

AN ASSESSMENT ON THE USAGE OF FREE INTERNET SERVICES AT
OMAHEKE REGIONAL LIBRARY

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Abstract

Public libraries have become primary sources of free Internet services delivery, and this qualitative case study set to assess the usage of free Internet services provided at the Omaheke Regional Library (ORL). The study was guided by the following research questions: What is the main reason for using Internet services? How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services? What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet? What is the impact of free Internet services to the users? What policies exist in the ORL regarding the usage of free Internet provision to its users? Kuhlthau's (2008) Information Search Processes theory and Wilson's (1999) Information Seeking Behaviour theory guided the study. The study applied a qualitative research approach, and the data were collected through Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations were conducted with purposely selected staff members and Internet users. Interviews, observations and focus group discussions data were analysed by employing the content analysis technique. The findings of the study showed that the Internet users of the ORL used free Internet services for socialising, educational purposes and searching for jobs. The data further revealed that Internet users were not satisfied with the provision of Internet services due to the slow speed of the Internet and few computers in the library. The findings also demonstrated that the provision of free Internet services impacted the lives of Internet users through education and social activities. Moreover, the findings also revealed that the library did not have any Internet policy in place regarding the usage of free Internet services. The research recommends that the ORL should increase the Internet bandwidth and engage library stakeholders regarding decision making of Internet services for effective and efficient provision of free Internet services. **Keywords:** Omaheke Regional Library, Internet in Public libraries, Internet usage, Public libraries, Information and Communication Technology

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List of abbreviation and acronyms

ALIA	Australia Library and Information Association
AUP	Acceptance Use Policy
CILIP	Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals
CIPA	Children Internet Protection Act
EBSCO	Elton B. Stephens Company
HTTP	Hyper Text Transfer Protocol
HTTPS	Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
IREX	International Research Exchange
ISP	Information Search Processes
LAN	Local Area Network
MAIPLE	Managing Access to the Internet in Public Libraries
MCA-N	Millennium Challenge Account Namibia
MoE	Ministry of Education
NIDA	Network for Information and Digital Access
NLAS	Namibia Library and Archives Services
OPAC	Online Public Access Catalogue
ORL	Omaheke Regional Library

UK	United Kingdom
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United State of America
WPA	Wi-Fi Protected Access

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It was indeed a team work!

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late mother, Laina Ndeshipewa Ngashikua, who instilled in me the love for education and taught me that education is the greatest equaliser.

Declarations

I, Lucia Ndesihafela Ngashikuaao hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research, and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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Lucia N. Ngashikuaao

LNN

April 2022

Name of Student

Signature

Date

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The renewed library and information policy framework for Vision 2030 in Namibia advocates for the establishment of public ICT access through the nationwide library network that should improve access to and usage of information through digital libraries and knowledge management systems. Due to the renewed library and information policy framework for Vision 2030, many communities in Namibia are benefiting from public library free Internet access delivery (Network for Information and Digital Access (NIDA) Consultancy Team, 2010). Thus, “Public libraries have evolved into a primary source of Internet access and have generated wide-ranging impacts on the communities that they serve” (Bertot, McClure & Jaeger, 2008, p. 1).

According to Beyond Access Initiative (2012), public libraries have emerged to be the number one key player to provide free Internet services as they already focused on providing free information services to the public. McClure and Jaeger (2009) indicate that public libraries are becoming a hub for providing free Internet to disadvantaged groups as well as an access point for free Internet services. Becker et al. (2010) also proffer that people visit a library to search for health-related information, employment, find key government services and for social connections, which impact their livelihoods in many ways. In addition, Taylor et al. (2012) concur that low-income groups use free Internet

services in public libraries, to seek for jobs and search health-related information, to mention a few. Moreover, access to the Internet was declared a basic human right (Beyond Access Initiative, 2012) and users have the right to access the Internet in order to curb the digital divide.

Even though the Internet is provided freely in public libraries, some libraries reported that time limitations, lack of digital literacy skills, slow bandwidth among others, hamper access and usage of free Internet provision (Mamafha, Ngulube & Ndwandwe 2016; Shehu, Urhefe & Promise, 2015). Thus, this study investigated if these challenges also affected the usage of free Internet services in the Omaheke Regional Library (ORL). Moreover, Ndivanga and Mukuzunga's (2009) study on the Ounongo Technology Centre in the same region reported that people in the Omaheke Region needed access to the Internet to searching for information.

Community Library Services is the mother body of all community libraries in Namibia. It is a division of the Namibia Library and Archives Services, a Directorate under the Ministry of Education. The Community Library Services is in charge of 65 community or public libraries of which three of them are newly built Regional Libraries, which are Oshana, Omaheke and Ohangwena Regional library. The regional library concept is new in Namibia and these new libraries were first of that kind. Thus, this study focused on Omaheke Regional Library (ORL), one of the three Regional Libraries under the Community Library Services in Namibia. The library was built with assistance from the Millennium Challenge Account Namibia (MCA-N). MCA-Namibia was a development

programme which was funded by the United States (US) Government with the purpose of improving economic growth (Namhila & Niskala 2012), more specifically, “this Account built and equipped three regional libraries in disadvantaged regions in order to improve access to scientific, professional and technological information as well as study and learning materials” (Namhila & Niskala, 2012, p. 9). The Omaheke Regional Library is based in Gobabis in the Omaheke Region in Namibia, which is one of the 13 regions in Namibia. The Omaheke Region was previously categorised as disadvantaged and it is a vast region with a population of approximately 71 233 people (Namibia Population and Housing Census, 2011). According to the Namibia Population and Housing Census (2011), the region had 73.3% of literacy rate and a weekly Internet usage of 5.1%. The ORL provides information services to the community, and it strives to support education, mostly lifelong learning and it is where all people living in this region can access information services, particularly the Internet for free. The Omaheke community members are known for farming and conducting various forms of business activities. The majority of library users are school going children, university students, school dropouts (youth) and business people. Against this background, the ORL was mandated to offer free Internet services to the Omaheke Community.

Given the aforementioned contextual background, peculiar to the ORL and the fact that the ORL is providing free Internet services to the community, it was deemed important to carry out this study to assess the usage of free Internet as well as the challenges, impact of Internet service provision and availability of Internet policies in this library and to recommend possible ways to improve the usage of free Internet at this newly established

community library. This attempt sets this study apart from other studies that were mostly carried outside Namibia as it is the only study that specifically used the ORL as a case study, and as such, certain nuances at the ORL could possibly be different. The centre was known at the beginning as Omaheke Regional Study and Resources Centre, however Namibia Library and Archive Services (NLAS) decided to change the name to Omaheke Regional Library for the community, to understand the purpose of the library (T. Shuumbili, personal communication, September 19, 2018).

1.2 Statement of the problem

McClure and Jaeger (2009) indicate that public libraries play a major role in providing Internet access to people from all walks of life. It was also evident that time limitations, lack of digital literacy skills and Internet speed among others hampered access and usage of free Internet provision (Mamafha et al., 2016; Shehu et al., 2015). Considering these reflections from studies that were conducted outside Namibia, this study therefore, particularly sought to assess the usage of free Internet services and the challenges that are faced. The study also sought to examine the impact of Internet services and the availability of Internet policies in the newly opened ORL that is located in a previously disadvantaged region so as to ascertain if it correlates with the findings of earlier studies that were conducted in other countries, and most significantly bring across nuances that are specific to the ORL.

Also, another study within the same contextual setting by Ndivanga and Mukuzunga (2009) on the Ounongo Technology Centre in the Omaheke Region indicates that people

in the Omaheke Region need the Internet to search for information. Since the study by Ndivanga and Mukuzunga (2009) was carried out in 2009 under a different setup and facilities, it was imperative for this study to focus on the newly opened ORL as a single case study. Moreover, the study sought to also establish whether users were able to meaningfully use various Internet services given the fact that the Internet was provided freely at the ORL.

1.3 Research questions

The main research question of the study was: what is the usage and impact of free Internet services at the Omaheke Regional Library? Sub-questions were:

1. What is the main reason for using Internet services?
2. How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services?
3. What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet?
4. What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?
5. What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how the library monitor the usage of the Internet?

1.4 Significance of the study

The significance of a study differentiates the study from other studies. According to Ariola (2006), the significance of the study concerns to “whom the study will be most useful (the beneficiaries / end users) and why the study would be useful to them” (p. 136). The findings from this study could be used to provide information to ORL policy and decision

makers, to better understand the services provided and relevance thereof to its users, while contributing ideas and debate to ensure the achievement of a knowledge-based society, which is one of the goals of Vision 2030 of the Namibian government (Ministry of Education (MoE), 2016).

1.5 Limitation of study

The limitation of the study is considered to be “any restriction that may decrease the study credibility and generalisability of the findings” (Burns & Grove 2011, p. 48). In this regard, this was a single case study of the ORL only and findings from this study cannot be generalised to other libraries.

1.6 Delimitations of study

Sharma (2014) explains the study delimitation as the “boundaries set by the researcher to define the scope of the study” (p. 94). This research only focused on Internet users of the ORL and only respondents from the Omaheke region and the library staff members formed part of the study population.

1.7 Research methodology

The study used a single case study design and adopted the descriptive research paradigm by applying a qualitative research approach. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations were used as data collection methods. According

to Creswell (2009), the use of multiple methods (triangulation), helps to overcome the weakness of a single method and it enhances the reliability as well as trustworthiness of the findings.

The population of this study comprised of Internet users and the management staff of the Omaheke Regional Library. The purposive sampling method was used to select focus group discussion participants, Internet users that formed part of the observations, and library staff members. Purposive sampling was selected and employed since it is a non-probability sampling method where the elements of the study are selected because of their characteristics (Flick, 2009). A semi-structured interview guide was developed and used to collect data from the study respondents. In addition, field note sheets were used to observe the skills and habits of the Internet users. The research instruments were pre-tested to ensure that questions were understandable, and this enhanced the trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2009).

The content analysis method was used to analyse the data from interviews, focus group discussions and observations. “Content analysis is a process of organising, coding and summarising the data in order to come up with themes responding to the statement of the problem and research questions” (Flick, 2009, p. 328).

Permission was granted to carry out the study by the Director of Education of the Omaheke Region. The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Namibia and adhered to the policy guidelines in this regard.

1.8 Definition of key terms

This section defines the key terms used in this study, to enlighten the context in which they were used.

1.8.1 Library users

According to Nwalo (2003, as cited in Anyira, 2011), a library user is anybody that visits the library to utilise the services with the purpose of satisfying his/her information needs. In this context, a library user refers to users that visited the library to specifically use the Internet and not necessarily other library services.

1.8.2 Internet user

Jarvis, Jenny and Yull (2005), describe an Internet user as people that use the Internet, to access information. In this context it refers to anyone that comes to the library to access the Internet services.

1.8.3 Digital skills

According to UNESCO (2018), digital skills are defined as a “range of abilities to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information. They enable people to create and share digital content, communicate and collaborate, and solve problems for effective and creative self-fulfilment in life, learning, work, and social activities at large” (para. 3). In this study digital skills refer to the skills

and ability Internet users have in order to utilise the free Internet services provided in the library.

1.8.4 Bandwidth

According to Doyle (1999), bandwidth determines the speed and the amount of data transferred over a period of time; the smaller the bandwidth, the slower the data received. The speed of the data is determined by the medium in which they are transferred. In this study bandwidth referred to the speed of the Internet available in the library.

1.9 Outline of the thesis

This section outlines how the thesis is arranged.

Chapter 1: Introduction – provides the background of the study, problem statement and the methodology used for this study

Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework – discusses the literature relevant to the study and the applicable theoretical framework

Chapter 3: Research methodology – provides the research design, research paradigm, and qualitative research instruments and techniques used. The chapter also looks at the population, sample, research instruments, procedure, data analysis techniques, research ethics and evaluation of the methodology

Chapter 4: Data analysis and presentation – provides the analysis and presentation of the data collected

Chapter 5: Discussion of research findings - discusses the data presented in chapter four as well as integrating the literature reviewed for the study

Chapter 6: Summary, conclusions and recommendations – provides the summary of the findings, conclusions as well as the recommendations and suggestions for further research

References – provides all the alphabetical list of references used in the thesis. The study followed the American Psychology Association reference style

1.10 Chapter summary

The chapter highlighted a brief introduction of the study, focusing on the need for free Internet service in a community library setup and discussed the statement of the problem. Moreover, it emphasised the background of community libraries in Namibia and more specifically the Omaheke Regional Library. The chapter also focused on the limitation, delimitation, methodology as well as the research ethics adhered to. The following chapter discusses the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework that guided the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one introduced the research problem relating to the usage of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Library (ORL). Chapter two provides an overview of literature reviewed concerning the usage of Internet services in public libraries. The literature review involved a comprehensive, critical analysis of secondary sources relating to the use of free Internet services in public libraries in Namibia and internationally. The chapter ends with a theoretical framework, which underpins the study. This study was guided by the Information Search Processes theory (Kuhlthau, 2008) and the Information Seeking Behaviour theory (Wilson, 1999).

The chapter is organised as follows, as guided by the research questions:

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Background of Internet provision in libraries

2.2.1 Reasons for using Internet services in libraries

2.2.2 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

2.2.3 Internet provision and usage challenge

2.2.4 The impact of freely available Internet services on users

2.2.5 Policies guiding the use as well as how does the library monitor the usage of free Internet services

2.3 Theoretical framework

2.4 Chapter summary

2.2 Background of Internet provision in libraries

The provision of Internet services in libraries has changed how people perceive libraries. Tomak (2012) claims that most perceptions about libraries have been challenged in the Internet age, as libraries are moving along with technological change. Freedom of information and access to information are pillars of what the library wishes to accomplish. In the digital age though, this basic principle is more important (Tomak, 2012).

Libraries are not static, as they have evolved from providing printed materials only to enhancing their collection with digital materials. Thus, many governments view public access to the Internet as a step towards encouraging people, who do not have access to the Internet, to utilise it through public libraries (Mpindi, 2016). The purpose of public Internet access in the library is to fill the gap of the digital divide. The provision of free Internet services in public libraries enables people to exercise their right, as the Internet has been declared a basic human right (Kravets, 2011). Community libraries are promoting digital inclusion and, due to the availability of free Internet services in the libraries, many people are increasingly relying on using libraries to access the Internet (Sey et al., 2013).

The Government of Namibia is no exception, as it has implemented and supported the provision of free Internet services in libraries to close the digital gap and for the Government to achieve Vision 2030 (Network for Information and Digital Access (NIDA) Consultancy Team, 2010). This study, therefore, was aimed at investigating how free Internet services are utilised at the Omaheke Regional Library.

The section however, reviewed studies on the usage of Internet services in local libraries as well as internationally to compare with Internet usage at ORL.

2.3 Reasons for using Internet services in libraries

Library users visit the library for various services, particularly to access the Internet for different purposes. Becker et al. (2010), in a USA study examining the impact of free access to computers and the Internet in public libraries, reveal that people visited a library to search for education-related activities such as participating in online courses, do research, complete assignments and homework, search for health-related information, such as, critical medical treatments and specialists, as well as seek employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, find key government services, community civic engagement, social networking and leisure activities. The study further revealed that the library Internet services served as an interface between the user and the global world. In a follow up study on the USA impact study, Taylor, Jaeger, McDermott, Kodoma and Bertot (2012) reveal that besides visiting the library to use the Internet for, job seeking, educational research, and health-related issues and for social networking, the public Internet services are also used for e-banking and contacting distant family and friends. Becker et al. (2010) and Taylor et al. (2012) reveal that for library users, even though they

could access Internet elsewhere, preferred using library Wi-Fi because it was free of charge, the library was a quiet place to be used and they could seek for the librarian's assistance.

Moreover, Zickuhr, Rainie and Purcel (2013), in a study for Pew Research Centre's Internet and American Life Project in American libraries, to study the young Americans library usage and habits. The study revealed that people visited the library to do school and work-related research, check their emails, search health-related information, view government websites and apply for jobs online, social networking, play games and watch videos, banking and online shopping as well as studying online.

One of the purposes of the current study was to find out the reasons why library users used ORL's free Internet services and then compare the reasons to literature findings as well as to note any suggestions on improving the provision of free Internet services.

Quick et al. (2013), in a study of users' perceptions and the benefits of ICT in a public library in Italy using desk research and a survey to collect the information, found that library users use the Internet for educational activities, e-governance and to interact with public authorities' websites. In addition, the study revealed that people used the library Internet to download official forms for employment, engage with civics and post opinions on political and civic issues. Some users further indicated that they preferred to use the library Internet because it was free and they relied on library staff for help, and also, they

could only access the Internet at the library. Moreover, The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) (2013) commissioned a study in Australian public libraries with the aim to understand the usage of the Internet in public libraries, to find out if there were policies that were developed for the usage of the Internet and how they were implemented, as a way to find out if the libraries were offering training to Internet users, what difficulties and complaints the Internet users encountered, and to find out if libraries were using filtering software to filter websites and how they were monitoring the usage of the Internet. The study reported that some Internet users appreciated the fact that the Internet was free. In the same study, users also expressed that they valued the assistance they got from library staff as well as training in the use of the Internet they received from the library. They regarded the Internet as a big development to the community and it attracted users to the library thus improving the usage of the library.

Besides comparing the reasons for the use of free public Internet services, the present researcher also considered the different research instruments in the literature reviewed to find instruments that suited the study. The current study used the interviews, focus group discussion and observation as research instruments.

Heok and Luyt (2010), in a discourse on learning and access to information in Singapore public libraries, investigated the debate surrounding the provision of the Internet in public libraries as a way to inform government and library management how the provision of the Internet contributes to the education of communities. Heok and Luyt (2010), observed that most people used the Internet to do their research, check emails, search for jobs, prepare

a résumé for work, and looking at the stock markets and company performances for future investment opportunities. Those who used the Internet for research preferred to use Google instead of the electronic databases which were provided by the library for research. The study also revealed that the library Internet services were used for chatting, discussion board sessions and playing Internet games. In another study, Sey et al. (2013) studied libraries in Chile, Philippines and Botswana and found that many people visited libraries just to search for specific information such as educational research, language and culture and government services.

Moreover, Ledwaba and Mugwisi (2020) in their study that examined the extent of Internet access in public libraries in South Africa, found out that participants used the Internet to send emails, search for e-governance, search for job stay on top of current affairs, news and events.

Furthermore, Kinney (2010) in the study entitled, “The Internet, Public Libraries, and the Digital Divide”, addressed the impact of the Internet in a public library. The article revealed that people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds tended to use the library’s Internet services more often to search for employment and for accessing other government services. The study used census and linear regression model data to evaluate the library effort to bridge the digital divide. Moreover, Modiba and Bopape (2017) in their study Users’ Perspectives on Computers and Internet Services Offered by Public Libraries in Bridging the Digital Divide in Ngaka Modiri Molema District also found that people with no income tend to use the library Internet more often to search for information

and use the Internet to study. Kinney (2010) also found that school-going children used the library's Internet to do their homework whereas school leavers accessed social networking sites in the library.

The Internet in public libraries, however, was not only utilised by library visitors, but library staff also used the services to perform official duties. Komal, Qutab and Mahmood (2011), in a study of a specific library in Pakistan, revealed that library staff used the Internet for different library operations like cataloguing and the classification of library books, and for purchasing of library materials just to mention a few.

Moreover, Shehu et al. (2015) in a study on the accessibility and utilisation of the Internet in Nigerian libraries found that Internet users mostly used the services for research purposes, to keep abreast with current knowledge and to update personal knowledge and competencies. The provision of the Internet services inspired users because it was freely available, contained a lot of information, and its usefulness and simplicity motivated its users. Moreover, library staff also used the Internet for capacity development (Shehu et al., 2015). Furthermore, in another study on the utilisation of information and communication technology (ICT) in Nigerian public libraries, Mamman (2015) reveals that the Internet is the most utilised service in these libraries. Using interviews and a checklist as research instruments, participants were asked to rank their reasons for using the Internet (Mamman, 2015). It emerged in that study that the main purpose of using the Internet was to search for educational information for self-development, which was ranked at 3.14%, while keeping abreast of news and events was rated at 2.88%. Meanwhile,

Internet browsing was rated at 2.79%, downloading and storing of personal information was rated at 2.75%, sending and receiving email was rated 2.44% and use of social media was the lowest, rated at 2.15%, indicating that Internet users used the Internet more for educational purposes.

In the present study, the researcher investigated the reasons for the utilisation of free public Internet services in the Namibian context to draw comparisons and also to examine the emerging patterns.

In addition, the study done by Uutoni, Yule and Nengomasha (2011) on electronic governance and hybrid libraries in Namibia, it was found that librarians that participated in the study indicated that people used the library Internet for job seeking, school assignments and searching for tertiary education opportunities as well as for leisure.

Furthermore, Niskala (2008), in a study on the use of community libraries in three different libraries in the northern parts of Namibia, reports that people used the Internet to check their emails, for study purposes and to surf the Internet without searching for anything specifically.

The above reviewed literature shows the purposes for which people used the Internet but most of the studies were conducted outside Namibia, therefore, the current study's purpose

was to find out the reasons for the usage of free Internet services at ORL, in Namibia, and compare them with literature findings.

2.4 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

The reliability of Internet services provided can determine the user's level of satisfaction. ALIA's (2013) in the study on Internet access in public library reports that Internet users were not satisfied with Internet services because the speed of the Internet was too slow, there were not enough computers in most libraries, computer usage time was limited and there was a restriction on accessing some websites.

Becker et al. (2010) reported that library users valued the library computing environment because it accommodated everyone, regardless of education and needs. In the same study, participants indicated that the library computer laboratory opening hour access time was reasonable and expressed appreciation for the assistance and guidance they received from library staff. In addition, Modiba and Bopape's (2017) study participants revealed that public library Internet services bridging the digital divide because community members were using the Internet free of charge.

Quick et al. (2013), in a study on users' perceptions of the benefits of information and communication technology (ICT) in Italian public libraries, revealed that Internet users

were satisfied with the provision of the Internet because the Internet was faster, library staff were ready to help with accessing the Internet, the library environment was friendly and quiet, it was easier to concentrate when using the Internet, and Internet terminals were enough. The respondents also indicated that even though the time for accessing the Internet was limited, it was always sufficient.

Hardy and Johansen (2003), in a study on the provision of Internet access in a Victoria (Australia) library to explore the characteristics of Internet users, how well the Internet services met the needs of users and what plans management had to improve the usage of the Internet, the impact of Internet services on the community, and the legal implications of Internet provision in Victoria libraries, report that 21% of the respondents indicated the Internet connectivity was very slow. Moreover, 23% indicated that they were not satisfied with the booking system and the time limitations, while 33% indicated that computer terminals were not enough in comparison to the number of users. Slow Internet connection was also cited as a problem. However, they appreciated the services and efforts librarians were making to assist the users with accessing the Internet and also how they availed the Internet to users.

In another study about user satisfaction with public library Internet services, Joy and Idowu (2014), reveal that South Western Nigerian libraries are lagging behind in Internet service provision and this contributes to the level of dissatisfaction and underutilisation of the library. Moreover, Utoni et al. (2011) also indicate that the majority of the

respondents (90%) in their study found the availability of Internet services in the library reliable, while 10% found it unreliable.

The literature reviewed under this subsection has shown the different levels of satisfaction with free Internet services provided in public libraries. The aim of the study is to compare the reasons to those that emerged at ORL with the intention to highlight them to decision makers.

2.5 Internet provision and usage challenge

The efficient and effective use of the Internet require skills so that the user can retrieve relevant information.

2.5.1 Barriers that hinder the effective use of the Internet

However, Mamafha et al. (2016), in a study on the use of ICT in Ekurhuleni public libraries in South Africa, found that Internet users encountered problems such as time limits, low bandwidth, restrictive institutional policy and procedures, and computer illiteracy, to mention a few as barriers to accessing the Internet efficiently. Computer literacy seems to be an obstacle to users accessing the Internet. An explanation of the obstacles found were summarised as follows:

Restrictions on the time that users can spend on the Internet was regarded as an obstacle because some people did not access the information, they were required to acquire within that time limit. In addition, low bandwidth caused people to wait longer for their

information to load and this was considered an obstacle because the lower the bandwidth, the longer the time the user takes to access the Internet. Moreover, there are some institutional policies and procedures that some libraries have put in place to restrict the use of the Internet and make it difficult for people to access the services to the fullest possible extent. In addition, the lack of information and computer search skills made it difficult for some people to use the Internet. Over and above, people's behavioural attitudes towards technology mean that young people as well as educated people are the only ones that are interested in using the Internet. The perceptions that information on the Internet is presented in English while most library users do not understand English and some people prefer local languages were also deemed as some of the obstacles. Education and income were also considered as some of the obstacles. There is an assumption that educated people tend to use the Internet more often than uneducated people and poor people use the library's Internet more than high-income earners because they cannot afford private Internet. With regards to security and privacy, people do not fully trust public access points because they are afraid that their personal information can be leaked. Resistance to change implies the resistance to the adoption of a new phenomenon which contributes to the ineffective use of Internet services in the public library.

Mojapelo's (2020) study about the Internet access and use in public libraries in Limpopo Province: SA, reports that in most libraries insufficient bandwidth hinders the usage of Internet, as reduced Internet speed results in some instances where users could not download or get the information they wanted from the Internet. The study further continued reporting that shortage of computers, electrical cut and people who bypass

librarian knowledge and configure the computers also hindered the usage of Internet. This was also confirmed by Fourie and Meyer (2016) in a study on the role of libraries in developing and informing nation, and the study found out that poor infrastructure, ineffective connection and lack of funding for the Internet hinders the usage of the Internet in public libraries.

Additionally, Kalugho (2016), in a study on the role of the Kenya National Library Services on the provision of information to empower the youth to explore the usage of online and electronic resource services in the library, found that the youth had challenges accessing the Internet due to lack of skills, blockage of some websites, insufficient computers, very slow Internet speed and time allocated to access the Internet. The study suggests that the library should find ways to expand the bandwidth and increase the Wi-Fi hotspots so that users can be able to use their personal devices.

Shehu et al. (2015), in their study on the accessibility and utilisation of the Internet in Nigerian public libraries, found that 34% of Internet users lacked searching skills, 60% found information overload on the Internet, 63% indicated downloading delays, whereas 65% pointed out power outages, while 56% indicated that some information on the Internet was irrelevant. In addition, 42% indicated difficulties in navigating some websites, 53% found some websites inaccessible, and 33% indicated lack of creditability of information, while a further 31% indicated unavailability/inaccessibility of the Internet. In another study on the utilisation of ICT in Nigerian public libraries, Mamman (2015) identified barriers to effective use of ICT as inadequate Internet connectivity, and lack of

funding for acquiring and procuring Internet facilities. According to Mamman (2015), staff and users lack digital skills, which hinders them from fully utilising the Internet. Moreover, insufficient computers and lack of ICT awareness were also regarded as barriers.

Furthermore, Komal et al. (2011) identified slow Internet speed, limitations on access to the Internet because of the library Internet policy and copyright issues, users' digital illiteracy, connection cut off, limited computers, limited time, and lack of support from library staff as barriers to access and use Internet services in public libraries. In another study, Clark (2010) on how public library play a vital role on bridging the digital divide, the study found that digital illiteracy hindered some people from accessing the Internet even though they were computer literate. Clark (2010) further states that though some people can type, they do not know how to use search engines such as Google or Yahoo. Therefore, lack of searching skills and digital illiteracy were found to be barriers to access the Internet in public libraries.

2.5.2 Possible solutions to the barriers that hinder use of the Internet

Free Internet services in public libraries promotes lifelong learning and self-education. However, to achieve this and prove the value and impact of a library, measures should be put in place. Below are some measures that can be employed to sidestep barriers to Internet access in public libraries as it indicated by Mamman (2015); Fourie and Meyer (2016) and Mojapelo (2020) in their studies:

- Library management to employ ICT specialists to help people when using the Internet;
- The library to start offering ICT training;
- Internet access time to be extended;
- Internet bandwidth to be increased because this can reduce the amount of time the user spends waiting for a document to load and upload on the Internet;
- The library to subscribe to online journals and electronic databases such as EBSCO, Emerald, and others because most of the Internet users use the Internet for study purposes;
- Libraries to create WhatsApp group for the library to communicate with the users; and
- Increase budget allocation for library

Furthermore, the public library plays a major role in bridging the digital divide, however, in order to achieve this, users require more skills, training and help to use the Internet so that they can retrieve relevant information. Respondents in the study by Zickuhr et al. (2013) also suggested that the library should subscribe to some research websites, uploads eBooks and provide classes to teach Internet users on how to use the Internet. Additionally, Maswabi, Sethate, Sebusang, and Sebusang (2011) on the article about the implementation of Sisego project to the library contribute to the achievement of national development goals. The article proffer that even though funding and donations for library services are sufficient, the libraries need to train the users. Moreover, Mphindi (2016) study the role of SA libraries on bridging the digital divide, argues that the availability of

Internet in a public library should not be looked at as sufficient enough to bridge the digital divide since people need to be shown how to retrieve relevant information in order to satisfy their information needs.

The IFLA Public Library Manifesto adopted in 1994 indicates the positioning of public libraries to enable the development of information and computer literacy as one of its missions (IFLA/ UNESCO, 1994). Public libraries are mandated to train library users on how to use computers and the Internet so that they can find information quickly and easily on their own. Moreover, projects like Library for Development (Mchombu, 2015) and IREX Beyond Access (2012) advocate for libraries with facilities for training users and are working together with governments to help communities create information hubs through libraries.

Mchombu (2015), in a report on Library for Development, a project by Namibia and Finland, revealed that the project trains many people on basic computer skills. More so, in Botswana, an ICT project called Sisego trains library users on how to use the Internet (Maswabi et al., 2011).

This sub-section therefore, examined literature relating to difficulties that users encounter when using the Internet services in public libraries. However, the current study sought to compare the literature reviewed to the findings of this study and thereby recommend ways to address the difficulties that users encounter when using the Internet.

2.6 Impact of freely available Internet services on users

It would appear that the provision of free Internet services in public libraries can impact the lives of many people in the community. As such, Bertot et al. (2008) mention that the lack of Internet access and the skills needed to effectively utilise technology represent the main causes of the digital divide which hinders students' progress in school, in their job searches, and the enablement of meaningful participation in society.

Furthermore, Totolo, Renken and Sey (2015), in their study on the impact of public access to Information and Communication Technology in Botswana public libraries, revealed that Internet users gained more knowledge on ICT skills, learnt new things from the Internet, and their digital skills improved through the use of the Internet. The study further reported that Internet users' lives were impacted through educational activities, and Internet users used the Internet to study online and do their assignments. In the same study, school dropouts reported that they passed academic subject and some improved their English through using services available on the Internet. The study further revealed that some Internet users obtained information about scholarships from the Internet. Totolo et al.'s (2015) study participants further indicated that Internet provision also impacted their lives on social networking as they can connect with their families through email, Facebook, and Twitter. Moreover, the study participants indicated that Internet provision impacted them also on the aspect of employment as they could search for employment opportunities from the Internet. The study participants also indicated that public access to Internet services helped to narrow the digital divide and further pointed out the need for

advanced Internet skills, and the need to equip library staff with more skills so that they can as well in turn help library users to acquire advanced Internet skills.

Beyond Access Initiative (2012) indicates that the provision of free Internet services has a positive impact on people's lives in areas such as health, education, time, income and financial savings. Beyond Access Initiative (2012) also indicates that skilled and trained library staff helped and assisted library users to locate health, education and economic-related information on the Internet, thus impacting their lives in many ways as they can now be able to search the Internet and find all the information they want.

Bertot et al. (2008), in a study on the impact of free Internet access in public libraries in the USA, also concurred that public library Internet provision impacted people's lives in the areas of communication, health, technological training and assistance, e-governance service delivery, educational resources and job seeking. Bertot et al. (2008) also found free Internet access in public libraries to impact disaster and emergency services. The provision of free Internet services in libraries impacted users of the Internet in many ways as per the evidence above, hence this study sought to understand how the provision of free Internet services at ORL impacted the lives of users.

Furthermore, Sey et al. (2013) revealed that Internet service provision through public libraries allowed people to search for information on education, agriculture, employment and government services, connecting with distant families and improving digital literacy.

Sey et al. (2013) further indicated that the majority of people impacted by the provision of free Internet services were young people, less educated people, unemployed youth, and people that cannot afford Internet at home and mostly those are computer illiterate and rely on assistance from library staff. Therefore, the present study sought to find out how Internet users are impacted by the provision of free Internet at ORL. This study found out that Internet users are impacted by the provision of free Internet in the area of education and socialising.

Even though the purpose of this study was to analyse the provision and usage of the Internet by public library users in the ORL, it also looked at how the use of the Internet impacted the work of staff in public libraries. Hart and Nassimbeni (2013), in a study on the impact of free Internet services in the public library reported that Internet service provision impacted the work of the library staff, the automation of the library and also that the library personnel used the Internet for library administration. For instance, for the acquisition of library materials, library staff were easily connected with booksellers to verify prices and order library materials. Hart and Nassimbeni (2013) also found that Internet provision eased the classification of library materials through online classification. Cataloguing was also made easy as books were catalogued online and the library was connected to the World Cat and OPAC. Moreover, the study found that the library subscribed to online journals and it was connected to other library databases. The study further described how the Internet impacted the life of library staff in that there was an impact on the circulation services since books could be uploaded onto the system and borrowed online and the users were able to access the library website online. Hart and

Nassimbeni's (2013) study also mentioned that the library staff could send late materials reminder online and users accessed the library OPAC and put books on hold. The study added that libraries formed a library union catalogue, where resources were shared and members of the library union catalogue accessed the catalogue and could add items and download items also. Moreover, user education was done online due to the provision of the free Internet services in community libraries.

This sub-section has reviewed the available literature regarding the impact of free Internet services provided in libraries to inform the results of the present study.

2.7 Policies guiding the use of free Internet services

The Internet is a global connection network where every person has the right to upload all kinds of information and sometimes no proper regulation exists to control or regulate the use of the Internet. It would appear that libraries have no proper control of what the users are accessing on the Internet. However, literature recommends that regulations and measures be put in place to detect what should be accessed through public library access points as a way to protect the library image and the users. Kahin and Keller (1996) suggested that libraries should regulate privacy and security issues, rules and regulations of censorship and indicate how minors should access the Internet. More so, intellectual property and copyrighted material should be protected as well as how the public can access commercial information services. According to Kahin and Keller (1996), libraries should also put limits on public Internet use when demand outstrips resources.

The American Library Association (2019), suggests that librarians should keep the following in mind when designing the Internet policy: The Internet use policy must be compatible with the library mission, it must include all users, and it should substantiate the importance of privacy and should be placed around the library so that everyone can see it. The association further advises that the policy should clearly stipulate those users are responsible for what they access from the Internet, whereas parents and guardians need to be responsible for their children's Internet use. Moreover, the policy should clearly indicate if the library is filtering websites and if possible, for adults to request for the filtration to be removed.

In addition, a study done by ALIA (2013) indicates that most libraries in Australia have policies on Internet use, which are reviewed every year. The policies cover how Internet users should behave when using the Internet and these are displayed in computer laboratories as well as on Internet terminals, library websites and in library brochures. Some libraries use website filters, which are set to filter website to be visited on library access points, thus some users may not be pleased with the system. Internet users complained that the website filters deprived them of the use of social media since they are blocked to use Internet banking and access to health services. The Australian Internet policy requires parents to sign consent forms for children under 18 years as well as parental presence for children under the age of 12 when using the Internet in libraries.

Muir et al. (2014) revealed Internet misuse, visits to inappropriate websites, watching of pornography and reconfiguration of computers as well as copyright infringement as some

of the challenges the library management faced in dealing with Internet users in the public libraries.

Muir et al.'s (2014) study also looked at the challenges of filtering the Internet. In the study, it was found that the purpose of filtering the Internet was to protect minors from harmful content from some information that is found on the Internet and to protect staff members and the image of the library. However, Internet filtering has some implications as it has been seen as an inappropriate way to control Internet use because it infringes on human rights. The available literature reveals those professional organisations such as the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) were also against Internet filtering and such they see it as "unwarranted interference with the individual's freedom of access to information" (CILIP, 2020, para. 10).

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) (2016), takes the position that:

The core mission of librarians and other information workers is to ensure access to information for all for personal development, education, cultural enrichment, leisure, economic activity and informed participation in an enhancement of democracy.

To this end, librarians and other information workers reject censorship in all its forms, support provision of services free of cost to the user, promote collections

and services to potential users, and seek the highest standards of accessibility to both physical and virtual services. (Para. 5-6)

Muir et al.'s (2014) study also suggested regulations that could be put in place such as the use of the Acceptance Use Policy (AUP), which Internet users would be required to sign before using the Internet. This form outlines what to search and what not to search using the library Internet. Every Internet user will be required to read and agree on the stipulations before signing it. Muir et al. (2014) also recommended a booking system where the Internet user has to book in, in order to use the library and be provided with a user pin and password. The library could also use a monitoring system on the library server through which the staff monitors Internet usage according to Muir et al. (2014). Moreover, Muir et al. (2014) also advised librarians to use digital history to track the history of the websites used by individuals. The study however, also recommended that, the Internet rules and regulations should be displayed in the library so that they can be enforced as a way to protect the image of the library and its users.

After Muir et al. (2014) reviewed the difficulties encountered by public libraries in providing Internet access, Muir et al. (2015) further investigated how UK public libraries managed and regulated Wi-Fi Internet services. In the review of the MAIPLE study which was conducted between 2012 and 2014, Muir et al. (2015) showed that public libraries had different methods to control Wi-Fi usage. Some libraries used a Wi-Fi pin and password to access the Internet, some asked for a library registered card while others asked the user to set up their own Wi-Fi account (Muir et al., 2015). To secure the library Wi-

Fi, participants said that they used Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA) protocols while some filtered the Internet (Muir et al., 2015).

Muir et al. (2016) further investigated how Internet access was regulated in the UK public libraries, by focusing on legal compliance and ethical dilemma. According to Muir et al. (2016), the UK public libraries are guided by Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) and use filtering software to control the use of websites. The purpose of filtering is to prevent Internet misuse, protect children from exposure to harmful material from the Internet and protect the image of the public libraries. The UK libraries also monitor the usage of the Internet through the library Internet server. Muir et al. (2016), in their review, did not consider filtering to be the best way to control the use of Internet services because it is in contravention of human rights policies. Besides, monitoring Internet usage through the server also raises concerns with the issue of privacy. However, Muir et al. (2016) indicate that libraries are still filtering and monitoring Internet usage because of their concern for the public.

Filtering library Internet has been a controversy. In an article on Internet filtering in the Ontario Public Library, Trosow (2011) argued that:

This project is not about restricting intellectual freedom. It is about reducing the risk of unintentional exposure of customers to images on computer screens in the library that is not appropriate in a public space specifically images that are violent or sexually explicit in nature, without compromising access to information such as consumer health or sexual education resources. It is very important to the Library

that we provide a welcoming space and positive experience for our customers while ensuring they have access to the information they need. (p. 9)

2.7.1 Examples of libraries that have an Internet policy

There are some libraries that already have Internet policies that are available in their libraries which guide the usage of the Internet, for instance the following libraries have Internet policies:

The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality Library Internet policy states that Internet users access the Internet at their own risk; the library does not have any control over contents from the Internet, the library does not guarantee virus free content from the Internet and cannot guarantee users' privacy when using the Internet (Chigumbu, 2017). The policy also states that accessing inappropriate websites will lead to the forfeiture of Internet usage privileges or they will be reported to the relevant authority. However, the library does not have the right to sensor information or restrict the usage of Internet content but the users are asked to adhere to library rules. The library Internet policy stipulates the following guidelines: Internet access usage policy is premised on a first come first served basis, each person has only one chance per day unless there is a computer that is available, the usage time is limited, users should adhere to copyright policies and they should respect each other's privacy. Regarding minor users, the policy specifies that parents must hold their children responsible.

Strand Public library Internet policy as it appears on the Western Cape Government (2018) website stipulated that only people who are registered members of Municipality libraries within the Western Cape can use the Internet. Limited time for accessing the Internet is 45 minutes per day per user. Parents or guardians hold the responsibility for their children when using the Internet.

Hornell Public Library (2018) has an Internet policy that is guided by the Federal Laws of Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and New York Civil Practice Law and Rules Section 4509, which gives users the right to access the Internet at their own risk but requires them to reference the owner of the information. According to the Hornell Public Library's (2018) Internet policy, the Internet user should not have an outstanding library fine, it is required that there be one person per computer and that every person should use the Internet for only one hour per day. The Hornell Public Library (2018) requires users to have library cards which are scanned before using the Internet. Visitors to the library are also required to sign the visitor's book before using the Internet. Parents of children using the Internet at the library are given the responsibility to guide their children when using the Internet.

Rahway Public Library (2018) provides computers that are connected to Internet and wireless network to library users and uses a commercial filtering service to control Internet access. The library's Internet policy includes a disclaimer clause that the library cannot guarantee the integrity of visited websites and it is up to the users to safeguard their personal information. Internet users are required to adhere to the policy of the website

they are visiting. The library outlines procedures to be followed when accessing the Internet, which are: users should register at the front desk before using the Internet, parents and guardians are responsible for their children who want to use the Internet, there is a limited time for using the Internet but if someone wants extra time they have to wait for a vacant workstation, and wireless Internet is available everywhere in the library (Rahway Public Library, 2018).

Leeds and The Thousand Islands Public Library's (2018) Internet policy states that: Internet users are responsible for all the information and what they post on the Internet, since computers are in the public lab, there is no privacy, and users should be responsible for what they display on the screen. However, staff members should detect inappropriate material on the screen and if the library user visits 'illegal pages', the library staff would intervene. The Internet policy stipulates those children under 12 years should be accompanied by their parents or guardian when using the Internet. If parents are not going to be present when their children are using the Internet, they are required to sign a parental responsibility form. The library Internet procedure also requires that Internet users first register at the front desk where they get the visitors' privileges and log-ins. Internet users are required to familiarise themselves with the copyright policy because the library will not be held responsible for any infringement. Library staff are available to guide the user on how to navigate the Internet and how to connect to the wireless Internet with personal devices but they will not be responsible for personal device configuration.

Kingston Frontenac Public Library (2016) also provides users with computers that are connected to the Internet and wireless access. The library Internet policy specifies that the library is not responsible for information obtained from the Internet, and users who want to use the Internet should present their card at the circulation desk. Library staff are available to help the users with the Internet and also to connect their personal devices to Wi-Fi services. The library filters some websites but the user has a right to ask for filtration to be removed. However, this does not give them the right to use inappropriate websites. If the user is found using an inappropriate website, he/she is banned from future usage. Internet access is limited but the user has the right to ask for extra time. Users are also expected to adhere to the copyright policy. Regarding children, Kingston Public Library is governed by the children's Internet Protection Act and prohibits children under the age of 17 from using the Internet without parents' or guardians' guidance; thus, children need a guardian that can guide them on how to use the Internet and for the parents to see what they are using the Internet for. Quick et al. (2013) report that libraries in Italy have policies that restrict users from downloading some materials using library Internet because this slows down the Internet traffic and they also prohibit users from connecting to video streaming.

This researcher, therefore, reviewed Internet policies of different libraries to compare with the policies that are available at ORL as this study aimed to investigate the policies that guided the free use of Internet services at the Omaha Regional Library and their impact on the staff and users.

2.8 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is a "general theoretical system with assumptions, concepts and specific social theories" (Neuman, 2011, p. 8). Barbie (2010) proffers that researchers make use of a theory to guide their study.

This study was guided by two theories, Kuhlthau's (2008) Information Search Processes (ISP) theory and Wilson's (1999) Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) theory and these were applied from the onset as part of the literature search, and the research methodology, up to the final conclusion and recommendations.

Kuhlthau's ISP theory describes a series of feelings, thoughts, and actions an information searcher undergoes during the initiation, selection, exploration, formulation, collection and presentation stages of a search process. According to Kuhlthau (2008), an information seeker experiences feelings of anxiety and uneasy thoughts, and searches for general information throughout the six stages of the searching process. However, uncertainty and uneasiness disappear as the person becomes more focused during the search process from a general topic to a specific topic. Kuhlthau, Heinstrom, and Todd (2007) confirm that Internet users also go through the same search processes when searching for information and this avails the relevance as to why this theory was regarded as the most appropriate for this study.

At the same time, the Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) theory by Wilson (1999) was also used to further guide and enhance this study as it relates to the information seeking behaviour of Internet users in particular and this study also attempted to observe the information seeking behaviour of Internet users at the ORL. The ISB theory by Wilson (1999) further explains the circumstances that predict the actions taken by people while

seeking for information. As per the ISB theory, the information seeking behaviour arises as a consequence of a need perceived by an information user. And in order to satisfy that need, the information user decides to search for the information either from formal or informal resources or services, which culminates into a successful or unsuccessful result. If the information searcher succeeds in getting the information, they make use of it but if they fail to succeed, they tolerate the failure. The theory also predicts that once the information seeker gets the information, they tend to use the information or exchange it with others. For purposes of this study, the Information Search Processes were designated to test how Internet users go through certain stages of searching for information from the Internet while applying the ISB theory. The two theories were combined to form the study's theoretical framework that underpinned the study. The ISP theory tested how Internet users go through certain stages when searching for information from the Internet, and the ISB theory informed the whole study regarding the information seeking behaviour of Internet users. Moreover Kuhlthau's ISB theory assisted in developing instruments as some of the questions asked in interview guides were guided by this theory. The researcher selected these two theories and combined them into a framework because they were the most suitable to guide this study in assessing the use of free Internet services at the ORL.

2.9 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed and discussed literature regarding the provision of Internet services in public libraries within a national and international context. The literature reviewed revealed that users used the Internet for socialising, educational purposes, health matters and for searching for work. Some Internet users were satisfied with the provision of free

Internet services while others were not. The provision of free Internet impacted Internet users in so many ways, and yet Internet users encountered some difficulties when using the Internet and the literature also showed that there are policies at some libraries that guide the use of free Internet services. The chapter ended with the theoretical framework selected to guide the study. The following chapter (Chapter 3) explains in detail the methodology used to carry out the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study's methodology was briefly dealt with in Chapter One, and this chapter (Chapter Three) explains in detail the research methodology used to carry out the study. The research design for the study is covered more in detail; then the chapter elaborates more on the case study design, discusses different research paradigms, explains what qualitative research entails, the composition of the population of the study, how the study sample was selected, instruments used to collect the data for the study, what procedures the researcher followed to collect the data, the ethical considerations used during the study and the summary of the chapter.

3.1.1 Research paradigms

According to Kuhn (1970), research paradigms are “a set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed” (p. 18). It is what the researcher understands and what guides them when doing research. Moreover, Maree and Van Der Westerhuizen (2009) explain paradigms as the ways in which researchers view and understand the world, whereas Creswell (2013) understands paradigms as a philosophical assumption that researchers follow when carrying out studies. Creswell (2013) further explained that paradigms are characterised by different components; “ontology (what is reality), epistemology (how the researcher

knows the reality) and methodology (how the researcher goes about finding the reality)” (p. 21). Paradigms are also divided into different types that are summarised as follows (Creswell, 2013):

1. **Positivism** - In this paradigm, the researcher believes that there is only one reality which can be measured and positivist researchers tend to use quantitative research to find out that reality.
2. **Constructivist** – In this paradigm, the researcher understands that there is no single reality, instead knowledge should be built and interpreted in different ways. This paradigm mostly uses qualitative research methods to understand the phenomenon deeply.
3. **Pragmatism** - This paradigm focuses on the research problem and uses all the available methods to tackle the problem, this paradigm tends to use mixed methods to study the phenomenon.
4. **Descriptive** – this paradigm focus on describing the problem to understand the phenomenon and the barrier that existing. Case study that aiming to unpack all aspects of a single event in order to identify the characteristics, dynamite, cause and effect fall under descriptive paradigm

In this single case study, the researcher opted for descriptive approach paradigm to access the experience, and opinion of ORL staff and Internet users so as to find out the main reason and impact of Internet provision.

3.2 Research design

A research design is a procedural way in which data are collected and analysed. According to Kothari (2004), a research design “is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure” (p. 31). The research design details all the steps taken when the data are collected. Kumar (2011) mentioned two main objectives of research design that are namely: the researcher should identify and develop procedural and logistical arrangements needed for the undertaking of the study and should ensure that the arrangements taken make it possible to obtain valid, accurate and objective answers. The research design should outline the logistical process and journey of the study, what type of study design will be used and why, who the respondents of the study are, how they will be selected, how the information is going to be collected and how it is going to be analysed.

This study followed a single case study design, which adopted the constructivist research paradigm, thereby applying a qualitative research approach. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and participant observations were used as data collection methods. Below is the detailed explanation of the research design of this study.

3.2.1 Case study

Yin (2009) defined a case study as an in-depth research which aims to understand a related phenomenon. According to Yin (2009), a case study can be used to investigate real-life

events of organisations or individuals. Tight (2017) stated that a case study involves the study of a specific case that is multifaceted and limited, and the case is studied in its natural environment and the analysis undertaken seeks to be holistic.

Kumar (2011) and also Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) stressed on the limitations of a case study, that is, the researcher has little or no control over the situation. Yin (2009) also added that case study researchers are able to collect data with a variety of instruments, for instance interviews, documentations and observations. However, Blanche et al. (2006) emphasised on the weaknesses of a case study, that is, it cannot be generalised to another phenomenon with the same situation, and there is a possibility of researcher bias during data collection and data analysis. This study assessed the ORL as a single case, as part of the research design in order to understand the usage and impact of free Internet services in a public library setup. The researcher used interviews, focus group discussions and observations as data collection instruments and these aided in availing an in-depth understanding of the ORL, specifically with regards to the aspects under investigation, which is premised in using a single case study design. However, the findings from this study were not generalised to other Regional Libraries.

3.2.2 Qualitative research

This study used a qualitative research approach to study the usage and impact of free Internet services at the ORL. According to Blanche et al. (2006), qualitative research is an in-depth and detailed study which allows the researcher to study certain selected issues

and to understand all the details that emerge from the data collected. Blanche et al. (2006) further emphasise that qualitative research collects data in the form of spoken and written languages or in the form of recorded voices and observations. In addition, Kumar (2011) adds that qualitative research focuses on “understanding, explaining, exploring, discovering and clarifying situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people” (p. 104).

Creswell (2014) also adds more value by explaining that qualitative data is collected in a natural setting where participants have experience and the data is collected with multiple resources such as observations, interviews, documentation and audio-visual resources. According to Creswell (2014), a qualitative researcher focuses on learning the meanings from emerging information. Data collected with qualitative methods are analysed by identifying and categorising them (Creswell, 2014).

Against this literature guidance, the researcher selected qualitative data collection instruments and methods because this was found to be most appropriate to understand the in-depth usage and impact of free Internet services through observing and carrying out of interviews at the ORL. This study specifically employed interviews, observations and focus group discussions as data collection methods. According to Creswell (2009), the use of multiple methods (triangulation) can help to overcome the weaknesses of a single method and it enhances the reliability of the study. In using observations, interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher triangulated through the use of these methods.

Population

The population of a study is described by Kothari (2004) “as a complete set of elements with common characteristics as stipulated in sampling methods where the researcher is drawing conclusions” (p. 158). The population of the study is where the findings are applied. Part of the study’s elements of interest were staff members in the ICT Department and Business and Research Department as well as the ORL Internet users. The library visitors in the year 2018 (the year the data was collected) were 25147 (Coward, Fellows, Rothschild, & Yim, 2020), while staff members consisted of 11 staff members: one (1) Senior Librarian, five (5) Librarians, four (4) Library Assistants and one (1) Senior IT Technician (Yim et al., 2020). However, only the IT technician from the ICT department and one Librarian and a Library Assistant from the Business and Research Department were dealing with Internet users specifically.

3.3 Sample

Kumar (2011) defines a sample as the selected number of elements drawn from the population of interest to make it possible to collect data, while sampling is the process of selecting elements from the desired number from the populations of the study. Bless et al. (2006) define sampling as “a technical accounting device to rationalize the collection of information, to choose in an appropriate way the restricted set of objects, persons, events and so forth from which the actual information will be drawn” (p. 97). Collecting data from the whole population is time-consuming and expensive that is why it is needed to draw a certain portion to collect data from. Kumar (2011) proffers that study sampling saves time, it is cheap, it does not require a large number of interviewers and it seems to

be the only option since it is not possible to test or conduct a study on the whole population, instead the study will predict or assume information for other elements which were not included in the study. However, the researcher needs to be careful when sampling to avoid sampling errors. Kumar (2011) adds that if there is a difference between the sample size and the population, sampling error occurs and the information collected will not be a true representation of the population.

The researcher decided to interview librarians from the ICT Department and Business and Research Department because they are the ones dealing directly with Internet users. However, the researcher interviewed only one staff member from the ICT Department because the other staff member had resigned from the library, which is a slight deviation from what was proposed; and the researcher also interviewed two Librarians from the Business and Research Department. Additionally, this study used the purposive sampling method to sample two groups of seven respondents for the focus group discussions, totalling to 14 participants (a group of seven teenagers and a group of seven adult Internet users), and 10 Internet users were observed. The researcher decided to focus more on teenagers and adults of all genders as they were the regular users of the Internet in the library. The Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method where the elements of the study are selected because of their characteristics and for the purpose of the study (Flick, 2009). The same method was used to sample library staff members for interviews, however, with the help of the Business and Research staff members, the Accidental sampling method was also used to select specific Internet users for the focus group discussion based on their availability at the time. Accidental sampling method is a non-

probability sampling methods where the elements of interest selected because they are available at the time of the study (Flick, 2009). Accidental sampling was used in that the researcher approached Internet users that came to use the Internet that day in the ORL, by seeking permission if they were interested to take part in the study. The researcher used this method until the targeted number for focus group discussion participants was reached as well as those who agreed to participate in the focus group discussion later. The study purposively sampled the population because it saves time and it was difficult to study the whole population of Omaheke Library Internet users. The researcher purposively selected specific Internet users, one staff from the ICT Department and two Librarians from the Business and Research Department because their experience with Internet at the Omaheke Regional Library fitted well with the purpose of the study.

3.4 Research Instruments

Research instruments include all the measurement tools that are used to collect data for the study. According to Creswell (2009), the validity of the data collected depends on the type of instruments selected to collect data. Creswell (2009), however, advised researchers to select a proper instrument with which to collect valuable information. This study used a semi-structured interview guide to collect data from the ICT Department, Business and Research Department staff members and also to collect data from the focus group discussion respondents. The researcher also designed a checklist to record the data obtained when the researcher observed the skills and habits of Internet users of the Omaheke Regional Library.

3.4.1 Interviews

Interviews, according to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006), is the direct contact of two people: the respondent and the researcher asking questions related to the research. Interviews are excellent for establishing a relationship and they allow the researcher to gain rich information about various phenomena (Miller & Brewer, 2003). This study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from participants. According to Kumar (2011), a semi-structured interview consists of questions related to the topic, but the interviewee's response largely determines the direction of the interview. Kumar (2011) emphasised that a semi-structured interview can allow the researcher to adopt a non-directive, almost conversation style. A semi-structured interview is a better method for studying perceptions and attitudes and it is motivational; the respondent can be motivated to continue and clarify more on the answers (Bless et al., 2006). The method helps the researcher to explain ideas and problems in depth and it allows for the formation of possible answers. It also facilitates the construction of more questions. This current study the researcher designed two set of interview guides according to the participants; the interview guide for focus group discussion and the other one for staff members. The interviewer/ researcher facilitates the interviews; this gives more chances for the researcher to probe more on the issue depending on the participants' answer. Moreover, Bless et al. (2006) stress that the weakness of the method is that the quality of information obtained depends on the skills and confidence of the interviewer, and also the fact that the interview is expensive and time-consuming. However, in this study the researcher took notes during the interviews and also used the digital recorder after obtaining the consent from the participants. The digital recording helped to catch the conversation and it was used during data analysis.

3.4.2 Interview Guide

The researcher set two types of interview guide, one for focus group discussion and the other one for library staff. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions that was set to inform the researcher and also to help the researcher not divert from the study or become bias. According to Kumar (2011) interview guide helps the researcher to focus and not to go out of the topic. The interview guide questions were set to answer all the research questions. The guide was set according to these themes delivered from the research questions: Reason for using the Internet; users' level of satisfaction with the provision of the Internet; impact of free Internet services on the users; policies that exist at ORL regarding the usage of the Internet as well as Internet usage monitored, Internet usage challenges and general comments regarding the usage of Internet.

3.4.3 Observation

The study also employed participant observations as a form of data collection method. According to Kothari (2004), observation is a “purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place” (p. 140). This study used participant observation, which, according to Kothari (2004), happens when the researcher is attached to the group observed and becomes a member while observing the situation. The advantage of observation is that it limits the researcher from being biased because the researcher observes the current situation and records what is happening at that moment and also this method generates primary information (Kothari, 2004). During observation, the researcher gains more information through experience and can verify the truth mentioned during interviews (Kothari, 2004). This study, the researcher informed

the participants about the study and gained their consent before observation. The researcher used a checklist that was designed according to the themes delivered from the researcher questions. Powell and Connaway (2004) add that during observation, the researcher can identify the behaviours and actions which were not mentioned during interviews because the respondents possibly regarded them as unimportant. Kothari (2014) outlined the disadvantages of participant observation, that, some participants may change their behaviour to positive or negative when they find out that they are being observed and the observer may also become biased if he or she is not impartial. However, the current study did not attempt to ask sensitive questions which could lead to respondents changing their behaviour and the researcher tried her level best to be objective.

The researcher selected these instruments because they complement each other and using more than one instrument to collect data increases the validity of the information collected (Bless et al., 2006). The research instruments were piloted in a different community. The pre-testing of the study was to ensure that questions were understandable. Creswell (2009) supports the pre-testing of research instruments, as it enhances the trustworthiness of the data. Pre-testing also increases the reliability of the study. According to Creswell (2009), for the research instruments to be deemed as reliable, instruments should yield the same data under different circumstances. These questions were addressed as follows:

The pilot study was done at Rehoboth Community library; a focus group discussions was done with a group of teenagers' Internet users and a group of adult users. The researcher

learned that some of the questions were duplicated and learned on how to phrase questions for the interviewees to understand.

3.5 Procedure

A procedure is a way in which the researcher goes about collecting information. A procedure is a practical arrangement that the researcher organises in order to get entry into the site and contact with the relevant respondents. Blanche et al. (2006) states that a procedure includes how the researcher gains entry to conduct the research, how the researcher obtains participant consent and how the researcher obtains permission to conduct the study.

For this study, the researcher wrote a letter (Appendix C) to seek authorisation from the Chief Librarian in charge of the Omaheke Regional Library to conduct the study in the library, but had to redirect the letter to the Director of Education for Omaheke Region, as the Chief Librarian was not available. Permission was granted (Appendix D) and the researcher organised an individual meeting with the staff of the ICT Department and Librarians in the Business and Research Section to brief them on the study, and sought their permission to participate in the study, and the staff members interviewed were given the consent forms (Appendix G) to sign.

The researcher selected the focus group participants, according to their proposed categories; a group of seven adult Internet users and a group of seven teenage Internet

users and organised meetings, to brief them about the study and sought their consent to take part in the study. The researcher informed the focus group participants about the purpose of the study and also their rights to participate in the study. Those who agreed to take part in the study were given the consent form to sign. All the meetings with focus group participants were held in one of the halls in the library. However, the researcher interviewed only six adult Internet users because the seventh one, who had agreed to take part in the study, could not make it to the discussion because he had an urgent meeting. The researcher also arranged with the Business and Research Department staff members and Internet users to be able to observe the Internet users when using the Internet. Moreover, the researcher obtained written consent from each and every individual Internet user, who agreed to be observed while they used the Internet. The researcher sat down with the Internet users one by one and observed them with their consent.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis is the process through which the researcher organises the data to find meaning and interpret the data.

According to Bogdan and Biklem (1992):

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field notes and other materials that you accumulate to increase your own understanding of them and to enable you to present what you have discovered to others. The analysis involves working with data, organising them, breaking them into manageable units, synthesising them, searching for

patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned and deciding what you will tell the others. (p. 153)

The researcher segmented the data into small portions, then coded them in order to find meanings and patterns. According to Kumar (2011), the process involved identifying main themes that emerge from interviews, field notes transcripts, and observations, assigning codes to the main themes, classifying responses under the main themes and integrating themes and responses into the text of the report.

This study used content analysis as the technique to analyse data from semi structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations.

Content analysis is a method that is used to analyse communicated data. Wildemuth (2009) stated that “any information recorded and captured in a fixed manner on paper, audio or video can be analysed with content analysis” (p. 309). It is an analysing method that is used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts in a document. Content analysis is a process of organising, coding and summarising data in order to come up with themes responding to the statement of the problem and research questions (Flick, 2009). Barbie (2010) adds that content analysis “involves coding – transforming raw data into categories based on some conceptual schemes, coding may attend to both manifest and latent content” (p. 298). It is an appropriate method that is used to analyse qualitative data

because it focuses on concepts rather than simple words and also concentrates on semantic relationships rather than just word presence.

According to Flick (2009), content analysis also helps in reducing the amount of information accumulated during data collection and it is systematic. When analysing the data, the researcher needs to focus and pay attention to every detail and single unit of the transcript in order to identify patterns and meaning of every word mentioned during data collection. Flick (2009) also emphasises that content analysis is flexible and allows the researcher to match different data. The researcher used content analysis to organise, code and summarise data collected from interviews, focus groups and observations, and identified patterns and meaningful words related to the research questions and presented the information obtained. The researcher selected the content analysis technique to analyse the data because all the data collected were communicated and recorded.

3.7 Trustworthiness of data

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2005) assert that qualitative researchers should design and incorporate methodological strategies to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. According to Noble and Smith (2015), the validity and reliability of quantitative research cannot be applied to qualitative research, thus trustworthiness in qualitative data were often criticised through citing the fact that it lacks scientific rigor and transparency in procedures and as such the findings were often labelled as the opinion of the researcher. However, Noble and Smith (2015) suggest some criteria that demonstrate validity and

reliability in qualitative data: truth value being the same as validity, whereas consistency and neutrality mean the same as reliability, and applicability mean the same as generalisability in quantitative research. Moreover, Lincoln and Guba (1985) also suggest some alternative criteria that are equivalent to validity and reliability in quantitative research that can be used to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the data: Credibility - determined by the use of different methods/instruments. Dependability and Conformability - determined by pretesting of instruments to cover up the shortfalls that may arise between instruments

To maintain the trustworthiness of this study, the researcher used different research instruments (triangulation) to collect data. According to Bless et al. (2006), the use of different research instruments (triangulation) enhanced the trustworthiness of data because one instrument can compensate the weaknesses of the other. Moreover, according to Kumar (2011), pre-testing of instruments can determine the strength and the weaknesses of the instruments. Kumar (2011) stresses more on the idea that pre-testing of instruments should be conducted in circumstances that are as similar as possible to actual data collection and on population members as similar as possible to those that will be sampled. The instruments for this study were pre-tested in a community library offering similar services.

3.8 Research ethics

Research ethics involved all the acceptable manners exercised during the study. The University of Manchester (2018) defined research ethics as:

A world-wide set of principles governing the way any research involving interaction between the researcher and other humans or human tissue or data relating to humans, is designed, managed and conducted. In preparing a research project, the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of human respondents must at all times be considered, respected and safeguarded. (para.1)

Resnik (2015) adds that ethics are methods, procedures, or perspectives, which a researcher adheres to when doing the research. The purpose of research ethics is to protect everyone involved in the study. Research ethics consists of principles which the researcher has to consider before conducting the research.

Powell and Connaway (2004) outline the core ethical principles that the researcher should adhere to:

- **Consent form:** the researcher should explain in detail the purpose of the study and ask people to sign the consent form; the agreement between the respondent and the researcher.
- **Beneficence:** the study should benefit the community where it is conducted.
- **Harmless:** the study should not harm the community and the study itself.

- **Confidential:** the issue of confidentiality should be respected by using anonymity and removing all personal information.
- **Respondent right:** the researcher should inform the respondents about their right to participate or not participate and should respect the right of the respondent.

In the context of this study, the ethical issues were addressed in the following manner:

The researcher obtained ethical clearance from the University of Namibia and adhered to the policy guidelines in this regard. At Omaheke Regional Library where the data was collected, the researcher engaged the respondents and sensitised them about the purpose of the research and introduced herself to all the participants and explained to the participants that she was a former staff member of the Omaheke Regional Library but this would not affect any part of the study. Internet users observed were also informed about the purpose of the observation before they agreed to participate. Moreover, special permission was sought from the respondents to be recorded during interviews. However, the researcher was prepared to take notes at all times if there was a respondent that did not feel comfortable to be recorded during the interviews. Respondents were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary and confidentiality was guaranteed by coding the respondents and not mentioning their names during the analysis of the findings. Respondents were informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any negative consequences and they were assured of utmost confidentiality, respondents were asked to sign a consent form before participating in the study. This study did not ask sensitive information, and the research instruments were scrutinised by the University of Namibia Ethics Committee to make sure that all the questions adhered to

ethical principles and that there were no offensive questions. The interview transcripts and voice recordings will be kept for a minimum of 5 years after the submission of the final report (University of South Africa, 2016) in a locked cabinet and only the researcher will have access to it.

3.9 Evaluation of the methodology

The study used multiple methods to collect data which yielded a lot of information. The weakness of one data collection method was countered by the other. The data collected provided the researcher with a lot of information that gave a picture of how the Internet was used and how it impacted the lives of Omaheke Regional Library Internet users. It was easier for the researcher to organise the interviews; however, it was difficult to organise the focus group discussions because people came to the library with plans on what they were going to do and some had already planned how much time they were going to spend in the library. Moreover, after the research organised the focus group discussions, one of the adult focus discussion participants did not show up due to other commitments. It was a little bit of a disappointment, however, the researcher continued with the discussion as it did not affect much of the discussion. The observation was also difficult because some people did not trust strangers especially being observed on what they were doing. However, the researcher explained to them the purpose of the study and eventually they agreed to take part in the study. Sampling techniques used for this study were convenient and all the data collection instruments used for this study were applicable because they provided the researcher with enough information. The procedures and ethics used for this study gave participants confidence to provide the information needed because

the respondents found out that the study was official and not harmful in any form. The method used to analyse the data collected was appropriate even though it was a little bit difficult and time-consuming to analyse recorded data because the researcher had to listen carefully and go back to the transcript more than four times to verify what had been said.

3.10 Chapter summary

This chapter described the research methodology and specific research methods used to carry out the study. This study used a single case study design following a qualitative approach, adopted a constructivist research paradigm and used interviews, observations and focus group discussions to collect data. The chapter further explained the population of the study, the sampling techniques used for the study and procedures carried out to obtain the information of the study. The chapter ended by discussing how data were collected and analysed, how ethical issues were observed and applied during the study and also the evaluation of the study methodology. The following chapter presents the analysis and presentation of the data findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and presentation of the findings collected during the interviews, focus group discussions and observations from staff members and Internet users at the ORL. The purpose of the study was to assess the usage of free Internet services at the ORL. This section links the research questions with the themes delivered from the research questions of this study. To ensure the anonymity of the interviewees and protect the identity of participants, the letters and numerical numbers **SM1, SM2 and SM3 (Staff Member)** were used to present the data collected from the purposively selected staff members. Even though the staff members were purposively selected, the arrangements on which the interviews took place were determined by the availability of the staff members as already explained. The sequence that was adopted to represent the arrangement of staff members followed a chronological order during which the interviews took place; the researcher interviewed the staff members depending on who was available at the time of the interview and not according to their ranking. Moreover, to protect the identity of focus group discussion participants, the letters and numbers as a part of coding **FG1 and FG2 (Focus Group)** were used.

The theoretical framework of the study was underpinned by both the ISP theory that tested how Internet users go through certain stages when searching for information from the Internet and the ISB theory that informed the whole study regarding the information seeking behaviour of Internet users.

This study used a semi-structured interview guide to collect data from the ICT Department, Business and Research Department staff members and also to collect data from the focus group discussion respondents. The researcher also designed an observational checklist to record the data when the researcher observed the skills and habits of Internet users of the ORL. The researcher designed separate questions for focus group discussions and interviews that were phrased differently to suit the respective groups. The interview guides were designed to address the research questions and the information obtained from the interviews were verbally cited. Data obtained from interviews informed all the research questions, however data from observations informed only research question number 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. Moreover, the data collected from both the interviews and observations were integrated so as to avoid any repetition of data.

The main research question of this study was: What is the usage and impact of free Internet services at the Omaheke Regional Library? Sub-questions were:

1. What is the main reason for using Internet services?
2. How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services?
3. What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet?
4. What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?
5. What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the Internet usage?

The chapter is organised according to the themes based on research questions and those that emerged from the content analysis technique applied and they are listed as follows:

- Reason for using the Internet;

- The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services;
- Internet usage challenges;
- Impacts as well as risks associated with using the Internet;
- Internet policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage; and
- Suggestions on how to improve the provision of the Internet.

4.2 Reason for using the Internet

This section sought answers to the research question: **What is the main reason for using Internet Service?** The section is organised according to interview questions.

4.2.1 The reasons why users used the Internet and what influenced them to use the Internet

In response to the research question: What is the main reason for using the Internet? The staff members SM1, SM2 and SM3 interviewed divided Internet usage into two aspects; socialising (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube) and educational (studying, search for tertiary education, and homework). The respondents indicated that some Internet users in the library used the Internet for socialising, while others used the Internet for educational purposes.

SM1 mentioned that the usage of the Internet depended on the age groups:

“...adult users from the age of 20 upwards mostly used the Internet for email, searching applications for studying, searching for online applications of tertiary institutions, database containing articles, while young users from the age of 10 to

19 used the Internet mostly for socialising, that is, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and to do their school works”.

SM1, SM2 and SM3 also mentioned that business people came to the library to use the Internet for business purposes, and to learn how to write business proposal and different ideas on how to start a business and keep it growing.

A library user who took part in the FG1 indicated that they used the Internet for social media (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.), educational purposes (looking for scholarships, searching for information on tertiary institutions and applying online to tertiary institutions), searching for jobs and also to find important information from the Internet, for instance, reading newspapers and watching news. FG1 and FG2 participants added that they mostly liked to visit websites related to education and business. However, those who wanted general information used Google search because that was the only search engine they knew or were familiar with. However, not all the computers have access to social media (Facebook, and YouTube) as social media services are blocked from some of the computers that are reserved for educational purposes only.

Focus group discussion participants mentioned that they were motivated to use the Internet because it was free and the library was closer to the community as they can easily visit the library and it was the only nearest public library that offers free Internet services.

The researcher also used observation as a method of data collection and found out that library users used the Internet for different purposes, namely, educational and socialising. The researcher observed four youth Internet users who were using Google to search for tertiary institutions' application forms, as applications were open at the time of collecting data. The researcher also observed elderly Internet users searching for business plans and school-going children library users using the Internet for homework, watching online videos and playing online games.

4.2.2 User's knowledge of using the Internet

To add more information to the research question: What is the main reason for using the Internet services? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they indicated that 90% of the youth who visited the library knew how to use the Internet and only a few school-going children and elderly people asked for guidance on how to use the Internet. However, SM1 added that:

“... People who came to the library to use the Internet for educational purposes also asked for guidance on how to go to specific websites or how to perform a search on a certain website. For instance, people who wanted to apply to tertiary educational institutions asked for guidance on how to upload their qualifications or an assignment and how to download and attach emails”.

However, contrary to the above, the researcher observed that the school-going children knew what they wanted from the Internet and they easily got it and also the elderly persons who were surfing the Internet knew how to use the Internet. Only those who were applying

to tertiary institutions sought help to upload their documents. Moreover, the researcher also observed that the Internet was very slow, hence, Internet users had to wait for long periods for their documents to upload and some of them gave up because they were tired of waiting.

The Internet users used simple search strategies by typing whole sentences of what they were searching from the Internet.

4.2.3 The usage of Internet services at ORL

SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they responded to the research question: What is the main reason for using the Internet services? SM1, SM2 and SM3 indicated that the usage of the Internet was very high since the library Internet usage was free.

“...because the library was the only one in Gobabis, which provided free Internet services to the community. The community depended on the library for all its Internet needs” (staff member 1 added).

However, FG1 and two respondents indicated that the Internet services in the library were quite poor and unreliable. The participant indicated, slow speed and low bandwidth.

4.3 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of the Internet services

The following section sought answers to the research question: **How satisfied are users with the provision of Internet services?** The section is organised according to interview questions.

4.3.1 Reasons for being satisfied or not satisfied with the provision of the Internet services

To answer to the research question: How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services? SM1, SM2 and SM3, who took part in the study were of the opinion that some users were satisfied, while others were not satisfied with the provision of the Internet in the Library. Thus, SM1 indicated that:

“...due to the frequent fluctuation of the Internet, it becomes difficult for the users to rely on the Internet services at the library”.

Moreover, SM3 and SM2 revealed that the Internet was also very slow, so much so that sometimes the users cannot finish uploading a document before the time allowed to use the Internet per user is up, the bandwidth was not enough and the speed of the Internet which is inconsistent.

SM2 continued explaining that:

“... The more people used the Internet the slower the speed. This is one of the main causes of Internet users’ dissatisfaction”.

SM1 further indicated that:

“...Users who visited the library with the purpose of watching YouTube videos or downloading music and other things were not satisfied because they complained about the slow speed of the Internet and that they could not access some of the websites that was blocked, but those who visited the library to do simple searches seemed satisfied”.

Internet users who took part in the FG1 and FG2 mentioned that they were not satisfied with the provision of the free Internet services because:

- Computers in the library were not enough to accommodate the number of people who wanted to use the Internet;
- The Wi-Fi hotspots were limited and could only accommodate a certain number of devices at a time;
- One focus group discussion participant cited time allocation as one of the contributing factors to the users' level of dissatisfaction and said the following:

“...sometimes you want to do a very important research or you are typing an assignment but the time allocation is only 30 minutes, someone cannot finish a UNAM assignment in 30 minutes. You need at least four hours to search and type”.

- The Internet in the library was not always functioning as another participant from GF2 added as follows:

“...Sometimes you travel from a very long distance to the library to send an important email and you find out that the Internet is off”.

Moreover, the researcher also observed that there were only a few computers on the corridor, and at the business section only three computers were working, and there were people who were waiting for others to finish using the computers so that they could get a chance.

To shed more light on the research question: How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services? Internet users at the ORL who participated in FG1 and FG2 continue mentioned that more factors that cause dissatisfaction in using the Internet was the blocking of some websites, for example, YouTube and Facebook from some computers. The users argued that:

“... It is not always that YouTube is used for leisurely, watching movies and video, as users sometimes want to learn something educational from YouTube”.

SM1 said that the reason why the library blocked some websites was to reduce the traffic and also mentioned that the library has a few computers in comparison to the number of community members that intend to use the computers.

SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they further indicated that researchers were also not satisfied because the library did not have specific educational databases that they could use for research, and Staff member 3 added that:

“..... researchers ended up spending most of their time searching on Google and this was time consuming, and they sometimes did not get what they wanted or finishing their research”.

SM1 indicated that those who came with their laptops sometimes could not connect their Internet-enabled devices to the Internet because the Wi-Fi was limited, to accommodate only a certain number of devices at the same time. The Internet became slow once too many users were simultaneously online with too many devices or if people started downloading various applications, videos or documents. Moreover, SM1, SM2 and SM3 who took part in the study explained that the library determined the users' level of

satisfaction through complaints from the suggestion box placed next to the IT department, which they opened every Friday and also when Internet users complained to staff members specifically.

4.4 Internet usage challenges

This section sheds more light on the difficulties encountered by Internet users at the ORL. The section sought to answer the research question: **What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet?** The section is organised according to interview questions.

4.4.1 Challenges faced by library staff and Internet users in using the Internet

To answer to the research question: What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet? The library staff members SM1, SM2 and SM3 interviewed and they stressed that the main challenge that the library encountered in providing free Internet services to the community was the high usage of the Internet. The Internet bill had increased to a level that the management found it difficult to pay, until the service provider disconnected the Internet service in the library. SM3 revealed that:

“It took the library management at least four months to gather the money to pay off the bill”.

However, eventually the management paid off the bill, thus the management decided to reduce the bandwidth to the level the library budget can cover and this resulted in reduced speed also. The reduction of the bill caused the Internet to no longer be sufficient to accommodate all the users.

Other challenges the library staff and the users faced is associated with the provision of Internet services as indicated by both SM1, SM2, SM3 and focus group discussion participants were as follows:

- Speed of the Internet: but this was caused by, whenever the library was overcrowded the Internet was slower than usual and users were unable to finish what they were doing.
- Behaviour of the library staff members, however SM1 revealed that this happened because the library had different sections. SM1 added that users did not know whom to talk to/ approach or who was responsible for which section. Users asked for help from any staff member they came across.
- Time allocation for using the Internet was one of the main challenges also because sometimes research needed more time to search for information
- The arrangement of the computers was also a challenge because it was difficult for a user to concentrate while the next person was watching a video
- The number of computers in the library kept on decreasing in numbers. The computers were no longer enough to accommodate all Internet users
- Some people only came to the Omaheke Regional Library because they had heard that there was free Internet but they did not know how to use the Internet; while some did not know what they wanted from the Internet. People just came to the library to learn how to utilise the Internet service which was free.

4.4.2 Measures aimed at assisting Internet users

To answer the research question: What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they mentioned what the library did to assist the Internet users of the library to overcome the challenges they faced when using the Internet. They assist the Internet user with the basics on how to use the Internet, encouraged/ advised users to join computer training, which the library is providing to the community and they also advised people to approach different staff members for assistance on how to use the Internet;

The Internet users that participated in the FG1 and FG2 suggested the following measures to alleviate the challenges faced with Internet usage in the library:

- Increase the Internet bandwidth, so that it can accommodate every person that wants to use the Internet
- The library should also increase Wi-Fi hotspots for the people who want to connect their own devices
- Library staff members need customer care training in order to learn how to help users
- The library needs to do a user survey to listen to users' complaints in order to improve their services
- The library should come up with a system where by users buy Internet tokens so that the system can allow users to use the Internet as much as they want

- When staff members allocate computers to users, they should consider who is sitting next to each other because it is difficult to concentrate if the person doing research is sitting next to the person watching something from YouTube
- Internet usage should be regulated in order to reduce the bill, thus downloading should be limited
- Staff members should move around more frequently to monitor the usage or abuse of the Internet
- The library management needs to use the assistance of interns more often to help with monitoring Internet usage
- Community members need training to understand how the Internet works. A few users, especially elderly people, ask for clarification of information they get from the Internet

4.5 Impacts as well as risks associated with using the Internet

This section sought answers to the research question: **What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?** The section is organised according to interviews questions.

4.5.1 Importance of free Internet services to the users

SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they responded to the research question: What is the impact of free Internet services to the users? Both staff members revealed that the provision of Internet services in the library was very important because it gave access to marginalised communities in the area who had never used the Internet before and also to poor people, who cannot afford access to the Internet; community members used the

Internet for academic purposes they no longer need to travel long distances to seek Internet services, their academic performance also improved because they used the Internet to study and search for information. Moreover, Internet users were now able to fix different DIY materials because of the knowledge they gained from the Internet.

Internet users in the library that took part in the focus group discussions added that computers and free Internet services were important to the community since the world is moving from manual to digital, and people need access to the Internet and computers to keep abreast with new technology. A participant from FG2 also emphasised that:

“...The provision of centrally located Internet services is very important to the community since most of the people cannot afford Internet services in their homes and relied on the Omaheke Regional Library for their Internet needs”.

4.5.2 The impact of free Internet services on users

SM1, SM2 and SM3 that participated in the study responded in the following way to the research question: What is the impact of free Internet services to the users? SM1, SM2 and SM3 indicated that the provision of Internet in the library has positively impacted the lives of people such as education, socialising as well as businesses. SM1 indicated that through the provision of the Internet the knowledge is transferred:

“...Sometimes Internet users asked assistance but once you showed them how the thing is done, they also showed others”.

SM3 also mentioned that:

“... Internet users benefited from the Internet by learning new development in the society for example new fashions and current news affairs. Some people learned how to cook, farming and to do things with their hands from the Internet. Internet users also learned how to write business proposals from the Internet. The provision of free Internet services in the Omaheke Regional Library brought considerable development to the region by providing free access to the Internet as most of the people in the region are interested on farming and entrepreneurship the provision of the Internet made it possible for people to learn about farming and business”.

FG1 and FG2 participants pointed out that people learnt many skills from the Internet such as farming, entrepreneurship and how to search for information from the Internet.

A member of the FG2 participants also stressed that:

“The provision of free Internet reduced the costs, as people did not need to use their money to buy data to use the Internet or take a taxi to town. They could only walk a short distance to the library to use free Internet”

The provision of free Internet services improved users' lives through education.

SM2 mentioned that:

“.... People studying through distance mode benefited from using the Internet, as they used the Internet to upload their assignments and connect with their supervisors. They also used the Internet to research for general and educational information. Access to free Internet also improved the users' social lives because

they could connect with friends and family living afar through Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media”.

SM1 added that:

“...The library free Internet services empowered people in many ways. For instance, people that could not afford to buy newspapers were able to read newspapers online in order to stay in touch with current affairs, search for job and vacancies and people that cannot afford to pay for manual application for tertiary education were able to apply online through the library free Internet provision. Some people also improved their education by using the Internet to study on line and search for information to do their assignments”.

FG1 and FG2 participants added that the provision of free Internet opened their minds as they learnt a lot from the Internet and improved their skills on how to use computers. The use of the Internet also improved their skills, for instance, fixing things from the experience they got from YouTube through Do It Yourself (DIY) videos. The Internet also improved their academic performance because they used the Internet to search for information for their assignments and preparing them for examinations.

4.5.3 Risks associated with the provision of Internet services

To answer to the research question: What is the impact of free Internet services to the users? SM1, SM2 and SM3 indicated that young people were at risk of exposure to unwanted content from the Internet because there was no one to monitor them when using

the Internet. They also added that the Internet is a global network where everyone has access and rights to upload anything they want. SM2 indicated that:

“...even though children under the age of 12 were supposed to be accompanied by parents or guardian to guide them when using the Internet this was not a case at ORL, there were no parental guidance at the library to watch over the children when using the Internet especially with Wi-Fi, even children used the Internet at their own risk”.

SM1, SM2 and SM3 pointed out some of the risks associated with Internet use, which were that the more people learnt different things from accessing the Internet, the more they tried to practice what they learnt from the Internet; for example, they tried to infect the computers with viruses or want to hack other people’s accounts. SM1 added that:

“.... Sometimes elderly people, who come to do Internet banking at the library, were also at risk, they asked for assistance from strangers and or they forgot to log out from their sessions which make them vulnerable to fraud because the next person could use their accounts”.

SM1 further gave the example of one old man who used the Internet to do Internet banking and forgot to log out his account. Luckily, the ICT staff noticed it and logged out the computer. Some people, because of naughtiness, just came to the library to use the free Internet for fun.

SM2 pointed out that the provision of free Internet in the library is also a risk to the building:

“...Before the library staff decided to set the Internet switching itself off automatically at six o’clock in the evening, people were found sitting outside the library late in the evening using the Wi-Fi”.

Moreover, FG1 and FG2 participants indicated that there were many risks associated with the usage of the Internet. For instance, FG1 participants pointed out that there was no control over the use of free Internet by young people and this exposed them to harmful content like explicit movies and illegal videos from the Internet. They said that young people used the Internet to watch videos and movies but sometimes they watched explicit videos. SM3 pin-pointed that:

“Sometimes young people asked to be logged into the computer to do schoolwork but they used the computers to watch movies, which has nothing to do with schoolwork”.

Focus group discussion participants added that children were also likely to be exposed to illegal content from the Internet such as drugs and sex videos, especially with free Wi-Fi because there was no one to monitor them when using the Internet. They added that pop-up advertisements were also a risk and irritating because someone can open them by mistake and end up watching explicit videos. Focus group discussion participants added that the world is full of people with different interests; there are people who can hack computers and steal people’s personal information and use it to do bad things.

The researcher also observed that Internet users that used the Internet on the computers that were in the corridors of the library were doing so by themselves as there was no one to do random checks probably because there was only one staff member for the whole ICT section, which consisted of a computer laboratory and computers in the corridor. Internet users in the ICT department in need of help consulted or called the staff member from the office. However, staff members in the Business and Research section were doing their random checks.

4.5.4 Possible measures to alleviate the risks associated with the provision of Internet

To add more information to the research question: What is the impact of free Internet services to the users? SM1, SM2, and SM3 were interviewed and they indicated that to curb risks associated with the usage of the Internet, the library should enforce strict measures to monitor Internet usage, and the library used their own discretion to block some websites in computers reserved for educational research. SM1 explained that:

“The library needs to strengthen the Firewall that controls Internet usage, even though it is against the community library mandate. Community libraries are mandated to give access to all information, and are not supposed to restrict any information. Restricting information is also in contradiction to a human right that people have right to information. However, the library staff members used their own discretion to block some websites at some sections especially at Business and Research section and some computers at IT department where some computers were strictly reserved for research purposes.

SM1, SM2, and SM3 indicated that the level of monitoring was still not very strict. SM1 mentioned that:

“...the library monitoring application is still under HTTP (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol) which is not very strong to monitor and put-up strict measures. The library monitoring application need to be moved to HTTPS (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure) that can close sessions automatically once the person that logged in to use the session is done.

FG1 and FG2 participants were asked to answer the question: What are the risks associated with the provision of Internet services and possible measures to alleviate them? FG1 and FG2 participants suggested these following ideas to the library in order to alleviate the risks associated with free Internet services:

- Privacy policy is needed in the library so that when someone is using the computer no other person should know what the person is doing
- Internet users need to know how to use the Internet and what to use the Internet for in order to protect themselves
- User education about the risks associated with using the Internet is also needed in the community because some people do not know the risks associated with the use of the Internet
- Users also need privacy in the library. When someone is dealing with sensitive information, they need to be given a private computer, to protect their information from passers-by.

- Parental guidance is also needed to monitor children when they are using the Internet especial the WI-FI
- The library needs to regulate the usage of the Internet because there are many crimes associated with using the Internet, for example, cybercrime - even though this has never happened before, we need to prepare ourselves because we never know.

4.6 Internet Policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage and suggestions on how to improve the provision of the Internet

This section sought answers to the research question: **What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the Internet usage?** The section is organised according to interviews questions

4.6.1 Policies existing in the library

To respond to the research question: What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the Internet usage? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they indicated that there were no written policies on the usage of the Internet apart from normal notices which were posted on computers. However, the ICT department has put up some strict measures which they impose on users. SM1, SM2 and SM3 mentioned the following measures:

The library does not allow users to open illegal websites and once they detect that an illegal website has been opened, they switch off the user, Users are not allowed to help other users with anything that contains personal information e.g., Internet banking and also the library has set the Internet to work only from 06h00 in the morning and it switches itself off automatically at 18h00 in the evening

SM1 said that there were notices that were displayed at each computer but users removed the notices and only two computers at the time of the study still had those notices. The staff did not reprint the notices because they were busy planning to come up with a permanent solution where notices will not be removed. The researcher also observed that there was no policy written regarding the usage of the Internet, but only some notices that were placed on the corridors in the library.



Figure 1. Example of notices in the library on what to use the Internet for.

To add more information to the research question: What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the usage of the Internet? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they revealed that the

library does not have strict measures in place to protect the user from the harmful content on the Internet, the only measure in place that minimises users' exposure to harmful content on the Internet was the Firewall that switched off users once they visited an illegal website. The library management did not pay much attention regarding this matter before but planned to come up with stricter measures.

4.6.2 Users who defy Internet use policies

To add more information to the research question: What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the usage of the Internet? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they stated that the library management agreed that if an Internet user were to be caught watching pornography, he/she gets a fine of N\$50. However, the library management found out that most of the users/offenders did not afford to pay the fine and as such they then came up with another strategy that entailed that the first-time offenders get a verbal warning. If the culprit repeats the offence for the second time, he/she gets a written warning and for the third time, a picture will be taken of the offending user and circulated to all departments in order to prohibit that user from using the free Internet service provided in the library for six weeks.

4.6.3 How does the library monitor the Internet usage?

To add more information to the research question: What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the

usage of the Internet? SM1, SM2 and SM3 were interviewed and they indicated that the library monitors Internet usage through a software, called Handy Café as well as the Internet and Server monitor software that uploaded on staff computers.

SM1 further explained that:

“... The Internet and Server Monitor Software used in the library was designed to detect and automatically kick out anyone who visited prohibited websites or watched pornography”, also the library computers had Firewall, specifically designed for the library to protect the library computers against viruses”.

SM3 also confirmed that the library used Handy Cafe to monitor what the users were doing.

“...Through Handy Café, library staff members are able to see what the users used the Internet for, which websites they visited and so forth” (SM3).

Moreover, SM1 further added that the library also monitors both the LAN and Wi-Fi they also do random checks on the computers to see what Internet users were busy with.

4.7 Overall suggestions and comments on the use of free Internet availability

This section covers the overall suggestions and comments from SM1, SM2 and SM3 who were interviewed and Internet users that participated in the FG1 and FG2 discussions.

SM1, SM2 and SM3 believe that Internet provision at the library is a good initiative happening in the marginalised community.

Most of the people in the Omaheke Region were now kept abreast with current news and developments, as they could now discuss with each other on what is happening around the world. The provision of free Internet service at the library was a positive initiative made by the government.

Some people, especially the ones that came to the library to download movies were a big disturbance to those who wanted to use the Internet for important things. As a result of the people downloading big files, those who wanted to use the Internet for important things could not go through because of people who were downloading movies and music. Library staff SM1, SM2 and SM3 suggested that strict measures be put in place to control the usage of the Internet and the bandwidth of the Internet to be increased in order to accommodate everyone. Participants also suggested that the library management should improve the Internet services because it is disappointing to travel from afar only to find that the Internet is off. The management should also regulate the usage of the Internet so that it continues to serve the people of the Omaheke Region.

4.8 Chapter summary

The results presented in this chapter were collected from library staff members responsible for the IT as well as Business and Research sections from library Internet users. The data indicated that people used the Internet for social and educational purposes, and most of the Internet users knew how to use the Internet. However, not everyone was satisfied with the provision of the Internet because of the limited time allocated for using the Internet

and on some computers the use of social media was blocked, thus the library staff members indicated that they used their own discretion to block some websites on some computers which were reserved for research purposes. The data showed that the Internet is important to the community and it has improved their lives and skills. The data also revealed that there were no written policies in the library regarding the usage of the Internet apart from the notices which were posted on computers to inform the Internet users regarding the process of using the Internet. Finally, the Internet users that were interviewed advised the library to increase the Internet bandwidth and to regulate the provision of the Internet so that it can satisfy the users. The next chapter presents the discussion of the findings and it is organised according to the research questions of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the data collected and analysed in Chapter 4 as well as examines whether the findings correspond with or contradict with the reviewed literature. The purpose of the study was to assess the usage of free Internet services at the Omaheke Regional Library (ORL). The study participants gave insights into the usage and impact of free Internet services provided at the Library through their experiences. The research questions, as posed in Chapter 1 (See 1.4) guide the discussion. This chapter therefore attempts to answer the research questions by adding meaning to the data collected in order to solve the research problem under investigation. This study was guided by the Information Search Processes theory (Kuhlthau, 2008) and the Information Seeking Behaviour theory (Wilson, 1999). The two theories were again referred to in this chapter. The theories were used to ascertain whether the experiences of the ORL Internet users attested to the ISP theory principles and if the ISB theory predictions correlated or not with the information seeking behaviour of the Internet users at the ORL. A number of conclusions that were drawn from the results presented in Chapter 4, which pertain to the research questions of the study will be discussed as follows:

- 1.** Reason for using the Internet
- 2.** The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services
- 3.** Internet usage challenges

4. Impacts as well as risks associated with using the Internet
5. Internet Policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage

5.2 Reasons for using the Internet

The main objective of this study was to assess the usage patterns and impact of free Internet services at the ORL and this was supported through various research questions. Thus, the first research question of this study was to find out; what is the main reason for using Internet services?

Public libraries (such as ORL) have a mandate to facilitate the community's access to free Internet services (Ministry of Education Namibia, 2019), hence community members are using such services to search for different information from the Internet. Results from this study confirmed that people visited the ORL to search for various information resources from the Internet. They used the Internet for socialising (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc.), educational purposes (looking for scholarship searches, searching for information on tertiary institutions and applying online to tertiary institutions), searching for jobs and informational resources, for instance, reading newspapers and watching the news. The results also showed that business people also visited the library and used the Internet in order to learn how to write business proposals and how to make their businesses grow. These research findings are corroborated with the studies done by various researchers such as Uutoni et al. (2011), Niskala (2008), Shehu et al. (2015), Mamman (2015) and Becker et al. (2010). The findings of these studies revealed that people visited libraries to use the Internet and to search for education-related activities, for socialisation and to keep abreast with current information and trends.

Findings reported in Chapter 4.2.1 show that Internet usage varies according to age and social groups. Most adult users used the Internet for research and emails, while young users used the Internet for socialising, watching online videos and for homework purposes, while business people used the Internet for business purposes. Internet users at ORL also preferred to visit websites related to education and business issues. Zickuhr et al. (2013) found similar results in a study carried out on American libraries where the study found that people used the library Internet to do school and work-related research and to check their emails. The above findings are in-line with the Information Seeking Behaviour theory (Wilson, 1999), which suggests that people seek information for different purposes so as to fill their information gap.

The Omaheke community members seemingly also used the ORL because the Library is the nearest public place where the community can access free Internet services and also seemed to be the only Library that provides free Internet access to the public. This finding is consistent with Becker et al. (2010) and Taylor et al. (2012) who observed that Internet users tend to use a certain centre because of its reachability and affordability. Besides the fact that the Library provided Internet access to the community, the data in section 4.2.3 indicated that the Internet in the library was not sufficient to cater for everyone that wanted to access the Internet due to low bandwidth. Mamafha et al. (2016) established low bandwidth as one of the hindrances when it comes to Internet usage in the library.

As per the findings, Internet users of the ORL specifically used Google to search for education-related websites since most of them only knew the Google search engine as a tool for information retrieval. A study by Heok and Luyt (2010) established that library Internet users indeed preferred to use the Google search engine instead of educational databases that the library provided.

However, with specific reference to the younger users of ORL, the results indicated that most of youths who visited the library used the Internet for social-related activities. The data also indicated that the youths knew how to use the Internet. However, some elderly users, school learners and Internet users who wanted to search for education-related activities relied on library staff for assistance especially when they wanted to upload their academic documents and attach documents to their emails. In contrast, Kalugho (2016) studied the role of the Kenya National Library Services and found that the youths had challenges accessing the Internet due to lack of skills on how to access the Internet, blocked websites, insufficient computers, very slow Internet speed and little time allocated to access the Internet.

The present study sought to find out the purposes for which library users used ORL's free Internet services compared to literature findings; however, the study found out that Internet users used the Internet for educational related activities and socialising.

5.3 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

Since access to the Internet was declared as a Human Right (Kravets, 2011), most governments have prioritised the provision of Internet services to their communities through libraries (Mpindi, 2016; Beyond Access Initiative, 2012). This section attempted to understand the research question: how satisfied are users with the provision of the free Internet services in the library.

Results from this study indicate that some Internet users are satisfied with the provision of free Internet services by ORL while others are not. However, satisfaction with service provision depends on what the user uses the Internet for. Library staff members mentioned that users who used the Internet for social activities for example watching YouTube or downloading music were not satisfied, unlike those who used it for simple searching. Thus, part of the above results corresponds with what Uutoni et al. (2011) who found that 90% of the people who used the Internet in libraries were satisfied with the service while only 10% were not satisfied. Becker et al. (2010) and Quick et al. (2013) established the same results as Uutoni et al. (2011) in that Internet users were satisfied with the provision of Internet service because the speed of the Internet was fast and they were satisfied with the assistance they received from the library staff.

On the other hand, the results of this study also showed that Internet users interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with the provision of free Internet services due to the fact that

the time allocation for each Internet user was too short since there were few computers in the library compared to the number of people who wanted to use the Internet and Wi-Fi hotspots. Overall, the results also revealed that most of the Internet users at the ORL were not satisfied with the provision of free Internet services because of the frequent fluctuation of the Internet, low bandwidth, and time allocated to every user, few computers in the library, and Wi-Fi hotspots that were not enough for those who came to the library with their personal devices. Hence, this corresponds with the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) (2013) that established that the speed of the Internet, time allocation and the number of computers in the library cause the dissatisfaction of the Internet users. Moreover, Mojapelo (2020) indicated that Internet users were not satisfied with the Internet services due to limited number of computers in the library, limited time to use the Internet, booking system and slow speed of the Internet, but appreciated the free Internet services and the assistance they received from the library staff. Furthermore, the Internet users that used the Internet for educational purposes expressed their dismay that, there were no specific educational databases that they could use, they spent more time surfing Google and also the Internet slowed down once a lot of people started using it. The study done by Mamafha et al. (2016) suggested that the library should subscribe to online journals and electronic databases such as EBSCO, Emerald, and others because most of the Internet users used the Internet for study purposes. The data showed that the library staff determine the users' satisfaction through a suggestion box.

Even though the ORL provided free Internet services, Internet users were in general not satisfied with the Internet service provided. The Internet users mentioned that the Internet

service at the library was poor and not consistent in terms of tripping on and off. However, Wilson (1999) ISB model predict that if the information searcher fails to get the information wanted, they tolerate the failure, this corresponds with the situation at ORL that Internet user not always make use of the Internet but they tolerate it.

5.4 Internet usage challenges

This section attempted to answer the research question: what difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet. Library users and staff members faced different challenges regarding the provision of free Internet services at the ORL.

5.4.1 Challenges that hinder the effective use of the Internet

Data analysed in Chapter 4 section 4.4.1 showed that the ORL faced a challenge of paying the Internet bill in order to provide free Internet services to its users, which rose to a level that the library management found difficult to pay and this resulted in the Internet provider cutting off the service. The high bill took the ORL management at least four months to clear. However, after clearing the bill, the ORL reduced the bandwidth in order to cope with the bill, which resulted in slow Internet speed. The Internet costs challenge is in-line with findings by Mamman (2015), Mojapelo (2020) and Kalugho (2016) that the acceleration of Internet funding forced libraries to reduce the Internet bandwidth, which resulted in reduced Internet speed.

Participants advised that in order to lessen the burden of Internet bills, users should rather buy Internet tokens that they can use to surf the Internet as long as they have credit. The reason being that if Internet users buy the Internet tokens, the management will be able to use that money to pay for the costs of providing Internet services.

As a consequence of the reduced speed, users at the ORL specifically identified slow Internet speed as one of the challenges they faced, resulting in some Internet users leaving the library without finding what they wanted. Mojapelo (2020) reported that in most libraries, insufficient bandwidth hindered the usage of the Internet, as reduced Internet speed resulted in users failing to download or getting the information they wanted from the Internet.

In addition, time allocation, privacy and the limited number of computers in the library were also some of the challenges Internet users also faced at the ORL. Mamafha et al. (2016), Kalugho (2016) and Komal et al. (2011) in their studies reported that Internet users faced challenges of time allocation, privacy in the library and a limited number of computers that can be used to access the Internet. Moreover, the staff members' attitudes were also seen as a challenge which Internet users faced at the ORL. Komal et al. (2011), in their study, also found that lack of support from staff members was a hindrance to Internet usage in public libraries.

Another challenge raised by ORL Internet users was the blocking of websites on some computers. The results showed that ORL staff members used their discretion to block some websites from some computers that the library reserved for research/educational purposes only. Mamafha et al. (2016) revealed that the institutional policy was one of the hindrances that rendered it difficult for the users to fully utilise the Internet services.

Furthermore, Internet search skills were also among the challenges Internet users faced at the ORL. Mamman (2015), Shehu et al. (2015) and Kalugho (2016) also found a similar challenge of lack of search skills among Internet users as a challenge of using the Internet.

5.4.2 Possible solution to the Internet usage challenges

In order to assist some users who had difficulties with search skills, the library had a programme where people were taught basic ICT skills. The ORL was one of the libraries that benefited from the Library for Development Project, as the programme trained people on basic ICT skills. As indicated by Mchombu (2015), the Library for Development, a project between Namibia and Finland, advocated for libraries with facilities to train library users on basic ICT skills. The results of this study showed that staff members at the ORL advised users who needed training with browsing/searching the Internet, to join the basic ICT training programme. Maswabi et al. (2011) also advised that users be trained on how to use the Internet in order to retrieve information efficiently and effectively.

Both staff members and Internet users who took part in the study made suggestions on how to alleviate challenges, which Internet users faced. The participants suggested that the Internet bandwidth, should be increased to accommodate everyone who wants to use the Internet. This study found that since the ORL is the most accessible facility which provided free Internet to the community, the number of people who needed to use the Internet was very high. Mamafha et al. (2016) also suggested that libraries increase the Internet bandwidth to accommodate the large number of Internet users they served.

The participants also suggested that the library should increase the Wi-Fi hotspots since the computers were not enough in the library so that people can bring their own devices (BYOD), to connect to the Internet as this could ease the problem of waiting for computer allocation. Kalugho (2016) also suggested that the library Wi-Fi hotspots be increased so that Internet users can be able to use their personal devices. Moreover, the participants in this study suggested that the library should put strict rules and regulations on Internet use since it is free. In addition, since downloading takes time and a lot of space, participants suggested that the library limits and put control measures on downloading. Mamafha et al. (2016) made the same suggestion so that everyone can get a chance to use the Internet and the library be able to prove its value and impact in the community.

Privacy remains a concern and participants suggested that when library staff allocated computers, they should do it according to user needs. In-line with this suggestion, perhaps researchers with the same information needs should sit next to each other. For instance, if

users want to use YouTube, they should sit on one side and users reading newspapers should likewise sit on the other side. In addition, staff members' interviews and focus group participants suggested that the library management should seek interns to help with the running of day-to-day activities of the library and staff members should move around the library to monitor Internet usage.

Kuhlthau (2008) described how an information seeker experiences feelings of anxiety, uneasy thoughts, and searches for general information. This theory correlated with the ORL Internet users' experiences. Internet users at the ORL also went through these experiences as they searched for information and also made use of the Internet as could be observed. They experienced anxiety as they searched for information that they did not know that they could finish as the Internet was slow and sometimes the time lapsed without them finishing their searches. The inconsistency of the Internet also gave them uneasy thoughts because they were not sure if they could get what they wanted from the Internet.

5.5 Impacts as well as risks associated with using the Internet

The provision of free Internet service in a public library is important to communities, and it was considered very important at the ORL as well, considering the fact that the Library is centrally located resulting in the community that can easily access it. This section sought to answer the research question: What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?

The library provided access to marginalised people who had never used the Internet before, and helped to keep the community abreast with current trends and current affairs. Even though the results did not specifically reveal what marginalised people used the Internet for, Kinney (2010) shared the same sentiment that people from previously disadvantaged backgrounds tended to use the library Internet services to search for employment opportunities and other government services.

Additionally, the provision of Internet services impacted the lives of users in many different ways as reflected below. Through the provision of Internet services, knowledge was transferred, as the Internet users researched and performed tasks from the Internet, for example for Do It Yourself (DIY) and then shared this knowledge with others. Library users also learnt how to write business proposals, cook or do farming from the information accessed on the Internet. This corresponds with the findings of Totolo et al. (2015) that Internet users gained more knowledge on ICTs as their digital skills improved and they learnt new things from using the Internet. Thus, Wilson (1999) ISB predicted that Information researcher once the information researcher got the information they tend to use or exchange it with others, this prediction connects with the Internet users at ORL that once they learn some knowledge from the Internet, they shared it with others.

The results also indicated that the provision of free Internet services reduced costs since people did not need to use their money to buy data to use the Internet at home or take a taxi to travel to town because of the close proximity of the library. The researcher is of the opinion that even though the Internet users were not satisfied with the provision of the

Internet service at ORL in general, the accessibility of free Internet services influenced their lives in a positive way.

The provision of free Internet services seemed to also have improved the lives of users through education. Internet users at the ORL used the Internet to search for educational information, uploaded their assignments and connected with their lecturers online, while others used the Internet to study online. Moreover, people who could not afford to buy newspapers used the Internet to access newspapers. Totolo et al. (2015) established similar results that free Internet service provision in the public library enabled users to carry out their studies online.

Internet provision at the ORL as per the results also improved the users' social lives because they could connect with friends and family living afar through Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms. Totolo et al. (2015) also discovered that the provision of free Internet services connected people living in different areas through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.

The results from Chapter 4 also revealed that Internet users appreciated the provision of free Internet services, as well as the impact on their lives because they learnt new skills, gained new knowledge and how to browse the Internet. Bertot et al. (2008), confirmed that public library Internet provision impacted peoples' lives in the areas of

communication, health, technological training and assistance, e-governance service delivery, educational resources and job seeking.

It is worth mentioning that even though the provision of free Internet services affected the lives of users in many ways, there are also risks associated with its use. The Internet is a global network where everyone has access. Library users at the ORL also used the Internet at their own risk besides monitoring efforts. Kahin and Keller (1996) suggested that libraries should regulate privacy in libraries and have rules on Internet usage. Children who use the Internet at the ORL also used it at their own risk, as there was no policy on parental guidance in the library. This was a serious risk because children could be exposed to harmful content on the Internet. The results from this study indicated that there was no written policy at the ORL to indicate the library's position on the risks associated with using free Internet services. However, some libraries, for instance, the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality Library Internet policy (Chigumbu, 2017) and Hornell Public Library (2018) indicated that young people using the Internet should use it at their own risk and the library would not be held responsible for what the children will be exposed to on the Internet. However, Rahway Public Library (2018), and Leeds and The Thousand Islands Public Library (2018) Internet policies stipulated that the onus is on the parents to ensure that children were monitored when using the Internet.

The children are at risk because sometimes they request to use the Internet for one thing but end up using it for different purposes. The results from section 4.5.3 indicated that sometimes young people asked for Internet time to watch videos and movies, however,

they ended up watching explicit videos. On some occasions, young people also requested to be logged into computers to do schoolwork but they used computers to watch movies which had nothing to do with schoolwork. This abuse of the Internet could also mean misuse of limited resources, which ended up being used for unimportant things. To avoid some of these risks, Kahin and Keller (1996) suggested that libraries should regulate privacy and security issues, impose rules and regulations of censorship and indicate how minors should access the Internet.

The results also showed that the more people learnt new things from the Internet, the more they wanted to practice what they learnt. For example, users tried to infect the computers with viruses or hacking other people's accounts. It was not only the young people at risk when it came to Internet usage, adults were also at risk when they used the Internet to do their Internet or Online banking because sometimes, they asked for assistance from strangers and sometimes forgot to log out their sessions before their active usage expired. One participant gave the example of an elderly person who used the Internet to do online banking at the library but forgot to log out and a staff member noticed it immediately and logged out the session.

The above findings on the risk of using free Internet services are similar to those of Muir et al. (2014), who found that the misuse of the Internet, visits to inappropriate websites, watching of pornography and reconfiguration of computers as well as copyright infringement, were some of the challenges the library management faced in dealing with Internet use in public libraries. Moreover, Rahway Public Library (2018) stated that the

library's Internet policy included a disclaimer clause that the library cannot guarantee the integrity of visited websites and it is up to the users to safeguard their personal information. The library, as a public place, had the authority to provide Internet services to the people but was not obliged, to control what the user used the Internet for.

Also, the free Wi-Fi at the ORL provided to the Internet users was also considered to be a risk to the building. The results in section 4.5.3 disclosed that before the library management set the Internet services to automatically switch off after 18h00, people were found sitting outside the building using free Wi-Fi after hours when all the staff members had already left.

Participants suggested measures that could alleviate the risks associated with the provision of free Internet services at the ORL. For instance, participants suggested that stricter measures should be put in place to monitor the usage of the Internet; the library should strengthen the Firewall that can control Internet usage. Community libraries are mandated to give access to all information, and they are not supposed to restrict any information (IFLA/UNESCO, 1994). Restricting information is also in contradiction to human rights as people have the right to information. Some library organisations like the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) are also against Internet filtering and found it as “unwarranted interference with the individual's freedom of access to information” (CILIP, 2020, Para. 10). Moreover, IFLA (2016) takes its position that:

The core mission of librarians and other information workers is to ensure access to information for all for personal development, education, cultural enrichment, leisure, economic activity and informed participation in an enhancement of democracy.

To this end, librarians and other information workers reject censorship in all its forms, support provision of services free of cost to the user, promote collections and services to potential users, and seek the highest standards of accessibility to both physical and virtual services. (Para. 5-6)

However, the results from Chapter 4 in this study indicated that the library staff members used their own discretion to block some websites at some sections for the benefit of the users. This discretion corresponds with the suggestion of Kahin and Keller (1996) that libraries should put limits on public Internet use when demand outstrips resources. The Kingston Frontenac Public Library (2016) Internet policy indicates that the library filters some websites but the user has a right to ask for filtration to be removed. However, the policy also indicates that if the user is found using an inappropriate website, they can be banned from future usage.

In addition, other scholars such as Muir et al. (2014) suggest that to avoid any inconvenience, a library can use the Acceptance Use Policy (AUP) that the Internet users can sign before using the Internet. This policy outlines what not to search when using the library Internet services. Every Internet user would then be required to read and agree to the terms and conditions before signing it. The researcher agrees with Kahin and Keller

(1996) that due to the limited resources in public libraries and to protect the image of the library, users should not use illegal websites. However, the researcher suggests that the users should communicate their research needs to the library staff members and ask for permission for the websites they want to be unblocked based on professional reasons provided.

The results of this study also indicated that the level of monitoring of the Internet was still not very strict because the software used was still on HTTP (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol), which is not very strong to monitor and put-up strict measures. The library needed to move to HTTPS (Hyper Text Transfer Protocol Secure) that could close sessions automatically once the person logged in to use the session. Muir et al. (2016) observed that monitoring Internet usage through the server raised privacy concerns. Moreover, even though it is against the library's mandate to restrict access to some of the information resources (IFLA 2016), the library used its own discretion to block some websites on computers reserved for educational research. Those measures needed to be put in place immediately in order to protect the users, as some participants indicated that they were not always comfortable using the Internet, especially the elderly people and young children that used the Internet, needed close monitoring.

Participants in this study suggested the need for a privacy policy to alleviate the risks associated with free Internet usage, so that when someone is surfing the Internet, people passing by should not see which websites the person is visiting. Kahin and Keller (1996) suggested that libraries should regulate privacy and security issues.

Internet users needed to know how to use the Internet and what to use the Internet for in order to protect their image and avoid cyber bullying. User education about the Internet was needed in the community because some people did not know how to behave when using the Internet. This corresponds with Maswabi et al.'s (2011) views that libraries needed to train the users and those users needed privacy in the library. When someone is dealing with sensitive information, they need to be given a private computer to protect their information from passers-by. Mamafha et al. (2016) considered a privacy policy as a barrier to Internet use. Parental guidance was also needed to monitor children when they were using the Internet. Kahin and Keller (1996) suggested that libraries should have Internet policies with rules and regulations indicating how minors should access the Internet in order to be safe. In addition, the library needs to regulate the usage of Internet services because there are many crimes associated with inappropriate usage of the Internet, for example, cybercrime.

5.6 Internet Policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage

This study sought to find out through one of the research questions: What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage and impact of free Internet provision to its users. Results from this study indicated that the ORL library does not have a written Internet policy. Even though libraries are advised to have Internet policies that stipulate how Internet services should be used (American Library Association, 2019), results from this study showed that the library only had notices posted on computers (figure 1). The library also imposed some measures on Internet users. For example, the library did not

allow Internet users to help each other with anything that involved personal information and it did not allow users to visit illegal websites or pornography sites. The library switched off access to the Internet services after six o'clock in the evening and switched on at eight o'clock in the morning again. The researcher is of the opinion that the issue of the Internet policy was not addressed properly at this library. The Internet policy should indicate the dos and don'ts with regards to the Internet use. Scholars like Kahin and Keller (1996) and Muir et al. (2014) suggested that a library needs to put strict rules and regulations on Internet services usage. Moreover, a study done by ALIA (2013) indicated that most libraries in Australia have policies on Internet use, which are reviewed every year. ALIA (2013) further suggested that all libraries should have policies that guide users on how to behave when they are using Internet services and those policies should be placed on computers and in the computer laboratory.

Even though the ORL did not have a policy or agreement with users on what websites to visit, it uploaded Firewall restrictions on the computers, which switched the computer off once it detected that the user was visiting a suspicious website. The library management used this system to protect the users from visiting illegal websites and being exposed to harmful content on the Internet and to protect the image of the library. ALIA (2013) found that some Australian libraries had website filters, which screened the websites that can be visited. However, the study indicated that the users were not pleased with this arrangement. Participants in this study also indicated that they were not happy with the blockage of some websites in the ORL. The results also showed that the library staff agreed on fining users caught watching pornography in the library. However, the fining

of culprits was made impossible because most of the people caught visiting inappropriate websites and charged for it could not afford to pay the fine. Moreover, users needed to know what not to do while using the Internet services. Quick et al. (2013) reported that libraries in Italy restricted users from downloading using library Internet services because it slowed down the Internet traffic and prohibited users from connecting to video streaming.

Moreover, even though it is the mandate of public libraries to provide free Internet services to the community, the library is also obliged to monitor the usage of the Internet as a way to protect the Internet users and the image of the library. For instance, Internet users were not allowed to use the free Internet services to watch illegal and prohibited websites at ORL. Therefore, ORL used Handy Café, an Internet and Server Monitor Software to monitor the usage of the Internet. The Handy Cafe software enabled the library staff to monitor what the user is busy with or which website the user is visiting. The Internet and Server monitor software were designed, to detect and automatically disconnect or block from the system, any one visiting illegal website or watching explicit movies. This finding corresponds with the study done by Muir et al. (2016) in UK public libraries where libraries used filtering software to control the use of websites and monitor Internet usage through the library Internet server. The purpose of filtering was to prevent Internet misuse, protect the children from exposure to harmful material from the Internet and protect the image of the public libraries. However, while Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) guided UK libraries, the results from this study did not indicate any similar policy followed at ORL. Moreover, Trosow (2011) argued that library Internet website filtering is not about

restricting intellectual freedom but reducing the risk of exposing users and protecting them against unwanted information from the Internet.

5.7 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the data collected and analysed in Chapter 4 regarding the provision of free Internet services at the ORL. The data discussed show that the main reason Internet users used free Internet services was to access educational and social information, job related activities and learning how to do business on the Internet. Some Internet users were satisfied with the provision of the free Internet services but some were not. However, to alleviate dissatisfaction, the staff members and Internet users interviewed suggested that the Internet bandwidth should be increased, Wi-Fi hotspot should be considered and the number of computers in the library should be increased. The library management experienced challenges that affected the provision of free Internet services that were, the high acceleration of the Internet bill that took the management a number of months to clear the debt. Other challenges that users experienced were, the speed of the Internet, time allocation, institutional policy, and users search skills. The free Internet services provision impacted the lives of users in various ways, such as educational, social, and gaining of skills and ability to transfer knowledge. Even though the provision of Internet services impacted Internet users in so many ways, the risks associated with the provision of free Internet services also transpired as part of the discussion, but this could be alleviated by putting strict measures in place. However, this should not deny users access to information but rather to protect them from unwanted information on the Internet and to protect the image of the library. Regarding the provision of free Internet services,

there was no written policy in the library that guided the Internet users on how to use the Internet even though the library was expected to have one. The next chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of the study, draws the conclusions and suggests some recommendations that can be used to improve the provision of free Internet services at ORL. The chapter is divided into three sections: summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations of areas of further research and final conclusions.

6.2 Summary of the findings

This section summarises the findings regarding the provision of free Internet services at the ORL. The study set to assess the usage and impact of free Internet services at the ORL and this was done through understanding the users' reasons for using the Internet, their level of satisfaction when using the Internet, the challenges users encountered when using the Internet, the impact of the use of free Internet on users and policies that existed at the ORL regarding the usage of free Internet services as well as the monitor of the Internet usage.

6.2.1 Reasons for using the Internet

Internet users at the ORL used the Internet for various reasons. The study established that Internet users used the Internet for socialising, educational purposes, searching for jobs and reading newspapers. Business people also used the ORL Internet to learn how to write

business proposals and how to make their businesses grow. The findings of the study revealed that Internet usage in the library was according to age groups and social groups. Adult users used the Internet for research and emails, while younger users used the Internet for socialising and school work. In particular, it was found that youths that used the Internet knew how to use the Internet, however school going children, adult users and those that wanted to upload assignments relied on library staff members for assistance. It was also found that Internet users visited the ORL because of its proximity since it was the nearest place that provided free Internet services to the community.

6.2.2 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

According to the data presented in Chapter 4, some Internet users were satisfied, while others were not satisfied with the Internet service. Library staff members mentioned that those who used the Internet for social activities, for example, YouTube and downloading videos were not satisfied, unlike those who used it for educational purposes. Moreover, the data indicated that users were not specifically satisfied with the provision of the Internet because the bandwidth of the Internet was too slow compared to the people that were supposed to use it, the time that users were allocated to use the Internet was very short, there were only few computers in the library compared to the number of users, Wi-Fi hotspots that were supposed to be used by the users that came with personal devices were also not enough. The inconsistent speed of the Internet also caused users' dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the Internet users that used the Internet for educational purposes expressed their displeasure because of the lack of educational portals that were

not available on the library computers. As such, they spend the whole-time searching Google that was also deemed as time consuming. Due to the above-mentioned difficulties the data revealed that Internet users as respondents were not satisfied in general with the provision of the free Internet services at the library.

6.2.3 Internet usage challenges

Internet users faced many challenges when it comes to the provision of free Internet services. The data revealed that the huge Internet bill as a result of accelerated usage was a challenge, the management found difficult to pay. After the management finally managed to pay the bill, they reduced the Internet bandwidth that resulted in the speed of the Internet to slow down. The data also revealed that time allocation, sitting arrangement, privacy and limited number of computers in the library are some of the challenges that affected the usage of the Internet. The data also indicated that some of the websites were blocked on some computers that were reserved for educational purposes, this was also deemed as a challenge to some Internet users. Internet users searching skills was also considered as a challenge.

Respondents that took part in the study suggested that to alleviate the challenges faced by Internet users, the library management should increase the bandwidth of the Internet in order to accommodate all the users, and the Wi-Fi hotspots should be increased to accommodate people who came with their personal devices. The study respondents also suggested that the library management should put measures to control the downloading

process because it slowed down the speed of the Internet. Another suggestion was to allocate the computer sitting arrangement according to Internet usage: those that used the YouTube or social media sites have to sit together, while the ones studying sit on the other side, as a way to avoid disturbances. Study respondents also suggested that the Internet users should buy Internet tokens and the money generated can be used to pay for the provision of Internet services.

6.2.4 Impact of free Internet services on the users

The provision of free Internet services at ORL impacted the lives of users in many ways, especially the marginalised groups who had never used the Internet before. The provision of the Internet services helped the community to be up to date with news and current affairs through the use of the Internet. The Internet users learnt different things like Do It Yourself (DIY) from the Internet and seemingly transferred the knowledge to others. Internet users learnt how to write business proposals, and reading about cooking and farming from the Internet. Internet users no longer used money to buy data or pay taxi money to go to town to use the Internet, instead they travelled a shorter distance to the Library to use the free Internet service. The provision of the free Internet services seemed to have improved people's lives positively in the area of education and social activities. Internet users at ORL used the Internet, to search for educational related information, uploading their assignments, connecting with their lecturers and studying online. They also used the Internet to connect with their families and to read newspapers.

Internet users at the ORL also mentioned the risks associated with the provision of free Internet services. The data indicated that the Internet is a global network, and everyone has the right to upload what they wanted; yet this increased the risks associated with the usage of the Internet, for example, users may be exposed to harmful content from the Internet. Internet users, young and old, used the Internet at their own risk. Moreover, the provision of the Internet was deemed as a risk to the library building because Internet users were found sitting around the building late at night using the Internet and thereby making the library vulnerable to thefts.

However, Internet users suggested that to lessen the risks associated with the provision of free Internet services, measures should be put in place to monitor the usage of the Internet. Communication between the users and staff members should be strengthened so that they can be able to communicate their needs if it is not freely available. Privacy should also be increased so that if someone is dealing with sensitive information no other person should be able to see it. User education was needed for Internet users to be taught what to do and what not to do when using the Internet. Parental guidance was also needed for children using the Internet at the library.

6.2.5 Internet Policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage

The data revealed that there were no written policies regarding the usage of the free Internet services in the library. The results also revealed that there were only notices that were displayed on computers but some of them were removed by library users. Even

though there were no written policies in the library regarding the usage of the Internet, the library had some measures that they implemented in the library, such as, users were not supposed to help each other on sensitive matters for example when doing Internet Banking and were encouraged to seek help from staff members. The library also used Handy café as well as Internet and Server monitor software that they uploaded on staff computers to monitor the usage of the Internet. The library management decided to regulate the Internet by switching on the Internet at eight o'clock in the morning and switching it off at six o'clock in the afternoon because of community members that were found sitting outside the library in the evening using the Internet.

To protect the library from exposure to unwanted information hence protecting the image of the library, the library installed firewalls on the library computers that could switch off/logout a user once it detected a visit to an illegal website.

6.3 Conclusion of the findings

Based on the summary, it can be concluded that the study answered all the following research questions:

1. What is the main reason for using Internet services?
2. How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services?
3. What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet?
4. What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?

5. What policies exist in the Omaha Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the usage of the Internet?

The section below draws conclusions from the data collected, presented, analysed and discussed, to offer possible answers to the research questions under investigation. The research further draws recommendations from these conclusions that are proposed to the ORL to possibly improve the implementation of free Internet services provision.

6.3.1 Reason for using the Internet

What was concluded under the research question: **What is the main reason for using Internet services?** The study concludes that the respondents used the Internet for educational and socialising purposes, as well as searching for jobs and important information from the Internet. Business people also used the Internet to learn how to write business proposals and how to make their businesses grow. The library was used because of its proximity and centrality as a place that provides free Internet services.

6.3.2 The causes of dissatisfaction and satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

What was concluded under the research question: **How satisfied are users with the provision of free Internet services?** The study concludes that only some Internet users were satisfied with the provision of the free Internet services, while some were not satisfied. Internet users that used the Internet for educational purposes were satisfied with the provision of the free Internet services. However, those who used the free Internet

services for socialising were not satisfied. The dissatisfaction was caused by: low bandwidth that was not enough compared to the numbers of Internet users that were supposed to use the Internet. Speed of the Internet was too slow, time allocation, few computers in the library, Wi-Fi hotspots that were not enough for people that used their own devices, inconsistency of the Internet and also the educational databases that were not available on library computers also emerged as a cause of dissatisfaction.

6.3.3 Internet usage challenges

What was concluded under the research question: **What difficulties do users encounter when using the Internet?** The study concludes that the library management had challenges in paying the Internet bill, while Internet users were challenged by the speed of the Internet, time allocation for computer usage which was very short, and privacy in the library was an issue for people dealing with sensitive information as well as sitting arrangements. Moreover, the other difficulties include people that used the Internet for socialising sitting together while the ones using the Internet for educational purpose sat on the same side, and websites that were blocked on some of the computers that were reserved for educational purposes and Internet users with limited searching skills that find it difficult to use the Internet.

6.3.4 Impact of free Internet services

What was concluded under the research question: **What is the impact of free Internet services to the users?** The study concludes that the provision of free Internet services has

an impact on the lives of Internet users. The provision of free Internet has positively impacted peoples' lives in the area of education and social activities. Internet users learnt new skills from the Internet, kept abreast with news and connected with distant families. Internet users no longer needed to pay taxi money to go to town to search for Internet services since they now travel a short distance to visit the library. Internet users also mentioned the risks associated with the provision of free Internet services.

The study also concluded that since the Internet is a global network, everyone has the right to upload what they want; however, this can be a risk to other users because they can be exposed to unwanted information that is uploaded on the Internet. Moreover, young and adult Internet users were also at risk of being exposed to some unwanted information. The library building was also at risk of thefts because Internet users used to sit around the building late in the evening using the Internet.

6.3.5 Internet Policies and how does the library monitor the Internet usage

What was concluded under the research question: **What policies exist in the Omaheke Regional Library regarding the usage of the Internet and how does the library monitor the usage of the Internet?** The study concludes that there were no written policies regarding the usage of free Internet services provision. There were only notices posted on computers but these were removed by users. However, users were presented with some rules regarding how to use the Internet, and users were not permitted to help each other when someone was dealing with sensitive information. Library computers were

installed with firewall software that protected the users from unwanted information on the Internet.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and the reviewed literature, the following recommendations are proposed as drawn from the study conclusions:

6.4.1 Internet provision - The provision of free Internet services budget should be a priority to enable the community library to be able to pay for their Internet bill.

6.4.2 Internet provision - For the provision of free Internet to succeed, the library management should put aside the budgeted money for the payment of the Internet bill to avoid the Internet being disconnected by the Internet service provider.

6.4.3 Internet user education - The library management should consider arranging more training on Internet usage as this will enable the users to fully utilise the free service and perhaps improve their living standards.

6.4.4 Internet speed – The library management should ensure that there is enough bandwidth so that it can accommodate all users. All possible measures need to be exhausted to increase the Internet bandwidth speed.

6.4.5 Stakeholders – The library should attempt to engage all stakeholders so as to solve the problem in respect of the high Internet bill. This can be done by involving library stakeholders in the decision making of the provision of free Internet services or asking for donations from stakeholders that can help with the broadening/expansion of the bandwidth.

- 6.4.6 Computers and time** - The library management should motivate the purchase of enough computers for the library do as to accommodate at least a larger number of people/users at the same time for them to use the computers, and adjusting the time allocation so that every user can have sufficient time to use the Internet.
- 6.4.7 Internet policy** - The library needs to come up with a written Internet policy that can guide the Internet users when using the Internet and guiding the library management on what to do in order to protect the image of the library and library staff.
- 6.4.8 Staff members** - The library should consider employing enough ICT librarians so as to curb the issue of understaffing for effective and efficient service delivery.

6.5 Areas for further research

One of the main aims of NLAS is to connect all community/public libraries to the Internet in the country by the year 2030. This study found that an Internet policy was lacking or there was no Internet policy at Omaheke Regional library at all. Internet users used the Internet for different purposes. Libraries need policies that can protect the users, staff members as well as the image of the library. Further studies or empirical studies need to be done in other community libraries, to find out if an Internet policy is an existence in any of the community libraries: what those policies are, and how do they deal with the situation. This study was done only in one of the regional libraries in the country, thus more studies are needed for other similar libraries, to find out how they are dealing with issues of Internet policy.

6.6 Final conclusions

This study achieved its overall aim of assessing the usage and impact of free Internet services at ORL. It has shown that community members are interested in using the free Internet services. It also demonstrated that some Internet users are not satisfied with the provision of the free Internet services and the causes of dissatisfaction. The study presented conclusions, recommendations and areas of further research that can enable the library to improve the provision of free Internet services.

The study also concluded that while the usage of the free Internet was high in the ORL, not all the users were satisfied with the Internet provision.

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Appendix A: Ethical clearance certificate



UNAM
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FHSS /453/2019 Date: 12 April, 2019

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: 13 An Assessment of the Usage of Free Internet Services at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre

Researcher: LUCIA NDESHIHAFELA NGASHIKUAO

Student Number: 200802950

Supervisor: DR. M. Beukes-Amiss (Main) Mr. W. Yule

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The ADREC retains the right to:
 - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

HREC wishes you the best in your research.

Dr. J.E de Villiers : UREC Chairperson

Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary

Appendix B: Research permission letter

CENTRE FOR POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia
340 Mandume Ndemutayo Avenue, Pioneers Park
☎ +264 61 206 3275/4662; Fax +264 61 206 3290; URL: <http://www.unam.edu.na>



RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

Student Name: Ms. Lucia Ngashikuao

Student number: 200802950

Programme: MASTER OF ARTS (LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE)

Approved research title: AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USAGE OF FREE INTERNET SERVICES AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL STUDY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that the above mentioned student is registered at the University of Namibia for the programme indicated. The proposed study met all the requirements as stipulated in the University guidelines and has been approved by the relevant committees.

The proposal adheres to ethical principles as per attached Ethical Clearance Certificate. Permission is hereby granted to carry out the research as described in the approved proposal.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marius Hedimbi', is written over a horizontal line.

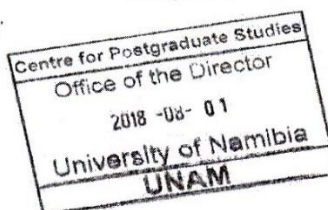
Prof. Marius Hedimbi

Director: Centre for Postgraduate Studies

Tel: +264 61 2063275

E-mail: directorpgs@unam.na

01 August 2018



Appendix C: Permission letter from the Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture in Omaheke.



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA
OMAHEKE REGIONAL COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE**

Tel: 062-577600
Fax: 062-564210/562888
E-mail: peckasempa@gmail.com
Enquiries: Mr. P. Semba

Private Bag 2004
GOBABIS
Namibia

Lucia N. Ngashikuao
P.O. Box 4234
Rehoboth

22 August 2018

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL STUDY AND RESOURCE CENTER

Dear Ms. Ngashikuao,

1. We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 14 August 2018 concerning the above-mentioned subject.
2. The Directorate of Education, Arts and Culture hereby grants permission to you to conduct the research study at the above-mentioned center.
3. By copying this letter to the relevant head of center they will be aware of your visit.
4. The ministry wishes you the best of luck in your endeavours.

**DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION
OMAHEKE REGION**

Yours Sincerely,

2018 -08- 22


Mr. Pecka Semba
DIRECTORS OFFICE
PRIVATE BAG 2004, GOBABIS
Director of Education, Arts and Culture, Omaheke Regional Council

22/08/2018

All official correspondences should be addressed to the Chief Regional Officer

Appendix D: Editor's confirmation letter

ACET Consultancy
Anenyasha Communication, Editing and Training
Box 50453 Bachbrecht, Windhoek, Namibia
Cell: +264814218613
Email: mlambons@yahoo.co.uk / nelsonmlambo@icloud.com

23 October 2020

To whom it may concern

LANGUAGE EDITING – LUCIA NDESHIHAFELA NGASHIKUAO

This letter serves to confirm that a **MASTER OF ARTS (LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE)** thesis entitled **AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USAGE OF FREE INTERNET SERVICES AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL LIBRARY** by LUCIA NDESHIHAFELA NGASHIKUAO was submitted to me for language editing.

The thesis was professionally edited and track changes and suggestions were made in the document. The research content or the author's intentions were not altered during the editing process and the author has the authority to accept or reject my suggestions.

Yours faithfully



DR NELSON MLAMBO
PhD in English
M.A. in Intercultural Communication
M.A. in English
B. A. Special Honours in English – First class
B. A. English & Linguistics

Appendix E: Interview guide for Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC) staff

My name is Lucia N. Ngashikuao. I am a Master of Arts student in Library and Information Science at the University of Namibia (UNAM). I am conducting research titled “An assessment on the usage of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC)” and would appreciate if you could assist by answering a few questions that I will be asking you during this interview.

The purpose of this study is to establish a meaningful understanding of the usage and impact of free Internet services provided at ORSRC and the findings of the study will be used by management to improve Internet services available in the centre.

I Thank you for accepting to take part in this study and let me remind you that your participation is voluntary and you are free to refuse to be interviewed. All information collected during this study will be treated **with utmost confidentiality** and nothing will be accredited to you personally. Please complete the informed consent form meant to serve as confirmation of your voluntary participation.

Section A. Reasons for Internet usage

1. What do you think is the level of usage of the Internet in this centre?
2. In relation to your experience, why are users using the Internet?
3. In your opinion, do the users know how to use the Internet? If your answer is no, what can be done to assist the users?
4. How does the library monitor the usage of the Internet by the users?

Section B. Satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

5. Do you think Internet users are satisfied or not satisfied with the provision of free Internet services?
6. What could be the factors affecting the level of satisfaction of Internet users at ORSRC?
7. What may cause dissatisfaction of Internet usage?
8. How do you determine a user's level of satisfaction that could aid in improving your Internet service delivery?

Section C. Impact of free Internet services on the users

9. In your opinion, explain the importance of free Internet services to the users at ORSRC?
10. How does the provision of free Internet services in the library improve the knowledge of users?
11. In your opinion, what are the benefits from using free Internet services?

12. In your opinion, what are the risks associated with the use of free Internet services and what could be done to reduce those risks?

Section D. Policies that exist at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre regarding usage and impact of free Internet services

13. What are the policy instruments that exist in ORSRC and how are they being applied in terms of guiding Internet users?
14. What measures do you have in place to ensure that users are not exposed to harmful content on the Internet?
15. Do users comply with Internet policies in place and what strategies do you use if they fail to comply?

Section E. Challenges

16. What are the challenges faced by Internet users?
17. What you think are the reasons why Internet users are experiencing challenges when using various Internet services?
18. Can you elaborate on any measures in place aimed at assisting Internet users to overcome challenges as discussed in question 16 above?

Section F. Comments

19. What are your general views/opinion about the usage of free Internet provision at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre?
20. Do you have any other comments regarding free Internet provision and usage in the library?

Thank you for participating!!

Appendix F: Interview guide for focus group discussion

My name is Lucia N. Ngashikua. I am a Master of Arts student in Library and Information Science at the University of Namibia (UNAM). I am conducting research titled “An assessment on the usage of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC)” and would appreciate if you could assist by answering a few questions that I will be asking you during this focus group discussion.

The purpose of this study is to establish a meaningful understanding of the usage and impact of free Internet services provided at ORSRC and the findings of the study will be used by management to improve the Internet services available in the centre.

I Thank you for accepting to take part in this study and let me remind you that your participation is voluntary and you are free to refuse to be part of this focus group discussion. All information collected during this study will be treated **with utmost confidentially** and nothing will be accredited to you personally. Please complete the informed consent form meant to serve as confirmation of your voluntary participation.

Section A. Reasons for Internet usage

1. What do you think about the Internet services at ORSRC?
2. What influences people to use Internet services at ORSRC?
3. What are the main reasons for using the Internet?
4. Which websites do you use more frequently and what are your reasons for using those websites?
5. What type of information do people search for on the Internet?

Section B. Satisfaction with the provision of free Internet services

6. Are you satisfied with free Internet availability?
7. What are the reasons for being satisfied or not being satisfied?
8. Do the Internet services at ORSRC meet your expectations? Or not meet your expectations? Please elaborate

Section C. Impact of free Internet services on the users

9. Did free Internet usage make any impact on yourself? How has it changed you or failed to change you?
10. What are the benefits of using free Internet at ORSRC?
11. How does the provision of free Internet services at the library improve your knowledge?
12. What impact does the use of the Internet have on your personal skills development?

13. What are your thoughts/views about the quality of information on the Internet?
14. What is your opinion about the usefulness/relevance of the information on the Internet?
15. Why do you think free access to computers and the Internet is important to library users?
16. What are the risks associated with the use of the Internet?

Section D. Challenges

17. What challenges did you experience from using the Internet at ORSRC?
18. How can those challenges be alleviated?
19. What do you do when you cannot access the Internet on your own?

Section E. Suggestions and comments

20. What do you think can be done to improve the provision of Internet services at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre?
21. Any other comments regarding the provision of free Internet and its value at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre.

Thank you for participating!!

Appendix G: Checklist for observation of Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC) Internet users

My name is Lucia N. Ngashikua. I am a Master of Arts student in Library and Information Science at the University of Namibia (UNAM). I am conducting research titled “An assessment on the usage of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC)” and would appreciate if you allow me to observe you while searching the Internet.

The purpose of this study is to establish a meaningful understanding of the usage and impact of free Internet services provided at ORSRC and the findings of the study will be used by management to improve the Internet services available in the centre.

I Thank you for accepting to take part in this study and let me remind you that your participation is voluntary and you are free to refuse to be observed. All information collected during this study will be treated **with utmost confidentiality** and nothing will be accredited to you personally. Please complete the informed consent form meant to serve as confirmation of your voluntary participation.

Participant observation checklist

	How many times does the user use the Internet per day?	Which search engines are the user using?	What search strategies do the user engage in?	Does the user know how to search?	How long does it take to get to the relevant information?	What is the user using the Internet for?	Comments
User 1							
User 2							
User 3							
User 4							
User 5							
User 6							

User 7							
User 8							
User 9							
User 10							

Thank you for participating!!

Appendix H: Consent form and non – disclosure agreement for Interviews

TITTLE OF THE RESEARCH: AN ASSESSMENT ON THE USAGE OF FREE
INTERNET SERVICES AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL
STUDY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

RESEARCHER: Ms Lucia Ndesihafela Ngashikuao

Department of Information and Communication Studies

University of Namibia

+264 812733470

luciandeshi@gmail.com

Research information

This research study aims to assess the usage and impact of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC). You are being selected to take part in this assessment based on your experience as an Internet user at ORSRC that can contribute to the understanding of Internet usage in the library. This is entirely anonymous; all responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality as no names or personal information will be divulged. The interview should take approximately forty-five minutes to one hour.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntarily and you are free to say no. The choice you made will not affect you in any way. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part from the onset.

No risk has been identified for this study, nor personal benefit to you. The information requested will be based on your personal experience as an active Internet user at ORSRC. This study will benefit the community as well as ORSRC management as it will contribute to a better understanding regarding availability of free Internet services in the library.

For further questions and clarifications please feel free to contact my research supervisors, in the Department of Information and Communication Studies, University of Namibia: Dr C. M. Beukes-Amiss email E-mail: cmbeukes@unam.na or Dr W. Yule E-mail: wyule@unam.na.

Appendix I: Consent form and non-disclosure agreement for Observation

TITTLE OF THE RESEARCH: AN ASSESSMENT ON THE USAGE OF FREE
INTERNET SERVICES AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL
STUDY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

RESEARCHER: Ms Lucia Ndesihafela Ngashikuao

Department of Information and Communication Studies

University of Namibia

+264 812733470

luciandeshi@gmail.com

Research information

This research study aims to assess the usage and impact of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre (ORSRC). You are being selected to take part in this assessment based on your experience as an Internet user at ORSRC that can contribute to the understanding of Internet usage in the library. This is entirely anonymous; all responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality as no names or personal information will be divulged. The observation takes place while you are searching the Internet.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntarily and you are free to say no. The choice you made will not affect you in any way. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part from the onset.

No risk has been identified for this study, nor personal benefit to you. The information requested will be based on your personal experience as an active Internet user at ORSRC. This study will benefit the community as well as ORSRC management as it will contribute to a better understanding regarding availability of free Internet services in the library.

For further questions and clarifications please feel free to contact my research supervisors, in the Department of Information and Communication Studies, University of Namibia: Dr C. M. Beukes-Amiss email E-mail: cmbeukes@unam.na or Dr W. Yule E-mail: wyule@unam.na.

If you agree to participate in this study, kindly indicate your consent by signing below

Name

Signature

Date

.....

.....

.....

Appendix J: Consent form and non-disclosure agreement for Focus Group discussion

TITTLE OF THE RESEARCH: AN ASSESSMENT ON THE USAGE OF FREE
INTERNET SERVICES AT OMAHEKE REGIONAL
STUDY AND RESOURCE CENTRE

RESEARCHER: Ms Lucia Ndesihafela Ngashikuao

Department of Information and Communication Studies

University of Namibia

+264 812733470

luciandeshi@gmail.com

Research information

This research study aims to assess the usage and impact of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resources Centre (ORSRC). You are being selected to take part in a focus group discussion, comprising seven Internet users. Your experience as an Internet user at ORSRC can contribute to a better understanding of the Internet services in the library. This is entirely anonymous; all responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and no names or personal information will be divulged. The discussion should take approximately one hour to one hour and thirty minutes.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you are free to say no. The choice you made will not affect you in any way. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part from the onset.

No risk has been identified for this study, nor personal benefit to you. The information requested will be based on your personal experience as an active Internet user at ORSRC. This study will benefit the community as well as ORSRC management as it will contribute to a better understanding regarding availability of free Internet services in the library.

For further questions and clarifications please feel free to contact my research supervisors, in the Department of Information and Communication Studies, University of Namibia: Dr C. M. Beukes-Amiss email E-mail: cmbeukes@unam.na or Dr W. Yule E-mail: wyule@unam.na.

Appendix K: Confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement for research participant

As an experienced user of Internet services at the Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre, I hereby agree, to take part in the study titled: An assessment on the usage of free Internet services at Omaheke Regional Study and Resource Centre. I agree to maintain the confidentiality of the information obtained.

I understand that by signing a non-disclosure agreement, it requires me not to disclose any information that was revealed, learned and obtained during the course of the interview. I understand and acknowledge that information shared during the interview is confidential information and I will not make use or disclose the information to any third party.

I further, hereby agree to safeguard and maintain as confidential, to the best of my ability, any confidential information, including all information disclosed during the interview that is understood at the time of disclosure to be confidential. I further agree that I shall regard information pertaining to the study as confidential even if there is no explicit indication of such.

I also agree that the findings and discussion of recommendations of this study is for academic purposes only, that is to obtain a Master Degree and all information obtained during this study will be used for such purposes only.

Signature of Participant: _____

Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Researcher: _____

Name of Researcher: _____

Date: _____