

**The reading habits/ behaviour
and preferences of African children:
The Namibian chapter
in collaboration with UNISA**

URPC/2011/37



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APRIL 2014

The reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children:

report of a study

1. Introduction to the study

The study entitled, “The reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children” has been successfully concluded. It was launched in 2011 by the University of Namibia (UNAM), Faculty of Education together with the Namibian Children’s Book Forum in collaboration with the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Information Science. The project comprised a pilot study and a main study. A report on the pilot study was submitted to the Research and Publications Committee, University of Namibia in November 2012. This document is a final report on the main study.

1.1 Background to the study

Readership studies in multilingual countries are challenging. Developing a scientifically acceptable research methodology for the investigation of reading behaviour and preferences of children in multilingual Namibia, was a process fraught with many difficulties, some of which were almost insurmountable. The research team was faced with situations that required the breaking of new ground. Since it has generally been observed that the vast majority of Namibian children have not developed a reading habit and that this situation may be having a detrimental effect on school success, we tried to establish to what extent language, cultural and socio-economic factors may be impacting on the development or non-development of a reading culture.

In 2012 fourteen languages were used in 1515 schools as main media of instruction during Grades 1 to 3 (Namibia, Ministry of Education. 2012: 42. Table 17). These fourteen languages also included the minority languages, San (Jul/hoansi), German, Setswana and Sign Language in a few schools. In the upper primary phase, as from Grade 4, students switch to English medium instruction and in addition study one of the Namibian languages as a school subject. In 2012, 55 422 students in Grade 6 were studying a local language as a subject (EMIS 2012. [Education statistic given by Deputy Director]). This is still the situation in 2014 but a curriculum change which entails the

extension of mother tongue as medium of instruction has been announced by the Ministry of Education to be implemented as from 2015 (see section 2.1 in this regard).

One of the challenges to develop a questionnaire for 1402 children speaking up to 13 recognised languages, plus several other dialects without an orthography, was to cope with the “grey areas” that the language policy for Namibian schools does not mention. While the policy does allow for mother language instruction for Grades 1 - 3 and the teaching of the 13 languages as a subject as from Grade 4 up to Grade 12, the reality in many Namibian schools is different.

Many schools opt for English medium instruction already from Grade 1, i.e. they do not offer mother tongue as the medium of instruction. For some students, owing to the multilingual nature of some regions and within some school classes, it is not their mother tongue they are studying, but a dominant local language spoken in the region. All students who did not have the opportunity to receive mother tongue medium instruction from grades 1 - 3, have no choice but to proceed with this non-mother tongue language as a subject in the upper primary as well.

According to the UNICEF Trend and GAP Analysis (2011: 17), “The vast majority of San learners and most Ruciriku [Rumanyo] speaking learners are not being catered for in terms of home language medium of instruction in the lower primary school.” There are also “vast numbers of non-Silozi speakers who are being placed in Silozi medium instruction classes in grade 1 - 3” (p. 41). This also applies in the upper primary to “vast numbers of non-Silozi speakers” and all San students (p. 40). There are also many non-Oshindonga speakers who are receiving instruction through the Oshindonga medium.

The choice of what language medium to use for a questionnaire designed for Grade 6 students was therefore a difficult decision. This was one of the main reasons why a pilot study was decided upon. Another question was that, if the questions should be put in English, what the level of difficulty of the English should be. Even before the pilot study it became clear that pre-pilot small group testings would have to be undertaken. Then after the pilot study, so many changes had to be made that a number of post-pilot testings and several adjustments to the questionnaire were again necessary. Of

particular concern was the social desirability factor that presented itself during the pilot study. In the face of militating circumstantial evidence, 88% of the respondents claimed that they were avid readers. Drastic changes to the questionnaire had to be made in order to reduce this factor and ensure more reliable results for the main study.

The process delayed the launching of the main study with one year. An article entitled, *Pilot study on children's reading in Namibia: pitfalls and new strategies* written by the research team is forthcoming in the accredited, peer reviewed journal, MOUSAION 32 (2) 2014. (Manuscript attached as Appendix 1).

1.2 Importance of the study

The findings of the study provided information for recommendations to government, suggesting certain interventions needed to promote a reading culture in Namibia. Findings also created a basis for advocacy to educators, libraries, publishers and other authorities responsible for the education of children and the production and dissemination of children's books and other information materials for children. We trust that the outcome will stimulate more concerted efforts to promote the reading habit, develop the various Namibian languages and improve the resources needed to ensure quality education and life-long learning.

1.3 Statement of the problem

An underdeveloped reading culture in Namibia appears to be determined by a whole syndrome of problems. Contributory factors may be the low reading proficiency both in English and in the mother tongue of students, the low educational level of parents, a low or non-existent proficiency in English of parents, their non-involvement in the education of their children, the lack of reading materials in the home, child labour in the rural areas, poor socio-economic conditions; inadequate qualifications of teachers, inadequate proficiency in English as well as in the local languages of teachers, the fact that lower primary subject teacher training takes place in English (and not in the mother tongues), insufficient suitable teaching materials and storybooks for the language teachers; the small number of children's books being published in the various indigenous languages of Namibia; the general lack of adequate libraries in the schools

and the surrounding environment; poorly resourced schools, often also lacking in basic amenities and the lack of sufficient basic materials such as paper and pencils; and lastly the possible deterioration of storytelling in the country.

All these problems are too wide for one study to investigate. A small number of other studies have however, been conducted on some of the issues raised above. This study therefore concentrated mainly on those areas that have not yet been researched in Namibia. But in order to place findings into a wider context, published results of other studies and official statistics were used. Triangulation allows for the inclusion of information not obtained through the empirical research of a study but obtained through the review and analysis of secondary data such as other studies and statistical sources in order to enrich the study and offer a wider perspective (Theis 2003: 44). “Triangulation means drawing data from two or more methods or sources, so that you can use a range of information to answer your research questions. In addition, weaknesses of one method or source may be compensated by strengths of another, so you can have greater confidence in what you find out” (Lambert 2012: 138). For this study, information on sensitive issues such as the literacy rate of parents and the qualifications of teachers to teach the languages they teach was derived from government statistical sources. Information on the relationship of parents with the school and on the socio-economic situation of the students in the sample was given by the teachers, as the parents were not directly involved in the study. Information on the state of publishing for Namibian children was derived from publications on the subject.

1.4 Aims and research questions

The study aimed to investigate the following research questions:

- Are grade 6 Namibian students readers?
- Do Namibian children read in their free time after school?
- What are the possible reasons why students don't read?
- What do Namibian children do in their free time? Do they take part in sports, spend time with friends or work in and around the home, rather than read?

- Why do Namibian children read? Do they primarily read for educational purposes? Do they also read in their free time for enjoyment?
- Do the readers read mostly in English or in their mother tongue? Why?
- Are there readers who, for recreational purposes, prefer to read books with facts (non-fiction) rather than reading stories?
- What are the characters and themes in storybooks or topics of non-fiction children like to read about?
- Do Namibian children read magazines, newspapers and picture stories?
- Are there significant differences between Namibian boys and girls as regards their reading behaviour?
- Which factors influence the respondents' choice of reading material?
- Where do the motivation to read come from?
- From which source, e.g. from the school, the environment, the home do Namibian children get their reading materials?
- Do language teachers use textbooks, readers and storybooks, or do they have to make do with photocopied pages for students?
- What is the state of Namibian school libraries in general?
- How well resourced are Namibian schools in general? What is the infrastructure in the school as regards basic amenities?
- Do children visiting well-resourced schools and who live in a book rich environment, read more than children visiting poorly resourced schools and live in a book deprived environment? Do children from urban schools read more than rural children?
- What are the socio-economic conditions of most Namibian children?
- What role does storytelling (and story reading) as a form of pre-literacy play in Namibia today?

1.5 Questions answered by means of triangulation

- On what level is the reading proficiency of Namibian Grade 6 students?
- What is the level of education of the parents?

- Are the teachers included in the study qualified to teach the languages they teach?
- Are the library teachers qualified to manage a school library and promote a reading culture among students?
- What is the state of Namibian school libraries?
- Is formal training in school librarianship available in Namibia?
- What is available for Namibian children to read, and in which languages? Is there material available in the local languages? If not, why not?
- What are the results of other studies on the socio-economic background of the students?

1.6 Possible recommendations

It is envisaged that recommendations on the following could emerge from this study:

- What can be done to reduce the percentage of children who do not read?
- How can reading material be made accessible for use by language teachers?
- How can the results of the study on the reading preferences of the minority of Namibian readers be useful to help transform the majority of non-readers into readers?
- How can teacher training support the development of readers?
- How can parents be empowered to support reading development of children?
- What topics and themes in books should be provided to children to match their interests?
- How can communication technology be used to support reading and preserve oral story telling traditions?

2. Literature review

It has to be stated at the outset that *readership* research is not the same as *reading proficiency* research. The latter falls within the discipline of education while readership studies fall within the field of the sociology of reading and information studies. The study investigated a wide context of possible factors that impact on the development of a reading culture among Namibian Grade 6 students. Reading proficiency is namely not the only factor impacting on a reading culture, albeit a prerequisite for the mastery of reading. In subsections 2.1 and 3.2 reference is made of reading proficiency studies and some main findings of these studies as regards Grade 6 Namibian students.

Intensive database searches for published articles on children's readership research in African countries produced scant results while several studies on formal education, reading proficiency, child literacy as well as family literacy, child poverty, the effects of HIV Aids on children, child mortality, child disability and the empowerment of girl children were found. Some aspects of these studies are of relevance to the study. The literature review therefore reports on some findings of other studies that have a bearing on the research questions of this study. Some of these studies confirm some of the findings of this study while others do not give answers to our research questions but offer information that is useful to present a more complete background against which the study was conducted.

2.1 Reading proficiency of Namibian Grade 6 students

The finding of a UNICEF survey on the reading skills of Grade 6 students in Africa in 2003 was that only 7.6% of all Namibian Grade 6 students could read well, while another 25.9% possessed minimum reading competency. This suggests that two-thirds of Namibian Grade 6 students could hardly read or not read at all (UNICEF 2003).

The second study published in 2005 was a survey by the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ II). The study reported on a survey conducted from 2000 to 2004 of Grade 6 students' and teachers' proficiency in reading and mathematics in fourteen African countries. These were Namibia, South Africa, Mauritius, Seychelles, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Zambia, Tanzania Mainland,

Tanzania Zanzibar, Uganda, Swaziland, Malawi, and Mozambique. SACMEQ is an independent intergovernmental NGO, with its coordination centre housed within the UNESCO Harare, Zimbabwe Cluster Office.

The Namibia Report of SACMEQ II showed in figures and tables that Namibia came third from bottom i.e. in the twelfth place, in the reading test for students on a level far below the SACMEQ II average. Namibia performed just slightly better than Zambia and Malawi. The reading test results grouped proficiency on two levels: *Minimum level*: “can barely survive during the next year of schooling”, and *Desirable level*: “be guaranteed to succeed during the next year of schooling”. Only 16.9% of Namibian Grade 6 students reached the minimum level and 6.7% the desirable level in 2000. These results indicate that in 2000 only 23.6% of Namibian Grade 6 students could read on an acceptable level, the majority of this percentage only minimally well. The results furthermore suggest that the reading proficiency of 76.4% of the students was inadequate, possibly to the point that some could not read at all (SACMEQ 2005: Figure 7.1: 171; Table 7.3: 176).

The Namibian sample for SACMEQ III published in 2010 were 6 398 Grade 6 students, 827 teachers and 267 schools. Reading proficiency was graded on eight levels. The mean reading proficiency score for all 15 participating southern and eastern African countries was 511.8. Namibia scored 496.9, performing below the mean level, seven African countries performing better than Namibia. Namibia however, improved on its average score with 48 points between 2000 and 2010. The reading proficiency of most Namibian Grade 6 students, however is still very low as the Namibian scores on eight levels of reading will show: Level 1: Pre-reading 2.8%; Level 2: Emergent reading 10.8%; Level 3: Basic reading 25.1%; Level 4: Reading for meaning 25.5%; Level 5: Interpretive reading 15.9%; Level 6: Inferential reading 10.5%; Level 7: Analytical reading 6.8%; Level 8: Critical reading 2.5%.

The results thus show that 38.7% (levels 1-3) of the grade 6 students cannot read for meaning while only 41.4% (levels 4-5) can read for meaning and interpret text, and only 19.8% (levels 6-8) can read inferentially, analytically and critically (SACMEQ/IIEP. 2010: 12-14).

According to SACMEQ II the average age of Grade 6 students in 2005 was 13.86 years (Table 3.1(a)). Automatic promotion from one grade to the next is practiced to a large extent in Namibian schools but 15% of students per class per year are allowed to repeat a class with the exception of Grades 10 and 12. More than 54% of students had repeated a grade once or more, including students who “dropped in” after having “dropped” out (SACMEQ 2005: Table 3.7 9(a) and (b)).

The Ministry of Education assesses the performance of Grade 5 and 7 students in English 2nd language and mathematics on a regular basis since 2009 by means of the Namibian National Achievement Tests (SATs). In 2013 a total of 59 771 Grade 5 students in 1162 schools were tested. The Grade 5 students obtained an average score of 44% in English 2nd language (17.6 out of a possible 40 marks) as compared to 46% (18.4 out of 40) in 2011, i.e. the results have declined by 2% in 2013. 45% of the students were classified as “below basic achievement” as compared to 39% in 2011, i.e. more students have reverted to the below basic achievement category. This category is the lowest of four categories: “*below basic achievement, basic achievement, above basic achievement and excellent achievement.*” The Ministry considers this “undesirable trend” as “worrisome” (Mupupa 2014: Table 2; Figure 2).

Mother tongue has not been enjoying a high priority with government until very recently. After 24 years the Namibian government has now become alarmed by the increasing low reading proficiency and poor academic performance of students. Far-reaching curriculum revision for basic education was announced by the Minister of Education, David Namwandi (Namibian Sun, 13 March 2014; Ikela, S., 2014. Namibian Sun Wednesday March 26 2014: 7; Nhongo, K., 2014. Windhoek Observer March 28 2014: 8). This includes a change in the structure of the school system. The Junior Primary phase will now be four years, including a pre-primary year. The senior primary phase will comprise Grades 4 – 7. The Junior Secondary phase will change from three years to two years (Grades 8 and 9), and the Senior Secondary phase will change from two to three years (Grades 10 – 12). Mother tongue instruction will be expanded from pre-primary up to Grade 5. Grades 6 and 7 will be transitional years in which the mother tongue will play a supportive role. In an effort to instill a reading culture in every teacher

and child, a weekly reading period will be introduced from grade 1 to 12 (Namibia. Ministry of Education. 29 January 2014. *A discussion document on curriculum reform for formal basic education*). It is envisaged that the finalised curriculum document will be supported by a revised language policy for schools.

Minister Namwandi motivated the change as follows: “The system is in need of an overhaul” (Windhoek Observer); “We have noted that our languages are dying” (Namibian Sun). For primary education alone, N\$5.8 billion have been requested by the Ministry of Education for the 2014/2015 financial year. This amount is necessary to *inter alia* finance the in-service training of teachers on “strategies and methodology to teach reading skills in the mother tongue” (Windhoek Observer), the writing of new mother tongue/local language teaching materials and set books for the various subjects.

The change of language policy in favour of mother tongue medium of teaching in Namibian primary schools has long been overdue and is to be welcomed and applauded (See Töttemeyer, 2010).

2.2 Parental involvement

SACMEQ II surveyed the qualifications of parents and their involvement in their children’s education in 2005. The level of education of the parents was relatively low: 7.2% of the students had mothers who had not been to school and 6.7% had fathers with no schooling; 32% of the mothers and 32.5% of the fathers had some primary education only. The rest of the parents had various levels of secondary education; 11.2% of the mothers had tertiary education (SACMEQ II, 2005. Tables 3.1(b) and 3.2).

Parents when asked about their support of students with homework, only 46.5% of parents ensured that homework was done, 33.9% helped with homework and 35.7% checked the work done by students (Table 3.10). The reason for the low level of support may be the low level of schooling among many parents.

A Namibian study of relevance is the research of Siririka (2007) on parental involvement in the development of children’s literacy in a rural Namibian school. Siririka’s findings indicate that parents are not really involved in their children’s literacy (pp. 47 - 63).

Kaperu (2004: 56 - 57) in his study of five primary schools and one combined school in the Khomas education region, came to the same conclusion. He found that parent involvement is hampered by the following factors: lack of education, lack of time spent with their children, poverty, distance from the school, negative attitude of principals and teachers towards parents and the wrong perception that “parental roles in the education of their children stopped the moment they sent the children to school”. 38% of the parents had no academic qualifications and 48% no professional qualifications (p. 29). 93% of the student respondents indicated that their parents were uneducated and that this hampered their involvement in their children’s education (p. 32). This result correlates well with the response of 96% of the parents who stated that they “cannot read and write” (p. 46). The statement by 98% of the parents that they do not attend meetings because of “the language teachers are using during the meetings” which can be assumed, was English, corroborates the findings further. Vision 2030 (Namibia. Office of the President. 2004: 88) does not indicate the percentage of illiterate Namibians but reports that the 2001 census showed that 33.5% of Namibians of 15 years and above did not complete primary school and that only 2% had a university education.

Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 96 - 119) collected data from teachers, parents and students between the ages of 6 and 16 in Grades 1 - 3 for their extensive study in all thirteen regions of Namibia. They surveyed the way in which a family literacy programme assisted Namibian parents to support their children’s learning. Final findings were that most parents did not help their children to read or do homework. The researchers found that 46% of the parents said that they were illiterate (p. 107). Not all parents were aware that “their obligation in assisting their children with their education does not end with physical support such as the provision of food and clothes only, but extends to helping their children with homework as well” (p. 118). They also found that “there was no evidence of literacy (in) the surroundings of the camps of the San people” (p. 117).

Some of the findings within the study of Kasokonya and Kutondukoa do not correlate well with one another, indicating that social desirability was influencing the responses of some groups, e.g. 92.3% of parents stated that they do attend school meetings but only 38.5% of the teachers reported that most of the parents do attend meetings.

The work of the Directorate of Adult Education of the Namibian Ministry of Education regarding family literacy projects (FLP) is to be commended. Since 2005 FLP is operating in all 13 regions with 288 trained family literacy promoters and with 4848 parents/caregivers benefiting over the years (Namibia. Ministry of Education. Directorate of Adult Education. 2011: 67). Efforts are made to empower parents to shoulder their responsibilities towards the education of their children on all levels and develop and strengthen the relationship between parents and the school. However, an evaluation of the Namibian FLP in 2011 found that FLP had not taken “intrafamilial dynamics ... into consideration” (p. 77). It was recommended that the project, instead of training only one family member, become extended learning on family-wide level with a view to contribute to educational and social improvements and poverty and inequality reduction (pp. xv-xvi). Kasokonya and Scheffers ([n.d.]: 9 - 13) however, opined that the Namibian family literacy programme did succeed in strengthening the relationship between the school and the families; but two challenges were the low participation of males (the fathers) and the significant number of participant drop outs of more than 50%.

2.3 Teacher qualifications and training

2.3.1 Teacher qualifications

Taking the low literacy rate of many parents into consideration, teacher qualifications are obviously an important factor of the educational success of their students and the development of a reading culture in a country. According to official statistics for 2012, 77.8% of all primary school teachers were qualified (Namibia. Ministry of Education. EMIS Education Statistics 2012: Table 48). However, there are still teachers teaching

with an Education Certificate (Grade 8 plus a 2 year teaching qualification), particularly in the rural primary schools.

Apart from the unqualified teachers, many qualified teachers are not qualified to teach the languages they teach. Seemingly on the basis of the belief, “who can speak a language, can teach a language,” 26.8% (4 101) of the 15 283 primary school teachers in 2012, irrespective of their teaching qualifications, were teaching the following languages without having received secondary education up to Grade 12 themselves in these languages. For the various languages the specific statistics were as follows: Afrikaans 1st language 15.7%, Afrikaans 2nd language 20.5%, English 1st language 20.4%, English 2nd language 20.4%, German 1st language 30.3%, Khoekhoegowab 1st language 27.3%, Oshiwambo 1st language 20.3%, Otjiherero 1st language 18.3%, Rukwangali 1st language 20%, Rumanyo 1st language 18.6%, Setswana 1st language 50%, Silozi 1st language 14%. There were also teachers of these subjects who studied the language up to Grade 12 only. Of the 15 283 primary school language teachers, 29.3% (4 480) had no tertiary training in the languages they were teaching in 2012. (Namibia. Ministry of Education. EMIS Education Statistics 2012: 73-74 (Table 43).

2.3.2 Language proficiency of language teachers

Being a qualified teacher in Namibia, does not automatically mean that such a teacher can speak, read and write English well. Namibia never was a British colony and at the time of independence in 1990, English was the mother tongue of only 0.8% of the total population (Wolfaardt 2010: 14). For many Namibians English was more or less a foreign language. The new government however, declared English as the sole official language of the country and the main medium of instruction in the schools. In 1990 teachers were teaching mainly in the mother tongue and in Afrikaans. English as medium of instruction was not gradually phased in; the switch to English medium as from Grade 4 in 1992 was total and abrupt. After 24 years, most Namibians are speaking “Namlsh” (a kind of broken English) and cannot read or write English well. This also applies to many teachers particularly in the rural areas.

SACMEQ II (2005) tested the reading proficiency of both students (see 2.1) and teachers at the same time. Teachers teaching Grade 6 were given exactly the same reading tests as the students. Taking into account that the level of difficulty of the tests was for approximately thirteen year old Grade 6 students, one would expect that 100% of the teachers would demonstrate desirable levels of proficiency in reading. Out of twelve African countries (South Africa and Mauritius did not take part in the teachers' tests), Namibian teachers came sixth but below the SACMEQ average in the reading proficiency test (SACMEQ II Figure 7.2). There were great regional variations in Namibia. Teachers from the northern regions performing less well to the point that 5% of the Grade 6 students scored higher levels than the bottom 12% of teachers (SACMEQ II Table 7.1). In the Omaheke region 78% of the teachers reached only the minimum level of reading for Grade 6. On the scale of 8 reading levels, 13.9% of teachers in Omaheke were at level 1 i.e. they were in the pre-reading phase and could hardly read what is required of a Grade 6 student whom they were supposed to teach. Another 8.2% of teachers in Omaheke were at level 3, i.e. they could not read for comprehension. Nationally 6% of the teachers teaching Grade 6 could not reach levels 4 to 5 which is the desirable reading level for Grade 6 (SACMEQ II Table 7.4) and 58.8% could not reach level 8, the highest level on the scale for student reading competency. A matter of grave concern is that the teachers with the lowest competencies were teaching more than 70% of all Grade 6 students in the country.

The government is aware of the fact that low English language proficiency among teachers contributes to low English language proficiency among students. The English Language Proficiency Programme (ELPP) is one of the programmes that has been developed to strengthen the English language abilities of teachers. In 2010 the tender for the development of this programme was awarded to the University of Namibia.

Subsequently UNAM then conducted a needs assessment survey as well as a diagnostic/placement test, both documented in substantive reports (Wolfaardt and Schier 2011; Elyssa and Steenkamp 2012). Both reports indicated that levels of English (and specifically reading comprehension) remain one of the biggest challenges of teachers in Namibia.

All teachers in Namibia that participated in the placement test received their status (whether they were placed on pre-intermediate, intermediate or advanced level, or whether they have been exempted from the programme). Materials have been developed on the different levels, and teachers are currently in the first phase of study. According to the programme administrator, all enrolled teachers will write an exit test towards the end of the year (2014). It is envisaged that a similar proficiency qualification, would in future form part of the Education degrees of UNAM (Kirchner 2014. [Interview with G. Fourie]).

2.3.3 Teacher training for Namibian languages

Teacher training for the Namibian languages has always been inadequate as far as the different languages offered at tertiary level as well as the number of tertiary students registered for local language courses – especially at secondary level - are concerned. The four teacher training colleges were merged with the University of Namibia in 2011 and the study of a local language in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma, junior secondary phase, did not continue. Currently, for Grades 8 -12, no training is being offered by UNAM in six languages (Silozi, Rukwangali, Thimbukushu, Rumanyo, Setswana, Jul’hoansi (See Töttemeyer, 2010: 27 - 29).

African languages have lost their attraction since independence, very few university students choose to study these languages. Student numbers have decreased and are now minimal. “The indigenous languages are held in such low esteem even by the very speakers of those languages that many Namibians are ashamed of their language and culture. Colonialism contributed to the notion that mother tongue education is second class education. Owing to poverty and/or ignorance, many parents see English as a vehicle of development and want their children to become fluent in this language in the hope that the children will become economically secure” (Töttemeyer, 2010: 53-54). One way to encourage students to register for language courses could be to offer study bursaries for the African languages.

The expansion of mother tongue instruction and the inclusion of a pre-primary year will lead to a severe shortage of local language teachers in all languages in the 1 723

schools of Namibia, particularly in the 1018 primary schools (Numbers of schools as in 2012: Namibia. Ministry of Education. EMIS Education Statistics 2012: Table 2.)

2.3.4 Teacher training for school library management and the teaching of Basic Information Science (BIS)

Since independence there are no qualified staff managing school libraries unless the parents pay the salary of a school librarian. The posts of full time school librarians in the former white schools Namibia were frozen with immediate effect in 1990. This was a shame as the well-resourced white schools were at the same time opened for all races. Since then teachers without formal training in librarianship are managing the school libraries in their free time as they are expected to carry a full teaching load of other subjects as well. The non-promotional subject, Basic Information Science (BIS), taught at all levels, teaches students how to retrieve information from various sources inside and also outside of libraries, such as printed materials, audio-visual and electronic media, retrieve classified library materials, use library catalogues and reference works and how to conduct research for assignments and projects. The subject also opens up the world of fiction to students by means of storytelling and story reading and reading clubs in collaboration with language teachers.

The staff member who is trained in school library management and to offer the subject Basic Information Science to students should be the qualified full time school librarian. Apart from managing the school library, the qualified librarian assists teachers with research projects and facilitates the integration of all subjects with the information materials in and outside the school library. However, since there are no full-time librarians in the schools, the subject is allocated to a teacher who is already burdened with the teaching of other subjects. In some schools up to four teachers share the responsibility for the teaching of Basic Information Science and also for the management of the school library, without having enjoyed training in any of these except for some short courses offered by the Education Libraries staff of the Directorate of Library and Archival Services of the Ministry of Education. This situation results in a library that is poorly managed and rarely open and that the subject BIS is neglected to

the point that it is not being offered at all, even though there may be slots on the timetable for BIS.

In the past, the University of Namibia offered a four year senior secondary diploma course and later a degree course in School Librarianship for 15 years. University students could opt for this subject as a minor or a major. The teaching methods of Basic Information Science were also offered to students opting for the major course.

In 1998 the Ministry of Basic Education scrapped the subject, School Librarianship from the list of approved UNAM subjects for the training of secondary school teachers. With this, bursaries for prospective students were also terminated. The result was that UNAM removed the course from the curriculum for teachers and that since then, no training of school librarians has been taking place in Namibia. (See the letter by the Namibian Children's Book Forum to Minister Iyambo of 9 November 2010 in Appendix 12.)

Among other graduate and postgraduate courses in archival science and media studies, training for general librarians is still taking place at UNAM in the form of a three year diploma and a four year B.A. in Library and Information Science.

2.4 Lack of resources to support literacy

2.4.1 Poor state of school libraries

This study investigated the state of the school libraries in the sample of 36 primary schools and these results are given in section 4.5. This section will only report on the findings of other studies.

Siririka (2007: 63) reported that as far as libraries were concerned, some children did not know what a library looked like. These findings suggest that children were not exposed to libraries or reading corners which may mean that their access to books was limited.

In an extensive study of southern and eastern African school libraries undertaken as part of the SACMEQ II 2005 study, Makuwa, reports on the poor state of Namibian

school libraries. The SACMEQ II findings on Namibian school libraries were corroborated in the same year by a World Bank study by M.T. Marope on “Human Capital and Knowledge Development for Economic Growth with Equity” in Namibia. The study scrutinised the role Namibian libraries were playing towards the development of knowledge in Namibia.

A Namibian Library and Information Service Sector Strategic Assessment Baseline Study commissioned by the Ministry of Education in 2008 produced important findings on the status of libraries. The interim report on school libraries by Knowledge Leadership Associates (KLA) under the leadership of Gretchen Smith presented the following main findings:

The study found that there were wide divergences in the quality of schools measured in terms of physical infrastructure, financial resources and staffing. “This divergence is very evident when comparing school libraries. At the one extreme are schools with no library at all while at the other extreme are schools, far fewer in number, and virtually all confined to the major urban centres, with standard library facilities. A mere handful of schools are relatively well equipped with well-resourced media centres. Education Library Services (ELS) has identified 386 schools as having a school library with standard facilities (2005) out of a total of 1 610 schools in the country. Thus, three quarters of all schools in Namibia do not have a library (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.2). It can be assumed that this statement refers to a *standard* library.

The KLA team reported that there were great regional disparities. The regions with the lowest percentage of schools with libraries also had the poorest ratio of community libraries in relation to the school population.

“Geographic, socio-economic and demographic factors have also played and inevitably continue to play a large part. Many schools in Namibia are situated in areas remote from urban centres, rendering support from both government agencies and NGOs problematic.” The majority of schools, particularly those in the northern regions of the country serves very poor communities. “The parent bodies are thus unable to give financial support to the school. In many instances parents are unable to pay school

fees, let alone make voluntary donations for the library or any other purpose” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.2).

The KLA team also gauged the perceptions of the need for a school library. The majority of school principals (70%) said they believe that there is a need for a school library and that a library can or should play a central role in teaching and learning. In many cases the financial and acute resource problems the majority of schools were facing, however meant that the school library was “placed low down on the list of priorities, its value seen more in potential than in actual terms, viewed as part of a ‘wish list’ rather than as an available practical resource” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.3).

The researchers even encountered an attitude that bordered on hostility among a small minority of principals who viewed the library as “an unnecessary luxury, a drain on scarce resources and a distraction in a teaching environment which had, in their view, functioned well enough without one.”

Even though the majority of principals, teachers, students and parents believe that school libraries are important, “there seems to be little evident connection in the minds of most educators at the school level regarding the pivotal role a properly resourced library can play” in the attainment of developing Namibia into a knowledge-based society”. The library is not seen as a key element. “It is a place where books are kept rather than a repository of knowledge and a platform that can provide the tools to access that knowledge.” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.3).

2.4.2 The need for qualified full-time school librarians

There is general consensus that a full-time qualified librarian is seen as the key to ensuring that the library plays its proper role in the life of the school. The KLA team reports that “it was repeatedly and emphatically stated during interviews with principals and teachers that schools need a qualified librarian whose only function is to manage the library and teach library studies. The Education Department’s mandatory insistence that teachers responsible for the library also teach a promotional subject was cited as one of the main reasons for the poor state of school libraries” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.5).

The study found that only 13% of schools had a teacher-librarian who had received training in formal school librarianship], with a further 31% of library teachers having attended an in-service workshop, none of whom are functioning as full-time librarians, with the exception of one or two schools where the parents pay the salary of a full-time librarian (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.4).

2.4.3 School library collections – status and development

Most schools did not or could not provide data on the size of their collections probably because their collections, where they exist at all, were in disarray. The library collections showed glaring shortages or complete gaps in a number of subjects, particularly as regards reference books, science, mathematics and English books, books in indigenous languages or a special needs collection for students with special needs. The average size of collections was a mere 37 books. Educational materials such as maps and posters or curriculum-based books are not bought as 77% of school libraries do not receive an allocation from the school development fund. The majority of schools had no money to buy books of any sort. “In such circumstances school library collections, where they exist, soon become outdated and irrelevant, both in terms of the curriculum and the needs and interests of learners” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.6).

2.4.4 Integration of libraries with teaching and the role of Basic Information Science (BIS)

Although 94% of schools responded that they believe it is important for students to be taught library information skills, the teaching of BIS in schools is a problematic issue. The subject is very low down on the list of priorities for most, “particularly at those schools that do not have a properly stocked and managed library, which in effect is true of the majority of schools in the country as a whole.” BIS is taught on an ad hoc basis, if at all, at many schools. “As a non-promotional subject, BIS is not regarded with the same seriousness as subjects such as mathematics and English and this inevitably impacts on the motivation of teachers assigned to teach the subject in addition to their principal subjects.” BIS is rarely taught in a practical context in spite of the fact that “most students do not seem to know when and why they need information, where to find

it and how to evaluate, use and communicate it. The majority of Namibian children do not know the internet as they do not have access to it, i.e. they are to great extent information illiterate (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.7).

2.4.5 Physical space, utilisation and maintenance of libraries

The KLA team reported that “library opening hours vary greatly, and in many cases are erratic ... In some cases the library is not open to learners at all.” The libraries were not user friendly, particularly in the sense of providing seating and adequate lighting. A third of schools in the Khomas region use a converted storeroom. 20% reported that the library was off limits to students; 20% reported that the library was open during the entire school day; 40% reported that it was open at break time and the same percentage that it was open after school hours (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.8).

2.4.6 Libraries and ICT

The research team found that information and communication technology plays a very small role in Namibian education. “A mere 15% of schools reported having computers and 14% reported having internet access. ICT is effectively absent in the great majority of schools in Namibia (in excess of 80%), both as a subject on the curriculum and as a tool for accessing and processing information”; this because many schools do not have electricity and also lack the funds to purchase the necessary equipment. Some schools use SchoolNet to access information. SchoolNet is a NGO with computer centres containing work stations in Windhoek Katutura, Ondangwa, Rundu and Gobabis. The NGO’s mission is to provide internet connectivity to schools and adult learners throughout Namibia. To date they claim to have connected 160 schools to the Internet.

Over all however, teachers and students indicated to KLA that only 2-4% of students in Namibia have access to computers and the internet. In the minds of many, is the belief that an adequate number of computers will solve all problems in schools as regards the information and reading needs of staff and students. The internet is being viewed as separate from and even superior to the printed resources offered by libraries while in reality they are “complementary resources to be used in tandem.... Fast tracking the

introduction of ICT and internet access into schools at the expense of upgrading and modernising library facilities is a tempting solution, but it is a solution with its own set of inherent pitfalls and dangers” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.9).

2.4.7 Library support and the role of Education Library Services (ELS)

The annual budget for ELS is “woefully inadequate” to perform its function of sourcing and providing sufficient copies of books and other print materials to school libraries. Another function of ELS is to offer in-service training in the regions in the form of short courses to library teachers and advocacy courses to school principals and HOD’s to motivate them towards library development and use in their schools. ELS field staff had to cover all the regions in the country on a total annual travel budget of N\$20 000 in 2008. Until today (information of April 2014 from a senior ELS staff member) the travel budget is totally inadequate which means that not all regions can be visited within one year.

KLA reports that ELS staff “identified a number of problems which make it difficult and even impossible for them to effectively fulfil their mandate as defined in the Strategic Plan for the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) and implicit in Vision 2030. These include a chronic shortage of staff.” The key post of Regional Librarian was vacant in most of the 13 regions while only a few regions had Advisory Teachers for Basic Information Science. The situation has not changed markedly since 2008. Another problem is that there are no full-time librarian/BIS teachers, despite BIS being a compulsory part of the curriculum. The teacher assigned these tasks must also teach a promotional subject. On a practical level this is often unworkable, especially at larger schools” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.10).

In 2010 the Minister of Education, the late Abraham Lyambo, realizing the crucial importance of school libraries to support education, issued a directive that a librarian be appointed for every secondary school and for every primary school with more than 250 students. Posts were advertised in some regions but no library dedicated appointments were made. It appears that regional directors prefer to use the librarian posts to appoint extra teachers for other subjects, even when qualified librarians apply for the post. It is

not clear to what extent the posts are being used for BIS teaching and the proper management of the school library.

2.4.8 Lack of information in the community

As far as other sources of information available within the community are concerned, the SACMEQ II (2005) report found that the number of books at home had declined from 27.6 in 1998 to 22.0 in 2004. The study further indicated that 48 percent of students were exposed to newspapers at home and 28 percent to magazines (SACMEQ II Table 3.1(b)). Percentages of electronic communication media in the homes were as follows: Radio 90%, Television 40% and Telephone 26% (SACMEQ II Table 3.4). In the northeast and in some of the central northern regions the percentages were extremely low.

Another relevant study by Trewby (2004: 21) found that resources that support literacy were non-existent in some remote rural areas and that hymn books and Bibles were often the only books in the homes. He found newspaper and other printed pages “flying around” outside. Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005:117) witnessed the same phenomenon. They also found that 50% of the Namibian homes they visited had no books or printed materials of any sort. In the other homes Bibles and other religious materials, literacy books and health booklets were present. Only 6% of the homes had newspapers and only 2% storybooks or children’s books. 80% had radios, 14.5% television and 5% cell phones (2005: 101). The Grades 1 - 3 teachers in the Caprivi schools that were visited did not seem to be aware that their school had a library (pp. 113 - 114). There were no telephones and the only communications received from the outside world was through a small radio at the school that broadcast announcements (p. 113).

Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution states that: “Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia.” Without basic reading materials in an easily understandable language this goal cannot be achieved effectively.

2.4.9 Lack of publications in the local languages

Tötemeyer (2013: 17) who conducted a study on the state of publishing for Namibian children, reports that the publication of trade books for Namibian children in the various local languages, diminished from 13 trade books per year for the 12 year period of 1988 to 1999, to less than four (3.8) trade books per year during the 12 year period of 2000 - 2011. In 1992, 53 per cent of the total turnover of the biggest publishing house in Namibia was from local language publishing; two years later this was down to 30 per cent. Possibly this dramatic drop in local language publishing three years after Namibian independence was a manifestation of the uncertainty among publishers in the face of a new language policy for the schools, favouring English.

African language publishing, even for the school book market, remains erratic as it is considered to be not economically viable; this even more so as regards publishing multilingual children's trade books for leisure reading. Only when publishers can find subsidies, either from the private sector or by using the profits from their own lucrative publishing projects such as large scale English and mathematics textbooks for the schools, can they consider publishing multilingual trade books for children (p. 18).

It is to be hoped that with the new language policy favouring the mother tongue to a greater extent, publishers will become more willing to publish children's books and supplementary readers in the African languages.

2.5 Amenities in schools

The UNICEF Trend and GAP Analysis (2011: 19 - 20) showed that in 2009 22% of all Namibian schools had no toilets of some kind and no water supply for both the students and the teachers; and that at the rate these amenities were being supplied, it will take 15 years to provide toilets for all teachers and 29 years for at least one toilet of some kind per school for students to be put in place. Of the existing toilets, 50% were pit latrines and not flush toilets. Only after 17 years all schools will have water. The UNICEF Trend and GAP Analysis furthermore states that "There is a clear relationship

between the quantity and quality of school infrastructure and the quality of learning” (p. 20).

Very recent statistics have been released by Minister of Education, David Namwandi, and reported in the Namibian of March 7, 2014 (p. 3) as follows: There are 11 415 toilets in Namibian schools of which 6 854 [i.e. 60.04%] are pit latrines and 4 561 [i.e. 39.96%] are flush toilets. But of the 1 723 schools in Namibia, only 1 300 [i.e. 75.35%] do have toilets of some sort while 423 [i.e. 24.55%] schools do not have any. Both teachers and students have to relieve themselves in the bushes. As if this appalling sanitary status of schools is not enough, it is widely reported in the press that many of the present flush toilets are not working and do not get repaired in spite of requests from schools.

Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 14) found a school in Oshikoto in a brick building but there was no water or electricity. In Rundu they visited a school with two zinc structures functioning as accommodation rooms for 40 students each. There were no mattresses and no electricity in the overcrowded rooms and the hygiene and safety of the students were compromised (p. 116).

The Ministry of Education allocates only 2.6% of the budget on infrastructure for schools. Vision 2030 set a target to provide all schools with drinking water and the necessary infrastructure by 2006. (Namibia. Office of the President. 2004: 91). This vision has not been achieved.

2.6 Housing and socio-economic conditions

Poverty and extreme poverty can be found in the households of all the regions covered by the study. Percentages of poor (P) and very poor (VP) households are as follows: Caprivi 28.6% (P) 12.5% (VP), Hardap 32% (P) 21.9% (VP), Kavango 56.5% (P) 36.7% (VP), Khomas 6.3% (P) 2.4% (VP), Omaheke 30.1% (P) 17.5% (VP), Ohangwena 44.7% (P) 19.3% (VP) and Oshikoto 40.8% (P) 16.6% (VP). In total 26.7 % of all

Namibian households are poor and 13.8% are very poor. (Namibia. Ministry of Education. Directorate of Adult Education. 2011 Figure 2.1: 9).

The Namibia Household Income Survey (NHIES 2009/10 Graph 1, Table 1: 5) showed that 18.3% of children were living in severe poverty and 34% in poverty. The report stated that “poverty ... impacts on the lives and development of children in Namibia, especially their health and education” (p. 1). Part of the profile of poor households was that the female caregiver in the house had no or only primary education (p. 9). 34.2 % of females between the ages of 16 and 59 in severely poor households had enjoyed no education and 31.2% only primary education. In poor households, the percentages were 57.7% and 52.3% respectively (NHIES 2009/10 Table 5: 11).

The UNICEF Trend and GAP Analysis (2011: 19) reported that in 2009 39% of schools had no electricity, 45% schools no telephones and 69% of all teachers had no housing. It would take 18 years for an electricity supply and for a telephone installed in all schools and 266 years before there will be teacher accommodation for all. The report stated that regions that had a higher annual per capita income and less poverty achieved better SACMEQ III results in the Grade 6 reading proficiency test, also in schools where the teacher used a teacher resource centre (p. 44) and had acceptable housing (p. 45).

As far as housing is concerned, Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 115) found that the majority of students were living in traditional houses or homesteads in rural areas or in shacks in most of the urban areas. In some areas people were wearing ragged clothes; most children were going to school barefoot (p. 115). The government feeding scheme was supporting the making of porridge in most schools, parents supplying firewood, and providing the labour.

SACMEQ II established that more than half of Namibian students (51%) were living in homes with floors of earth, clay or canvas, 79% in homes with walls of sticks, grass,

mud, wood or metal sheets and 56% in homes with roofs of grass, thatch, cardboard, wood, metal sheets (SACMEQ II 2005: Table 3.5).

2.7 Distance from school

Kaperu (2004: 38) found that 83.9% of the parental homes were “far from the school.” Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 102) reported that 30.8% of the teachers felt that the walking distance to school was “too long” for the students. In Rundu the distance to the school from students’ homes was between 4 and 15 kilometres.

SACMEQ II established that the majority of students lived in rural areas (SACMEQ II Table 3.5). On average the distance from the student’s homes to the primary and secondary schools, the clinic, the library, the bookshop was 30 km, in Caprivi and Kunene much further (SACMEQ II 2005: Table 3.6).

2.8 Lack of confidence, shyness

Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 102) also reported that “An overwhelming 92.3% of teachers” saw the lack of confidence, shyness and fear of students when they start school as a problem.

2.9 Reading as a pleasurable activity

Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005: 97) opine with reference to the family literacy programme in the Kwazulu-Natal province of South Africa, that “reading is promoted as a shared pleasure,” an enjoyable activity since “learning is easier when learners are having fun”. As will be shown in Sections 6 and 7, an understanding of the enjoyment aspect of reading is much wanting in Namibia.

One Namibian initiative in this regard is Readathon. Education Library Services is to be commended for the organizing of the annual National Readathon in spite of a tight travel budget. Readathon is a reading festival celebrated in all Namibian schools. The purpose

of Readathon is to offer students an opportunity to experience reading as fun, as a pleasurable activity and help schools to raise funds for the school library. Owing to the vast distances between most regions, ELS organizes a special event in the main town of one region per year. From 2009 to 2013, festivals took place respectively in the following regions: Khomas, Otjizondjupa, Kunene, Karas and Caprivi (Zambezi). In September 2014 the event will be celebrated in the Erongo region. A huge reading tent is rigged and the whole community is invited to celebrate a variety of items related to books and oral literature together with the schools. ELS reports that every year the older generation is delighted to see how well the children can read, recite poetry, dramatize stories, sing reading songs, conduct quizzes and dance.

Publications consulted on research methods will be discussed in Section 3.

3. Research methods

According to Theis (2003: 125), research *method* in the social sciences “is a scientific technique for gathering data,” such as the decision to conduct a survey to study a particular matter of concern. Research *method* is not identical to research *tool* “but can be used in research tool design.” A research *tool* is a purpose designed structured instrument to gather systematic answers to specific research questions.

Muijs (2012: 38) states that data gathering by means of a survey is “the most popular type of research in the social sciences” as it is highly flexible and allows for the study of a wide range of research questions.

3.1 Triangulation

As indicated in Sections 1 and 2, information was gathered not only by means of primary data collection through the instruments chosen for the study, but also by the use of secondary sources of information.

Any advance in knowledge always begins by analyzing what is already known. This is called 'secondary data review and analysis'. The process entails collecting, analyzing and evaluating all existing information that is relevant to the research topic. This is more than a simple literature review; it is an essential part of research. Secondary data review and analysis underpins all good scientific research.

Sirika (2007: 40 - 41) quoting from Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000: 112), defines triangulation as the use of multiple data sources to help the researcher to “map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint.”¹ She also states that according to Anderson (1998: 131), triangulation entails “the use of multiple data sources, data collection methods and theories to validate research findings” and that “triangulation also helps eliminate bias and can help detect errors or anomalies in your discoveries.”² Referring to Altrichter, Posch and Somekh (1993: 117), Sirika (2007: 41) argues that triangulation is an

important method for contrasting and comparing different accounts of the same situation. It gives a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation and contributes to the trustworthiness and credibility of the conclusions drawn.³

Maxwell (2013: 128) states that “Triangulation – collecting information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods ... reduces the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases due to a specific method, and allows a better assessment of the generality of the explanations that one develops.” While no method is infallible “in the final analysis, validity threats are made implausible by evidence, not methods.”

3.2 Units of analysis and instruments of data collection

The units of analysis for the readership study were Grade 6 students in Namibian schools. The reason for the choice of Grade 6 was because studies had been conducted on the *reading proficiency* of Grade 6 students in 2000, 2005 and 2010 by the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ I, II and III) in fourteen African countries, as well as in 2003 by UNICEF. As Namibia was included in these surveys, it was felt that it would be meaningful for comparative purposes if the proposed Namibian research on *reading behaviour and preferences* also investigate the Grade 6 group since the study, while not the same, would be relevant and related to the studies already undertaken.

3.3 The instruments of data collection

Muijs (2012: 38 - 39) states that by means of a survey “We can describe a situation, study relationships between variables..... [and] it is easier to generalise findings to real-world settings.” Large numbers of data at reasonably low cost can be gathered. Respondents’ anonymity can be guaranteed, “which may lead to more candid answers than less anonymous methods such as interviews ... [it] is particularly suited for canvassing opinions and feelings about particular issues. The use of standardised questions allows for easy comparability between respondents and group of respondents.”

Disadvantages are that “surveys do not allow the researcher to control the environment, and are therefore less suited to answering questions of causality than experimental designs ... A further limitation is that it is difficult to come to a deeper understanding of processes and contextual differences through questionnaires which are standardised and by their nature are limited in length and depth of responses.” Muijs therefore advocates a combination of survey and qualitative methods.

The instruments of data collection for the study were a self-administered questionnaire for Grade 6 students and structured observation by means of field notes. Maxwell (2013: 125) opines that “observation studies are not a serious validity threat as with interviews” but that it is necessary to take note that “in field research, the researcher’s presence is always an intervention in some ways” (p. 127).

A second questionnaire was designed after the pilot study for the language teachers in the selected schools to gather more information on the resources available to teachers and students, both in the school and in the surroundings of the school and on the socio-economic conditions under which the student respondents are living.

Interviews with a selection of respondents who had been identified as readers were conducted in order to enrich the data. Maxwell however, cautions that with interviews, ‘reflexivity’ which is “a powerful and inescapable influence” has to be kept in mind. This means that “the researcher is part of the world he studies ... whatever the informant says is always influenced by the interviewer and the interview situation” (p.125). (See also 3.3.3). Maxwell nevertheless believes that “interviews enable you to collect ‘rich data’ that are detailed and varied enough that they provide a full and revealing picture of what is going on.” He advocates verbatim transcripts and not “just notes what you felt was significant” (p.126).

The study thus made use of mixed methods of data collection, the two questionnaires being quantitative methods to gather non-experimental descriptive data, the answers to which were numerically converted and analyzed through statistical methods. Qualitative methods were also used to gather further information, as a description of the

surroundings in which the respondents to the questionnaire were finding themselves, was necessary to form a picture of their reality. These were the field notes documented by the researchers through observations and conversations as well as the interviews. Even though we were aware of certain limitations attached to observational methods and interviews, these data were nevertheless essential to complement the statistical data in order to facilitate full understanding of the research context.

3.3.1 Quantitative and qualitative research

Muijs (2012: 9) states that “Quantitative research is often put into opposition to qualitative research. In many cases this turns into a ‘paradigm war’, which is seen as a result from apparently incompatible world views underlying the methods... [but] the so-called subjectivist [qualitative] versus realist [quantitative] divide is not clear-cut.” He opines that quantitative and qualitative research are not incompatible but “can be usefully combined in mixed methods designs, which often produce more useful information.” A combination of the two produces both breadth and depth. The two methods may also be alternated, depending on the research question.

Muijs (p. 9) states furthermore that “It is not true that quantitative research cannot explain things ... A well-designed quantitative study, allows not only to look at what happens, but to provide an explanation of why it happens as well. The key lies in your research design and what variables you collect.”

There exists a wrong perception among some researchers that data collection for quantitative research entails the collection of statistical data and/or other numerical information only. Muijs (p.10) stresses that “The fact that data have to be quantitative does not mean that they have to be naturally available in quantitative form. Non-quantitative phenomena (such as teacher beliefs) can be turned into quantitative data through our measurement instruments i.e. information in verbal format is quantifiable in many cases.”

3.3.2 Observational research

Black (2003/1993: 234 - 240) states that “Before roughly 2000 statisticians in literature did not recognise observations and interviews as being qualitative methods and took great pains to devise methods to quantify these.”

Muijs (2012: 48) however, argues that “The open-ended and essentially qualitative nature of this format has the advantage that it allows observers to pick up factors that they had not thought of beforehand (in contrast to scales) and that it can provide very detailed and rich information.”

Kothari (2004: 96) defines observation method as follows: “the information is sought by way of investigator’s own direct observation If the observation is characterised by a careful definition of the units to be observed, then the observation is called *structured observation*. According to Muijs (2012: 47) a descriptive observation form is required upon which “the observer writes down everything that is happening during the observed session.”

Gilham (2008: 19) describes a situation where the researcher has “quite specific questions but they are ‘open’ so you cannot predict what you are going to find. He calls this type of research *semi-structured observation*.”

Kothari (2004: 97) describes *uncontrolled observation* where “the observation takes place in the natural setting In uncontrolled observation, no attempt is made to use precision instruments. The major aim of this type of observation is to get a spontaneous picture of life and persons.”

We used all three observational methods for the study:

- Structured observation on the school and its surroundings were collected at every school and summarized on a standardized form. The following elements were tabled: Name of school; urban/rural location; number of students tested and the local language they are studying, as well as the date of study.
- During administration of the questionnaire, notes were also made on the venue where the session took place; whether the students asked questions, how they

responded/ behaved; whether they were confident to use English; whether an interpreter was necessary; how long it took to complete the questionnaire. The researchers also recorded their observations regarding the availability of text books and the availability of other books in classroom collections and/or a library.

- The researchers further made informal observational notes after a school was visited and commented on the overall behaviour of the students, the facilities available, the attitude of students and teachers towards the research project. These observations can be termed as *semi-structured* and was compared with the information verified from the official response of the school (see Section 4.1).
- Lastly, *uncontrolled observation* also took place. The reactions of respondents, the kind of questions they asked and the level of enthusiasm or reluctance shown as well as signs of confusion, fatigue or boredom were noted down by means of open ended text.

Semi-structured and uncontrolled observations were collected in a narrative text, supported by photos (see Appendix 2).

3.3.3 Interviews

Thorne (2010: 418) opines that there are limitations to interviews with children. Reporting on a study of the autonomous behaviour of primary school children, she stated that qualitative observation of children can never be objective because “in the very act of documenting their autonomy, I undermined it, for my gaze remained, at its core and in its ultimate knowing purpose, that of a more powerful adult.” It is this adult presence or gaze that can inhibit interactions between adults and children, particularly those whose culture discourages free discourse between the generations.

African American researcher, Ann Ferguson (2010: 334) conducted interviews with Grade 5 and 6 African American boys from low income families. She described the considerable problems she encountered as follows: “I had underestimated the enormous chasm of power that separates grown-ups and young people ... The young,

especially under the circumstances of being interviewed by an outsider are guarded, cautious.”

The same observation was made by Siririka (2007: 41) who stated that children attending a rural school in the Omaheke region of Namibia “are not used talking to strangers. They were shy and they could not articulate easily,” even though they were invited to enter into a dialogue in their mother tongue by Siririka who is a speaker of the same tongue.

We repeatedly had similar encounters in many Namibian schools. Students were shy and hardly vocal. In the northern regions almost no questions were asked, whether a mother tongue interpreter was present or not. Our efforts to relax the students and to ensure understanding were only partially successful. Shyness and possibly also because there were hardly any readers in most of the poorer rural schools inhibited respondents to enter into a dialogue with the research team. It was thus decided that interviews at that early stage of the research would not add much value to the study.

The research by Thorne, Ferguson, Siririka and also by us, showed that the adult status and “strangeness” of interviewers were the main factors of inhibited behaviour among children from poorer educational and socio-economic backgrounds rather than racial differences.

During the research process, researchers realized that, even if limited to a few schools, the conducting of interviews at a later stage would add a valuable dimension to the research, especially in elaborations on reasons why options of preference in the questionnaire were chosen. Therefore a semi-structured interview guide was designed and implemented at the end of the data collection period with Grade 6 students at four schools. The researchers decided to interview *readers* only (see Section 8). To interview non-readers about their reading preferences would just have repeated some of the problems of the pilot study. It would have rendered either no information or useless information and an open invitation for the social desirability factor to come into play again.

3.4 Sampling

3.4.1 Population validity

According to Huysamen (1998: 37) “Population validity refers to the extent to which results obtained of a sample of individuals may be generalized to the population to which the research hypothesis applies The degree of population validity depends exclusively on how representative the sample is of the population from which it has been obtained.”

Muijs (2011: 33) elaborates as follows: “The population is the group you want to generalise your findings to ... In most cases we do not have the resources to study the whole population, and will need a sample. It is important to remember that we can only generalise to a population we have actually sampled from In order for us to be able to generalise, we need to have an *unbiased* sample of the population we are studying, and not skewed towards one group or another.”

The population for the study (as in 2012) was 55 422 Grade 6 students in 1515 schools in the 13 regions of Namibia, studying 13 mother tongues or local languages (see Section 1.1).

3.4.2 Multitype sampling for the study

Huysamen (1998: 40 - 43), Muijs (2011: 36), Kothari (2004: 15 - 17), Black (1993/2003: 118-121) and Welman et al. (2005: 68) present information on the various types of sampling that may be used to select a sample of a given population.

These are random sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling, area sampling, judgment sampling, convenience sampling, quota sampling and purposive sampling.

Multi-type or mixed sampling was used for the study. Kothari (p.16) opines that “In practice, several of the methods of sampling described ... may well be used in the same study in which case it can be called mixed sampling.”

Random sampling was not chosen for three reasons: Firstly, the population of students in Grade 6 schools in Namibia is too large to compile a sampling list of all. Secondly, the population is also too heterogeneous as it is composed of (Muijs p. 40) “non-overlapping subpopulations or strata which differ from one another” as regards the fact that some schools are well-resourced, others are reasonably resourced and others poorly resourced. Other differences are also that different schools teach different languages; a certain percentage of schools are urban while the majority is rural; the socio-economic status of the population in the 13 regions varies. Simple random sampling would have been (p. 41) “unwise ... as it will ignore the differences among such clearly discernable populations.” A third reason for not using random sampling was that it could render ‘grey average results’ not similar to any of the strata of the population and not even typical of the population as a whole. It would have been impossible to make specific recommendations on the basis of ‘grey averages’ for the improvement of the diverse situations in which Namibian schools find themselves.

Primary sampling was based on geographic, linguistic and demographic considerations. The following sampling methods were applied for the study:

1. Area sampling: Seven out of the 13 regions (as in 2012) were chosen to include regions from the north, the south, the east and the centre of Namibia. The seven regions were, Khomas, Hardap, Omaheke, Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Kavango and Caprivi.

the Kavango and Caprivi regions as these were the official areas and names during data collection in 2012.

2. Linguistic sampling: In each of the seven chosen regions, at least one of the six main local language groups had to be the dominant language, which is also taught to Grade 6 students in the schools, i.e. in diminishing order of speakers: Oshiwambo, Khoekhoegowab, Afrikaans, Otjiherero, Rukangwali and Silozi.

Schools were thus selected that offer these languages as a subject in Grade 6 in addition to English.

Caprivi is included because Silozi is the dominant school language. Kavango is included because Rukwangali is the dominant school language.

Ohangwena is included because mostly Oshikwanyama (Oshiwambo language variant) is spoken.

Oshikoto is included because it is predominantly Oshindonga-speaking (Oshiwambo language variant) while the regions, Oshana and Omusati (where Oshindonga is also dominant) are excluded.

Hardap is chosen (and Karas is excluded) because the dominant languages are Afrikaans and Khoekhoegowab, both as home languages and as school subjects.

Omaheke is included because Khoekhoegowab and Otjiherero are dominant. Afrikaans is also widely spoken but will be tested in other regions.

Khomas is included for Afrikaans and Otjiherero. Although other languages are spoken, these languages are included in other regions. (Erongo and Kunene and Otjozondjupa are excluded because the dominant languages will be tested in other regions).

3. Demographic (urban/rural) sampling: According to statistics from the Ministry of Education, the great majority of Namibian schools are situated in the rural areas. This does not reflect the trend towards urbanization of the total population since independence. While more than 70% of all Namibian primary schools are situated in the rural areas and less than 30% in the urban areas, the 2011 census indicated that 58%

of the population lives in the rural areas and 42% in urban areas. Many children of city parents are visiting rural schools because there is a shortage of schools in the towns and cities.

For the pilot study we used the urban/rural balance of the 2011 census of 60:40 which could be considered as having been demographically the correct choice for the study. The insight that this does not reflect the geographical reality of Namibian schools only came to us after the pilot study. We therefore opted to use the statistics of the Ministry of Education and selected schools according to the proportion of 70% rural and 30% urban. Another important consideration for us was that the 36 schools chosen should not for convenience sake, be chosen mainly in urban areas, even if it should entail extensive traveling, if needs be, even to remote areas.

4. Quota sampling: A total of 200 Grade 6 respondents in 3 to 5 schools from each of the seven regions were selected. This rendered 1402 respondents in 36 schools. The 200 respondents were not chosen on the basis of gender. In Namibia the gender balance in Grade 6 is 50% girls - 50% boys and interestingly, the sample reflected this balance exactly without any deliberate effort to achieve the 50% girls - 50% boys balance. This accidental occurrence speaks for a reasonably to high likelihood that the sample is representative.

5. Stratified sampling: According to Kothari (pp. 15 - 17) a population group that is not homogeneous may be "stratified into non overlapping subpopulations or strata." As there are vast differences in the availability of resources among Namibian schools, we wanted to see if there were more readers in well-resourced schools than in poorly resourced schools. We also wanted to gather information on the socio-economic conditions under which the student respondents were living.

As it would have been futile to gather this information on the resources in the school from the students, it was decided after the pilot study to design a separate questionnaire for the Grade 6 teachers of schools selected for the students' survey. A sub-study was conducted with 88 teachers (language teachers and library teachers in the 36 schools). The additional data on the availability of resources in the schools and its surroundings

as well as the socio-economic status of the students, together with the observational research outcomes, enabled us to classify the 36 schools in three groups or strata: poorly resourced schools, reasonably resourced schools and well-resourced schools. Final stratification of the schools involved took place after data collection for the teachers' survey as the state of resources in the schools chosen for the study was based on the advice of the regional directors before data collection and was only provisional.

The results of the students' survey on the number of readers were correlated with the three strata that were identified through the teachers' survey to establish if there is a relationship between reading and the state of "resourcedness" of a school. This process produced interesting results on reading (see Section 7).

According to Black (2003: 64) "Correlational studies are asking about the nature of a relationship and whether it exists, with no pretence to establish causality ... [These studies] are *ex post facto*." He defines *ex post facto* as systematic empirical inquiry in which there is no "direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred ..." (p. 70).

Black (p. 68) believes that "Correlational studies have great potential and correlations are widely used to describe the outcomes of surveys, since they are based on a single sample". Welman et al (2005: 234) states that "Correlations estimate the extent to which the changes in one variable are associated with changes in the other variable ... A positive correlation reflects a direct relationship." He also stresses that correlational relationships are not causal, i.e. "we are usually not able to infer that one event is caused by another event" (p. 235).

6. Judgment sampling: As it was unknown at the time of data collection which schools belonged to which resource stratum; the seven regional directors for educational and cultural matters were asked to provide a list of schools representing each of the three strata. Kothari (2004: 15) defines judgment sampling as being based on the judgment of the researcher. In this study the regional directors exercised judgment while classifying schools in their respective regions as well-resourced, reasonably resourced and poorly

resourced. This initial classification of schools was however, as mentioned under point 5 above, considered as provisional only. Final classification was based on the outcome of the sub-study which was by means of the separate survey for the teachers. Their questionnaire specifically gauged the state of resources available in the school and the environment surrounding the school.

7. Convenience sampling: From the lists compiled by the regional directors, 3 - 5 schools per region that could be most conveniently reached were chosen but taking care to include schools representing all the different strata on the list for each region. Some rural regions, however, did not contain any well-resourced schools (see Section 4).

3.5 The students' questionnaire

3.5.1 The questionnaire of the Roehampton Institute, London, UK as adapted by UNISA

As the main tool chosen for data collection was a survey by means of a questionnaire, it was crucial that it be properly designed. The Department of Information Science, UNISA, was given permission by the Roehampton Institute, London, to use the five questionnaires the Institute had developed for use in a children's readership study in Britain. These questionnaires were tailored to two broad age groups, namely students in Grades 5-7 and students in Grades 8-10. For the first group, two questionnaires were prepared and for the second group, three.

UNISA adapted the questionnaires to fit as far as was possible, the multicultural, multilingual and multi-confessional reality of African respondents. The Namibian UNAM/NCBF team of researchers was invited to consider the adapted Roehampton questionnaires for use during the Namibian children's readership study.

The Namibian team however, decided not to use these questionnaires, mainly for the following reason: The Roehampton questionnaires, even though efforts had been made to adapt them for use in Africa, were still very much tailored to respondents who are mainly mother tongue English speakers or otherwise are very proficient in English, living in an environment surrounded by books and printed media.

The five questionnaires

1. did not adequately take the book-poor reality of the Namibian rural areas into consideration;
2. required a too high level of proficiency in the English language;
3. contained too many questions (Questionnaire 1 contained 101 questions, Questionnaire 2, 119 questions and Questionnaire 3, 118 questions);
4. contained within most questions, too many Likert-type options to indicate variances of the degree to which an action is performed or an attitude is adhered to.

3.5.2 The Namibian questionnaire: Lessons learnt through the pilot study

We decided to design our own questionnaire but that a pilot study should be undertaken to enable us to make changes before launching the main study, if necessary. Huysamen (1998: 13) states that “often unforeseen problems crop up ... which may necessitate modification to the original research plan. In some instances modification may be so drastic that the entire project has to be repeated from scratch.” This we wanted to avoid at all costs.

3.5.2.1 Social desirability

The outcome of the pilot study showed that social desirability was such a huge problem that it compromised the reliability of the pilot study results.

Black (2003: 223) defines social desirability as follows: “Faking results in the respondent answering in a way that he or she thinks will make a good or bad overall impression ... Social desirability results in answers that are commensurate with what the subjects think they should say, rather than what they feel.” Huisamen (1998: 123) states that “Participants may deliberately provide incorrect answers with a view to putting themselves into a positive or negative light ... The consequences ... may vary from the withholding of co-operation to deliberate deception.”

Nederhof (1984: 264) defines the phenomenon as follows: “Social desirability reflects the tendency on behalf of the subjects to deny socially undesirable traits and to claim

socially desirable ones, and the tendency to say things which place the speaker in a favourable light.” He further opines that “norms are important determinants of socially desirable behaviour, as they determine what constitutes a good impression in a given situation.” McKenna (2001: 139), as quoted by Lukhele (2013: 4), supports this view by stating that one’s attitudes towards reading are influenced by “one’s ‘beliefs about cultural norms concerning reading (conditioned by one’s desire to conform to those norms)’.”⁴

Reading appears to have a high status in Namibia even though a large portion of the population did not complete primary education and all circumstantial evidence and related studies show that they are not likely to be avid readers or may even not read at all (see Sections 2.1 and 2.3). Literacy statistics for Namibia derived from the 2001 census showed that 80% of the population was literate (Namibia Vision 2030. 2004: 91). These statistics should be viewed with caution however, as respondents were not tested to establish if they could read. They were merely asked what their educational level was and if they could read, i.e. the method of information gathering about reading was *self-statement*. But even if a reading test had been included in the census, it cannot be assumed that everybody who is literate actually reads. Recent statistics claim a 89% literacy rate in Namibia.

The young respondents of the pilot study were clearly aware of the status of being regarded as a reader in their culture and thus presented themselves as such. Their attitude towards reading did not reflect their true behaviour. Lukhele (2013: 1) reports that Mathewson (2004) in his model of reading attitudes “asserts that a positive reading attitude does not guarantee actual reading behaviour.” He [Mathewson] suggests that an additional factor is needed to be a reader: the *intention to read* ... “one’s attitude may be positive but one may lack the intention to read, resulting in non-reading behaviour being exhibited.”⁵

Huysamen (p. 123) opines that “Because the constructs in the social and behavioural sciences often involve human attributes, asking research participants directly about them, ... the reliability and validity of the measurements obtained in this fashion would be highly suspect ...” The question for us therefore was how much information should be divulged to respondents in order to curb social desirability? Black (p. 223) states that

“it has been suggested that the purpose of the instrument should be disguised though the ethics of this is questionable” (see Section 3.7).

The outcome of the pilot study confirmed our doubts about whether self-statement about reading could provide reliable results. 88% of the 226 respondents stated that they were readers. The problem was that they were informed before the questionnaires were distributed what the study was about. But even if no information on the nature of the study had been divulged beforehand, a quick paging through the 10 page questionnaire would have shown that it was all about reading.

In the light of the field observations that revealed a book-deprived environment in which most schools were operating and by the way many students were struggling to make sense out of the simple questions of the questionnaire, there was reason to suspect that most respondents did not answer truthfully. Our suspicion was also corroborated by the three SACMEQ studies which found that the majority of the Grade 6 Namibian students cannot read for meaning. Since such a strong possibility existed that the social desirability factor influenced responses, it was decided that the results of the pilot study were not trustworthy enough to draw any conclusions as regards reading behaviour and preferences.

One of the greatest concerns of the research thus was trustworthiness. The quality of the information gathered would depend on how truthful respondents would be about their reading habits and preferences.

3.5.2.2 Design of the main study questionnaire

The challenge was to design an instrument for the main study that would minimise the social desirability factor and thereby provide more trustworthy results than the outcome of the pilot study. A major change was that no indication was left on the front page of what the questionnaire was about. The top heading only contained the wording, UNISA/UNAM/NCBF RESEARCH PROJECT with a smiley below it.

Another major change was that we decided not to distribute the whole questionnaire at the beginning of the session but to split the questionnaire into two parts. Part 1 consisted of only five questions, through three of which it would be possible to classify a respondent as a reader or a non-reader.

These questions were so neutral that respondents would not be able to tell what the whole study was about. One question required respondents to make a list of the activities they engage in during their free time after school, during the week-ends and school holidays. The purpose of this question was to see if respondents would spontaneously list reading.

Another question required the ranking of a list of six free time activities which inter alia included reading; the purpose of which was to see if reading would receive a ranking of at least four out of six.

Lastly there was a matching question whereby respondents were tested if they could identify a storybook, a book of facts (non-fiction), a magazine, a newspaper and a comic book. Respondents had to score at least 60% for the three questions to be classified as a reader.

When the second part of the questionnaire was handed out, respondents were able to see that the research was about reading, but if they thereupon didn't tell the truth, it would not influence the study as the classification of readers and non-readers would have been done on the basis of the three questions in Part 1.

Part 2 nevertheless also contained four distractor questions that were not coded for data input. These questions were included to shift the focus to activities other than reading, e.g. about the kind of chores respondents have to do around the home, the TV programmes they like, their sports activities, etc.

Although all respondents, the readers as well as the non-readers completed Part 2, only the Parts 2 of *the readers* were coded and used for data input.

The design, small-group testing before and after the pilot study of the new instrument took one year to complete before the research team felt ready to launch the main study

(see Töttemeyer et al. 2014: Forthcoming [pp.16 - 20. Page numbers of MS]). We believe that the social desirability factor has been reduced to a large extent by the final questionnaire and that the main study outcome of 22% readers is trustworthy (see Section 5).

3.5.2.3 Linguistic factors

Already from the outset it was decided that it would not be possible to prepare questionnaires in twelve Namibian languages as data analysis would be too difficult. As all Namibian Grade 6 students in government schools are already in their third year of English medium instruction, the decision was made that the language medium of the questionnaire would be English. The pilot study however, allowed that the open questions could be answered in a language of the respondent's choice as it was felt that respondents, even though they might be able to tick off answers to questions put in simple English, they might not be able to answer the open questions which require writing in English. Initially, researchers planned to make use of translators (colleagues or students) to assist where open questions were answered in the various Namibian languages. Most respondents however, refrained from answering the open questions and the written answers of the few who did, were mostly in English. Many of the answers, both in English and in the mother tongues did not make sense. It was thereupon decided to remove the mother tongue option for the main study.

3.5.2.4 Contents of the final questionnaire for Grade 6 students

The questionnaire, to be answered anonymously, consisted of 25 questions. Excluding the four distractor questions only 21 questions were used for data capturing.

Part 1 (Appendix 3)

1. General information (name of school, age and gender of respondent)
2. Language questions (mother tongue, languages receiving tuition in)
3. Three questions to classify respondents as readers or non-readers (see Section 3.5.2.2 above)

4. A question whereby readers could be classified as readers of mainly fiction or non-fiction

Part 2 (Appendices 5 and 7)

5. Reading questions (choosing books and themes or topics in books, language of books chosen, use of other reading materials, other activities e.g. watching television, listening to the radio instead of reading books)

6. Encouragement to read (by parents, teachers)

7. Availability of reading materials

8. Listening to story reading and reading to others by respondent

9. Listening to storytelling and telling stories to others by respondent

The majority were simple questions that could be marked off with an X. There were dichotomous/binary Yes/No questions, one ranking question, one matching question, multiple choice questions, i.e. alternative answers listed, and some open-ended/free-response questions that required writing. The latter were necessary as it was not always possible to think of and enlist all the possible reasons why children don't read, what they do with their free time, etc. We simplified the Likert-type options of certain questions to "Often," "Sometimes" or "Never" for the pilot study but ultimately removed all Likert-type questions for the main study as they were still too confusing for many respondents.

3.6 The teachers' questionnaire (Appendix 9)

This questionnaire was drafted after the pilot study but before the main study was launched when it became clear that more background information was necessary. The language medium was English. The respondents were the Grade 6 language teachers and/or the library teacher/s of every target school.

The questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

1. General information: name and location of school, gender of respondent, mother tongue of respondent, number of students in the school

2. Language questions: language/s the respondent is teaching and for how many years, to how many students, and for how many is it their mother tongue
3. School library: number and language medium of books, non-book materials, borrowing, management of the library
4. Classroom collections: similar questions as in 3
5. Teaching materials used: textbooks, readers, storybooks, copied pages
6. Sources from which students can get reading materials in and outside the school
7. Distance of the nearest library from the school
8. Situation of the school e.g. urban/rural
9. Whether the school has the following materials and amenities: educational materials, facilities and equipment also amenities such as running, drinking water, electricity, toilet type
10. Whether students have school books and storybooks for home use
11. Parent involvement in the school and whether parents help with homework
12. Whether students have enough food to eat at home, how they travel to school or how far they walk, in what kind of housing they live
13. How far the nearest sjebeen is to the school
14. Degrees of affluence or poverty of parents
14. Storytelling in the school and in the home environment

The answers to the teachers' questionnaire enabled us to do the final classification of the 36 schools into three groups: well-resourced, reasonably resourced and poorly resourced. This was needed for correlational studies.

3.7 Ethical matters

The information given to the respondents was that the study was about the after school activities they engage in, which was indeed also gauged by Part 1 of the questionnaire. It would have defeated the purpose of the study if more specifics had been divulged before data collection. By the time Part 2 was handed out, it was in any case clear that the study was mainly about reading.

Huysamen (1998: 180 - 181) considers whether it is unethical to withhold the true nature of the research from the participants and argues that in some cases it would “undermine the purpose of some research projects” (p. 181) if respondents were informed beforehand. The school principals and teachers were however, fully informed. Researchers furthermore adhered to the ethical requirements of anonymity and confidentiality.

Permission for the research was obtained in writing from the Namibian Ministry of Education. Schools were identified and contacted in collaboration with regional offices. The researchers contacted the school both telephonically and in writing, explaining the nature of the research. Appointments were then made for a visit. When arriving at a school, the researchers first met with the principal or his representative and discussed the aims of the visit. Before the questionnaires were administered, students and teachers were informed that the questionnaires were not tests, that there were no wrong or right answers, but that primarily the opinions of respondents were sought. After completing the questionnaire, students were given a pencil and a sweet for their willingness to cooperate. (No prior information was given that they will be rewarded). The NCBF also donated a storybook in the local language to the school as a token of appreciation. Thank you letters were sent to all participating schools and authorities who were involved in the selection of schools.

3.8 Reliability

According to Muijs (2011: 71) “Reliability refers to the extent to which test scores are free of measurement error.” Punch (2009: 244) indicates that reliability basically refers to consistency – “consistency over time (or stability) and internal consistency”.

Various versions of the questionnaire were tested in pre- and post-pilot small-group sessions, in an attempt to address consistency over time. Internal consistency was addressed by adapting the questionnaire to finally include 3 items which all worked in the same direction – to identify *readers*. No standardised tests were done to measure reliability. We further strengthened reliability and validity by triangulation, piloting, anonymity as suggested by Lambert (2012: 137 – 139).

3.9 Limitations to the main study

1. Teachers' qualifications are an important factor of the educational success of their students as well as how well and how much the students read. The teachers' questionnaire however, did not gauge the specific language qualifications of teacher respondents as it was considered as being a too sensitive issue. General information on whether language teachers are qualified to teach the languages they teach was procured from the Ministry of Education. Tables are available that give information for every Grade and every language.

2. Parents were not used for data collection on their qualifications, the role they play in the education of their children or their socio-economic situation. The needed data were gathered mainly from the teachers and also from other studies by means of triangulation as there are several studies that researched these aspects.

3. Data collection was done in seven of the 13 regions of Namibia. The geographical distribution of the chosen regions included the south, north, east and centre of Namibia. The sample was selected to be as representative as possible, as regards the coverage of the six main languages taught in the schools and the rural/urban distribution of the schools. The gender balance of boys/girls was not deliberately selected before data collection but the outcome tallied 100% with the real situation of 50% - 50%. This shows that the sample was not skewed.

4. Shyness among students was a real challenge. It is possible that some students misunderstood some questions but were too shy to ask. It was difficult to encourage the students in their classes to ask questions and to respond orally to questions or react spontaneously. Using teachers to translate into the mother tongue did not really change the situation. It is possible that more information could have been gathered if there had been no shyness. A possible reason for this reticence is traditional African culture that does not encourage free conversation between adults and children and particularly not with strangers (see section 3.3.3). It was possible though to conduct interviews at a later stage after the *readers* had been identified. The interviews with individual students or small groups of 2-3 students rendered useful information on reading preferences.

Unfortunately the interviewees came mainly from well-resourced, urban schools. It would have been interesting to interview some students from poorly resourced schools in remote rural areas but these respondents were the very ones who do not read and were too shy to be interviewed. This was an unfortunate limitation to the study.

5. Social desirability was a major limitation to the pilot study but no major limitation to the main study. After drastic modification of the final questionnaire, the possibility of social desirability featured in a minority of the questions only. In the discussion of these questions it is emphatically stated that those results should be viewed with caution.

6. Although researchers were aware of certain limitations attached to observational methods and interviews, these data were nevertheless essential to complement the statistical data in order to facilitate full understanding of the research context (see 3.3).

Notes

1. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. 2000. *Research methods in Education*. (5th ed.). London: Routledge/Falmer.
2. Anderson, G., & Arsenault, N. 1998. *Fundamental of educational research* (2nd ed.) London: The Falmer Press.
3. Altrichter, H., Posch, P., & Somekh, B. 1993. *Teachers investigate their work: An introduction to the methods of action research*. London: Routledge.
4. McKenna, M.C. 2001. Development of reading attitudes, in Verhoeven, L. & Snow, C.E. (eds.), *Literacy and Motivation: Reading engagement in individuals and groups*, (pp. 135–158). Mahweh, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
5. Mathewson, G.C. 2004. Model of attitude influence upon reading and learning to read, in Ruddell, R.B. & Unrau, N.J. (eds.), *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*, (pp. 1431 – 1461). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

4. Teachers questionnaire

4.1 Introduction

As explained in section 3, apart from administering a questionnaire to the students, information was gathered about each school visited by means of a separate questionnaire for teachers (Appendix 9).

The information from this sub-study is presented first, as important information regarding the socio-economic situation of the schools and regions is needed against which to portray the results on reading behaviour and preferences of grade 6 students. The ideal was to let the grade 6 English teacher, the grade 6 Namibian language teacher(s) and the library teacher complete a questionnaire. Between 1 and 3 questionnaires were thus completed per school. After the visit to the school, the researchers then compiled one questionnaire as the response from the school. Where teachers differed in opinion, e.g. about the distance from the school to a library, the researchers took the response that the majority of teachers gave as the official response. The researchers also verified the responses of teachers e.g. regarding rural/urban situation of the school, with information received from the regional directors. Unfortunately at some schools, all information could not be gathered. This many a time had to do with information regarding the library, when the library teacher was not available. Some schools have no school library and Namibian government schools do not have full-time librarians. A teacher with a full teaching load of other subjects has to manage the school library as well. As a result the library is often locked during the times he/she is teaching elsewhere in the school. In some cases the language teacher was also the library teacher.

The questionnaire consisted of 27 questions. As between one and three teachers completed the questionnaire per school, there were a total of 88 questionnaires from teachers. Of these 36 were verified as the “official” response from the school. The data were thus analysed as follows:

For questions where the profile of the school was the aim, the result of the 36 official responses were used. For questions where the opinions or profiles of all teachers were

relevant, the 88 questionnaires were used. 66 of these respondents were language teachers and the rest library teachers.

The order of the questionnaire is generally followed in the discussion of findings. However, for readability, a few changes to the sequencing of questions as in the questionnaire were made.

4.2 Data of schools visited (Questions 1 and 14; part 1 of student questionnaire)

As explained in Section 3, the seven regions included in the study reflect the demography of Namibia which consists of large, sparsely populated areas, the majority of the population being rural.

As with questions to students, general information was captured with question 1: Name of school, location of school, gender and mother tongue of respondent. The size of the schools was captured in question 1.5. Two schools were very small with less than 200 students. 12 schools had between 201 and 400 students, 16 schools had 401 – 800 students, and 6 schools had more than 800 students.

Question 1.1 and 1.2 (name of school; location of school) is a repetition of data gathered from students. Teachers had to indicate the name of their school as well as their town or village. Researchers used the classification used by the EMIS statistician to classify the school as rural or urban. Furthermore, information from the teachers' questionnaire was used to ascertain their perception regarding the urban or rural status of the school.

Question 14 of the teachers questionnaire (discussed further below) was used to ascertain whether a school could be regarded as well - , reasonably, or poorly resourced.

Figure 2: List of schools, region, number of student respondents and languages taught

REGION/SCHOOL	RU*	RES#	LANGUAGE TAUGHT	STUDENT NUMBERS
OMAHEKE				

1	Otjivero PS	R	PR	KHOEKHOEGOWAB	34
2	Goeie Hoop PS	R	RR	OTJIHERERO	60
3	Nuasanabis PS	R	RR	KHOEKHOEGOWAB	66
4	Chief Hosea Kutako PS	R	PR	OTJIHERERO	40

	HARDAP				
5	JR Camm PS	R	RR	AFRIKAANS	34
	JR CammPS			KHOEKHOEGOWAB	16
6	Cambridge PS	R	WR	AFRIKAANS	33
7	DD Guibeb PS	U	RR	KHOEKHOEGOWAB	43
8	Ruimte PS	U	WR	AFRIKAANS	60
9	Witkom PS	R	PR	AFRIKAANS	12
	KAVANGO				
10	Bunya Primary	R	RR	RUKAVANGO	33
11	Nzinze Primary	R	PR	RUKAVANGO	22
12	Nkamagoro	R	RR	RUKAVANGO	42
13	HausikoWakina	R	PR	RUKAVANGO	31
14	Rudolf Ngondo	U	WR	RUKAVANGO	38
15	Kayengona	R	PR	RUKAVANGO	33
	CAPRIVI				
16	Chinchimane	R	PR	SILOZI	31
17	Batubaja	R	PR	SILOZI	28
18	Sam Nujoma	R	RR	SILOZI	45
19	Silumbi	R	PR	SILOZI	33
20	Lisikile	R	RR	SILOZI	27
21	Sachinga	R	PR	SILOZI	37
	OHANGWENA				
22	Kongo PS	R	RR	OSHIKWANYAMA	68
23	Edundja PS	R	PR	OSHIKWANYAMA	41
24	Shikudule CS	R	RR	OSHIKWANYAMA	63
25	Okelemba CS	R	PR	OSHIKWANYAMA	7
26	Oshaango CS	R	RR	OSHIKWANYAMA	26

OSHIKOTO					
27	Onashikuvu PS	U	RR	OSHINDONGA	35
28	Okangororosa CS	R	RR	OSHINDONGA	31
29	Onamupalula PS	R	PR	OSHINDONGA	28
30	Oniipa PS	R	RR	OSHINDONGA	39
31	Okalumbu CS	R	RR	OSHINDONGA	36
32	Ethikilo PS	R	PR	OSHINDONGA	31
KHOMAS					
33	Pionierspark PS	U	WR	AFRIKAANS	54
34	Al Steenkamp PS	U	WR	AFRIKAANS	44
35	Windhoek Afr PS	U	WR	AFRIKAANS	51
36	St Barnabas	U	RR	OTJIHERERO	50
28 R (Rural)		14PR			
8 U (Urban)		16RR		1402	
		6WR			

RES = RESOURCING OF SCHOOLS:

PR – POORLY RESOURCED

RR – REASONABLY RESOURCED

WR – WELL RESOURCED

*RU = RURAL (R) OR URBAN (U) SITUATION OF SCHOOLS

Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga are the two main variants of the Oshiwambo language. Ohangwena and Oshikoto regions were chosen as representatives of each main variant. In Kavango region Rukwangali, Rumanyo and Thimbukushu are spoken, indicated by Rukavango above.

Figure 3: Demographic (Rural or Urban) setting of schools

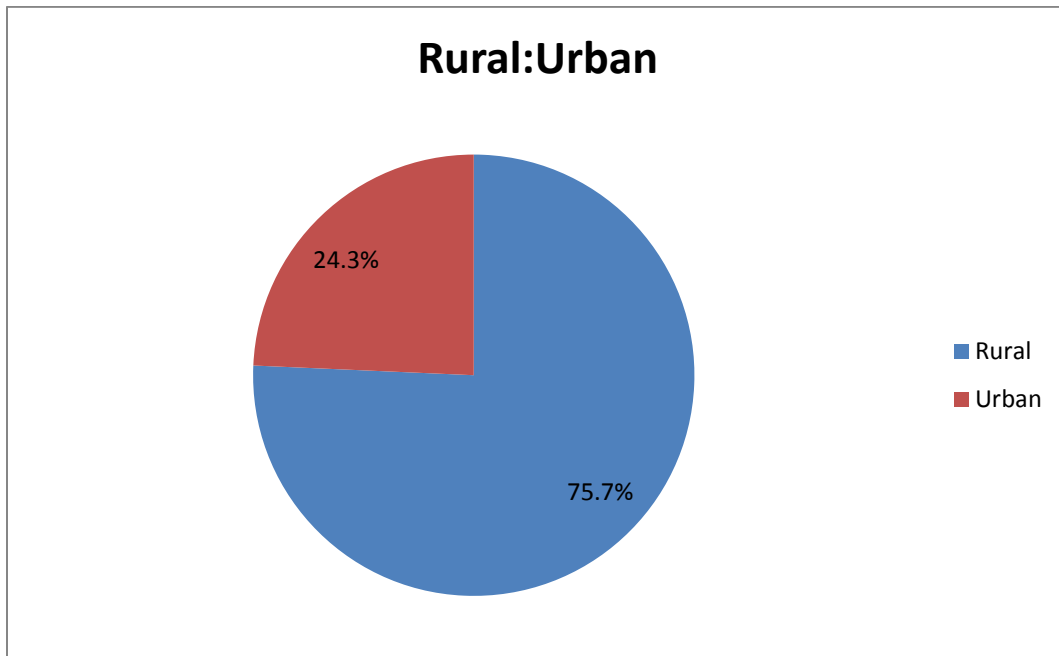
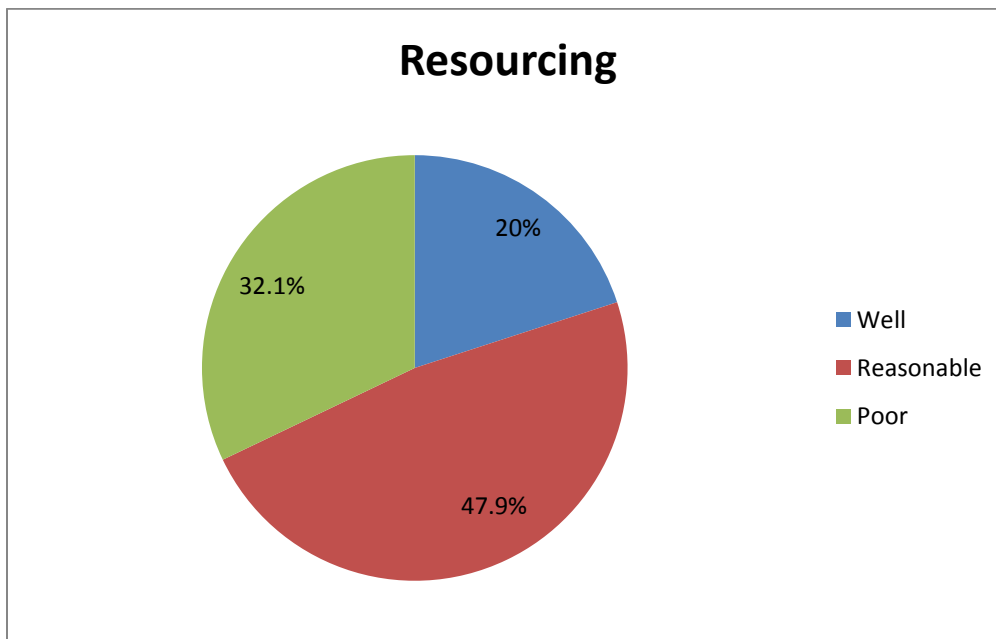


Figure 4: Degree of Resourcing of schools



From the above it is clear that a quarter of the schools selected were in the urban areas, while three quarters were rural. This is very near to the distribution of all schools within Namibia. Nearly half of the schools, according to the criteria used by the researchers,

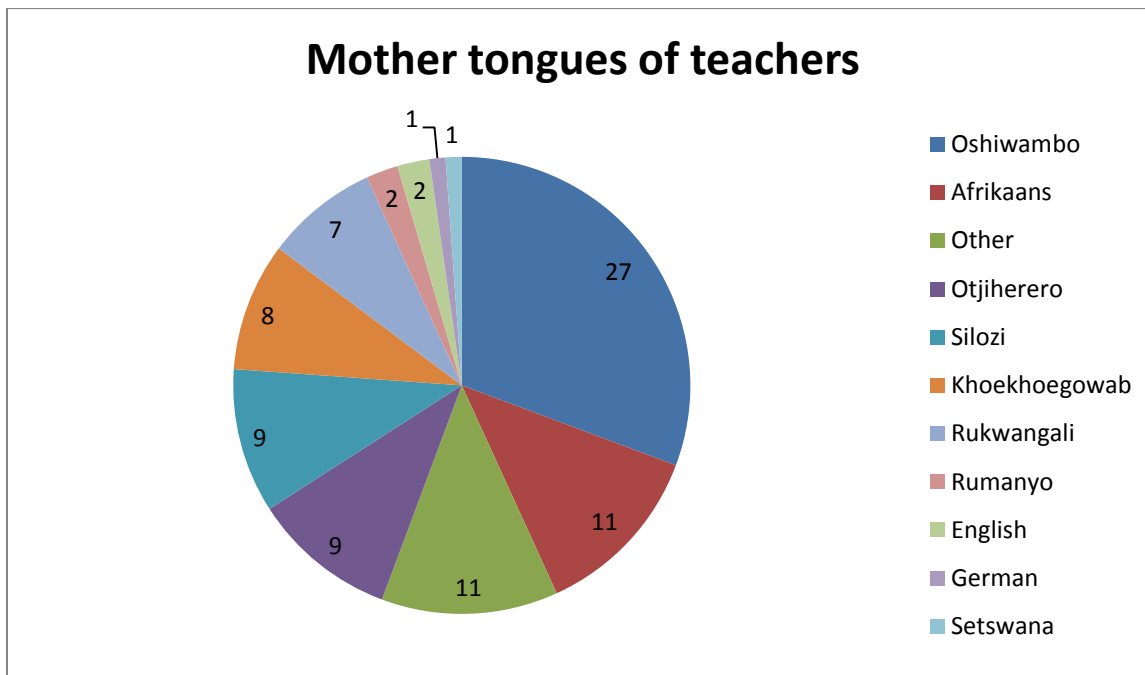
could be classified as reasonably resourced, while a third is poorly resourced. One fifth could be classified as well-resourced. Only one well-resourced school (Cambridge) was found in the rural areas.

4.3 Information on teachers included in the study (gender and mother tongue) (Question 1)

Question 1.3 ascertained the gender and 1.4 the mother tongue of the 88 teachers. 50 teachers were female and 38 were male.

The mother tongues of all teachers who completed the questionnaire are as follows:

Figure 5: Mother tongues of teachers



As can be seen in figure 5, most teachers who completed the questionnaire were Oshiwambo speaking.

4.4 Language teachers and teaching experience (Question 2)

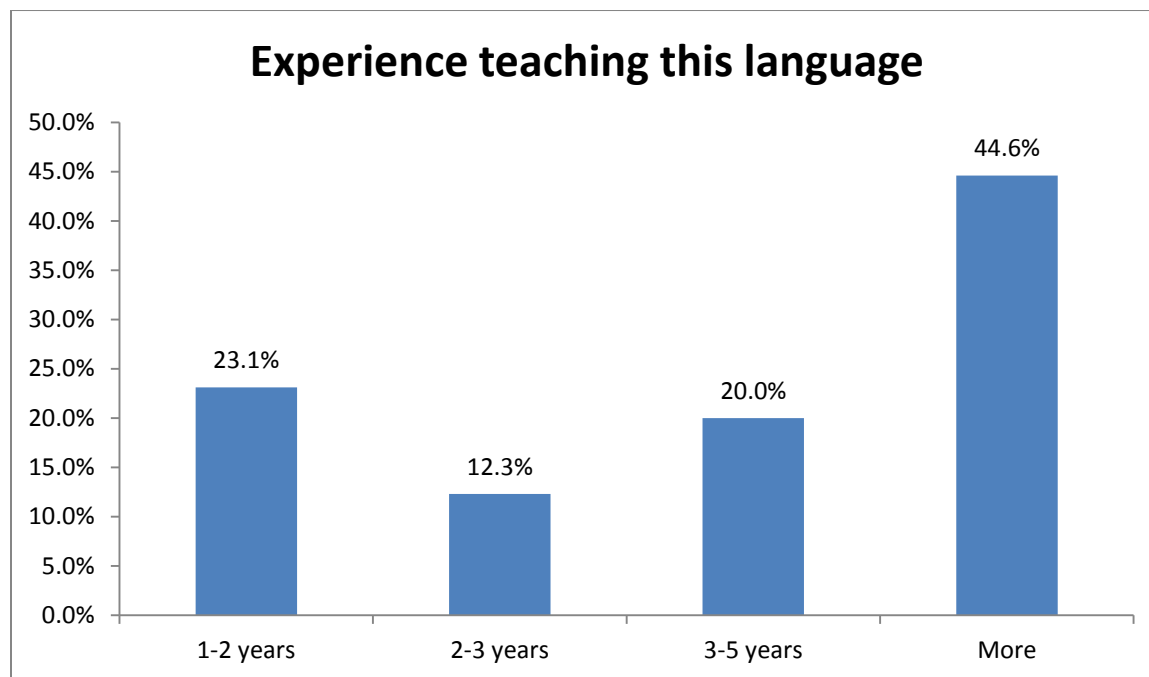
Question 2 gathered information of language teachers in general. 66 language teachers completed this question. 22 teachers did not – and thus were involved only in

the library and are teaching other subjects, or only gave information on the school (e.g. the principal).

35 of the 66 teachers taught English and of these only two were English mother tongue speakers.

Data gathered on the years teaching experience of the 66 language teachers are as follows:

Figure 6: Experience teaching this language



From the histogram above it is evident that most of the teachers of grade 6 in the schools visited had more than 5 years experience in language teaching. 32.3% had average experience ranging from 2 – 5 years. 23.1% were novice teachers with 2 years or less experience.

4.5 Libraries and library teachers (Question 3)

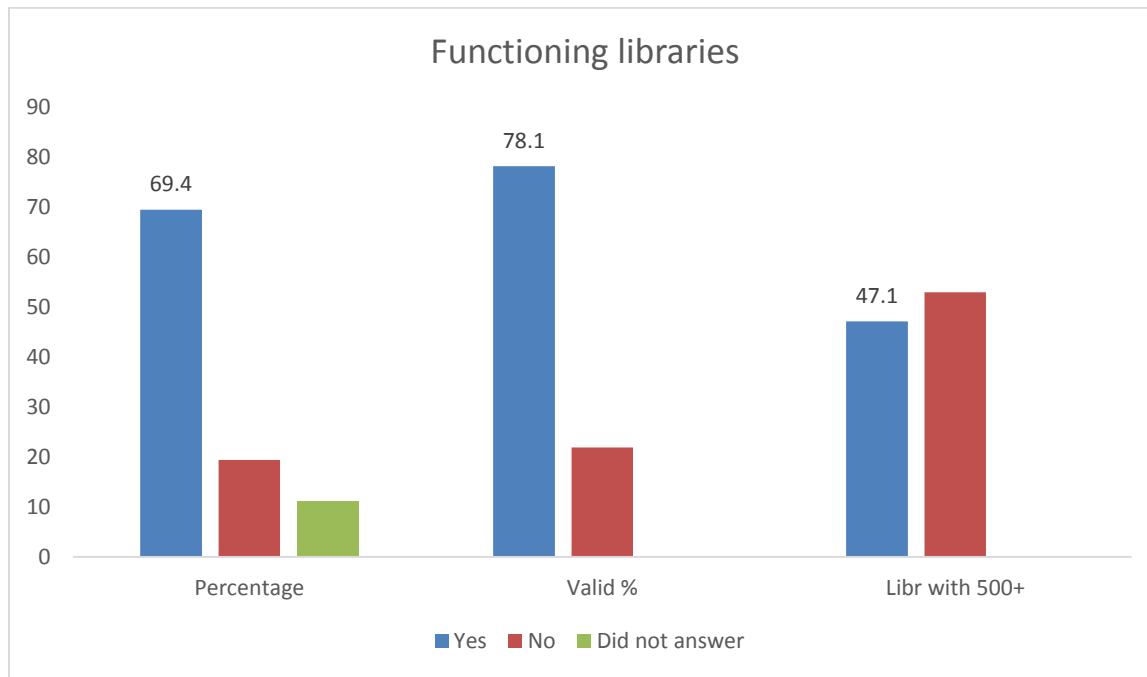
The information gathered on school libraries was sparse because many schools did not provide information. Often the library was not accessible for viewing by the researchers, and the library teacher was not available. Therefore percentages

calculated from the schools that could give information must be judged against this background.

4.5.1 Functioning libraries

Figure 7: Functioning libraries

Four schools (11.1%) did not provide information. In the figure below, three sets of data are given, depicting percentage, valid percentage and information from question 14.



Of the schools that answered, the responses were as follows:

78.1% schools (25 of 36) indicated that there is a functioning library in their school and 21.9% (7 of 36 schools) indicated that there is no functioning library. Although most schools had a room with books, the collections in some schools are very small and many could not be regarded as functional libraries. It is possible that social desirability played a role as all teachers know that a functioning school library is considered to be important. The observations and photos of every school visited (Appendix 2) were helpful to come to some kind of conclusion. This result was also compared with what was reported in question 14.7 (third set of chart), where only 47.1% of schools indicated that there is a functioning library of more than 500 books in their school. This compares better with the observations of the researchers but is still far more positive

than the 24% finding of the baseline study on Namibian libraries reported by Smith (2008).

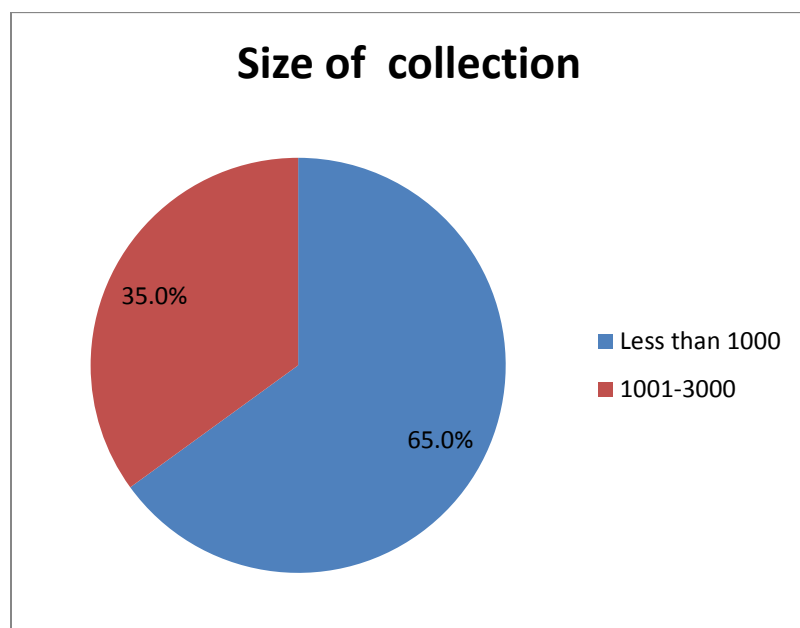
The questions that followed attempted to get more information from the schools about their collections.

The information however, was of limited use, because in most cases some schools (13 - 16, or 36.1 – 44.4%) could not provide the information. Furthermore, the information was gathered through open questions which made data capturing difficult.

4.5.2 Size of collection:

16 (44.4%) of schools did not answer. Of the schools that answered, the following information was gathered:

Figure 8: Size of collection



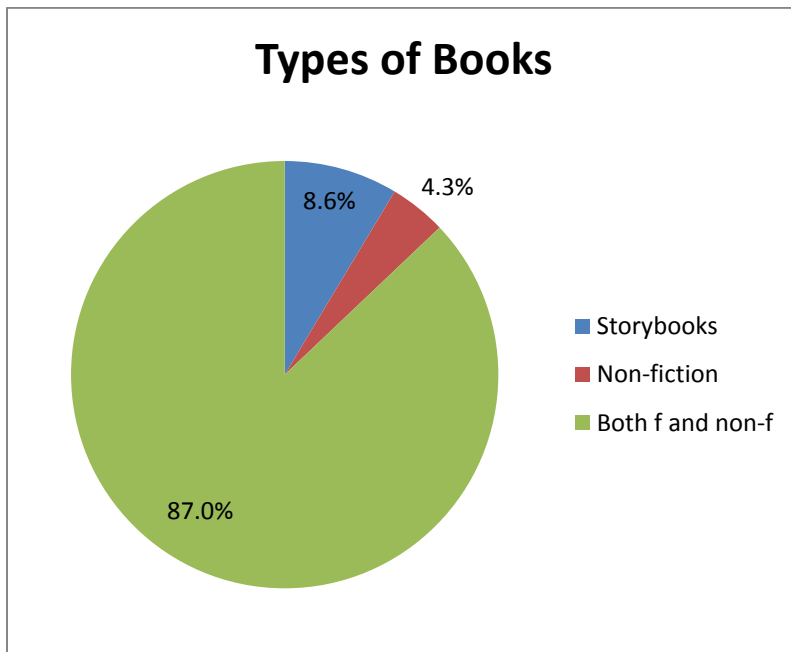
It is possible that some of these schools have no library or book collection. 13 schools (65%) had collections with less than a 1000 books, 7 schools (35 %) had between 1000 and 3000 books. A moderate yardstick for the size of a school library collection is at least 10 books per student plus the availability of non-book, print and electronic materials, audiovisual materials, and access to the internet. According to this yardstick,

the number of books in Namibian school libraries is grossly inadequate and the print and non-print materials are sadly absent in most of the schools visited.

4.5.3 Types of books

13 (36.1%) schools could not indicate whether the collections consisted of fiction and/or non-fiction. Of the schools that answered, the following information was gathered:

Figure 9: Types of books



20 schools (87%) indicated that their collections consisted of both fiction and non-fiction, while 2 schools indicated that they only have storybooks (fiction) and 1 school indicated that they only had fact books (non-fiction). The researchers could not verify these statistics and it needs to be viewed with caution.

4.5.4 Languages represented in the collection

Once again 13 (36.1%) schools did not provide information. From the 23 schools that responded, it seems as if some schools have only one language in the collection (43.5%): 3 schools have only Afrikaans books, and 7 only English books. Only 13 (56.4%) of the 23 schools that responded to the question thus indicated that they have more than one language in the collection, e.g. English and a Namibian language. This

percentage is not acceptable in a multilingual country and against the fact that all schools visited taught at least two languages in the school.

These results (of 3.3 and 3.4) are indicative of the poor state of Namibian school libraries as a school library should ideally consist of 60% non-fiction and 40% fiction and in Namibia these information materials should be in at least two languages of which one should be English and the other in the national language/s taught in the school or at least in another local language spoken in the area.

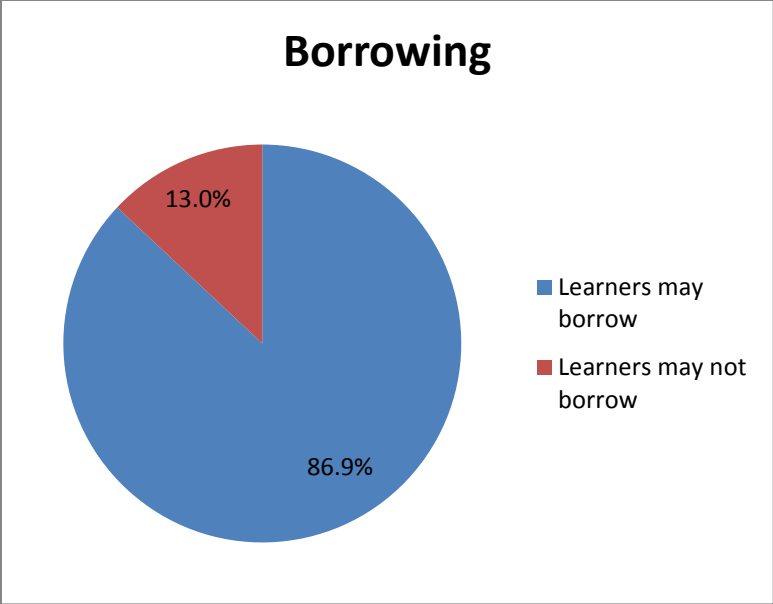
4.5.5 Other text types in the library collections

14 (38.9%) schools could not indicate whether the library had magazines, newspapers and picture stories. It is thus possible that some of these 14 schools have no functioning library or just do not have non-book print media. Of the schools that answered 95.5% (21 schools) indicated yes and only one indicated no. 95.5% of the schools that answered, thus gave an affirmative response regarding the presence of these kinds of material in their library. (The researchers could not affirm that this was indeed the case, as many a time they were not given access to the library/room with books in all schools.)

4.5.6 Borrowing

The following data was gathered:

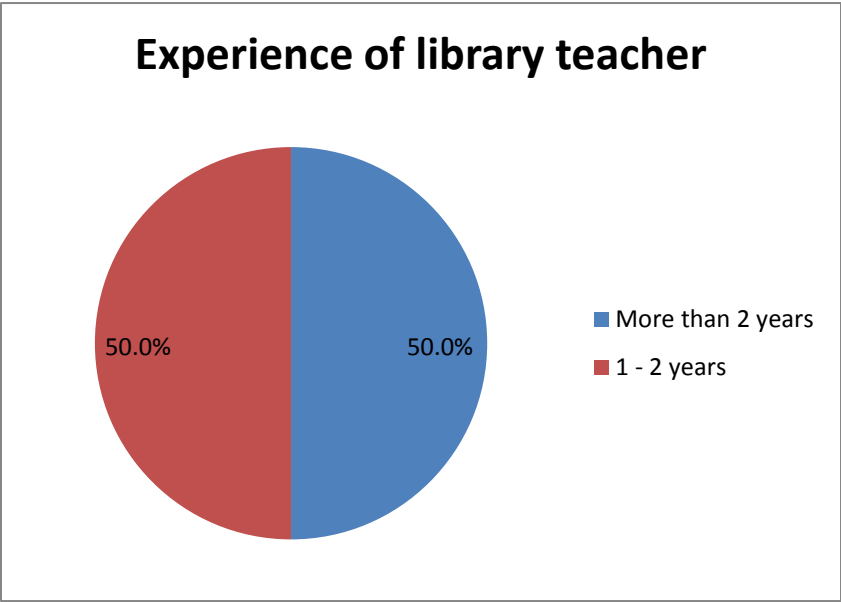
Figure 10: Borrowing system



13 schools (36.1%) did not answer. Of the schools that answered, 86.9% indicated that there is a kind of borrowing system in place, and only 13% indicated that this is not possible.

4.5.7 Experience of library teacher

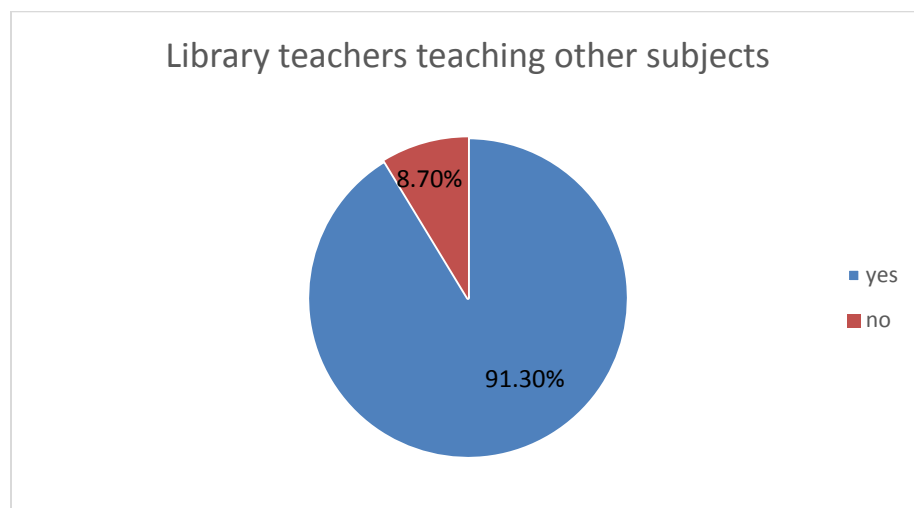
Figure 11: Experience of library teacher



14 schools (38.9%) did not provide this information. The schools that answered were equally divided: half of library teachers have more than 2, and half less than 2 years' experience.

4.5.8 Library teacher teaching other subjects

Figure 12: Library teacher teaching other subjects



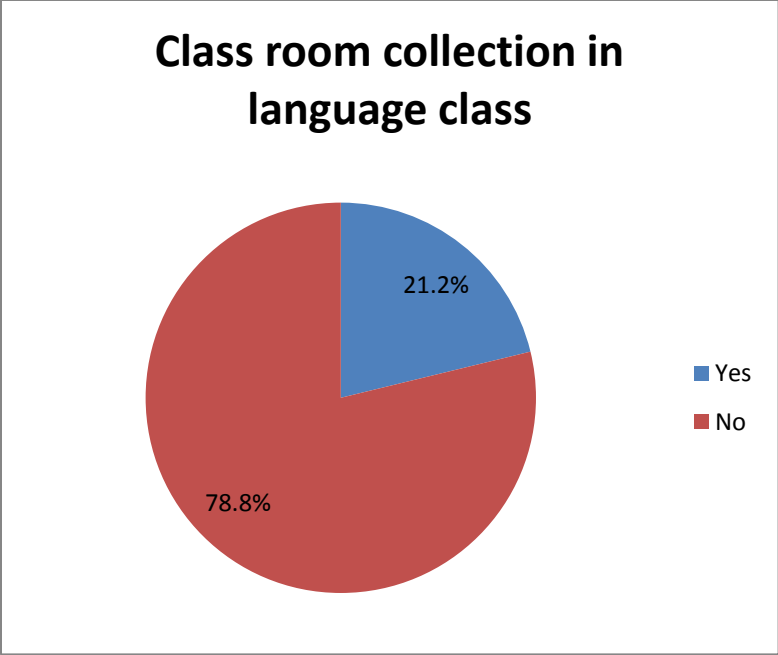
13 schools (36.1%) did not provide information. Of the schools that answered, the following data were gathered:

Most schools (91.3%) indicated that the library teacher was also teaching other subjects. This is a totally unacceptable finding as a teacher cannot manage a well-functioning library while teaching other subjects.

4.6 Classroom collections (Question 4)

In question 4 language teachers gave information on the state of classroom collections. 66 Language teachers were supposed to complete this question. However, very few teachers provided information. This fact renders the results of limited use, but is also indicative of the fact that classroom collections are not really found in language classes in the schools visited (see below).

Figure13: Classroom collections



52 of the 66 language teachers (78.8%) indicated that there are no classroom collections in their language classes while only 14 teachers (21.2%) do have class room collections. As classroom collections can be an important resource for teaching and learning in the absence of a library in a school, it is highly advisable that language teachers be supported with a small hands-on collection of storybooks.

4.6.1 Number of books

Only eight of the 14 teachers (who indicated that they have classroom collections) responded to question 4.2 that requested information on the number of books in the collection. Six of them indicated that their collection consisted of less than 50 books (also see question 14.8).

4.6.2 Kind of books in the classroom collection

Only 11 of the 14 language teachers responded to this question. 45.5 % indicated that they have only storybooks in the collection, while 55% indicated that they had both storybooks and non-fiction.

4.6.3 Languages represented in the classroom collection

Thirteen teachers responded. 61.5% had only English books and the rest indicated that it consisted of more than one language. This information is not very useful as we do not know whether these teachers are teaching English only, or more than one language.

4.6.4 Other text types

Twelve teachers responded of which 75% responded positively – that their collection included magazines, newspapers and picture stories.

4.6.5 Borrowing

Thirteen teachers answered. 76.9% indicated that students may borrow. They did not explain the borrowing system in the open question.

The absence of well-functioning school libraries and/or classroom collections is highly unsatisfactory. A reading culture cannot be promoted under these appalling circumstances. Particularly in the rural areas, school libraries are the only resources of printed information.

4.7 Materials used by language teachers (Question 5)

55 - 62 of a possible 66 language teachers responded to the different subsections of question 5:

100% of language teachers make use of textbooks

90.9% also make use of an extra reader – a book with stories

90.3% make use of extra copied pages or work sheets

98.4% make use of storybooks or pages with stories.

From the above it is clear that the teachers mostly rely on the prescribed textbooks and readers, but that they do supplement with extra material – worksheets or pages of stories. This is possibly done to compensate for the absence of classroom collections and access to a library. It is doubtful whether, even though commendable, this will do much to create a reading habit and reading culture among students.

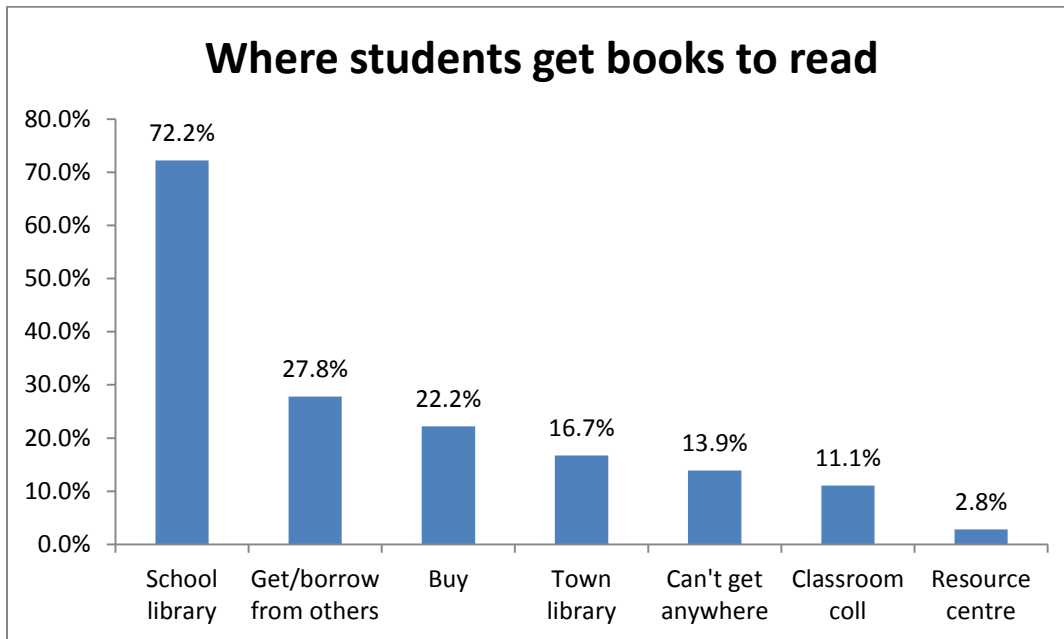
Furthermore, in question 14 the following additional information is given:

- 42.4% of schools indicated that students have school books for home studying
- 20.6% indicated that schools have enough teaching material

This information from question 14 raises doubts about the reliability of the responses of the teachers to question 5 in the teachers' questionnaire.

4.8 Where students get storybooks (Question 6)

Figure 14: Where students get books to read



The school library was indicated by most teachers (72.2%) as the place where students can get books from. Other options were indicated by far less schools: 27.8% indicated that students can borrow books, or get books as presents from friends or family members, while 22.2% indicated that books are bought for students by e.g. parents. Only 16.7% indicated that a town library is an option to obtain books, and even less indicated classroom collections (11.1%) or a nearby resource centre (2.8%) as options. 13.9% indicated that students cannot get books anywhere.

These are relevant findings, and point out how important a well-resourced and functioning library is to promote a reading culture. Five schools (13.9%) indicated that there is no place where students can get books.

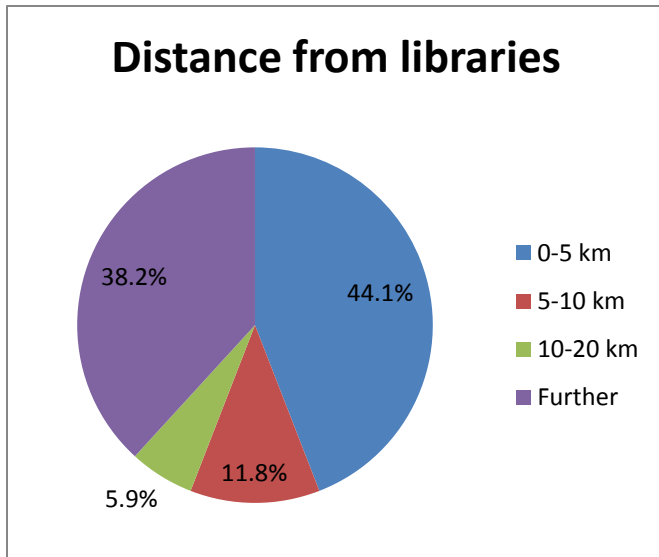
The low percentage of classroom collections tally with the information obtained in question 4.

It needs to be noted that the responses of students - *readers only* – as discussed in section 6.10, differed substantially from the responses of teachers. This was expected,

as readers (mostly from more affluent backgrounds) had more options to get books. However, the role/use of the school library as source of books as indicated by teachers and readers correlate well.

4.9 Distance from other libraries or resource centre (Question 7)

Figure 15: Distance from other libraries

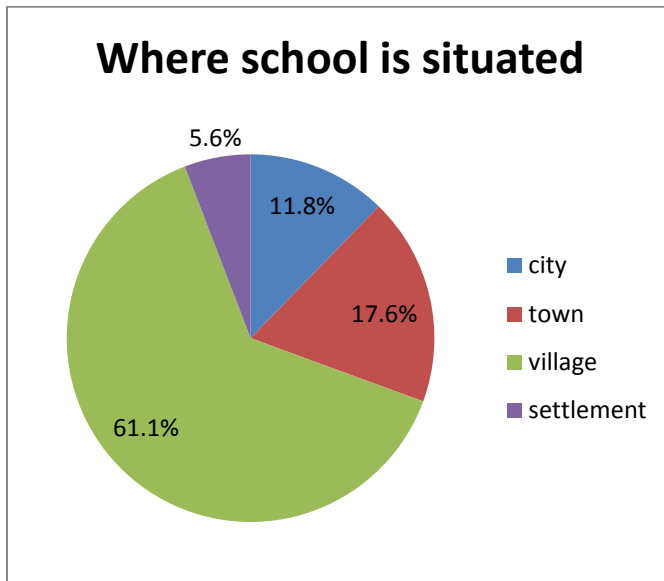


44.1% of schools are within a 5 km range from a library or resource centre. This includes urban schools in towns and cities (see figure 16 below). However, for the majority of the students, libraries and information centres other than in schools are out of range: 5.9% are between 10 and 20 km from this resource, and 11.8% between 5 and 10 km. For 38.2% of schools it is further than 20 km. These are rural schools, sometimes very far from a town.

Without a school library and a classroom collection, most of these students are cut off from the world of books.

4.10 Where school is situated (Question 8)

Figure16: Where school is situated



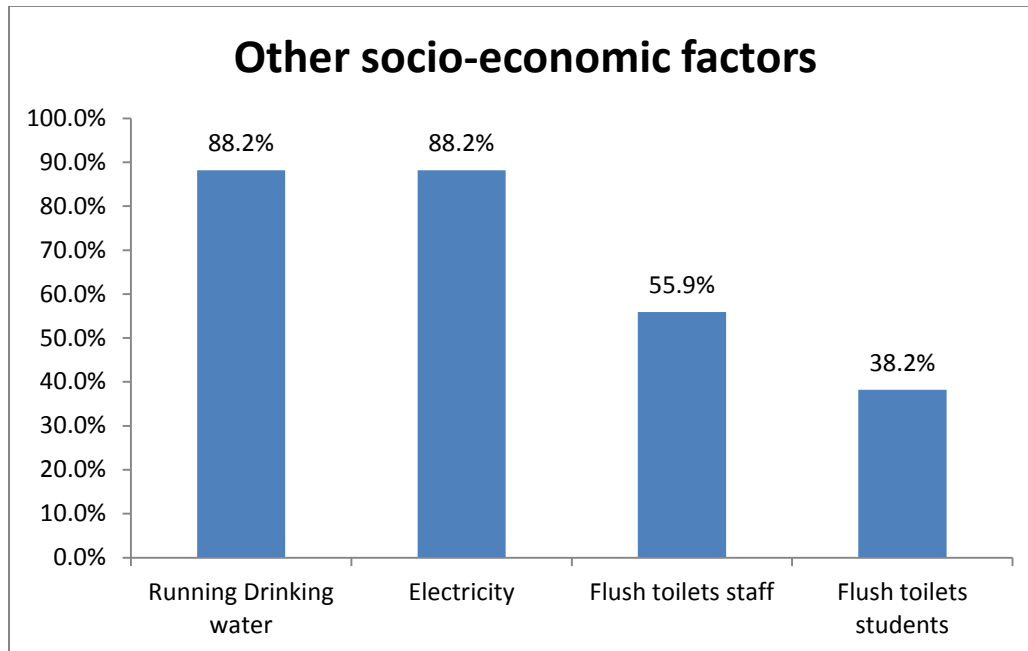
As can be seen in figure 16, most schools included in the study were situated in villages or settlements (66.7%) and the rest in towns or cities (Windhoek). The findings show that remoteness and a poor state of resourcing go hand in hand, and that two thirds of Namibian primary schools are severely deprived. This is a matter of great concern.

Questions 9 – 24 were formulated to build a profile of the school and the students in the school. It captures the socio-economic situation of the school, ranging from amenities available in the school to the involvement of parents in the school.

4.11 Other socio-economic factors (Questions 9 – 13)

Questions 9 - 13 gauged the presence of basic amenities in the schools, and should be read together with question 14.

Figure 17: Other socio-economic factors



Most schools visited had at least a tap with running drinking water, as well as electricity (88.2%). Only one school had solar power. The situation of sanitary facilities was not so positive. Flush toilets were available for staff at 55.9%, and for students at 38.2% of the schools visited. This correlates well with questions 14.1 – 14.3.

4.12 Materials, facilities and equipment – dividing schools into well-, reasonably and poorly resourced schools (Question 14)

Question 14 consisted of 25 short questions, used for verifying information given to other questions. These have been cross referenced with other questions as necessary. However, the main aim of this question was to categorize a school as well-, reasonably or poorly resourced (see also section 4.2 Figure 4). This was done after it became clear that a yardstick for such categorization did not exist in Namibia. This issue was important for the researchers, as socio-economic factors might play an important role in the reading behaviour of students.

If a school could positively respond to 0 - 8 of the questions, the school was classified as poorly resourced, a positive response to 9 – 15 questions resulted in the school being classified as reasonably resourced, and positive responses to 16 and more

questions categorized a school as well-resourced. Refer to section 4.2 (Figure 2) for this categorization.

The following figure captures the results of question 14.

Figure18: Materials, facilities and equipment at schools

Materials, facilities and equipment

	Yes	No	Tot	% Yes
14.1 Running, drinking water	30	4	34	88.2
14.2 Electricity (functioning)	30	4	34	88.2
14.3 Flush toilets for staff and learners	15	19	34	44.1
14.4 School books for all learners for home studying	14	19	33	42.4
14.5 Enough teaching materials	7	27	34	20.6
14.6 Enough class rooms	15	19	34	44.1
14.7 School library with more than 500 books	16	18	34	47.1
14.8 Classroom collection/s with more than 50 books each	4	29	33	11.8
14.9 School hall	4	30	34	11.8
14.10 Office	27	7	34	70.4
14.11 Store room	33	1	34	97
14.12 Staff room	25	9	34	73.5
14.13 Specialist room	2	32	34	5.9
14.14 Language centre	2	32	34	5.9
14.15 Telephone	25	9	34	73.5
14.16 Television	16	18	34	47.1
14.17 Photocopying machine	29	5	34	85.3
14.18 Computers for staff (working)	14	20	34	41.1
14.19 Computers for learners (working)	9	25	34	26.5
14.20 Internet access (functioning)	10	24	34	29.4
14.21 Sports equipment and facilities	19	15	34	55.9
14.22 Library/ies near the school (public/ community/church library/ies, resource centre)	19	15	34	55.9

14.23 Majority of parents help with homework	6	28	34	17.6
14.24 Majority of parents are involved in the school	10	24	34	29.4
14.25 Majority of learners have enough food to eat	14	20	34	41.1

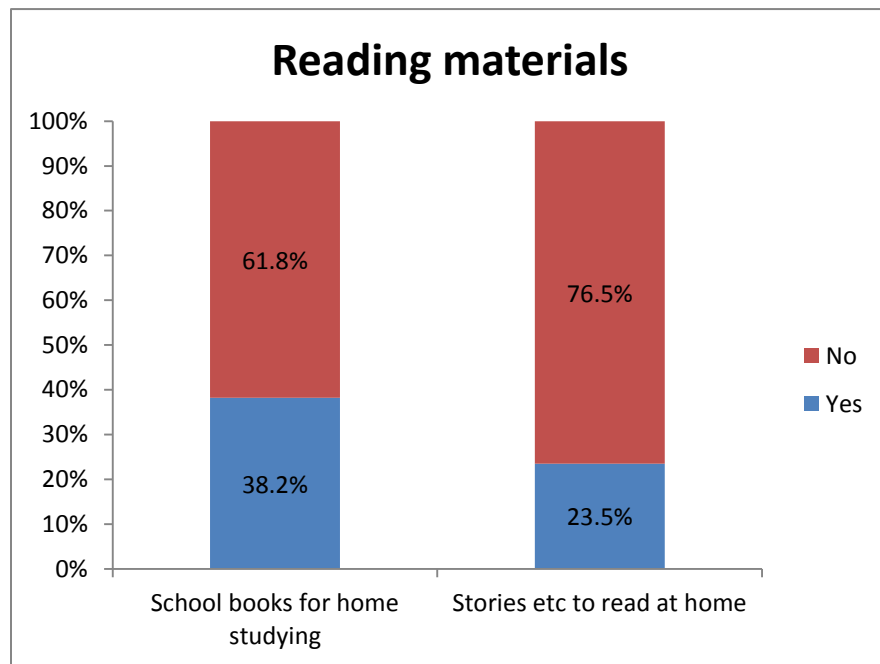
These results confirm the responses to earlier questions, especially in terms of:

- High availability of water and electricity
- Lower availability of flush toilet for students and staff
- Long distance between school and public library and resource centres
- Few well-functioning libraries at schools
- Poorly resourced libraries
- Non-availability of classroom collections in language classes
- Poor availability of material for home studying
- Poor involvement of parents with homework and involvement in the school
- Presence of hunger and poverty in communities

4.13 Study resources and parental involvement (Questions 15 – 24)

Questions 15 – 24 gauged the view of teachers regarding the availability of academic resources for students, the level of parental involvement and the general socio-economic status of parents.

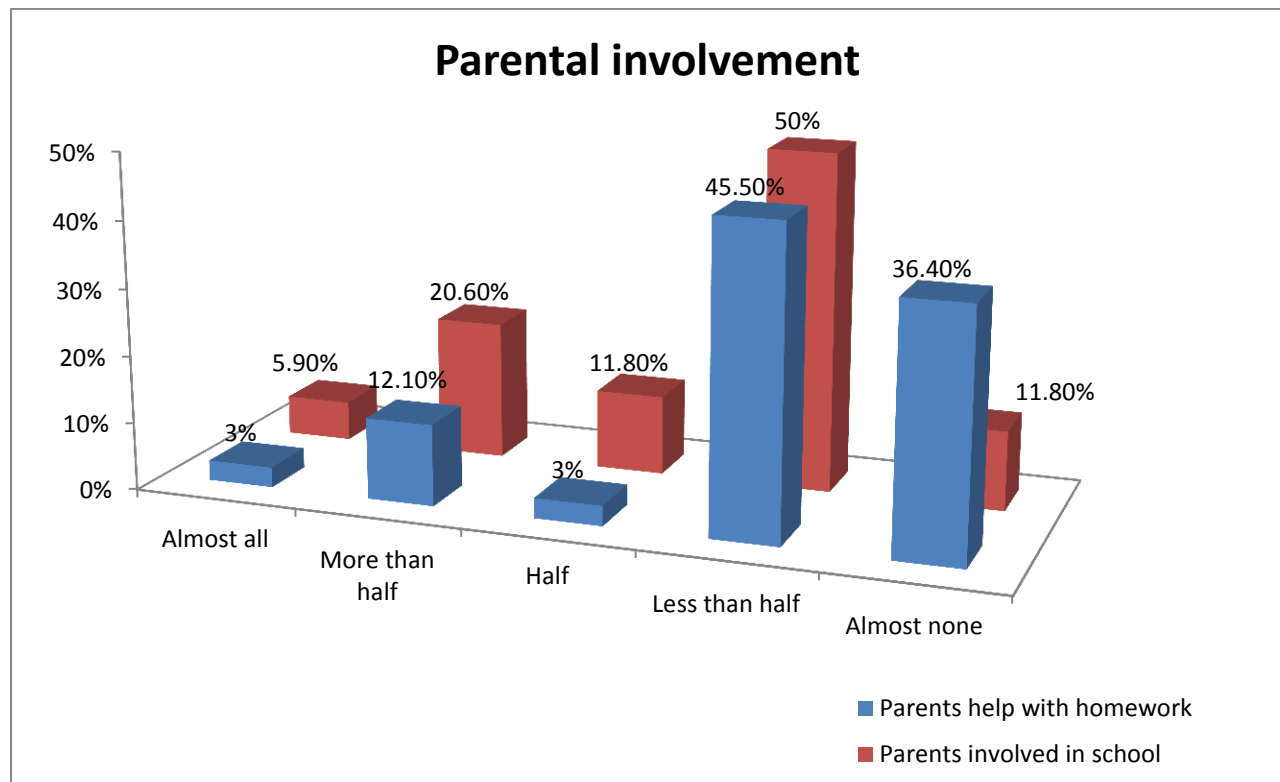
Figure 19: Availability of text books and other reading material to use at home (Questions 15 and 16)



The results from these 2 questions give an appalling picture of the situation of Namibian students:

61.8% of the schools visited indicated that students do not have school books for home studying. This means that the textbooks are not taken home by students (possibly because there is not a book for every student). There is also very little other material to read at home, according to the respondents: Only 23.5% indicated that students will have access to storybooks and other reading material to read at home.

Figure 20: Parental involvement (Questions 17 and 18)



From the above it is clear that parental involvement with homework and in the school leaves much to be desired. High percentages for non-involvement were scored in both instances. 81.9% of schools reported that almost none (36.4%) or less than half (45.5%) of the parents help their children with homework. Reasons for this might be the fact that parents are uneducated, poor and working.

Although still disappointing, schools indicated higher scores for parental involvement in the school: 61.8% indicated that almost none (11.8%), half (11.8%) and less than half (50%) of parents are involved in the school.

4.14 Impact of poverty and hunger (Questions 19, 19.6 and 23)

Three questions gauged the socio-economic situation of parents. These questions were:

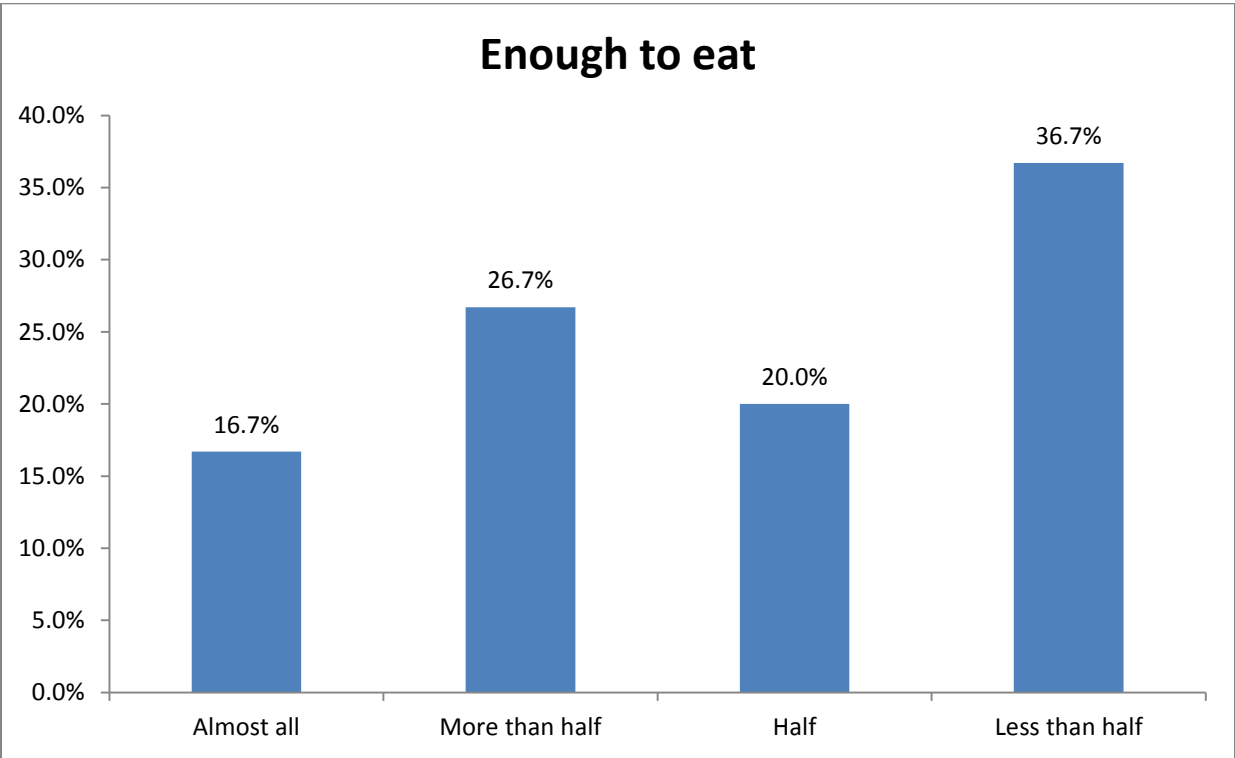
Question 19 *Do students have enough food to eat at home?*

Question 19.6 Does your school have a feeding scheme?

Question 23 Would you say the majority of the parents whose children are in your school have (enough) money?

The results were as follows:

Figure 21: Do students have enough to eat at home? (Question 19)

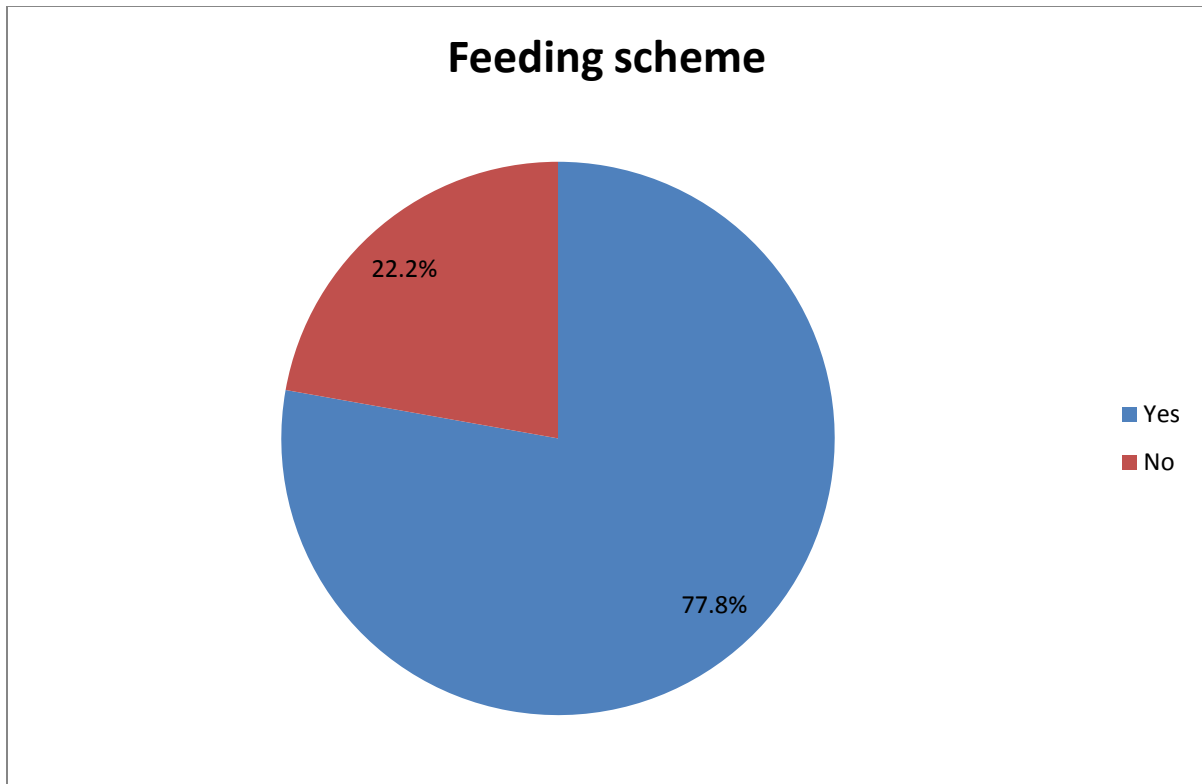


Only 16.7% of schools reported that *almost all* students have enough to eat at home. 26.7% of the schools reported that more than half of the students have enough to eat; 20% of the schools reported that *half* of the students have enough to eat; 36.7% of the schools reported that *less than half* of the students have enough to eat. The majority (56.7%) was thus of the opinion that *half or less* students do not have enough to eat at home. (This result was confirmed by question 14.25 where only 41.1% teachers indicated that students have enough to eat. See section 4.12.)

From this question it is clear that poverty and hunger is still rampant in many areas in Namibia and this has a marked influence on education. The researchers observed that

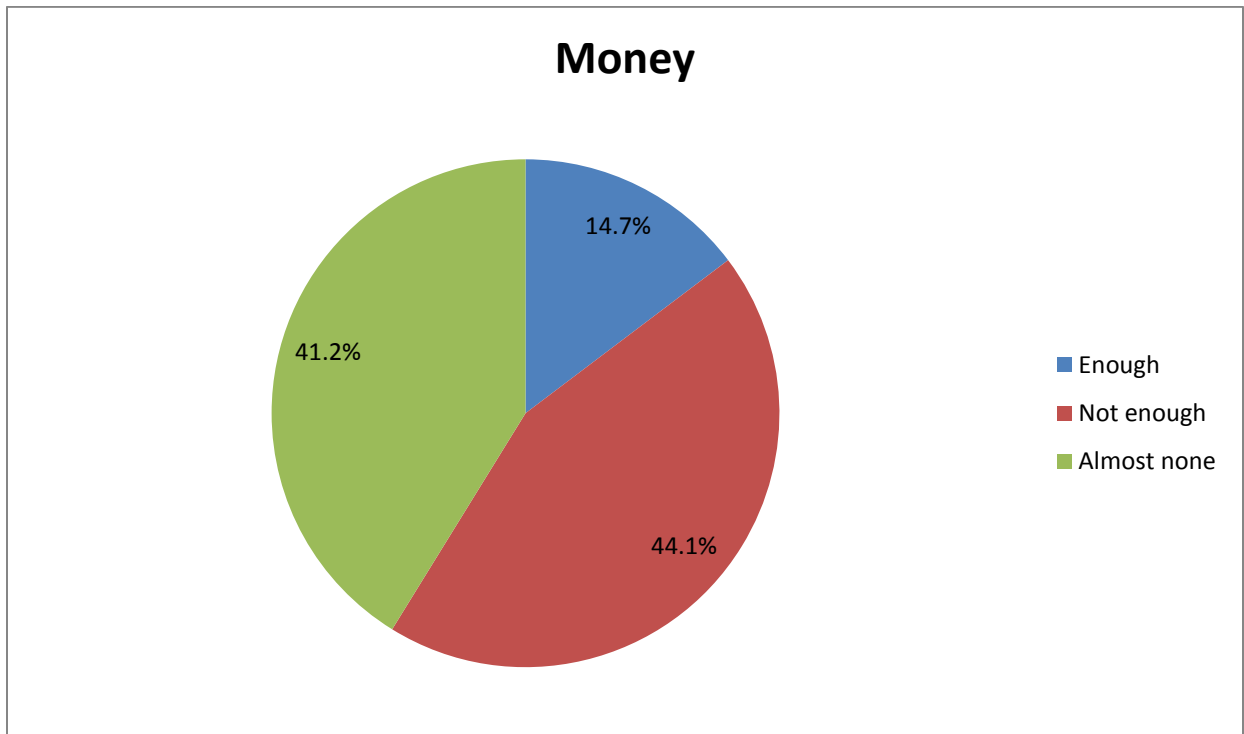
many children bring only a bottle of *oshikundu* (a traditional home made drink) to school. Most schools, therefore, have feeding schemes in place (see 19.6).

Figure 22: Feeding scheme at school (Question 19.6)



The above is an important finding and shows that the government is rendering a life-saving service to Namibian children through school feeding schemes in 77.8% of the schools visited. For many rural children this daily meal (mostly a plate of porridge) is the only food they get during school days. Sufficient nutritious food is of paramount importance for growing children and the high percentage of hungry children in Namibia is a matter of grave concern for the nation and the greatest barrier towards the development of a knowledge society. No one can concentrate on intellectual work while being hungry. Obviously it is the duty of parents to feed their children but, as will be shown in the next figure, most parents are poor to very poor (see also 2.6).

Figure 23: Financial position of parents (Question 23)



This is an important and shocking finding: 85.3% of schools reported that parents have either not enough or almost no money. This again points to the influence of hunger and poor economic circumstances on the education sector and school success of students – and to why so few parents can assist their children with homework and access to reading materials.

4.15 Mode of travel and walking distance from school (Questions 20 and 21)

Two questions were asked about the above factors.

Question 20 How do the students travel to school?

Question 21 If students walk to school, what is the farthest that the majority of walkers must

walk?

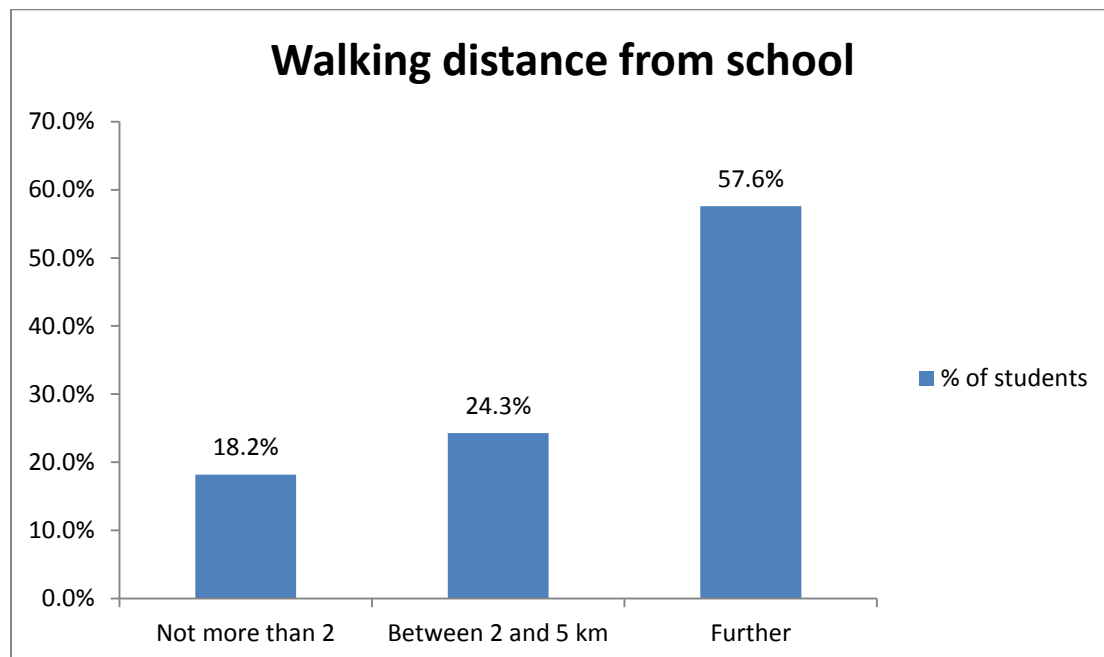
Results were as follows:

Figure 24: Mode of travel to school (Question 20)

Mode of travel	Never	Most and second most
Car	70.4%	25.9%
Bus	92.3%	3.8%
Bicycle	69.2%	15.4%
Donkey cart	96.2%	0%
Horse or donkey	96.2%	0%
Walk	0%	96.9%

The great majority of Namibian school children thus travel on foot from their homes to the school and back.

Figure 25: Walking distance from school (Question 21)



This question ascertained what the farthest distance is that students had to walk to school.

57.6% of schools reported that students live *further than 5 km* from the school, and 96.9% indicated that students *walk to school most or second most*. In the rural areas the researchers also observed how far the students were walking each day – often more than 10 km to and from the school. The findings show that together with household chores, not much of the day can be spent on free time activities like reading for pleasure. They also show the hardship of so many Namibian children who have to walk long distances to and from school every day on an empty stomach.

4.16 Type of housing (Question 22)

One question ascertained the type of housing most frequently found around the schools visited.

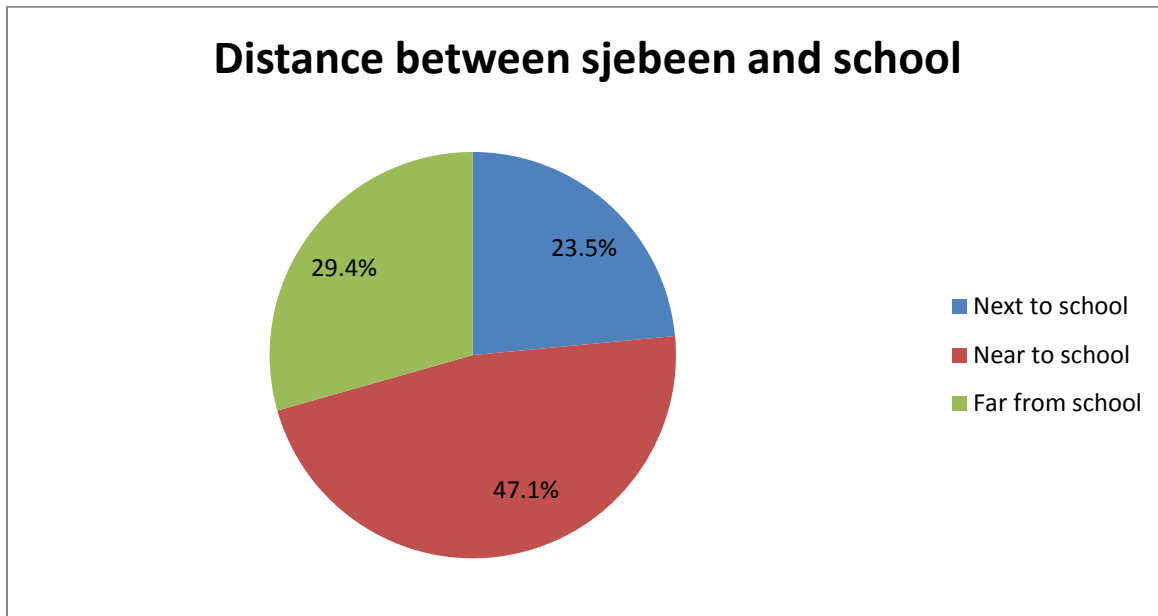
Figure 26 Type of housing

Type of housing	Percentage: Never	Percentage: Most and second most
(Brick) house	44.8	41.3
Flat/town house	80	12
Hostel	75.9	13.8
Hut	20	76.7
Tent	92.6	3.7
Other (e.g. shack)	72	24

Traditional huts are the most common housing of the respondents – these are mostly without electricity, running water, etc. Furthermore, three quarters of the students do not live in *hostels*. Distance from schools and the lack of hostel facilities are real challenges. These findings were verified by the observations of the researchers. In fact, some rural students were found living in small tents next to the school to minimize walking. Transport services such as school buses for children attending government schools do not exist.

4.17 Distance between nearest sjebeen and school (Question 24)

Figure 27: Distance between nearest sjebeen and school



The results of question 24 gauged the distance of the nearest sjebeen (bar) from the school, as it is often claimed that the proximity of a sjebeen to a school has a bad influence on the atmosphere in the school, and contributes to the negative role that alcohol plays in the lives of parents, teachers and even students. It is a cause of concern that 76.6% of schools indicate that a sjebeen is either next to or near to the school.

4.18 Reading or telling of stories (all 88 teachers) (Questions 25 – 27)

The last three questions tested teacher perceptions on the role of stories in the lives of the students. For these questions the responses of all 88 teachers' questionnaires were analysed. The results of these questions should be read together with the responses of readers in section 6.

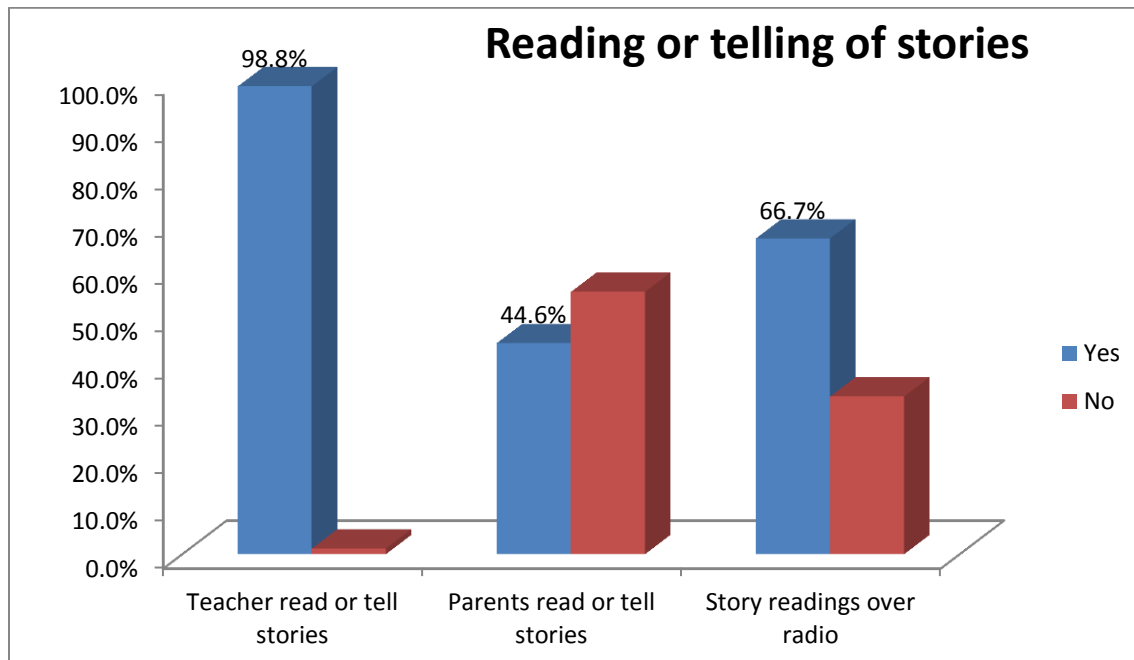
The following were asked:

Question 25 Do you read or tell stories to the students?

Question 26 Do parents/the community tell stories to the children?

Question 27 Are you aware of story reading for children over the radio?

Figure 28: Reading or telling of stories



98.8% of language teachers reported that they read or tell stories to students. This is not surprising as all languages teachers have to at least read stories to children from the school readers.

Only 44.5% of the teachers reported that stories are still being told to children by parents or the community. According to them, therefore, the culture of storytelling is not high.

66.7% of them are aware that stories/story readings for children take place over the radio.

The transition from an oral to a literate culture is a slow process. This transformation process is evolving unequally in Namibia. The danger is that the beneficial influence of oral literature towards the forming of character in the young may fall away before the beneficial influence of the written culture, particularly storybooks, has been established in the form of a reading habit. Story, whether presented orally or in text, satisfies many

psychological needs of the child (Sutherland and Artbutnot 1991) and contributes to the child's understanding of him/herself, other people and the world we live in. Story forms a bridge towards learning and also reading and should be preserved and cherished.

4.19 Summary of main findings from teachers' questionnaire

- $\frac{3}{4}$ of the schools included were from rural communities and about half of these were reasonably resourced, based on the criteria of the study.
- More than 80% of the schools had running drinking water and electricity. 73.5% had telephones.
- Less than half of the schools had proper flush toilets for students and teachers.
- Only 41.1% of schools had a computer and 29.4% internet access.
- The majority of students do not have enough to eat. 56.7% of teachers reported that half or less than half of students have enough to eat. Only 16.7% of teachers indicated that all students have sufficient nutrition.
- Nearly 80% of schools rely on feeding schemes for the students.
- More than 80% reported that parents do not have enough money to take proper care of their children.
- Parents are not really involved in the school, nor are they assisting their children with homework.
- Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the schools are close to or next to a sjebeen.
- Most of the children included in the study live in traditional huts and nearly all of them walk more than 5 km to school and back, i.e. 10 km, on a daily basis.
- While the answers related to library services (Question 3) are of limited use throughout, generally a very bleak picture presents itself.
- Only 47% of schools indicated that they have functioning libraries. These libraries are generally understocked and seem to lack proper systems of lending and recording.
- In almost all the schools with libraries the library teacher also teaches other subjects. Full time librarians are not available.

- The lack of functioning school libraries are not compensated for in any other way. Public libraries and resource centres are generally out of range.
- These poorly resourced libraries remain the only source of information for the majority of students.
- Classroom collections in language classes are unavailable and only implemented by about 10% of teachers included in the study.
- Language teachers seem relatively experienced and try to compensate for the above by making use of textbooks, readers, copied pages (with stories) in the classroom.
- High percentages of language teachers read or tell stories to students.
- Language teachers claim that the culture of storytelling at home is not high.
- They are aware of story readings for children over the radio.

5. Results of Student questionnaire 1 (Part one)

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of Part 1 of the questionnaire was mainly to gather school data and biographical data regarding the respondent, as well as to classify the research population into two main groups, *readers* and *non-readers*. Furthermore, there is also a last question to subdivide the readers into *general readers* (readers of mainly non-fiction) and *story readers*.

Part 1 of the questionnaire (Appendix 3) comprised five questions:

Question 1 – School and biographical data

Question 2 – Open question on what students do after school

Question 3 – Question with ranked response on what students do most outside of school hours

Question 4 – Matching question whereby students had to demonstrate their knowledge of basic types of reading material

Question 5 - Question on basic reading preference (stories or non-fiction)

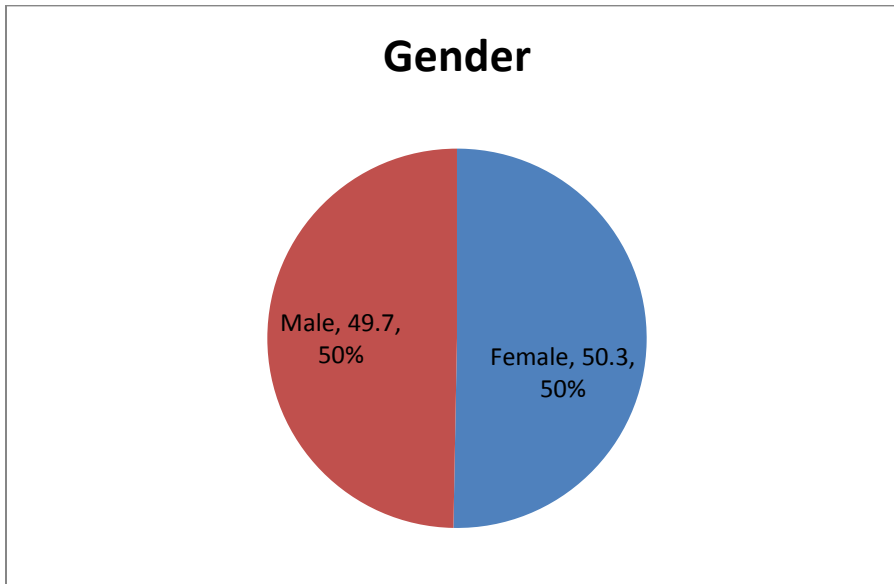
Question 1.1 and 1.2 (name of school, situation of school) is not discussed, as this information was already dealt with in section 4.

5.2 Biographical Information: gender, mother tongue and language studied at school (Question 1.3 - 1.5)

The following data regarding the aspects above were gathered:

5.2.1 Gender (Question 1.3)

Figure 29: Gender relationship

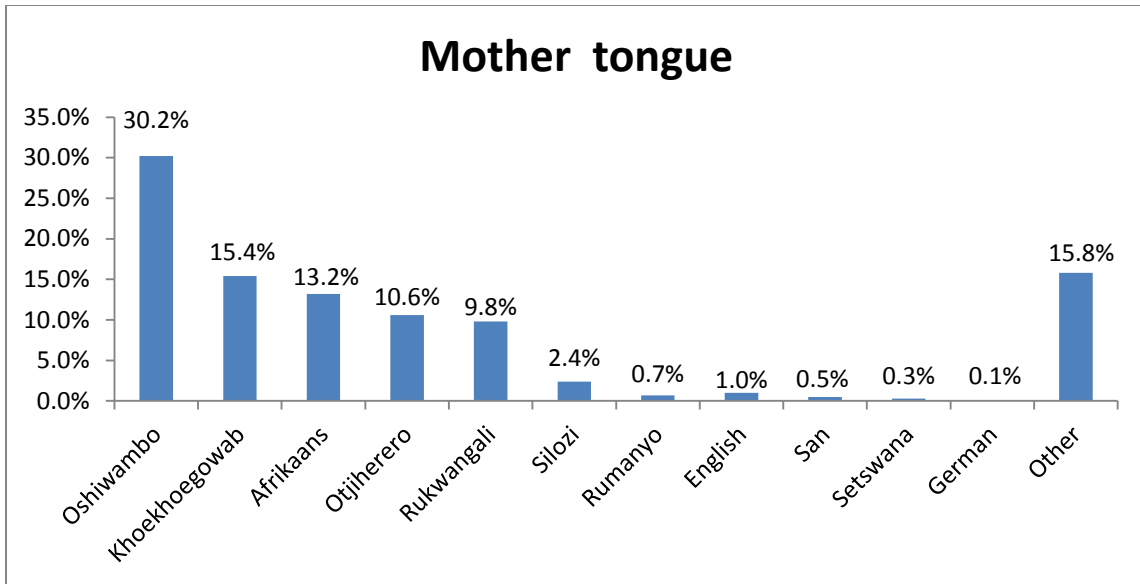


As illustrated above the population had nearly equal representation of male and female respondents: 50.2% female; and 49.8% male.

5.2.2 Mother tongue (Question 1.4)

Students were requested to indicate their mother tongue (language spoken at home). Students were requested to indicate only *one*, as in some households, more than one language is used in the home.

Figure 30: Mother tongue

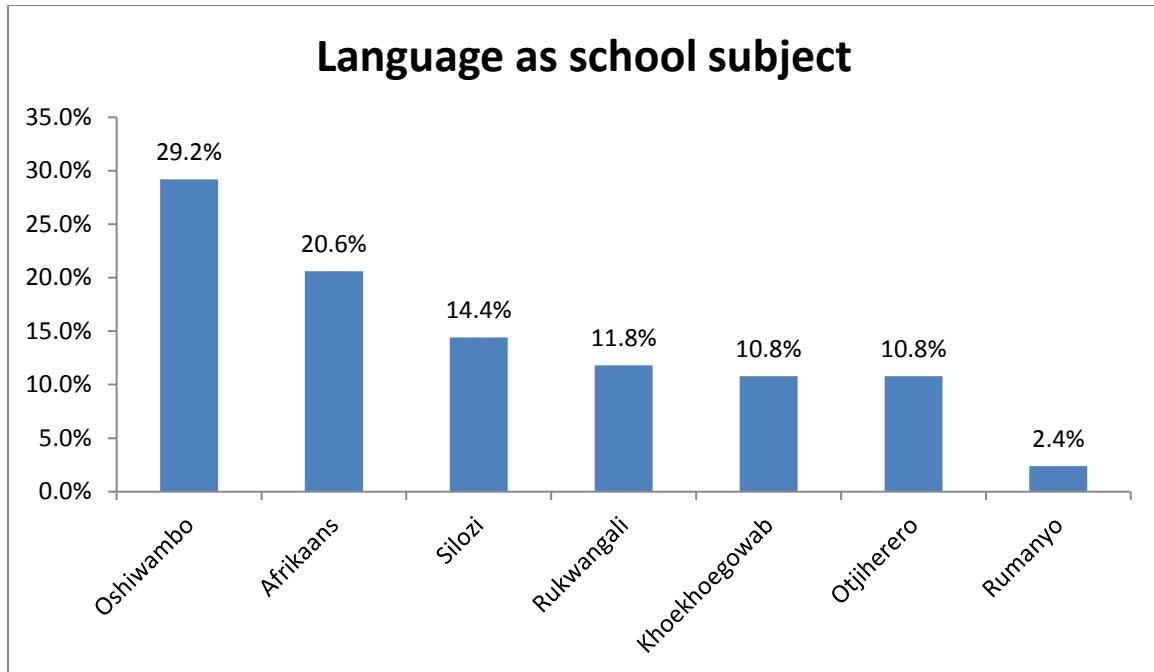


As is evident above, 30.2% of the respondents were Oshiwambo speaking (including all variants of the Oshiwambo language). 15.4% were Khoekhoegowab-speaking, followed by Afrikaans (13.2%), Otjiherero (10.6%) and Rukwangali (9.8%). These languages are dominant in the regions visited. However, speakers of the following languages were also represented in the population: Silozi (2.4%), Rumanyo (0.7%), English (1%), San (0.5%), Setswana (0.3%) and German (0.1%). All other languages indicated by respondents were grouped together (15.8%). These were languages not captured separately and included languages spoken in Caprivi and Kavango, such as Thimbukushu as well as Portuguese and other languages not provided for in the listing. These languages are mostly oral languages, and not used as media of instruction in schools, as no orthography exists up to date.

5.2.3 Language taught as school subject (Question 1.5)

Students were requested to indicate the language, other than English, they were being taught in schools. It has to be reiterated that as from Grade 4, students take a second language as a subject while English is the medium of instruction.

Figure 31: Language as school subject



Oshiwambo languages (specifically Oshikwanyama and Oshindonga) were taken as school subjects by 29.2% of the students. 20.6% of the students were taught Afrikaans (both as first and second language). 14.4% students took Silozi and 11.8% of students Rukwangali, while Khoekhoegowab and Otjiherero were taken by 10.8% of students respectively. Rumanyo was taught to 2.4% of the students.

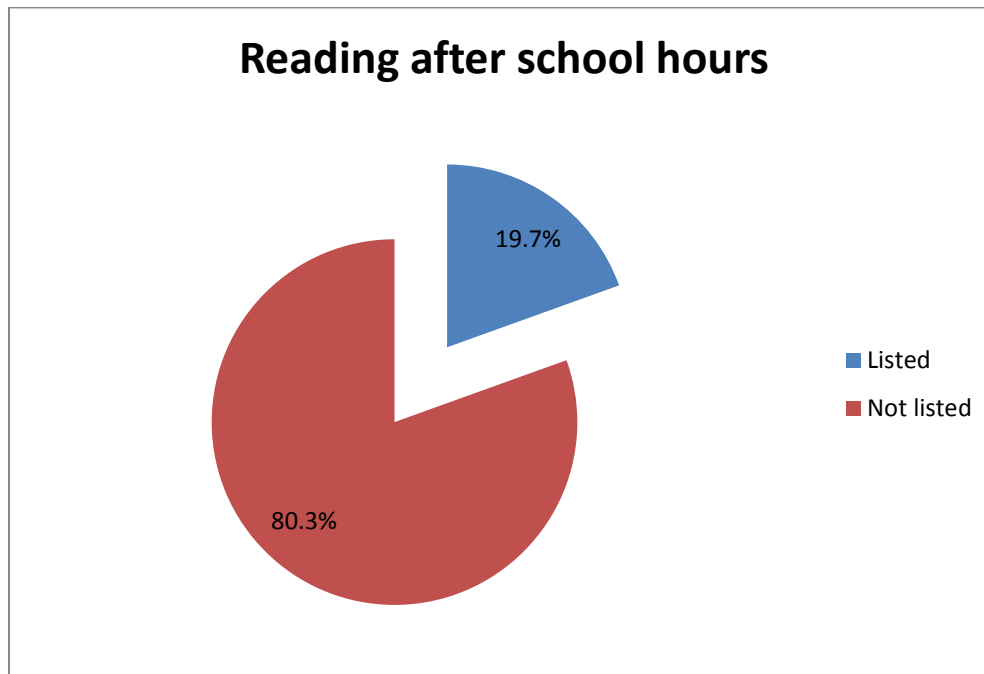
It is clear that most Oshiwambo students and Otjiherero students included in our sample population took their mother tongue, as a school subject. For Afrikaans, Rukwangali, Silozi and Rumanyo this was not the case. For 7.3% of the students who took Afrikaans it was not their mother tongue. These students are possibly mostly Khoekhoegowab speaking as for many of them Afrikaans is a second mother tongue – which explains the lower percentage of students taking Khoekhoegowab as a school subject, compared to the mother tongue speakers in this sample. In the Caprivi region Silozi is the predominant school language, albeit the mother tongue of a minority. Most students in the Caprivi region have other mother tongues which are not offered at school. Also with Rumanyo it is clear that a number of students in the Rumanyo class are not mother tongue speakers of the language, possibly because

their mother tongue is an oral language. These trends might be contributing to the languages preferred for reading by students as shown in part 2 of the study.

5.3 Reading after school (Question 2)

In question 2 students had to list the activities they spend their time on after school. They were not prompted in any way, as it was an open question. This question had the aim to minimize social desirability. The objective was to ascertain how many students would list reading spontaneously as an activity on which they spend time after school. Students responded as follows:

Figure 32: Reading after school



80.3% percent of students in the population did not list reading as an activity that they spend time on after school. As part one of the study was designed to gauge how many students read for pleasure, this outcome already indicates that possibly a very low number would be found.

Out of all respondents, about one fifth spontaneously included reading as an after school activity.

This result is important, as this question, amongst others, was used to determine the group of respondents who can be considered as readers.

5.4 Ranking of after-school activities (Question 3)

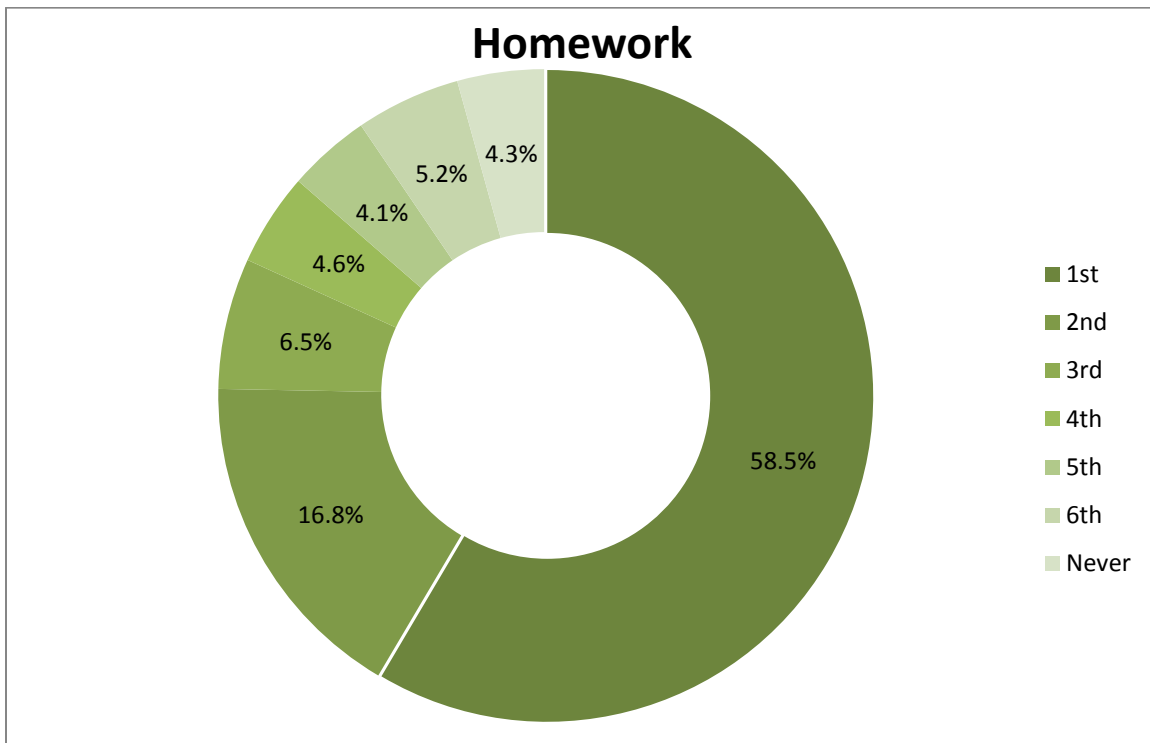
Question 3 had the aim to gauge the activities that take up most of the time of students after school. Six options that students had to rank were given. Students were required to indicate what takes up most of their time after school, what takes up

second most of their time, etc. Students could also indicate what they never do after school. Students could rank the activities from 0 – 6.

The following paragraphs and figures indicate how students ranked the activities.

5.4.1 Studying or doing homework

Figure 33: Homework



58.5% of the students ranked doing homework as the activity that takes up most of their time.

16.8% ranked it second.

75.3% ranked doing homework thus as the activity that takes up first and second most of their time.

The rest of the students ranked it lower: 6.5% ranked it third, 4.6% fourth, 4.1% fifth and 5.2% sixth. Only 4.3% indicated that this is an activity that they never spend time on after school. 0.2% of students ranked it seventh and 0.1% ranked it eighth. The last two

options were actually not possibilities. Therefore it was calculated together with the 0 (Never) responses in the figure above.

The results of this question thus indicate that homework is the activity that students mostly spend their time on after school.

5.4.2 Taking part in sports or athletics

Figure 34: Sports

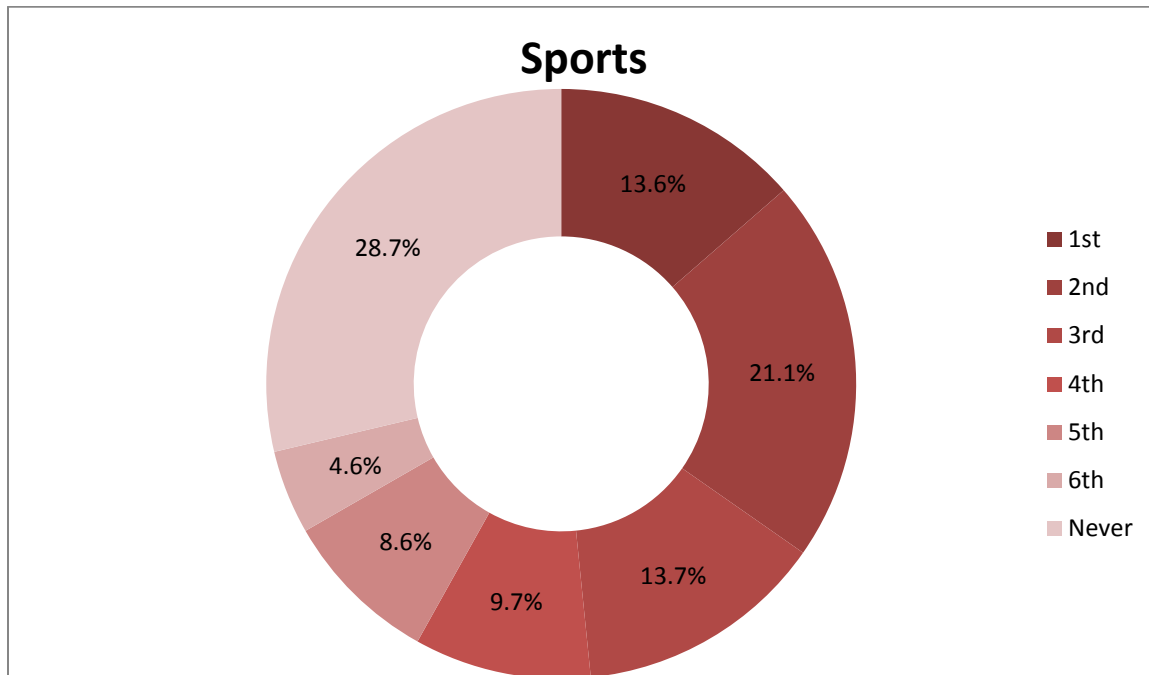


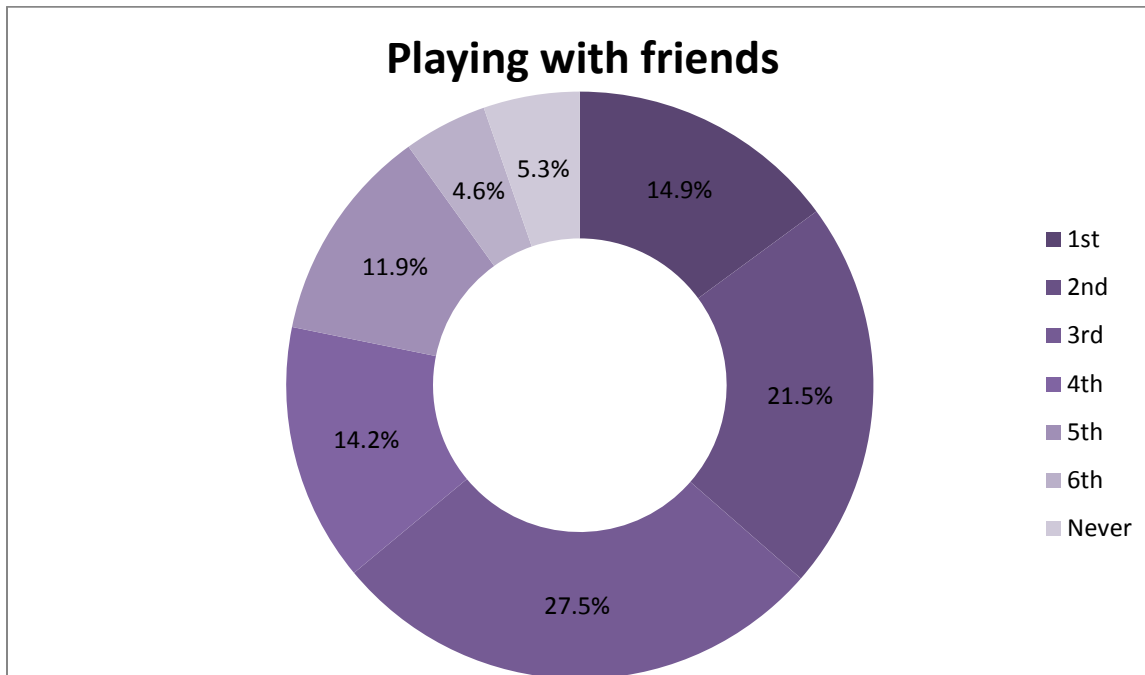
Figure 9 shows that 13.6% of students ranked taking part in sports as the activity that takes up most of their time. 21.1% ranked it second. 34.7% of students thus ranked sports in either first or second position in terms of time spent on the activity.

The rest of the respondents ranked the time spent on taking part in sports or athletics lower: 13.7% ranked it third, 9.7% ranked it fourth, 8.6% ranked it fifth, and 4.6% ranked it sixth.

28.4% of students indicated that this is an activity that they never do. The lack of sports facilities observed and discussed in the teachers' questionnaire (Question 14.21) may contribute to this result. 0.2% and 0.1% of the respondents ranked it seventh and eighth respectively, which again was calculated as with the 0 (Never) responses in figure above.

5.4.3 Playing with friends

Figure 35: Playing



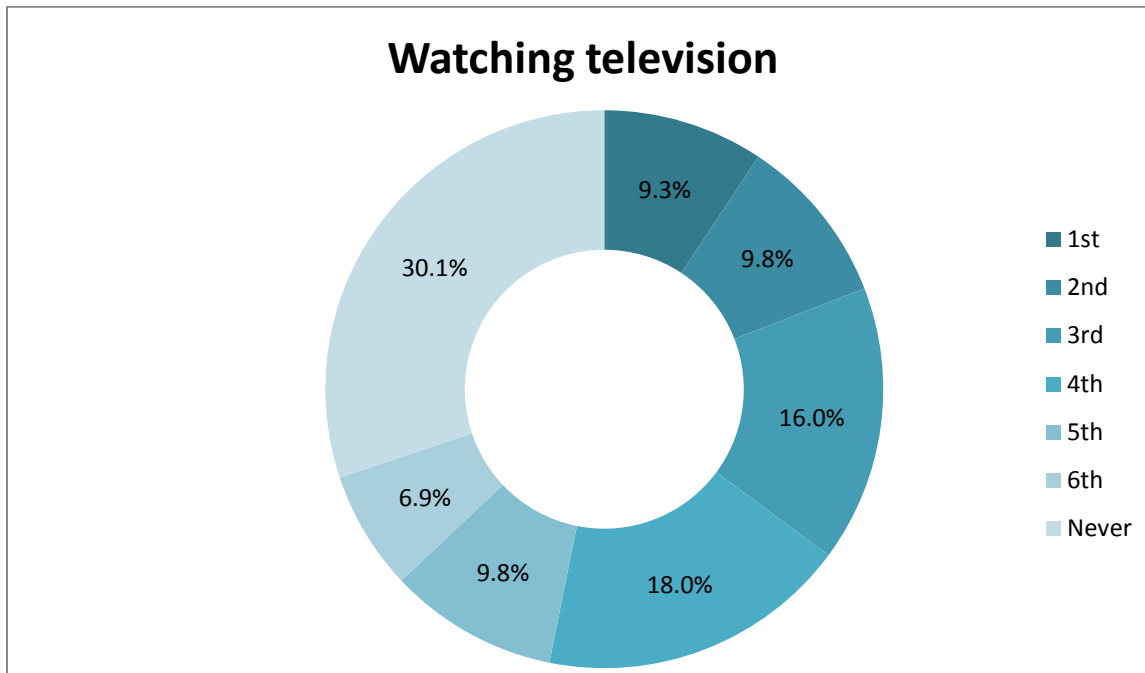
Playing with friends was ranked as first activity by 14.9% and as second activity by 21.5% of students.

36.4% thus ranked this activity as either first or second, while 27.5% ranked playing with friends as the activity that takes up third most of their time.

14.2 % ranked it fourth, 11.9 % fifth, 4.6% sixth and 0.1% seventh. 5.2% indicated that this is an activity that they never do. Once again the 0.1% was added to the 0 responses.

5.4.4 Watching television

Figure 36: Television



9.3% of the respondents ranked watching television as the activity that takes up most of their time and 9.8% ranked it second. Thus (only) 19.1% ranked it either first or second.

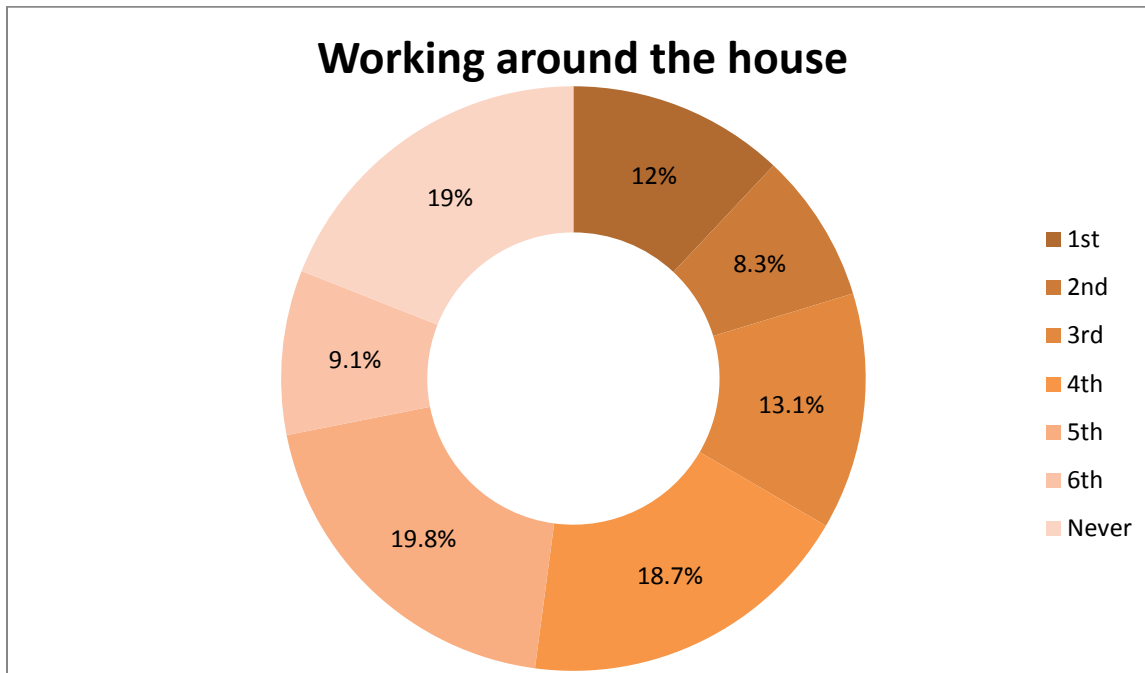
16% of students ranked it third and 18% ranked it fourth.

9.8% of the respondents ranked it fifth, 6.9% ranked it sixth, while 0.2% and 0.1% ranked it seventh and eighth respectively, which were added (in the figure) to the students who indicated that they never watch television.

29.8% of students indicated that this is an activity that they never do. (This result may be related to the poorly resourced environments in which some respondents live.)

5.4.5 Working in the house or outside

Figure 37: Household chores



12% indicated that working in the house or outside takes up most of their time and 8.3% indicated that it takes up second most of their time (a total thus of 20.3%).

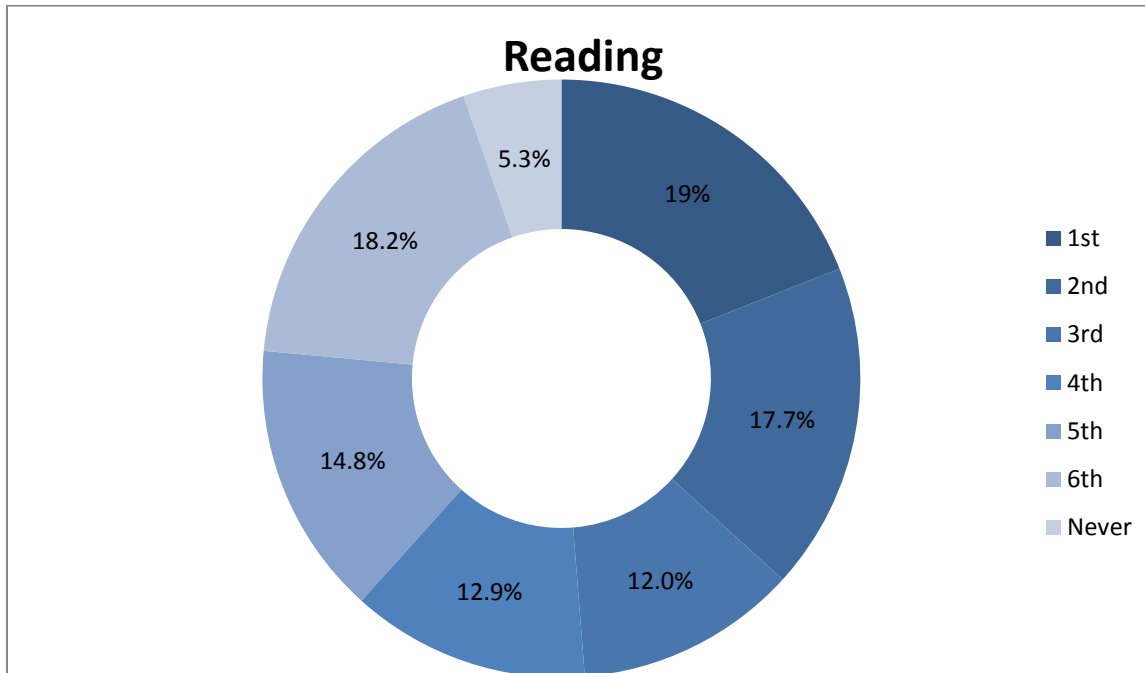
This activity is ranked third by 13.1% and fourth by 18.7% of students respectively. 19.8% ranked it fifth, while 9.1% ranked it sixth.

18.9% of respondents indicated that this is an activity they never do. 0.1% ranked it seventh, which was added to the respondents that indicated they never work in or around the house. Child labour is thus a reality in the lives of a sizeable percentage of Namibian children.

5.4.6 Reading

Reading was one of the six possible after school activities to be ranked.

Figure 38: Reading



19% of students ranked reading as the activity that takes up most of their time in the afternoons, evenings or week-ends. 17.7% ranked it second. 36.7% thus ranked reading either first or second.

12% ranked reading third, 12.9% fourth, 14.8% fifth and 18.2% sixth.

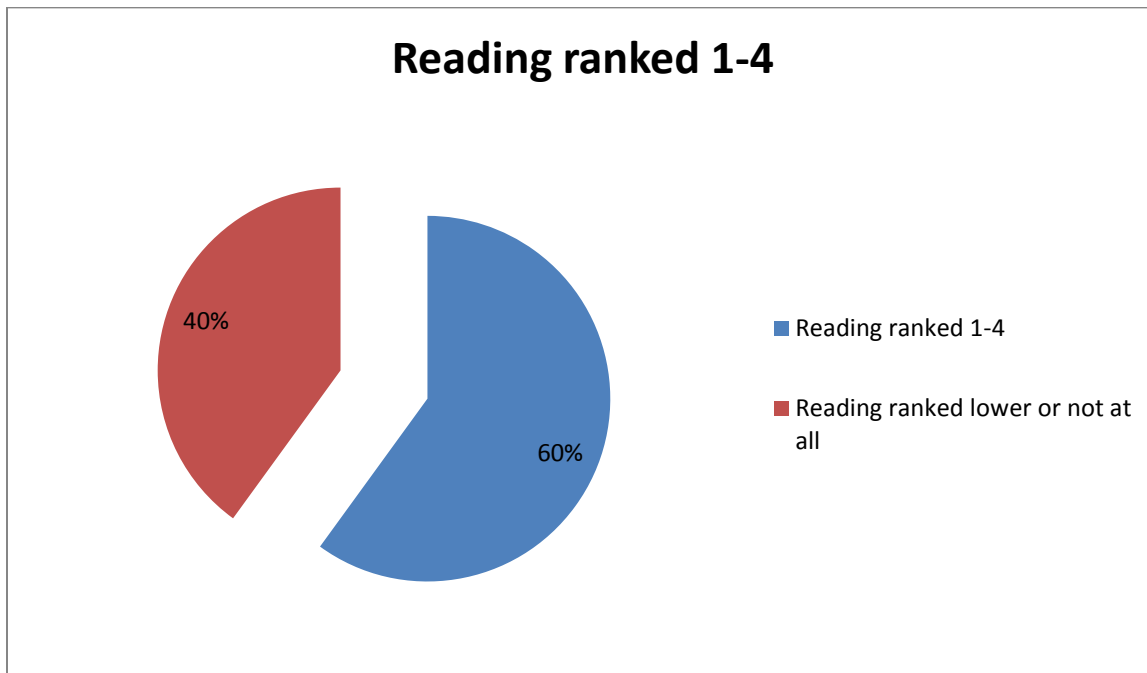
5% of students indicated that this is an activity they never do, and 0.1% and 0.2% ranked it at 7th and 8th position respectively, which were added to the respondents that gave this activity a 0.

The percentage of 36.7% of respondents who spend most or second most of their time on reading after school hours, does not correlate well with the 19.7% of students indicating reading as free time activity in question 2. This result thus needs to be viewed with caution, as it is possible that the ranking of reading could have been influenced by the fact that reading is an activity that is also used when doing homework.

Social desirability – the fact that they ranked it higher than they should have, because they think it is a proper response - might also have played a role.

This question was one of three questions that were used to identify the readers. It was thus decided to add the percentages of respondents who ranked reading third and fourth to those who ranked it first and second. It is therefore important to note that, 60% of respondents ranked reading as one of the four activities that takes up their time:

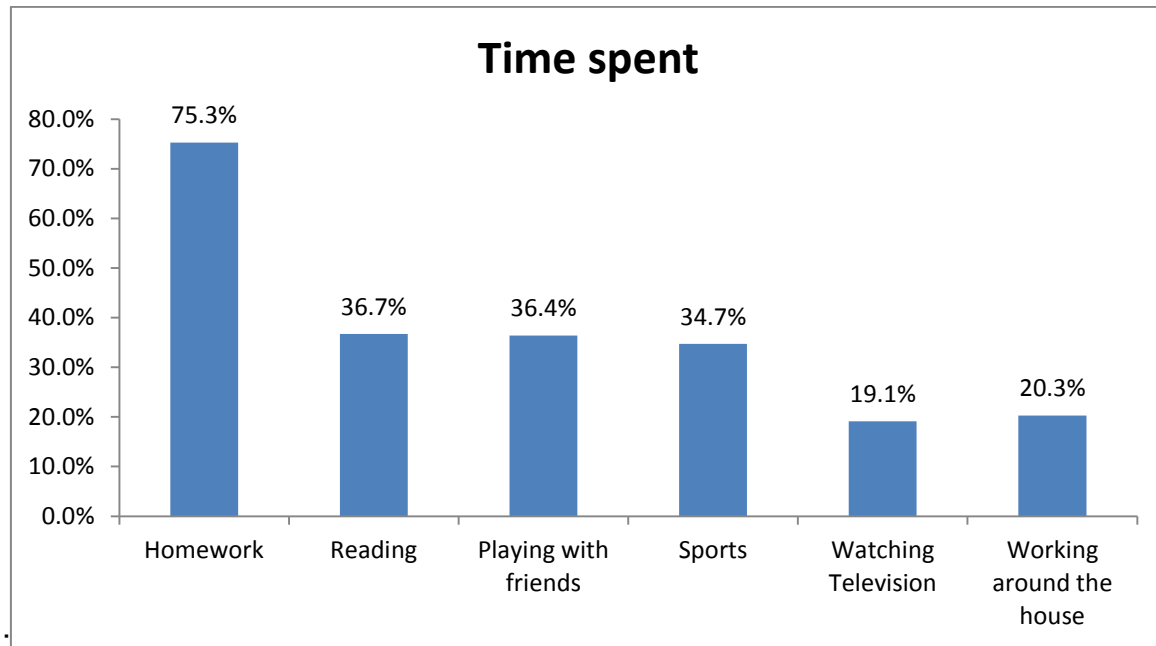
Figure 39: Reading ranked 1-4



5.4.7 Summary of most time spent on various activities:

The following histogram compares the percentages given to the various activities, comparing the students who listed an activity as taking up first or second most of their time.

Figure 40: Most time spent on activities



75.3% ranked doing homework thus as the activity that takes up first and second most of their time.

36.7% thus ranked reading either first or second.

36.4% ranked playing with friends as either first or second.

34.7% of students thus ranked sports in either first or second position in terms of time spent on the activity.

18.9% of respondents indicated that housework is an activity they never do (see Figure 37), while 20.3% ranked it first or second.

19.1% ranked watching television either first or second while 29.8% of students indicated that this is an activity that they never do (see Figure 36).

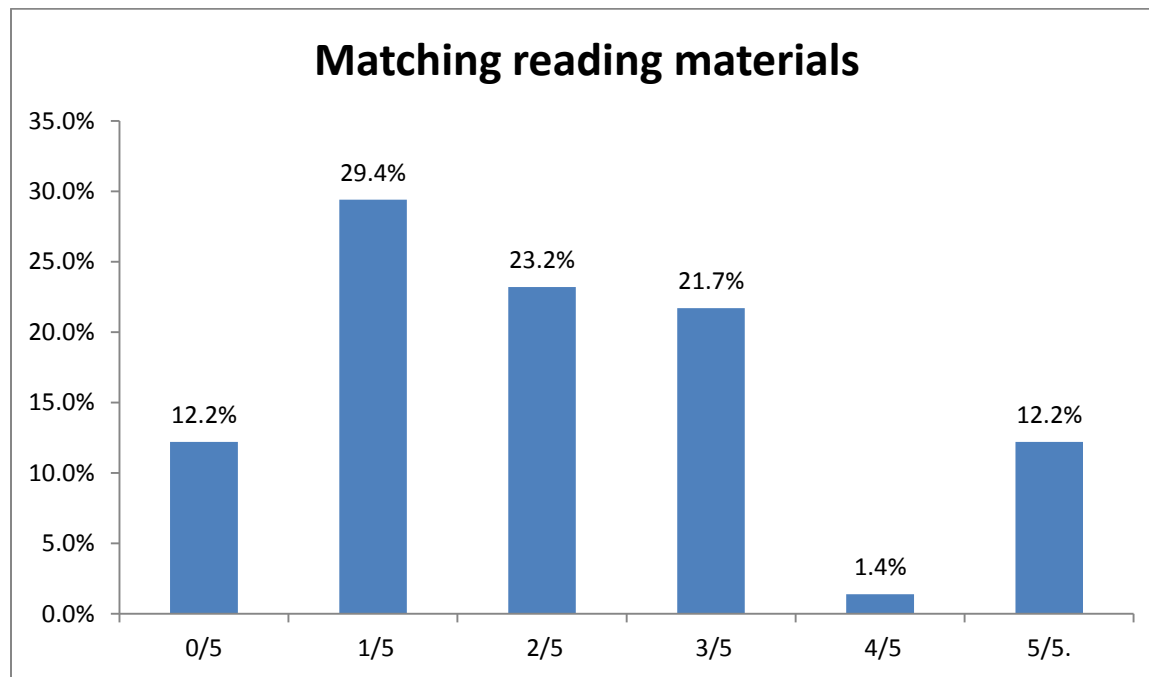
While once again it is clear that students regard homework as the activity that takes up most of their time, smaller differences between reading, playing and sports could be detected. It is possible that big differences between urban and rural patterns exist here,

especially with regard to the ranking of television and chores. This issue was not investigated further.

5.5 Demonstrating knowledge of various print media (Question 4)

In question 4 students had to demonstrate the ability to distinguish between types of reading material. They had to recognize a storybook, a fact book (non-fiction), a magazine, a comic and a newspaper and match these to a specific definition, term or word describing each. As argued in section 3, the result of this question allowed the researchers to exclude students who ranked reading very high due to social desirability, while being very poor or no readers in reality. The result of this question is given below, i.e. how many out of the 5 matches could be done correctly.

Figure 41: Matching reading materials with examples or definitions

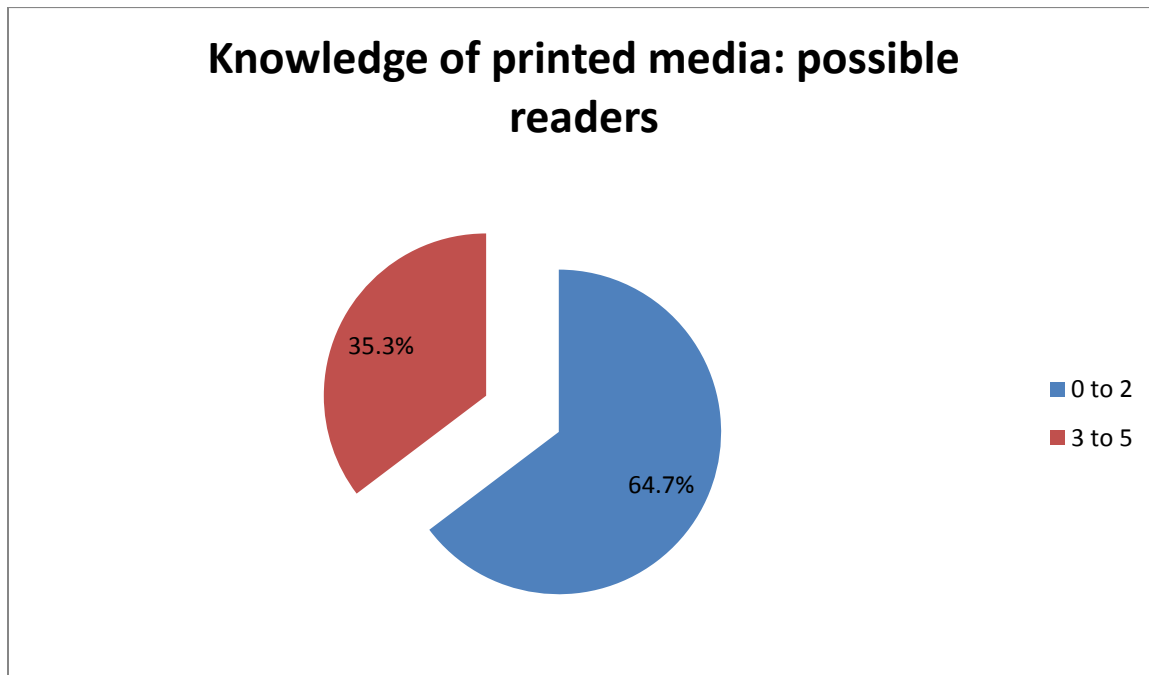


12.2% of students could not match any of the items correctly. 29.4% of students could match one item correctly, 23.2% could match two items correctly and 21.7% could match 3 items correctly. Only 1.4% of the respondents had a score of four out of five, while 12.2% of students could match all items correctly – thus obtaining a score of 100%.

35.3% (492) of students thus scored 60%, having been able to get 3, 4, or 5 out of 5 for this question.

This question was also used to identify readers. To qualify as a reader or possible reader, a respondent had to score at least 60% for this question. 64.7% of the respondents could not be regarded as readers.

Figure 42: Knowledge of printed media: Possible readers (scores of 60% and above)



The 35.3% who could identify 3 – 5 different types of reading material is typified as “possible” readers, because, as shown below, not all of them met all criteria to be classified as readers.

5.6 Final coding: Readers and non-readers

While many other interesting observations regarding the use of free time of Grade 6 students could be made, the main purpose of Part 1 of the questionnaire was to distinguish readers from non-readers, using results from the questions as indicated above.

For the purposes of this study, a reader was thus a person who was knowledgeable of the basic types of reading material available. In addition, a reader was somebody who spontaneously chose to mention reading (for pleasure) or gave reading a priority among various options as an activity on which a substantial amount of time was spent.

Respondents who did not know the basic categories of reading materials, but ranked reading as a very important free time activity, were thus excluded as readers, because they were regarded as not responding truthfully.

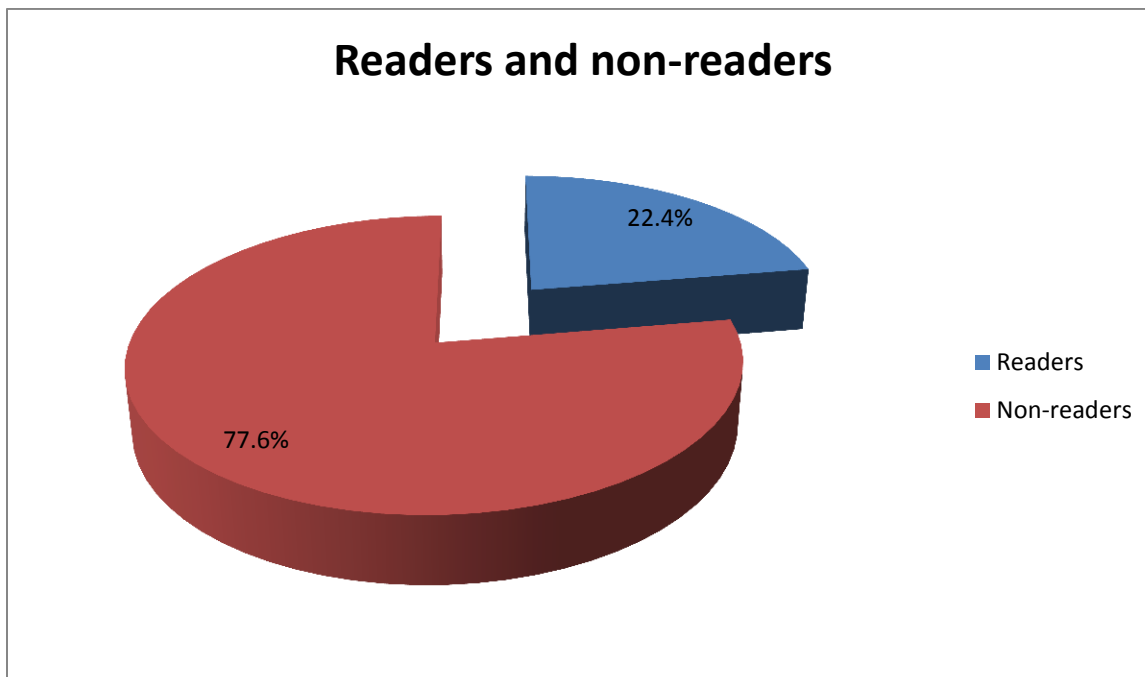
The following requirements were used to classify a respondent as a reader:

1. Had to spontaneously list reading as an activity in Question 2
And/Or
2. Had to rank reading as amongst the first four activities that s/he was spending most of his/her time on in Question 3
And
3. Had to demonstrate knowledge of printed media by scoring 60% in Question 4 (3 and more out of 5)

Respondents thus had to meet requirement 1 **or** 2 **and** 3.

The results obtained were as follows:

Figure 43: Classification of readers and non-readers



The study shows that the vast majority of the sample population is thus non-readers – 1088 out of 1402, i.e. 77.6%. Their further responses on reading preferences were therefore not taken into account in the next section.

The readers are 314 out of 1402, i.e. 22.4%.

5.7 Reading preference for fiction or non-fiction (Question 5)

With this question the respondents by own choice identified themselves either as readers of mainly stories (SR) or readers of mainly non-fiction, general readers (GR). Only responses of respondents identified as readers (thus 314 respondents) were further used for data input.

All completed separate Part 2 questionnaires (Appendices 5 and 7). The answers of the non-readers were not analysed.

Figure 44: Final reading preferences.

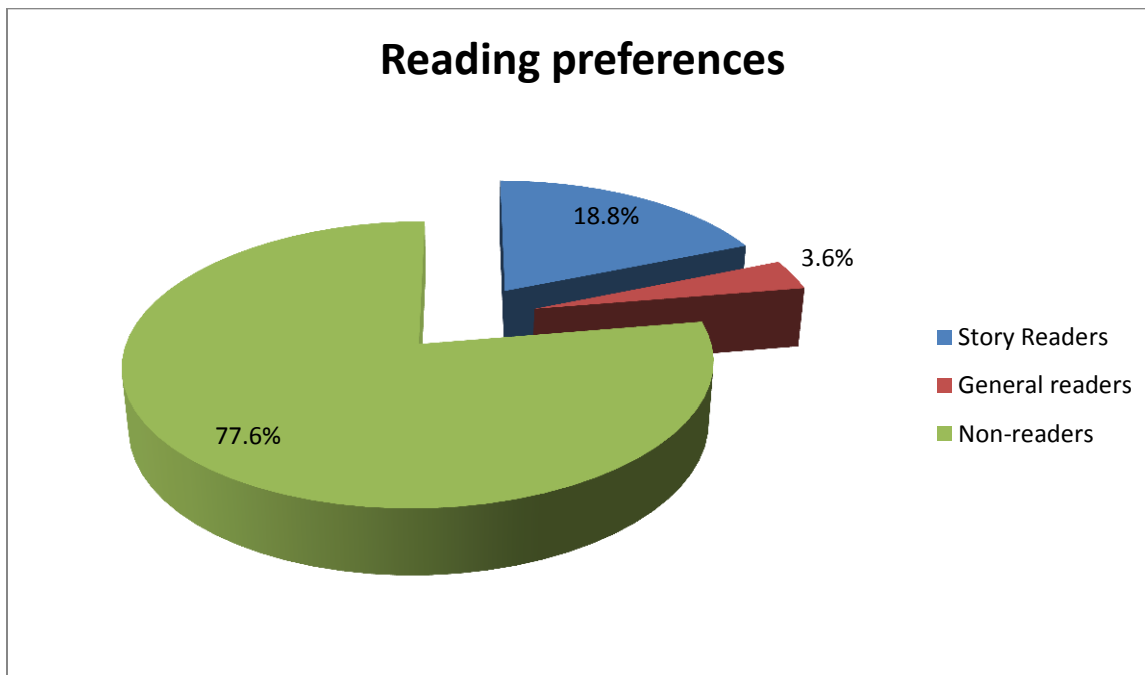


Figure 19 shows that more than three-quarters - 77.6% - of the sample were non-readers. The further responses of the non-reading group as from Question 5 to 25 were not used for data input and analysis. The 22.4% of readers were sub-classified into

story readers, 264 (18.8%), and general readers, 50 (3.6%) of the total sample population.

5.8 Concluding summary Part 1

From the analysis above the following conclusions were made:

- Boys and girls were equally represented.
- Not all students are in a position to take their mother tongue as a school subject – this is particularly true of the Caprivi region and for the Khoekhoegowab-speaking students.
- Only 20% of all students spontaneously listed reading as an activity they engage in after school hours.
- Homework takes up most of the time of students after school.
- Equal time is spent on sports, reading and playing after school.
- Reading was ranked 1st - 4th by 60% of the students as an after-school activity they engage in. (The results described in 5.4.6 and 5.4.7 should be viewed with caution as far as reading for pleasure as an after school activity is concerned.)
- In the final analysis, only 22.4% of students could be classified as readers.
- 18.8% of the total respondents are mainly story readers and 3.6% are mainly general readers.

As anticipated, readers form a minority of the students. It is to be expected that school results will not improve while this is the case. The overall results suggest that the majority of students are not motivated to read.

6. Results of Student Questionnaire Part 2 – The Readers

6.1 Introduction

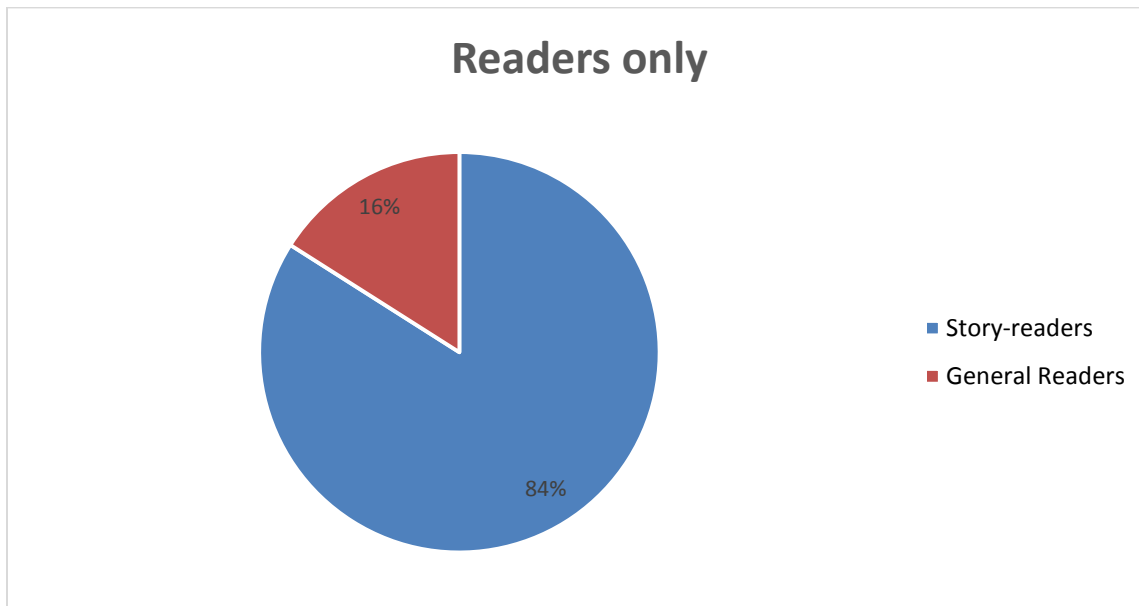
In section 5 the procedures to identify readers and non-readers were explained. Readers were divided into readers of mainly fiction (story-readers) and non-fiction (general readers). See Figure 43.

From the above it is clear that more than $\frac{3}{4}$ (77.6%) of the sample were non-readers. The 22.4% of readers were sub-classified into story-readers, 264 (18.8%) and general readers, 50 (3.6%) of the total sample population.

Though all 1402 respondents completed Part 2 of the questionnaire (Appendices 5 & 7) of the questionnaire, only the readers – 314 questionnaires – were analysed for this section, thus 22.4% of the total respondents. This should be taken into account throughout data interpretation.

Of the total readers (314) the majority were readers of stories:

Figure 45: Readers only: story-readers and general readers



Part 2 gauged the attitude of readers towards reading (stories or non-fiction), the kind of topics, characters and themes they like to read about, and the criteria they use when

choosing a book. It also ascertained where readers get the books from, who motivates them to read and in which languages they read. Finally some questions focused on whether stories are read or told to them and if they listen to stories on the radio. The 25 questions, though fairly similar, focused either on general reading or on story reading and were handed out in two separate sets.

The questions and/or results that differ markedly have been analysed separately for general and story-readers. The results of all questions that are the same for both story-readers and general readers have been put together and will be discussed together. As indicated in section 3, four of the 25 questions (9, 12, 15, and 20) were included as distractors and though interesting, they were not specific to the research. These will not be discussed.

6.2 Readers and non-readers in rural and urban schools; in well-resourced, reasonably resourced and poorly resourced schools

The teachers' questionnaire (see section 4) contained questions which enabled the researchers to classify schools included in the study as well-, reasonably or poorly resourced. Before further analysis of the questionnaires of readers, the status of all respondents and the resourcing status of the 36 schools are summarized. The rural/urban settings of schools as it emerged from part one, will also be shown.

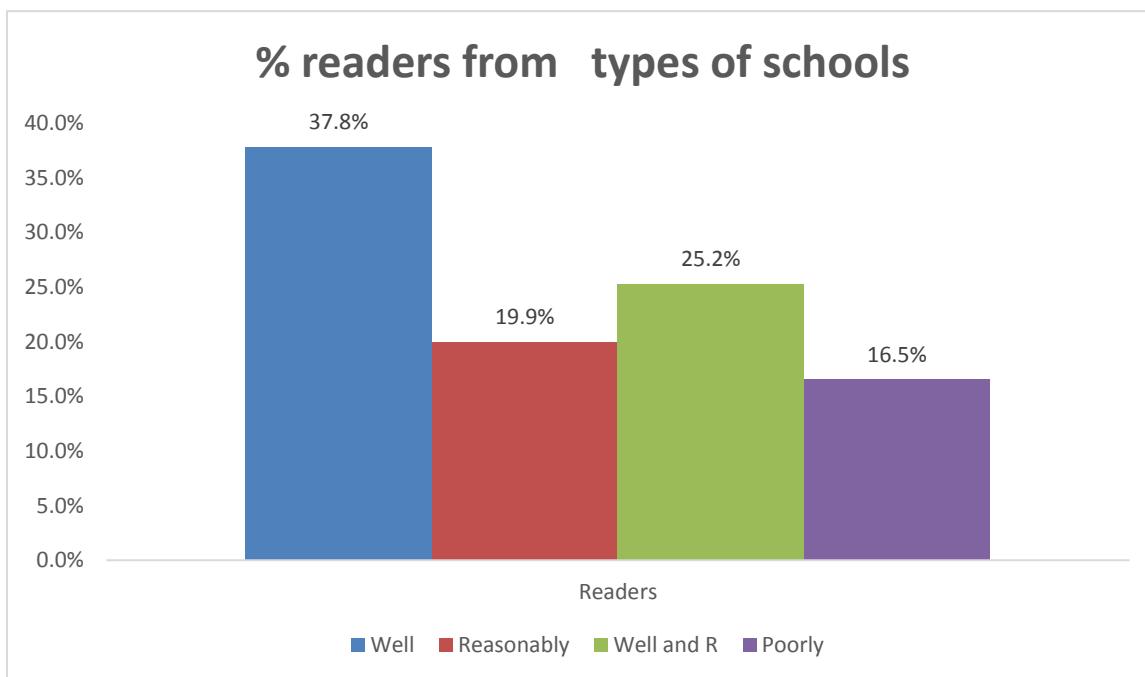
Figure 46: Readers (story-readers and general readers) and Non-Readers in well-resourced, reasonably resourced and poorly resourced schools.

Readers and Non-Readers in well-, reasonably and poorly resourced schools



WR = well-resourced; RR = reasonably resourced; PR = poorly resourced

Figure 47: Percentages of readers only in well-, reasonably and poorly resourced schools



WR = well-resourced; RR = reasonably resourced; PR = poorly resourced

The figure above shows that 37.8% of the total students from well-resourced schools are readers; and 19.9% of the total students from reasonably resourced schools. The average of these two groups of readers put together renders 25.2% of readers in well- and reasonably resourced schools. Only 16.5% of students from poorly resourced schools are readers.

The study thus shows that well-resourced schools produce the most readers and poorly resourced schools the least readers. Most non-readers are in poorly resourced schools (83.6% of the respondents), i.e. there are only 16.5% readers in those schools. The over-all results however, are not good either. Even in well-resourced schools there are still 62.1% non-readers and only 37.8% readers. The results of reasonably resourced schools hardly differ from the poorly resourced schools. There are 80% non-readers and only 19.9% readers in these schools.

Figures 48 and 49: Readers (story-readers and general readers) and non-readers in rural and urban schools

Figure 48: Readers and Non-Readers in rural and urban schools

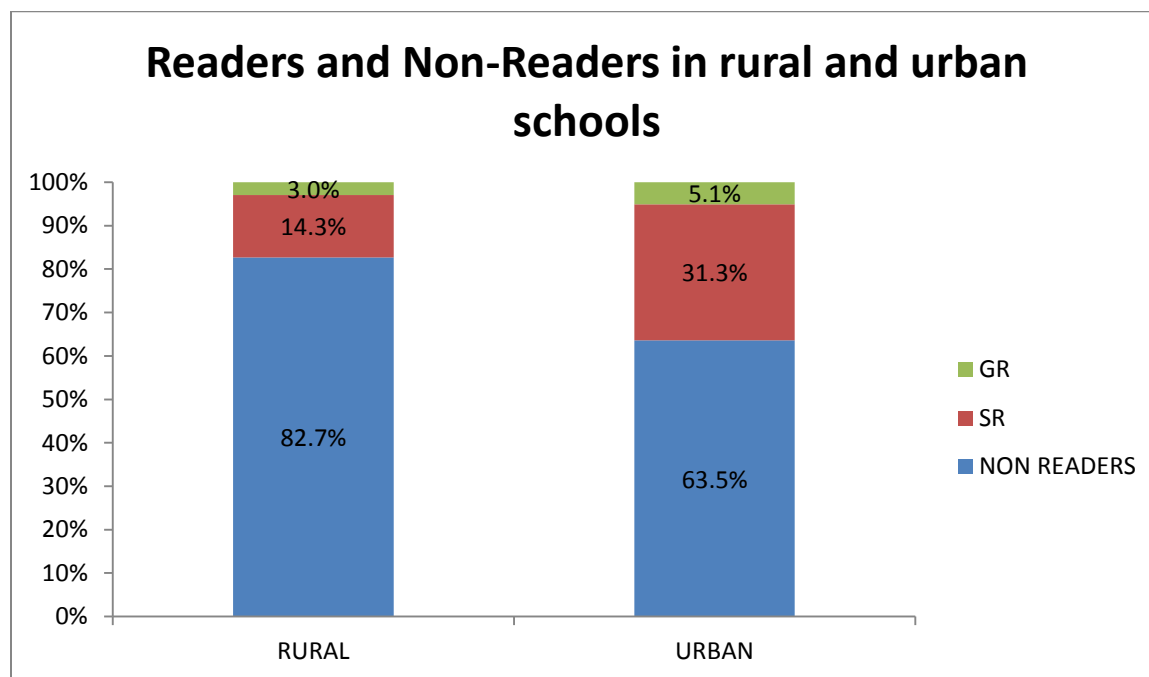
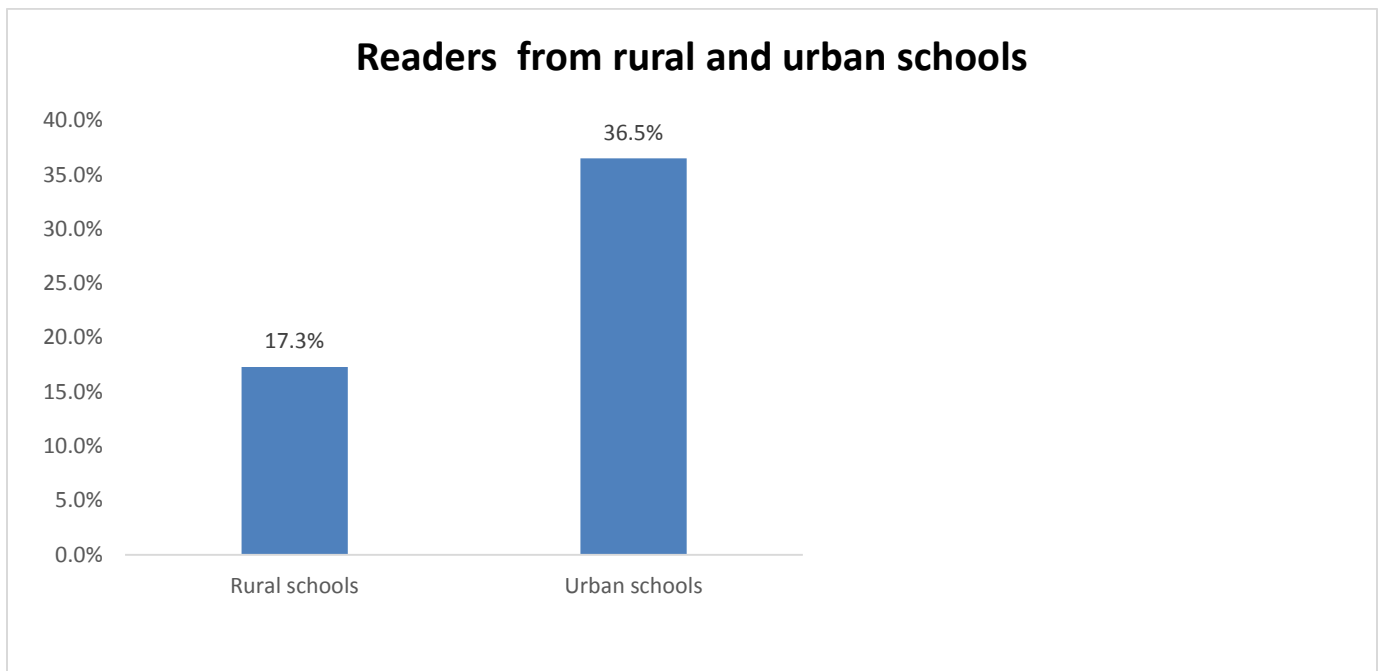


Figure 49: Readers from rural and urban schools



The figure above shows that 17.3% of the total students in rural schools (12.6% of 1402) emerged as readers, while 36.5% of the total urban students (9.8% of all 1402) were readers. Alarming, 82.7% of rural and 63.5% of urban schools were non-readers. Most readers were readers of stories. The number of general readers across all types of schools was very low.

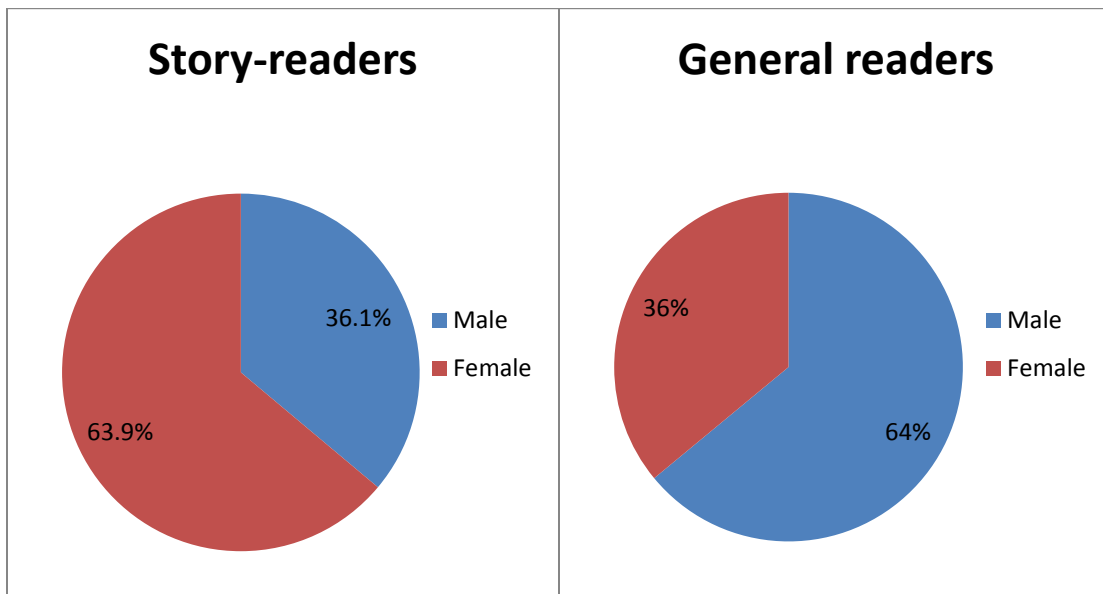
The study shows that the resource status of schools and their rural/urban situation are factors of respondents reading or not reading, but we do not claim that these could be the only factors that determine whether students read or not. Other factors might be the availability or non-availability of reading material, qualifications of teachers, their language proficiency, the language proficiency and qualifications of parents, their example (do the parents read themselves) and their socio-economic status. The survey of teachers, EMIS statistics and the use of results from other studies might shed more light on some of the possible factors that either encourage or inhibit reading (see sections 2 and 9). Other research showed that readers are lost when they reach the age 12 – 14; this could also be a contributing factor in this case.

The same percentage of rural students (82.7%) as those in poorly resourced schools (83.6%) does not read and only about 17% are readers in both figures. This does not mean that there are no well-resourced schools in the rural areas but they are very few – only one in our study. Even though the study clearly shows that there are more readers in the schools of urban areas, it is again a matter of concern that there is such a high percentage of non-readers. This percentage (63.5%) is almost the same as the number of non-readers in well-resourced schools (62.1%).

(In section 7 tests of independence for relationships between variables are discussed, among others whether there were significant differences between rural and urban students, as well as whether resources at schools influenced respondents' reading behaviour/responses).

6.3 Readers and Gender

Figure 50: Gender – readers only

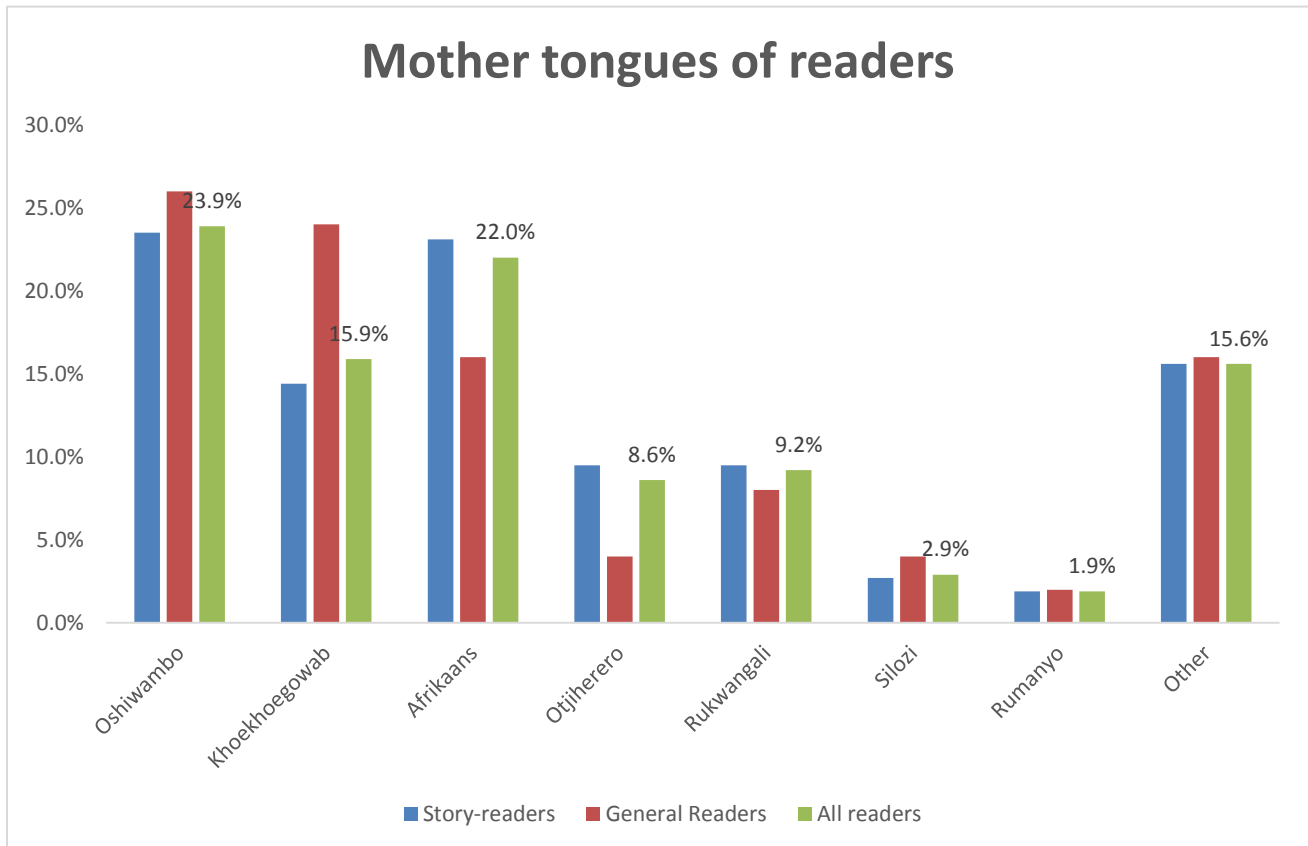


The figures above show that most female respondents prefer reading stories (168 out of 263 - 63.9%), while male respondents form the majority among general readers (32 out of 50 - 64%), i.e. they prefer non-fiction.

6.4 Readers and Language

6.4.1 Readers and mother tongue

Figure 51: Mother tongues - readers only



The figure above again shows that readers form a very small part of the total sample; general readers forming an even smaller part of the community of readers. In the total sample of 1402 respondents, 30.25% were Oshiwambo speaking, 15.4% Khoekhoegowab, 13.2% Afrikaans, 10.6% Otjiherero and 9.8% Rukwangali. These languages are dominant in the regions visited but in figure 50 above only the mother tongues of the *readers* are given.

The Oshiwambo speakers thus form the biggest part of the *readers* (23.9%), followed by Afrikaans (22%) and Khoekhoegowab (15.9%) speakers. Otjiherero seems lower than expected (8.6%). The Afrikaans mother tongue speakers strongly emerged as *readers*. This was to be expected as they came mostly from urban schools in Khomas. From the

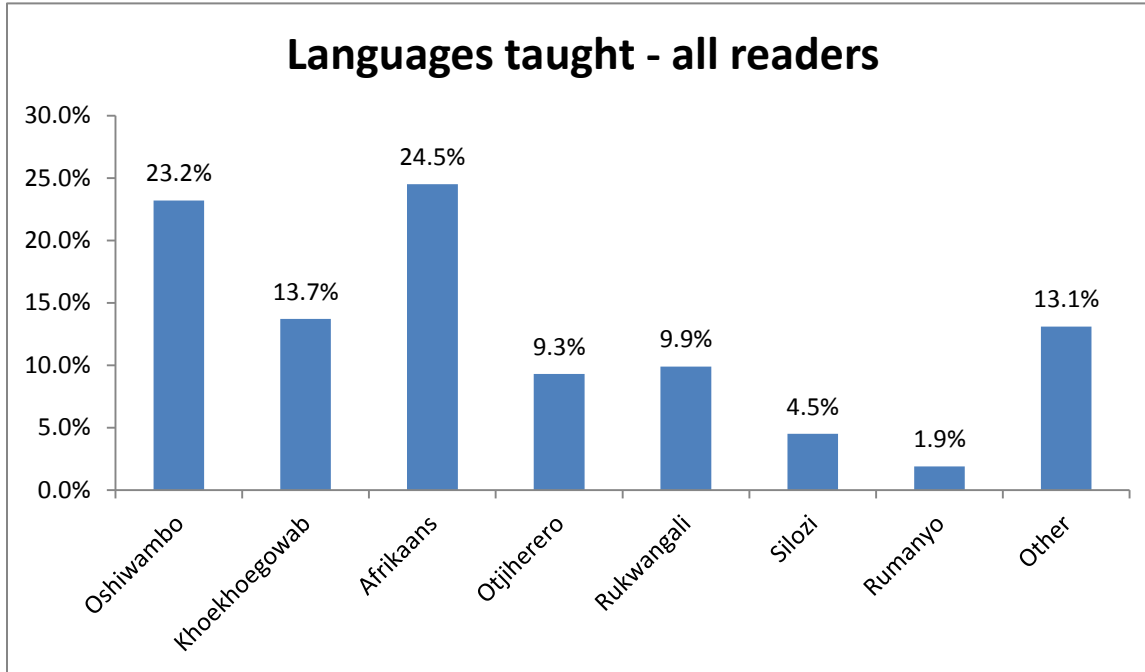
few general readers that emerged, the highest numbers are among the Oshiwambo and Khoekhoegowab language groups.

A crucial factor of reading patterns is the availability of reading materials in the various languages, whether books, newspapers or magazines. For the speakers of most of the indigenous languages, the lack of printed materials is a severe inhibiting factor of reading. Most books in the indigenous languages are school books. Some publishing in the indigenous languages is done by the daily English and Afrikaans newspapers. They print pages in each of the major local languages at certain intervals. The Bible in the mother tongue remains the most important book and for the smaller languages, more or less the only book available to read. For the Oshiwambo language group, commanding the largest ethnic language, there are a small number of fictional titles, and some other print materials such as the newspaper, Omukwetu.

No major conclusions can be drawn from Figure 50 above, as books and print materials available in Namibia are mainly in English and Afrikaans. Another reason for not being able to draw conclusions is because the sample was taken from languages taught in the schools selected for the study and not from mother tongues.

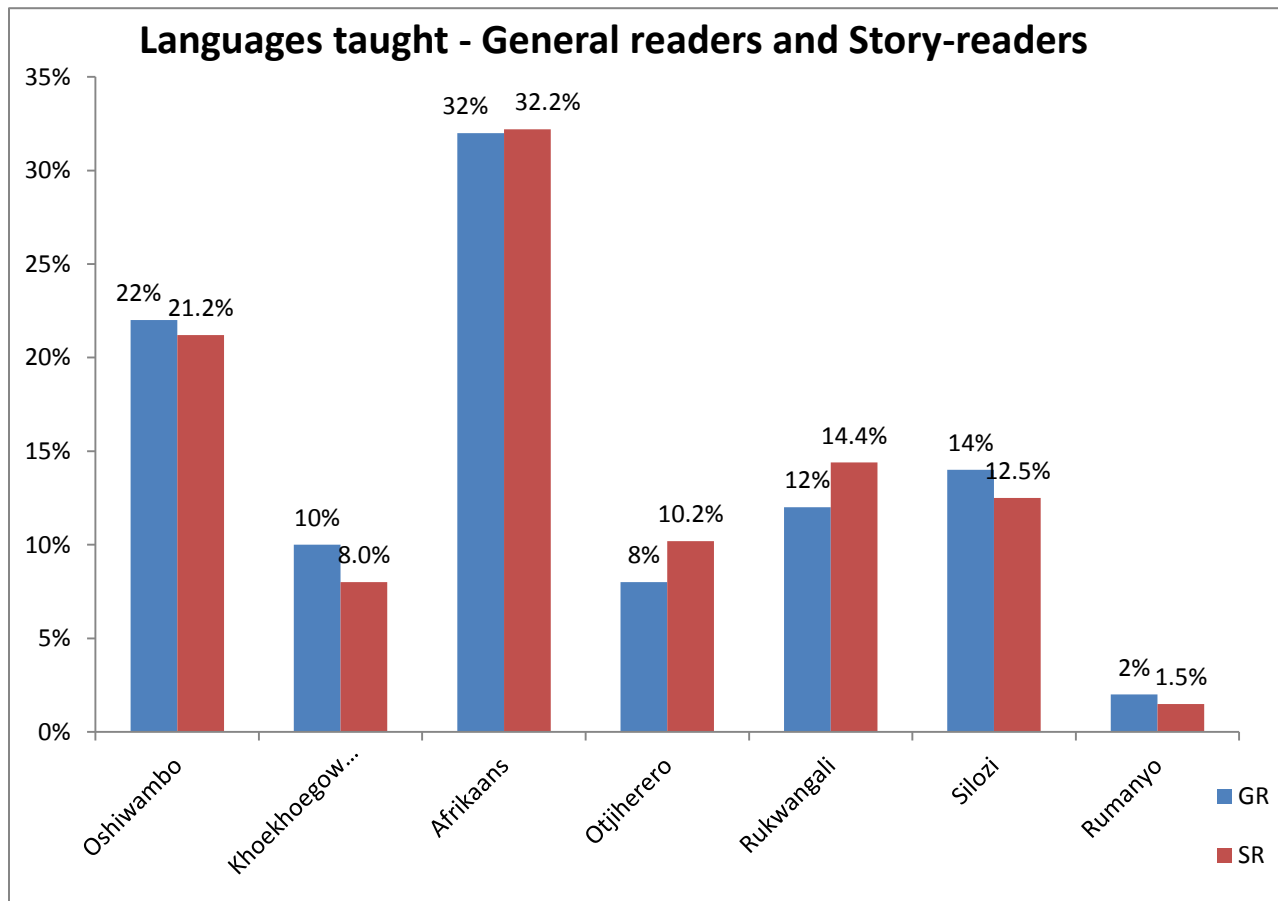
6.4.2 Readers and languages taught

Figure 52: Languages taught - all readers



Afrikaans is studied as a local language in multilingual schools where none of the other languages is dominant; this explains the relatively high percentage of students who study the language. All other languages not provided for in the listing were grouped under *Other*.

Figure 53: Languages taught - General readers and Story-readers



In the total sample, seven languages were taught as school subjects in the different regions. There are differences in how these respondents were represented in the total respondents, and how they emerged as readers.

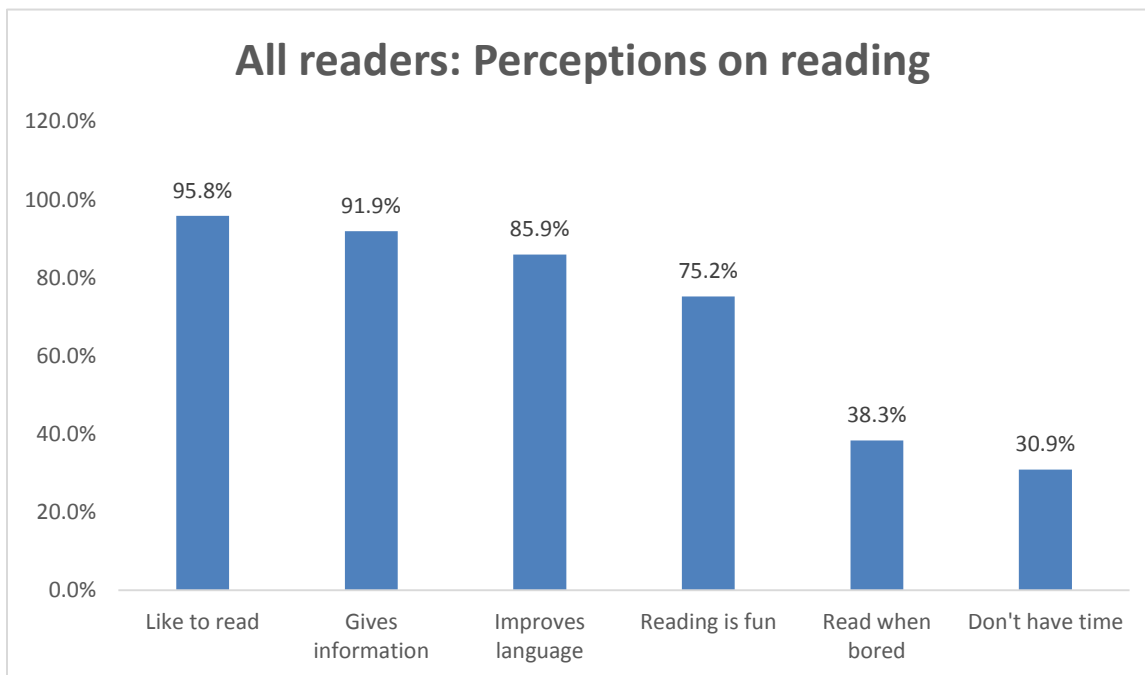
With reference to Figure 52 and Figure 31 in Section 5.2.3, while 29.2% of *all respondents* were from the Oshiwambo classrooms, 23.2% of the *readers* were Oshiwambo students. 20% of *all respondents* were from Afrikaans classrooms, and 24.5% of the *readers* were from these Afrikaans classrooms. 10.8% of all respondents studied Khoekhoegowab and Otjiherero, and of these students 13.7% and 9.3% respectively emerged as *readers*.

Students who were taught Afrikaans now form the biggest percentage of the readers. But as is the case above, conclusions can also not be drawn from figure 52 as e.g. most Afrikaans students were from the Khomas region and also came from urban schools. Also, as mentioned, the availability or non-availability of reading materials in the various languages impacts on reading patterns. Many Namibians are taught to read in both English and Afrikaans and other than reading in these languages, they can read very little else, even though these languages are not their mother tongues.

6.5 What respondents think about reading (Question 6)

Question 6 was basically the same for general readers and story-readers. The aim with the question was to ascertain whether the respondents regarded reading as an activity done for enjoyment, or more for educational purposes (improving language or for information).

Figure 54: Perceptions on reading (All readers)



No real differences between general and story-readers were found. 95.8% of all respondents stated that they like to read. The functional value of reading is also rated

very high: 91.9% indicated that reading improves their knowledge – it gives information. 84.9% felt that reading improves language skills.

4.2% of all readers indicated that they do not like to read, while some respondents seemed to think that liking an activity does not mean that it is fun to do it. Only 75.2% of readers indicated that reading is fun. They only read for enjoyment as a fourth priority. This was the only response where a substantial difference between story- and general readers was evident. While 78.6% of story-readers read for enjoyment, only 57.1% of general readers indicated this.

As far as time available for reading is concerned, only 30.9% indicated that time is a problem. 38.3% indicated that they read when they are bored.

In general, respondents had very positive perceptions of reading. However, the functional value of reading was rated higher than reading for enjoyment and fun.

Generally, these results should not give reason to optimism as they constitute the opinions of only the *readers*, namely 22.4% of the total sample.

6.6 What readers like to read (Question 7)

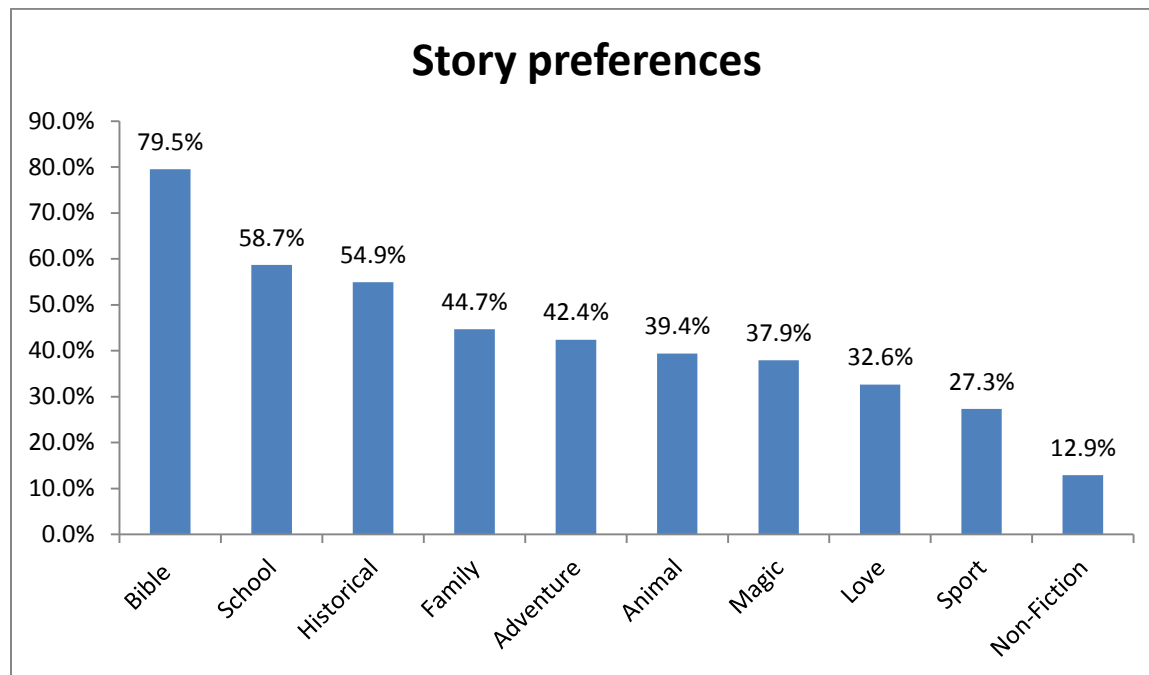
Separate questions were administered to general and story-readers.

6.6.1 Story-readers

Story-readers were asked to mark the four kinds of stories they like to read about most. Respondents were not requested to rank their choices in any particular order. They could choose between different themes or content areas, e.g. Bible stories, love stories, stories with magical elements (or fantasy), stories about animals or where animals play an important part, family stories, historical stories, sports or school stories, adventure stories or non-fiction.

The figure below gives an indication of the preferences of respondents:

Figure 55: Story preferences



The themes that were most popular with the Namibian story-readers included in the study are as follows:

Bible stories were chosen by 79.5%, school stories by 58.7%, and stories set against a time in history by 54.9%. Slightly less popular were family stories (44.7%) and adventure stories (42.4%). Animal stories and fantasy were included by 39.4% and 37.9% of the respondents respectively. The least popular stories were love stories (32.6%) and stories where sports play an important role (27.3%). A preference for non-fiction was, as expected, expressed by only 12.9% of the story-readers. These respondents are possibly students who read both fiction and non-fiction.

These preferences are important findings. As can be seen from section 6.3, there were more girls, and from section 6.2, there were also more rural respondents in the group of story-readers. Given the characteristics of this story-reader group, these findings at this stage could be regarded as more true for *girls* and for *rural students*. It will however, be necessary to indicate whether the differences between boys and girls and between rural and urban students are statistically relevant, before recommendations for e.g.

classroom collections and school libraries can be made (See sections 7.1 and 7.2.). The Chi-square test of independence was done to determine if variables are independent or related in section 7. In the analysis of *gender* by answers to questions, no significances were found. No significant differences between the reading behaviour and preferences of girls and boys as regards story reading could thus be proven. In the analysis of the rural:urban situation by answers to questions, some significant differences were proven (see section 7.2).

6.6.2 General readers

General readers were asked to mark the four kinds of topics they like to read about most. Respondents were not requested to rank their choices in any particular order. They could choose between topics such as sports, machines, cooking, animals, hobbies, other countries, cars, computers and gardening.

The figure below gives an indication of the preferences of respondents:

Figure 56: Reading preferences of general readers

The percentages who chose a particular topic were generally lower (ranging between 43% and 62%) than for story-readers. General readers indicated that they like to read about most of these topics, and did not have one favourite topic.

The topics that were most popular with the Namibian readers of non-fiction included in the study were as follows:

Cars and sports were the most popular and chosen by 62% of general readers, followed by animals and hobbies, chosen by 60%. Computers were chosen by 50%. Less popular were machines (44%), cooking (44%) and gardening (43%). It is clear that there are no big differences between the topics preferred.

These preferences are important findings but to make recommendations for e.g. school libraries and classroom collections it will, as for story-readers, be necessary to establish whether the differences between boys and girls and between rural and urban students are statistically relevant (see section 7.1 and 7.2).

In the analysis of *gender* by answers to questions, no significances were found. No significant differences between the reading behaviour and preferences of girls and boys as regards non-fiction could thus be proven. In the analysis of rural:urban situation by answers to questions, some significant differences were proven (see section 7.2).

6.7 Reading in free time (Question 8)

This question attempted to ascertain how many hours per week students thought they were reading for enjoyment and relaxation. 28.2% of respondents indicated that they spend more than 5 hours per week, 32.4% indicated that they spend 3 - 5 hours per week, and 39.5% that they spend 1 - 2 hours per week on reading for enjoyment. The researchers observed that some students were uncertain what the term “hours per week” meant. They also observed (from the questions students asked) that they were afraid that a mathematical calculation was required, which they clearly could not attempt. 12.1% of story-readers and 28% of general readers did not attempt to answer this question. The results should therefore be viewed with caution, even though they appear fairly realistic.

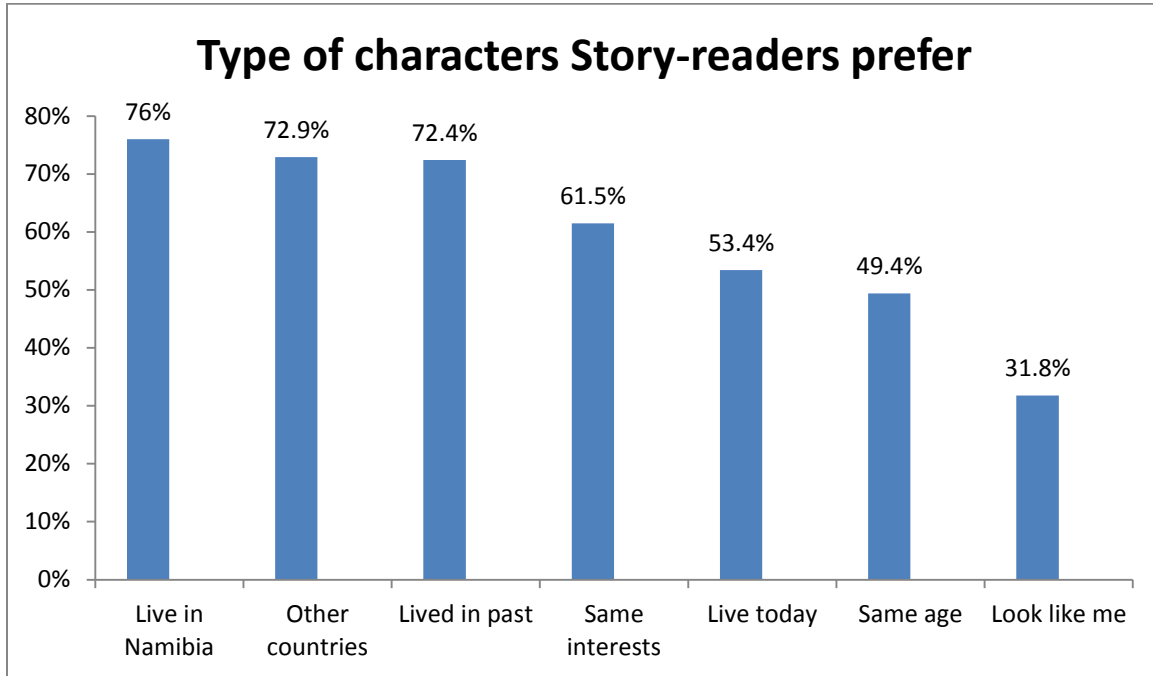
6.8 What readers like to read - Character and Topic (Question 10)

This question was formulated differently for story-readers and general readers.

Story-readers had to choose the characters they would like to read about. The possibilities included people who look different and are of a different culture; are Namibians; have the same interests, are of the same age or the same gender as the reader.

6.8.1 Story-readers

Figure 57: Type of characters story-readers prefer

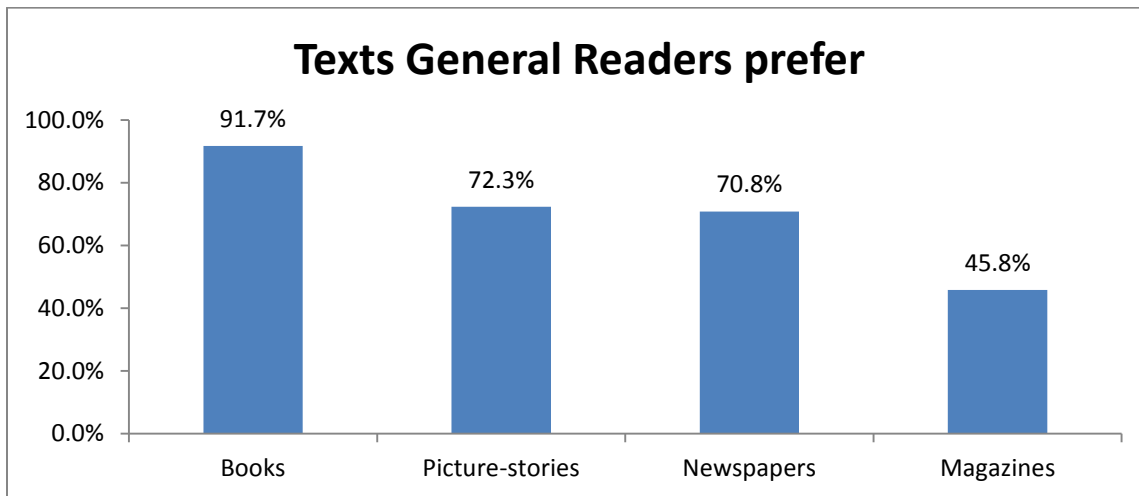


The results depicted in this figure are quite interesting: Story-readers were nearly equally attracted to characters who are fellow Namibians (76%) AND those who live in other countries (72.9%). The next feature that appealed to them most, was characters living in the past (a story presented against a historical backdrop) (72.4%). Characters living today (53.4%) and are the same age (49.4%) were next, with characters that look the same as the readers scored lowest (31.8%). Results show that story-readers were open for stories about people who are different from them or who lived during times unknown to them.

6.8.2 General readers

General readers had a different Question 10 in which they had to choose the different text types they preferred to read, be it books, magazines, newspapers or picture-stories.

Figure 58: Text preferred by general readers



As seen on this histogram, books were favoured (91.7%) with picture-stories (72.3%) and newspapers (70.8%) second and magazines last on their list (45.8%). Newspapers and picture-stories are available countrywide; some even as mentioned, contain pages in the indigenous languages. This might have contributed to the popularity of these texts. Magazines are probably not readily available in schools or in the homes.

6.9 Reasons for choosing a book (Question 11)

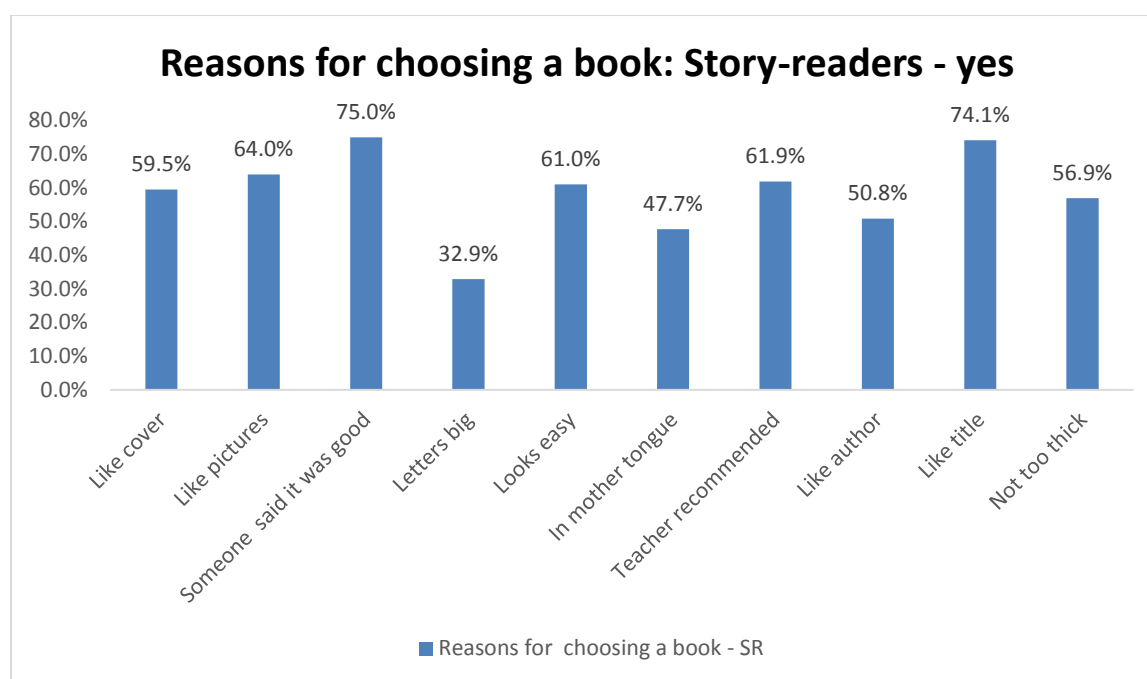
This question had as aim to gauge the criteria students used to select a book for reading. It covered areas like the visual appearance of a book (cover, pictures, letter type, volume/thickness), as well as issues such as the recommendation of peers or teachers, as well as language factors, (difficulty, specific language) and preference for books by a specific author.

Story-readers had 10 options to consider, while general readers had 8. Two options (choosing a book on the basis of the author or on the basis of an interesting title) were only available for story-readers as can be seen in the figure below.

Both groups could add other criteria by means of an open question but almost no respondents used the open question.

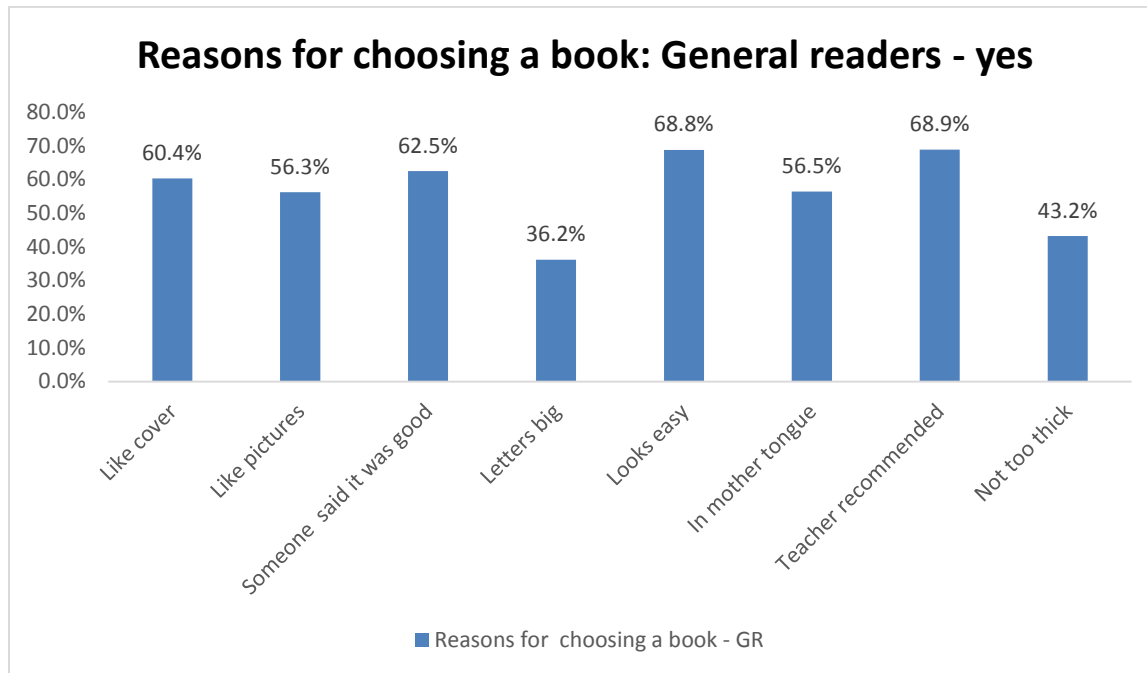
Responses were as follows:

Figure 59: Reasons for choosing a book – Story-readers



As can be seen above, story-readers chose a book mainly on recommendation from someone – possibly a peer (75%) - and on the title (74.1%). Popular considerations were also the pictures (64%), the teachers' recommendation (61.9%), because it looked easy (61%), or because the cover looked inviting (59.5%). Lower scores on the other options indicate that these factors were less important: the author (50.8%); the fact that it is in the mother tongue (47.7%), the thickness of the book (43.1%) and the letter type (32.9%).

Figure 60: Reasons for choosing a book – General readers



General readers mainly chose a book on the basis of the teachers recommendation (68.9%), because it looked easy (68.8%), another person’s recommendation – possibly a peer (62.5%) and on the basis of the cover (60.4%).

Lower scores were given to the role of pictures (56.3%) or mother tongue (56.5%) in choosing a book, and even lower scores for letter size (36.3%) and thickness of the book (43.2%).

As can be seen from the figure, similar responses were obtained on some options for both groups. A recommendation from another person played a big role, however the teacher’s recommendation was more important when choosing non-fiction. The recommendation from another person was the most important consideration for choosing fiction.

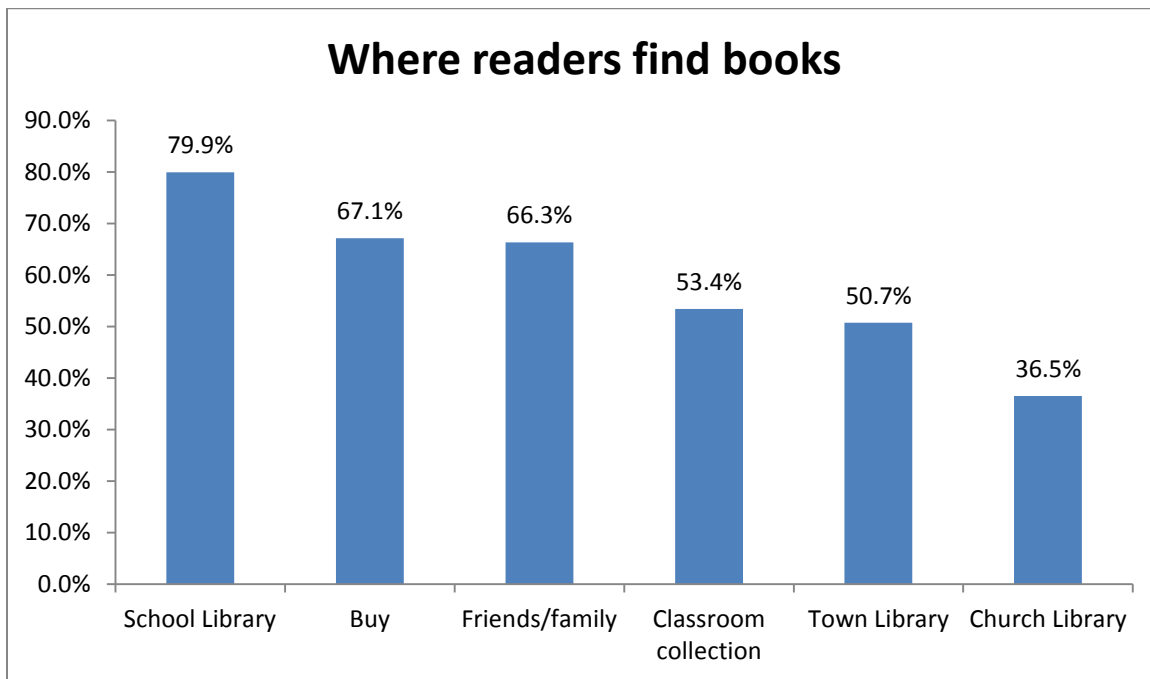
Generally accessible and easy-to-read texts were important for both groups. Strangely, the role of pictures was more important for story-readers than for general readers. The factors that were rated low for both groups were mother tongue texts, the thickness of a book and a larger letter type.

Based on the above, some recommendations for reading materials were made in the final section.

6.10 Where readers find books (Question 13)

Question 13 was formulated nearly the same for story-readers and general readers and ascertained where story and general readers get *storybooks/ books* to read. Providers varied from libraries and classroom collections to friends and family. There was also the option to buy.

Figure 61: Where do readers find books?



The school library is the main source for books (79.9%). This is an important but disconcerting finding, if one considers the results from the teachers' questionnaire regarding the poor state of school libraries.

Getting books from friends or family is an important source of books (66.3%). Buying books also yielded fairly high scores (66.3%). One should keep in mind that these responses come mainly from the more affluent areas where these are options. (The interviews conducted with readers "confirmed" this. This behaviour can be seen as typical in more affluent surroundings.

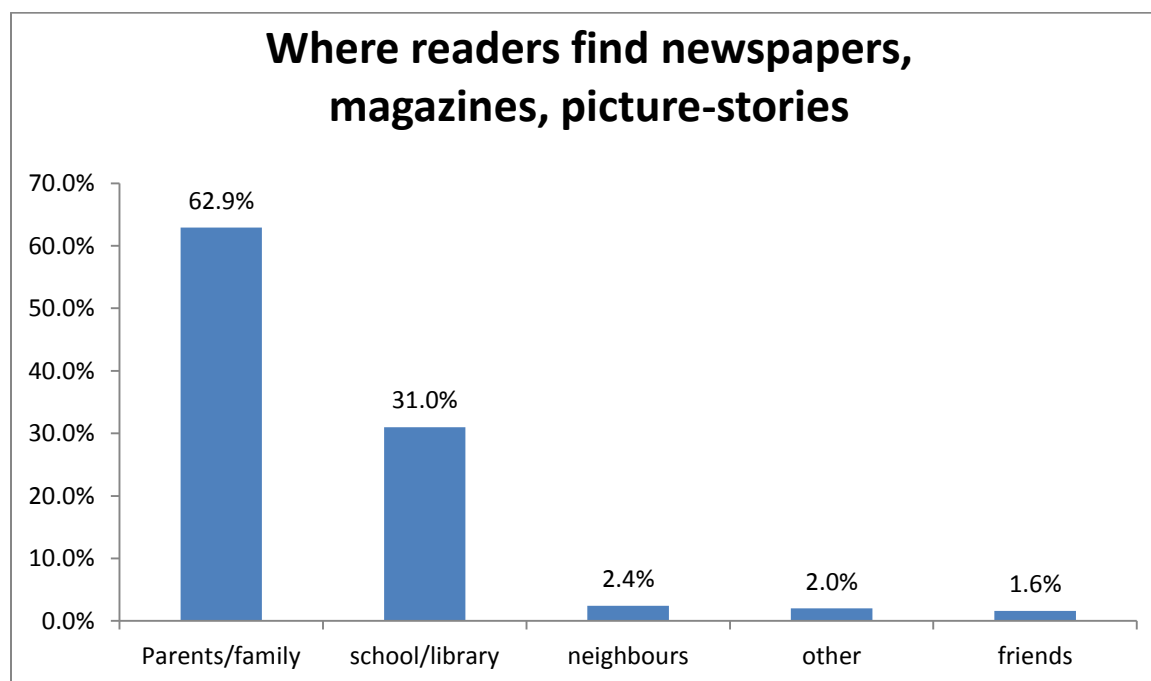
Lower scores were given to the town library (50.7%) and class room collections (53.4%). Even for readers, these places do not really serve as sources of books.

Church libraries as a source of books obtained the lowest score (36.5%). This is also the only response where some measure of difference between story-readers and general readers were found. More story than general readers indicated this as a source of books but at 39.2% it remains a less frequent source of reading material. Church libraries mainly stock fiction for parishioners and mostly in areas where there are no other libraries, or no books in the mother tongue, e.g. German books in rural towns.

6.11 Where readers find newspapers, magazines, picture stories (Question 14)

Question 14 was an open question, connected to Question 13. Students thus were not prompted with suggestions in any way.

Figure 62: Where readers find newspapers, magazines and picture stories



The combined results of Story-readers and General readers showed that 62.9% get newspapers, magazines etc. from parents or family and only 31% from the school library. Only very small percentages indicated that these reading materials were available from neighbours, friends and others. It is interesting to see that these reading

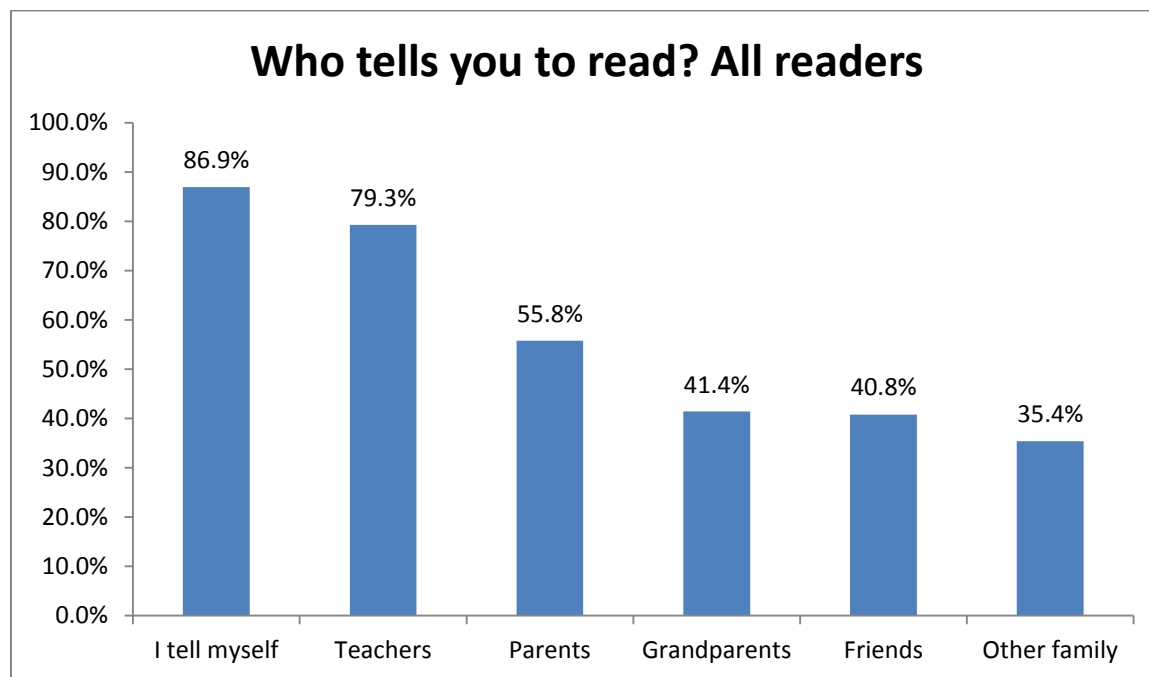
materials are more available at home than at the school. Given the results of question 10 of General readers this question possibly mostly reflect on *picture-stories* and *newspapers* than other types of material (See Figure 57).

6.12 Motivation to read (Question 16)

This question was aimed at establishing whether there were specific persons that motivated Grade 6 students to read. The most important persons (teachers, friends, parents, grandparents and other family) were listed. One other option captured the possibility that some students were natural readers, and did not need motivation. The same question was administered for both General readers and Story-readers.

The results for this question are given below:

Figure 63: Who tells you to read?



86.9% indicated that they love reading and do not need to be told to read. This response is justified, seeing that the results depict the behaviour of readers.

Teachers are the most influential persons when it comes to motivating students to read. 79.3% of the respondents indicated that it is teachers who tell them to read.

The influence of other persons is far lower. Parents have a higher score than grandparents and friends (55.8% compared to 41%), while other family obtained the lowest score (35.4%). Although other questions indicated the important role of friends' opinions when choosing a book, it seems fair that students will not "lecture" each other on the importance of reading. One would indeed rather expect this from teachers and parents.

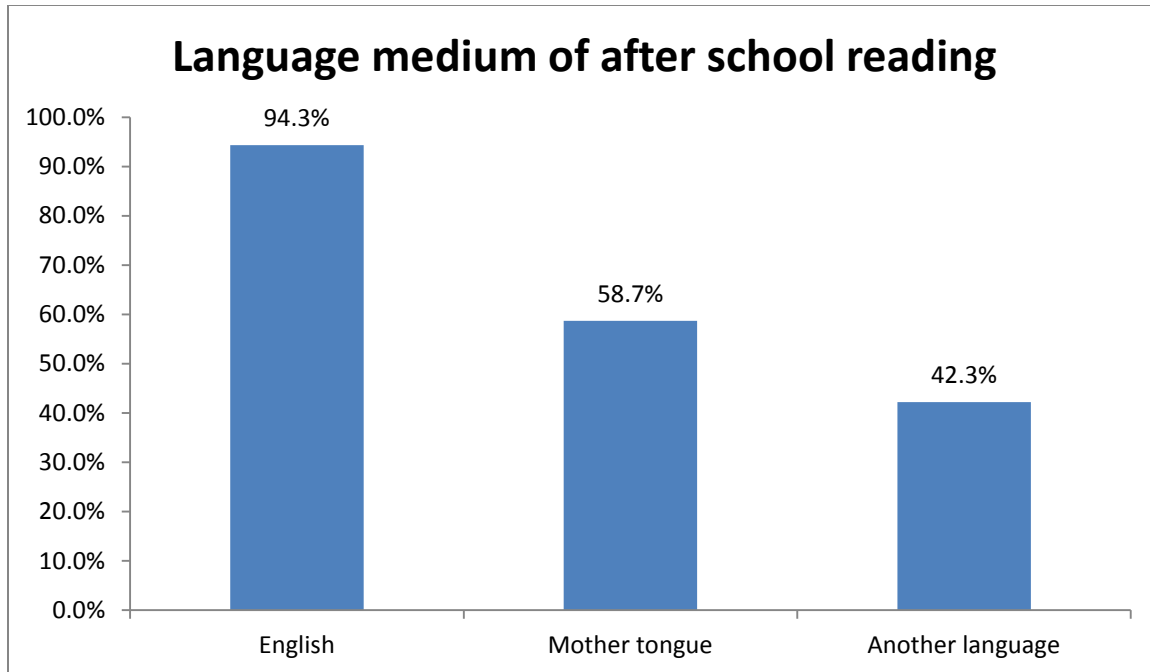
The result of this question underlines the very important role teachers have in molding and influencing their charges to become avid readers. It is therefore very crucial that teachers are very well trained in techniques toward reading motivation. The importance of teachers as role models should not be underestimated.

6.13 Language medium of after school reading (Question 17)

Question 17 aimed to ascertain in which languages students read after school – thus including academic reading as well as reading for enjoyment. General readers and Story-readers received the same question.

Results were as follows:

Figure 64: Language medium of after school reading



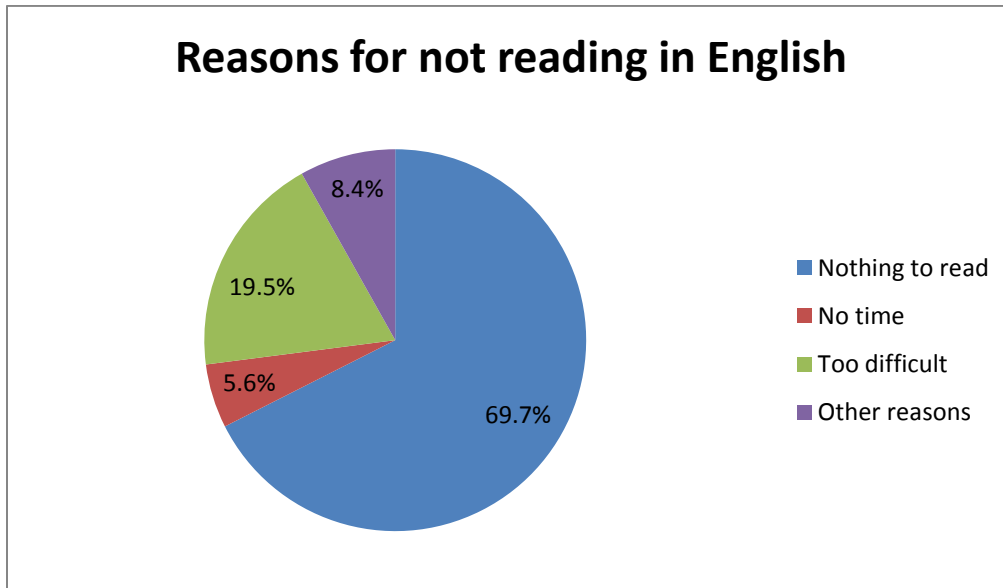
English is used by 94.3% of all readers; thus far more than any other language when students read after school. The mother tongue is also used, but only by 58.2% of respondents. The reason for this can of course be that the students have access to mostly English materials. Their school text books are mostly in English, far more trade books are available in English than in other languages, and the largest parts of the most popular newspapers are in English.

It was not expected that such a large number of students would indicate that they also read in languages other than the mother tongue, namely 42.3%. The results from previous questions did indicate that not all students study their mother tongue. Some are obliged or choose to study a different language, e.g. many Khoekhoegowab speakers study Afrikaans and speakers of several Caprivi languages study the lingua franca of the region, Silozi. Sometimes their mother tongue is not offered at the school and sometimes their mother tongue does not even have an orthography, e.g. Subia and Sifwe. However, when asked to indicate the specific other language, very few students (only 22) responded. This response is too small to draw meaningful conclusions.

6.14 Reasons for not reading in English (Question 18)

This was an open question only for those respondents who do not read in English. Students had to formulate their own reasons.

Figure 65: Reasons for not reading in English



It is important to note that only 33 story-readers answered this question. 87.5% of respondents did not answer, thus they DO read in English (as shown in Figure 64, 94.3% reads in English). Of the 12.5% who responded, 69.7% indicated that the reason for not reading is the fact that they do not have anything to read. This is an important finding.

Only four of the 50 General readers answered this question. Thus 92% most possibly do read in English. Two readers indicated that English is too difficult and two that there is nothing to read.

Taking into account that the vast majority of readers (combining Story-readers and General readers) thus do read in English, 66.7% of respondents who do not read in English indicated that the main reason is that there is nothing to read, 19.5% indicated that English is too difficult and 5.6% indicated that they do not have time. 8.4% had other reasons.

6.15 Reasons for not reading in the mother tongue (Question 19)

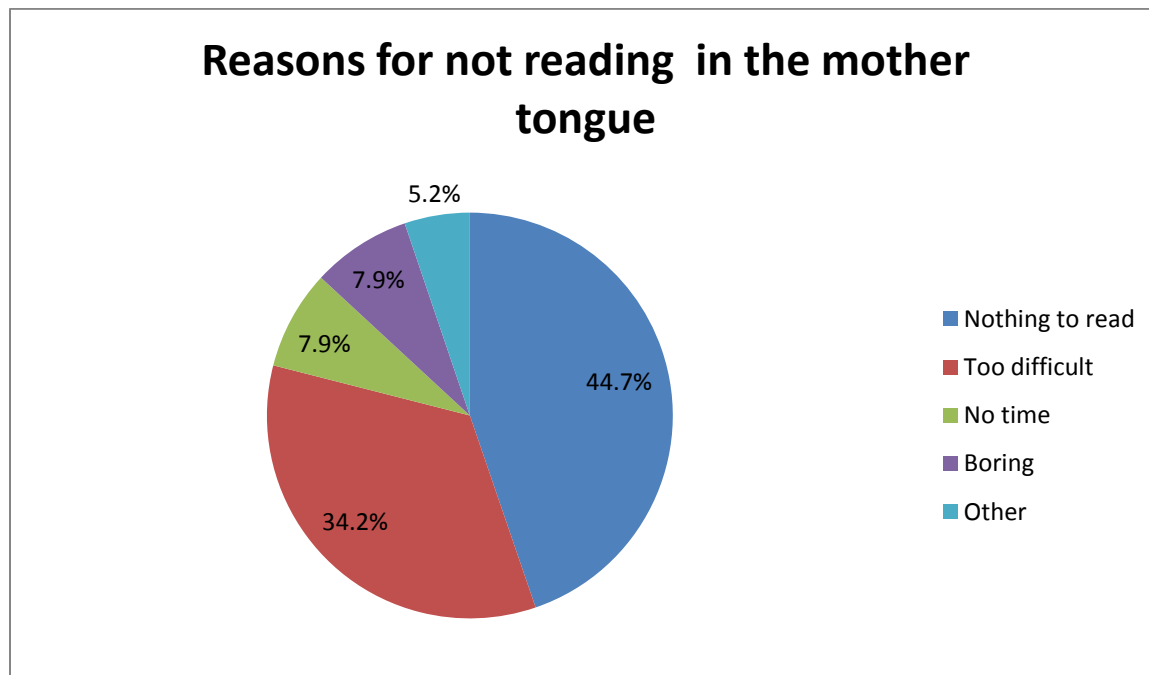
This was an open question. The response should be related to Question 17 – where 58.7% of respondents indicated that they read in the mother tongue. Only 13.3% (35) of the story- readers and only 8% (4) of the general readers answered this question.

Reasons for not reading in the mother tongue given by story-readers were: there is nothing to read (44.1%), it is too difficult (36.3%), there is no time (8.8%), it is boring (5.9%) and other reasons (5.8%).

Reasons given by the four general readers were: there is nothing to read (2), it is too difficult (1), and it is boring (1).

When these responses are combined, taking into account that 86.7% of story-readers and 92% of general readers did not answer this question, responses are as follows:

Figure 66: Reasons for not reading in the mother tongue



The most important reasons why students do not read in their mother tongues are thus twofold: there is nothing to read (indicated by 44.7% of respondents) and they find reading in the mother tongue too difficult (34.2%). Only small percentages indicated other reasons (no time, it is boring, and other reasons).

The results indicate that there is indeed very little material available for students to read in the mother tongues (see section 2.3). Improvement of the book production in Namibian languages seems important to support reading in the mother tongue.

No real negative responses towards the mother tongues were found. However, it is a cause for concern that the mother tongue seems too difficult for some readers to read.

Furthermore, the main reason why students do not read, both in English and in the mother tongues, is because they *simply have nothing to read*. Real efforts to give more access for students to trade books for enjoyment reading is a prerequisite if this situation is to be turned around. Their lack of proficiency in both English and the mother

tongue also causes them not to read. Reading is for them a laborious and complex task. (See Section 2.9 for a report on other studies in this regard).

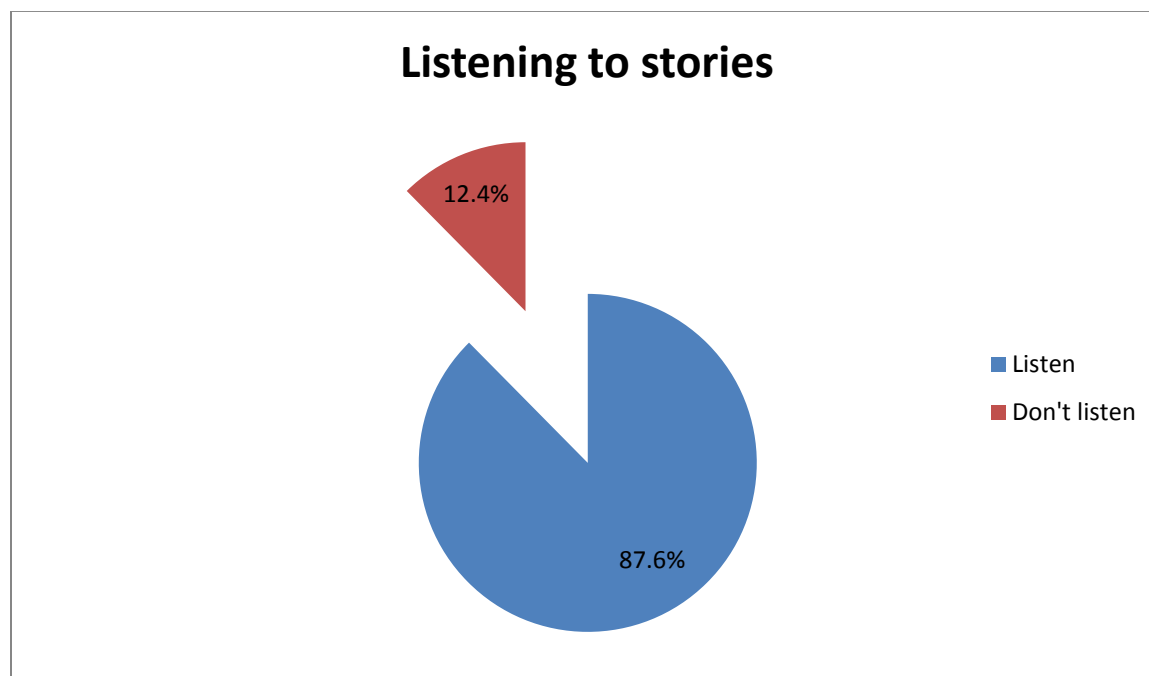
6.16 Storytelling and story-reading (Questions 21 – 25)

Questions 21 to 25 were included in the questionnaire to determine whether storytelling and/or reading still play a role in respondents' lives.

6.16.1 Storytelling

In Question 21, *Do you listen to somebody telling stories?* the combined answer from Story- readers and General readers indicates that 87.6% do listen to someone telling stories.

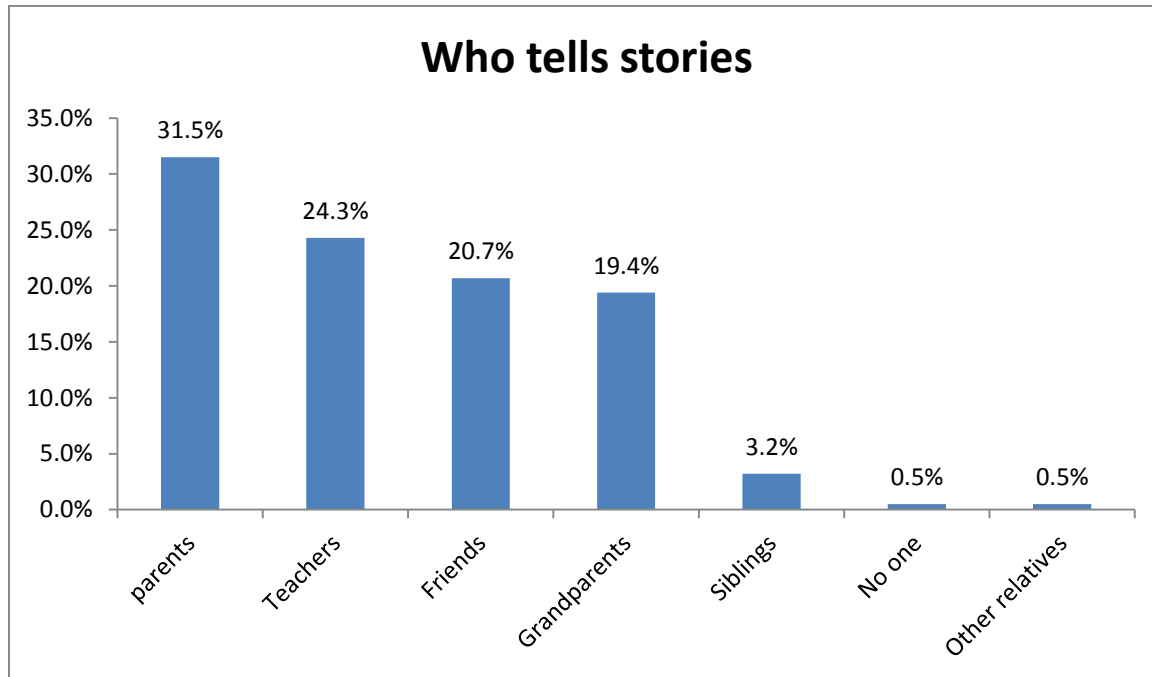
Figure 67: Listening to stories



In the follow up open Question 22, *Who tells you stories?* it is to be noted that 25% of Story- readers and 48% of General readers did not answer the question. Respondents reacted as follows: Of the two groups combined, 24.3% indicated that teachers tell stories; 31.5% that parents tell stories; 19.4% that grandparents tell stories. Other

relatives and siblings scored only 0.5% and 3.2% as being the people telling stories. Friends again scored higher – 20.7% - as the storytellers.

Figure 68: Who tells stories?



Although there is still some culture of storytelling left, this question matches the response from teachers that it is not very high. Parents and teachers are the main tellers of stories. This differs from the responses of teachers. 44.6% of teacher responses indicated that parents tell stories. They as language teachers indicated that nearly all of them tell stories to their students. Students gave a much lower score to teachers, but they evaluated storytelling of all teachers – not only the language teachers.

It needs to be mentioned that from the interviews it was evident that respondents might have misunderstood this question, and regarded stories as including any gossip, chatting or moralizing stories/lessons.

In all, the study shows that there is still some oral tradition left – parents, teachers, grandparents and friends still tell stories. Language teachers probably make more use of storytelling than the teachers of other subjects.

6.16.2 Listening to stories

Question 23 gauged listening to stories on the radio. Respondents only had to indicate, Yes or No.

Figure 69: Listening to stories on the radio

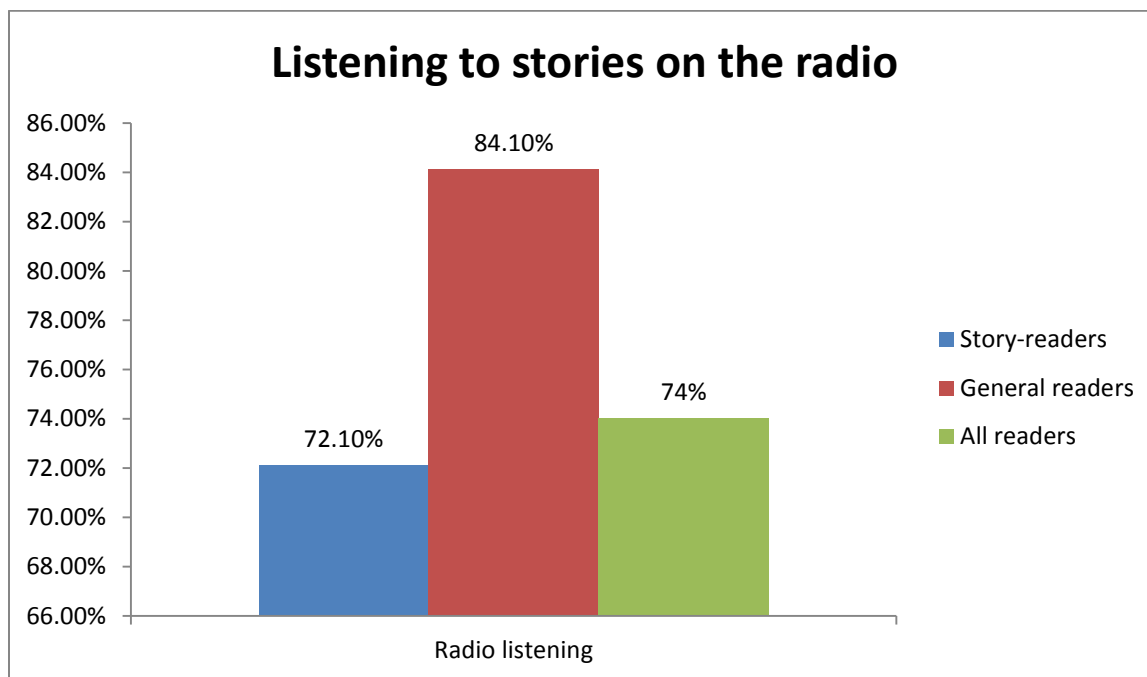


Figure 70: Radio listening: story-readers

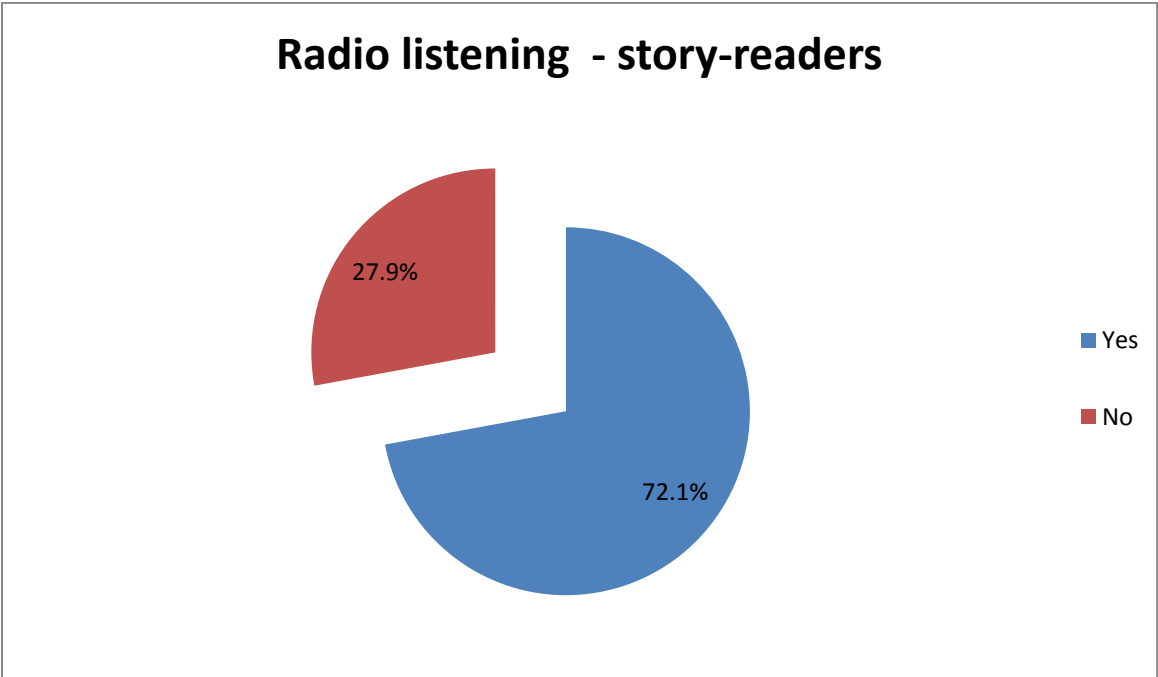
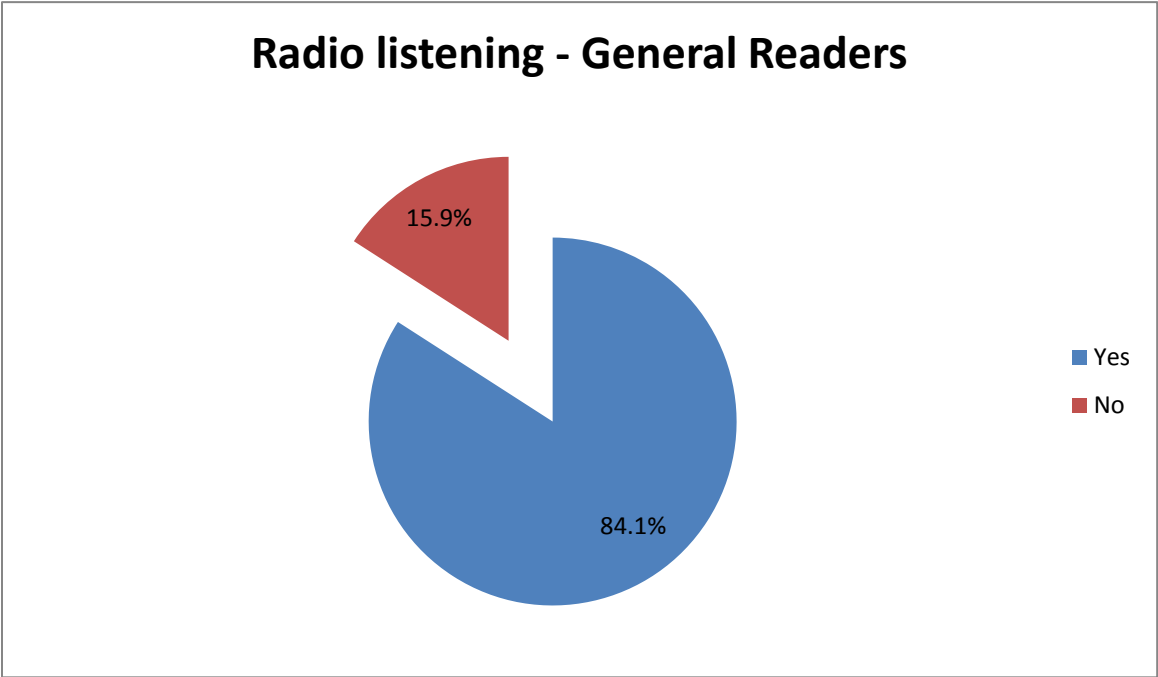


Figure 71: Radio listening: General readers

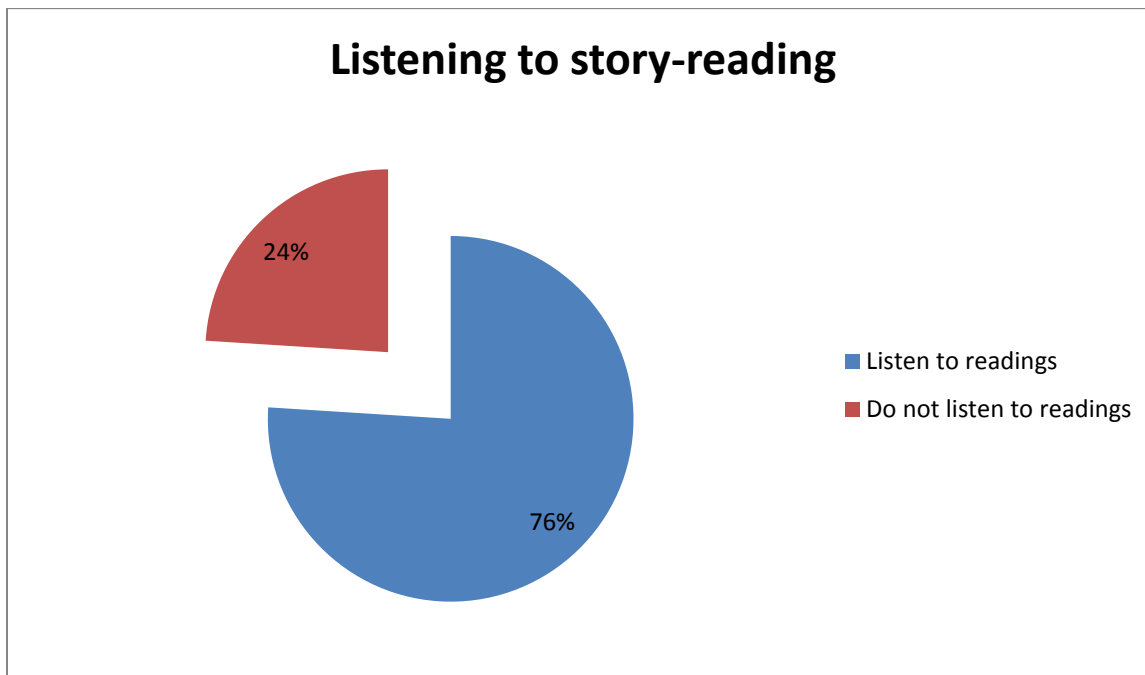


74% of all readers indicated that they listen to stories over the radio. It is interesting to observe that radio listening is more popular among General readers (84.1%) than among Story-readers (72.1%). General readers read non-fiction but it seems they prefer

to be entertained by fiction through the oral mode. 66.7% of teachers indicated that students listen to stories over the radio. There is therefore some similarity in the responses of teachers and students on this issue.

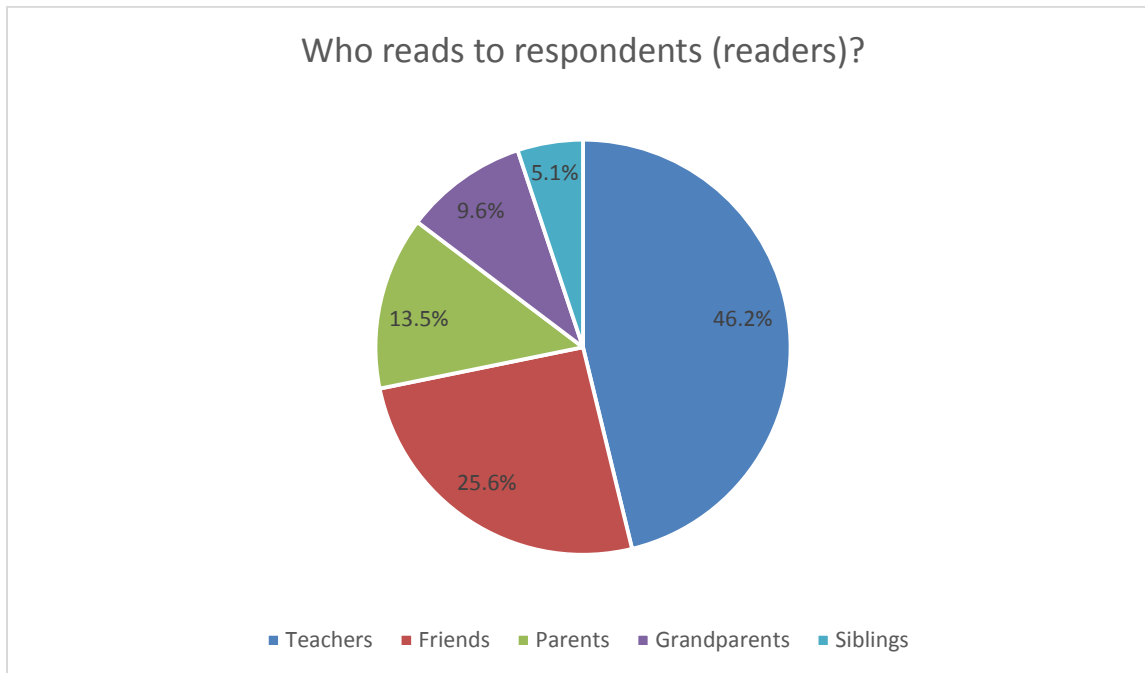
Question 24 gauged whether respondents (individually or in a group) sometimes listen to somebody reading stories.

Figure 72: Listening to story-reading



76% of all readers combined indicated that someone reads stories to respondents. This of course includes the teacher reading to students in a class situation, and one cannot therefore deduct that story-reading is necessarily well-established as an activity outside the classroom. This is confirmed by the results of question 25:

Figure 73: Who reads stories to children? (Question 25)



To the last question (25) about who reads to respondents, Story-readers and General readers both indicated that mostly teachers read stories to them (this was indicated by a total of 46.2% of respondents). It must however, be mentioned that there are substantial percentages of respondents who did not answer this question, i.e. 48.5% of story-readers and 58.0% of general readers.

6.17 Conclusions Part 2

The main finding of Part 1 of the students' survey was that 77.6% of the respondents do not read in their free time. They have therefore not been included in Part 2 of the study which deals with the reading behaviour and preferences of the remaining minority of 22.4% who are readers.

The following data summarise the results from part 2 of the questionnaire:

Only 22.4% of the total sample were readers.

Of the readers, the vast majority were readers of fiction – story-readers (84%). General readers are very few – 50 respondents, i.e. 16%.

Although percentages are alarmingly low, most readers visit well-resourced (37.8%) and urban (36.5%) schools.

Girls (63.9% of the story-readers) prefer stories and boys (64% of the general readers) prefer non-fiction.

Of our readers 95.8% indicated that they like to read, and mainly read for information (91.9%), to improve language (85.9%) and only as a third priority, because reading is fun (75.2%).

Most popular stories are Bible stories, school stories, and historical stories – above 50% of the story-readers indicated these.

Story-readers also like to read adventure stories, and stories about family life (between 40 and 50%) Furthermore story-readers like to read about characters who live in Namibia, and have the same interests as they have; however, they also want to read about characters from other times and countries – above 60%. Characters who live today are also important (above 50%).

Non-fiction topics that are popular include cars, sports, animals, hobbies and computers (choice of more than 50% of general readers)

General readers like all types of material such as books, picture-stories and newspapers (above 70%), but not really magazines (only 45.8% indicated this).

There are many similarities regarding the reasons given for choosing a book. Both Story and General readers choose books based on aspects like a recommendation (especially from teachers), because the book looks easy to read, and the cover looks inviting. Story-readers are also influenced by the pictures and the title (all percentages above 60%).

School libraries are the most important sources of storybooks – indicated by nearly 80% of readers. Respondents also get books from other people or they buy them (above 60%).

Libraries seem to be a less important source for non-fiction materials – only 31% indicated the library as a source. Non-fiction is rather obtained from parents or family – 63%. This is a worrisome result. A school library should be a storehouse of knowledge as 60% of the collection in school library should consist of non-fiction on a variety of subjects and topics of interest. As was shown by other studies Namibian school libraries do not stock sufficient and suitable informational literature. This seems to be the reason for above findings.

Teachers are the main motivators to read (79.3%). Although followed by parents, the score is much lower (55.8%). Peers are also important, but this was indicated by only (40.8%).

Students read mostly in English after school – indicated by a very high percentage – (94.3%). Reading in the mother tongue was indicated by 58.7%.

Reasons why respondents do *not* read in both English and the mother tongue have mostly to do with difficulty to read or because there is nothing to read.

High percentages on the existence of storytelling were found (87.6%). Mostly teachers and parents play a role as storytellers.

Students still listen to stories over the radio – as indicated by 74% of readers.

Teachers are by far the most important persons who read stories to students as indicated by 46.2%.

In the next section the data presented in this section will be analysed further. The reading behaviour and preferences of Grade 6 readers will be related to rural/urban factors and the status of resourcing of the schools they visit. It will be shown how the socio-economic status of readers impacts the provision of reading materials to these children.

7. Tests of Independence to test for relationships between variables

7.1 Introduction

The Chi-square test of independence was done to determine if variables are independent or related. The variables in the analysis were Area (rural and urban), Resources of schools (poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools), Gender and the various variables (answers to questions of Part 2 of the questionnaire as also discussed in section 6).

As stated by Black (2003) and Welman et al. (2005) and as argued in Section 3, the researchers are aware that, even if statistically relevant differences between variables were found, it cannot be claimed that they have a causal relationship, i.e. we cannot necessarily state that the one factor is caused by the other.

In the analysis of gender by answers to questions, no significances were found and therefore it will not be reported. It can thus be stated that, with reference to this study, even though there may be small differences between the genders, there are no significant differences between the reading behaviour and preferences of girls and boys.

For the other subsections, the responses to some questions were found to be statistically relevant (where the χ^2 statistic was large and the p-value was smaller than 0.05). In some cases, unfortunately, where the p-value (the probability that the null hypothesis is true) indicated relevance, the expected frequencies for each category were not at least 5 for 80% or more for the categories. Too few respondents thus answered the questions but the results will be stated even though it has no statistical basis.

7.2 Area (Rural and Urban) by responses

7.2.1 Reading is fun (Question 6.4)

The researchers wanted to find out if there was a difference between rural and urban students' thinking about reading, whether they like to read and why. While students

could respond to 6 options, only one option showed a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students, namely that reading is fun:

H₀: There is no relationship between the responses of rural and urban students to the question whether reading is fun.

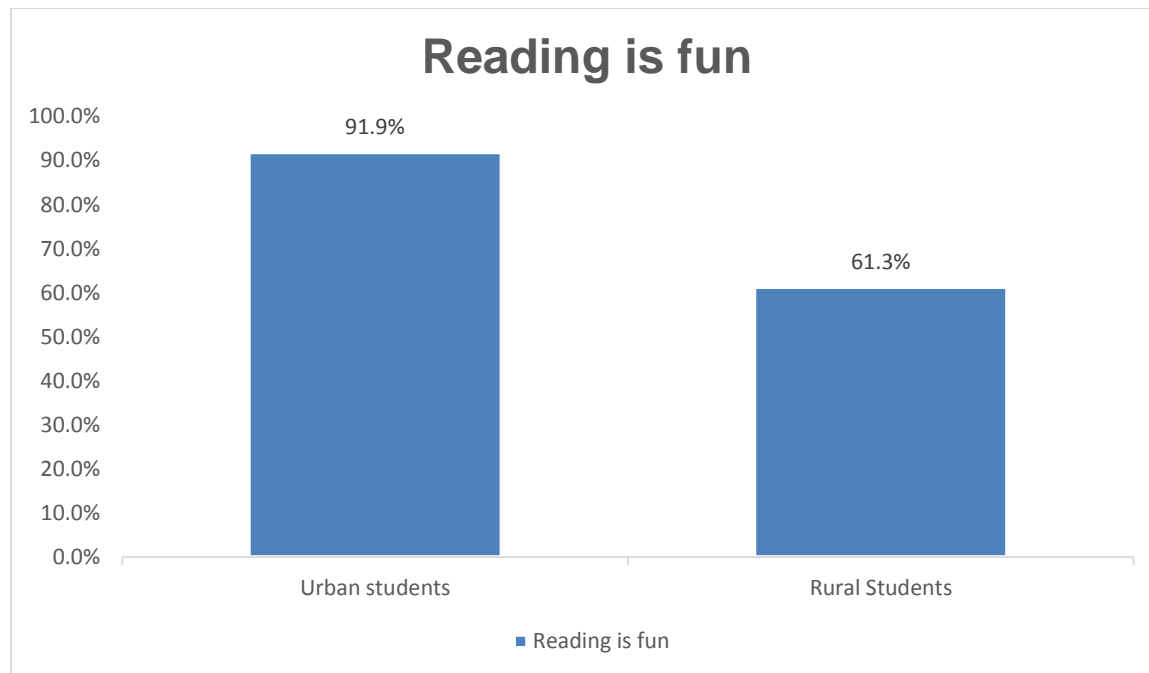
H₁: There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students to the question whether reading is fun.

$\chi^2 = 36.04$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H₀ is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether reading is fun or not.

91.9% of urban students compared to 61.3% of rural students indicated that reading is fun.

The belief that reading is a fun activity is thus rather found among urban than rural students:

Figure 74: Reading is fun



7.2.2 The factors influencing respondents (readers) when choosing a book (Question 11)

The researchers wanted to find out if there was a difference in the factors that rural and urban students take into account when choosing a book. Only the factors that were the

same for Story-readers and General readers were taken into account – therefore 7 options. For five options a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students were found.

7.2.2.1 The cover of the book (Question 11.1)

H₀: There is no relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the cover of the book influences their choice of reading material.

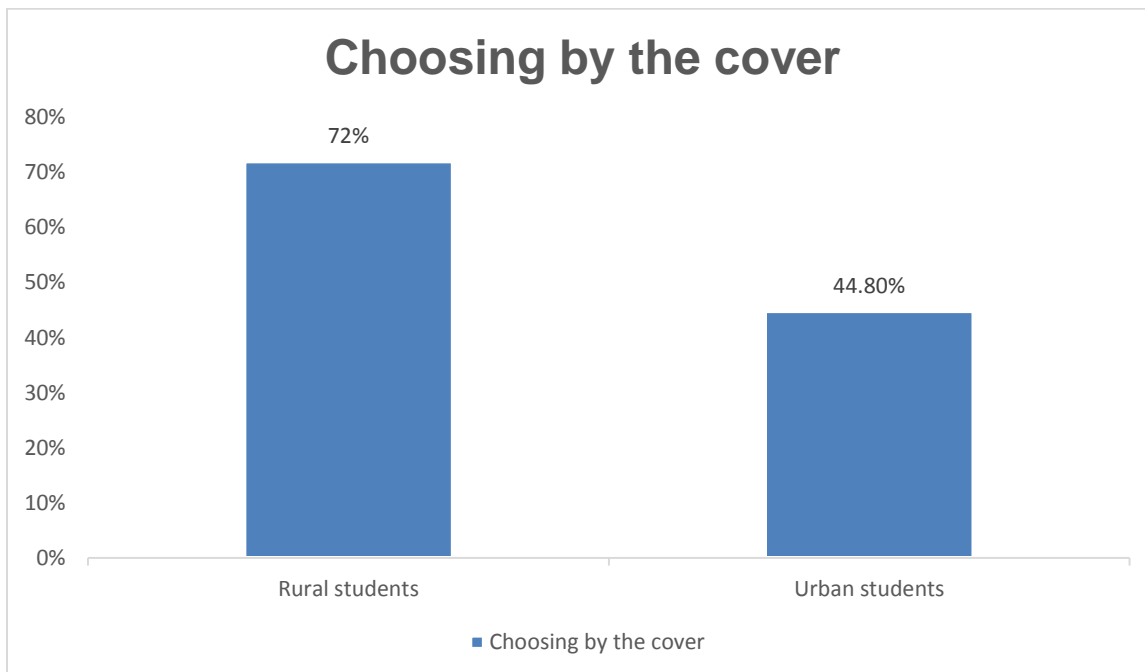
H₁: There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the cover of the book influences their choice of reading material.

$\chi^2 = 22.64$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H₀ is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the cover of the book influences their choice of reading material.

72% of rural students compared to 44.8% of urban students indicated that the cover of a book influences their choice.

Far more rural than urban students are thus influenced by the cover of a book.

Figure 75: Choosing a book based on the cover



Hereafter the null and alternative hypotheses will no longer be mentioned, but only the relevant χ^2 values and the p-values as well as the conclusions.

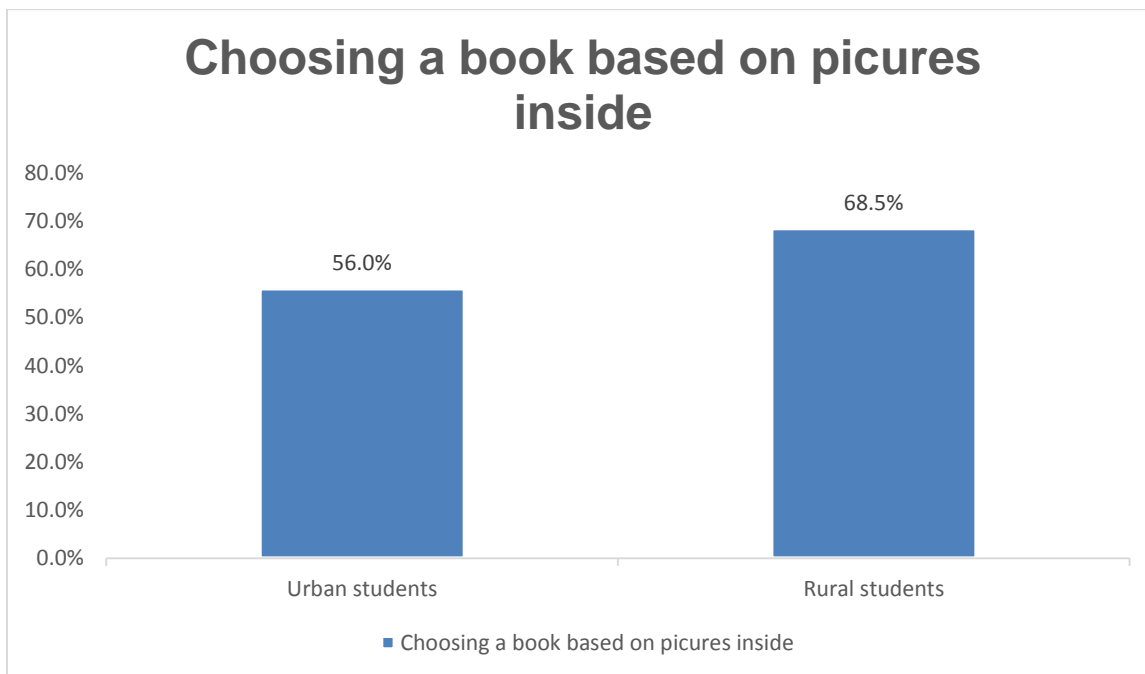
7.2.2.2 The presence of pictures inside the book (Question 11.2)

$\chi^2 = 4.95$; $p = 0.025 < 0.05$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the presence of pictures inside the book influence their choice of reading material.

68.5% of rural students compared to 56% of urban students indicated that the presence of pictures inside a book influences their choice.

More rural than urban students are thus influenced by the pictures in a book:

Figure 76:



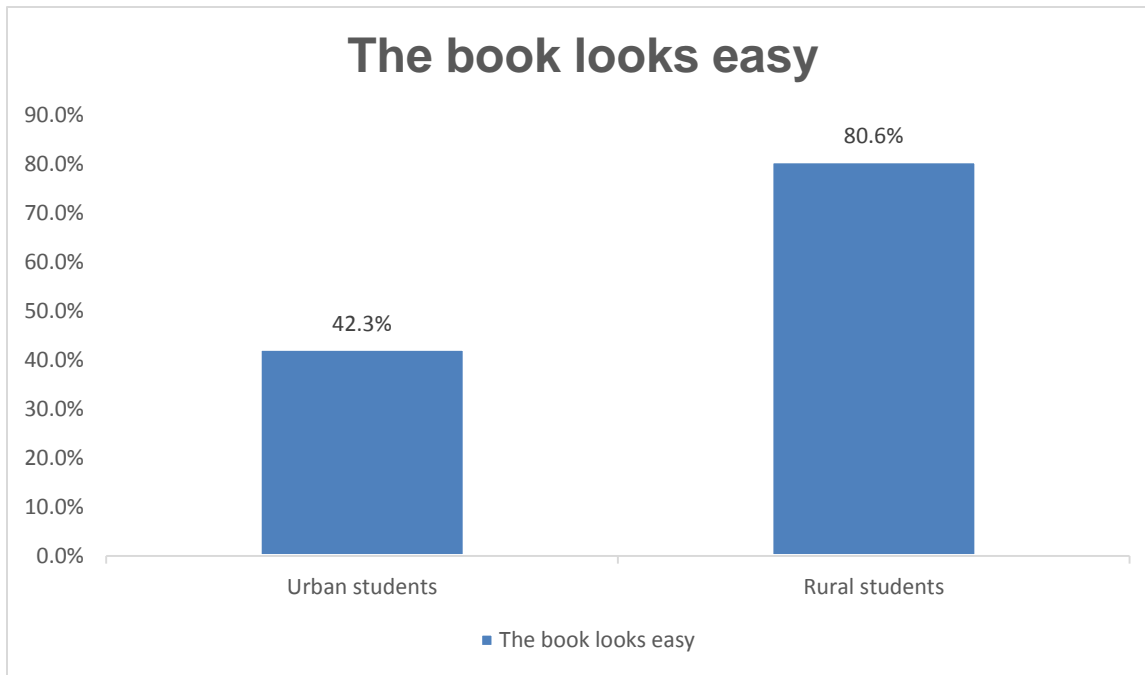
7.2.2.3 The book looks easy to read (Question 11.6a)

$\chi^2 = 45.77$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the fact that the book looks easy to read influences their choice of reading material.

80.6% of rural students compared to only 42.3% of urban students indicated that the fact that a book looks easy influences their choice.

Far more rural than urban students are thus influenced by the “easy appearance” of a book:

Figure 77: Choosing a book based on perceived simplicity



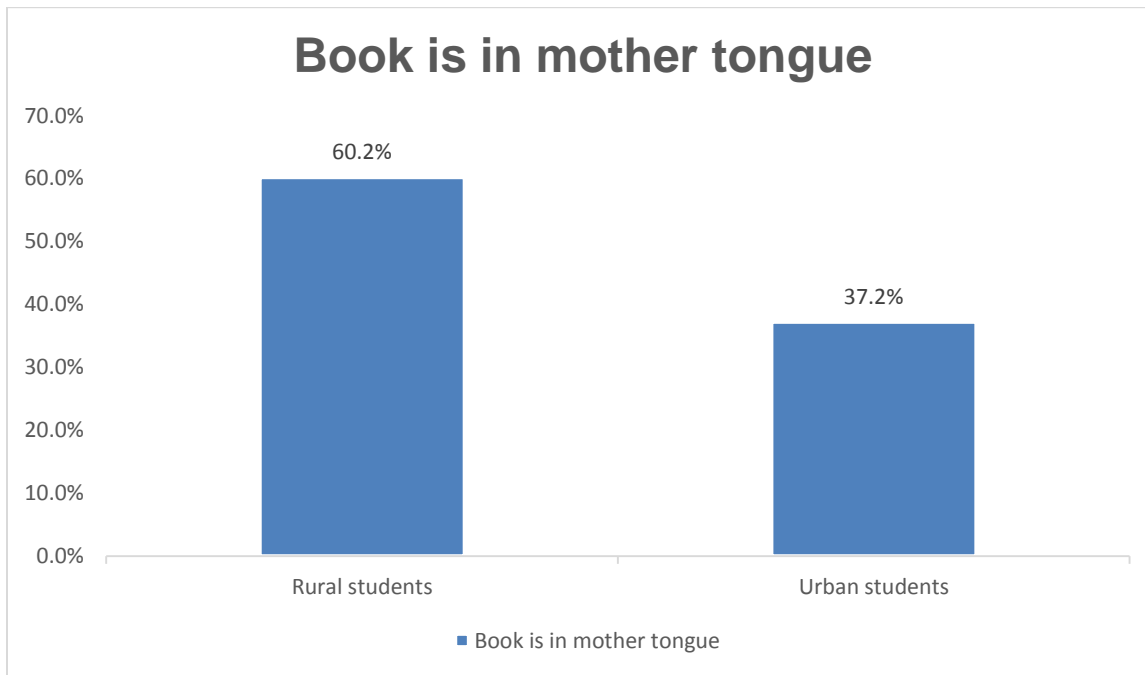
7.2.2.4 The fact that the book is in the mother tongue (Question 11.7a)

$\chi^2 = 15.0$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the fact that the book is in the mother tongue influences their choice of reading material.

60.2 % of rural students compared to only 37.2% of urban students indicated that the fact that the book is in the mother tongue influences their choice.

Far more rural than urban students are thus influenced by the fact that the book is in the mother tongue:

Figure 78: Choosing a book because it is in the mother tongue



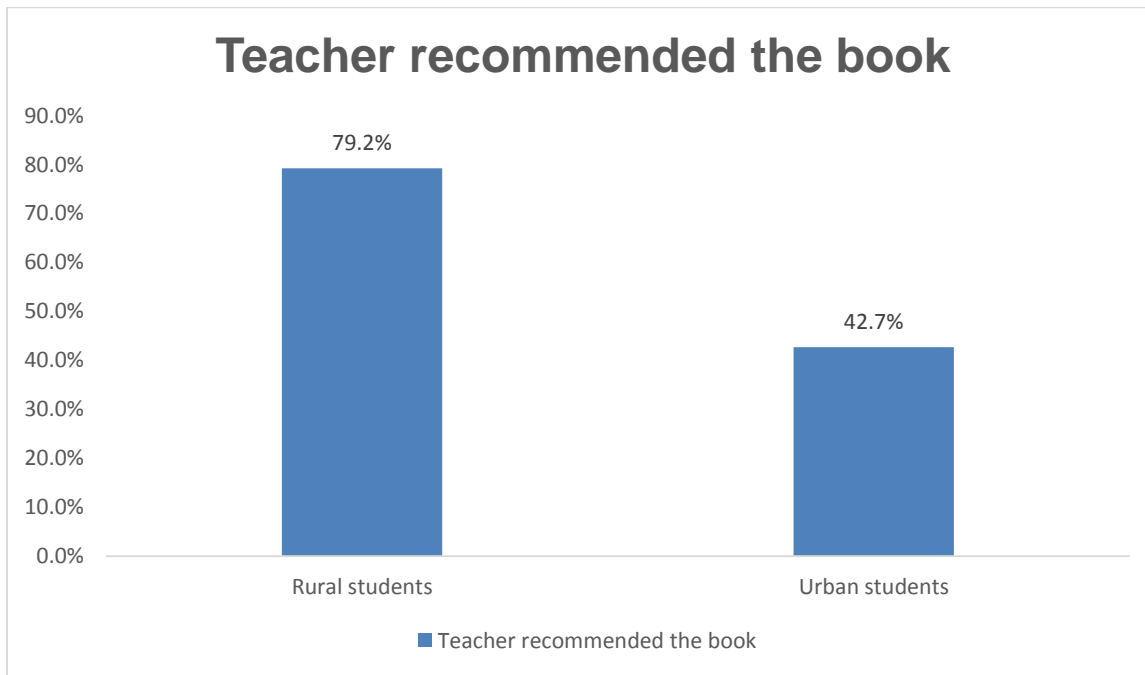
7.2.2.5 The teacher said you should read it (Question 11.8a)

$\chi^2 = 42.88$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of rural and urban students whether the recommendation of a teacher influences their choice of reading material.

79.2% of rural students compared to only 42.7% of urban students indicated that the recommendation of a teacher influences their choice of reading.

More rural than urban students are thus influenced by the teacher in their choice of reading material:

Figure 79: Choosing a book on teacher's recommendation



7.2.3 Sources of reading material

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference in the sources where rural and urban students get their reading material. Students could respond to 6 options, and five options showed a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students:

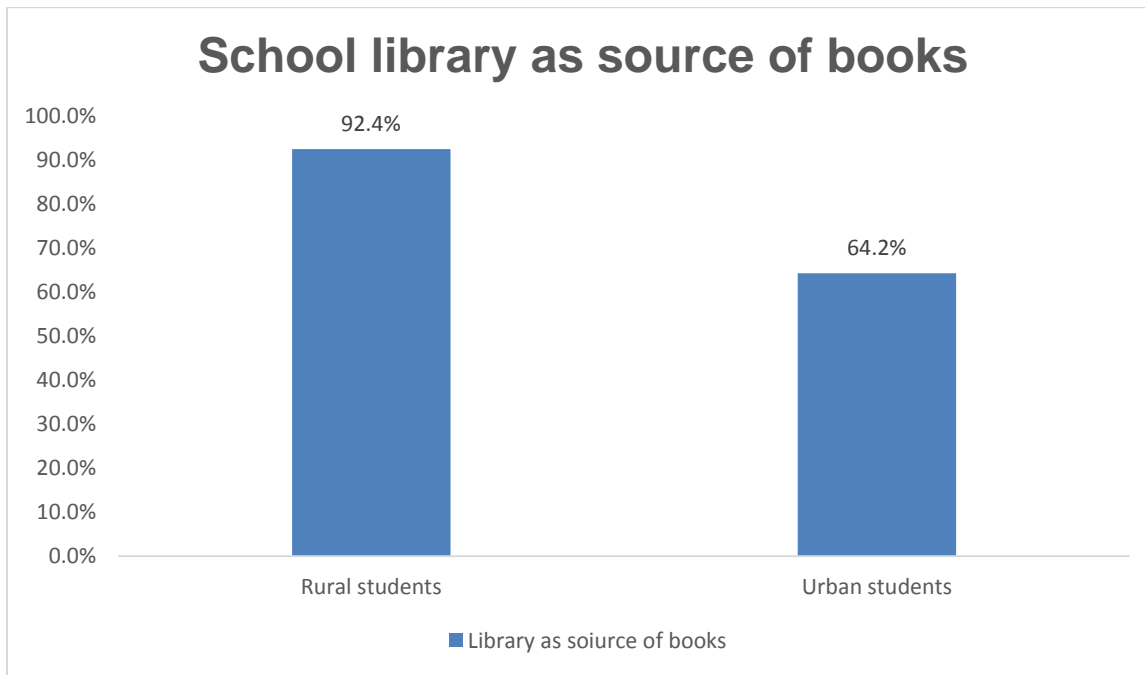
7.2.3.1 Use of school library as source of books (Question 13.1)

$\chi^2 = 37.08$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether students obtain books from the school library.

92.4% of rural students compared to 64.2% of urban students indicated that they obtain books from the school library.

The school library is thus a far more important source of books among rural than urban respondents:

Figure 80: School library as source of books



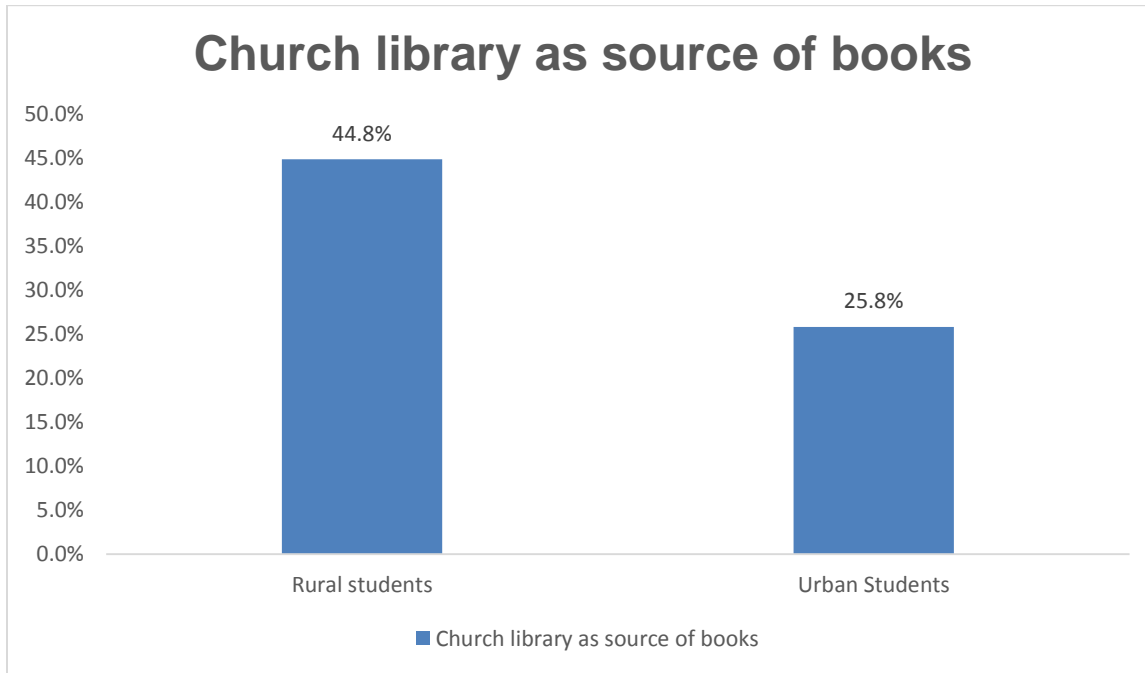
7.2.3.2 Use of church library as source of books (Question 13.3)

$\chi^2 = 12.0$; $p = 0.001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether students obtain books from the church library.

44.8 % of rural students compared to 25.8% of urban students indicated that they obtain books from the church library.

The church library is thus a more important source of books among rural than urban respondents.

Figure 81: Church library as source of books



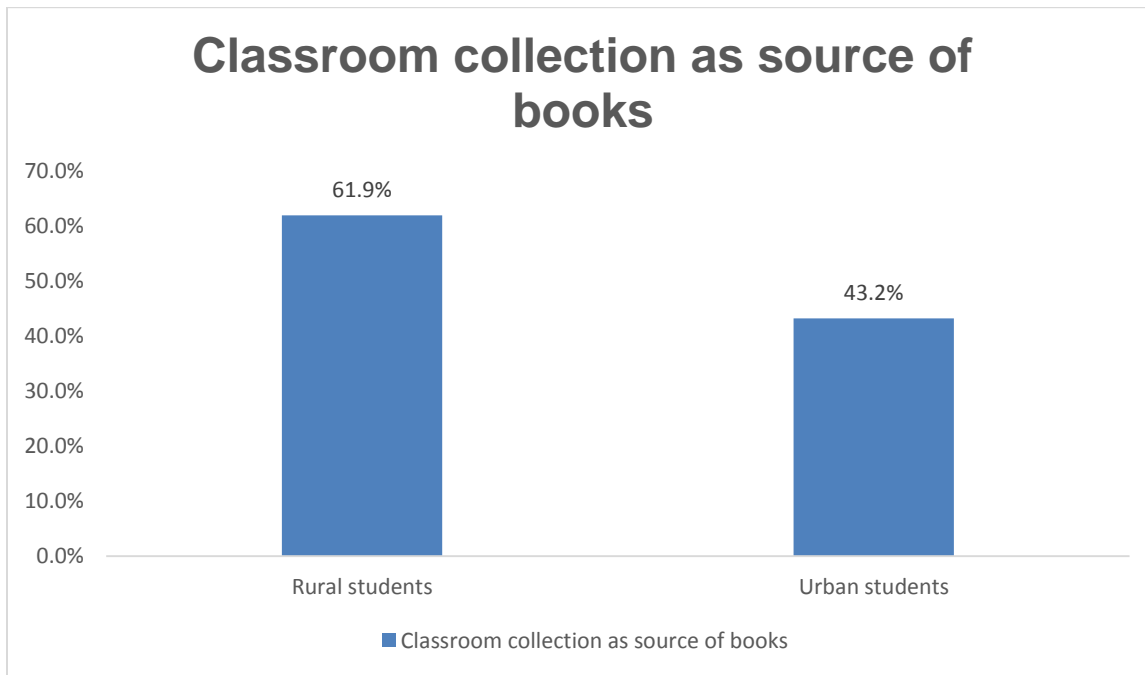
7.2.3.3 Classroom collection as source of books (Question 13.4)

$\chi^2 = 10.263$; $p = 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether students obtain books from the classroom collection.

61.9 % of rural students compared to 43.2% of urban students indicated that they obtain books from the classroom collection.

The classroom collection is thus a more important source of books among rural than urban respondents.

Figure 82: Classroom collection as source of books



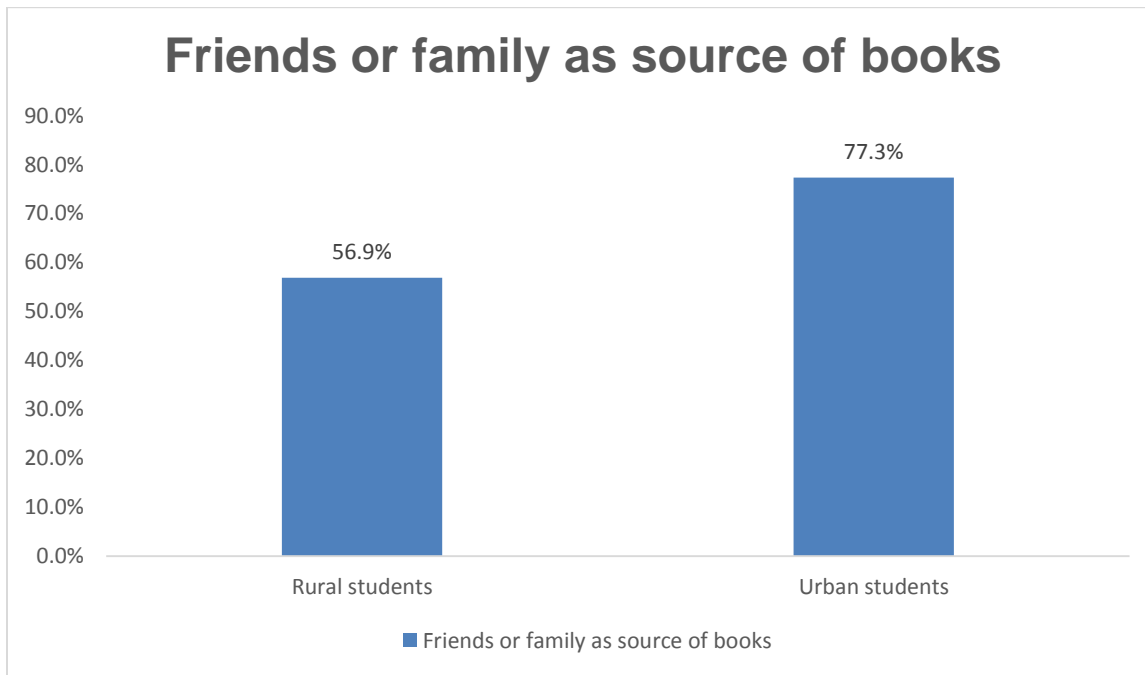
7.2.3.4 Friends or family as source of books (Question 13.5)

$\chi^2 = 133.215$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether students obtain books from friends or family.

77.3 % of urban students compared to 56.9% of rural students indicated that they obtain books from friends or family.

Family and friends are thus more important sources of books among urban than rural respondents.

Figure 83: Friends or family as source of books



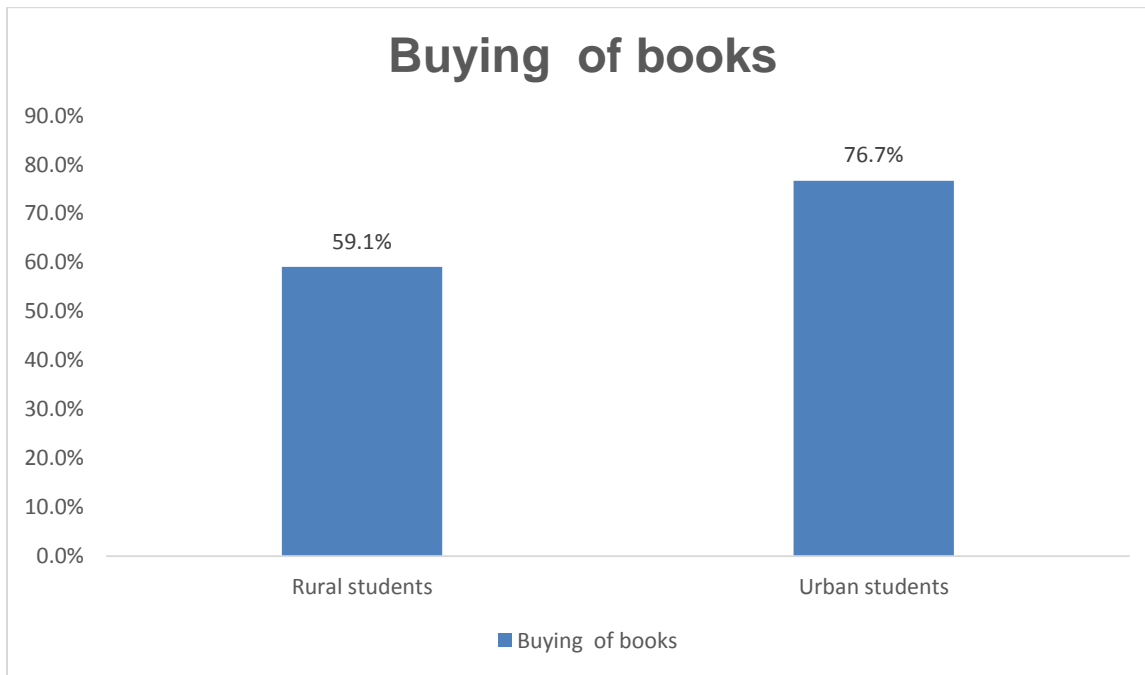
7.2.3.5 Buying of books as source of books (question 13.6)

$\chi^2 = 10.133$; $p = 0.001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether students buy books.

76.7 % of urban students compared to 59.1% of rural students indicated that they obtain books through buying.

The buying of books is thus a far more important source of books among urban than rural respondents.

Figure 84: Buying books



7.2.4 Motivation to read (Question 16)

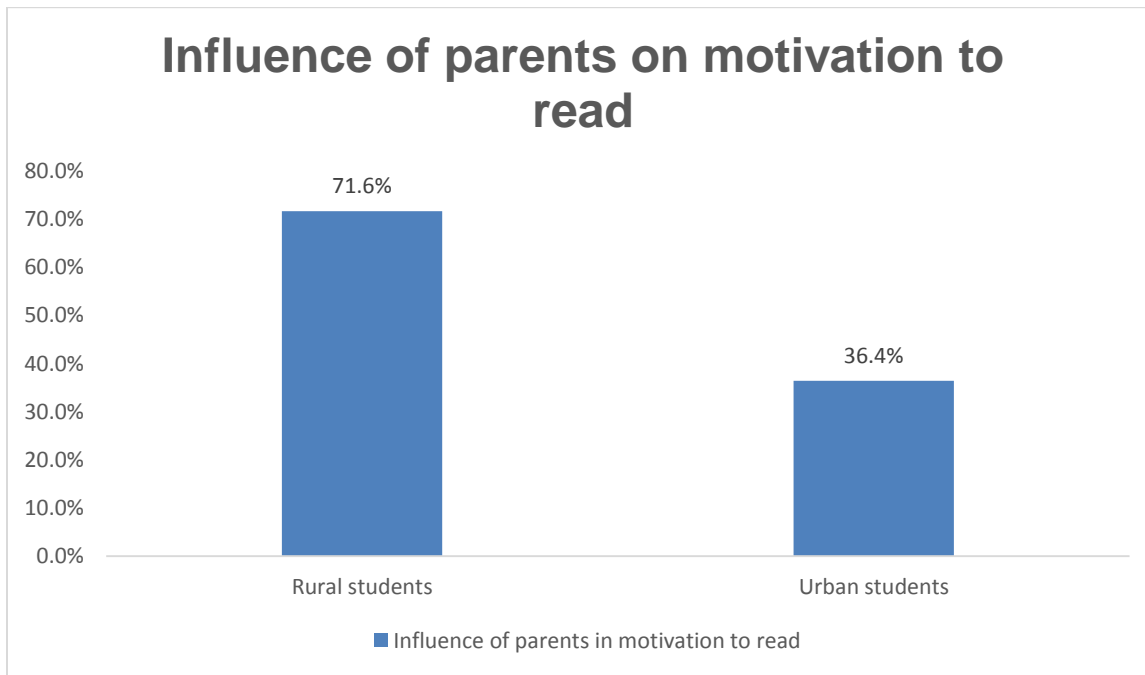
The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among rural and urban respondents regarding the influence of other persons on their motivation to read. Students could respond to 6 options, and 5 options showed a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students:

7.2.4.1 Motivation to read – role of parents (question 16.2)

$\chi^2 = 36.623$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether parents motivate them to read. 71.6 % of rural students compared to 36.4 % of urban students indicated that their parents motivate them to read.

The motivation of parents is thus a more important factor among rural than urban respondents.

Figure 85: Influence of parents on motivation to read



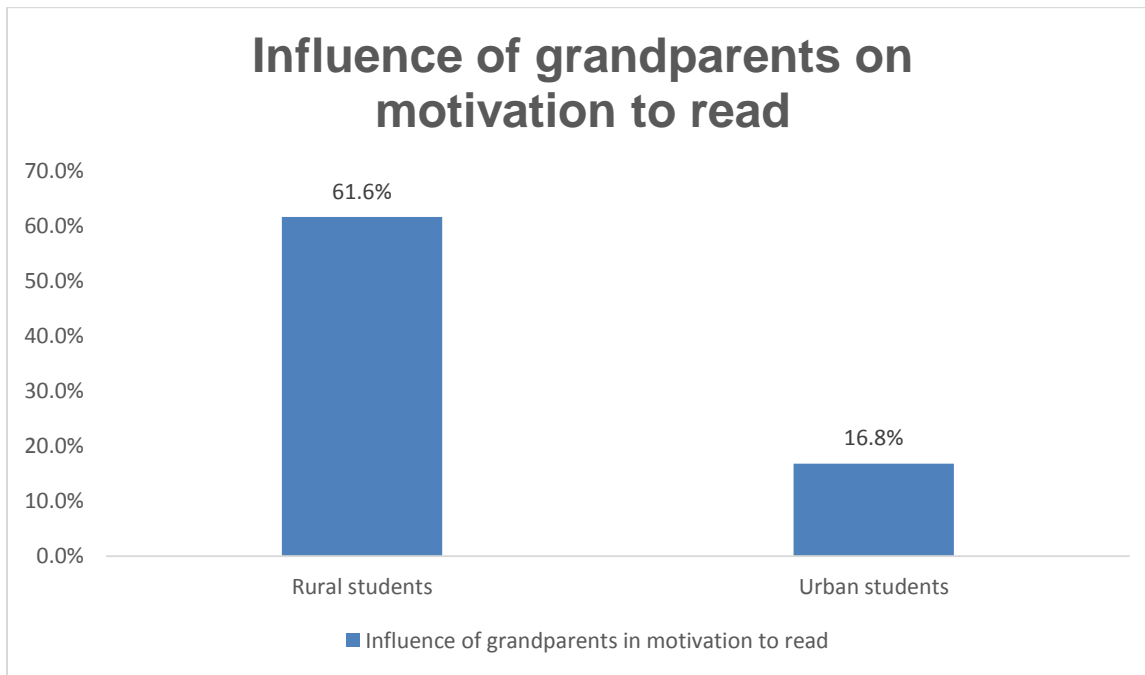
7.2.4.2 Motivation to read – role of grandparents (question 16.3)

$\chi^2 = 59.538$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether grandparents motivate them to read.

61.6 % of rural students compared to 16.8 % of urban students indicated that their grandparents motivate them to read.

The motivation of grandparents is thus a more important factor among rural than urban respondents.

Figure 86: Influence of grandparents on motivation to read



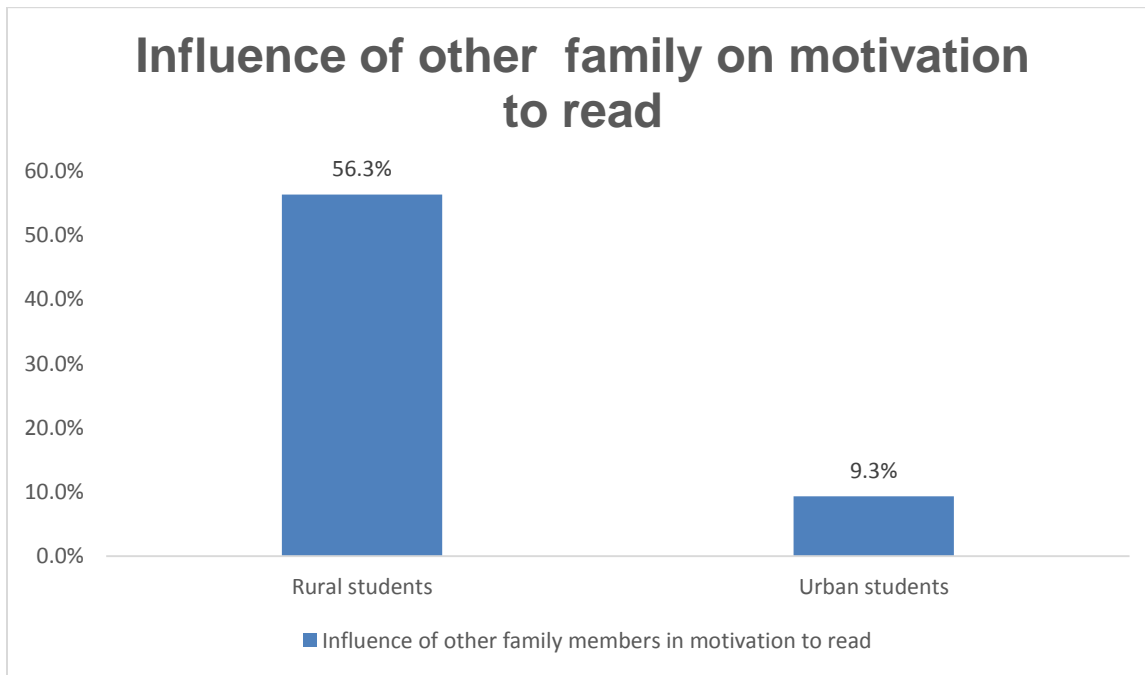
7.2.4.3 Motivation to read – other family (question 16.4)

$\chi^2 = 69.665$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether other family members motivate them to read.

56.3 % of rural students compared to 9.3 % of urban students indicated that other family members motivate them to read.

The motivation of other family members is thus a more important factor among rural than urban respondents

Figure 87: Influence of other family members on motivation to read

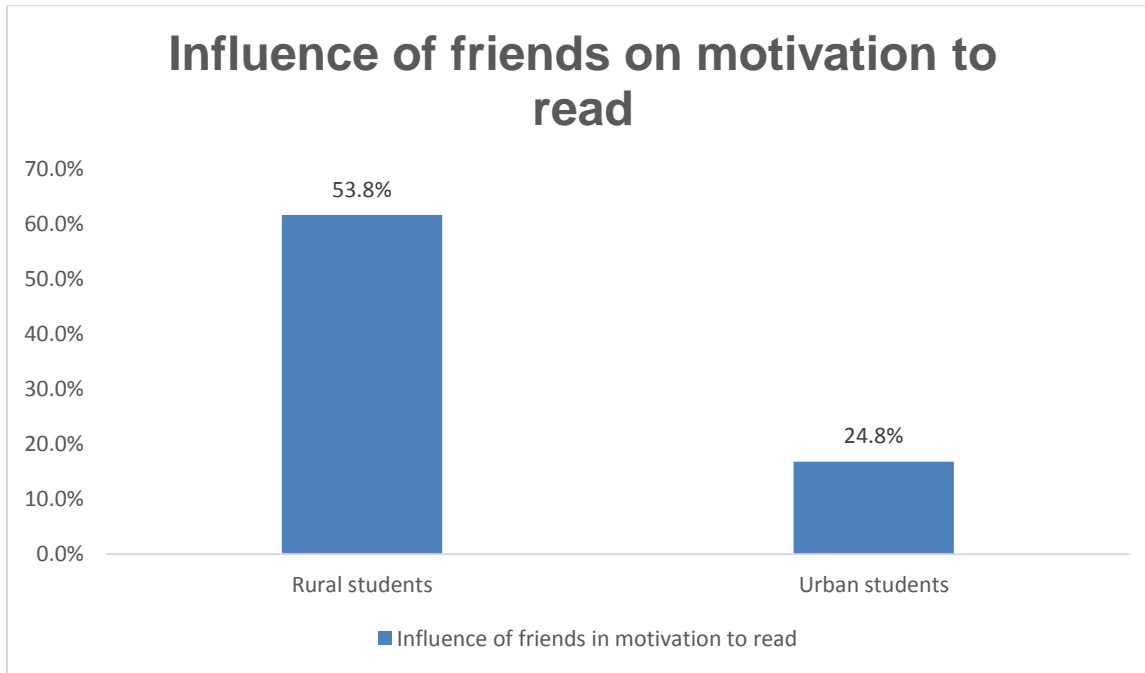


7.2.4.4 Motivation to read – friends (question 16.5)

$\chi^2 = 24.196$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether friends motivate them to read. 53.8 % of rural students compared to 24.8 % of urban students indicated that their friends motivate them to read.

The motivation of friends is thus a more important factor among rural than urban respondents.

Figure 88: Influence of friends on motivation to read



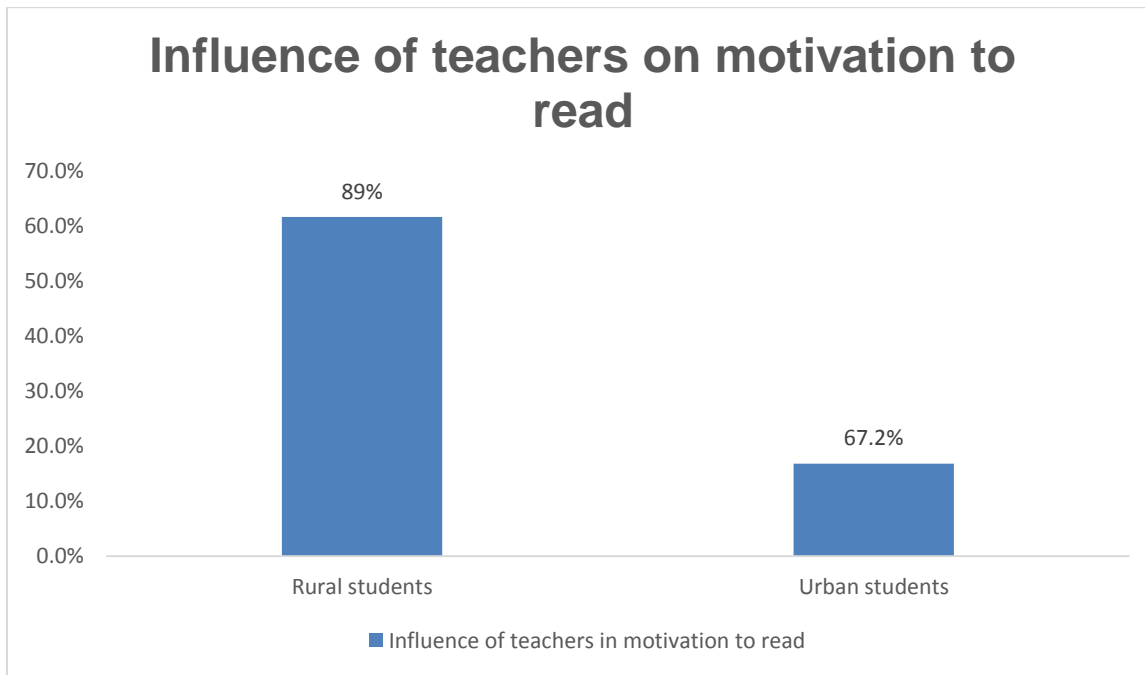
7.2.4.5 Motivation to read – teachers (question 16.6)

$\chi^2 = 21.196$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether teachers motivate them to read.

89.0 % of rural students compared to 67.2 % of urban students indicated that their teachers motivate them to read.

The motivation of teachers is thus a more important factor among rural than urban respondents. Both groups showed high scores.

Figure 89: Influence of teachers on motivation to read



7.2.5 Languages used for after school reading (Question 17)

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among rural and urban respondents regarding the languages they used for after school reading. Students could respond to 3 options (English, mother tongue or another language), and only the third option showed a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students:

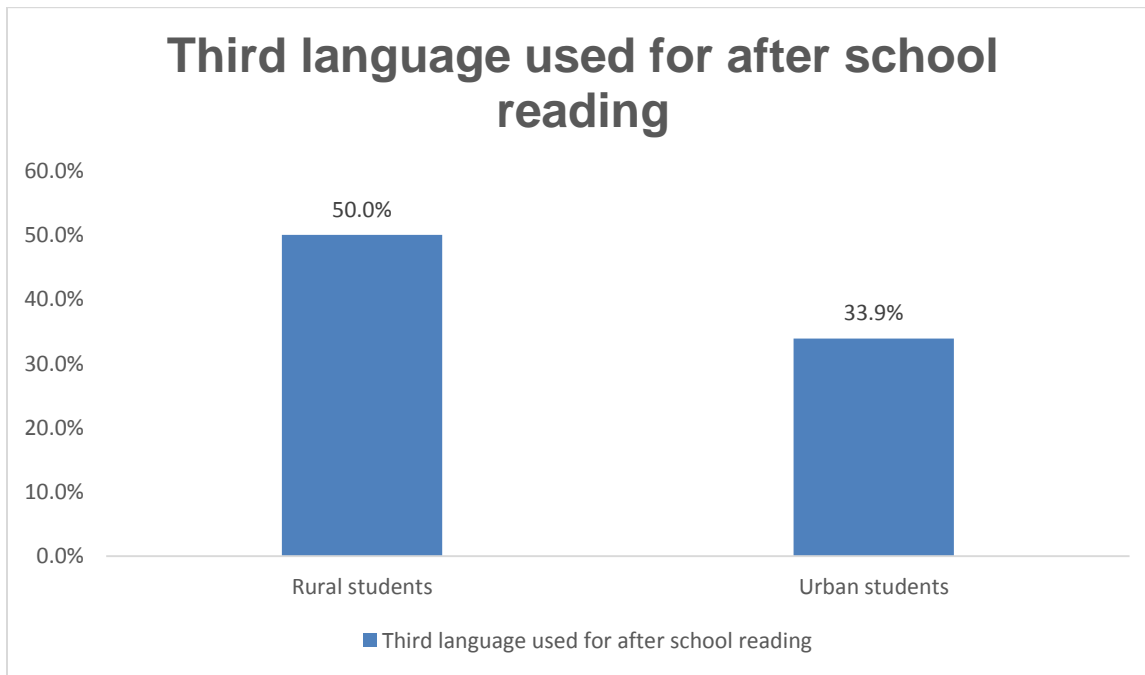
7.2.5.1 Languages used for after school reading (another language)

$\chi^2 = 6.648$; $p = 0.01$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether respondents use languages other than English or the mother tongue to read after school.

50 % of rural students compared to 33.9 % of urban students indicated that they use languages other than English or the mother tongue to read after school.

Rural respondents thus read more in a third language than urban students:

Figure 90: Third language used for after school reading



7.2.6 Listening to stories on the radio (question 23)

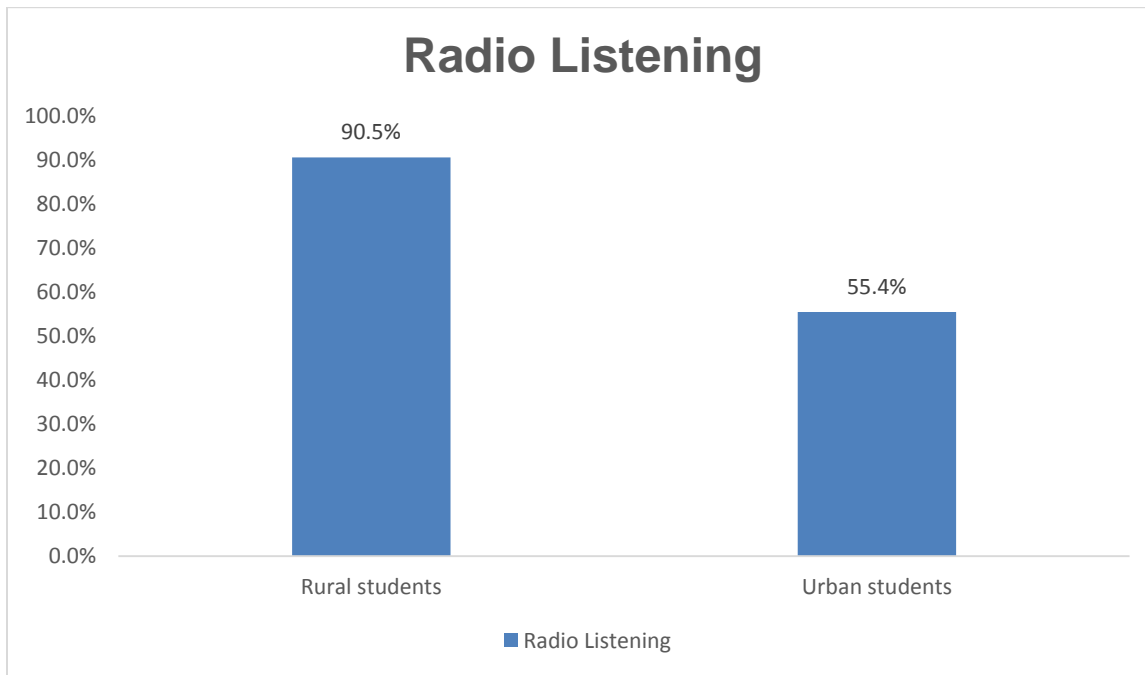
The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among rural and urban respondents regarding listening to stories (live telling or over the radio). Only the second option showed a significant difference between the responses of rural and urban students:

$\chi^2 = 44.163$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether respondents listen to stories over the radio.

90.5 % of rural students compared to 55.4 % of urban students indicated that they listen to stories over the radio.

Rural respondents thus listen to stories over the radio far more than urban students.

Figure 91: Listening to stories on the radio

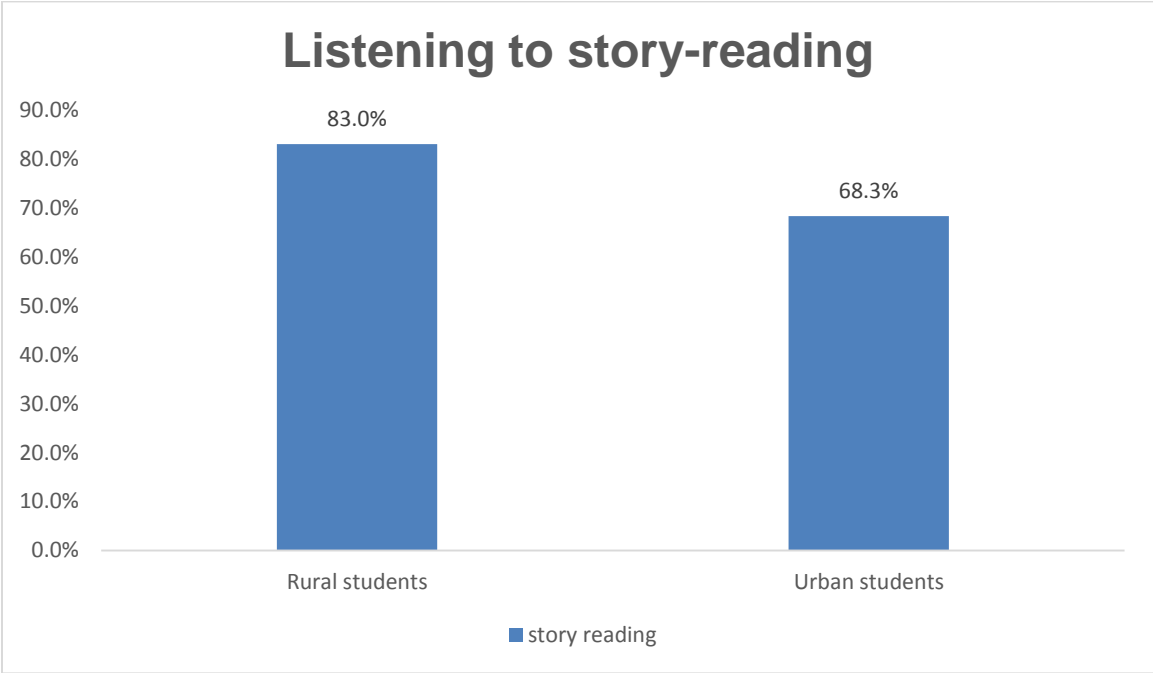


7.2.7 Listening to (live) story reading (question 24)

$\chi^2 = 7.916$; $p = 0.005$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether stories are read to respondents. 83.0 % of rural students compared to 68.3 % of urban students indicated that stories are read to them.

Rural respondents thus listen to live story reading more than urban students.

Figure 92: Listening to story-reading



7.2.8 Summary

In general the factors investigated had a more significant effect on the reading behaviour of rural than urban students. Most students are found in the rural areas, therefore the following are important findings regarding the reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children:

Figure 93: Summary1

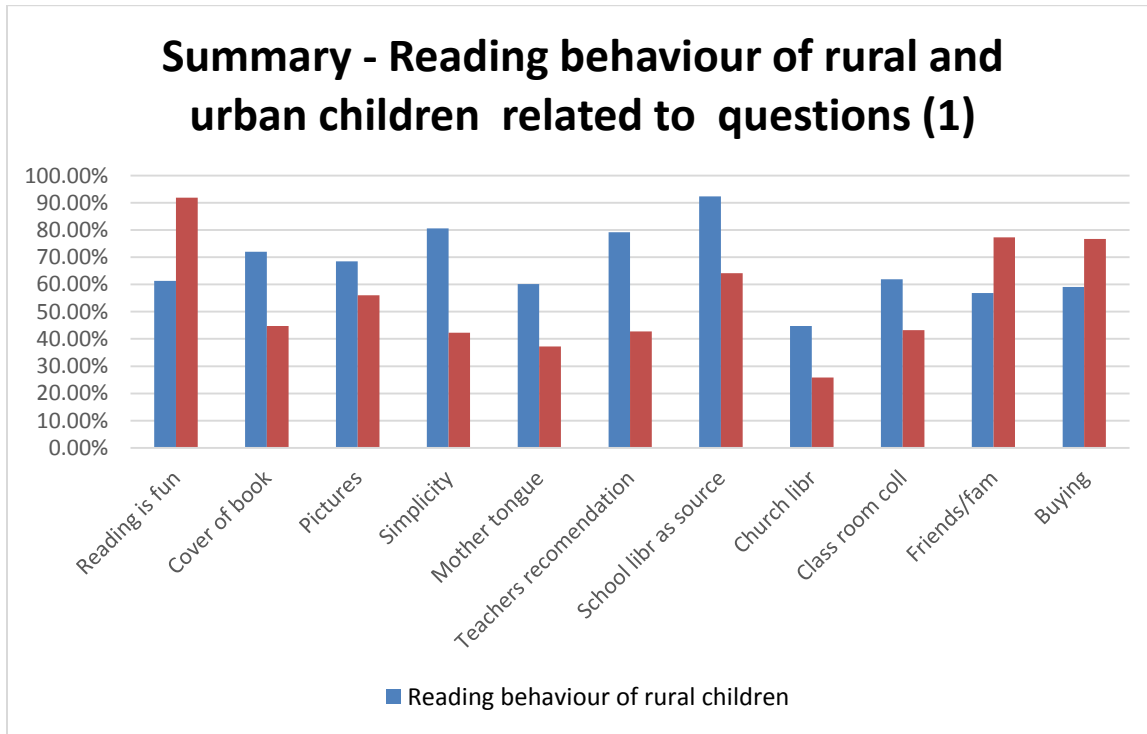
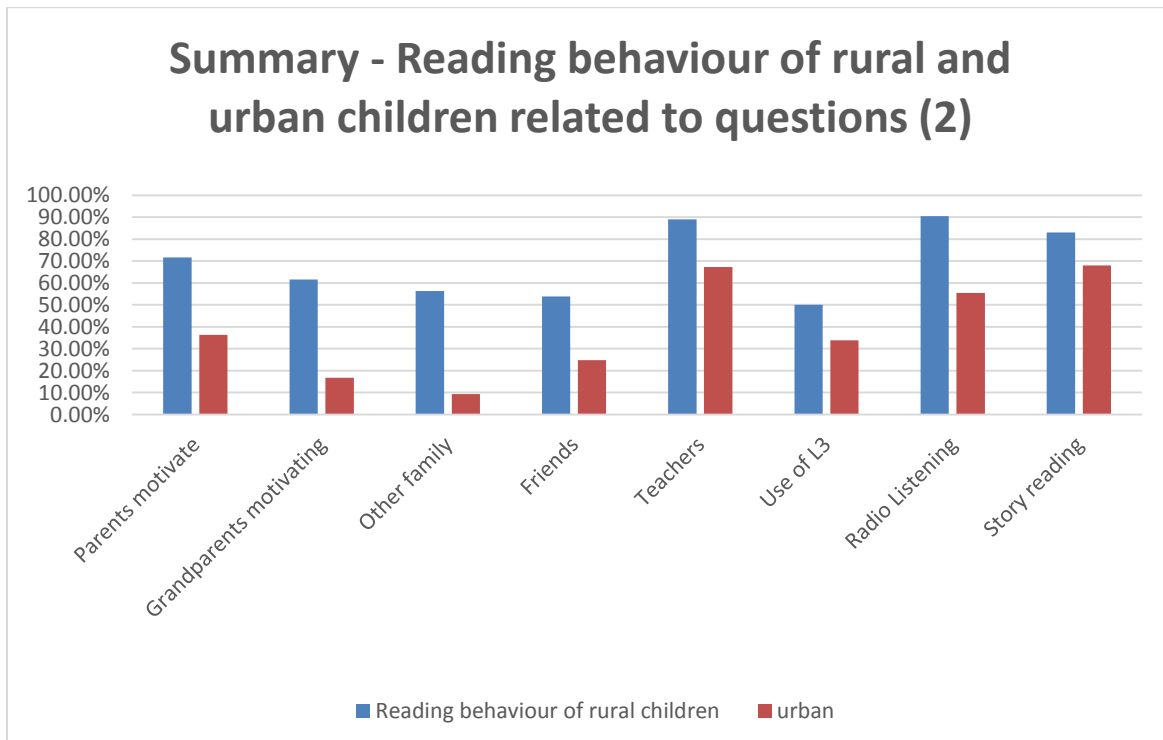


Figure 94: Summary 2



The choice by rural respondents of reading material is clearly affected by perceived complexity and other “external” factors – they therefore would rather choose a book that looks easy to read, has an inviting cover and has pictures inside (possibly thus with easier language and less print). This is in line with the fact that less rural readers see reading as fun. Their difficulties with reading in English is mirrored by the fact that they prefer to read books in the mother tongue.

The role of the school and the teacher is very important in the rural areas. The school library and books in the classroom is possibly the only source of books for these students. The influence of the teacher as motivator to read and in establishing a reading culture and also a critical mind (in terms of preferences) seems clear.

In urban areas, family and friends seem to be more important sources of books; in these areas books are also more frequently bought. Urban readers are more independent from other people’s opinions or instructions from others when choosing a book.

Although respondents in rural areas claimed to read more in a third language than urban respondents, the researchers suspect that this could be a case of social desirability. Rural respondents also indicated that they listen to stories over the radio and to live story reading more than respondents in urban areas.

7.3 Resources (poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools) by responses

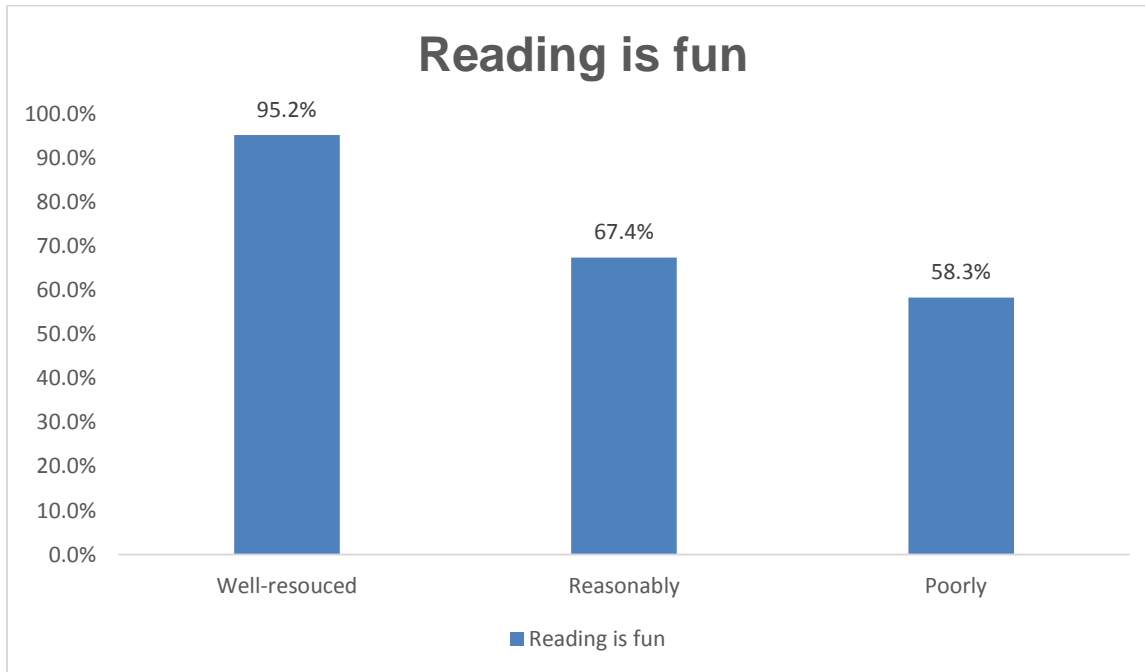
7.3.1 Reading is fun (Question 6.4)

The researchers wanted to find out if there was a difference in what students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools think about reading, whether they like to read and why. While students could respond to 6 options, for only one option a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools was observed – that reading is fun:

$\chi^2 = 36.351$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between and the answer to the question whether reading is fun or not.

58.3% in poorly resourced, 67.4% in reasonably and 95.2% students in well-resourced schools indicated that reading is fun.

Figure 95: Reading is fun



Reading as a fun activity is thus rather found among students in well-resourced schools than among students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools. Although the difference in percentages in poorly and reasonably resourced schools were not too big, significantly more students in well-resourced schools indicated that reading was a fun activity. This is an important finding because it shows that in all probability there is a lack of entertaining stories and interesting fact books in the poorer schools. The students do not have the opportunity to really experience the joy that books can bring.

7.3.2 The factors influencing respondents (readers) when choosing a book (Question 11)

The researchers wanted to find out if there was a difference in the factors that students from poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools take into account when choosing a book. Only the factors that were the same for Story-readers and General readers were taken into account – therefore 7 options. For five options a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools were found.

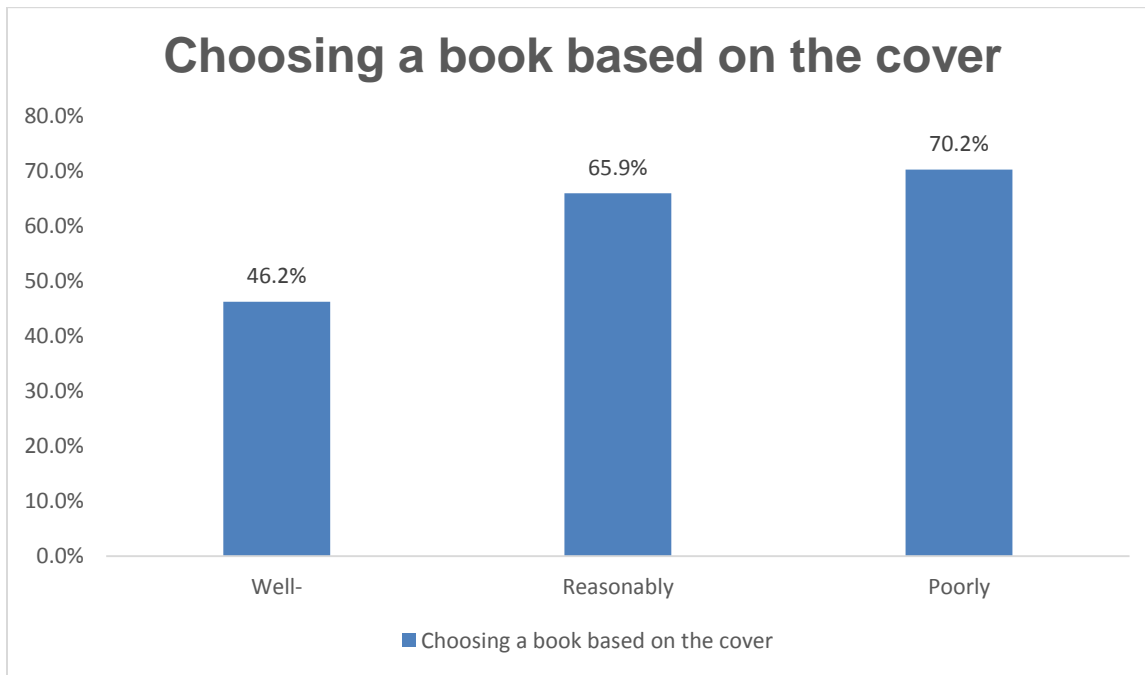
7.3.2.1 They are influenced to choose a book when they like the cover (11.1)

$\chi^2 = 12.776$; $p = 0.002$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools to the question whether they take the cover of the book into account when choosing a book.

70.2% in poorly resourced, 65.9% in reasonably and 46.2% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they take the cover of the book into account when choosing a book.

Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools admitted that they are influenced to choose a book if they liked the cover; students in well-resourced schools were far less influenced.

Figure 96: Choosing a book based on the cover



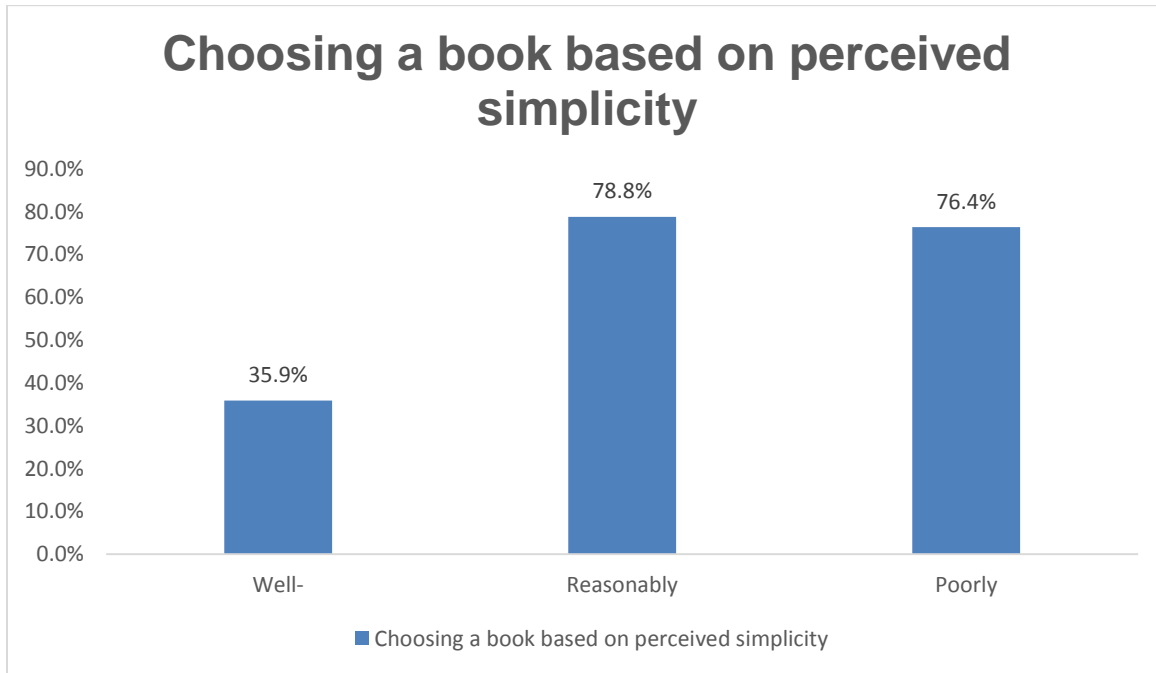
7.3.2.2 They are influenced to choose a book if it looks easy to read (11.6a)

$\chi^2 = 53.153$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools to the question whether they choose a book if it looks easy to read.

76.4% in poorly resourced, 78.8% in reasonably and 35.9% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they choose a book if it looks easy to read.

More students in poorly and reasonably schools indicated that they choose books if they look easy to read than students in well-resourced schools.

Figure 97: Choosing a book based on perceived simplicity



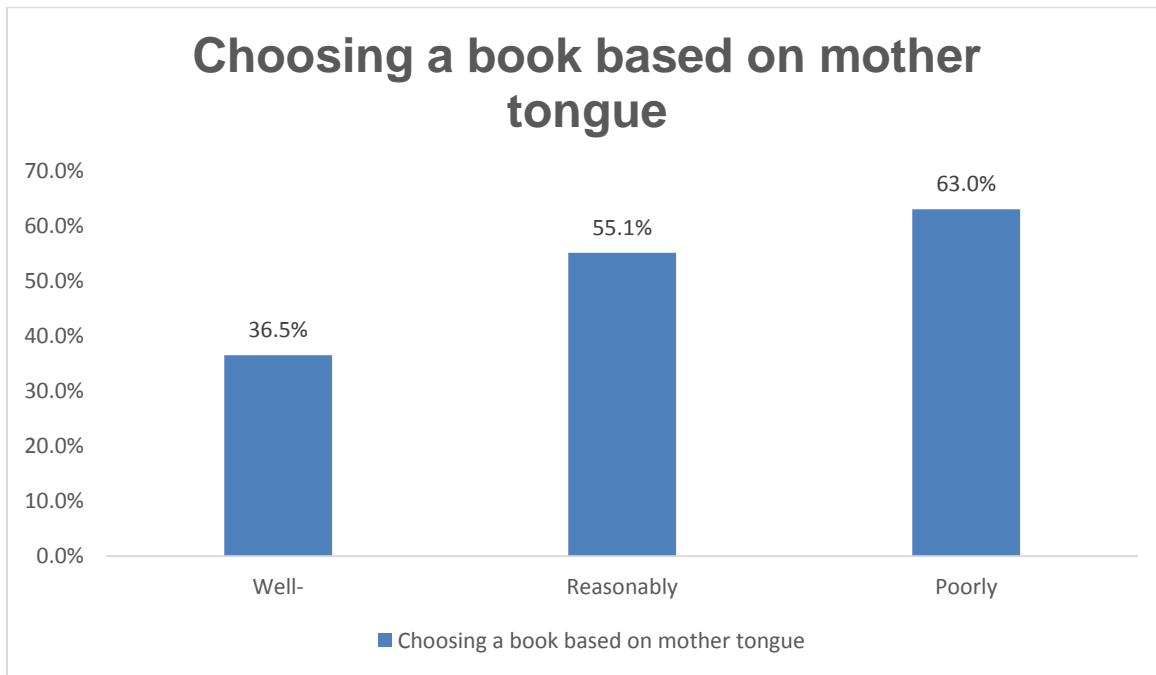
7.3.2.3 They are influenced to choose a book if it is in their mother tongue (11.7a)

$\chi^2 = 12.495$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools to the question whether they would choose a book if it is in their mother tongue.

63.0% in poorly resourced, 55.1% in reasonably and 36.5% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they would choose a book if it is in their mother tongue.

Less students in well-resourced schools than students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools indicated that they take it into consideration that a book is in their mother tongue when choosing it.

Figure 98: Choosing a book based on mother tongue



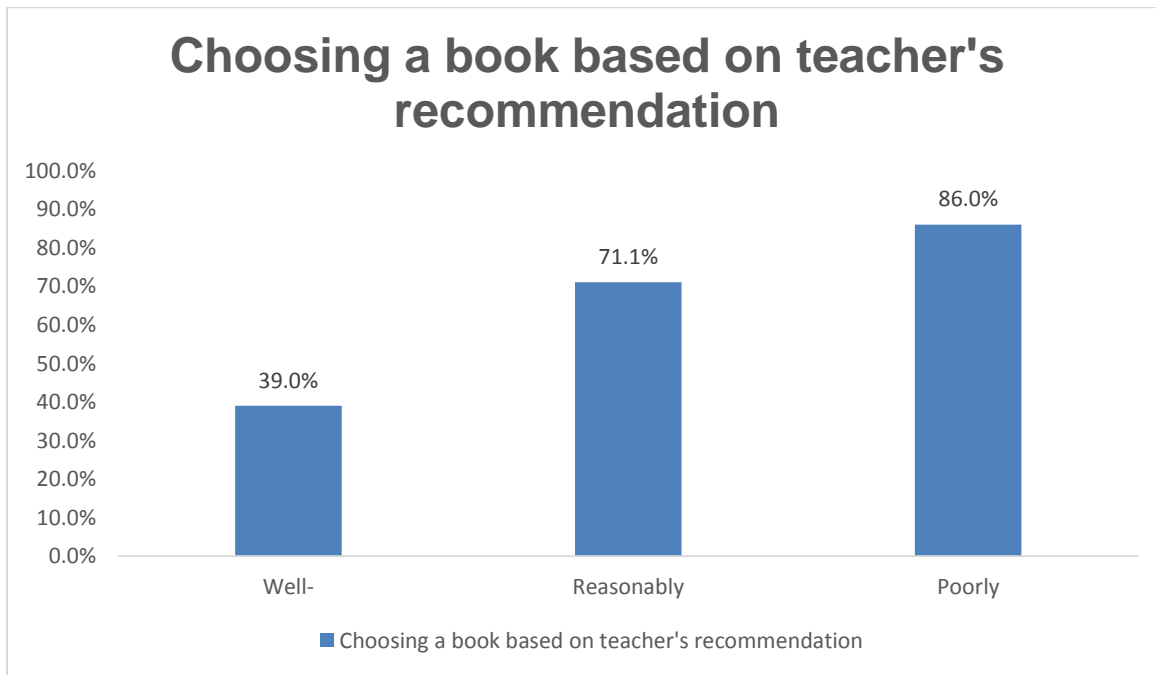
7.3.2.4 They are influenced to read a book if the teacher tells them to do so (11.8a)

$\chi^2 = 42.791$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools to the question whether they would choose a book if the teacher tells them to do so.

86.0% in poorly resourced, 71.1% in reasonably and 39.0% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they would choose a book if the teacher tells them to do so.

More students in poorly and reasonably schools than students in well-resourced schools indicated that they would read a book if the teacher said they should.

Figure 99: Choosing a book on teacher's recommendation



7.3.3 Sources of reading material

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference in sources where students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools get their reading material. Students could respond to 6 options, and five options showed a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools:

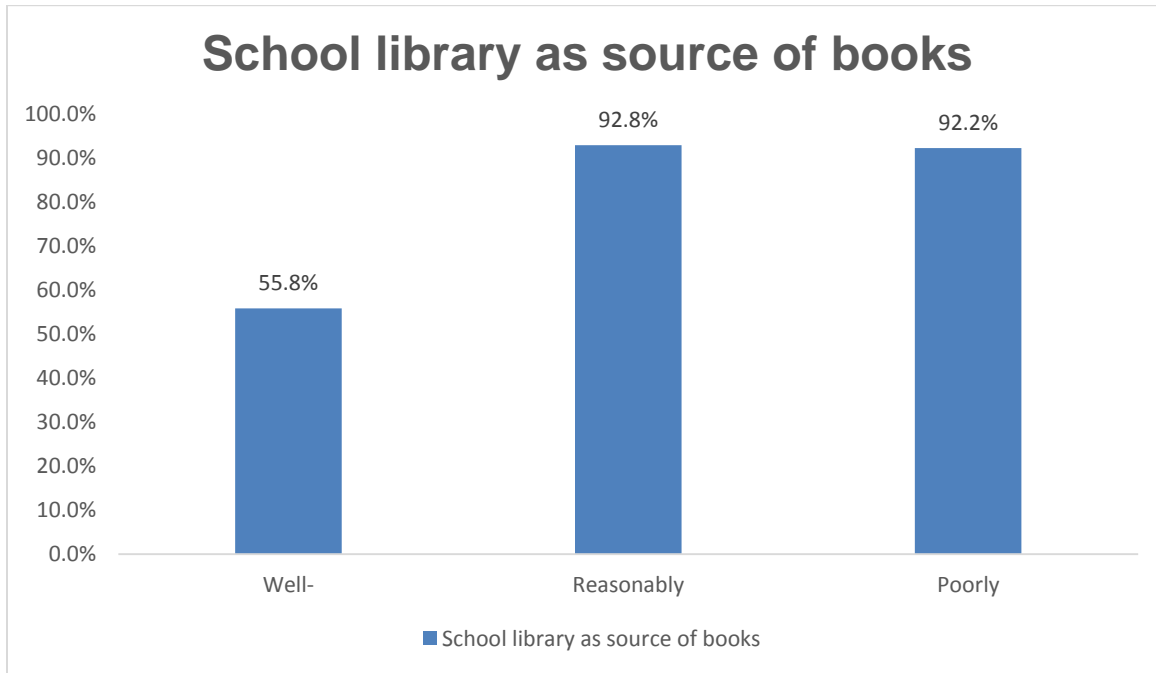
7.3.3.1 Use of school library as source of books (Question 13.1)

$\chi^2 = 57.57$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools whether they obtain books from the school library.

92.2% of students in poorly resourced, 92.8% in reasonably and 55.8% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they get books to read from the school library.

The school library is thus a more important source of books among respondents in poorly and reasonably resourced schools.

Figure 100: School library as source of books



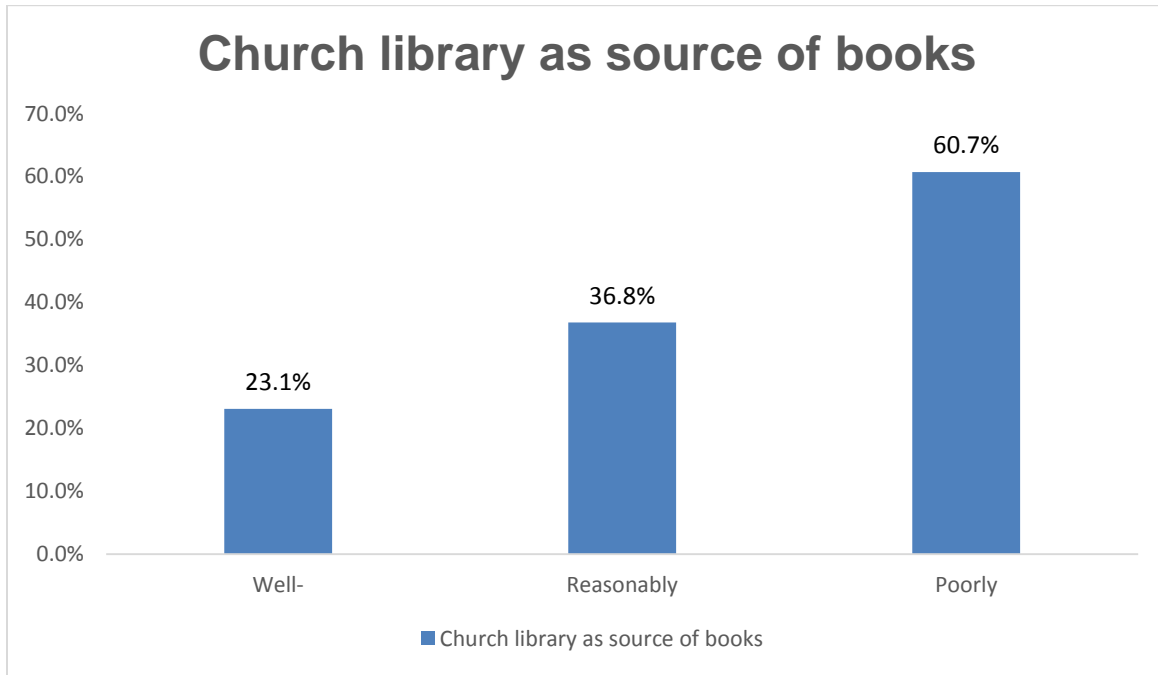
7.3.3.2 Use of church library as source of books (Question 13.3)

$\chi^2 = 22.253$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools whether they obtain books from the church library.

60.7% of students in poorly resourced, 36.8% in reasonably and 23.1% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they get books to read from the church library.

Not many students indicated the church library as a source of books but more students from poorly resourced schools indicated it as a source.

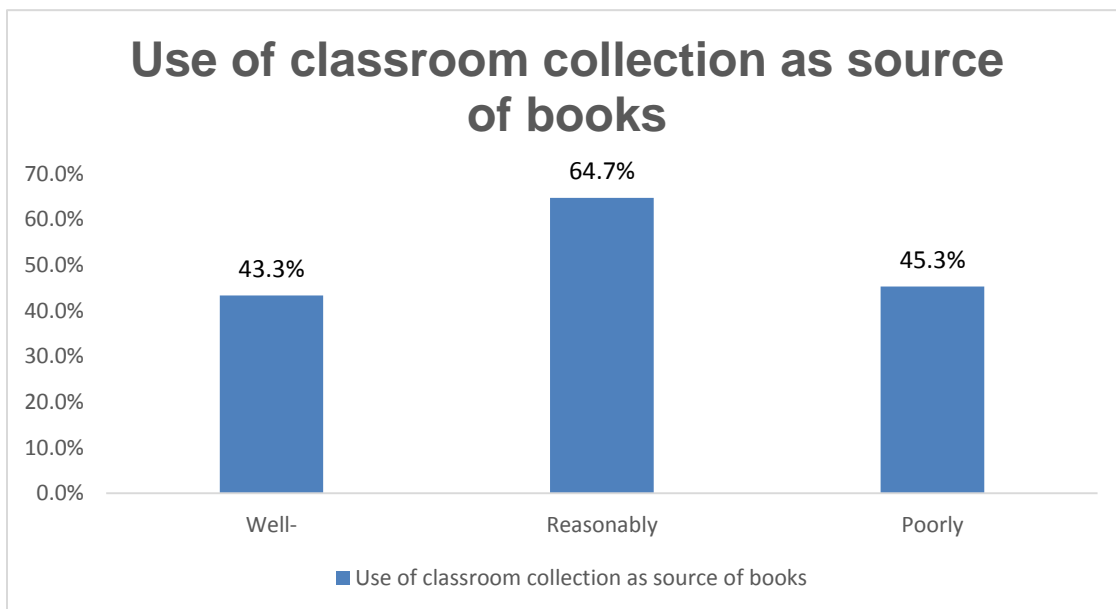
Figure 101: Church library as source of books



7.3.3.3 Use of a classroom collection as source of books (Question 13.4)

$\chi^2 = 12.472$; $p = 0.002$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools whether they obtain books from the classroom collection.

Figure 102: Classroom collection as source of books



64% of students in reasonably resourced schools indicated that they get books to read from the classroom collection.

It is interesting that there were students in poorly and well-resourced schools who answered that they used a classroom collection as a source of books. The research showed that very few schools had classroom collections. Most poorly resourced schools did not have any classroom collections while well-resourced schools do not really need any as there are many other sources of information in the school and in the environment.

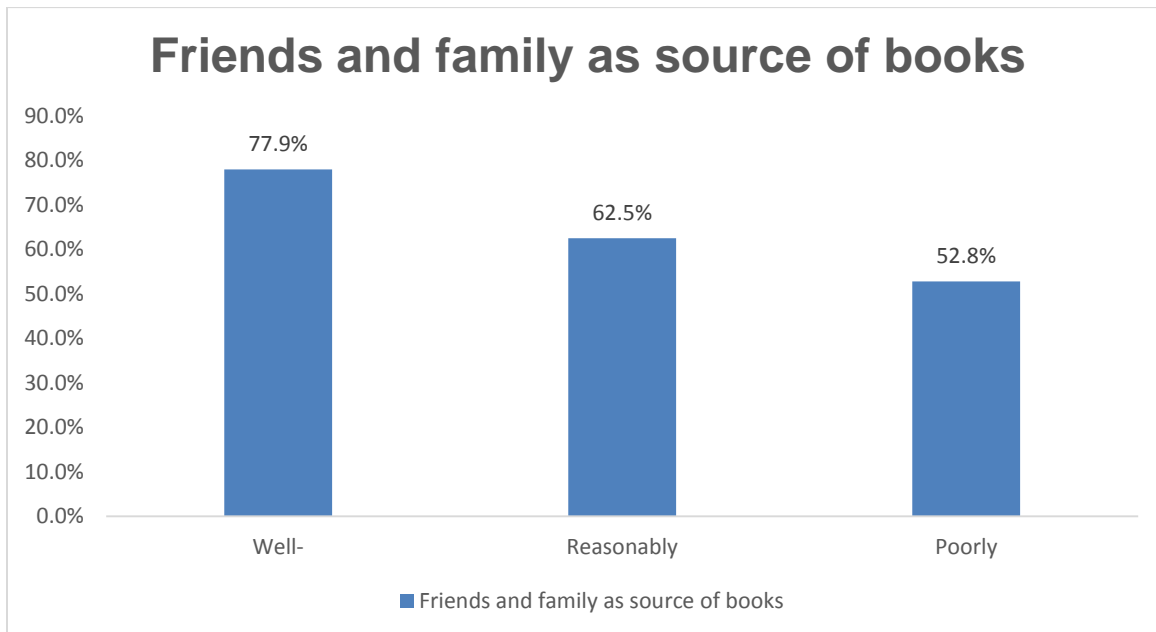
7.3.3.4 Get books from friends/family (13.5)

$\chi^2 = 11.38$; $p = 0.003$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools whether they get books to read from friends or family.

52.8% of students in poorly resourced, 62.5% in reasonably and 77.9% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they get books to read from family or friends.

As expected, the highest percentage of students in well-resourced schools indicated that they get books from family or friends to read.

Figure 103: Friends or family as source of books



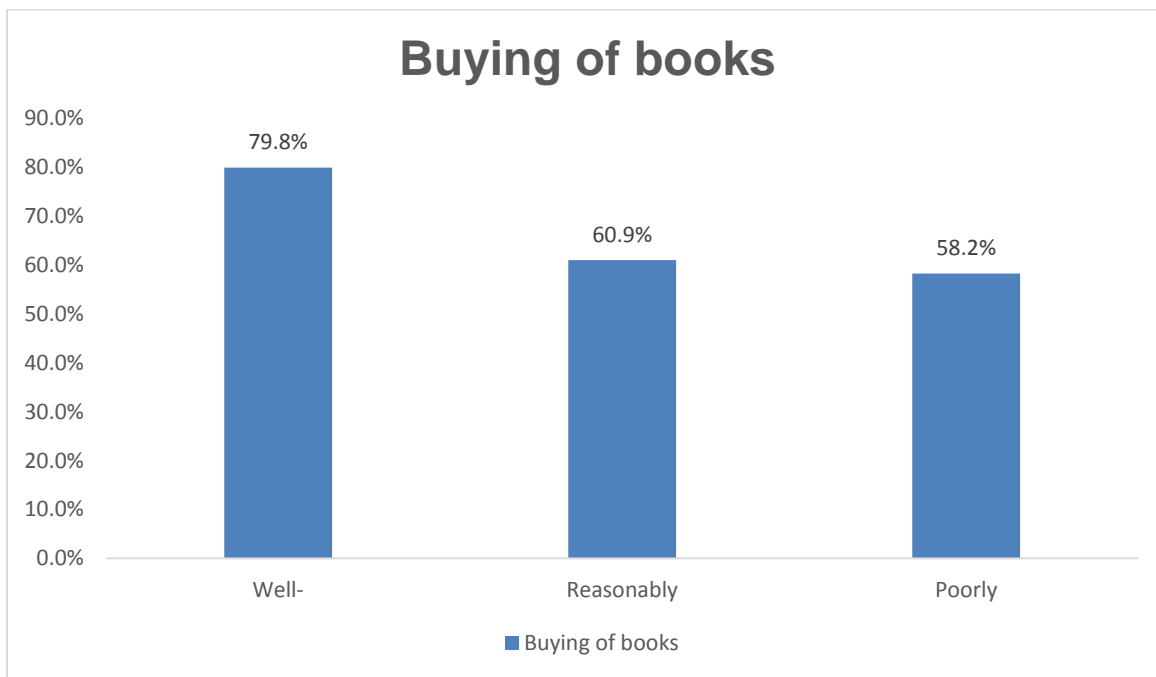
7.3.3.5 Buy books (13.6)

$\chi^2 = 11.908$; $p = 0.003$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools whether they get books to read by buying it.

58.2% of students in poorly resourced, 60.9% in reasonably and 79.8% students in well-resourced schools indicated that they buy books.

As with the previous question, the highest percentage of students in well-resourced schools indicated that they buy books to read.

Figure 104: Buying as source of books



7.3.4 Motivation to read (Question 16)

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among respondents in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools regarding the influence of other persons on their motivation to read.

Students could respond to 6 options, and 5 options showed a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools:

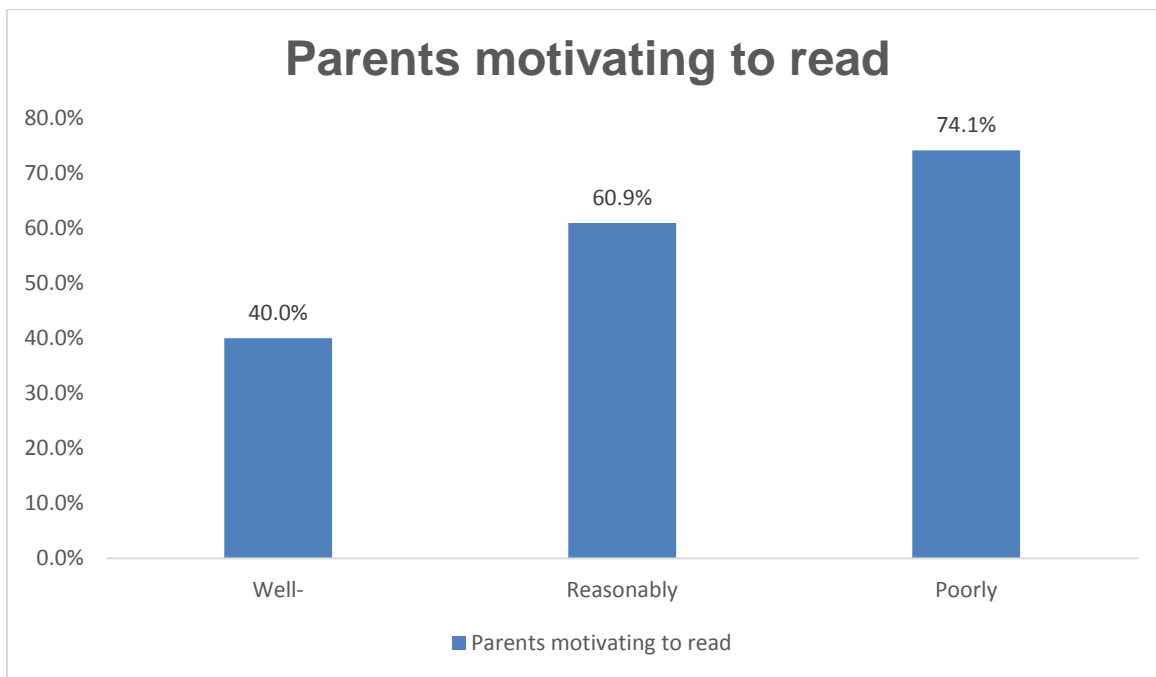
7.3.4.1 Motivation to read – role of parents (question 16.2)

$\chi^2 = 19.612$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools and the answer to the question whether parents motivate them to read.

74.1% of students in poorly, 60.9% in reasonably and 40.0% in well-resourced schools indicated that their parents motivate them to read.

The motivation to read by parents is thus a more important factor among respondents in poorly and reasonably resourced schools.

Figure 105: Parents motivating to read



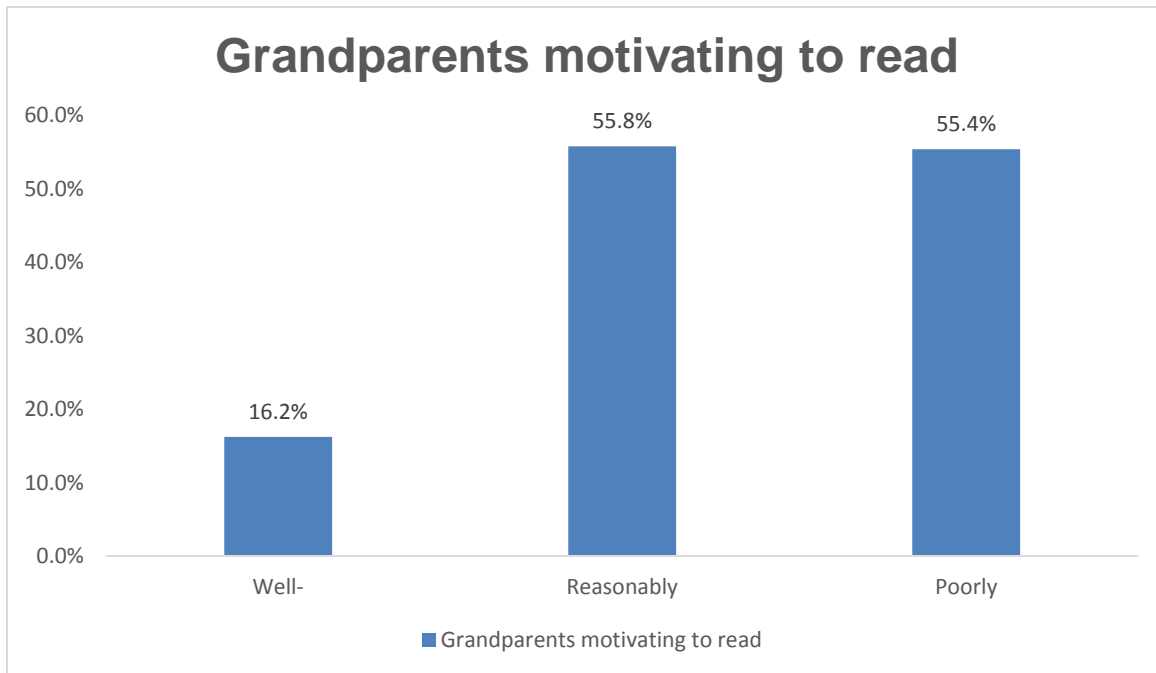
7.3.4.2 Motivation to read – role of grandparents (question 16.3)

$\chi^2 = 43.056$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between students in poorly, reasonably and well- resourced schools to the question whether grandparents motivate them to read.

55.4% students in poorly, 55.8% in reasonably and 16.2% in well-resourced schools indicated that their grandparents motivate them to read.

The motivation of grandparents is equally important in poorly and reasonably resourced schools. Students in well-resourced schools are significantly less influenced by grandparents to read.

Figure 106: Grandparents motivating to read



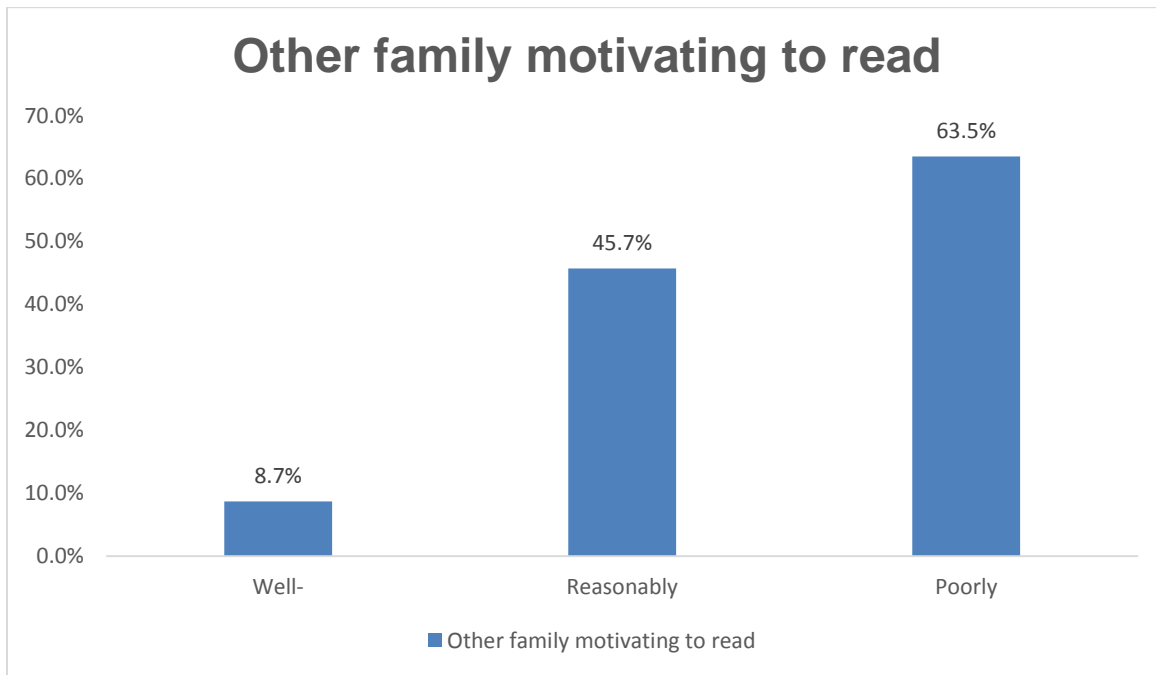
7.3.4.3 Motivation to read – other family (question 16.4)

$\chi^2 = 55.147$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools and the answer to the question whether other family members motivate them to read.

63.5% of students in poorly resourced, 45.7% in reasonably and 8.7% in well-resourced schools indicated that other family motivate them to read.

The motivation of other family members to read is thus a more important factor in poorly resourced areas.

Figure 107: Other family motivating to read



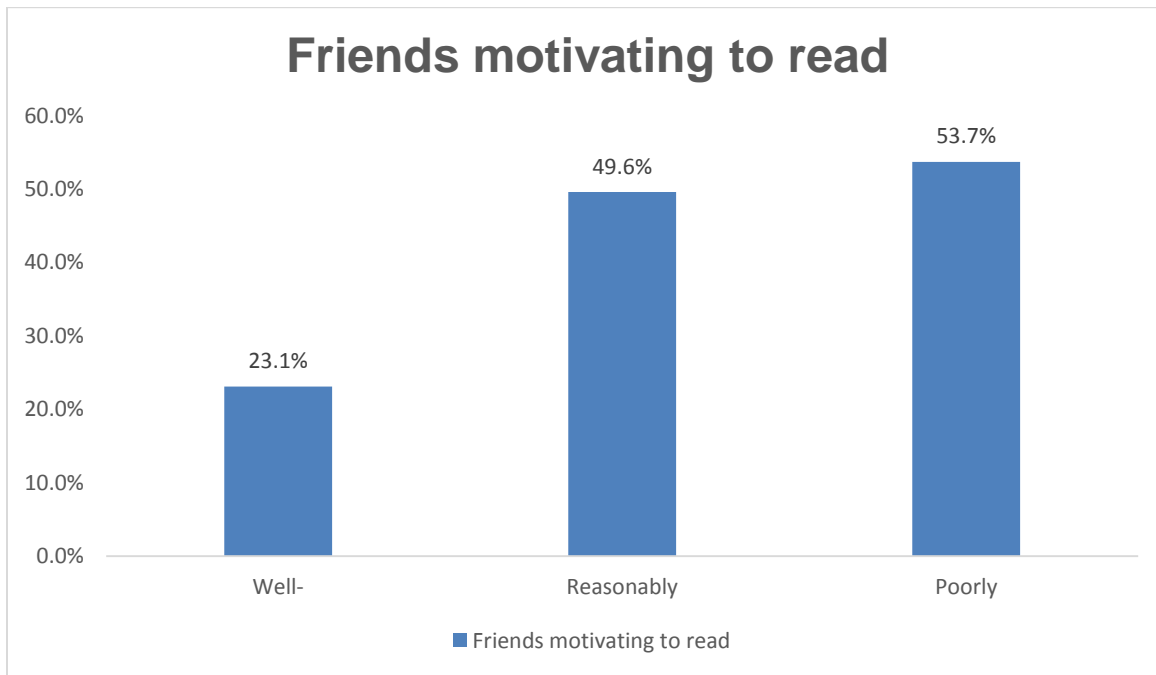
7.3.4.4 Motivation to read – friends (question 16.5)

$\chi^2 = 21.4$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools and the answer to the question whether friends motivate them to read.

53.7% of students in poorly, 49.6% in reasonably and 23.1% in well-resourced schools indicated that their friends motivate them to read.

The motivation of friends is thus a more important factor among respondents in poorly and reasonably resourced schools.

Figure 108: Friends motivating to read



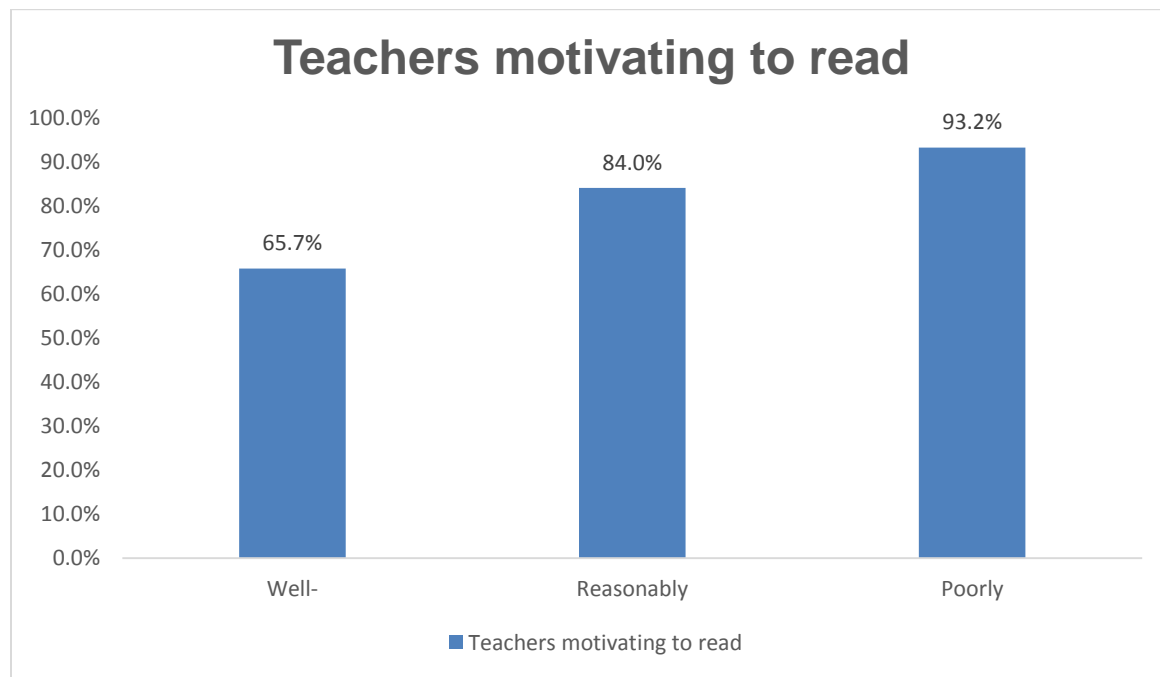
7.3.4.5 Teachers' influence on students' motivation to read_(question 16.6)

$\chi^2 = 20.527$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between area of school (or living) and the answer to the question whether teachers motivate them to read.

93.2% of students in poorly, 84.0% in reasonably and 65.7% in well-resourced schools indicated that their teachers motivate them to read.

Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools indicated that teachers motivated them more than for students in well-resourced schools.

Figure 109: Teachers motivating to read



7.3.5 Languages used for after school reading (Question 17)

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among responses from students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools regarding the languages they used for after school reading. Students could respond to 3 options (English, mother tongue or another language), and only the third option showed a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools. Because too few respondents answered, the information here is not usable.

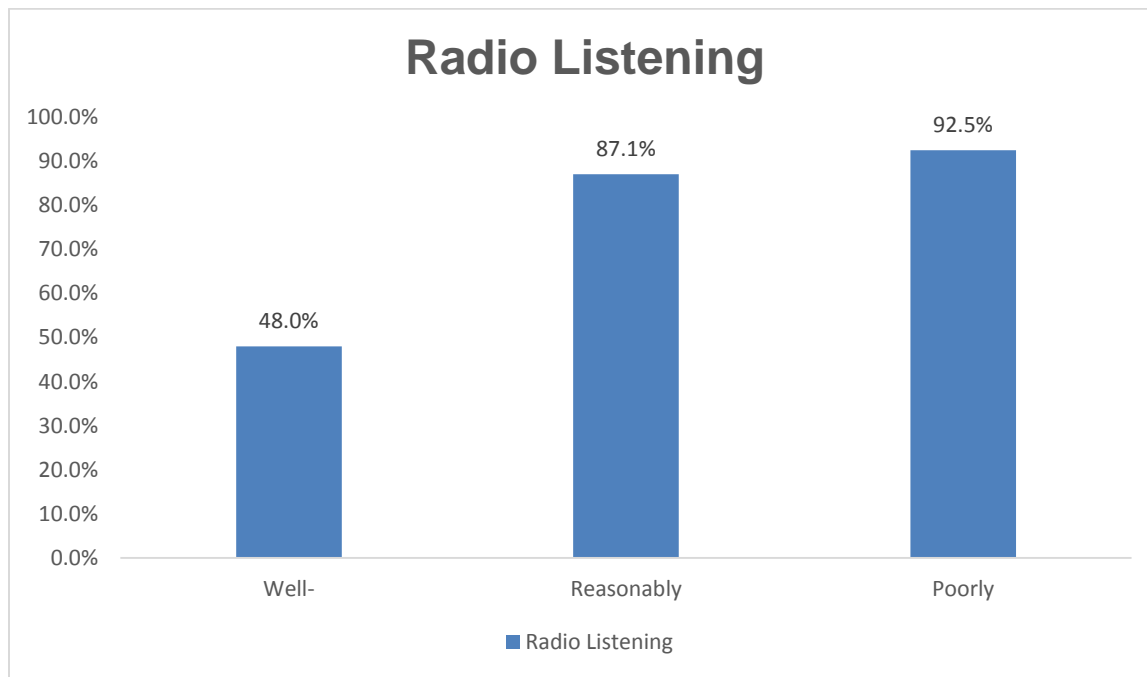
7.3.6 Listening to stories on the radio (question 23)

The researchers wanted to find out whether there was a difference among respondents in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools regarding listening to stories (live telling or over the radio). Only the second option showed a significant difference between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools:

$\chi^2 = 55.58$; $p < 0.0001$ and thus H_0 is rejected. There is a relationship between the responses of students in poorly, reasonably and well-resourced schools and the answer to the question whether respondents listen to stories over the radio.

92.5% students in poorly resourced, 87.1% in reasonably resourced and 48.0% in well-resourced schools indicated that they listen to stories over the radio.

Figure 110: Radio Listening



Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools listen to stories over the radio far more than students in well-resourced schools.

7.3.7 Summary

In general the factors investigated had a more significant effect on the reading behaviour of students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools than on those in well-resourced schools.

Reading is perceived as a fun activity in more well-resourced schools than in schools reasonably and poorly resourced.

Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools admitted that factors like the cover of a book and the appearance of being easy to read influenced them when choosing a book. Students in well-resourced schools were far less influenced by these factors.

Like with the previous questions, students in well-resourced schools were less influenced to choose a book if it is in their mother tongue than those in poorly and reasonably resourced schools.

More students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools answered “yes” when asked if they would read a book if the teacher said they should, than those in well-resourced schools.

Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools indicated that they used the school library as a source to get books from as well as the church library, in both cases more than the students in well-resourced schools seemingly because they are situated in areas where sources of information are readily available.

It is interesting that the pattern of responses is totally different when students were asked if they use a classroom collection as a source of books. Students in poorly and well-resourced schools used them less than students in reasonably resourced schools.

When asked whether students get books from family or friends and whether they buy books, the highest percentage came from students in well-resourced schools. They thus get books from other places than the school environment.

Students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools indicated that the motivation for them to read by parents, grandparents, friends and teachers is very important. This is

an interesting finding that corroborates the impression mentioned in Section 1 that reading has a high standing among adults in Namibia even if those adults may not read much themselves. Students in well-resourced schools were not motivated by these people in the same way. Although the influence of teachers is the highest, it is still lower than in poorly and reasonably resourced schools.

Lastly, students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools listen to stories over the radio far more than students in well-resourced schools. As indicated in Section 2, other studies show that the radio is the most popular medium of communication throughout Namibia, particularly in the rural areas.

In general the factors investigated had varying effects on the reading behaviour of children from differently resourced backgrounds. Children from well-resourced backgrounds are less influenced by external factors when choosing a book, and they do not rely on libraries as source of books. They are also not influenced so much by other persons in their motivation to read. These factors have a stronger influence on less affluent students. For them the school library as source and the teacher as model is very important.

Figure 111: Summary1

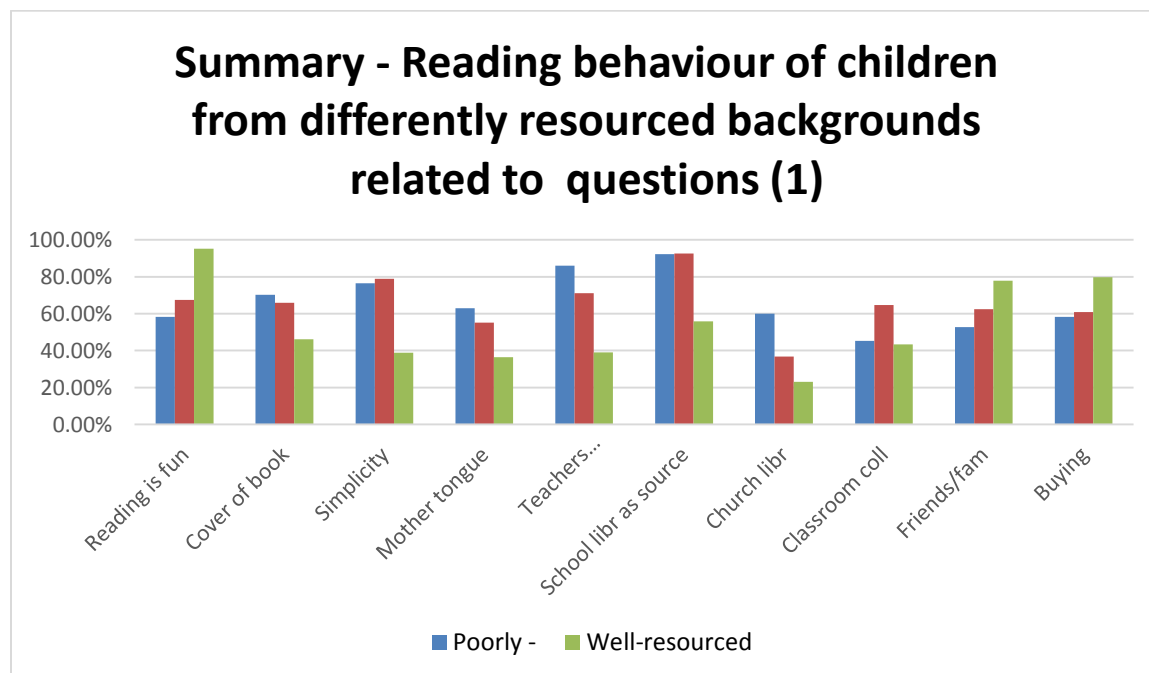
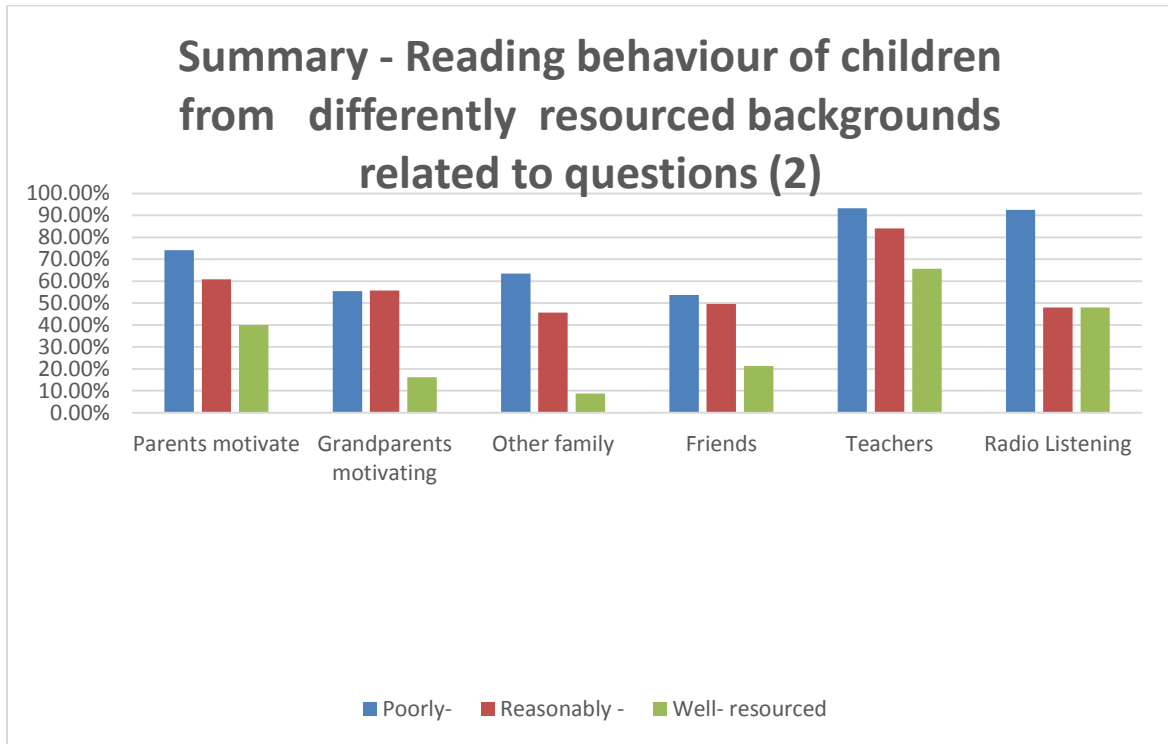


Figure 112: Summary 2



8. Interviews with Grade 6 students at three selected schools in the Hardap and Omaheke regions as well as a final visit to a school in the Khomas region

8.1 Introduction

In order to enrich our data, researchers decided to do interviews at three schools previously visited during the main research trips. The schools were selected to include well and medium resourced schools. We did not include poorly resourced schools, because so few of the respondents came through as readers. In the Hardap region, Ruimte Primary School – a well-resourced urban school – was chosen, as well as JR Camm Primary School, a reasonably resourced rural school. In the Omaheke region, Noasanabis Primary School, a reasonably resourced school in a rural area was visited.

As the information that could be gathered at Camm and Noasanabis was inadequate, it was decided to do a final session at Pionierspark Primary School, a well-resourced school in Windhoek, Khomas region.

The schools in the Hardap and Omaheke regions were visited on 6 and 7 November 2013. The principals were contacted beforehand and appointments were made for the visits. Researchers requested language teachers to select 10 Grade 6 students whom they considered to be readers. Upon arrival at the schools, researchers were escorted to suitable venues where they met the 10 students. The procedure was explained. Ethical issues were also dealt with as recordings of the interviews were made.

Back in Windhoek, the researchers made an appointment with the principal of Pionierspark PS for the 12th of November 2013. At this school the researchers were also well received and the principal, language teachers and Basic Information Science (BIS) teachers were very helpful.

At all four schools, students at first completed the self-administered Part 1 of the original questionnaire. These were marked (using the same criteria as with the original visits) and the 4 strongest readers (at one school only 3) were selected. The rest of the students went back to their classrooms. The researchers then proceeded with an individual or small group interview using a set of prepared questions as point of

departure (interview guide) (Appendices 11 & 12). This guide followed the same basic order as Part 2 of the student questionnaire. It allowed researchers to gauge the reasons for answers of interviewees. Together with this guide, interviewers also used a set of books, list of topics and themes and cards with types of characters. These assisted students to clearly indicate their preferences and actions when choosing books. The physical books were selected to include texts on different levels of difficulty, some with pictures, some without, different languages and different themes.

At Ruimte, all 10 students qualified and researchers selected the 4 strongest readers. They were divided into General and Story-readers and the researchers interviewed the two groups separately.

At JR Camm, none of the 10 students qualified as readers, but researchers still interviewed the 3 best candidates. We did not use the information.

At Noasanabis only 3 of the 10 students qualified and were thus interviewed. They were clearly not strong readers, but the interviews were useful to demonstrate the difference between the reading patterns of readers in reasonably resourced schools coming from poorer backgrounds and those from affluent backgrounds.

At Pionierspark only 2 of the ten students did *not* qualify. The 4 strongest readers were selected.

14 interviews (4.5% of the 314 readers) were thus conducted.

Figure 113

REGION	PRIMARY SCHOOL	STUDENTS THAT QUALIFIED AS READERS	STORY-READERS	GENERAL READERS
HARDAP	RUIMTE	10 – selected 4 strongest	3	1
HARDAP	JR CAMM	0 – selected 3 strongest	2	1
OMAHEKE	NOASANABIS	3 – interviewed 3	2	1
KHOMAS	PIONIERSPARK	8 – selected 4 strongest	2	2

8.2 Responses of interviewees

The following section contains the summaries and transcriptions of the two researchers. Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews are only partly given as some parts were totally irrelevant to the questions asked. In some cases respondents were not able to answer the questions despite prompts from the researchers. The questions and/or prompts or remarks researchers made, is indicated with R1 and R2. The response from the students is indicated with the first letter or first two letters of their names.

8.2.1 What do you think about reading? Why do you like to read? (Question 6)

RUIIMTE

In the interviews, reading to gain information was mentioned as an important reason for reading. Interviewees also said that they like a good storyline and adventure. They indicated that books can teach you a lesson. They read for enjoyment, finding it interesting and fun.

Ruimte Researcher 1

In the discussion of storybooks, JJ said that it taught him about life. The two girls, CH and S indicated that they read *'n Soen vir Whitney*. It taught them about HIV and the dangers of getting into a relationship too early.

Reasons for liking to read were as follows:

R1: *Why do you like reading?*

CH: *I like reading because it's my hobby and I love reading.*

JJ: *I like reading because it gives you very much information about the world. And adventures. Like adventure stories... It gives you much information and your knowledge will improve.*

S: *I like reading because it's fun for me to read and I get more information*

Students stressed that a book must be interesting – that the storyline was important.

R1: Why storybooks?

JJ: Because there's always something interesting behind it; at the end ... you get a surprise. (story line)

S: Because it's interesting to read and...and there is always action in stories

CH: I like storybooks because it's always interesting and I enjoy it.

R1: Can you tell me something about the last book you read?

JJ told about the last story he read during the previous month

S and CH talked about the book, 'n Soen vir Whitney.

R1: Why did you like it?

JJ: It did grip me because it teach me; when I'm at high school I will know what is coming next and.... prepares me for the things ahead.

S: I liked it because I would know ... to love someone... because there was also action in the story... I learned ... mm

CH: I liked the story because God was in it ... I did not know that a small child like that could experience that ...

Ruimte Researcher 2

R2 asked the one General Reader about the last book she has read.

C: Whitney se soen ... daar's mos ook wat dit jou van HIV vertel. Dit sê ... jy moet nie so vroeg in 'n verhouding ingaan nie. [Whitney se soen it tells about HIV. It says do not go so early into a relationship.]

R2: Hou jy regtig van lees? [Do you really like reading?]

C: As ek boeke het, sal ek lees. Dit gee idees soos ... as jy moet opstelle skryf. Feiteboeke is nogal lekker ... dit gee jou informasie. [If I have books I will read. It gives ideas like ... if you have to write compositions. Fact book are quite nice. They give information]

NOASANABIS

Educational reasons (important, knowledge) were mentioned. No one could remember a title. They tried to retell stories. The students here were very shy.

Noasanabis Researcher 1

R1: Why do you read?

E: Because reading is important for us.

J: So that we can get much information.

R1 prompts – is it nice?

Both: Yes

R1: Can you give a reason? (No response)

R1: Can you remember the last book you have read?

J: My book was about a kid who was living near a river. (Did not elaborate even after prompting)

E: My book was about a boy. He didn't have a mother and a father. He was living with his aunt and his aunt was not staying good with him ... she was staying badly.

R1: What happened at the end?

Both: Cannot remember

R1: Where did you get the book?

Both: We get it here, in the library.

They could not indicate when they got these books, probably this year.

R1: Did you like it?

Both: Yes

R1: Why?

E: It was sad ...

Noasanabis Researcher 2

R2: Why do you like to read ... why do you read fact books?

A: To know the things that is happening.

R2: What is the last book that you read?

A: Don't swim in the stream.

R2: *What was it about?*

A: *Someone was told not to swim in the stream.*

R2: *Did you like that book ... why?*

A: *Because it is telling the truth.*

PIONIERSPARK

Pionierspark Researcher 1

In this school one of the general readers indicated reading is part of his leisure activities. Two readers responded that they read for the educational benefit: you learn about animals and it helps with your schoolwork. One story reader said that stories develop one's imagination. It answers questions you have and teaches a lesson. They liked adventure and animal stories. Students mostly indicated that it was nice to read, and interesting.

The readers could give detailed information about the books they have read. They mentioned titles such as *The Hardy boys*, *Inkdeath*, *Vampire Diaries*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*.

M: *Reading ... it's actually a good activity. It helps you with school work and it increases your imagination, especially when you draw... and you read a story and if you read that story without pictures you can actually see the picture so I don't think reading is a nerd thing; it's actually quite a good thing.*

D: *Yes, they called me a nerd because I read this *Dairy of a Wimpy Kid* but I find it interesting.*

(M agrees)

M: *I still need to read it too and sometimes my mother sometimes yells at me at home when I read a book and I have something to do ... I have stacks of books in my room.*

D: *I find my own books because I read three of the same books: *Dairy of a Wimpy Kid*; *Last Straw*, *Dog days* and *Roderick rules*. I read it during the year and other*

books also and my mum buys me. I can choose my own.

M: Like the last book that I read is like a really thick book...aaa ... is like a love story, Miss, but it is out of a Bible script...I don't know the name, but it is a lady with a red dress and she had a child but the lady died (R: Possibly the adult book, Redeeming love by Francine Rivers) so I still need to figure why the lady died I'm not yet finished ... (I liked it) because people don't read Bible stories any more ... like they're trying to create Bible stories but in a modern way.

D: (interjecting) Some of them talk to you more ... you read through the Bible and it tells you something ... cause I once did something wrong and I was reading the Bible and some of my answers (questions) got answered during my reading ... yes...

M: This was a modern retelling of a ... Miss, you know the lady and the two daughters and the sons died [R. Very possible that she is referring to the book on Ruth in the adult series, A lineage of grace by Francine Rivers dealing with the lives of five women in the Bible, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary.] So they just did something totally different, but it still has the same line. So like they took a lady..." (telling of story continues ...)

D: (tells about his story) ... it is about a wimpy kid trying to get through his middle school without like getting into trouble. (I like) the way it is portrayed. Sometimes it's also about the teacher and how he (the wimpy kid) sleeps in class ... that also taught me because I was always coming tired to school ... he also used to sleep early ... he is like me ... now I'm also going to bed just after school.

Pionierspark Researcher 2

R2: Mo ... do you really like to read?

Mo: Yes

R2: S...?

S: Ja, Juffrou ... maar net sekere boeke. [Yes Miss ... but only certain books.]

R2: So, jy kies jou boeke. [So you choose your books.]

S: Ja. [Yes]

R2: Mo, why do you like to read?

Mo: It is part of my leisure.

R2: En S, jy? [And you, S?]

S: Juffrou ... dit leer my baie om met diere te ... werk. En ek love diere. Enige boek met diere is ek geïnteresseerd in. [Miss ... it teaches me a lot about how to work with animals. And I love animals. Any book with animals I am interested in.]

R2: Mo, why do you prefer fact books?

Mo: It tells you more about the topic.

R2: S – kan jy die naam van 'n boek noem wat jy laas gelees het? [Can you mention the name of a book you read last?]

S: Inkdeath. Dis nie 'n feiteboek nie – dis 'n storie en dit klink miskien scary, maar dit is nie so scary nie. Dis eintlik baie interessant. [Inkdeath. It is not a fact book – it is a story en it may sound scary, but it isn't really scary. It is actually very interesting.]

R2: Mo, what was the name of the last book you read?

Mo: Vampire diaries.

R2: Do you like scary stories?

Mo: I like adventure ... like the Hardy Boys.

R2: Why did you like the Vampire Diaries?

Mo: I like the adventure ...myths ...

R2: S, waarom het jy van Inkdeath gehou? [S., why did you like Inkdeath?]

S: Dis ook vol adventures. [It is also full of adventures].

8.2.2 Where do you get books? (Question 13)

RUIIMTE

Ruimte Researcher 1

It seemed that the school library is not really used. These students and their families seem to be in a position to buy books. The store CNA, the Windhoek and local library were mentioned. Rehoboth is a smaller town just 70 km south of Windhoek. Affluent parents come to Windhoek a lot, and can afford to visit stores, bring children to after school activities and buy them books. Some interviewees could not remember exactly where the library was. Students did not mention the school library. They elaborated a bit about the books they have bought, taken out...

JJ tells about thick books he reads ... keeps him busy ...

Ruimte Researcher 2

C: Soms koop my ma my boeke ... en soms kry ek dit by die skool. [Sometimes my mom buys me books ... en sometimes I get them at the school.]

R: Jy sê jy neem boeke uit by die dorpsbiblioteek. Is jy 'n lid? [You say you borrow books from the town library. Are you a member?]

C: Ek was ... ek het eintlik nog nie hierdie jaar daar uitgeneem nie. Ek kry die meeste informasie by die huis. [I was ... this year I haven't actually borrowed books there (2013). I get most of the information at home.]

PIONIERSPARK

At Pionierspark all four students indicated that they do not use the school library a lot. The one language teacher also underlined later that the library was not used by students or teachers. The reason seemed to be that they get their books elsewhere. Although they said that they do not really get books from the library, they later remembered the title, Goosebumps that they got from the library. Only one story reader said that he used the town library, but not anymore because of swimming. All four emphasized that they buy or get books from their family. All mentioned the CNA. M mentioned that they bought from Book Den – the best book shop in town! Mo said that he bought books at a book sale that was at the school

some time ago.

Pionierspark Researcher 1

R1 (following up: Your mother buys books? (Yes.) Is that the most important way you get books?

D: Not really. I sometimes go to the library. (Q - The school library?) I used to come but my mom said I can buy my own books.

M: My mother also buys me books and then sometimes I collect books from my family. I am pretty scared to go to the library, cause I can't find the book I am looking for and then the book falls and the teacher will scream "you don't come into the library". I am really clumsy...

D (interjects)... but the most books I read here are the Goosebumps.

M: Ja! (Did you also read that? - R) Yes, Miss ... a lot ... and I can't sleep at night because it is really scary (D: Yes it is scary!)

R1: Do you ever go to the library in town?

D: I used to go there but then my mom said it's getting ... I couldn't go because I started swimming. I used to walk from the library to there ... (more about swimming and guitar...)

R1: And you M?

M: Miss, I wanted to but I can't find time because they ... don't really have decent books. They only have children's books. I saw it on national television ... so I don't really go there. I usually buy my books.

R1: Where do you buy books?

M: Do you really want me to tell you?

D: I buy mine at CNA.

M: CNA and Book Den. It's the best place to go buy your books, I'm telling you, the best place. (More about Book Den)

Pionierspark Researcher 2

R2: Waar kry jy boeke? [Where do you get books?]

S: Ek koop dit by Maerua. Partykeer koop my ouma vir my vir Desember ... ek weet nie waar sy dit kry nie. [I buy them at Maerua. Sometimes my granny buys for me for December ... I don't know where she gets them.]

R2: Mo, where do you get books?

Mo: I get it from CNA.

R2: Do you buy it yourself, or do you parents buy?

Mo: My parents buy.

R2: When was the last time you bought a book?

Mo: There was a book sale ... here at the school.

8.2.3 Themes and types of books, language, reasons for choosing a book (Question 11)

RUIIMTE

In choosing a book, students were asked why they would choose a book in a library or bookshop. Then ten books were presented (suitable books of different themes). Students were asked to select one or two titles. When asking for reasons why they selected a specific book, they responded mainly as follows: They would look at the cover, title, page through. Some said they would go to certain sections to find their favourite theme: adventure stories, Bible stories. They find books funny, interesting and exciting. One respondent indicated that the author plays a role.

Ruimte Researcher 1

S: First I go to the adventure books ... I look around to see if I like something ... and then I take it if I like it ... if there's animals in there ... I like animals ... The title ...

JJ: I would look at the person who wrote the book ... Naa, I can't remember because I just see that people ... normally the most popular one ... and I normally see the most common ... author or person ... I'll take that one, because I think he has more experience and will know ... and I think his book will be interesting. More ...

C: First I go to the Bible stories books because I love Bible books and Bible stories and I want to learn more about the Bible. I choose the one that looks more interesting ... I think by looking at the name of the book ...

After the activity:

JJ: Because I could instantly see by the cover of the page it is adventure. I paged through it and I liked the ways they described all the things that happen ... I read in the beginning so that I could see what happened so that I will know ...

CH: I chose it because it is a story, a Bible story about animals ... saw it on the cover... I chose because it was about a family... looks interesting to me

S: I chose it because I thought it is funny... laughs ... the cover, I paged through...

Other information:

When asked why respondents did not choose a sports story, they responded that it didn't seem interesting; without pictures. Another responded that he already read this one. One said he will not read Afrikaans. Will not read Asterix because he doesn't read comics ...

Pionierspark Researcher 2

R2: *As jy 'n boek kies, waarna kyk jy? [If you choose a book, what are you looking for?]*

C: *Ek kyk na die cover van die boek. Of dit interessant is [I look at the cover of the book. Whether it is interesting.]*

R2: *Waarom het jy hierdie boek oor Electricity en Animal Partnership gekies? [Why did you choose this book about Electricity and Animal Partnership?]*

C: *Ek kies die boek oor electricity want ek dink dit is exciting. [I choose the book about electricity because I think it is exciting].*

R2: *Het jy hierdie boek gekies omdat dit dinosourusse op die buitekant het? [Did you choose this book because there are dinosaurs on the cover page?]*

C: *Nee ... nie eintlik nie, maar ek het in die binnekant gekyk ... [No ... not really, but I looked in the inside ...]*

NOASANABIS

When choosing a book, the story-readers indicated that they look at the cover and inside. One respondent also mentioned the author. The general readers also chose books because the theme interested them. They wanted to learn something. They preferred picture books, but not a baby book.

Some said they would read a book on the recommendation of friends and teachers. One said they would want to know what the book is about.

Responses collected by researcher 1 were very short:

A: You first take that ...

A: You first look at the pictures ...

Silence ...

The researcher (1) then asked interviewees to choose titles from the selection of books presented to them. They found it hard to verbalize why they chose a book.

Noasanabis Researcher 2

R2: How do you choose a book?

A: I look at the book.

R2: What do you look at?

A: The name of the book ... the author.

R2: You chose ... hunting the dinosaurs ... why did you choose it?

A: I want to know ... why did they hunt it.

R2: How did you choose ... did you look inside?

A: Yes.

R2: Why didn't you choose any of the other books?

A: ... I first chose this one.

R2: If a teacher tells you a book is good, will you read it?

A: Yes ... I want to know what it is about.

PIONIERSPARK

These students indicated that the front cover – picture and the title – plays a big role. The story-readers paged through the book. Mo said that he always read the back cover to see if the topic interested him. The thickness of a book – not too thick or too thin – is also important.

It was clear that the perceived theme or topic of the book (sports, soccer, nature, animals, thriller, detective, adventure) was important. (It was noted that a book made into a film was commented on - did the student read the book or just watched the film?)

The story-readers indicated that they would read a book on recommendation of teachers or friends. Mo said his classmates have other interests – therefore he is not influenced by them. They read comics and he doesn't. M rationalised her choosing of a picture book because she thought she could read it to someone younger.

About the last story they have read, all students could give detailed information.

(Researcher 1 only did this activity at the end with the story-readers at this school.)

D: (I chose these two) because it looks adventurous and this one its sports ... my favourite ... soccer.

M: Because... dis oor die natuur en baie mense mors die natuur. Ek dink dis goed as mense oor die natuur skryf. Dis half bangmakerig. Die sal ek vir my niggie lees - dis oulik en kleurvol (about a picture book). [Because ... it is about nature and many people trash nature. I think it's good if people write about nature. It is kind of scary. I will read it to my cousin – it is charming and colourful (about a picture

book).]

About titles not chosen:

D: Don't want to read Afrikaans (he cannot really read Afrikaans he said earlier).

M: I don't want to read soccer.

(Discussion about the books they have not chosen, about comics. They mentioned Captain Underpants.)

The story-readers ended debating about Albert Einstein and whether he read or not!

Pionierspark Researcher 2

R2: Mo, when you go into a bookshop, how do you choose a book?

Mo: I look at the back cover to see what is it about.

R2: Hoe kies jy 'n boek, S? [How do you choose a book, S?]

S: Juffrou, ek kyk ook na die prentjie ... maar ek kyk ook agterop waaroor gaan dit. [Miss, I look at the picture ... but I also look at the back to see what it's about.]

R2: Mo, try to tell me why you chose the book on soccer and Animal Partnership.

Mo: I like that.

R2: S, waarom het jy die boek oor elektrisiteit gekies? [S., why did you choose this book on electricity?]

S: Juffrou ek hou baie van electric power [Miss, I like electric power very much.]

R2: En die een oor voëls? [And the one on birds?]

S: Juffrou... die boek vertel meer oor voëls en ek hou baie van voëls. [Miss ... the book tells more about birds and I like birds.]

R2: Waarom het jy nie hierdie boek gekies nie, S? Dit is ook oor diere. Hier is ook prentjies. [Why didn't you choose this book, S? It is also about animals. Here are also pictures.]

S: Nee, Juffrou. Ek is nie so baie geïnteresseerd in prentjies nie. As daar een of

twee prentjies is, is dit ok. [No, Miss. I'm not very interested in pictures. If there are one or two pictures, then it is OK.]

R2: If a teacher tells you to read a book, would you read it?

Mo: Yes

S: Ja, Juffrou ... die onderwysers weet meer as kinders ... en partykeer is hulle reg. [Yes, Miss ... the teachers know more than the children ... and sometimes they are right.]

R2: If you hear a book is nice, will you read it?

Mo: No ... if I hear from the people in my class, I will not read it. We don't have the same interests. They read comics.

S: Nee, juffrou ... partykeer triek jou klasmaats jou om iets te lees waarvan ek nie hou nie. [No, Miss sometimes your classmates trick you to read something you don't like.]

R2: Daardie Inkdeath ... hou jy daarvan? Waaroor gaan dit? [That Inkdeath ... do you like it? What is it about?].

S: Ja, Juffrou ... ek hou daarvan, maar daar is dele wat nie so interessant is nie. As Juffrou die flik, Inkdeath gesien het, sal Juffrou sien. Dit gaan oor 'n vrou wat haar man verloor het, en nou moet sy en haar seun in die underworld ... soos mense sê oorleef. Hulle moet elke aand diere gaan doodmaak ... om te eet. [Yes, Miss ... I like it but there are parts that are not so interesting. If you have seen the film, you will see. It is about a woman who lost her husband and now she and her son must as people say, survive in the underworld. Every evening they must kill animals ... to eat.]

R2: S, jy het gesê jy hou van avontuur ... is daar ander tipe stories waarvan jy hou? [S,, you said you like adventure ... are there other types of stories you like?]

S: Ja, Juffrou, ek hou van stories oor diere ... dit is eintlik my main ... hoof interest. Dan is daar ander stories ... partykeer grillerige stories. [Yes, Miss, like stories about animals ... that is actually my main interest. Then there are other stories sometimes creepy stories.]

R2: Mo ... can you shortly tell me what is Vampire Diaries about?

Mo: Yes ... it is about this three boys ... and there is the nasty vampire they must

get rid of. Then they go to Paris ... and they get this Professor ... and there is this spy that take them into the underworld.

R2: Any other type of books you like?

Mo: Yes ... detective books. I also like reading sports books

8.2.4 Kinds of books/topics (Question 7)

(Many students answered this question spontaneously during the previous question.)

RUIIMTE

Students mentioned mostly adventure stories but also about family, Bible stories, funny stories, and facts.

Ruimte Researcher 1

S: I like adventure books ... sometimes when it is hilarious ...

CH: I like Bible books ... stories about families ...

JJ: I like adventures and actions and probably comedy sometimes

R1: Why?

S: Because it's interesting and you laugh about it and you enjoy it...

CH: I love Bible stories and what happened long ago because I can learn more about Jesus. I like to read more about families

JJ: I enjoy it and it is fun for me ... the characters and all the things they do ... the actions in the story

One general reader, a girl, said that she enjoyed stories where problems are solved in the end.

Ruimte Researcher 2

R2: Van watter onderwerpe hou jy? [Which topics do you like?]

C: Soos miskien ... mense wat lost was en hulle is gekry. [Like maybe ... people who were lost and they were found.]

R2: As jy kyk na hierdie lys met moontlike onderwerpe, wat sal jy kies? [If you look at this list with possible topics, which would you choose?]

C: Adventure ... en facts ... Ek hou van adventure, want dit voel jy is self in die storie in. [I like adventure because it feels as if you are in the story yourself.]

NOASANABIS

Respondents (General readers) mentioned themes such as sports, animals, computers and things happening in the village. They also mentioned (Story-readers) the Bible and school, family and magic stories. They could not say why – gave vague responses like: *I like it; it is interesting.*

Noasanabis Researcher 2

R2: You said the last book you read was: Don't swim in the stream ... what would you say was it about?

A: Not to swim in the stream.

R2: The danger?

A: Yes

R2: Ok ... you said you like to read about dinosaurs and about danger ... is there any other topic you want to know about?

A: Yes ... what happens in the village.

R2: If I give you a list of topics ... can you tell me what you want to read about?

A: Animals ... sports ... computers.

R2: Here is a book about sports ... why didn't you choose it?

A: I chose the one about animals.

R2: But I said you could choose more than one ...

A: (no reply)

R2: Look in the book about soccer ... what do you like about it?

A: The steps ...

R2: The steps of soccer?

A: Yes



PIONIERSPARK

The general readers indicated storybooks when asked what kinds of books they read. The two boys (one general and one story reader) liked stories as well as non-fiction. Both general and story-readers mentioned adventure, sport, cars, animals. A strong captivating storyline is important. S said she liked spooky stories. Mo said he liked detective stories. D specifically said he liked stories of long ago and that he is busy reading a book about Hitler. He also mentioned reading about Bin Laden. M indicated that she chose a picture book to read to someone else. (Researchers noted that they sometimes slipped into telling about movies.)

Pionierspark Researcher 1

R1: What kind of books do you like to read?

D: Adventurous, cars and Olympics and...

M: I like all the books; I don't have a favourite. As long as it's a book I'll read it. I love books! Love stories, adventure stories, even when I have to read to someone (smaller) I'll read that book to them...

R1: Why do you like these kinds of books?

D: Because I like to ... when I read I find the main story ... when you are at the end of a page and you want to know what happens next so I keep reading to know more about the story. It's interesting to know...

M: When you read like an adventure story: sometimes they talk about hunting - you can sometimes learn from that ... it can help you with your vocabulary and ... (goes on about good language.)

R1 prompts: Tell me about the kinds of books/ types you won't read?

M: Except horror movies (sic), Miss. I don't like those because they really scare me. But Goosebumps were really scary and it grips you. You can't leave the book. It takes you by the head and you have to read it.

R1 lays out cards - Something else you like to read about?

D: I would also take stories that happened a long time ago – like Hitler and Ben Laden. Cause I have Hitler rise of evil and I didn't finish the movie cause sometimes I am afraid about what's going to happen next. I have heard of his past (more about Hitler ...)

R1: What don't you want to read about?

D: I would not read love stories – I get emotional sometimes; tears just come dripping.

M: Sports stories – I am not very athletic If it's a necessity I would.

8.2.5 Kinds of people (Question 10 - only story-readers)

(Many students found this question repetitive...)

RUIIMTE

Researcher 2 Ruimte

It was difficult for students – after the previous question – to mention types of characters. Some liked characters that had the same interests and lived long ago. *Silence....* R1 took out activity card and read it to them.

S: (Points to same interests) About people who enjoy animals.

CH: I like to read stories about people who lived long ago because then I know what happened long ago.

JJ: The same...

After prompting on Other Countries: *JJ: It will definitely learn us about the world ... what is going on outside Namibia. About the international ... the whole world ...*

Even after prompting it became clear that Gender and Namibian setting did not matter to the interviewees.

NOASANABIS

They could not really answer this question. J said he liked to read about English people. The researcher suspects that he actually meant she liked to read English stories. When presented the list, the two girls chose everything except books about boys and people having the same interests. They could not motivate their choice.

PIONIERSPARK

Pionierspark Researcher 1

D: Because when I was smaller I used to be like him [the Wimpy Kid]. I used to get pushed around.

M interjects: (He) still gets pushed around.

D: My brother also used to treat me like he is treated...

M: A joyful person, a colourful person like ... did Miss read Betty G. the hamster? ... It's like a child book but it is interesting ... some people don't read children's books because they think they.... they are too cool to read that but the reason I used to read it, is because you can learn something from it. Like when you're a parent, you can like tell your child the story.

R1 prompts. Does the character matter to you?

D: It matters but I don't have any other characters.

M: The Treasure Island ... Sam ... I can't remember the name, Miss. The lead character was like Adolf Hitler. I liked that because he also killed people ... for a good reason – he tried to find his child ... (tells the story...)

(Long part here not transcribed because not relevant to question).

8.2.6 Other reading materials (Question 14)

RUIMTE

It was clear that students liked magazines and newspapers (Huisgenoot, Finesse, Comic books, Republikein, Sun). Huisgenoot and Namibian newspapers are widely bought and read in this community. They get it in shops and Spar. Parents buy.

(No response again when asked about role of school library)

Ruimte Researcher 1

CH: ...Read about film stars...

A: Last time I read about ... also ... a woman that ... her face burnt ... it tells you about things that happened in other person's lives ...

Ruimte Interviewer 2

R: Watter tydskrifte lees jy? [Which magazines do you read?]

C: Die Huisgenoot ... en soms die Finesse. [The Huisgenoot ... and sometimes the Finesse.]

R: Waar kry jy dit? [Where do you get it?]

C: My ma koop vir haar ... en as sy klaar is, dan lees ek dit. [My mother buys it for herself... and after she finished it, then I read it.]

NOASANABIS

They said that they read newspapers but only indicated the name of one newspaper, New Era. It seemed as if they got the newspapers from the Post Office. E indicated that her mother sometimes brings it home.

R2: Which newspaper do you read? (no answer)

PIONIERSPARK

The general readers both mentioned newspapers and magazines. The story-readers could mention specific titles. D mentioned *Top Gear*. They get these reading materials from their parents and grandparents. D could give very interesting detail about small cars for disabled people.

Mo: I also read magazines and newspapers. My father buy it.

S: My ma koop die koerante by die man op die straat. Die magazines kry ek by my ouma. [My mom buys the newspapers from the man on the street. The magazines I get from my grandma.]

8.2.7 Who tells you to read (Question 16)

RUIMTE

It became clear that mothers and grandmothers mostly motivate the children to read - the utilitarian reason being that reading improves their schoolwork.

R2: As niemand vir jou sê jy moet lees nie, sal jy nog steeds lees? [If nobody tells

you to read, will you still read?]

C: Ja ... as daar 'n nice boek is. [Yes ... if there is a nice book.]

NOASANABIS

The students' responses were that others and teachers tell them to read. A said he wants to read with someone because he often needed help with difficult words.

Noasanabis Researcher 2

R2: A, would you read if no one tells you to read?

A: No ... I don't like to read alone. ... it is too hard. Someone must tell me the words.

When asked: who tells you to read, they answered that the main people were their mothers and the library teacher. A little general reader (boy) said that he would not read because it is too hard for him. He chose *Not so fast, Songololo*, the picture book, because it is easier. He said he would read if the book were available.

PIONIERSPARK

The students also responded that others told them to read. The readers of non-fiction said they would not read so much without motivation from somebody.

S: My ouma ... net my ouma sê ek moet lees. As ek by haar is, moet ek 'n hele 3 bladsye ... of 'n hoofstuk lees. [My grandma ... only my grandma tells me to read. When I am with her, I must read three pages ... or a chapter.]

S: As niemand sê ek moet lees nie, sal ek nie so baie lees nie ... net as ek verveeld is. [If nobody tells me I should read, I will not read so much ... only when I

am bored.]

Story-readers answered (when prompted) that storybooks gave information in a much more interesting way. They would read even if nobody motivated them.

8.2.8 Languages read in after school (Question 17)

RUIMTE

All of them said English and mother tongue – except one who said only English (she tried to impress the researcher!)

S: I do not enjoy to read in Afrikaans; I like English ... Afrikaans is just ... Afrikaans ... English is more beautiful ...

R2: Watter Engelse boek het jy onlangs gelees? [Which English book did you recently read?]

C: 'n Boek oor Kathy Cassidy. [A book about Kathy Cassidy.]

NOASANABIS

Story-readers said they will read because of the educational value. They read in English and Khoekhoegowab (KKG) but could not give any titles. The library in town is their source.

A said he reads in Khoekhoegowab. Story-readers said they read in English. They also read Khoekhoegowab. They get books in the town library or in class. They could not give any title.

R2: Can you remember what the last Khoekhoegowab book that you read was

about?

A: About sport.

R2: Was it a book or a newspaper?

A: A book

R2: Was it a story or the rules of a sport?

A: A story

R2: About which sport?

A: Athletics

R2: In Khoekhoegowab?

A: Yes

R2: What was it about?

A: Two boys. They win.

R2: Did they compete for their school?

A: Yes.

PIONIERSPARK

Languages: Most students read in English and Afrikaans. D and M were both in the English first language class and D a mother tongue speaker. Mo said that he is learning a bit of Arabic at his Religious Lessons.

It was clear from all interviews that there were no negative feelings towards English or the mother tongue. The two English speaking students indicated that they don't read Afrikaans, even though they are taking it as a second language.

R2: In which language do you read, Mo?

Mo: Only English ... and a bit of Arabic ... at Religious classes.

S: Afrikaans ... nie Engels nie ... daar is funny woorde wat baie moeilik is om te lees. [Afrikaans ... not English ... there are funny words that are difficult to read.]

Mo: I don't understand Afrikaans.

8.2.9 Storytelling (Question 21 & 22)

RUIMTE

Story-readers said that the English and Afrikaans teachers tell *(life time)* stories. At home grandmothers mostly told stories. The themes were the Rehoboth culture *(about our heritage; our fathers that were before us and what they did)* and the Bible.

Students had the understanding that stories are just events that are spoken about.

Ruimte Researcher 2

R2: Vertel julle onderwysers soms vir julle stories? [Do your teachers sometimes tell you stories?]

C: Ja, ... ons Engelse onderwyser. [Yes ... our English teacher.]

R2: En die ander onderwysers? Die Afrikaanse onderwyser? [And the other teachers? The Afrikaans teacher?]

C: Net as ons iets nie verstaan nie, dan vertel hy 'n storie om te verduidelik. [Only if we do not understand something, then he tells a story to explain.]

NOASANABIS

Students said that some teachers tell stories: the language and agriculture teachers. They could mention the names of teachers telling stories. Mothers and grandmothers were also mentioned. They all told a story about a snake they heard recently. They could not elaborate further.

Noasanabis Researcher 2

R2: Which teachers tell stories?

A: Ms Janzen

R2: Oh ... the life skills teacher. What kind of stories does she tell?

A: About HIV

R2: Is it in a story or is it just facts?

A: (no reply)

PIONIERSPARK

The respondents said that teachers don't tell stories, but some said parents and grandparents and a brother sometimes tell stories. Real storytelling did not feature. Friends only told stories about everyday events.

Pionierspark Researcher 1

R1: Who tells you stories?

M: My dad ... excellent storyteller (retells a story he told her) ... My dad would sometimes completely change the story

D: Brother warns about satanic TV stories on Disney channel ...

Pionierspark Researcher 2

R2: Who tells you stories?

Mo: No teachers ... only the religious teacher. Most of the stories my father tells is about when he was young.

S: Nee, Juffrou, glad nie die onderwysers nie. My ma vertel my partykeer stories ... oor stories wat sy gelees het in die koerant of so ... om my te waarsku. [No Miss, not at all the teachers. My mother sometimes tells me stories ... about

stories she has read in the newspaper or so ... to warn me.]

8.2.10 Story reading (Question 24)

RUIMTE

Not a lot of reaction was experienced with this question. Some mentioned teachers (reading school books) or parents.

R2: Lees julle taalonderwysers soms vir julle stories? [Do your language teachers sometimes tell you stories?]

C: Nie eintlik nie. [Not really.]

R2: En by die huis? Lees iemand daar vir jou. [And at home? Does anyone read to you there?]

C: Nee ... ek lees self. [No ... I read by myself.]

NOASANABIS

They said that the library and language teacher read stories. J and E are friends and said they read to each other.

At home, no one reads stories. A, a general reader, said his mother reads Bible stories.

R2: Who reads stories to you at home?

A: My mother.

R2: What kind of stories does she read?

A: About the Lord.

PIONIERSPARK

The English teacher was mentioned by all respondents – especially reading for comprehension purposes.

At home after school, only one said her father reads to her. The others said no one reads to them.

R2: Do teachers read stories to you?

Mo: No.

S: Nee ... mev. Haacke het ... maar nou is sy nie meer hier nie. [No ... Miss Haacke did ... but now she is not here anymore.]

8.2.11 Radio stories (Question 23)

RUIMTE

Students responded that they listen to the radio (*Capricorn station ... can't remember the stories; 90.3... not stories*), but not to stories. The role of TV is possibly the reason – this is indicated in Part one where students listed their activities.

NOASANABIS

The students said they don't listen to stories on the radio. One said he listened to sports news.

A: Yes.

R2: *In which languages?*

A: *English or Damara.*

R2: *Which kind of stories?*

A: *About sports. Sometimes.*

R2: *Is it stories or is it information about sports?*

A: *Information.*

PIONIERSPARK

Story-readers indicated that they do not listen to stories on the radio. Only one general reader said she listens to serials on the Afrikaans service. M mentioned an evening story over Radio Kosmos (?).

8.2.12 Reading for pleasure (Question 8)

RUIMTE

General readers said they read when they have time, or are bored; story-readers said in the afternoon after schoolwork.

JJ: *Only at night...when I am done with my school work and studying ... in the namiddae [afternoons]... not all the time ... school work is too much ... teacher will give you plenty of homework ... holidays... then I will take a book and finish it ...*

R2: *Wanneer lees jy vir jou plesier? [When do you read for pleasure?]*

C: *Net wanneer ek tyd het. [Only when I have time.]*



NOASANABIS

A said he doesn't read for pleasure. He does have time – but doesn't read. The story-readers said they read at night and during holidays.

PIONIERSPARK

General readers indicated they only read on weekends. M said she read 24/7. One (D) said he reads while travelling.

D: After I do my work in class and sometimes at home ... my mum takes away the TV. My punishment ... she takes away the TV and I just take a book and read.

S: Ek lees net wanneer ek alleen is. As my broers by is kan ek nie lees nie. Hulle gil en skree. [I only read when I am alone. When my brothers are with me, I cannot read. They yell and scream.]

8.2.13 How do you feel when you choose your own story (Question 26)

RUIIMTE

Students said, they feel excited, good, eager to see what happens in the end.

A: It makes me feel excitedit gives me a nice feeling....

R2: Hoe voel jy as jy self 'n boek gekies het en jy lees dit? [How do you feel if you chose a book yourself and you read it?]

A: Ek wil dit net klaarkry ... ek wil weet wat teen die einde gebeur. [I just want to finish it ... I want to know what happened at the end.]

NOASANABIS

A said he feels fine. The story-readers said they feel happy.

It was very difficult to get the information because the students were very unresponsive.

R2: Do you think it is good for a person to read?

A: Yes.

R2: Why? What is good about it?

A: To read better. To understand.

PIONIERSPARK

Students indicated that they feel good; in a different world.

M: It makes me feel new, actually ... it's actually a weird feeling

D: I feel good. When I finish a book I also feel good because I also know what happened ...

R2: How do you feel when you choose a book to read

S: Juffrou, ek voel verlig ... dit voel of ek in 'n ander wêreld is. [Miss, I feel relieved ... it feels as if I am in another world.]

8.3 Conclusion

The researchers concluded that the more personal contact with students was very enriching. Despite the cautious stance of Maxwell (see Section 3.3) regarding possible bias of researchers, the interviews enabled us to collect detailed and varied data complementing the results from questionnaires in a powerful way. The transcriptions captured views, preferences and behaviour of true readers. However, it remained clear that most students in the rural, reasonably resourced schools were very shy and it was not easy to get useable information from them. On the other hand, it was an absolute pleasure to interact with students at the two well-resourced schools. These students had very specific opinions on their preferences, had involved and supportive parents and could interact with a stranger confidence. The well-resourced Ruimte and Pionierspark – children from an affluent social background - came through as informed and self-confident.

It also became clear that rural students attending schools that are not well-resourced and living in an information and socio-economic poor environment need a lot more support to become regular and enthusiastic readers. The school library in rural areas has the potential to become an important agent of transformation in this regard. In addition, a project to distribute used magazines to school libraries and language teachers would help a lot. (Obviously the magazines should be only approved titles, e.g. Getaway, Country Life, Go, Joy, Finesse, Rooi Rose, Sarie, National Geographic, hobby magazines, sewing, knitting, arts & crafts magazines, etc). Many students would particularly benefit from contact reading projects such as shared and paired reading, initially even more than from book clubs. Book clubs could be a second step when they have become more skilled and confident readers.

It has to be taken into account that no interviews were undertaken with students from poorly resourced schools owing the very small number of readers that could be identified in these schools.

Main points from the interviews:

During the interviews the following main points emerged, (validating findings described in section 6)

- The main reason given for reading was educational - to gain information. They were also aware that books can “teach you a lesson”
- Readers also read for enjoyment and leisure, finding it interesting and fun.
- One story reader said that stories develop one’s imagination
- Interviewees chose a book by looking at the cover, the cover picture, the title, by paging through. Some said they would go to certain sections to find their favourite theme: adventure stories, Bible stories. Some indicated that the author plays a role. Some indicated that they read the back cover to see if the topic interested them.
- The general readers also chose books because the theme interested them. They wanted to learn something.
- Some said they would read a book on the recommendation of friends and teachers.
- The thickness of a book – not too thick or too thin – is also important.
- It was clear that the perceived theme or topic of the book (sports, soccer, nature, animals, thrillers, detective, adventure) was important. (It was noted that a book made into a film was commented on).
- A good storyline and adventure is important.
- Students mentioned mostly adventure stories but also about family, Bible stories, funny stories, and facts. One general reader said that she enjoyed stories where problems are solved in the end. Respondents (General readers) mentioned themes such as sport, animals, computers and things happening in the village. Story-readers mentioned Bible and school stories, family and magic stories.
- The interviews showed that there is no clear distinction between story-readers and general readers. It was demonstrated by the way the general readers indicated storybooks when asked what kinds of books they read. Boys liked stories as well as non-fiction. Both general and story-readers mentioned adventure, sport, cars, animals. A strong captivating storyline is important. The conclusion was that almost all the interviewees were avid readers that were reading both fiction and non-fiction.

- They want to identify with the main character, a book about a colourful (lively) character from whom you can learn a lot. Story-readers said they would also read about bad characters.
- It was clear that students liked magazines and newspapers (Huisgenoot, Finesse, Comic books, Republikein, Sun). Huisgenoot and Namibian newspapers are widely bought and read in this community. They get them in shops and Spar; parents buy.
- It seemed that the school library is not always used in well-resourced schools. These students and their families seem to be in a position to buy books. (Q2)
- Mothers and grandmothers mostly motivate the children to read - the utilitarian reason being that reading improves their schoolwork.
- The students' responses were also that others and (library) teachers tell them to read. The readers of non-fiction said they would not read so much without motivation from another person.
- Story-readers answered (when prompted) that storybooks gave information in a much more interesting way. They would read even if nobody motivated them.
- About language: All of them said they read in English and the mother tongue. It is clear from all interviews that there are no negative feelings towards English or the mother tongue.
- Story-readers said that the English and Afrikaans teachers and library teachers tell (*life time*) stories. – also for comprehension. At home mothers and grandmothers mostly told stories. The themes were the Rehoboth culture (*about our heritage; our fathers that were before us and what they did*) and the Bible.
- They could mention the names of teachers telling stories.
- Real storytelling did not feature at home.
- At home after school, only one said her father reads to her. The others said no one reads to them.
- Story-readers indicated that they do not listen to stories on the radio. Only one general reader said she listens to serials on the Afrikaans service.
- The research by means of the self-administered questionnaires for both students and teachers shows that storytelling, story-reading and listening to the radio play

a relatively important role in the rural areas. Clearly this finding does not apply to the minority of affluent readers, living mainly in urban areas.

- General readers said they read when they have time, or are bored; story-readers said in the afternoon after schoolwork
- General readers indicated they only read on weekends
- Students indicated that they feel good; in a different world when reading.
- Some said that books help them to understand. Understanding, which is a deeper experience than just receiving facts to take note of mentally, entails the internalising of the contents of a book by both the heart and the mind. Books can satisfy this basic human need functioning as vehicles that contribute to understanding of the self, the other and the world we live in.
- It was clear from some remarks made by interviewees that reading was satisfying some of their psychological needs such as the need to read about family life, to love someone, to laugh, about the truth, about God, even enjoying to read books that made them sad.
- The interviews with the three readers from a poor background in a reasonably resourced rural school showed a marked difference from the responses of students in affluent urban schools. The three interviewees were shy, non-communicative and clearly belong to the large group of Grade 6 students in Namibia who choose not to read unless it is related to homework. Using the opportunity to demonstrate the difference between the reading behaviour of students in well-resourced schools and those from lesser resourced schools situated in poorer socio-economic backgrounds was really worthwhile. In this respect the interviews “correlate” well with the findings gathered from the two questionnaires for Grade 6 students.
- Lastly, the strong desire among interviewees to read books that provide facts and information is also driven by the psychological need for intellectual satisfaction.

9. Answering the research questions: major findings and conclusions

The research questions upon which the study has been based (see section 1.4) should be viewed within a broader context. For this reason triangulation was used to present the main findings of related studies as well as statistics derived from official reports (see the literature review in section 2). This concluding chapter will therefore first summarize the information gathered through triangulation before the summarized results of the study will be presented.

9.1 Summary of information gathered by means of triangulation (secondary information)

In section 1.5, the following research questions to be answered by means of triangulation, were formulated:

- On what level is the reading proficiency of Namibian Grade 6 students?
- What is the level of education of the parents?
- Are the teachers included in the study qualified to teach the languages they teach?
- Are the library teachers qualified to manage a school library, teach the subject Basic Information Science and promote a reading culture among students?
- What is the state of Namibian school libraries?
- Is formal training in school librarianship available in Namibia?
- What is available for Namibian children to read, and in which languages? Is there material available in the local languages? If not, why not?
- What are the results of other studies on the socio-economic background of the students?

9.1.1 Reading proficiency level of Namibian Grade 6 students

As stated in section 2, it was not the aim of the research to test the *reading proficiency* of Namibian students, it is a *readership research study*. It is however, important to take the results of reading proficiency research into account as low reading proficiency levels may be one of the reasons, albeit not necessarily the only reason, why students do not read.

9.1.1.1 English reading proficiency

English reading proficiency is deteriorating in Namibian primary schools. (See section 2.1). The last Namibian National Achievement Tests (SATs) show that 45% of grade 5 students command a reading proficiency for English 2nd language that is below the basic achievement level. The 2013 results have declined by 2% since 2011.

The findings of the SATs are corroborated by the results of the three Southern and Eastern African Consortium for the Monitoring of Educational Quality SACMEQ I, II, and III studies published in 2000, 2005 and 2010. *According to SACMEQ III, 38.7% of Namibian grade 6 students could not read for meaning (SACMEQ/IIEP. 2010: 12-14).*

9.1.1.2 Mother tongue reading proficiency

The researchers are not aware of any extensive study that has been done to test the mother tongue reading proficiency of Namibian students or their teachers. Although this study also did not test mother tongue proficiency, it was observed that the majority of respondents did not answer the open questions in the questionnaire. In the pilot study these questions required writing in either English or in the mother tongue. It is possible that Grade 6 students are not able to write properly in either English or in the mother tongue.

A revision of the language policy for Namibian primary schools was announced by the Ministry of Education in March 2014 to be phased in as from 2015. English medium instruction as from Grade 4 will be replaced by mother tongue or the predominant local language as medium of instruction from the Pre-Primary year (Grade R) up to and including Grade 5. English as a subject is to be offered as from the pre-primary level. (See section 2.1). More emphasis on mother tongue medium of instruction in the Namibian education system has been long overdue. The Ministry of Education is to be commended for the intended revision of the present language policy.

9.1.2 Involvement of parents

Various studies (see section 2.2) have shown that *Namibian parents are only minimally involved in the education of their children.* Only a minority of parents support their

children with homework. *The level of education of the parents is relatively low.* Additional factors that hamper parent involvement are the lack of time spent with their children, poverty and distance from the school.

The work of the Directorate of Adult Education of the Namibian Ministry of Education regarding family literacy projects (FLP) is to be commended. (See section 2.2). FLP aims to empower parents to support the education of their children on all levels and develop and strengthen the relationship between parents and the school. However, an evaluation of the Namibian FLP in 2011 found that FLP had not taken “intrafamilial dynamics ... into consideration” (p. 77). It was recommended that the project, instead of training only one family member, become extended learning on family-wide level. A name change for the project to FAMILY EDUCATION (FAMED) was advocated with a view to encourage education and training as a two-way process, of old educating the young and the young educating the old. *These recommendations of the 2011 evaluation of FLP have not been implemented yet.*

9.1.3 Qualifications of language teachers

Although in 2012 77.8% of all primary school teachers were qualified, there are *many qualified teachers who are not qualified to teach the languages they teach.* 26.8% of primary school teachers in 2012 were teaching the various Namibian languages without having received secondary education up to Grade 12 themselves in these languages. There were also teachers of these subjects in 2012 who studied the language up to Grade 12 only. 29.3% had no tertiary training in the languages they were teaching.

Being a qualified teacher in Namibia, does also not automatically mean that such a teacher can speak, read and write English well. According to the SACMEQ II study of 2005, 58.8% of Grade 6 language teachers could not reach level 8, the highest level on the scale for Grade 6 student reading competency. Teachers with the lowest competencies were teaching in more than 70% of the primary schools in the country.

The English Language Proficiency Programme (ELLP) is one of the programmes that has been developed to strengthen the English language abilities of teachers (see

section 2.3), but the implementation is not without challenges – especially regarding interactive support towards teachers enrolled in the programme.

9.1.4 Tertiary teacher training for the Namibian languages

Teacher training for the Namibian languages is inadequate. Currently, for Grades 8 -12, no training is being offered by the University of Namibia in six languages (Silozi, Rukwangali, Thimbukushu, Rumanyo, Setswana, Jul’hoansi. (See Töttemeyer 2010: 27 - 29).

The expansion of mother tongue instruction and the inclusion of a pre-primary year will lead to a severe shortage of local language teachers in all languages in the 1 723 schools of Namibia, particularly in the 1 018 primary schools.

Since African languages have lost their attraction since independence, very few university students choose to study these languages. Student numbers have decreased and are now minimal (see section 2.3.3).

9.1.5 Training for school library management and the teaching of Basic Information Science

The Division Education Libraries Service (ELS) of the Directorate of Library and Archival Services (LAS) under whose control the Namibian school libraries resort offers 5 day in-service training courses for library teachers and two day courses on the teaching of Basic Information Science (BIS). Some courses for school principals are also offered to motivate them to develop their school libraries and support the teaching of BIS. *As the travel budget allocation for ELS is totally inadequate, not all regions can be visited in one year to offer in-service training courses.*

Owing to a chronic shortage of staff, particularly for Regional Librarians and Advisory Teachers for Basic Information Science, ELS cannot fulfil their mandate as defined in the Strategic Plan for the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) and implicit in Vision 2030.

There is no professional training for school librarians and for teachers to teach the school subject, Basic Information Science offered by tertiary institutions in Namibia since 1998 after the Ministry of Education scrapped the subject, School Library Science, from the list of approved subjects for the teaching profession, thus cutting off all study bursaries for the subject (see section 2.3.4).

The teaching of the compulsory non-promotional subject *Basic Information Science (BIS)* that enables students to source knowledge and information independently *is being allocated to teachers unqualified for the task*. Library teachers who are managing the school library and teaching BIS are not qualified school librarians. Basic Information Science should only be taught by qualified librarians as *most students do not seem to know when and why they need information, where to find it and how to evaluate, use and communicate it*.

9.1.6 Status of Namibian school libraries (See sections 2.4.1 - 2.4.7)

Three-quarters of Namibian schools have either no library or only a small collection that does not meet minimum standards. There are also great regional disparities. *The library collections showed glaring shortages or complete gaps in a number of subjects. The average size of collections was a mere 37 books in 2008. Many libraries are housed in store rooms*. Financial and acute resource problems the majority of schools are facing, mean that the school library is “placed low down” on the list of priorities.

There are no full-time librarians in the schools; the subject is allocated to a teacher who already has a full teaching load of at least one other subject plus BIS. *This situation results in a library that is poorly managed and rarely open and that the subject BIS is neglected to the point that it is not being offered at all*, even though there may be slots on the time-table for BIS.

Most educators do not understand the important role a resourced library can play in the attainment of developing Namibia into a knowledge-based society. The library is not seen as a key element. It is just a place where books are kept. “Unless the resources are found and allocated to schools, the notion that school libraries can play a

meaningful role in helping Namibia evolve into a knowledge-based society within the next two decades seems little more than wishful thinking” (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.2).

9.1.7. The library and information and communication technology (ICT) (See section 2.4.6)

Only 15% of schools reported having computers and 14% reported having internet access. ICT is effectively absent in the great majority of schools in Namibia (in excess of 80%), this because many schools do not have electricity and also lack the funds to purchase the necessary equipment. The majority of Namibian children do not know the internet as they do not have access to it, i.e. they are to a great extent, information illiterate (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.7).

The goals for school libraries set out in Vision 2030 through ETSIP, cannot be reached in the face of wholly inadequate funding for the establishment of a fully equipped library in every school and the lack of school librarians dedicated to the management of the library and the teaching of BIS only.

9.1.8 Status of information in the community (See section 2.4.8)

Namibia is predominantly a book poor and information poor society with great regional variances. In the northeast and in some of the central northern regions there is extreme poverty in this regard. SACMEQ II (2005) stated that the national average number of books at home were 22 in 2004.

Kasokonya and Kutondukoa (2005:117) found that 50% of the Namibian homes they visited had no books or printed materials of any sort. Only 6% of the homes had newspapers and only 2% storybooks or children’s books. 80% had radios, 14.5% television and 5% cell phones (2005: 101).

Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution states that: “Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia.” Without basic reading materials in an easily understandable language this goal cannot be achieved effectively.

9.1.9 Availability of children's books in the indigenous languages of Namibia (See section 2.4.9)

Since independence the indigenous African languages in Namibia are being neglected. Neville Alexander stated that African languages in South Africa “suffer from deliberate underdevelopment” (Alexander, 2000) and that one of the effects is alienation where “the entire print environment [is] in English” (Alexander, 2009). The indigenous languages in Namibia are suffering the same fate. Töttemeyer (2013: 17) reports that *the publication of trade books, (books that are sold by bookshops) for Namibian children in the various local languages, diminished from 13 trade books per year to less than four (3.8) trade books per year during the 12 year period of 2000 - 2011. Publishers do not find African language publishing economically viable in the face of the language policy for the schools, favouring English (p.18). The new language policy will hopefully stimulate the production of children's books in all Namibian languages. Teachers teaching in Pre-Primary (Grade R) to Grade 5 will as from 2015 need storybooks and non-fiction in the various Namibian languages, not only for the language lessons, but also for the other subjects as well as for the weekly reading period.*

9.1.10 Amenities in schools (See section 2.5)

In 2009 39% of schools had no electricity and 45% schools no telephones. The Ministry of Education allocated only 2.6% of the budget on infrastructure for schools. According to the findings of our study, this situation had improved by 2012. (See Section 2.16).

The sanitary status of many Namibian schools is still appalling. *Presently (in 2014) three quarters of Namibian schools have toilets of some kind. Of these 60% are pit latrines and 40% are flush toilets. 25% of schools have no toilets and teachers and students have to relieve themselves in the bushes.* The rate at which these amenities are being supplied is far too slow. *Vision 2030 set a target to provide all schools with drinking water and the necessary infrastructure by 2006. This vision has not been achieved.*

9.1.11 Housing and socio-economic conditions (See section 2.6)

In total 26.7 % of all Namibian households are poor and 13.8% are very poor. There are great regional variances. In the Kavango region 93% of the households are either poor or very poor while in the Khomas region only 8.7% of the households are either poor or very poor.

The Namibia Household Income Survey of 2009/10 showed that 18.3% of children were living in severe poverty and 34% in poverty, i.e. *52.3% of Namibian children are living in either poverty or severe poverty.* The report stated that “poverty ... impacts on the lives and development of children in Namibia, especially their health and education” (p. 1). *Regions that had a higher annual per capita income and less poverty achieved better results in the Grade 6 reading proficiency test, also in schools where the teacher used a teacher resource centre (p. 44).*

The majority of students lives in traditional houses or homesteads in rural areas or in shacks in most of the urban areas. As these houses are very often overcrowded and most houses do not have electricity, school libraries have an important status in poor societies as places where students can study in peace and source information. A study by Harlech-Jones in the early nineties when there were still functioning pre-independence hostels attached to some rural schools, showed that students accommodated in hostels receiving three meals a day and having a quiet place to study, performed better academically.

9.1.12 Distance from school (See section 2.7)

A great majority of children travel on foot to and from the school, many of them walking a total distance of between 4 and 15 kilometres and more per day. Some children live more than 30 km from the school. There are no school buses and very few hostels.

9.1.13 Conclusion from triangulation

The overview of related studies and the statistics consulted show that the challenges the majority of Namibian children are facing to get a good education are just too great for them to cope with. *The overview shows a child of about 13 years from a poor and mainly uneducated family, living in a hut without books in an information poor rural area where English is only heard within the school, and not receiving any help with homework, feeling hungry most of the time, having to walk on foot for up to ten kilometers a day and more, to an under-resourced school without the basic amenities and no functioning school library, with teachers who are not always qualified in the subjects they teach. That this child's academic performance is inadequate and is even deteriorating to the point that he/she may decide to just drop out of school, is not surprising.*

In section 9.2 entitled Questions answered by primary research a summary of the empirical results of the study itself will be presented and the conclusions that have been made.

9.2 Questions answered by primary research

9.2.1 Are Grade 6 Namibian students readers?

The study showed that the vast majority of the sample population is non-readers (77.6%). As expected, readers form a minority of the students. School results will not improve while this is the case. Students who read develop thinking skills such as the ability to read for meaning, interpret, analyse and reflect on texts, make inferences and view texts critically. They also benefit from the overall advantages reading brings e.g. the widening of horizons, enhancing of creativity, development of vocabulary as well as moral edification.

A minority – 314 out of 1402 (22.4%) - was classified as readers. In fact, the majority of respondents demonstrated a lack of even the most basic knowledge of print media/reading material: only 35.3% scored 60% and more for this question. In the light

of the fact that the non-promotional subject Basic Information Science (BIS) is compulsory in all government schools up to Grade 10, this result is a matter of concern.

9.2.2 Do Namibian children read in their free time after school?

In the final analysis, only 22.4% of all respondents could be classified as readers. From the interviews (section 8.2.12), *students indicated that they have to fit in reading after homework for school, and over weekends.*

9.2.3 What are the possible reasons why students don't read?

The reasons why 77.6% of all respondents do not read are that

- *their reading proficiency is low.* In the SACMEQ III report 2010, mentioned in 2.1, it is shown that 38.7% of Namibian Grade 6 students cannot read for meaning. During the course of this study, this situation was very evident, particularly in the rural areas. (See Appendix 1).
- there are *no children's books* to read, particularly in the local languages and also in English. Poorly resourced schools and generally the rural areas are book poor. See sections 2.4.9 and 9.1.9 as regards the state of publishing for Namibian children.
- there is *no time* for reading, especially in the rural areas where students have to walk long distances to and from school. (See sections 4.15; also 2.5 and 9.1.10).
- most *parents in rural areas are not involved* in assisting students with homework and reading. Furthermore very little or no money is available in these areas which makes it impossible to buy books. (See section 4).
- *reading in English or the mother tongue is too difficult.* (See 6.14 and 6.15).
- *homework takes up all their time.* (See section 5.4).

9.2.4 What do Namibian children do in their free time? Do they take part in sports, spend time with friends or work in and around the home, rather than read?

- Answers to this question indicated that *homework* takes up most of the time of students after school. Researchers came to the conclusion that this activity takes so much of students' time, that very little time was left for anything else. (See section 5.4.1).
- Activities other than homework scored lower. Answers showed that more or less equal time was spent after school *on reading (36.7%), on playing with friends (36.4%) and on sports (34.7%)*, ranking these first or second. It is interesting that reading is rated approximately equal to these other activities. This result needs to be viewed with caution however, as it is possible that the ranking of reading could have been influenced by the fact that it is also used when doing homework or that social desirability played a role. More than a quarter of students indicated that they never take part in sport – possibly due to the lack of sports facilities. (See section 5.4.7).
- Working around the house, indicated by a fifth (20.3%) as the most important after school activity, was scored lower than researchers expected. (See section 5.4.5).
- Television was ranked more or less the same. (19.1% ranked TV first or second). In Namibia television is available in some schools but is not widely available in the rural homes. 30.1% of students indicated that watching television outside of school hours is an activity they seldom or never do. (See section 5.4.4). This result is in line with the researchers' field observations and is corroborated by the research by Kasokonya and Kutondukoa in 2005. (See sections 2.4.8 and 9.1.6).

9.2.5 Why do Namibian children read?

It has to be kept in mind that these results constitute the reading behaviour of only 22.4% of the sample. The *reader* respondents had very positive perceptions of reading. The functional value of reading was rated higher than reading for enjoyment and fun.

9.2.5.1 Do Namibian children read primarily for educational purposes?

The functional value of reading is rated very high: 91.9% of the reader group indicated that reading improves their knowledge – it gives information. 84.9% felt that reading

improves language skills. These views were supported during the interviews. (See section 6.5).

9.2.5.2 Do they also read in their free time for enjoyment?

95.8% of *readers* indicated that they like to read - which is to be expected. (See section 6.5). The interviews confirmed the above. *The main reason given for reading was educational.* Readers are aware that books can “teach you a lesson”. Interviewees also found reading interesting and fun, indicating that reading develops the imagination and conveys information in a more interesting way.

9.2.6 Do the readers read mostly in English or in their mother tongue? Why?

Students (*the readers*) *read mostly in English after school* – indicated by a very high percentage – 94.3%. Reading in the mother tongue was indicated by 58.7%. It has to be kept in mind that not all students are in a position to take their mother tongue as a school subject. The reason for reading in English can of course also be that *students have access to mostly English materials.* Their school text books are mostly in English, far more trade books are available in English than in other languages, and the largest parts of the most popular newspapers are in English. (See section 6.13).

The tests of independence indicated that students in well-resourced schools were less influenced to choose a book if it is in their mother tongue than those in poorly and reasonably resourced schools. Rural students also preferred to read in their mother tongue. (See sections 7.2.2.3 and 7.3.2.4).

Taking into account that the vast majority of readers thus do read in English, *66.7% of respondents who do not read in English indicated that the main reason is that there is nothing to read.* 19.4% indicated that English is too difficult. The most important reasons *why students do not read in their mother tongues are twofold: there is nothing to read (indicated by 44.7% of respondents) and they find reading in the mother tongue too difficult (34.2%).* (See sections 6.14 and 6.15). However, the interviews showed that

there are no negative feelings towards English or the mother tongue – they would read in both languages.

These results are indicative of the fact that there is indeed very little material available for students to read in the mother tongues because publishers don't find it economically viable unless donor funding can be found. (See section 2.4).

9.2.7 Are there readers who, for recreational purposes, prefer to read books with facts (non-fiction) rather than reading stories?

Very few Namibian children read non-fiction for pleasure. While it is normal for Grade 6 students to prefer fiction, the percentage of students preferring non-fiction is very low. Of the readers, the vast majority are readers of fiction (84%). General readers were only 50 out of 314 respondents, or 16%. (See section 5.7 and 6.1).

It can be stated that *Namibian children are not avid readers of non-fiction. Only 16% of readers indicated a preference for non-fiction, as already pointed out. The Strategic Assessment Baseline study (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.6) showed that non-fiction on a variety of subjects for general reading was almost non-existent in most of the Namibian school libraries; it is therefore possible that non-reading of fiction may be influenced by the non-availability thereof. Of the readers preferring fiction, only 12.9% also read non-fiction (facts and information). These respondents are possibly students who read both fiction and non-fiction.*

These results are alarming because they show that most readers do not read wider than the textbook on any subject or read on other topics among the many in the world of knowledge. This is a contributing factor to the poor performance of Namibian students in all subjects.

9.2.8 What are the characters and themes in storybooks or topics of non-fiction children like to read about?

Bible stories were chosen by 79.5% - making these the most popular texts – only followed by school stories with 58.7%, and stories set against a time in history by

54.9%. Researchers suspect that the popularity of Bible stories is connected with the fact that these are the only stories readers really know well. Slightly less popular were family stories (44.7%) and adventure stories (42.4%). Animal stories and fantasy were included by 39.4% and 37.9% of the respondents respectively. The least popular stories were love stories (32.6%) and stories where sports play an important role (27.3%). (See section 6.6.1).

Interviews supported the above information, although indications were that humour in stories and adventure, enriching information, a captivating storyline, and suspense were also highly regarded. They enjoy stories where a problem is solved in the end.

Where characters are concerned, story readers were nearly equally attracted to *characters who are fellow Namibians (76%) AND those who live in other countries (72.9%)*. The next feature that appealed to them most (*72.4%*) was *characters living in the past (a story pictured against an historical backdrop)*. Characters living today (53.4%) and are the same age (49.4%) were next, while characters that look the same as the readers scored lowest (31.8%). Results show that story readers were open for stories about people who are different from them or who lived during times unknown to them. Interviews corroborated the above where story readers indicated that they want to identify with the character, that the character should be colourful/lively and that they should be able to learn from the character. (See section 6.8.1).

Readers of non-fiction were not so discriminating as far as themes were concerned. Topics that scored high were cars, sports, animals, hobbies and computers (all chosen by more than 50%). (See section 6.6.2).

9.2.9 Do Namibian children read magazines, newspapers and picture stories?

The readers of non-fiction, though a small group, expressed the following preferences:

While books with facts were favoured (91.7%), students also read newspapers (70.8%) and picture stories (72.3%). Magazines were least popular (45.8%). Magazines were glaringly absent in the school libraries visited and many students did not even know

what a magazine was. *Newspapers* though, *formed an important source of information as they are readily available* and are thus playing a great informational role in Namibia. Some newspapers even provide pages in the indigenous languages. Possibly this is contributing to the popularity of these texts. (See section 6.8.2).

The interviewees (mainly urban readers) could mention the names like *The Namibian* and the Afrikaans magazine, *Huisgenoot*. During the interviews some students indicated that their parents buy magazines in shops.

9.2.10 Are there significant differences between Namibian boys and girls as regards their reading behaviour?

In the Namibian schools, boys and girls are equally represented. Also in the population of the study, boys and girls were equally represented. *No significant differences* could be found in the *analysis of gender between the reading behaviour and preferences of girls and boys*. However, the researchers do not claim that this finding can be generalized. (See section 7.1).

9.2.11 Which factors influence the respondents' choice of reading material?

There are many similarities regarding the reasons why both story readers and general readers choose a book. *The recommendation of another person (especially a teacher) is the most important consideration for choosing fiction*. Generally accessible and easy-to-read texts were also important for both groups (all percentages above 60%). (See section 6.9).

The tests of independence further show that *the role of the school and the teacher is very important in the rural areas* – more than in urban areas (see sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3); that *rural respondents would rather choose a book that looks easy to read, has an inviting cover and has pictures inside* (possibly thus with easier language and less print). This is in line with the fact that many rural readers do not see reading as fun. *Urban respondents are much less influenced by these factors*.

Strangely, the role of pictures was more important for story readers than for general readers. It is possible that general readers do not know beautifully illustrated fact

books, which are quite expensive. The factors that were rated low for both groups were mother tongue texts, the thickness of a book and a larger letter type.

During the interviews the following main points emerged: Researchers observed that interviewees chose a book by looking at the cover, the cover picture, the title, by paging through. Some said they would go to certain sections to find their favourite theme: adventure stories, Bible stories. Some indicated that the author plays a role. Some indicated that the back cover is read to see if the topic is interesting. (See section 8.2.3).

9.2.12 Where does the motivation to read come from?

Teachers are the main motivators to read (79.3%), followed by parents, though the score is much lower (55.8%). Peers are also important, but only by 40.8%. (See section 6.12). This was confirmed by the results of the tests of independence where students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools indicated that teachers, parents, grandparents and friends motivate them to read. (See section 7.3.4). *Students in well-resourced schools were not motivated by these people in the same way.* Although the influence of teachers is the greatest, it is still lower than in poorly and reasonably resourced schools. 86.9% of the 314 reading students indicated that they love reading and do not need to be told to read. The interviews also corroborated this as students indicated that they would read even if nobody motivated them. (See section 8.2.7).

9.2.13 From which source, e.g. from the school, the environment, the home do Namibian children get their reading materials?

The school library is the main source of storybooks for the majority of students (79.9%). Only 31% indicated that they use the school library as a source to get non-fiction. This is not surprising as triangulation showed that non-fiction is greatly lacking in Namibian school libraries. *Library collections showed glaring shortages or complete gaps in a number of subjects.* The average size of collections was a mere 37 books in 2008. (See section 2.4.3). Our study reported that 47.1% of schools have libraries with more than 500 books (see 4.5.1). It is disconcerting that the small and unbalanced school libraries in only some of the Namibian schools could be the only source of information for many children in the rural areas.

Getting books from friends or family is also an important source of books (66.3%).

Parents are an important source of non-fiction (62.9%). It is interesting to see that these reading materials are more available at home than at the school. This question possibly reflects more on *newspapers* than other types of material.

Buying storybooks yielded fairly high scores (67.1%) as well. One should keep in mind that readers come from mainly well-resourced and urban areas – therefore responses represent mainly the more affluent areas where these are options. (See sections 6.10 and 6.11). The interviews conducted with readers “confirmed” this. This kind of buying behaviour can be seen as typical in more affluent surroundings. Tests of independence further confirmed that in urban areas, family and friends seem to be more important sources of books; in these areas books are also more frequently bought. (See section 7.2.3).

Only a minority of language teachers included in the study use classroom collections to support their teaching. (See section 4.6). Even for readers, these small collections do not really serve as sources of books. Tests of independence showed that students from reasonably resourced schools made significantly more use of classroom collections than students of poorly and well-resourced schools. (See section 7.3.3.3). It is possible that the language teachers in reasonably resourced schools were making an effort through classroom collections to make some books available to the students to compensate for the lack of a school library.

9.2.14 Do language teachers use textbooks, readers and storybooks, or do they have to make do with photocopied pages for students?

Language teachers seem relatively experienced and try to compensate for the lack of resources by making use of textbooks, readers, copied pages (with stories) in the classroom. (See section 4.7).

9.2.15 What is the state of Namibian school libraries in general?

Only a few schools indicated that they have functioning libraries. These libraries are however, generally under-stocked and seem to lack proper systems of lending and recording. These findings are corroborated by the Strategic Assessment Baseline Study in 2008 on the status of Namibian libraries by Knowledge Leadership Associates (KLA). 386 schools out of a total of 1 610 i.e. 24% of schools in the country were identified in 2005 as having a school library with standard facilities. Thus, three quarters of all schools in Namibia did not have a library (see section 2.4.1). The worrying fact is further that the lack of functioning school libraries is not compensated for in any way. Public libraries and resource centres are generally out of range. (See section 4.5.1 and 4.9).

9.2.16 How well-resourced are Namibian schools in general? What is the infrastructure in the school as regards basic amenities?

Based on the criteria of the study, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the schools included were from rural communities and only about half of these were reasonably resourced. 32% of the schools in our sample were poorly resourced and only 20% well-resourced. A minority of schools had at least one computer and internet access. More than 80% of the schools had running drinking water and electricity, but less than half of the schools had proper flush toilets for students and teachers. (See sections 4.11 and 4.12). While a rather negative picture, our results show that the status of amenities in schools in 2012 showed some improvement compared with the 2009 studies reported in section 2.5 and 9.1.10.

However, since then the situation as regards the toilets has remained unchanged. According to the statistics released by the Minister of Education in March 2014, $\frac{3}{4}$ of Namibian schools have toilets of some kind. Of these 60% are pit latrines and 40% flush toilets. 25% of schools have no toilets. (See section 2.5). Presently (in 2014) three quarters of Namibian schools have toilets of some kind. Of these 60% are pit latrines and 40% are flush toilets. 25% of schools have no toilets. (See section 2.5).

9.2.17 Do children visiting well-resourced schools and who live in a book rich environment read more than children visiting poorly resourced schools and live in a book deprived environment? Do children from urban schools read more than rural children?

The study clearly shows that the resource status of schools and their rural/urban situation are factors influencing whether respondents are reading or not reading. (See section 6.2):

Although percentages are alarmingly low, *most readers come from well-resourced schools (37.8%) and urban schools (36.5)*. Only 16% of students from poorly resourced schools are readers and only 17.3% of the rural students emerged as readers.

19.9% of the total students from reasonably resourced schools are readers. 25% of the readers from well- and reasonably resourced schools combined are readers. The study thus shows that well-resourced schools produce the most readers and poorly resourced schools the least readers. 83.6% of poorly resourced students and 82.7% of rural students are non-readers.

The over-all results on the status of reading among the Grade 6 respondents of the study are not good. Even in well-resourced schools there are still 62.1% non-readers. The results of reasonably resourced schools hardly differ from the poorly resourced schools. There are 80% non-readers.

Irrespective of resourcing status, 17.3% of the total student respondents in rural schools emerged as readers, while 36.5% readers of the total urban students were readers. Alarmingly, 82.7% of rural and 63.5% of urban schools are non-readers.

Even though the study clearly shows that there are more readers in the schools of urban areas, it is again a matter of *concern that there is such a high percentage of non-readers*.

Tests of independence indicated that readers in rural and poorly resourced areas (see section 7) were more significantly influenced by factors such as physical appearance and simplicity of books, external motivating factors and available sources of material.

Most students are found in the rural areas, therefore important findings regarding the reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children were ascertained.

We do not claim that the status of resourcing and the situation of schools could be the only factors that determine whether students read or not. Other factors might be the reading proficiency of students, qualifications and language proficiency of teachers, the language proficiency and qualifications of parents and their socio-economic status.

9.2.18 What are the socio-economic conditions of most Namibian children? Do these conditions influence the reading behaviour of the respondents?

56.7% of the teachers reported that the majority of students do not have enough to eat. Nearly 80% of schools rely on feeding schemes for the students. More than 80% of the teachers reported that parents do not have enough money to take proper care of their children. Other information gathered from teachers are that parents are not really involved in the school, nor are they assisting their children with homework. Most of the children included in the study live in traditional huts and nearly all of them walk more than 5 km to school and 5 km back on a daily basis. These results are corroborated by the results of triangulation. Furthermore almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the schools are close to or next to a sjebeen. (See sections 4.13 – 4.17).

From the above-mentioned studies and from the results of this study on reading behaviour, it is evident that the *poor socio-economic conditions under which the majority of students are living are having a negative influence on their reading behaviour*. The high percentages of poverty and extreme poverty that can be found in the rural households of most regions covered by the study, form part of the complex syndrome of deprivation that impacts on the reading behaviour of Namibian students. It needs to be mentioned that the results from our study indicated higher levels of poverty than the results from the NHIS quoted in section 2 (see section 2.6). The NHIS study is of course a national survey, whilst our statistic represents the position of mostly rural students.

9.2.19 What role does storytelling (and story reading) as a form of pre-literacy play in Namibia today?

Although there is still some culture of storytelling left - 44.6% of teacher responses indicated that parents tell stories - (see section 4.18), the responses of both readers and teachers are not very high. Readers indicated that parents (31.5%) and teachers (24.3%) are the main tellers of stories. (See section 6.16).

Language teachers indicated that nearly all of them tell stories to their students. This was confirmed during the interviews. Interviewees further stated that at home mothers and grandmothers told stories related to their culture (about their heritage; their fathers that were before them and what they did) and the Bible.

Regarding listening to stories over the radio, 74% of readers indicated that they listen to stories. *Teachers stated that they are aware of story readings for children over the radio.* (See section 6.16.2). The tests of independence indicated that students in poorly and reasonably resourced schools listen to stories over the radio far more than students in well-resourced schools. Rural respondents also indicated that they listen to stories over the radio and to live story reading – far more than respondents in urban areas. (See sections 7.2.6 and 7.2.7).

The radio is clearly an important medium of stories and of communication in rural areas. In rural Namibia television plays a smaller role at this stage. Only 19.1% of student respondents indicated that it is a major activity that they engage in after school, and a third of Namibian children rarely or never watch television. (See section 5.4.4). Our results are corroborated by statistics reported in section 2 and 9.1.8 regarding the availability of radio in relation to television in the community.

9.2.20 Conclusion from the primary research

A thirteen year old Namibian child is most possibly from a rural community and attending a poorly resourced school under the same conditions described in 9.1. He is possibly hungry, relying on a feeding scheme and his parents are poor and uninvolved in his education. He is most likely a non-reader. He has little time for reading as homework takes up a lot of his time. He is in a position to listen to the radio, but not to watch television. He has a low reading proficiency and reading in the mother tongue or

in English is difficult. His academic performance is most possibly inadequate to poor. Access to reading material is nearly impossible. If given the opportunity, he chooses easy books without a lot of print. His parents are too poor to change his situation.

In contrast, a minority of thirteen year olds attend a reasonably or well-resourced school, possibly in an urban area. This child perceives reading as an activity to improve his education and language proficiency. Because he reads mostly English storybooks (that is all that is available), reading remains a laborious task for him. He likes Bible stories, school stories and will read about Namibians and about historical characters or characters from another world than his own. His teacher guides his reading – both in terms of motivation and recommendation.

A small group of these children has affluent parents that provide reading material, making visiting the school library less important. This child also has definite opinions and is less reliant on his teacher as a model. He most possibly can read well and is academically successful.

Virtually non-existent, is the thirteen year old reader of non-fiction books. His main source of reading material is the newspaper. This child is possibly fortunate enough to obtain books through other means than the school.

Very few of these children above have had the opportunity to experience the joy of reading. Mere utilitarian reasons to read are not very conducive to forming a love of books and reading. The development of a reading culture is connected to affective processes while reading a book which involve not only the mind but also the heart. The challenge now is to give Namibian children the opportunity to experience that reading is not only to learn facts but that it is fun to read and a source of pleasure.

10. Recommendations: What can be done to reduce the percentage of children who do not read

The overall results of the study suggest that students should be motivated to read by providing a more enabling environment. The environment at present does not enable the majority of Namibian children to do so. Their reading behaviour may be determined by various factors of which reading proficiency is a key factor. Other factors could be that there is nothing interesting or entertaining to read in the homes; there are almost no functioning libraries in the schools and the environment; no books are being published in the mother tongue; books or other reading matter cannot be bought owing to poverty; many language teachers are not properly qualified in the languages they teach; the parents do not motivate their children to read, i.e. they are no role models of reading.

Namibian parents, irrespective of their level of education, generally want their children to read well but are no example as readers to their children themselves. It is said that children don't do what the parents say they must do, but do what the parents do. It follows that the children also won't do what the parents don't do. So if the parents don't read, their children will also not read even though the parents tell them to read.

If a child never experiences the joy of reading it will be very difficult to make him/her a reader. Taking the poor socio-economic situation of the majority of Namibian parents and the low level of their education into consideration, it is of paramount importance that the schools offer the kind of enabling environment that is conducive to the development of a reading habit in the children of Namibia. In the information age of 2000 a person who cannot read and write cannot develop; investing in the schools is therefore the best policy to develop the human potential of the Namibian nation.

10.1 Developing reading proficiency of students for academic success

Efforts need to be made to improve the reading proficiency of students in both English and the mother tongue. Proficiency in the mother tongue should be established first as a sound cognitive basis in the mother tongue is the ideal foundation upon which reading

proficiency and academic achievement develop; this again facilitates the successful acquisition of a second language.

The reading of non-fiction in particular is crucial for academic success but the reading of fiction also plays a role. A large study conducted in the USA with 260 middle school students by Guthrie et. al (p.40) showed that reading within the school as well as recreational reading in the home of novels, newspapers, and websites contributed to the achievement of reading competencies that were related to school success.

School curricula should therefore include reading programmes - across the curriculum. Sustained thematic reading at an appropriate level over time should be the basis of the programme. Themes on “big” and interesting topics, requiring appropriate student responses should be included (see Guthrie et al, p 164).

10.2 Supporting proficiency in the mother tongue

The recent decision by government to implement mother tongue as medium of instruction from Pre-primary (Grade R) up to Grade 5 in 2015, should contribute to both mother tongue and English reading proficiency depending on competent teachers and the provision of the needed reading materials. (See the various recommendations in this regard in the subsections below).

The researchers are not aware of any extensive study that has been done to test the mother tongue reading proficiency of Namibian students or their teachers. *It is recommended that continuous assessment of both English and mother tongue reading proficiency by means of the Namibian National Achievement Tests (SATs) be undertaken.* This should render important information for decision-making purposes as regards language policy.

The efforts of teachers *to improve students’ skills of reading must be supported by providing a variety of books in both English and the relevant mother tongues of the students, over and above teacher manuals, set books and readers.* (See section 10.4).

In order to improve the reading proficiency of students in the mother tongue, a sufficient number of trained teachers in all the local languages are necessary. (See section 10.7.1).

10.3 Enhancing proficiency in English

It is of paramount importance that all Namibian students while at school, become fully proficient in the international language, English, i.e. in fluent speaking, reading and writing. High levels of proficiency in English are a prerequisite for tertiary studies. The education system has not achieved this goal so far. Many Namibian children can speak only very basic English and their reading and writing of English are poor. Hopefully the change in language policy for the schools in 2015 will bring improvement, albeit probably gradual. Various recommendations to improve the speaking, reading and writing proficiency of children in both languages are given in the subsections below.

10.4 Increasing the production of children's books in the indigenous languages for use by language teachers

Up to 2013-14 the Ministry of Education budget did not provide for the acquisition of reading materials other than teachers' manuals and readers for the students. Publishers have therefore been reluctant to publish storybooks or non-fiction for general reading particularly in the indigenous languages, unless titles are prescribed for the schools. The number of children's trade books published in the indigenous languages diminished dramatically from 13 titles per year to only four (3.8) titles per year within a time span of twelve years after independence. *Publishers simply do not find African language publishing economically viable.*

The result is that there are hardly any books for Namibian children to read in their mother tongues. This is serious as the best way to "hook children onto books" is to let them experience that reading is pleasurable and enjoyable. It is crucial that more enjoyable and interesting children's books be developed in the various Namibian languages in the form of storybooks and books with facts e.g. about nature, animals and hobbies, etc. and also supplementary readers of entertaining stories be produced for use by language teachers.

Since the proposed revision of the language policy for schools could create a great need for children's books in all the Namibian languages, it is recommended that the publishers and the government team up to produce the needed literature as matter of great urgency. *In order to generate the needed finances for such a project, a special fund could be established to subsidise publishers to publish children's fiction and non-fiction in the indigenous and local languages.* A government levy of one Namibian cent on every tin or bottle of beer sold could finance the special fund. This should boost the production of children's books tremendously and stimulate the creativity and enthusiasm of the many talented Namibian authors and illustrators.

10.5 Providing greater access to reading materials in general

Apart from the fact that a large percentage of Namibian children can't read properly, as reading is for them a laborious and complex task, *many of them do not read much because they simply have nothing to read.* Very few schools have properly functioning libraries with an adequate collection. Therefore the small number of children's books published in Namibia (some of them available in the various languages), is not available in most schools. *Real efforts will have to be made to give children more access to books, picture stories and illustrated books of non-fiction* to enable them to develop an understanding that books are vehicles of knowledge and entertainment and an integral part of their lives. This is a prerequisite if the situation is to be turned around. Recommendations on the need for libraries are given below. Ideas to motivate children to read are given in section 10.8.

10.5.1 Developing school libraries

School libraries need to be developed throughout the country as a matter of urgency. Particularly in the remote rural areas the school library is often the only source of reading materials in the community. The many schools, storing library books in store rooms, broom-cupboards or in boxes in offices and staff rooms, need to be given a standard school library. Library-dedicated rooms presently being used as classrooms should be re-allocated to the school library.

Educators do not seem to realize the important role a well-equipped library can play to develop Namibia into a knowledge-based society. They see it merely as a place where books are kept. The study has found that less than half of the schools has some sort of book collection but most of these collections are too small to meet the minimum standards for a functioning school library. The Baseline Study by Smith et al. found in 2006 that *three-quarters of Namibian schools had no standard library* and many of the libraries that did exist had very small and totally inadequate collections that showed glaring shortages or complete gaps in a number of subjects. The average size of collections was a mere 37 books in 2008 (Smith et al. 2008: 4.1.3).

Generally accepted minimum guidelines for a standard school library are as follows: The collection should consist of 60% non-fiction on a variety of subjects and 40% fiction - storybooks not only in English but also in the other Namibian languages relevant to the languages taught and the culture of the students of that particular school. The library should also contain non-book print materials such as maps, pictorial matter, magazines, newspapers, as well as CD Rom and DVD compact disks for educational purposes.

The minimum size of the collection should be at least 10 information units per student. A school of 250 students should therefore have at least 2 500 units of information, i.e. books, maps, magazines, newspapers, CD's and DVD's in the school library. This is still quite a small library, i.e. it is the bare minimum. While expensive reference works could to a large extent be substituted by internet services, internet access should not be seen as a total substitute for a standard school library. The two services complement one another and are to be used alongside one another.

10.5.2 Staffing for school libraries and the teaching of Basic Information Science (BIS)

The compulsory non-promotional subject Basic Information Science is being taught by teachers without any formal training in librarianship. Basic Information Science (BIS) introduces the child to the world of books and information in all formats. It is mandatory that a qualified school librarian teaches the subject as most students do not seem to

know when and why they need information, where to find it and how to evaluate, use and communicate it.

BIS is not being properly implemented and taken seriously in the schools. There are no full-time librarians in the schools; the subject is allocated to a teacher who already has a full teaching load of at least one other subject plus BIS. This situation results in a library that is poorly managed and rarely open and that the subject BIS is neglected to the point that it is not being offered at all.

*A qualified librarian, dedicated to the library and the teaching of BIS **only** should be appointed for every school library.* In 2011 posts were created for school librarians in all secondary schools and all primary schools with more than 250 students.

It is recommended that the Minister of Education investigate for what purpose the incumbents of these posts are being used in the schools. Incumbents of these posts should be qualified librarians managing the school libraries and not be expected to teach any other subjects except Basic Information Science.

10.5.3 Developing classroom collections

It is recommended that where there is no school library or the school library is still in an embryonic stage, funds should be allocated for classroom collections containing supplementary reading materials in English and in the languages taught in the school and spoken in the area for the use of language teachers. A small hands-on collection of storybooks can be an important resource for teaching, learning and the nurturing of a reading habit in the absence of a library in a school.

10.5.4 Developing community libraries

*Community libraries are ideal places for children to study and read after school and on weekends for those students that are not too far from the towns. For students attending schools with no or inadequate libraries, trained teachers could be hired by the community libraries to help with homework in the afternoons, retrieve information from the collection and/or from the internet and offer holiday programmes. *Community libraries should be strengthened and collaboration with local schools should be initiated**

where this is not being practised yet. Two divisions within the Directorate of Library and Archival Services (DLAS), Education Library Services (ELS) and Community Library Services (CLS) should collaborate to optimise their potential to help the children after school hours to develop optimally.

10.5.5 Providing book boxes to remote schools

A system of book boxes sent to schools and communities in remote areas without school and community libraries should be considered. The system could be managed and distributed by the Directorate of Library and Archival Services (DLAS) to schools and other possible venues and in collaboration with the Family Literacy Project (FLP) of the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE).

It is recommended that the two directorates within the Ministry of Education, DLAS and DAE join hands. While DLAS has the expertise to select and process suitable information materials for distribution, DAE has a network of literacy workers in the regions who need suitable easy to read books and printed materials for their work with adults and to encourage families to read together. The work of DAE can play a significant role to promote the development of a reading culture not only among the adults but also benefitting the children.

10.5.6 Implementation of a mobile library system

The Division Community Library Services (CLS) will be implementing a mobile library service in the Ohangwena region as from May 2014. Mobile library services can function well in areas where the roads are tarred and the distances not too great. They function particularly well in the outskirts of larger towns i.e. in peri-urban areas with tarred roads. Owing to the great weight of fully loaded bibliobuses, mobile library services have not been very successful in several African countries. Fuel and servicing of such vehicles are very expensive. Dirt roads, particularly during the rainy season, are not passable with a bibliobus. It is recommended that the mobile service be carefully monitored before considering extension of the service further.

10.6 Continued support to language teachers to develop students into avid readers

Teachers are the most influential persons when it comes to motivating students to read; this underlines the very important role teachers have in moulding and influencing their students to become avid readers. *It is therefore crucial that teachers are well-trained in techniques to increase reading motivation.* The importance of teachers as role models should not be underestimated - thus the support to language teachers should be a high priority.

Because a high percentage of teachers are still under-qualified or have no qualifications, classroom teachers should at least get in-service training in techniques needed to motivate students.

It is further a problem that *language teachers are usually overloaded:* either they get all the grades to teach a language, or they get another subject to teach together with a language. The system should be adapted to recognise the important role of the language teacher. *Without enough time to plan and prepare creative, effective lessons, students have a smaller possibility to improve their language skills.* This factor should be viewed as a high priority to change the current situation.

For language classes to really be effective in improving students' skills, *classes should be divided to accommodate smaller numbers. Without individualisation, success is limited.* Part of individualisation includes the ability to select or create texts on the same theme, but on different levels of complexity – giving a whole class the opportunity to discuss a theme after a text was read and analysed.

Part of a language teacher's training should include basic knowledge of remedial teaching and reading support towards struggling readers. The content for these should be included in all teacher training programmes, as well as in in-service training courses to recognise and address or refer students with problems.

10.7 Training teachers for school librarianship and the indigenous languages

10.7.1 School librarians, Library teachers

As there is a great and chronic shortage of qualified librarians in Namibia and there is no professional training for school librarians offered by tertiary institutions since 1998, *it is recommended that consideration be given by the University (or other suitable institution) to develop the following qualifications:*

- An Advanced Diploma in School Librarianship on Level 6 for holders of the three year Diploma in Library and Information Science
- A Postgraduate Degree or Postgraduate Diploma in School Librarianship for holders of a Bachelor's degree.

School librarianship should be made a priority field of study with proposed quotas to the University, and dedicated study grants should be made available for these students.

Library teachers can play an important role as assistants to a qualified school librarian. The short in-service courses they receive from Education Library Services (ELS) are helpful and should be continued. *ELS need a larger travel budget to allow more annual visits per year to every region.*

10.7.2 Training indigenous language teachers

It is urgently recommended that the Ministry of Education address the shortage of language teachers across all school phases. *Indigenous languages should be made a priority field of study with proposed quotas to the University, and dedicated study grants should be made available for these students.* To have good language teachers, Namibia needs linguists and applied linguists, as well as literary experts and methodologists, specifically in the indigenous languages (e.g. Rumanjo, Khoekhoegowab). These experts, in the long term, should be involved in teacher training.

Furthermore, the status of indigenous languages should also be enhanced in schools. The University of Namibia should ensure that well-rounded language teachers are available to teach languages as academic school subjects and that *all teachers for e.g.*

grades 0 – 5 be enabled to use an indigenous language as medium of instruction in the first years across a variety of school subjects. It is important that all Namibian languages are available for tertiary study – and that an indigenous language is an entry requirement for teaching in any school phase – or even other university courses, e.g. Law. This would make the language far more attractive for students in the secondary school phase (they should be able to DO something with an indigenous language at grade 12 level.)

The language curricula should be reviewed to ensure that, especially as regards reading, most recent theories and practices suitable for African languages are studied and applied. These should also include, among others, innovative ways to improve vocabulary and fluency, knowledge of critical literacy, practices to create more reading opportunities and at higher levels in local languages.

The unique characteristics of the various Namibian languages should also be recognized. Research in specific Namibian languages should be conducted to develop and support the reading ability of these speakers – taking into account the specific difficulties in decoding Khoekhoegowab for instance.

Apart from knowing all literary texts and genres available in the specific language, *teachers of Namibian languages should also be able to create and supplement the literature available in the specific language. Courses in creative writing are therefore even more important for these students than for English teachers.*

Ways should be investigated to ensure equal depth and quality of language teaching across different languages – and specifically the inclusion of tasks that require higher order thinking skills and critical analysis.

10.8 Ways to promote motivation and engagement with children's books

Engagement can only be built if reading is part of life – at home, at work and at school. Therefore *all (language) teachers should be well versed in ways to build not only the mechanical aspects of reading, but also reading engagement, so that all children can experience the joy and benefits reading can bring.*

Teachers should concentrate more on advanced reading skills than merely fluency. They should also provide enough opportunities for children to engage with a variety of texts and books so that children will read with enthusiasm, spontaneously, regulate themselves and are intrinsically motivated to read.

Activities and opportunities like the following should be considered:

- Opportunities to listen to good stories and to continue to read aloud
- Opportunities to read interesting and humorous texts (e.g. in the proposed reading period)
- Provision of texts on appropriate levels that would ensure reading success and build confidence
- Provision of shorter and longer texts around themes that interest children, e.g. soccer, music idols, etc.
- Opportunities for children to make their own choices as to themes they would like to read about
- Opportunities to collaborate and discuss books/texts in pairs and groups to enhance comprehension
- Activities that require much more reading, the use of sources, and the integration and evaluation of ideas
- Activities that make reading “cool”, e.g. creating Facebook groups and reading clubs as extra-curricular activities
- Being and providing reading role models and champions for children, e.g. showing that “reading is not a nerd thing!”

A vast treasure of literature on this topic exists and the above ideas can systematically be developed in researched reading programmes for Namibia, this is however, not within the scope of this study. Some of the ideas of Concept Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) of the University of Maryland would be a valuable source in this regard. (See end note 1 for a brief summary).

10.8.1 Implementing the reading period

As indicated in section 9, a discussion document on the new Namibian School Curriculum (Ministry of Education. 29 January 2014.) proposes the institution of a *weekly reading period* across all grades to promote a reading culture in Namibia. This is a very “brave step” and therefore is discussed separately:

While commendable, it would be quite a challenge to ensure that this weekly reading period is utilized for pleasurable reading, and not used for homework, or, even worse, misused for reading as a form of punishment. Furthermore, if a variety of material in English and the local languages are not actively made available, through a national drive, the danger will be that teachers use school text books and readers, and thus reinforce existing negative attitudes towards reading.

Therefore the following is crucial:

The reading period should be a social and rewarding experience.

Engaging material, suitable for different reading levels and preferences, in more than one language, should be available.

Students should be asked what their interests and “obsessions” are and be allowed to read about it. Opportunity for students to share their reading experiences should be created. Students should be allowed to form interest groups, and assist each other to find reading material. Where cell phones are available, students should be encouraged to text each other about their reading.

On national level, it should be considered to tap into success stories of other countries, and to adapt these to Namibian circumstances, e.g. thrilling detective or adventure stories in weekly serial format, available on websites or cell phones, have proved to be successful.

Student views on their reading experiences should be respected and publicized on notice boards, the intranet, etc.

The impact of role models is very important. Principals, sports stars and other celebrities should be invited to classes to share their reading experiences, and to read for children (not to preach about it).

The reading period should form part of larger activities, e.g. Readathon, book weeks, etc.

Therefore it is recommended that the work of ELS is supported by means of sufficient government funding to strengthen Readathon activities and children's book festivals and develop the school libraries. The private sector is urged to offer generous donations for special events to promote reading and the production of new children's books, particularly in the local languages.

10.8.2 Provision of literature for children with special needs

Every standard school library should have a special needs collection that will include books to meet the needs of reluctant readers, poor readers and students with emotional problems. (In addition, special collections for visually impaired students should also be available, where needed).

Reluctant readers need a selection of books with gripping and exciting stories that are easy to read. For children who do not like fiction, books on sports heroes, hobbies, how to conduct experiments or make things may be more attractive. Sometimes only one single book can change a reluctant reader into an avid reader.

As poor readers tend to avoid reading because the effort is just too big, the special collection should be at a level of difficulty that allows the poor reader to succeed and experience the satisfaction of achievement. Poor readers will however, not want to be seen reading baby books but need books that as far as theme is concerned, fit the interests of the age group to which the child belongs but use simple words in short sentences. Paperbacks that are not too thick with an attractive cover may tempt the poor reader to try reading.

On a deeper level, the collection should enable the qualified librarian together with the responsible language teacher, to use bibliotherapy to help students with emotional

problems. Being different from the peer group in appearance or being physically challenged may result in rejection by the group. Outsider children need books that present literary characters with whom he/she can identify. Some students may struggle to come to terms with a physical disability or with familial problems such as divorce, rejection, favouritism, discord or substance abuse of parents, etc. There are also children's books that present the theme of death in such a way that a child struggling to come to terms with the death of a loved one may feel encouraged and comforted.

Reading books portraying literary characters who are suffering the same challenges, the reader may identify with the feelings of the characters and also with the way the characters manage to deal with these problems and retain or regain their feelings of self-worth, self-esteem and joy in life.

The child reader experiences vicariously the pain of the literary character and finds inspiration to read how the literary character overcomes in the face of adversity. In essence all children need books that help them to understand themselves, other people and the world we live in. The satisfaction and comfort experienced by reading such books may make a life-long reader of the child.

10.9 Empowering and involving parents in reading activities

One of the main reasons why most Namibian parents are not involved in the education of their children is their low level or lack of education. The vast majority of Namibians attending literacy training are women. Men do not seem to realize that they are losing out on development on all levels by refusing literacy training.

The literacy training of adults offered by the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE) should be vigorously promoted and ways and means should be found to encourage males to register for and regularly attend literacy training.

The National Family Literacy Programme (FLP) has the potential to empower parents to become fully involved in the education of their children. Literate parents could get involved as mentors and trainers of the illiterate parents. Community education should include the benefits of reading/programmes to engage parents in library activities. The

reading of picture books with minimal text read within the family group, the most proficient reader, irrespective of age, reading to the family is a good start. The enjoyment of sharing books in this way is a sure way to engender enthusiasm for reading.

Collaboration between the Directorate of Library and Archival Services (DLAS), Division Community Library Services (CLS) and the Directorate of Adult Education (DAE), should provide sufficient and suitable reading materials for the FLP project. (See also section 10.5.5).

The recommendations of the 2011 evaluation of FLP have however, not been implemented yet. The main finding of the evaluation was that FLP had not taken “intrafamilial dynamics ... into consideration” (p. 77). It was recommended that the project, instead of training only one family member to communicate with the school, become extended learning on family-wide level. A name change for the project, to FAMED (FAMILY EDUCATION) was suggested. Similar projects in other African countries have been very successful. Family reading projects empower semi-literate older members of the family; reading develops into a family event, the pleasure of which can be conducive to a reading habit.

It is also important that *schools should be more welcoming as many parents with a low educational status are afraid of the school of their children*. Parents should be invited to get involved in the school to share the indigenous knowledge of the culture. Mother tongue should be used during meetings as most rural parents do not speak or even understand English. Parents will feel respected for who they are, irrespective of their level of formal education. (For an example of an interesting parent-school relationship being practiced in Peru, see Rengifo (2009: 276-278 and end note 2).

10.10 Providing books with suitable topics and themes in books to children; matching complexity of material to reading level of students

Teachers and librarians must be able to select books to fit the needs of individual students who may differ in reading and language proficiency. The slogan, “The right book for the right child at the right time” is still relevant. Introducing books that are too

difficult to read may discourage a reader but it is encouraging that Grade 6 readers do not feel that the thickness of a book is necessarily a negative factor. Students may feel a great sense of achievement when reading thicker books. (The letter type should also be suitable for the age group.)

It is evident that recommendations by teachers and others (librarians, peers) are very important factors in forming a reading habit and choosing a specific title to read. Therefore it is important that *teachers and librarians have a sound knowledge of titles available for different age and interest groups*. They should regularly introduce new and interesting books to students and also integrate trade books in their teaching. Language teachers should make time for students to discuss among themselves what they have read and *encourage the creation of book clubs/reading clubs*. Since *peer opinion appeared to be important among the youth*, the establishment of such clubs can be a most rewarding effort to stimulate a reading habit among students.

10.11 Sharing the rich store of stories and cultural knowledge in the minds of the older generation with the nation

10.11.1 Role of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation

The Namibian Broadcasting Corporation is commended for its important contribution towards the promotion of the Namibian languages. *It is recommended that broadcasts of stories in all Namibian languages be strengthened and storytellers be invited to share the oral stories and their knowledge of cultural customs, history, agricultural methods, musical instruments, food recipes with the nation.*

Radio broadcasts in combination with Learning by Ear clubs in Niger, Uganda, Kenya, Togo, Tanzania and Benin for the communication of important educational matters by means of stories, mini radio plays and dramas, serve very well to reach out to school youth and students from remote areas. (See the article "Learning by ear," by Ute Schaeffer, D& C 36 (7-8), July/August 2009: 288-290). It is not a distance learning programme ("adolescents are fed up with lectures the best way to get across a message is by means of a story") and is reaching 40 million people in Africa.

10.11.2 Storytellers

Schools and community libraries should be encouraged to invite storytellers and knowledgeable senior citizens for telling sessions at the schools during reading festivals such as the annual Readathon. Regional offices should also play their part. They should do more than just supporting dancing groups. The performance of poems, praise songs, dramas, proverbs and riddles, the exhibition and sale of books in the local languages, the desk-top publishing of local stories and support towards the annual Readathon in the schools, should form part of the work of cultural officers. New books should be marketed during cultural festivals, particularly in remote areas, as people are often not aware of their existence.

10.12 Harnessing technology to promote reading

The study did not find real evidence of the use of the internet or cellular phones etc. in rural schools. Only 41.1% of schools have a computer and 29.4% internet connectivity. It follows that most Namibian children do not know the internet as they do not have access to it. Ideally all schools should have a computer centre or even classrooms with a laptop for each student, even in the primary school. There are a few well-resourced Namibian schools that are well-equipped in this regard.

Schools should at least have one or two notebook computers. Teachers could then use resource centres where information could be downloaded and then used in the school. Donor funding could also be found for the use of internet services such as SchoolNet.

It is of paramount importance that *teachers should be trained in using websites*. This could enrich student teachers as well as in-service teachers – not only to stay on top of new reading techniques, but also to benefit from projects like the African Storybook Project (see <http://www.africanstorybook.org>). There are invaluable reading websites where students and teachers could browse and find material to read for enrichment and/or to use in the classroom.

Although the idea of using the radio is looked down upon (and sometimes openly derided) in urban areas, this medium is important in the very remote areas. Students

indicated that they listen to stories and sometimes get information from the radio. Some even emphasized the pleasure and enjoyment from listening to serials on the radio. Programmes, specifically targeting school students, should be encouraged.

The NBC radio should expand their educational programmes in all the local languages and in English. New books in the local languages should be publicised through weekly or monthly book discussion programmes in the local languages. An information campaign (to prepare the nation for the change in language policy for the schools and the importance of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction) should be launched. The radio could be used with phone-in programmes and should allow callers to speak in any Namibian language.

Television could be used by high officials speaking in the local languages to advise parents on the importance of the mother tongue. *Television* should also be seen and used as a medium to promote interest in reading – dramatizing popular storybooks, introducing well-known models from society to promote the importance of reading. In this day and age, *social media* should also be used to involve students in activities that could stimulate interest in reading – e.g. *a blog on a prescribed or very popular book where comments and questions could be posted. The idea of using cell phones to read serials has already been mentioned in 10.8.1.*

To support and encourage language teachers, information on these programmes and sites should be officially disseminated to ensure that these rich and innovative teaching impulses be effectively accommodated as part of the activities used in the classroom.

Not only technology should be mentioned as a ways and means of supporting the teacher in the language class; practices requiring minimal financial input – like using *newspapers* – should be used. Seeing that this medium is widely available, *the use of it in the classroom should be promoted.*

Training or in-service training should thus prepare the language teacher to work under ideal AND less ideal circumstances – operating in a developed as well as in a developing world setup.

Projects like UNESCO's Global project: *Enhancing teacher education for bridging the education quality gap in Africa* – recently launched in Namibia, should be embraced. Teams were selected to visit schools, observe and set up a plan of action to improve circumstances in the specific and other similar classrooms. Part of this project is to create a platform where teachers all over the whole country could communicate, share, ask and give information and practical ideas.

Access to technology and internet connectivity is rapidly changing in Namibia. Access to voice communication, messaging and data provision in Namibia is increasing. The use of mobile phones is becoming widespread. Teachers should be able to adapt and keep abreast of technological changes and use these in innovative ways to enhance their teaching and promote reading.

10.13 Using reading and books to promote understanding of the self, others and the world. (See also Bibliotherapy in section 10.8.2).

Children have several psychological needs which books can help to satisfy. They have an insatiable need for information, for wanting to know because they feel powerless and instinctively sense that knowledge will empower them. School textbooks are not nearly enough to satisfy this need in the child. Through non-fiction on many interesting child-related topics in the form of books, magazines and pictures, the child's need for information can be satisfied. Even fiction can inform as descriptions of the landscape against which the main characters are acting, or descriptions of the various cultures and customs in the storybooks, contain information.

Books with beautiful illustrations, rhythmic rhymes, lilting poetry and evocative prose will satisfy the child aesthetically and refine his literary taste. Another type of children's fiction is fantasy. These include fairy tales, folktales, modern fantasy and science fiction that take the child into weird and wonderful 'other worlds'. The child's imagination is stimulated and his feeling of wonderment is awakened by fantasy.

Humorous stories that make the child, smile or even laugh, have a therapeutic function. Life is sometimes far too serious for children. The child needs humour, to have a good

laugh at times to relieve tension. Children also sometimes have a need to counteract boredom by means of stories that offer escape. They like adventure, encounters that engender excitement and gripping events. The reader may be kept in suspense through elements of danger and fear. Funny and exciting stories are the first type of books that should be selected for reluctant readers. For this type of potential reader the books must be entertaining.

A child reader is also able to identify with literary characters and feel comforted through the presentation of happy family life and relationships with the peer group. *The child reader's need to feel loved and accepted can be satisfied vicariously by literary portrayals of such relationships.* He/she may also experience a feeling of relief when a literary character with whom he identifies is saved from a dangerous situation.

Books can inspire children to do only their best when they read *about literary characters who don't give up but persevere until they have achieved their goal. Moral values such as goodness, courage, honesty, loyalty, faithfulness, sacrifice, caring, sharing, justice and uplifting thoughts about a supreme being, life and death can be instilled in child readers by books.* Modern books communicating moral values do not preach directly but through the experiences of the literary characters, the child reader internalises the values by which the literary characters are driven.

Children also have *a need for understanding the natural world. Apart from non-fiction and on a deeper level storybooks can help the child reader to relate to the animals, plants and the inanimate things in the environment.* Such books can engender an understanding of the vulnerability of nature, empathy for the animal and plant life on planet earth and the realization that living natural beings also have rights. By reading such fiction an appreciation for the preciousness of the natural world as well as our responsibilities regarding the sustenance and care thereof may be nurtured in the child.

Reading is also one of the ways towards self-discovery. In addition the child also learns that his personal feelings are not unique but are in fact universal, that other children feel the same. *Through stories readers may be moved to accept their own weaknesses, and also those of others and be brought to understand that outward differences are not*

important, that other people may be different but are equal, that 'otherness' is not a deficiency. Through identification with literary characters child readers may become keen to know more about 'the other' and open for the enrichment a new culture could offer.

So far this subsection has been dealing with extra-curricular reading. School text books however, the extent to which will depend on the discipline, should also reflect the values discussed above. Particularly as regards the issue of tolerance and acceptance of people different from yourself. *There is a need for study modules, textbooks and school readers that transmit knowledge of the diverse cultures in Namibia to engender respect for and appreciation of one's own culture and the various cultures of other groups in the country.* Mono-cultural textbooks deny reality because they do not relate to the environment Namibian children are living in. The curriculum should offer opportunities for students to learn from one another and develop appreciation for the customs and way of life of fellow Namibians. Learning content disconnected from the local culture produces children without identity and roots because they do not know who they are. Study modules and stories should be directed to the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values as advocated by the Convention of the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations on 20th November 1989 Article 29 (c) (UNICEF, 1990: 60). *"Social diversity is not a threat to national unity but will counteract and reduce harmful tribalism when children come to an understanding of other cultures and learn to embrace diversity".*

10.14 Address the socio-economic conditions in the schools and the homes

Too many rural schools in 2014, albeit a minority, are lacking in basic amenities. 25% of schools have no toilets of any kind, and 11.8% no electricity and no running water.

It is recommended that the Ministry of Education take cognisance of the UNICEF Trend and GAP Analysis' declaration in 2011 that "there is a clear relationship between the quantity and quality of school infrastructure and the quality of learning" (p. 20) and urgently allocate more funds to improve the hygienic situation at all Namibian schools.

Many Namibians are living in poor socio-economic conditions. In section 4.14 it was stated that 56.7% of teachers reported that students do not have enough to eat, and that parents do not have enough money. While *The Namibia Household Income Survey (NHIES 2009)* indicates that there are great regional variances, it states *that “poverty ... impacts on the lives and development of children in Namibia, especially their health and education” (p. 1). As Namibia is not classified as a poor country, concerted efforts at job creation to reduce unemployment will bring about a more equal distribution of wealth and alleviate the plight of many Namibians.*

The majority of students are living in traditional houses or homesteads, many of which are overcrowded, without books and without electricity in rural areas or in shacks in most of the urban areas. *As education cannot flourish in an information poor environment, school libraries should be developed without delay. These libraries should be havens of information and knowledge and be open for some hours after school to offer quiet places for deprived students to study and source information. Consideration should also be given to offer afternoon sessions in the schools where students are assisted to do homework.*

The vast majority of children travel on foot to and from the school, many of them walking a total distance of between 4 and 15 kilometres and more per day. Some children live more than 30 km from the school. There are no school buses, no other means of transport and very few hostels. *It is recommended that government establishes more hostels for students living in remote areas. Studies have shown that students perform better if they are accommodated comfortably, receive three meals a day and have a quiet place to study.*

Many children are hungry and rely on one plate of maize porridge for the day cooked at 80% of the schools through the feeding scheme. Under-nutrition does not only affect children’s physical development. Stunted children have lower levels of cognitive ability and lower IQs. It leads to adults who are less well educated, earn less income and are less able to care for their children. If a large share of children are under-nourished, this

will affect national development. *The government is commended for the school feeding scheme but is urged to add protein to the maize meal and extend the scheme further.*

END NOTES

1. Part of the CORI practices to motivate students to read is linked with the curriculum to be covered in a certain grade: The thematic approach is used, selecting texts based on material to be covered. This approach could also be used, based on students' choices. Working with themes empowers students to take part in class discussions with confidence. Secondly the relevance of reading material, where books and the reading experiences are linked to student's personal experiences contributes to reader motivation. The teacher as facilitator should always let students experience the importance of reading – not to go to college – but to understand the material at hand in the classroom. Part of the process is working with one partner or a small group to discuss subject material. Collaboration is thus also a CORI practice to build confidence. If students could get the choice to select – either the texts or the topics to discuss - it gives a strong sense of involvement. These practices all contribute to a feeling of success – that the student is important and part of the learning process. (Adolescents' Engagement in Academic Literacy - Retrieved from: http://www.cori.und.edu/research/2012_adolescence_engagement_ebook.pdf)
2. Successful innovative approaches in education in Peru involving the Amerindian community in the Andes region with the school programme are being implemented. Authorities abandoned the unsuccessful use of the colonial language Spanish as medium of instruction. Parents and relatives were encouraged to become actively and enthusiastically involved in and committed to the schools their children are visiting. Even illiterate parents are being involved in imparting local indigenous knowledge such as techniques of agro-biological diversity to ensure that communities can feed themselves, also of crafts, the

playing of instruments and dances. Such programmes foster a greater sense of community. (See Rengifo 2009: 276 - 278).

11. Final Statement

The study on the reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children revealed a picture of deprivation in the schools and environment of the majority of Namibian children. *The finding that 78.6% of the 1 402 grade 6 students selected for the study do not read in their free time, is therefore though appalling, not surprising. Apart from the fact that many children struggle to read, they also have nothing or almost nothing to read, particularly in their mother tongues.* For a long time the indigenous languages have not been promoted with the result that very few children's books are available in these languages.

Only 22.4% of the 1402 respondents, most of whom are attending well-resourced mainly urban schools, read in their free time. Among these readers there is only a small group that is strongly motivated to read, i.e. they do not need teachers and parents to tell them to read. With the other readers the influence of the teachers in this regard is high.

It follows that teachers should be well-qualified in the languages they teach but this is however, not always the case. Even though the majority of teachers are qualified, this does not guarantee that they can speak, read and write English well and are adequately qualified in the languages they teach.

The government succeeded in getting almost 100% of Namibian children into school since independence but the infrastructure of the schools has been and still is inadequate to ensure quality education. *Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution states that: "Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia."*

School libraries, particularly in the rural areas can be seen as 'reasonable facilities.' *A standard school library is no luxury but the key towards academic success and a facility without which no rural school can nurture the reading habit. Without basic reading materials in an easily understandable language, Namibian children will not be able to*

develop into informed and well-educated citizens. Namibia's mandate to evolve into a knowledge-based society within the next fifteen years as set out by Vision 2030 through ETSIP (Training Sector Improvement Programme), is being seriously threatened by the lack of a reading culture in the country.

No society can afford to waste talent. A part of at least two school generations (12 years each) of human potential has already been lost in post-independence Namibia in the face of the serious constraints under which many children have been trying and are still trying to get a decent education. In order to educate the next generation for citizenship, leadership and participation in the knowledge economy and also to promote social mobility depends on quality teaching and the resources to offer a rich learning environment. *Giving access to education for all children is essential but a poor learning environment defeats the purpose.* Our children are precious human capital for the future; the country cannot afford to lose them during the most impressionable years of their lives.

Urgent attention to the recommendations that emanated from the research will pave the way towards the development of a reading culture that is a prerequisite for the advancement of a knowledge-based society.

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PILOT STUDY ON CHILDREN'S READING IN NAMIBIA: PITFALLS AND NEW STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the article is to report on a pilot study in 2011 that preceded a main study undertaken in 2012, investigating the reading behaviour and preferences of Grade 6 Namibian students. The aims of the pilot study were to develop an easy to answer and reliable questionnaire, to enable emerging researchers to gain experience in data collection through small scale sampling and to test whether the instruments of data collection were covering the main aims of the study. The questionnaire was developed and tested three times on small groups before the pilot study. In all 226 students, both rural and urban, from three educational regions in Namibia were included in the pilot study. Vast differences in the language ability and socio- economic situation of students were observed. Data analysis showed that the researchers underestimated the impact of the social desirability factor and the reading levels of the respondents. The questionnaire had to be drastically redesigned. Six further versions of the questionnaire were developed and tested before implementation in the main study. Careful reporting and recording of the pilot process ensured that a successful main study was conducted

in 2012. While pilot studies are not frequently fully documented and reported on, it is argued that valuable lessons can be learnt from this honest report.

KEYWORDS

Children's readership- Namibia, pilot study, questionnaire testing, Grade 6 respondents, social desirability factor, language proficiency

1. Introduction and background to the main study

A study entitled, "The reading preferences and behaviour of Namibian children" was jointly launched in 2011 by the University of Namibia (UNAM), Faculty of Education and the Namibian Children's Book Forum in collaboration with the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Information Science. UNISA was envisaging a possible Pan African children's readership study under its auspices, involving research institutions in various African countries. UNISA approached the Namibian Children's Book Forum (NCBF) in 2010 to pioneer a study of the reading preferences and behaviour of Namibian children. The NCBF thereupon gained the collaboration of the University of Namibia (UNAM), Faculty of Education, to partner in this project.

The project comprised a pilot study and a main study. This article is a report on the pilot study. General information on the main project will be provided in this first section of the article to situate the pilot study within its broader context.

The realities of multilingualism in Africa render readership studies very challenging. Developing a scientifically acceptable research methodology for the investigation of reading preferences in a multilingual society is a process fraught with many difficulties, some of which are almost insurmountable. Academics that embark upon such a study will invariably be faced with situations that require the breaking of new ground.

There are currently fourteen languages, including Sign language, in Namibia with an approved orthography (Namibia. National Planning Commission. 2011). At Namibian independence in 1990, Afrikaans was the *lingua franca* yet English was chosen as the only official language and as the main medium of instruction in the schools; this even though Namibia never was a British colony and very few Namibians, including school teachers, could speak English and the majority of the population not at all.

With English as the only official language, the other languages were given unofficial status as 'national languages' i.e. these languages are not mentioned in the Namibian constitution as official national languages. According to the language policy (Namibia. Ministry of Education. 2009), mother tongue as medium of instruction is nevertheless, allowed during the first three years of schooling where-after the switch to English

medium instruction is made. An increasing number of schools however, opt for English medium instruction from Grade 1.

The 2012 report by EMIS (Namibia. Ministry of Education. Education Management Information System), shows that fourteen languages were used in 1515 schools as main media of instruction during Grades 1 to 3. These also include the minority languages, Ju|'Hoansi (San), German, Setswana and Sign Language in a few schools. Most of these schools offer the fourteen languages further as a school subject as from Grade 4, the choice of which language depending on the geographical area.

The EMIS report also stated that 55422 students in Grade 6 were studying a 'national' language as a subject (Namibia. Ministry of Education. 2012). However, owing to the multilingual nature of some regions and within some school classes, for some students, this is not their mother tongue that they are studying, but a dominant language spoken in the region.

It has generally been observed that the vast majority of Namibian children have not developed a reading habit and that this situation is having a detrimental effect on school success. Research is necessary to establish the impact of language on the culture of reading. Findings could provide information and create a basis for advocacy to educators, libraries, publishers and other authorities responsible for children to make a more concerted effort to promote the reading habit, develop and support libraries and develop the various Namibian languages *inter alia* through publishing programmes.

This exploratory study wishes to investigate the reading habits of Namibian students in a systematic and scientific manner. The aim of the investigation is to establish the percentage of Namibian children who read in their free time, what they like to read, whether they read in their mother tongue or English and also how well resourced the schools and the surrounding environment are as regards reading materials. The research questions are based on these aims.

The main readership study is based on the demography and geography of Namibia. In all 1402 Grade 6 respondents participated in the main study. They belonged to six different language groups in seven regions (200 respondents per region, both urban and rural).

The instruments of data collection were a questionnaire for Grade 6 students and structured observation by means of field notes. A second questionnaire was designed after the pilot study but tested before the main study for the language and library teachers in the selected schools to gather more information on the physical and human resources available to teachers and students, both in the school and in the surroundings

of the school. It was also thought that these data might be helpful to supplement and verify the field observations.

It was initially decided not to do individual interviews with students on their reading preferences as the culture, particularly in the rural areas where the majority of the respondents live, does not allow for free dialogue between children and adults. Other reasons were that many students were non-readers and at that early stage, readers had not yet been identified. To enrich the data interviews with students who are readers were added later after data collection for the main study.

The study thus made use of mixed methods of data collection, the main method being the gathering of quantitative data through two separate questionnaires, while the field notes and interviews were qualitative methods of data collection.

2. Literature review for the pilot study

Arain et al. (2010: 5) define a pilot study as follows: "A pilot study is a version of the main study that is run in miniature to test whether the components of the main study can all work together. It is focused on the processes of the main study ..." while Moore et al. (2011:336) see pilot studies as "preparatory investigations that provide specific information needed for planning subsequent studies they are designed to test the performance characteristics ... capabilities and operational strategies that are under consideration for use in a larger subsequent study."

For the social sciences a definition of pilot studies is given by Theis (2003:70): "Piloting is testing draft research tools on limited samples before using them in the field." He advocates that these instruments should first be tested out on friends or family members and once errors in wording and instructions have been corrected, "select small groups of participants similar to the sample groups required for each tool and go through the entire procedure of using the tool. Decide what works, what doesn't work and what can be done differently." Re-testing after the revision of instruments should be done: "..... test them again, agreeing on final changes." He stresses that "all research tools must be tested before they are used and modified where appropriate" (p.75). Each new research tool should be tested (p.77).

Namibian publications in the social sciences use the term "pilot study" rather loosely. Tseng (2007:7) refers to her study based on 58 respondents as "mini or pilot research." Full results with percentages in the form of charts are however given and no follow up main study was undertaken. According to Arain et al. (2010:6), the results of such a small sample should be interpreted with caution "as hypothesis testing requires a powered sample size." In other Namibian cases, a pilot study is an extensive fully fledged study, with a large group of respondents. Keulder (2009:4) elicited data from

14684 mobile phone respondents but refers to this countrywide study as a “pilot project” (p.3). It is possible that the term ‘pilot’ was used in this case because of the use of a novel mobile based, Interactive Voice Response (IVR) platform as the instrument for data collection. The 44 page full report contains results with 58 charts (1 graph, 34 bar and 23 pie charts). This was an autonomous study without any follow up larger study.

A ‘pilot’ study by Van der Walt et al. (2007) was followed by another report in 2009, but no reference is made in the 2007 report on the ‘pilot’ study of the intention to do a follow up larger study. Respondents for the so-called pilot study were 124 teacher-educators (lecturers) at the four training colleges. The report on this study consists of 50 pages, including 10 tables and 9 Figures (5 bar and 4 pie charts). The 2009 report is a different study which targeted school teachers. The two-pronged study therefore, produced separate and autonomous results for two different sets of respondents. The first report is no pilot study but is, like the second report, a full study on its own. In this case the term ‘pilot study’ may have been used because it was the first of the two studies, both of which were aiming to elicit the same type of information, on the one hand from teacher educators (lecturers) and on the other from teachers.

None of the abovementioned Namibian pilot studies match the definitions of Moore et al., Arain et al. (2010) and Theis (2003). Some are small studies, consisting of not more than a testing session of a very small group of respondents while others are stand-alone major studies that are in no way preliminary investigations in preparation for a yet larger study.

Some researchers consider a pilot study to be unnecessary. The SADC HIV & AIDS Unit (2007:15) opines that “In some circles, pilots are frowned upon. This is because scaling up from a pilot to a wider programme can be a challenge and some pilots do not make the transition, in which case they may be viewed as a waste of time and resources”. Lancaster et al. (2004, (10):307-12) report that “50% of pilot studies reported the intention for further work ... yet we identified only 8.8% which were followed up by a major study.”

Where pilot studies do take place, not all of them are publicised resulting in a dearth of literature on pilot studies. Some research teams publish the pilot study as a separate report but most others report on the pilot study as part of the main report. In such a case, it is mentioned in the introduction that a pilot study preceded the main study, but little or no further information is divulged. A few paragraphs may indicate that the pilot study led to some changes to the instruments of data collection such as the reformulation or correction of questions of a questionnaire or the questions for interviews (for example Siririka 2007:36; Sharma 2008:47). In cases such as these, a

pilot study is seen as a testing of the instruments only. The process is viewed as not significant enough to warrant a separate report.

In many cases more extensive pilot studies however, also do not get published, as in the medical sciences. Moore et al. (2011, 4 (5):336) state that “many investigators make little or no effort to publish negative or unsuccessful findings, and this contributes to publication bias.” Arain et al. (2010:2) also report that “many pilot studies are never published,” and that “the reporting of pilot studies was poor.” The latter authors state that many pilot studies do not have clear objectives. They advocate that the data of pilot studies and those of the main study should not be mixed and stress that the pilot study “has specific hypotheses, objectives and methodology” (p.6). They report that published articles on pilot studies tend to put “inappropriate emphasis on hypothesis testing.” In their opinion pilot studies should not try to draw conclusions from main study research questions and hypotheses (p. 2). Lancaster et al. (2004:307-12) state that “a well-conducted pilot study, giving a clear list of aims and objectives within a formal framework will encourage methodological rigour [and] ensure that work is scientifically valid and publishable...”

There is consensus that reports on pilot studies should be published. The benefits of pilot study publications are, according to Moore et al. (2011:336), that both positive and negative results “can provide valuable information for future research,” while Arain et al. (2010:6) state that the publication of “well conducted pilot or feasibility studies is important for research, irrespective of outcome.” The SADC HIV & AIDS Unit (2007:16) opines that, if pitfalls are never documented “the mistakes tend to keep being repeated thus compounding the costs.” The authors argue that documentation on lessons learnt should be freely available as a resource in the region to those who wish to learn and to consider new ideas.

3. Why a pilot study and what must it achieve?

Whereas not all studies necessarily require a preliminary pilot study, the Namibian team had to feel their way along on largely unknown terrain and therefore considered a pilot study as essential to ensure as far as was possible, that the main study render reliable results. The exploratory nature of the study suggested that it would be very risky to launch a costly nation-wide main study without first having gone through a pilot study. Clarity needed to be found on the uncertainties raised. From the outset it was clear that small group pre-testings of the questionnaire might also be necessary before launching the pilot. In addition, if many changes should be necessary after the pilot study, post-pilot testings might also be needed. It was argued that only through several trial runs appropriate instruments for the main study could be developed.

In the planning and execution of the study, the research team learned many valuable lessons that might be beneficial to fellow researchers embarking on similar research projects. The intention with this article, therefore, is to offer an honest report on the pitfalls and lessons learnt through these processes. As researchers we share our experiences from the inception of the research until the roll out of the final data gathering. From the outset, the intention of the pilot was not to test and report on the results of research questions of the main study, but to report on the development of the questionnaire(s) used during the planning stages towards the main survey, the sampling process as well as the lessons learnt from the pilot and the new strategies devised.

A pilot study and possibly also pre-testings therefore had to answer the following questions:

- How can the questions for the questionnaire be formulated to ensure, as far as is possible, truthful answers?
- Since most Grade 6 learners will have enjoyed three years of mother tongue education and then had to switch to English education in Grade 4, in which language would they be more proficient to respond in the open ended questions?
- On what level of simplicity should questions in English be for rural Grade 6 children from an environment where English is not heard outside the school building?
- Are questions on reading through electronic means relevant for respondents in rural areas where there is no electricity, no computers and in many cases not even mobile telephones?
- Will it be possible for rural children imbedded in an authoritarian traditional culture that does not encourage free dialogue between adults and children, to overcome this taboo and interact with adults who are strangers?
- Will it be responsible to expect inexperienced data collectors to visit 36 schools in seven regions, travelling 5500 kilometers without having learnt through trial runs at a few schools, how to organize materials, write structured observations in the form of field notes, approach school principals, teachers and students and afterwards prepare completed questionnaires for electronic data input?

The aims of the pilot study thus were

- to develop a questionnaire that would
- be a useful and reliable instrument for data collection for the main study
- be suitable for administration to Grade 6 respondents as far as the level of difficulty of questions is concerned
- be suitable for children belonging to 13 different language groups

- take the social and economic realities of the majority of children into consideration while also recognizing the realities of the minority
 - to gain experience
- through small scale sampling how to do sampling for a representative target population for the main study
- in administering a questionnaire to students
- in writing structured observations
- through a small scale study how to manage a large scale study
 - to find out if it would be possible to conduct interviews with respondents
 - to test if the instruments of data collection will address the aims of the main study.

4. Methodology of the pilot study

According to Theis (2003:125), research method in the social sciences “is a scientific technique for gathering data,” such as the decision to conduct a survey to study a particular matter of concern. Research method is not identical to research tool “but can be used in research tool design.” He opines that, “To answer the key research questions takes more than one research tool” (p. 69). A research tool is a purpose designed structured instrument to gather systematic answers to specific research questions.

As with the main study, mixed methods of data collection were used in the pilot study. The quantitative method was used to gather information: a questionnaire was developed as an instrument to collect descriptive data, the answers to which were numerically converted and analyzed through statistical methods. The qualitative method was also used to gather information. The instrument was field notes documented by the researchers through observations and conversations. A description of the surroundings in which the respondents to the questionnaire found themselves, was necessary to form a picture of their reality. These data complemented the statistical data in order to understand the research context. As will be shown, interviews could not be used during the pilot study as these could only be conducted at a later stage.

4.1 Instruments of data collection

4.1.1 The questionnaire

The respondents of the Questionnaire were Grade 6 students.

As far as the language problem was concerned, it was decided that data analysis in thirteen languages (Sign language excluded) would be too difficult. As all Namibian Grade 6 students in government schools are already in their third year of English medium instruction, the decision was made that the language medium of the questionnaire would be English but with options to answer the four open questions in a language of the respondent's choice. It was felt that respondents, even though they might be able to tick off answers to questions put in simple English, they might not be able to answer the open questions which require free writing in English.

Since data analysts would not be able to understand all the written answers to the open questions in the various languages, student teachers studying at the University of Namibia could be used to help with the translation into English.

Contents of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire to be answered anonymously consisted of the following sections:

1. General information (name of school, age and gender of respondent)
2. Language questions (mother tongue, languages receiving tuition in)
3. Reading questions (choosing books and favourite themes or topics in books, language of books chosen, use of other reading materials)
4. Encouragement to read (by parents, teachers)
5. Availability of reading materials
6. Listening to story reading and reading to others
7. Listening to storytelling and telling stories to others.

The questionnaire was designed to contain mainly simple questions that could be marked off with an X. As it is not possible to think of and enlist all the possible reasons why children don't read, what they do with their free time, etc., four open questions were included.

4.1.2. Field notes and observations

During every school visit field notes and observations were collected according to a standardized format. The following elements were tabled: Name of school; urban/rural location; number of students tested and their home language; time and date of pilot study. The form also provided space for information gained from the principal and language teacher, on

- the number of respondents
- the availability of textbooks
- the availability of other books in classroom collections and/or a library.

During administration of the questionnaire, notes were made on the venue where the session took place; whether the students asked questions, how they responded/behaved; whether they were confident to use English; whether an interpreter was necessary; how long it took to complete the questionnaire.

4.2 Testing and piloting

The research team treated testing and piloting as two different processes. The pilot study had to be more than merely testing the understanding of questions and the time needed for administering the questionnaire. Small pre-pilot group sessions in schools were used to establish these two matters and in how far explanations were necessary. After every testing, changes were made so as to arrive at a workable version for the pilot study. It was decided beforehand that if the pilot should reveal flaws in the questionnaire, post-pilot testings would have to be done as well in order to reach a final questionnaire that would render relatively reliable information.

4.3 Sampling design

The type of sampling used was quota sampling and not random sampling (Welman et al. 2005:68). The quota agreed upon was at least 10% of the units of analysis selected for the main study. The main study also made use of quota sampling in that 200 respondents, i.e. units of analysis, per region were decided upon. This resulted in 1402 respondents for the seven regions chosen for the main study. Thus for the pilot study 140 units of analysis would have been the minimum but ultimately 226 units out of 1402 i.e. 16% were taken.

As the study endeavoured to select a sample for the pilot study that would be a microcosm of the main study sample the demographic and geographic characteristics of the intended main study were taken into account. Three out of the thirteen Namibian regions where three languages are spoken by the majority, were selected for the pilot study. The quota sampling was furthermore also proportionate in that important strata such as the rural/urban distribution in the population were reflected by the sample of units of analysis. Care was therefore taken that the multilingual stratum be reflected and also that the majority of respondents should be from rural communities, similar to the demographics of Namibia.

The Oshana region with nearly 100% of Oshiwambo speakers, the largest ethnic and language group was one of the three chosen regions for the pilot study. One urban and two rural schools were selected as the research wanted to establish whether the rural children in this region would be able to understand the questionnaire and interact with the researchers.

In both the Khomas and Otjizondjupa regions students from the Khoekhoegowab and Afrikaans communities were involved. Two rural schools in Otjizondjupa and two urban schools from Khomas were selected. (Table 1).

Table 1: Pilot population

			Number of Respondents		
School	Town and region	Language	Rural	Urban	Total
A	Ongwediva, Oshana	Oshiwambo	-	58	58
B	Amutanga, Oshana	Oshiwambo	34	-	34
C	Ekambo, Oshana	Oshiwambo	35	-	35
D	Otavi, Otjizondjupa	Khoekhoegowab	29	-	29
E	Windhoek, Khomas	Khoekhoegowab	-	20	20
F	Mangetti, Otjizondjupa	Afrikaans L2	30	-	30
G	Windhoek, Khomas	Afrikaans	-	20	20
Total: 7			128 (57%)	98 (43%)	226 (100%)

The questionnaire was designed in such a way that it would be suitable for all respondents despite possible differences between regions, languages and between the rural and urban areas.

5. Ethical matters

Research ethics require that permission be elicited to collect data from human beings and/or the environment. Potential respondents should be fully informed about the objectives of the study. Appreciation should be shown to those who cooperate in the study. Confidentiality should be strictly adhered to and feedback be given on the results of the study to participating authorities.

For the testings, schools were contacted telephonically and an appointment made for the visit. For the pilot study, permission for the research was obtained in writing from the Namibian Ministry of Education. Schools were identified and contacted in collaboration with regional offices. The researchers contacted the school both

telephonically and in writing, explaining the nature of the research. Appointments were then made for a visit. When arriving at a school the researchers first met with the principal or his representative and discussed the aims of the visit. Before the questionnaires were administered, students and teachers were informed that the questionnaires were not tests, that there were no wrong or right answers, but that primarily the opinions of respondents were sought. After completing the questionnaire, students were given a pencil and a sweet for their willingness to cooperate. (But no prior information was given that they will be rewarded). The NCBF also donated a storybook to the school as a token of appreciation. As the pilot study and the testings did not test main study hypotheses or research questions there were no results of importance to present to participants.

6. Phase 1: Design and pre-pilot testings of the questionnaire

6.1 Version 1

The first draft of Version 1 completed in February 2011, consisted of 32 questions. The format was informal and user friendly. Some questions contained options to be ticked Yes or No, while others contained up to 14 options of which more than one could be ticked. There were also four open questions.

The first version of the questionnaire was tested at a Windhoek school on 23 March 2011. Six Grade 6-students, differing in ability, were selected by the principal. The outcome of the session was positive. Students completed the questionnaire between 15 and 27 minutes. As paging back and forth proved to be confusing, it was decided that all options to a question should be on the same page.

6.2 Version 2

The amended Version 1 was sent to the University of South Africa (UNISA) for comments. On advice from a statistician, it was recommended that major changes be effected to extract more information such as the inclusion of questions requiring the ranking of options, the indication of the number of hours per week devoted to each chosen activity and also Likert-type questions requiring an indication of the degree to which statements are agreed or disagreed with (five possible variants to each question were suggested). As a result the new Version 2 became lengthy and more complicated.

Version 2 was tested on 5 July 2011 in a very poor, informal residential area of Katutura, Windhoek. The Oshindonga teacher assisted the researcher in this Grade 6-class with 42 students. The same explanations were given as with the first school testing.

As the reading ability of these students was much poorer than at the previous school, the researcher read each question aloud, one at a time. The teacher explained nearly every question in Oshindonga but students were still totally overwhelmed by everything they had to read. Rereading each question before answering resulted in a very slow pace. Respondents tired after the first 30 minutes and needed one hour to complete the questionnaire.

Observations were that the written explanations to every question confused students, as it required more to read. They had problems to remember the different instructions, varying from “I agree/I don’t agree,” to “Mark with an X”, to an instruction to comment on all options. This more complicated questionnaire was a disaster. It was clear that not all statisticians take the realities of respondents into consideration.

6.3 Version 3

Deliberations between the UNISA/UNAM/NCBF teams early in July 2011 resulted in a more user friendly Version 3, albeit still more complicated than the first version.

An inviting front cover was designed (Appendix 1). The level of difficulty of the English was reduced. Some options on electronic media were reduced. Likert-type options were simplified to “Often,” “Sometimes” or “Never.” Only minimal writing was required as open questions were mostly optional.

Version 3 was tested on 22 July 2011 in Khomasdal, Windhoek. The ten Grade 6 students completed the questionnaire in less time than at the previous school. Students that could read with understanding had no problems. Version 3 was not redesigned as the outcome of the testing was quite positive.

7. Phase 2: The Namibian Pilot study: 25 – 30 July 2011

As indicated in section 4.3 the pilot study was undertaken at seven schools in three regions (Table 1). The 226 Grade 6 respondents received tuition in the Oshiwambo, Khoekhoegowab and Afrikaans languages as school subjects. Version 3 of the questionnaire was used for the pilot study.

7.1 Observations during administration of the questionnaire

7.1.1 Rural students

As low reading levels were anticipated, it was decided that the researcher would give oral support by reading the questions one by one to the group of students and explaining each item, either with the assistance of an interpreter, or by switching

between English and Afrikaans. Students wrote down the answer to every question each time after the explanation. This led to a slow pace but it helped provide greater comprehensibility and systematic completion of the questionnaire by the respondents.

Students were shy and hardly vocal. Whether an Oshiwambo interpreter was present or not, almost no questions were asked. Efforts by researchers to relax the students and to ensure understanding were only partially successful. The same observation was also made by Siririka (2007:41) who stated that children attending a rural school in the Omaheke region of Namibia “are not used talking to strangers. They were shy and they could not articulate easily,” even though they were invited to enter into a dialogue in their mother tongue by a speaker of the same tongue.

Apart from concepts that were quite new to many, the interpretation of basic words was problematic. It was evident that in-depth interviews with individual students or with groups on their reading behaviour and preferences would have been futile, even if conducted in their mother tongues. It would only be possible to make efforts to conduct interviews after readers had been identified during the main study.

Students found it difficult to interpret the instructions. Constant repetition of instructions and guidance from the researchers could not prevent many errors. Some questions required the marking of four options out of nine, others again required the marking of all options, and yet others required “Yes/No,” “Like/Don’t like” or “True/Not true” responses. Students were also confused where the selection of a certain option meant that they were excluded from filling in other options.

In the poor rural areas some options were just embarrassing. No one in a whole class had a mobile phone or access to television. They had never heard of a comic or a magazine.

7.1.2 Urban students

The English of urban students seemed adequate to answer the questionnaire. They were more relaxed and open, and not intimidated at all. There was no need for translators. While the same procedures as for rural schools were followed, many students were able to complete the questionnaire without assistance. Observations were that urban students generally had a better vocabulary and comprehension skills than their rural counterparts. They spoke English with a lot more confidence and were more vocal.

The urban school (G), situated in an advantaged area in the capital, was a unique experience. Students far outperformed those from other schools in terms of comprehension and the speed with which they could complete the questions without

assistance. Some of the questions included specifically for rural students evoked responses of laughter and disbelief e.g. on whether they listened to stories over the radio.

7.1.3 General observations of school contexts

The seven schools differed widely, in terms of infrastructure, access to textbooks, storybooks and student: researcher interaction. School G had a fully operational school library and respondents in schools D and G had access to the library in town. Five of the seven schools had no operational school library and there was also no other library in the vicinity students could visit. Reading opportunities outside the classroom in the mother tongues seemed to be very limited. All teachers indicated a severe shortage of storybooks for the students, and in the Namibian languages storybooks were virtually non-available. Only one class had a book corner of donated books.

Language proficiency differed from school to school. The time it took to complete the questionnaire also differed widely, ranging from 35 minutes to about 90 minutes.

The social setting of schools clearly has a marked impact on the performance of students, but social setting is not necessarily linked to geographical setting. Field experience revealed that it would be wrong to assume that there are no disadvantaged schools in the urban areas. In the urban capital city of Windhoek students from the two schools responded quite differently. Students from Windhoek school (E) in a more informal settlement were just as disadvantaged as the students from an Otavi school (D) a northern rural settlement situated 350 km from Windhoek.

It is evident that the differences between *disadvantaged* rural and urban students compared to *advantaged* students are very, very wide, and that even within the urban areas, there will possibly be no comparison between advantaged and disadvantaged students.

7.2. Outcome of the pilot study with Questionnaire Version 3

While it never was the intention to publish the full results of the pilot study, it was hoped that responses to the questionnaire would already give some reliable indication of the reading behaviour and preferences of Namibian children. Results regrettably did not show anything of the kind despite, or rather on account of, the extremely positive outcomes as regards reading.

Of the 226 respondents, 88.9% indicated that they liked to read storybooks. Almost half, i.e. 46% indicated that they read seven or more books for pleasure per year. Yet very few students could mention a recognizable title of a storybook. A high percentage, i.e. 67.7% of students, indicated that they obtained books from the school library, while

the school often had no library. Many students had no access to any kind of library. Respondents who hardly ever read, due to lack of materials or interest, completed questions intended for respondents who would be seen as readers. For instance, they indicated what kinds of books they read and how they choose a book.

Answers showed that respondents were confused by the way some questions were phrased, requiring differing responses such as “Yes/No,” “True/Not true,” and “Like/Don’t like.” There were discrepancies in responses, e.g. a respondent would answer in the same question that s/he liked *and* disliked reading. Students also seemed to interpret the term “free time” differently.

The majority of the respondents did not answer the four open questions and very few of them i.e. only 6% of the students responded in their mother tongue and 29% in English while 65% did not answer. Of the 35% who answered, 60% of the answers were irrelevant, i.e. the answers did not make sense. Frequently a question already ticked was just copied again.

It was clear that the instruments did not yield useful results. The researchers needed to go back to the drawing board.

8. Pitfalls and new strategies

8.1 Pitfalls

Despite all the effort that went into the designing of version 3, the pilot study revealed serious problems. The following pitfalls were identified:

8.1.1 The social desirability factor

In the light of the field observations that revealed a book-deprived environment in which most schools were operating, there was reason to suspect that most respondents did not answer truthfully. The impression was that an option was ticked if the option was understood or regarded as a “right” response. As shown in 7.2, there is reason to believe that social desirability influenced responses.

The literature on social desirability is scant but Nederhof (1984: 264) defines the phenomenon as follows: “Social desirability reflects the tendency on behalf of the subjects to deny socially undesirable traits and to claim socially desirable ones, and the tendency to say things which place the speaker in a favourable light. He further opines that norms are important determinants of socially desirable behaviour, as they determine what constitutes a good impression in a given situation.” McKenna (2001:139)

as quoted by Lukhele (2013:4) supports this view by stating that one's attitudes towards reading are influenced by "one's 'beliefs about cultural norms concerning reading (conditioned by one's desire to conform to those norms)".¹

The fact that the researchers explained at the outset that they were trying to gather information on reading behaviour seems to have influenced the respondents, i.e. it acted as a prompt for subsequent responses. It appears that most respondents tried by all means to respond to questions in the way they hoped would please the researchers even if it meant that their response was not true.

Respondents were clearly aware of the status of being regarded as a reader in their culture and thus presented themselves as such. They portrayed awareness of the value of reading, without being readers themselves. Their attitude towards reading did not reflect their true behaviour. Lukhele (2013: 1) reports that Mathewson (2004) in his model of reading attitudes "asserts that a positive reading attitude does not guarantee actual reading behaviour. He [Mathewson] suggests that an additional factor is needed to be a reader: the *intention to read*..." A positive attitude towards reading "is of little consequence: one's attitude may be positive but one may lack the intention to read, resulting in non-reading behaviour being exhibited."²

Since such a strong possibility existed that the social desirability factor influenced responses, it was decided that the results of the pilot study were too unreliable to come to any conclusions as regards reading behaviour and preferences.

8.1.2 Complexity of the Questionnaire and the Language

Most respondents had great difficulty in understanding and completing the questionnaire. As the English reading proficiency of most Namibian Grade 6 students is extremely poor, the wording of the questionnaire was clearly too complicated for the average Namibian Grade 6 student. Some students e.g. did not know simple English words such as "boring," "often", "hours" or what "folk tales" meant. The finding of the 2010 SACMEQ 3 English proficiency study is that only 45% of Namibian Grade 6 students passed the basic reading test (SACMEQ 3: Table 7.3).

As regards the opportunity that was offered to respondents to answer open questions in their mother tongue, this provision proved to be superfluous. Only a minority answered the open questions, and mostly in English, but most of these answers did not make sense. It is possible that many respondents are not able to write coherently in English or in their mother tongue. SACMEQ studies do not test writing proficiency but writing will in all probability be even worse than reading proficiency. If the extra information obtained through the 6% of mother tongue (often incoherent) written replies was weighed against the effort it took to get the very few and poor responses translated, the exercise can be considered as not having been worthwhile.

The researchers realized that they were partly responsible for the unreliable results of the pilot, through their efforts to include all participants.

8.2 New strategies

To limit the social desirability factor, i.e. ensure more truthful answers, and facilitate as well as expedite the administering process, it was decided that the following points should be adhered to:

- Do not tell the respondents what the research is about. All they need to know beforehand is that you want to find out what they do with their time after school, during week-ends, holidays.
- Avoid all “telling” information on the questionnaire such as the wording, “Readership Research Project” or a heading such as “What do you read, when, why and how?” or pictures of children reading.
- Include a few questions in the questionnaire to shift the focus to activities other than reading, e.g. about the kind of chores respondents have to do around the home, the TV programmes they like, their sports activities, etc. Answers to these questions will not be coded or could be used for another study.
- Simplify the English wording but not so much as to jeopardize the aims.
- Design questions as far as possible that require respondents to mark with an X, “Yes or No” only.
- Shorten the questionnaire and reduce the amount of reading, i.e. limit long explanations and instructions.
- Limit the options respondents may choose from but ensure that there will be possible answers for both the urban and the rural child.
- Do not waste time on long oral explanations. If the questions are simple enough, the readers (in most schools a minority) will understand. The focus of the research is on the *readers*. The non-readers are mainly relevant for general and statistical purposes.
- Accept that all readers do not necessarily like to read stories but some (possibly a minority) prefer non-fiction for general reading. So do not exclude these respondents by asking only questions related to story-reading but distinguish between story-readers and general readers, while still allowing “all-readers” to indicate their tastes.
- Do not distribute the whole questionnaire at the beginning of the session. First hand out a sheet with a minimum of only 5 questions through which it will be possible to classify a respondent as a non-reader, a story-reader or a reader of mainly factual literature. These questions should be so neutral that respondents will not be able to tell what the whole research is about. (When the second part of the questionnaire is handed out, respondents will see that the research is about

reading, but if they thereupon don't tell the truth, it will not influence the study as the classification of readers and non-readers will have been done on the basis of the first five questions).

- Before launching the main study test the questionnaire again to ensure that all the research questions can be answered.
- If necessary, re-design the questionnaire and test the next version again.

9. Phase 3: Design and post-pilot testings of the questionnaire

During the course of Phase 3, all suggestions made in 8.2 were incorporated in the questionnaire before the launch of the main study. This entailed further simplification of the English, the regrouping of question clusters and the reformulation of questions so as to elicit mainly "Yes/No" responses. Also the simplified Likert-type questions were removed.

Major changes were that no indication was left on the front page of what the questionnaire was about. The top heading only contained the wording, UNISA/UNAM/NCBF RESEARCH PROJECT with a smiley below it.

The questionnaire was split into two parts. Questions 1-5 were separated from Questions 6-21. The purpose was to develop a first part in order to establish two things:

Firstly, Part 1 was designed to classify respondents into readers and non-readers. The five questions were composed in a certain way to minimize the social desirability factor.

Secondly, Part 1 made the classification of respondents into readers of predominantly fiction or non-fiction possible. Two sets of Part 2 of the questionnaire were developed, the one set for story-readers and a second set for readers of non-fiction, further referred to as general readers. After having divided the respondents into two groups, namely story-readers and general readers through Part 1 of the questionnaire, Part 2 could be distributed.

The procedures for administering were that all respondents complete and hand in Part 1 (Questions 1-5). Data collectors would then briefly check only Questions 4 and 5 to see if storybooks or fact books/non-fiction were named and chosen. Separate questionnaires for story-readers and general (non-fiction) readers could then be distributed accordingly. It was very important that respondents should not see Part 2 before Part 1 has been handed in.

On 28 November 2011 ten Grade 6-students from the Afrikaans class of a Windhoek school completed the questionnaire – now administered in two different parts. It only took the students 30 minutes to complete the whole questionnaire. No assistance was

given. The checking of the answers to Questions 4 and 5 of Part 1 during the session required only 10 minutes. Identification of the *readers* could however, only be done later after numerical conversion and analysis through statistical methods. The readers could be identified on the basis of the answers to three questions in Part 1. Requirements were that:

- reading must be spontaneously mentioned as an after school activity and/or
- reading must be ranked as preference 1-4 out of 6 activities and
- a respondent must be able to match 3 out of 5 definitions with the appropriate type of book and non-book materials, i.e. the question tested if a respondent could distinguish between a storybook, a book of information (non-fiction), a magazine, a comic book and a newspaper.

Parts 2 of all questionnaires that did not meet these requirements were not included for the data input on reading preferences as those respondents were not readers.

Part 1 of the questionnaire was once again administered to 10 students from a Khomasdal, Windhoek school on 2 March 2012. The purpose of the testing was mainly to enable data collectors to practise the administering of Part 1 and the identification of story readers and general readers within a short time. No assistance was given as students were supposed to be able to *read* and to understand. It took respondents 11 minutes to complete Part 1, but many had problems with the matching question.

In the final Version 9, the matching question was simplified and the questionnaire was expanded from 21 questions to 25 questions. Four irrelevant questions were added to Part 2 in an effort to minimize the social desirability factor. The questions gauged how many hours the respondents play with friends per week, what kind of jobs they do in and around the house, what kinds of sports are participated in and the listing of favourite TV programmes. These distractor questions were excluded from data input.

10. Limitations of the pilot study

The research team took pains to ensure a well designed questionnaire. Before the pilot study one testing of a young family member and three testings of small groups in schools, as well as the drafting and redrafting of the questionnaire three times were done. The results of the pilot study however, led to the decision that a drastic change of action was necessary. Another two testings and six redraftings of the questionnaire followed.

The main limitation of the pilot study was that the social desirability factor was not taken into account. It appears that reading in Namibia, even in remote rural communities where illiteracy or semi-literacy is still prevalent, is seen as very desirable. As respondents were informed beforehand that the study was about reading they wanted to please by giving answers resulting in unusable information.

This outcome seriously delayed the progress of the study. The total process of drafting, testing, adapting, refining and finalizing the questionnaire took more than one year. All in all a total of five small group pre- or post-pilot testings, one larger pilot, nine versions of the questionnaire and numerous smaller changes between versions, were necessary to conclude the process with a reasonably reliable final questionnaire for the main study.

11. Conclusions: Were the pilot and the pre- and post-pilot testings necessary?

In retrospect it was clear that, without the pilot study, the full scale survey would have been a disaster. The researchers initially overestimated the reading ability and the ability of students to deal with a long and complex questionnaire. Much effort thus went into simplifying the language and the technical aspects of the questionnaire. However, it also became clear that even though oversimplification may make the questionnaire more understandable for many students, they are the very ones whose poor language ability actually excludes the possibility of them being readers at all.

The huge impact of the social desirability factor could also be addressed to a large extent.

The researchers also ascertained that it was not necessary to make provision for written responses in the various Namibian languages.

Due to the constraints that limited interaction between the researchers and students and also between students and teachers/interpreters, it was clear that the value of trying to interview students would not have been worth the effort at that early stage before the readers could be identified.

Although the researchers were aware of the vast differences between rural and urban students from the outset, the realities of Namibia in terms of the availability of educational, reading and other resources for students required that some adjustments had to be made during the final planning.

The pilot study proved invaluable in terms of logistical issues specific to Namibia. In planning the main study, realistic travelling schedules and school visits per day could be

made, given the vast distances that had to be travelled. It offered an ideal opportunity for the two inexperienced researchers to gain hands-on experience regarding data gathering, interacting with and guiding respondents. Even basic issues such as the packing of questionnaires and pencils per school, counting and recording data after every school visit were positively influenced by the pilot study.

The lessons learnt during the pilot gave valuable guidelines for selecting the final population. While in the initial stages it was decided to include 10% of all Grade 6 students in every selected region for the main study, it became clear that this sample would be too large for the researchers to deal with. Therefore a representative quota sample of only 200 respondents per region was finally decided upon.

The pilot study showed that socio-economic factors might prove very important for the final study. This observation prompted the team to broaden the base of data collection and include a sub-study to establish if well resourced schools and environments produce more readers than poorly resourced schools and environments. As instrument of data collection, the teachers' questionnaire for the 36 target schools was designed.

Finally ending up with three separate questionnaires for students (a part one for all respondents, as well as two separate questionnaires for story readers and general readers), and adding a questionnaire for teachers, the researchers felt ready for the launching of the full scale survey.

The final survey included 1402 students from 36 schools and 7 regions, with approximately 70% of respondents selected from rural areas. Data gathering for the main study was successfully conducted from 25 July to 5 August 2012. The newly developed questionnaires worked reasonably well, and it was possible to classify respondents into readers and non-readers. A separate article on the results of the main study will be published in due course.

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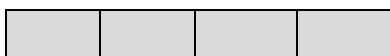
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Appendix 1



QUESTIONNAIRE UNISA / UNAM / NCBF RESEARCH PROJECT

The reading habits and preferences of African children.

The Namibian Chapter in collaboration with UNISA

**WHAT ARE YOU READING,
WHEN, WHERE AND WHY?**



- This questionnaire is confidential
- Do not put your name on it. Nobody will know who you are
- Please answer honestly. This is not a spelling or grammar test

**PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THE GREY BOXES AT ALL. THEY ARE ONLY FOR
CODING**

Notes on the research trips conducted by researchers Emma Kirchner and Susan Alexander

BACKGROUND

During 2011, a team, consisting of members of the Namibian Children's Book Forum, UNAM and UNISA, embarked on research to determine the reading behaviour of Grade 6 learners in Namibia.

Between June and October 2012, Susan Alexander and Emma Kirchner visited 36 schools in 7 of Namibia's 13 regions and conducted sessions during which Grade 6 learners completed the questionnaires.

This document contains notes on each and every visit.

TRIP ONE: OMAHEKE AND HARDAP REGION

REPORT ON VISIT TO OTJIVERO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 1

22 June 2012

Emma Kirchner and Susan Alexander arrived at the Otjivero settlement and school just before 11:30, as planned.

Although the principal, Mr. Heita, was not there, they were friendly welcomed by an old student of theirs. They met the English, Khoekhoegowab and Library teachers and handed them the Teacher's questionnaire to complete. Then they immediately went to the Grade 6 class where the learners awaited their arrival.

Ms Kirchner briefly explained to the 32 learners (6 were absent) what was expected from them. She thanked the teachers for their cooperation and handed a gift package of an English and Khoekhoegowab copy of **Under the Story Tree** to the representative of the principal. Then Part 1 of the questionnaire was distributed. Ms Kirchner handed out the pencils that were bought beforehand as a small token. These the learners used to complete the questionnaire. They started at 11:34.

From the very beginning it was clear that the learners had difficulty to fill in Part 1. They were unsure of what to do on all 5 the questions. As Ms Kirchner encouraged them beforehand to ask questions if they didn't understand something, they asked for assistance throughout.

It took the learners 20 minutes to complete Part 1. Ms Kirchner then asked them to open the questionnaire on page 3. She asked who marked List 1 (General Reading) and who marked List 2 (Story Reading) of Question 5. Only 2 learners chose List 1. Part 2 was then distributed.

Although the researchers thought that Part 2 should be easier, learners again asked questions on every part of the questionnaire. At one stage the researchers considered reading the questions, but decided against it. It was beforehand decided not to help in this way. The reasoning behind this decision was: if the learners cannot read, it would not help the research to assist them.

It took an hour to complete Part 2 of the questionnaire.

Researchers observed that the English of these learners was too poor to complete the questionnaire. They suspect that lots of copying took place. Although subdued, a lot of talking took place. Researchers realize that it was a Friday afternoon and learners were eager to go home.

Researchers observed that the community lived in shacks around the school. It is a very poor community in which the school is situated.



REPORT ON VISIT TO GOOD HOPE PRIMARY SCHOOL, EPUKIRO POST 10 NR 2

25 June 2012

The researchers arrived at this primary school at 11:40, a bit later than planned. Mr. Mujoro awaited them and welcomed them to his school. He took the researchers to the staff room and called the upper primary teachers to meet the researchers. Ms Kirchner gave a few words of appreciation and handed over the gift of **Under the Story Tree** in English and Otjiherero.

Mr. Mujoro made sure that learners of all three Grade 6 learners were part of the group that completed the questionnaire. The learners were very disciplined and orderly and eager to start with the questionnaire. Ms Kirchner observed that the classroom she was in was decorated with attractive media. Despite the very positive atmosphere, the abilities of the learners differed a lot.

A lot of the learners seemed to be from the San group and some struggled with the questionnaire.

Researchers left with a very positive take on the school. The discipline, the neatness, the helpfulness of the staff left a good impression.



REPORT ON VISIT TO NUASANABIS PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 3

26 June 2012

Researchers were welcomed very warmly. There were 2 old WCE students who were very excited to see their lecturers again. This was the first school that offered us something to drink. The children were talkative and friendly. The school grounds were neat and clean.

Mr. Murangi, the principal, was very friendly. He made a professional and positive impression. He was prepared to change the school timetable to suit us.

Tobias Kamberipa, one of the old Arts students, commented on his studies and Ms Nel and Ms Venter's Arts Book that he finds very helpful. He was very aware of his role in the Leonardville area. We had the feeling that positive things are happening at this school. They are also part of a feeding scheme. We took a nice photo with them.

Tobias indicated that they – in the rural area – did not feel neglected by the authorities.

REPORT ON VISIT TO HOSEA KUTAKO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 4

26 June 2012

The principal was not at the school – he attended a meeting. Although the HOD was not informed about our visit, he was prepared to make arrangements to accommodate us.

The school buildings are run down – even the staff toilet is in a bad state. There is an effort to clean up the school grounds – although there were still papers lying around.

The learners were quite disciplined - just as at the previous Herero school – but they still asked a lot of questions. The reading ability was not good.

There were notes on the board on physical abuse (Bad Touching)

Some learners (in general Khoekhoe and San) showed scars of possible abuse.

There were positive signs of learning taking place (singing and reciting of math tables)

The researchers did not experience a conducive atmosphere (part of the school is not used – empty classrooms with broken windows and broken furniture) The entrance is though quite impressive.

VISIT TO JRC CAMM PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 5

27 June 2012

Researchers were well received. The personnel expected the visit. They organized the KKG and Afrikaans learners in one class. This was the first school where two mother tongues were taught as subjects.

The librarian at this school also teaches Afrikaans. The library was not functional during the visit as new stock was received.

This school has a hostel. There is a nice garden effort; chickens in a pen at the hostel! There are soccer and netball fields.

The Aranos community has lots of unemployment and alcohol abuse.

We gave here 3 booklets as a gift as they have the 2 mother tongues.

Remark of Afrikaans teacher: If learners take English L2, they have to take the Namibian Language at L1 level (of course not the reality!) Learners were very language and visually deprived – they could not interpret pictures. One teacher remarked that some of the learners were not even over the bridge to Aranos!

Learners asked lots of questions. They could not really read (same in all schools)

Although schools are sometimes better equipped, learners are all very poor in rural areas. There are few signs of good reading skills.

In general Ms Kirchner felt that the Ministry really tried to do something.



VISIT TO CAMBRIDGE PRIVATE SCHOOL NR 6

27 June 2012

Mr. Meintjies received us warmly. He is an old BETD student. The surrounding area shows a caring environment. The hostel is run by the RC. The Ministry rents the school buildings from RC.

Although there is a lot more media, it is the same kind of learner: Very poor and from the surrounding farms and Aminuis. All children are in the hostel – thus they are well fed and do not have to walk far.

There is a media centre and library being built. As it was HIV week, we could see that they had a lively program on this theme.

The children seemed very happy – but could not read better. The secretary mentioned that in 14 years not a single window was broken by children.



VISIT TO DD GUIBEB PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 7

28 June 2012

This school was not prepared for our visit, but they were very accommodating and organized the children so that we could start. The learners were very disciplined. Researchers had totally different experiences of the learners: Ms Kirchner felt they were very weak – some could do nothing. Ms Alexander observed that they did not ask any questions and the first learner finished in 40 minutes.

The school grounds were not developed, but very neat – no papers lying around.

VISIT TO RUIIMTE PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 8

28 June 2012

After getting totally lost on their way to Witkop, researchers decided to go to Rehoboth to visit the second school planned for the day. They arrived at 12:15 and finished at 13:05! The buildings were slightly dilapidated but the grounds were clean. The library was neat – only a room. The staff was very accommodating.

All learners had uniforms. There was clearly a better understanding and reading ability among them. Researchers wondered if it was the slightly better economic setup?

After the initial questions, most learners completed the questionnaires easily and quickly.

General comments on questionnaire:

Sometimes instructions are too long; The negative questions were a problem; The 4 kinds of sport was a problem (some learners had only ONE sport!)



VISIT TO WITKOP PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 9

29 June 2012

Researchers went back from Windhoek to find the school they missed the previous day. It is a farm school with 80 learners in a multigrade setup.

All the learners are in the hostel – sponsored by the farm owner.

The learners are very poor. Only one is an Afrikaans mother tongue speaker. The principal is a retired teacher. Furthermore there are 3 other teachers and a secretary.

Some of the children were taken away from their parents. Here is also a feeding program – OVC according to principal. They have the Orange babies project.

There is no library – only shelves with books. The caring atmosphere of Cambridge was not experienced. Learners had a big problem to complete the questionnaire.



TRIP TWO: CAPRIVI AND KAVANGO REGION

VISIT TO BUNYA PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 10

16 July 2012

Ms Alexander visited Bunya, 50 km from Rundu. The principal was not at school, thus another teacher assisted her. Because of the lack of chairs, desks and space, only 34 learners could be used in stead of the 75 planned. This is a very poor school.

During a short discussion with an old BETD student, now a teacher for some time at Bunya, it became clear that the LP teachers were both unqualified.

VISIT TO NZINZE PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 11

16 July 2012

Ms Alexander arrived at the school (90 km from Rundu) at 9:15 and met the principal, Mr. Nepanda. He was actually on sick leave but came to school for some administrative tasks. Mr. Haingura assisted Ms Alexander. He asked if learners could first have breakfast at 9:40 – which Ms Alexander agreed to. The questionnaire session only started at 10:10

The poor state of the buildings and the learners stood out. Learners were extremely timid. There were no posters of other media to observe.

According to Ms Alexander, this school was in the worst state of all she observed.

VISIT TO NKAMAGORO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 12

16 July 2012

The physical appearance of the school was slightly better than others observed – but the learners are also extremely poor.

Ms Kirchner took all of them in one class. The door of the classroom was broken and there was writing (vandalism?) on the walls.

Learners really tried their best. A few could read well – mechanically only?

The principal was not there, but he arranged beforehand for assistance. It is a big school – near the circuit.

VISIT TO HAUSIKU WAKINA PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 13

16 July 2012

Ms Kirchner was well received. There is real poverty at the school. The learners had to sit in icy weather in 3 brick and 3 pole classrooms. Ms Kirchner worked in a pole construction with hungry and shivering learners. The lady who had to cook porridge (feeding program) did not

turn up. All learners (including Ms Kirchner!) shared 2 pit toilets. Learners were friendly – some asked questions. There were no real reading skills.

The library was moved because the space was needed. Ms Kirchner took photos of this total chaos!

Despite the state of the classrooms, Ms Kirchner experienced positive signs of learning: e.g. teachers in grade 1 let the learners count with stones.



VISIT TO RUDOLF NGONDO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 14

17 July 2012

The principal's daughter passed away and the HOD took over. The library teacher was on a work shop but it was clear to Ms Kirchner that a clear system was followed in the library.

Learners may take books out. Ms Kirchner visited the computer labs where grade 1 learners were busy exploring and playing games.

Ms Kirchner experienced a great atmosphere.

There were 40 gr 6 learners. Clearly urban learners – bright, neat, reading quite good. It was overall a positive experience.

VISIT TO KAYENGONA PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 15

17 July 2012

As Ms Kirchner and Ms Alexander split – due to time – Ms Alexander visited Kayengona while Ms Kirchner did Rudolf Ngondo. This school is 12 km outside Rundu on the Caprivi Highway. Fortunately helpful people next to the road directed Ms Alexander to the school – on a very sandy road through a village (with quite a few sjebeens on the road!)

When Ms Alexander arrived, she was in time to see the principal, Ms Anna Mateya conducting the early morning assembly in a square court. The children stood in orderly lines and went to their classes after the assembly. Ms Mateya greeted Ms Alexander warmly and took her to the reception. She got hold of the Gr 6 class teacher and language teachers. Ms Alexander handed over the **Under the Story Tree** gift and gave the teachers their questionnaire to complete.

The class teacher decided to be present during the question session. She interfered with learners when she observed mistakes – which created an awkward situation.

VISIT TO CHINCHIMANE PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 16

18 July 2012

The principal, Mr. Mainga warmly received us. He introduced us to all classes (one class per grade). There is a preschool class with a qualified teacher. Beautiful media in were observed in her class.

The school is clearly well organized and well managed. Learners were all busy in the classes. Principal showed his cramped office that he shares with the secretary as well as the staff room (no more than a store).

Mr. Mainga made a big fuss about their school being chosen for this project.

The staff/store room hosts a library collection. Children may take out books – they say.

The Silozi teacher attended a funeral. The English and HOD completed the questionnaire.



VISIT TO BATUBAJA COMB INED SCHOOL NR 17

18 July 2012

The principal attended a funeral, but we were welcomed by the HOD and introduced to the English, Silozi and Library teacher. Ms Kirchner was taken to the Gr 6 class while Ms Alexander walked around and took photos of the buildings, Gr 6 –learners, trees, the porridge prepared for learners (part of a feeding program.)

Ms Alexander observed some built toilets. Behind the school there were 4 tiny tents pitched. When enquiring, she was told that learners slept there.

Gr 6 learners were very quiet, shy, very few questions were asked. It looked as if some really struggled. Very poor conditions were observed; not as good as Chinchimane.

VISIT TO SILUMBI COMBINED SCHOOL NR 18

19 July 2012

Ms Kirchner visited this school and was welcomed warmly by the principal. The Silozi teacher attended a funeral, thus a HOD filled in this questionnaire. The librarian and English teacher were there. The learners were very quiet in the beginning and asked no questions but warmed to Ms Kirchner later. At this school there were also tents where some of the learners had to stay.

Ms Kirchner experienced a running library where children can take books out.



VISIT TO SAM NUJOMA COMBINED SCHOOL NR 19

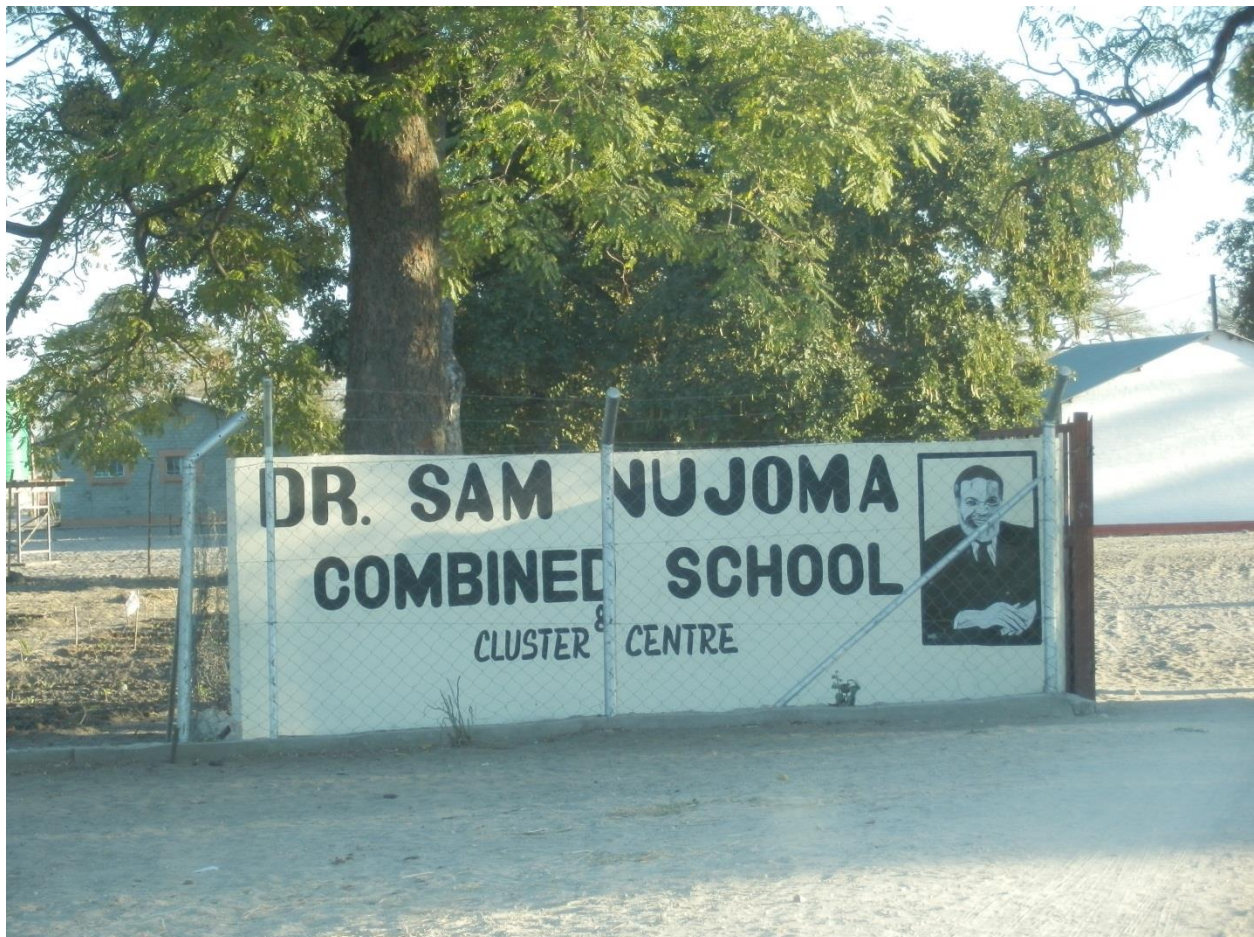
19 July 2012

This is also a circuit school – an old school that started in the 80's. Caprivan politicians and inspectors' names are painted on classes' walls to honour them. Alfred Ilukena apparently was a learner in this school!

Ms Alexander was welcomed very warmly and teachers were eager to show her around. The Science HOD took her around and showed her the nicely equipped Preprimary class. He asked the little ones to sing her a song.

The question session went well. Few questions were asked.

This was quite a positive experience.





VISIT TO ISIKILI COMBINED SCHOOL NR 20

19 July 2012

This school was informed shortly before researchers visited it. Mr Nkando, the principal was so kind to receive us on short notice. Researchers were concerned that the planned 200 learners per region would not be met, thus this action.

Mss. Alexander and Kirchner were friendly met at their arrival. An old BETD student greeted them when he recognized them. Mr Nkando took Ms Kirchner to the Gr 6 class and she could immediately start with the questionnaires. For the first time Ms Kirchner felt helpless to guide some of the learners. A group of 5 big boys just could not get a grip on the questions. They were noticeably older than the rest of the learners. A few questions were asked by the rest of the class. The school is dirty and neglected. Ms Alexander walked around the school and took photos of the community hostel where 70 of the learners are housed. The matron informed

her that the poor conditions really were a problem and that learners mostly get 'pap'. As the catching of fish is so poor, learners do not get any protein.

Ms Kirchner struggled to get her learners' attention as there was a lot of noise outside the class. Ms Alexander also experienced a sort of brutality in the attitude of the Gr 8 – 10 learners she met outside.

This visit was not a good experience.



VISIT TO SACHINGA COMBINED SCHOOL NR 21

20 July 2012

The principal was not present. He went to Katima to get fuel for a tractor. The school was busy renovating the old traditional classroom for grade 7.

Ms Alexander worked with grade 6 and Ms Kirchner had a long interview with the HOD and English and Lozi teachers. She assisted the library teacher who is just standing in and teaching 2 subjects for grade 8 – 10 to fill in the questionnaire. According to her there are over 900 books. Learners may take out, but the library is mostly closed.

The teachers indicated that they struggle a lot, although they are only 40 km from Katima and next to the main road. They have no power, thus no photocopying facilities. The gr 10's must do without this. Teachers must make other plans for copies. Because of the lack of power, even the secretary does not have any ways to do administrative tasks on a computer.

Ms Alexander who took care of the questionnaire, experienced that learners were not prepared to admit that they do not understand questions. They rather tried to ask a friend than to put up their hands.

This school also had tents where Gr 10's are housed.



TRIP 3: OHANGHWENA AND OTJIKOTO REGION

VISIT TO KONGO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 22 (We took out 5 Questionnaires from the 68)

13 September 2012

The principal, Ms Jakobina Kayofa, received us very friendly. She called all the language teachers to meet us. English and Oshikwanyama were the languages taught as subjects.

Mss. Kirchner and Alexander each took one Grade 6 class. The learners were in corrugated iron classrooms with sand floors. In Ms Kirchner's class there were very high English on the writing board. The learners were relaxed and not shy to ask questions.

In Ms Alexander's class there was difficult Mathematics on the board.

The library books were typically in a storeroom. The learners may take it out.

The one teacher told Ms Kirchner that there is a community library in town.

Writing books were visible in the classrooms, but no textbooks.

The English and Oshikwanyama teacher is an old BETD Inset students, now doing B.Ed Secondary on distance. She could only choose History because no other possibilities were available.

The English **Under the Story Tree** were handed out – but the Oshikwanyama version is not in print at the moment.

The offices and toilet were neat and clean.

There is no preprimary classes – but the teachers see this as a need.

The school take part in the feeding scheme, but the food did not arrive.

VISIT TO EDUNDJA PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 23

14 September 2012

Mss. Alexander and Kirchner arrived very late at this school – past 12:00. The learners were on break. It seemed as if they were waiting for us. The principal was not there – he was on training. We were received by the Oshikwanyama/English teacher. They gave OTST.

The library in a storeroom was also the only space for the staff – from the principal to the librarian. The librarian informed us that only teachers could take out books as learners never return books!

The staff organized one class for us. The school was very noisy and not neat. All learners were without teachers these last periods. Teachers said there was a lot of confusion due to ELPP in the region on this day.

The Grade 6 learners were very quiet and really tried to complete the questionnaire. There was not a lot of understanding. Learners are clearly very poor. The classroom was in a bad state. There were old Etosha self made posters and one other torn poster on the walls.

This school did not make a good impression. There was not the good vibe we experienced at Kongo.

The staff filling in the teachers' questionnaire asked the difference between a dry and pit toilet. Ms Kirchner visited a very clean pit one!

Ms Kirchner got a similar feeling as in Lisikile: that there is only bad influence of the nearby town – seen in the lack of discipline and respect.



VISIT TO OKALEMBA COMBINED SCHOOL NR 24 (EMIS 8732)

14 September 2012

On arrival at this school, Mss. Alexander and Kirchner realized that they were awaiting the Deputy Minister. Children were playing around, some were involved in pitching a tent for the event. We became part of the school community while we were there.

While Ms Alexander took care of the questionnaire with only 7 Grade 6-learners, Ms Kirchner interviewed 3 teachers and completed the Teacher's questionnaire. She also helped them with their cooking preparations! She even kicked a soccer ball outside with children enjoying the informal atmosphere at the school.

The principal was very apologetic and helpful, despite the bad timing of our visit. He did not receive our sms in time to make other arrangements.

Ms Alexander read the willing Grade 6 learners a story. They participated in a positive way; did not ask questions.

The road to the school was definitely a 4x4-road!



VISIT TO SHIKUNDULE PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 25

17 September 2012

The staff was waiting for us. They are MCA funded. The school is newly renovated and some buildings were added (a library and computer centre). These are not functional yet.

It was such a pleasure to be in clean, freshly painted classrooms!

The principal was very cooperative. He stressed the need for Namibian Language teachers.

Mrs. Alexander and Kirchner took two classes separately. They were the same quality learners, but more focused on learning and school work. There were no teaching aids on display.

GENERAL

- We will not make 200 learners in this region because of Okalemba;
- There is a need for Namibian Language teachers;
- There is a need for Primary Education on Distance;
- There is a need for BIS training for staff taking care of the libraries;
- Except for Shikudule, all the libraries are in the storerooms and mostly these are also used as offices!

VISIT TO ONOSHIKUVU COMBINED SCHOOL NR 26 (OTJIKOTO)

17 September 2012

In this Chinese built school with a totally different un-school like design, we met Ms Ngipandulwa, a smart, confident and friendly principal. The school was built in 2003 and never repainted, but it still looks clean and new!

The principal teaches English for Grades 9 and 10. Mrs. Kirchner and Alexander had to wait for her finishing her class. The secretary was very efficient and friendly. We could visit a clean, fresh flushing toilet!

We heard a lot of teaching taking place. The learners wear bright yellow school uniforms (to fit with the colour of their school?)

In this school we encountered one English mother tongue speaker. The learners had school text books that they can take home. Economically it seems to go very well with this community. The atmosphere in the Gr 6-class was very positive. The children on the school ground were much more confident than in most other schools.

The facilities here were well taken care of. The school received computers before the holidays. It was not unpacked yet.

There is a big staffroom. The principal has a nice office. Overall this was a very positive experience ... only a lot of mosquitos around!



VISIT TO OKANGOROSA COMBINED SCHOOL NR 27

17 September 2012

Mrs Alleta Amakali received us very friendly. We had to pick up Sam from the Circuit Office to direct us to the school. Ms Alexander sat in the back of the Toyota! We realized afterwards that we would not have been able to get this remote school without a guide.

Ms Amakali showed us two BETD-students who teach English and Shindonga. One of them, Julius, is busy with a B.Ed Honours at Rhodes.

The library building was constructed by parents. The principal told Ms Kirchner that her Gr 10 learners did very well in the examinations. There was a 80% pass rate.

The principal stays in Omutheya. The teachers stay in corrugated iron shacks on the school grounds. There are also a few corrugated iron classrooms.

The learners were very unresponsive. We got the feeling that they were absent. Would stare in the distance for minutes without writing. We contemplated whether they were hungry. There is no feeding scheme at the school. Bottles of otjikundu stood outside the class.

There was not a lot of understanding under learners. Classrooms were very dirty.

Ms Alexander saw a incorrect number line at the back of the classroom:

0 ... 2 ... 3 ... !!!

In the library there were oldish computers and a brand new television.



VISIT TO ONIIPA SCHOOL NR 28 (700 learners in the school)

18 September 2012

We arrived at 7:30 at this school. After speaking to the principal, we met all the Upper Primary staff. There was a formal meeting to explain our aims. We met Maria Kamati, an old WCE student. One of our current students was doing SBS at the school.

The principal explained that the library (in a store room) was in shambles and not operational.

The learners were very cooperative; but they sometimes stopped writing until we urged them to continue. Ms Alexander went to the principal to ask directions to the next schools. Mr Mpinge called 2 other staff members to help. Ms Alexander made precise notes.

In the discussion with the principal, he said the school was proclaimed as rural because it is more than 7 km from Ongangwa and learners came from undeveloped areas.

The classroom walls were full of holes. There were posters with signs of English learning.

Learners were quite relaxed. There was a nice atmosphere at the school.

GENERAL

We have to give back

- Findings should be discussed with the Ministry;
- Suitable learning material should be developed;
- Story project!

VISIT TO ONAMUPALULA SCHOOL NR 29

18 September 2012

The principal asked for a BIS syllabus and materials, PO Box 591, Ondangwa, Att. BIS/Principal

We experienced this school as very poorly resourced. The principal is though very positive. There was no relevant Grade 6-teacher available to fill in the teacher's form. Teachers who taught Gr 6 English and Namibian language in the past, sat with Ms Kirchner to complete the forms. The Grade 6 learners were in sheds. Ms Alexander completed the questionnaire with these learners.

Ms Kirchner sat in the store with 2 teachers and the principal. All library books are also housed here.

The learners were painfully shy. They have very neat handwritings. They have corrugated iron classrooms. They all had new math sets!

There was a very authoritarian atmosphere. The Oshindonga teacher struggled with the questionnaire.

There is an obvious garden effort at the school.

Oshikundu is the only food for the learners at the school.

A rake, not a broom was observed in the class. We left the school grounds hearing a song on the melody of O Tannenbaum coming from one of the classrooms!



VISIT TO OSHAANGO (OHANGWENA – RURAL) NR 30

18 September 2012

We visited this school on 18 September 2012 as an extra school to get the 200 learners for this region. The acting principal received us. All teachers were very interested in the research.

Ms Kirchner and one teacher worked with 6B. Learners were very, very shy. We doubt their understanding. There were 2 teachers present – intimidating? One room is being upgraded to become a media centre. There were interviews in process to select LP teachers.

We found one UNAM KC SBS student at the school.

A TV in the media room was donated from MTC.

Ms Kirchner reported that she really struggled during this session.

VISIT TO OKALUMBU COMBINED SCHOOL NR 31 (49 learners)

20 September 2012

Back in the Otjikoto region. We had difficulty finding this school in the Onankali area. In the end the Principal, Mr Kamati, came and guided us to his school. He was really very friendly and helpful.

At his school we went to 2 classes to conduct the research. The children were very shy; did not ask any questions.

There were collections of books to be seen. The principal told the learners not to be scared of us. As in previous schools, we had to urge learners to continue with the answering of questions.



VISIT TO ETHIKILO PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 32

20 September 2012

It was even more difficult to find this school than previous schools. Ms Alexander did some bundu bashing before reaching the school.

Mr Shatipamba – the principal – was very friendly and excited to have us at his school. He introduced us to all his classes. For some learners it was the first time to see a white lady!

Ms Kirchner made a group of 30 learners together in one class. The learners were very shy. Some girls even covered their work and would not let us see it.

Mr Shatipamba is nearly on pension. Despite his age, he was energetic and enthusiastic about his school, the learners and the teachers.

We met the founder lady of the school. She started it in 1984 with 85 learners in Sub A and Sub B. (later we found out she was not really the founder!)

Mr Shatipamba asked us to take an official envelope for him to Windhoek.



TRIP FOUR: KHOMAS REGION

The visits in this region was not a trip in the real sense of the word as the two researchers left with their own transport to the schools in the close by vicinity.

VISIT TO PIONIERSPARK PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 33

8 October 2012

Ms. Kirchner and Alexander visited this school in Windhoek on Monday, 8th of October. They were friendly received by the school principal and then assisted to commence with the questionnaire right after morning assembly. They used 2 separate Grade 6 classes. These learners had a clear advantage to learners visited in more rural regions. They were very relaxed and asked questions – more for attention and jokes than for information – in Afrikaans and

English. When learners finished, they took out library or other books and started to read – without any instruction or motivation!

Their gift and photos are still outstanding

VISIT TO AI STEENKAMP PRIMARY SCHOOL - TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER NR 34

10 October 2012

This school is situated in Katutura. This school was visited in the afternoon, during the time learners attend learning support sessions. Learners were organized into the school library. Two teachers (Beukes and Stephanus) assisted at first and received the gift. The principal (Rudolfine) also popped in at one stage. This was the second school where we were offered a cup of tea! Ms Kirchner handled all learners herself.

Learners were disciplined and well behaved. They asked questions in Afrikaans and English, but really needed little assistance. It was a pleasure to work in the freshly painted library. It seems as if computer literacy is also taught in this venue. Magazines and books were seen on shelves. There is no dedicated library teacher.

VISIT TO WINDHOEK AFRIKAANS PRIVAATSKOOL – NR 35

11 October 2012

Ms Kirchner visited the school alone and was well received by the principal. She took the grade 6 learners in the school hall. The hall was not really conducive, but learners gladly wrote on their knees, or lay down to write on the floor! The school has Afrikaans as medium of instruction, but Ms Kirchner conducted the formal part of the session in English. Learners asked questions in Afrikaans and English. Here many of the questions we expected from learners popped up for the first time, e.g. – I cannot choose, I read all the time, I like to read about gardening but not really about computers.

A teacher was present the whole time and commented that the learners are all so privileged. He wondered whether they appreciated their life. Ms Kirchner was pleasantly surprised when they really appreciated the little sweet they received, just like any other child!

The library is handled by the secondary section, so no discussion or photos could be gathered at the time.

The gift to this school is still outstanding.

VISIT TO ST BARNABAS PRIMARY SCHOOL NR 36

17 October 2012

This school is situated in Katutura and the only school in Windhoek where Otjiherero children were included. The school principal and language teachers were very friendly and helpful. An old WCE student is the English teacher at the school.

Both researchers went to the school in the early morning, but because they could be accommodated in one class, Ms Alexander conducted the session on her own. Ms Kirchner took photos. The library is used as a class as well. There are books on shelves.

Learners were shy, but prepared to ask questions and eager to please. On the notice boards there were posters and pictures. Although in an urban surrounding, learners took longer to complete the questionnaire than in other urban schools.

The principal and library teacher were pleased to receive **Under the Story Tree** in English and Otjiherero.

This was the last school visited.





UNISA / UNAM / NCBF RESEARCH PROJECT

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THE GREY BOXES



Question 1

1.1 Name of your school:			
1.2 In which town or village is your school?			
1.3 Are you a boy or a girl? (Mark with an X)	I am a boy		V1
	I am a girl		V0
1.4 What is your mother tongue? ONLY ONE			
1.5 What language (except English) are you taught at school?			

Question 2

How do you spend your time after school? Make a list.	
V1	
V0	

Question 3

What takes up most of your time in the afternoons, evenings or week-ends?

What you never do: Mark it 0.

What you do most: Mark it 1.

What you do second most: Mark it 2.

What you do third most: Mark it 3.

What you do fourth most: Mark it 4.

What you do fifth most: Mark it 5.

What you do sixth most: Mark it 6. (If you don't do it at all, do not give a 6 but an 0)



studying or doing homework		V1	V7
taking part in sports or athletics		V2	V8
playing with friends		V3	
watching TV		V4	
working in the house or outside		V5	
reading		V6	

Question 4

Match the words in Column A to the statements in Column B. Draw a line between the two.

Column A

Storybooks
Fact books (books with information)
Magazines
Comics
Newspapers

V1
V0

Column B

The rules of soccer -----
Asterix; Trek Net -----
Red Riding Hood; The talking pot; The Famous Five -----
News about a car accident that happened yesterday -----
Interesting articles, stories, pictures

Question 5

What do you prefer to read? Do you prefer the topics in List 1 or those in List 2? Mark the block you like to read most with an X.

List 1

- Sports
- Cooking
- Cars
- Animals
- Computers

List 2

- Bible stories
- Magic stories
- Adventure stories
- Stories about long ago
- Love stories

Hobbies
Gardening

Family stories
School stories

**GUIDE FOR DATA ANALYSIS
OF READERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE**

PART 1

Questionnaires to be numbered per school and per respondent beforehand at the top right hand corner. This is the number for the respondent.

Question 1.1: Used for WR RR PR

Question 1.2: Used for U R

Question 1.3: The data analyst will give a **boy** the code **V1** and a **girl V0**.

Question 1.4: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey box provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for each language:

V1: Oshiwambo languages (Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama, other dialects e.g. Kwambi)

V2: Khoekhoegowab (Nama-Damara)

V3: Afrikaans

V4: Otjiherero

V5: Rukwangali

V6: Silozi

V7: Thimbukushu

V8: Rumanyo (Ngciriku)

V9: English

V10: Jul / Hoansi (and other San languages)

V11: German

V12: Setswana

V13: Other languages

Question 1.5: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for each language:

V1: Oshiwambo languages (Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama, other dialects e.g. Kwambi)

V2: Khoekhoegowab (Nama-Damara)

V3: Afrikaans

V4: Otjiherero

V5: Rukwangali

V6: Silozi

V7: Thimbukushu

V8: Rumanyo (Ngciriku)

V10: Jul / Hoansi (and other San languages)

V11: German

V12: Setswana

V13: Other languages

Note:The English language is omitted here but I have kept the numbering as above i.e. there are only 12 options

Question 2: We only want to know if reading is listed or not. Data analyst to code in the grey boxes next to this question: V1 if reading is listed and V0 if reading is not listed

Question 3: We need **two sets of coding:** **Firstly**, the activities in order of preference from 1 to 6 or 0. **Secondly**, the group that includes **reading among the first four activities** and the group that does **not include reading among the first four activities**, i.e:

Data analyst to first code in the six boxes provided and as indicated in the instructions: Giving what is done most a V1, and so forth up to V6 to what is done least, and/or V0 to what is not done at all.

Second coding in the two boxes on the far right:

V7 if reading is rated between 1 and 4

V8 if reading is rated 5, 6 or 0

Finally we will need a list of percentages for the six activities from popular to least popular and the activity that is totally not done at all (the latter is rather unlikely though).

Data analyst also to provide the percentages for V7 and V8.

Question 4:

The correct answers are:

Storybooks: Red Riding Hood; The talking pot; The famous five

Fact books: Rules of soccer

Magazines: Interesting articles, stories, pictures

Comics: Asterix, Trek Net

Newspapers: News about a car accident....

Code: V1 if respondent scores 3-5 out of 5

V0 if respondent scores 2 or less out of 5

Question 5: Researchers will check this question immediately as soon as Part 1 is completed and write next to the number of the respondent at the top right hand corner, GR if List 1 was chosen and SR if List 2 was chosen.

FINAL CODING: Respondents who get:

V1 for Question 2

V7 for Question 3 and

V1 for Question 4, get the Final Code R (Reader) above the coding on the top centre front page. All other respondents get NR (Non Reader). The data analyst to perform this task.

QUESTIONNAIRE CONTINUED (PART 2- STORY READERS)

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THE GREY BOXES

Question 6

**We want to know what you think of reading stories.
Mark Yes or No with an X.**

	Yes	No		
I like to read stories			V1	
I like to read stories but I don't have time			V2	
Stories give me information			V3	
Reading stories is fun			V4	
Reading stories improves my language			V5	
I read when I am bored			V6	

Question 7

Mark with an X the 4 kinds of stories you like to read MOST.

Bible stories e.g. Noah and the arc; birth of Jesus		V1	
Love stories		V2	
Animal stories e.g. pets; wild animals		V3	
Magic stories e.g. monsters; talking pots		V4	
Family stories		V5	
School stories		V6	
Adventure stories		V7	
Stories about long ago		V8	
Sports stories		V9	
Stories with facts/information		V10	
Fill in any other kind of stories you like to read about		V11	

Question 8

How many hours per week do you read in your free time after housework, homework, sports, watching TV or play?

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
V0					

Question 9

How many hours per week do you play with your friends?

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 10

What kind of people do you like to read about? Mark Yes or No with an X.
Stories about people who



	Yes	No
live in Namibia		
look like me		
have the same interests as I have		
live today		
are boys like me		
are girls like me		
are as old as I am		
lived long ago		
live in other countries and have another culture		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	
V8	
V9	

Question 11

Mark Yes or No with an X. Would you choose a book to read if...



	Yes	No
you like the cover of the book		
you like the pictures inside		
you read all the books by this author (writer)		
you like the title		
the letters are big		
the book is not too thick		
the book looks easy to read		
it is in your mother tongue		
the teacher said you have to read it		
somebody said it was good		
Please write down any other reasons why you sometimes choose a storybook to read.		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	
V8	
V9	
V10	
V11	

Question 12

What kind of jobs must you do in or around the house for your mother, father or relatives after school? Make a list.

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 13

Where do YOU get storybooks from? Mark Yes or No with an X



	Yes	No
From the school library?		
From the library in town?		
From the church library?		
From the classroom collection?		
From friends or family?		
I buy them		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

Question 14

If you read newspapers, magazines and picture stories, where do you get them?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
V0					

Question 15

Mark with an X the 4 kinds of sports you take part in? You may answer more than one type.

Soccer
Rugby
Cricket
Swimming
Netball
Hockey
Athletics

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	

Question 16

Who tells you to read? Mark Yes or No with an X.



	Yes	No		
I do not need to be told because I love reading			V1	
My parents tell me to read			V2	
My grandparents tell me to read			V3	
Other family (uncle, aunt, cousins) tell me to read			V4	
My friends tell me to read			V5	
My teachers tell me to read			V6	

Question 17

In which languages do you read after school? Mark Yes or No with an X.

	Yes	No
Do you read stories in English after school?		
Do you read stories in your mother tongue after school?		
Do you read stories in another language after school?		
If yes, which language?		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	

Question 18

If you don't read in English, what is the reason?

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
--	----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 19

If you don't read in you mother tongue, what is the reason?

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
--	----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 20

What are your favourite TV programmes? Make a list.

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
--	----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 21

Do you listen to somebody telling stories? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 22

IF YES, who tells you stories?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 23

Do you listen to stories on the radio? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 24

Do you listen to somebody reading stories to you or to a group of children? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 25

IF YES, who reads to you?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!



**GUIDE FOR DATA ANALYSIS
OF READERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE
PART 2 STORY READERS**

The researchers will distribute the Questionnaire Part 2 for Story Readers to all respondents who chose List 2 in Question 5 of Part 1. Respondents must write the same number on the top right hand corner as the number they had for Part 1.

Question 6: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 7: The data analyst to give a percentage for each topic only. Combinations are not required. A list of additional topics written in Option V11 must be made.

Question 8: The data analyst to give a percentage for each time span. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: one hour or less

V2: two hours

V3: three hours

V4: four hours

V5: five hours

V6: more than five hours

V0: Does not read in his/her free time (no option chosen or any negative remark).

Question 9: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 10: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 11: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for no

Combinations are not required. A list of additional topics written in option V11 must be made.

Question 12: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 13: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 14: The data analyst to give a percentage for each source. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Parents/family buy

V2: Neighbours buy

V3: School library

V4: Public/community library/resource centre

V5: Friends buy

V6: Other sources

V0: Does not read newspapers, etc. (no option chosen or any negative remark).

Question 15: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 16: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 17: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Additionally the data analyst to produce a separate list of percentages for each language to which **Yes** was answered:

Data analyst also to produce for **Option V4 a list of other languages** noted.

Questions 18 and 19: The data analyst to give a percentage for each reason. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Nothing to read

V2: No time

V3: Don't like

V4: Boring

V5: Too difficult

V6: Other reasons

Question 20: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 21: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 22: The data analyst to give a percentage for each type of persons. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Teachers

V2: Parents

V3: Grandparents

V4: Siblings

V5: Other relatives

V6: Friends

Question 23: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 24: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 25: The data analyst to give a percentage for each type of persons. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Teachers

V2: Parents

V3: Grandparents

V4: Siblings

V5: Other relatives

V6: Friends

Further requests to data analyst:

1. We need to know the percentage of respondents who gave no written answers to the following nine questions: 7 V11, 11 V11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25

QUESTIONNAIRE CONTINUED (PART 2- GENERAL READERS)

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THE GREY BOXES

Question 6

What do you think of reading. Mark Yes or No with an X



	Yes	No
I like to read		
I like to read but I don't have time		
Reading gives me information		
Reading is fun		
Reading improves my language		
I read when I am bored		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

Question 7

Mark with an X the 4 topics you like to read about MOST.



Sports	
Machines and how they work	
Cooking	
Animals (pets, wild animals)	
Hobbies	
Other countries	
Cars	
Computers	
Gardening	
Fill in any other topics you like to read about.	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	
V8	
V9	
V10	

Question 8

How many hours per week do you read in your free time after housework, homework, sports, watching TV or play?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
V0					

Question 9

How many hours per week do you play with your friends?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 10

Do you read the following? Mark Yes or No with an X

	Yes	No		
Books			V1	
Magazines			V2	
Newspapers			V3	
Picture stories			V4	

Question 11

Mark Yes or No with an X.

Would you choose a book to read if...

	Yes	No	
you like the cover of the book			V1
you like the pictures inside			V2
somebody said it was good			V3
the letters are big			V4
the book is not too thick			V5
the book looks easy to read			V6
it is in your mother tongue			V7
the teacher said you have to read it			V8
Please write down any other reasons why you sometimes choose a book to read			V9
.....			
.....			
.....			
.....			

Question 12

What kind of jobs must you do in or around the house for your mother, father or relatives after school? Make a list.

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 13

Where do YOU get books from? Mark Yes or No with an X

	Yes	No
From the school library?		
From the library in town?		
From the church library?		
From the classroom collection?		
From friends or family?		
I buy them		



V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

Question 14

If you read newspapers, magazines and picture stories, where do you get them?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
V0					

Question 15

Mark with an X the 4 kinds of sports you take part in? You may answer more than one type.

Soccer
Rugby
Cricket
Swimming
Netball
Hockey
Athletics

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	

Question 16

Who tells you to read? Mark Yes or No with an X.



	Yes	No		
I do not need to be told because I love reading			V1	
My parents tell me to read			V2	
My grandparents tell me to read			V3	
Other family (uncle, aunt, cousins) tell me to read			V4	
My friends tell me to read			V5	
My teachers tell me to read			V6	

Question 17

In which languages do you read after school? Mark Yes or No with an X.



	Yes	No
Do you read stories in English after school?		
Do you read stories in your mother tongue after school?		
Do you read stories in another language after school?		
If yes, which language?		

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	

Question 18

If you don't read in English, what is the reason?

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 19

If you don't read in you mother tongue, what is the reason?

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 20

What are your favourite TV programmes? Make a list.

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 21

Do you listen to somebody telling stories? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 22

IF YES, who tells you stories?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

Question 23

Do you listen to stories on the radio? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 24

Do you listen to somebody reading stories to you or to a group of children? Mark Yes or No with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V2
----	----

Question 25

IF YES, who reads to you?

--

V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6
----	----	----	----	----	----

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!



**GUIDE FOR DATA ANALYSIS
OF READERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE
PART 2 GENERAL READERS**

The researchers will distribute the Questionnaire Part 2 for General Readers to all respondents who chose List 1 in Question 5 of Part 1. Respondents must write the same number on the top right hand corner as the number they had for Part 1.

Question 6: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 7: The data analyst to give a percentage for each topic only. Combinations are not required. A list of additional topics written in option V10 must be made.

Question 8: The data analyst to give a percentage for each time span. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: one hour or less

V2: two hours

V3: three hours

V4: four hours

V5: five hours

V6: more than five hours

V0: Does not read in his/her free time (no option chosen or any negative remark).

Question 9: This question will not be coded. It is a deliberate misleading question.

Question 10: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 11: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for no

Combinations are not required. A list of additional topics written in option 9 must be made.

Question 12: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 13: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 14: The data analyst to give a percentage for each source. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Parents/family buy

V2: Neighbours buy

V3: School library

V4: Public/community library/resource centre

V5: Friends buy

V6: Other sources

V0: Does not read newspapers, etc. (no option chosen or any negative remark).

Question 15: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 16: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 17: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Data analyst also to produce for **Option V4 a list of other languages** noted.

Questions 18 and 19: The data analyst to give a percentage for each reason. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Nothing to read

V2: No time

V3: Don't like

V4: Boring

V5: Too difficult

V6: Other reasons

Question 20: This question will not be coded. It is a distractor question.

Question 21: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 22: The data analyst to give a percentage for each type of persons. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Teachers

V2: Parents

V3: Grandparents

V4: Siblings

V5: Other relatives

V6: Friends

Question 23: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option**.

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 24: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey boxes provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for all **Yes answers to each option.**

1 for Yes

0 for No

Question 25: The data analyst to give a percentage for each type of persons. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: Teachers

V2: Parents

V3: Grandparents

V4: Siblings

V5: Other relatives

V6: Friends

Further requests to data analyst:

1. We need to know the percentage of respondents who gave no written answers to the following nine questions: 7 V11, 11 V11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25



QUESTIONNAIRE UNISA / UNAM / NCBF RESEARCH PROJECT

For the English teacher /Namibian language/local language teacher and/or the librarian (responsible library teacher)

Please do not write in the grey boxes

Question 1

2.1 Name of your school:					
1.6 In which city, town, village or settlement is your school?					
1.7 Are you male or female? (Mark with an X)	Male	V1			
	Female	V0			
1.8 What is your mother tongue? ONLY ONE					V
1.5 How many learners are there in your school?		V1	V2	V3	V4

Question 2 (To be completed by the language teacher)

Please write your answers to the following questions in the open boxes:					
↓					
2.1 What language do you teach for grade 6?					V
2.2 For how many learners do you teach this language?					
2.3 For how many learners in Grade 6 is this language their mother tongue?		V1	V2	V3	V4
2.4 For how many learners in Grade 6 is this language not their mother tongue?		V1	V2	V3	V4

2.5 How many years have you been teaching this language?		V1	V2	V3	V4
--	--	----	----	----	----

Question 3

Does the school have a functioning school library?

3.1 Yes	No
---------	----

V1	V0
----	----

If not, do not write below. If yes, the responsible librarian/library teacher to please answer the following questions:

3.2 How many books?		V1	V2	V3
3.3 What kind of books (storybooks, fact books)?			V1	V2
3.4 In which languages?		V1	V2	V3
3.5 Do you have magazines, newspapers, picture stories?	Yes	No	V1	V0
3.6 May learners borrow? How?		V1		V0
		V2	V3	V4
3.7 How many years have you been managing this library?		V1	V2	V0
3.8 Are you also teaching other subjects, if yes, which are they?			V1	V0

Question 4
To be completed by the language teacher

Is there a classroom collection in your class?

4.1 Yes	No
---------	----

V1	V0
----	----

If there is no classroom collection, do not write below. If yes, please write your answers to the following questions in the open boxes:



4.2 How many books?		V	
4.3 What kind of books (storybooks, fact books)?		V1	V2
4.4 In which languages?		V1	V2
4.5 Do you have magazines, newspapers, picture stories?		V1	V0
4.6 May learners borrow? How?		V1	V0
.....			
.....			
.....		V2	V3

Question 5
To be completed by the language teacher

What materials do you use in the grade 6 language class? For 5.1 - 5.2 please supply the name and author of text books/readers where applicable:

5.1 Textbook
.....
.....

V1	V0
----	----

5.2 Reader/s (books with stories for language classes)
5.3 Do you make use of copied pages/work sheets?
5.4 Do you make use of storybooks or pages with stories?

V1	V0
V1	V0
V1	V0

The rest of the questions are to be completed by all the teachers, language teachers and library teachers

Question 6

From where do the learners get storybooks or other books for general reading? Mark with an X. YOU MAY MARK MORE THAN ONE OPTION



6.1 From the school library	
6.2 From the library in town	
6.3 From the church library	
6.4 From the classroom collection	
6.5 From a nearby resource centre	
6.6 They (or parents or somebody else) buy them	
6.7 Friends or family give to them or they borrow from them	
6.8 They can't get them anywhere	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	
V0	

Question 7

How many kilometres away is the nearest library (any of the following: public/community/church library or resource centre) from your school? Make an X in one box.



7.1 0-5km	
7.2 5-10km	
7.3 10-20 km	
7.4 Further	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	

Question 8

Where is your school situated? Make an X in one box.



8.1 In a city	
8.2 In a town	
8.3 In a village	
8.4 In a settlement	
8.5 In an informal settlement	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	

Question 9

Does your school have running drinking water? Mark Yes or No with an X.

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 10

Does your school have functioning electricity? Mark Yes or No with an X.

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 11

If yes, what kind of electricity? Mark with an X in one box.

11.1 From Nampower	
11.2 From solar power	
11.3 From a generator (diesel operated)	



V1	
V2	
V3	

Question 12

Does your school have working flush toilets for the staff and the learners? Mark with an X.

12.1 <u>Staff</u> : Yes	No
-------------------------	----

V1	V0
----	----

12.2 <u>Learners</u> : Yes	No
----------------------------	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 13

If you have answered No to either 12.1 or 12.2 or both, what kind of toilet facilities are there? Mark with an X.



13.1 Dry toilets		V1	
13.2 A toilet pit		V2	
13.3 No facilities		V0	

Question 14

Does your school have the following materials, facilities and equipment? Mark Yes with an X but only if the equipment is working and is used, otherwise, No.

	Yes	No		
14.1 Running, drinking water			V1	
14.2 Electricity (functioning)			V2	
14.3 Flush toilets for staff and learners			V3	
14.4 School books for all learners for home studying			V4	
14.5 Enough teaching materials			V5	
14.6 Enough class rooms			V6	
14.7 School library with more than 500 books			V7	
14.8 Classroom collection/s with more than 50 books each			V8	
14.9 School hall			V9	
14.10 Office			V10	
14.11 Store room			V11	
14.12 Staff room			V12	
14.13 Specialist room			V13	
14.14 Language centre			V14	
14.15 Telephone			V15	

14.16 Television		
14.17 Photocopying machine		
14.18 Computers for staff (working)		
14.19 Computers for learners (working)		
14.20 Internet access (functioning)		
14.21 Sports equipment and facilities		
14.22 Library/ies near the school (public/ community/church library/ies, resource centre)		
14.23 Majority of parents help with homework		
14.24 Majority of parents are involved in the school		
14.25 Majority of learners have enough food to eat		

V16	
V17	
V18	
V19	
V20	
V21	
V22	
V23	
V24	
V25	

Question 15

Do all your learners have school books for home studying? Mark with an X.

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 16

Do the learners have storybooks and other reading materials to read at home? Mark with an X.

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 17

How many parents help the learners with their homework? Mark with an X in one box.



17.1 Almost none of the parents	
17.2 Less than half of the parents	
17.3 Half of the parents	
17.4 More than half of the parents	
17.5 Almost all the parents	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	

Question 18

How many parents are involved in your school? Mark with an X in one box.



18.1 Almost none of the parents	
18.2 Less than half of the parents	
18.3 Half of the parents	
18.4 More than half of the parents	
18.5 Almost all the parents	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	

Question 19

Do the learners have enough food to eat at home? Mark with an X in one box.

19.1 Almost none of the learners	
19.2 Less than half of the learners	
19.3 Half of the learners	
19.4 More than half of the learners	
19.5 Almost all the learners	
19.6 Does your school have a feeding scheme? Mark with an X if Yes	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

Question 20

How do the learners travel to school?

What they never do: Mark it 0 (You may mark more than one type with an 0)

What they do most: Mark it 1

What they do second most: Mark it 2

What they do third most: Mark it 3

What they do fourth most: Mark it 4

What they do fifth most: Mark it 5

What they do sixth most: Mark it 6 (If they don't do it at all, do not give a 6 but an 0)

20.1 By car	
20.2 By bus	
20.3 By bicycle	
20.4 By donkey-cart	
20.5 By horse or donkey	
20.6 On foot	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

Question 21

If learners walk to school, what is the farthest that the majority of the walkers in your class must walk? Mark with an X in one box.

21.1 Half a km	
21.2 1 km	
21.3 2km	
21.4 3km	
21.5 4km	
21.6 5km	
21.7 More	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	
V7	

Question 22

Indicate the type of housing the learners in your class live in.

The type they never live in: Mark it 0 (You may mark more than one type with an 0)

The type most of them live in: Mark it 1

The type they live in second most: Mark it 2

The type they live in third most: Mark it 3

The type they live in fourth most: Mark it 4

The type they live in fifth most: Mark it 5

The type they live in sixth most: Mark it 6 (If they don't live there, do not give a 6 but an 0)

22.1 House of bricks	
22.2 Flat or townhouse of bricks	
22.3 Hostel of bricks	
20.4 Hut (wood, thatch)	
22.5 Tent	
22.6 Other housing	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V5	
V6	

If you have chosen Other , please give details	
---	--

V7	
----	--

Question 23

Mark with an X in one box. Would you say the majority of the parents whose children are in your school, have

23.1 A lot of money	
23.2 Enough money	
23.3 Not enough money	
23.4 Almost no money	
23.5 No money	

V1	
V2	
V3	
V4	
V0	

Question 24

How far is the nearest sjebeen to the school? Mark with an X in one box.

24.1 Next to the school	
24.2 Near the school	
24.3 Far from the school	

V1	
V2	
V3	

Question 25

Do you read or tell stories to the learners? Mark with an X.

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 26

Do parents/the community still tell stories to the children?

Mark with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

Question 27

Are you aware of story readings for children over the radio?

Mark with an X

Yes	No
-----	----

V1	V0
----	----

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!



**GUIDE FOR DATA ANALYSIS
OF READERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR TEACHERS/LIBRARY STAFF**

The researchers will distribute the Questionnaire for Teachers/Library Staff to the following Grade 6 teachers: English teacher, Namibian Language teachers/Local Language teachers as well as the staff member responsible for the Library. It is possible that one or more of the language teachers is/are also responsible for the library. In that case he/she/they must complete Question 3 as well. If a separate person is responsible for the library, he/she must not complete Questions 2, 4 and 5.

Depending on the number of Namibian languages offered by the school, up to 5-6 questionnaires per school may be completed.

The researchers will study the completed questionnaires by the teachers of one school afterwards and select only one for coding as the official response from the school. The researchers will number every questionnaire beforehand at the top right hand corner. This is the number for the respondent. The questionnaires will thus be analysed – for all teachers (language teachers and library teachers), and per official response of the 36 schools.

Questions 1 and 2 need to be coded as follows:

Question 1.1: The researchers will put a code in the left grey box the top which will designate the **EMIS number of the school**.

Question 1.2: The researchers will put a code in the right grey box at the top which will designate that it is a rural (R) or an urban (U) school in which the school is situated.

Question 1.3: The data analyst will give a **male** the code **V1** and a **female V0**.

Question 1.4: The data analyst to code as follows in the grey box provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for each language:

V1: Oshiwambo languages (Oshindonga, Oshikwanyama, other dialects e.g. Kwambi)

V2: Khoekhoegowab (Nama-Damara)

V3: Afrikaans

V4: Otjiherero

V5: Rukwangali

V6: Silozi

V7: Thimbukushu

V8: Rumanyo (Rugciriku)

V9: English

V10: Jul / Hoansi (and other San languages)

V11: German

V12: Setswana

V13: Other languages

Question 1.5: The data analyst to give a percentage for each group. Coding in the grey boxes provided for this question is as follows:

V1: 200 or less learners

V2: 201- 400 learners

V3: 401-800 learners

V4: More than 800 learners

Question 2.1: The data analyst to use the same list as indicated in 1.4 to code the language taught in the grey box provided for in the questionnaire and finally produce a separate list of percentages for each language.

Question 2.2: (Possible teacher answer: 40)

Question 2.3: (Possible teacher answer: 20)

1. First work out the percentage, e.g. $20/40 = 50\%$

2. Then code: $75 - 100\% = V1$; $50 - 74\% = V2$; $25 - 49\% = V3$; $0 - 24\% = V4$
(In the final analysis these results could not be used.)

Question 2.4: V1 1-2 years, V2 2-3 years, V3 3-5 years V4 More than 5 years

Question 3.1: V1 Yes V0 No

Question 3.2: V1 Less than 1000 V2 1001-3000 V3 More than 3 000

Question 3.3: V1 Storybooks V2 Fact books/Non Fiction

Question 3.4: V1 Afrikaans V2 English V3 Other Namibian Languages

Question 3.5: V1 Yes V0 None

Question 3.6: V1 Yes V0 No V2 Registering Book V3 Loan Cards V4 Computer system

Question 3.7: V1 More than 2 years experience V2 1-2 years experience V0 No experience

Question 3.8: V1 Yes V0 No

Data analyst to produce a list of other subjects that library teachers teach, as well as the numbers of teachers giving this subject. (In the final analysis this could not be used.)

Question 4.1: V1 Yes V0 No

Question 4.2: V1 Less than 50 V2 51-100 V3 More than 100

Question 4.3: V1 Storybooks V2 Fact books/Non Fiction

Question 4.4: V1 Afrikaans V2 English V3 Other Namibian Languages

Question 4.5: V1 Yes V0 No

Question 4.6: V1 Yes V0 No V2 Registering Book V3 Loan Cards

Question 5.1: V1 Textbooks V0 No Textbooks or No answer

Question 5.2: V1 Reader V0 No Reader or No answer

Question 5.3: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 5.4: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 6.1-6.8: Percentages for each for total sample of schools for each required

Question 7.1-7.4: Percentages for each required

Question 8.1-8.5: Percentages for each required

Question 9: V1 Yes V0 No

Question 10: V1 Yes V0 No

Question 11.1-11.3: Percentages for each required

Questions 12.1-12.2: V1 Yes V0 No for each

Question 13.1-13.3: Percentages for each required

QUESTION 14 WILL BE USED TO FINALLY CATEGORIZE SCHOOLS IN 3 SOCIO BLOCKS.

WR= Well Resourced Schools

RR= Reasonably Resourced Schools

PR= Poorly Resourced Schools.

Question 14.1-14.14: Percentages for all Yes answers for each required

Classify as follows:WR: 0-8 Positive answers

RR: 9-15 Positive answers

PR: 16-25 Positive answers

Write the correct classification WR, RR or PR in the centre grey box top first page

List percentages of schools giving positive answers to all questions

Question 15: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 16: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 17.1-17.5: Percentages for each required

Question 18.1-18.5: Percentages for each required

Question 19.1-19.6: Percentages for each required

Question 20: The travelling modes in order of preference from 1 to 6 or 0.

Data analyst to code in the six boxes provided and as indicated in the instructions: Giving what is done most a V1, and so forth up to V6 to what is done least, and/or V0 to what is not done at all.

Finally we will need a list of percentages for the six travelling modes from most used to least used.

Question 21.1-21.7: Percentages for each required

Question 22: The types of housing in order of preference from 1 to 7.

Data analyst to code in the six boxes provided and as indicated in the instructions: Giving what is done most a V1, and so forth up to V6 to what is done least, and a separate list of alternative housing for V7. Finally we will need a list of percentages for the seven housing types from most used to least used.

Question 23.1-23.5: Percentages for each required

Question 24.1-24.3: Percentages for each required

Question 25: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 26: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

Question 27: V1 Yes V0 No or No answer

STORY READERS

Students:

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School:

Date:

Question 6:

Why do you like to read

1. Thank you for completing Part 1! I see you read stories ... but do you really like to read?
2. Why do you like to read?
3. Why do you like to read these story books?
4. Can you remember the last book that you read?
5. Can you remember the name or what it is about?
6. Why did you like the story?

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Question 13: Where do you get books from

Where do you get books from?

- 1. From a library or do you borrow from people or do you buy?
- 2. Why there/ in this way?
- 3. Where is the library?
- 4. When have you last gone there?
- 5. How often do you go?

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Question 11: List of themes and types, language

1. So, if you go into the library or a bookshop, how do you choose a book? What makes you decide?

2. *(Lay out books.)* Let's say you are in a shop. Which book would you buy? *(Let him/her choose. One or two.)*

Try to explain why did you choose this/these book(s)

3. Would you read a book if the teacher says it's good? Why?

4. Would you read a book if you heard it was good? Why?

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Question 7: Kinds of stories (bible, etc), themes

1. About the last book that you read ... did you like it?
2. Why? What was it about? What kind of story?
3. Can you mention the 4 topics you like to read about most?
4. (If they can't answer, give them the list.) Why these kinds of stories?

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Question 10: Kind of people like to read about

Try to link to a story that he/she has read.

1. Did you like to read about this person?
2. Did you like him/her? Why?
2. What other kind of persons do you like to read about.
3. Does the type of person matter to you?
4. Are there some persons that you do not like to read about?

(If necessary, lay out nine cards with the possibilities ... choose the persons that you like to read about.)

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Question 14: Other reading matter (newspapers, magazines, picture stories)

1. Do you read only books or do you also read other reading materials?
2. What are they?
3. Where do you get the other reading materials? (*Only ask when applicable*)

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Question 16: Who tells you to read?

1. Do other people tell you to read? If yes, who?
2. If nobody – not your teacher, not your parents – tell you to read, do you think you would still read?

Why?

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1. Do you listen to stories on the radio?
2. In which language? (*When applicable*)
3. Tell me about it. (*When applicable*)

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Question 8: When reading for pleasure

1. When do you read for pleasure?
2. Prompts: Do you have time over the weekends?
3. During the week? Holidays?

Extra Question 26 (Feeling)

When you read a book you have chosen for yourself in your free time, how does it feel?

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Question 7: Kinds of books/topics

1. About the last book that you read ... did you like it?
2. Why? What was it about? What kind of story?
3. Can you mention the 4 topics you like to read about most?
4. (If they can't answer, give them the list.) Why these kinds of books?

Question 14: Other reading matter (newspapers, magazines, picture stories)

1. Do you read only books or do you also read other reading materials?
2. What are they? (*Only ask when applicable*)
3. Where do you get the other reading materials? (*Only ask when applicable*)

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Question 16: Who tells you to read?

1. Do other people tell you to read? If yes, who?
2. If nobody – not your teacher, not your parents – tell you to read, do you think you would still read?

Why?

Question 17: Languages read in after school

1. In which languages do you read after school? (Not school books). English, mother tongue, other language?
2. Tell me about a book you recently read in another *language* (*Only when applicable*)

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November 9th 2010

The Honourable Minister of Education

Dr Abraham Iyambo

Government Office Park

Windhoek

Honourable Minister Iyambo,

It is with great pleasure that I am able to congratulate you on behalf of the Namibian Children's Book Forum, on the excellent and far sighted recommendations you have made to Cabinet and to your senior management to improve education in Namibia.

We in particular salute your decision to appoint a librarian for every secondary school and for every primary school with more than 250 learners. We are also pleased with your directive that non-promotional subjects shall be taught at all levels. This will also include the non-promotional subject, Basic Information Science (BIS), which has been grossly neglected in Namibian schools for many years.

As former head of the Department of Information Studies at the University of Namibia, I was involved with the drafting of the syllabus and also the concept of the handbook that was published later. Basic Information Science (BIS) training equips learners to retrieve information from various sources inside and also outside of libraries, such as printed materials, audio-visual and electronic media, but also how to retrieve indigenous knowledge, even to the point of having interviews with knowledgeable community members. The subject BIS also teaches learners how to retrieve classified library materials, use library catalogues and reference works and how to conduct research for assignments and projects.

The staff member who is trained to offer the subject Basic Information Science to learners is the school librarian. The librarian assists teachers with research projects and facilitates the integration of all subjects with the information materials in and outside the school library. If there is no full-time librarian at the school, which is still the case in government schools, the subject is allocated to a teacher who already has a full teaching load of other subjects. In some schools up to four teachers share the responsibility for the teaching of Basic Information Science and also for the management of the school library, without having enjoyed training in any of these. This results in a library that is rarely open and that the subject BIS is neglected to the point that it is not being offered at all even though there may be slots on the time-table for BIS.

The University of Namibia offered, at first a senior secondary diploma course and later a degree course in School Librarianship for 15 years. Students could opt for this subject as a minor or a major. The teaching methods of Basic Information Science was also offered to students opting for the major course. I not only drafted the syllabus for the degree course, but also taught it for ten years.

Unfortunately in 1999 the Ministry of Basic Education scrapped the subject, School Librarianship from the list of approved UNAM subjects for the training of secondary school teachers. With this, bursaries for prospective students were also terminated. The result was that UNAM removed the course from the curriculum for teachers and that since then, no training of school librarians has been taking place in Namibia. Training for general librarians is still taking place at UNAM.

Fortunately there are several hundred students who are teaching at Namibian schools who completed the minor course and about 150 who completed the major course in school librarianship plus the teaching methods during the years 1985 and 1999. Some of them are now school principals and many are senior teachers.

Unfortunately they have hardly been used to offer BIS and manage the school library since many principals do not want to “waste” any of their most highly qualified teachers on the school library and on teaching a non-promotional subject. These teachers also prefer to specialize on their other major subject because there is no promotional path for them as full-time school librarians and also because many principals expect them to offer a full teaching load of other subjects, teach BIS and on top of this, manage the school library. For fear that this might happen some of my former students did not inform the principal that they were fully trained school librarians.

In the light of all these facts, I therefore, on behalf of the Namibian Children’s Book Forum, plead with you to:

1. Put School Librarianship back on the Ministry of Education list of approved degree subjects and earmark some bursaries for the subject.

2. Request UNAM to reinstate the subject School Librarianship as a degree course for both the B Prim Ed and the B. Sec.Ed.

3. Increase the budget allocation for information materials (books, other printed materials, audio-visual media and computers) for the school libraries.

4. Establish a list of all trained school librarians in the schools which will however, not be all of them since some have been lured away by the private sector with high salaries and are managing other types of libraries now.

4. Direct principals to use those teachers who studied school librarianship as school librarians and to teach BIS and not for subjects which could be handled by other teachers.

5. Establish a career path for school librarians which will be the same as for teachers with the same salaries and opportunities to be promoted. Since they are just as fully qualified as other teachers, this is only fair.

As things stand now, we fear that your directive of appointing librarians in the schools is simply not going to materialize unless the measures we suggest are taken.

We wish you all the best for the daunting task ahead, and remain

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andree-Jeanne Töttemeyer". The script is cursive and elegant, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Prof Dr Andree-Jeanne Töttemeyer

Chair Namibian Children's Book Forum