

Politics and performance of a literacy intervention in Cape Town:  
School libraries and the new subjection of volunteerism.

By  
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## Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Signature:

Date: December 2016

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## Abstract

Since 1994, policy-driven research in South Africa led by the Department of Education (DoE) and Library Information Sciences (LIS) in resource-poor schools has focused on the absence of teaching and learning the material, teacher support for poor numeracy, and literacy pass rates. In addition, research has been particularly concerned with teachers and poor literacy results across Grade 3 and 6 cohorts. I argue that "literacy" and "literacy rates" are complex political and educational concerns in South Africa. I argue further that a historical examination of the notion of a "school library" in South Africa, its deployment in education policies and programmes, and the effects of school libraries on individuals who work in them should inform our understanding of these concerns. Based on ethnographic research within a non-profit organisation in South Africa which aims to realise a school library in every school, I develop here a framework for understanding the complex processes that shape the school library as a particular kind of policy and political object. Investigating the school library in historical and political context allows for a more in-depth understanding of the outcome of a policy campaign and those implementing the policy. Through a close examination of the policy campaign, I aim to illustrate the relations between stakeholders and role-players in the context of the school library campaign developed by Equal Education and its spin-off, The Bookery. An ethnographic approach to the literacy campaign enabled me to develop an intimate knowledge of a particular non-governmental organisation and the complex relations between volunteers, employees, and activists.

## Opsomming

Sedert 1994 lei die Departement van Onderwys (DvO) en Biblioteek Inligting Wetenskappe (BIW) beleid navorsing oor beleid in minderbevoorregte skole. Navorsing fokus veral op die afwesigheid van onderrig en leer- en onderrigmateriaal, onderwyser ondersteuning vir swak numeriese vaardighede, asook die verswakte geletterdheidslaag vereiste. Daar word ook klem gelê op die swak geletterdheid uitslae, met meer spesifieke fokus op Graad 3 en 6. My mening is dat “geletterdheid” en “geletterdheidstatistiek” van die komplekse politiese en opvoedkundige bekommernisse in Suid-Afrika is. Verder beklemtoon ek hoe die bogenoemde kwessies slegs verstaan kan word indien die historiese konteks van “die skoolbiblioteek” in Suid-Afrika in ag geneem word. Dit sluit in die voorgestelde implementering daarvan in opvoedkundige beleide en programme asook die ervarings van en uitwerking op individue wat in die skoolbiblioteek werk. Hierdie studie werk is gebaseer op etnografiese navorsing in ’n nie-winsgewende organisasie in Suid-Afrika wat beywer om ’n skoolbiblioteek in elke skool op te rig. Ek wil hiermee ’n raamwerk voorstel om die bogenoemde komplekse prosesse uit te wys. Die raamwerk dui aan dat die skoolbiblioteek as ’n politiese en beleid voorwerp. So ’n kontekstueel histories- en politiese-ontleding van die skoolbiblioteek dra by tot ’n insiggewende begrip van die uitkomstes van ’n spesifieke beleidsveldtog, asook die rolspelers wat by die implementering daarvan betrokke is. Met deeglike ondersoek van beleidsveldtogte, illustreer ek die dinamiek tussen aandeelhouers en rolspelers soos dit uitspeel in die konteks van die skoolbiblioteek veldtog, wat onderskeidelike deur “Equal Education” en sy afstammeling, die “Bookery”, ontwikkel is. So ’n etnografiese benadering tot die skoolbiblioteek veldtog het dit moontlik gemaak om intieme kennis van ’n spesifieke nie-regerende organisasie op te doen en om die komplekse verhoudings tussen vrywilligers, werkers en aktiviste uit te beeld.

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## Dedications

*I dedicate this thesis to the one who taught me to read.*

*This is for the love of reading, Mom.*

I

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## List of Acronyms

ANA	Annual National Assessment
ANC	African National Congress
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DoSD	Department of Social Development
EDULIS	Education Library Information Services
EE	Equal Education
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
LIS	Library and Information Services
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Materials
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee (renamed National Education Co-ordinating Committee)
NEIMS	National Education Infrastructure Management System
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NEPI	National Education Policy Investigation
NP	National Party
NPO	Non-profit organisation
PAY	Premier Advancement Youth programme
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PMSA	Project Management South Africa
QIDS-UP	Quality Improvement and Development Strategy and Upliftment Programme
SACMEQ	Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

SASA	South African School Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SPCC	Soweto Parents Crisis Committee
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WCED	Western Cape Education Department

*All things are subject to interpretation; whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth. (Nietzsche, 1967 cited in Lissitz, 2009:234)*

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Overview

Since 1994, a substantial amount of policy-driven research in South Africa has been conducted by the Department of Education (DoE) and Library Information Sciences (LIS) in resource-deprived schools. This research focused on the absence of teaching and learning material, teacher support for poor numeracy, and literacy pass rates. Also, research was concerned with teachers and poor literacy results across Grade 3 and 6 cohorts. Previous studies were informed by quantitative and qualitative studies conducted on the impact of poor literacy levels on learners from previously disadvantaged schools (e.g. [Van Der Berg, 2008:145](#); [Moloi and Chetty, 2010](#); [Mfubu, 2012](#); [Potan-Ash and Wilmot, 2013:145-146](#); [Mojapelo and Dube, 2014](#)). LIS empirical data suggest that the absence of school libraries ([Le Roux, 2002:112](#)), poor literacy levels, and inadequate school infrastructure are characteristic of the unequal education system in South Africa ([Spaull and Taylor, 2013](#); [Van Der Berg, 2008](#)). I argue in this thesis that “literacy” and “literacy rates” are complex policy concerns that act as go-betweens in political and educational debates in South Africa. I am interested here how best to understand these complexities from the point of view of unrecognised and unpaid volunteers who are at the heart of efforts to implement “school libraries” across the Western Cape. This study addresses the experiences of “volunteers” in these literacy interventions in Cape Town. Based on ethnographic research within a non-profit organisation ([NPO](#)) in Cape Town focused on realising a school library in every school, the argument I develop here examines the developments that shape the school library as a particular kind of policy and political object. The research scope attends empirically to the relations between the policy campaign, stakeholders and role-players in the context of the school library campaign developed by Equal Education ([EE](#)) and its spin-off, The Bookery.

### 1.2 Rationale

My interest in the school library stemmed from the Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure campaign conducted by EE and partnering Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in 2013 ([EE, 2012](#); [Hart and Nassimbeni, 2013](#)). The Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure campaign hailed EE’s ability to mobilise a collective action as an effective response to inequalities in basic education. EE was successful

in ensuring that the debate on Minimum Norms for Public Schools Infrastructure ([DBE, 2012](#); [DBE, 2013b](#)) engaged with global and national debates concerning the importance of literacy in South Africa (see [Chapter 3](#)). While the campaign highlighted the persistence of different education systems in South Africa, one unexpected outcome was a renewed focus on the school library as a means to improve low literacy levels and inadequate school infrastructure.

The *1 school, 1 school library, 1 librarian* campaign reinforced the idea that empirical-evidence should compel the Minister to provide basic services. Like other campaigns, the individuals who are the foot soldiers, invested parties and implementers of the literacy intervention were brushed over ([EE, 2015](#)). During my observation and participation in the organisation, I realised that volunteers needed to be foregrounded. This meant that the precise nature of volunteers' involvement amidst organisation change, intervention implementation and work challenges complicated the role of the individual. Working with these volunteers in school libraries, allowed for clarification of the lived realities of the school library assistant.

### 1.3 After the “victory campaign”: Equal Education Book Donation site

Social and structural support for the school library campaign was obtained from members and allies within the NPO sector. Throughout the campaign, Equal Education leveraged from their member-based structures to situate the campaign at a Book donation site. Thus, the organisation created pockets of opportunities in various spheres within the NPO sector to ensure a victory. As such, the campaign successes linked the identity of the Bookery and its members invested interests in the school library.

EE is a member-based social movement in South Africa established in 2008, as a “movement of learners, parents, teachers and community members working for quality and equality in South African education” ([EE, 2012](#); [Le Roux, 2012](#); [Hart and Zinn, 2007](#)). EE focuses on research, analysis and activism. This organisation works primarily through its head office in Khayelitsha in the Western Cape, with the assistance of youth activists (known as “equalisers”) and NPO staff involved in training and data management. They focus on improving learning facilities and resources; improve the availability, practice and content of teaching; build commitment and passion among teachers and learners; and enhance public understanding of basic education rights ([Byram, 2010:1](#); [Fleisch and Robins, 2014:6](#); [EE, 2012](#)).

During 2009, EE embarked upon a new campaign namely: *1 school, 1 school library, 1 librarian*. The legal framework for conducting the campaign existed in *Section 5 (1) (a) of the South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996* ([DoE, 2008](#)). The latter proposes that the Minister of Basic Education should prescribe minimum norms and standards for public school

infrastructure. This legislation includes the provision for school libraries. Tensions arose throughout the campaign and among civil societies as the Minister had not signed the draft regulations into law.

EE demanded the ratification of this law and the provision of full-time librarians. EE engaged this issue by sourcing resources for previously disadvantaged schools through their book donation site. EE's "book drive" was located on the premises of the former Charley's Bakery on Roeland Street in downtown Cape Town, known as The Bookery. Since its origin in 2010, The Bookery has established 42 school libraries in under-resourced schools ([EE, 2012](#)). EE's aim was to use The Bookery to collect as many books as possible suitable for primary and secondary learners and to compel learners to read ([The Bookery, 2015](#)).

The spin-off of the campaign resulted in The Bookery being registered under the *Non-profit Organisations Act, No. 71 of 1997*. From that point on, the organisation acted as a service provider of school library material ([Department of Social Development \(DoSD\), 2011](#)). The objective of the Bookery is to ensure every school in South Africa has a school library. This organisation's mission and vision are to create functional school libraries, train school librarians, and support literacy programmes.

In providing literacy programmes to schools through books for learning and recreation, volunteers maintained the momentum of the campaign ([EE, 2015; DoSD, 2011](#)). In another sense, these individuals gave of their time to support a cause as they were required to be the linkage between stakeholders, learners and resources. Subsequently, these people fulfilled institutional support to schools.

#### 1.4 Situating the school librarian<sup>1</sup>

The school librarian contributes to the ethos of the *1 school, 1 school library, 1 librarian* campaign as a particular kind of labourer, in the school. In providing support to the campaign, the Bookery, supporting NPOs and learners, these school librarians fulfil multiple roles, including those of volunteers, contractual volunteers, and volunteers earning a stipend, unpaid workers and income providers of single-headed households. Through their ongoing participation in the Bookery and schools, the school librarians affirmed their position in the literacy intervention.

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<sup>1</sup> School librarians is the name given to individuals who acquired a BibEd or BEd ACE qualification (Field Notes, December 2014). The participants have self-assigned themselves as school coordinators as stipulated in the *National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services* (DBE, 2012b). When using the term school library assistant, I am referring only to individuals employed by the Bookery in schools to manage, facilitate and oversee the library programme. The name school library assistant is loosely applied in the Bookery to volunteers, contract workers and interns employed in the library programme.

The descriptive case studies of the school librarian referred to in this study concern four women who associated themselves interchangeably as “school library assistants”, “library coordinators” or “school librarians”. While the organisation experienced a degree of tension and change, the librarians negotiated various roles, including volunteer, assistant, and coordinator. For these four women, as discussed below, navigating these diverse roles revealed the shifting and sometimes contradictory nature of the policy campaign.

Ms Brown<sup>2</sup> had been involved in the school library for more than eight years. My encounters with Ms Brown were in harsh conditions in the midst of school and office politics. As captured in a memorandum of understanding ([MOU](#)) between her, the School Governing Body ([SGB](#)) and The Bookery, the school library assistant negotiated the separation of identities as "equaliser" and "activist". Despite these challenges, she managed to negotiate and connect the multiple roles she fulfilled as a contract worker. Her resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills allowed her to gain external support to supplement her income and create social networks for the school.

On the first day as an intern, I met Grandma Baby who emphasised her role within the organisation as “a way of giving back for what they have done” [Field Notes, 6 November 2014]. She spoke of giving back as a direct link to her children, grandchildren, school and The Bookery. I was interested in her devotion to realising the school library despite being a “volunteer” earning a stipend for eight years. This participant reflected different levels of altruism and measures of care (for instance, using her resources). The burden of caring for others in The Bookery, in particular through reading, writing, and routine activities or workshops points to the responsibilities given to the school library assistant in direct contact with learners.

Unlike the other participants, Melissa had a young daughter who fell pregnant before marriage while a learner in the high school where she worked. With a pregnant teenage daughter at her place of employment, uncertainty in the work environment and the absence of a formal contract, Melissa found the burden of care created extra stress in her life. By reflecting on this personal encounter, I explore the responsibilities and roles of the figure of “the volunteer” concerning a conception of a certain kind of labourer.

In [Chapter 7](#), I examine the burden of care these women navigate as school library assistants. The emergence of care in this form of employment supports the argument that a as a concept is

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<sup>2</sup> Pseudonyms are given to each participant and schools throughout this thesis. Where names are mentioned and organisations identified it is due to the specificity of the research to the school library and information services profession. In South Africa, the library information service sector is a small network. All the information is confidential ([Neyland, 2008:144-145](#)).

grounded in empirical and everyday lived realities of the volunteer and families ([Thomas, 1993: 669](#)). As such, the volunteer becoming a particular kind of labourer cares for the child and school library in a personal and public manner.

While speaking to Mariaam, I learned of her involvement with the United Democratic Front ([UDF](#)) as a high school learner in the 1980s. The historical significance of participating in this period of activism allowed Mariaam to relate to her learners. This employment history is a representation of an “extension of her speaking up for learners” in her current job as school library assistant [Key Informant and NPO Staff interviews, Mariaam, Bloem Primary School, 4 March 2015; original in English]. She described herself concerning the completion of her outstanding Grade 12 subjects and personal accomplishment after her divorce. For Mariaam, working in The Bookery was an extension of her work history and personal growth. In keeping with her history of an activist, she spoke of her life as a school library assistant as a connection to her past and investment in herself financially.

As illustrated above, the school librarian is confronted with the shifting nature of what it means to negotiate choices to further themselves in the process of caring for others. One manner in which the nature of care can be described is through affective labour ([Muehlebach, 2012](#)). The ethical subject is confronted with making sense of his or her role as a volunteer in a precarious or competitive work environment, such that he or she needs to secure their place as a means of entering the labour market. The competitive work environment is two-fold: the volunteer is competing in a growing NPO environment where people are continuously entering and leaving, as well as the school environment where the SGB formally employs them.

In the following chapters, I explore the newly conceptualised labourer as a means to consider the long-term effects of labour contracts and volunteering. Read ([2009:30](#)) identified these trends as follows:

*The contemporary trend away from **long-term employment contracts**, towards temporary and **part-time labour**, is not only an effective economic strategy, freeing corporations from contracts and the expensive commitments of health care and other benefits; it is an **effective strategy of subjectification as well**. It encourages workers to see themselves not as ‘**workers**’ in a political sense, who have something to gain through solidarity and collective organisation, but as ‘companies of one’.*

School library assistants shifted their affiliation and identity once the shifts within the Bookery. There are immediate and long-term outcomes of being a volunteer. For the school library assistant, this is a means by which the organisation gains from the appropriation of knowledge from those involved in part-time labour. The actions of these labourers consist of caring for

others, which result in the domination of the school library assistants by stringent organisation policies and contracts, legislation and education policy constraints.

Being there as an intern, in a broader sense, revealed the challenges when you are required to believe in the organisation's values and principles, however, most of the volunteers time is spent alone in the school. Because of the assumptions of separating identities from lobbyist group to NPO, it was challenging to break away from the collective action and work alone in the school library. I was the only research intern in the organisation and experienced the lived realities when confronted with the layered arguments and conflicts of being a volunteer, and unpaid. Thus, I consider the role of the school librarian important in contextualising the effect of organisational change on stakeholders and role-players.

### 1.5 “Unpaid volunteer intern”: The start of an ethnographic journey

I left my car parked in front of the Human Science Research Council ([HSRC](#)) Building and walked to The Bookery. It was 07:55 am on 13 June 2014. A few people were standing in front of the door. I approached the building with caution. I kept the folder with this clear title of "unpaid volunteer intern" close, as I was terribly nervous.

This would be the first day as an intern at The Bookery. I spent most of my day being informed about my role within the organisation, becoming acquainted with interns, volunteers and NPO staff after being introduced to the new staff from the Premier Advancement Youth ([PAY](#)) programme. In the coming days and weeks, I worked with staff from Project Management South Africa ([PMSA](#)) and was given a degree of access to the various operational aspects of The Bookery [Field notes, 13th June 2014].

The variations in working as an intern and volunteer were salient in my observation of the Bookery. The descriptive vignettes above and throughout this study contribute to the tensions while conducting an ethnographic study. As described in my field notes, I needed to understand the biases that I had towards the organisation and those imposed on me by the category, namely “unpaid volunteer intern”<sup>3</sup> (see Appendix I).

To be a volunteer and an intern was perceived as synonymous. The Bookery categorised my time with them as an intern, in an unpaid position for which I had volunteered my time (*cf.* [Muehlebach, 2012](#); [Seabe, 2014](#)). The category became an overarching and an all-

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<sup>3</sup>According to the National Accounts ([2014:7](#)), unpaid means the absence of remuneration in cash or kind for work done or hours worked. Upon admission, The Bookery classified my time as being an “unpaid volunteer intern,” whereby the organisation compensated me for my travel expenses for four months, namely the bus ticket from the airport to the Civic Centre Cape Town.

encompassing title that circumscribed my relationship with the school library assistants and shaped how I understood their roles and responsibilities.

On reflection, I came to understand that this kind of blurring of categories created real dilemmas for many of the people asked to labour in school libraries. As an unpaid intern (from here on I use the term “intern”), I became attentive and sensitive to the roles of activists, volunteers and school library assistants and the tensions around titles, job descriptions and perceived working hours. As will be described in chapters to follow, several social events within The Bookery forced me to, as Hume and Mulcock (2004:16) put it, “mature politically and intellectually, and learn to embrace the contradictions of reality and awake to the inadequacy of theory” (Hume and Mulcock, 2004:16). That said, I began to understand that different cases contrast the meaning of being a school library assistant, volunteer and labourer.

### 1.6 Research question and aims

I explore in this thesis how The Bookery, alongside EE, pursued a strategy of lobbying for and realising a school library in every school. This approach stems from The Bookery's founding, parent organisation, EE, with competing interests among businesses and other education NPOs. The significance of the relationship between The Bookery and EE allowed for a closer examination of the presentation of the political environment defining the literacy intervention in Cape Town. Through exploring the historical development of the school library and its interwoven nature with literacy interventions, policy formation and economic reform, I trace the subtle and yet important role imposed on implementers of the school library. The research questions guiding this study are: what is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

While exploring the relations between stakeholders and school library assistants after the policy campaign, my focus was on the everyday lived realities portrayed in the Bookery and by volunteers. In other words, I considered the school library assistants as being forced to mediate and negotiate the blurred experiences of their roles as activist and volunteers. Drawing from the historical development of the policy campaign and role-players involvement in implementing it, then, these volunteers became the main focus of this research.

### 1.7 Chapter Overview

My position as intern is the starting point of this research. I, therefore, start this thesis with situating myself within the organisation, and ethical considerations in conducting the study. In

[chapter two](#), I describe the unintended outcome of organisational ethnography which overlap the position of the activist and volunteer in Equal Education, the Bookery, partnering NPOs and, more specifically, in the school library.

[Chapter three](#) conceptualises the place and space of the school library and literacy intervention in the South African education sector. In describing the historical trajectory of the school library, I argue that there be different ways in which policies and political campaigns transformed the usage of the school library. Therefore, I give an account of the various policies which informed literacy interventions for under resourced schools.

I illustrate that the school library becomes an instrument to describe the political urgency to improve literacy standards. Conceptualising the school library focuses on the manner various stakeholders and role-players give meaning to the building as a legitimate and illegitimate space of learning. Through the different descriptions given to the school library, these policies juxtapose the fluid role of literacy interventions.

Policy formations and political campaigns were roadmaps to Equal Education's Minimum Norms and Standards campaign. I considered this roadmap as foregrounding education inequalities, which emphasised the absence of inadequate resources allocated to under-resourced schools. The flagship of the campaign was made possible by equalisers. However, similar to the activist lobbying for literacy interventions dating back to the British colonial period, school librarians are a footnote in the narration of people implementing the school library. By considering the school library as a political object, I illustrate the manner in which literacy interventions are interwoven with the political, economic and social interventions in the school.

In [Chapter four](#), I build on the [third chapter](#) to describe the manner in which the school library assistant experiences her work subsequent to the policy campaign. Assistants' experiences are shaped, I argue, by the manner in which the policy campaign transformed into an independent NPO. As such, the equalisers struggled to be detached, apolitical individuals. Drawing on existing literature, I argue that the NPO struggled this transition from activist / lobbyist movement to service provider while the labourers are struggling to adopt this new identity. Furthermore, I correspond this battle of organisational change to that of other post-apartheid social movements ([Robins, 2005](#); [Gaventa and McGee, 2010](#)). I extrapolate this institutional change to personal and intimate moments narrated by an equaliser. While the organisation experienced the tensions and battles of organisational growth, school library assistants were expected to be apolitical.

Linking the arguments made by Robins (2005), Gaventa and McGee (2010) and Dlamini (2009), I present two tensions occurring simultaneously. Firstly, The Bookery is implicated in broader social changes in the history of post-apartheid social movements. Secondly, volunteers are confronted with a shifting history of NPOs and political identities that coalesce in the making of the school library as a political object. To this end, I present the shift after the political campaign which present challenges and barriers to becoming a paid wage labourer in the newly formed NPO.

In [Chapter five](#), I consider how the ability to implement a school library is shaped by relations between stakeholders and role-players. I recount a specific engagement between the Department of Basic Education as a stakeholder, political parties, a school and the Bookery as an example. In the act of “presenting the opening of the school library”, I draw on proximate and intimate details of stakeholders' involvement in implementing the school library. I describe the fragmented accounts given by various individuals and the manner in which the decisions made by interested parties can influence and reinforce a political space.

[Chapter six](#) discusses the shift of role-players involved in the NPO from activist, volunteer to school library assistant. While the Bookery has been increasingly involved as service providers in a contractual agreement with DBE, it has experienced difficulties in sustaining this service. As the organisation is caught in the demand to provide school libraries, it is also “wrapped into this narrative of materiality versus (sic) rationality [with] the familiar distinction between remunerated versus [non] - remunerated labour” ([Muehlebach, 2012:205](#)).

Bearing this in mind, I describe the manner in which the volunteer engages in ethical unwaged labour. In the act of giving of oneself for another, I surmise that the volunteer takes volunteerism a step further. The school library assistant extends the role of activist to a worker when he or she mediates this space to obtain formal employment. As the Bookery mediates this process of formal and contractual employment, the school library assistant establishes different economic and social pathways to sustain their income.

In [Chapter seven](#), I bring together my findings and relate them to the formation of the entrepreneurial volunteer. This chapter discusses how changes to the organisation and the way in which care was enacted drew on what Michel Foucault has called *homo economicus*. I argue that transformation in the public sphere and the domain of family combine in this particular expression of the “entrepreneurial self” ([Dilts, 2011: 5](#)). By arguing for a new understanding of the subjectification of the school library volunteer, I conclude that there is a need to acknowledge the complex work of navigating the roles of the volunteer, wage labourer, assistant, and teacher, in the implementation of the literacy policy campaign.

## Chapter 2

### Methodology

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter details the ethical considerations and methods employed throughout the study. These two issues restructured and navigated the research study. Learning the particulars of a literacy intervention in Cape Town and relations with stakeholders and role-players required “an intimate knowledge of [participants through] face to face [engagement] with communities and groups” ([Marcus, 1995:99](#)). Therefore, I explore in this chapter the usefulness of organisational ethnography in answering the key research question.

The following chapters are the product of nine months (as mentioned earlier) of ethnographic research conducted primarily at The Bookery, the NPO and four schools (two public primary schools and two high schools). Geographically, the fieldwork extended to surrounding areas of Cape Town stretching as far as Caledon (a community in the Western Cape, Overberg Region). I spent six months as an intern from June 2014 until December 2014, while the remainder of my time at The Bookery were three months in 2015 conducting school-based interviews and follow-up visits.

#### 2.2 Note on organisational ethnography

Before giving a detailed description of organisational ethnography ([see Chapter 2](#)) and its role in analysing a social phenomenon pragmatically, I give here a preliminary treatment of the ideas and images gleaned from fieldwork in this organisation ([Silverman, 2011:59](#)). Discursively, these are representations of the outcome of the policy campaign within The Bookery. Every interaction and observation within the organisation amounted to evidence of the context and the lived reality of the volunteer within the organisation which brought changes in the NPO and work conditions.

The aim of using an ethnographic strategy is, according to Van Maanen ([1979:540 cited in Silverman, 2011:60](#)), “to cover and explicate the ways in which people in particular work settings come to understand, count for, take action and otherwise manage their day-to-day situation.” For Neyland ([2008](#)), the importance of understanding the inferences made by the researcher is to look at the study conducted as either *for* the organisation or *of* the organisation. Each ethnographic strategy lends different forms of agency and presentation of research to the organisation and researcher.

Observing the organisation and understanding the day-to-day situation of its members reinforced the focus of an ethnography of the organisation ([Neyland, 2008:168](#)). Obtaining adequate information and detailed descriptions required sufficient exposure, interaction and collating the characteristics that structure the wholeness of the school library assistants and the Bookery. As such, detailed accounts of the tensions within the Bookery and in the lives of the school library exhibited working definitions on the new form of labourer imposed in the NPO and school. My observation and contribution were best to observe what the organisational shift entailed and how this transpired in the lives of the school library assistant.

### 2.3 Extended case method

The school library assistant and the Bookery were the focus of the study. The volunteer and this organisation engaged in an intricate sequence of activities over a period. These activities and events illustrated my fieldwork through the Bookery's mandatory workshops, training, and briefing sessions with school library assistants. In other instances, the school library assistant is a collective when based at the Bookery in Cape Town, however, when I am asked to meet them at the school, they become “the company of one” ([Read, 2009](#)). Thus, the persistent relationship between the Bookery and the school library assistant required that I make a conscious effort to link participants, study sites and structural positions as an extended case method ([Mitchell, 1983: 192](#)).

Using the example from Martin's *Flexible Bodies* ([Marcus, 1995:113](#)) where the researcher was an AIDS volunteer at one site, a medical student at another and a corporate trainee at a third, I prepared myself to be flexible in the field. In conducting multi-sited research, like Marcus, I learnt to renegotiate my identity and be sensitive to different school libraries as well as to school environments ([Marcus, 1995:112](#)). As time progressed, my role as qualitative researcher shifted as I was the intern in the organisation, an assistant to the school library assistants and a library monitor trainer. These were not the only singled-out events. I accompanied the NPO staff to school meetings, workshops and initial planning of the school librarian programme. I was directly involved in the data collection for the PMSA library project.

In *Learning to Labour* (1977), Paul Willis followed respondents from a single site which served as a springboard to understanding what happens to the participants in multiple sites ([Marcus, 1995:106](#)). Initially, I proposed a single-site case study at a school in Mitchells Plain. A single case became an extended case method ([Burawoy, 2004](#)) when multiple cases of school library assistants involvement emerged in the field. The method as mentioned above became key to understanding the link between the organisation, the school library campaign and volunteer

work- therefore I could not deny the flexibility in finding truths, and understanding the multiple perspectives ([Rossman and Rallis, 2012:62](#)). Since then, I followed four women from four different schools, across the Western Cape in predominantly working class communities and other stakeholders in Cape Town ([as noted in section 1.5](#)). As the case was extended in the field, it strengthened my understanding of the school library campaign as well as the lives of participants. When considering the different accounts of participants, I was able to understand the internal divisions of what is happening *in* the case.

#### 2.4 *Being there* as intern: participant observation

The understanding is that “being there” and actively participating in the everyday realities grants the researcher the “insider point of view” ([Hume and Mulcock, 2004: xi](#)). In fact, I had to negotiate my time at The Bookery, in particular, what it meant to “be there” and what I was allowed to do. I approached the organisation to spend at least a few days assisting where needed, and possibly shadowing people. Instead, I worked with PMSA representatives on the Librarian Project and Organisational Realignment Project ([see Appendices](#)). The PMSA Librarian Project was focused on strategy planning and organisation change. While such involvement gave me access to several key individuals within the NPO, it also allowed for manoeuvring between management, volunteers and interns. Throughout my work with PMSA, I was exposed to different narratives of the organisation while collecting information on optimising the strategic change. Despite, *being there* with volunteers and NPO staff, I was unable to obtain the insider perspective until I started working in their everyday activities. The insider point of view was about relating to their (i.e. school library assistants) understanding of struggles, jargon in labour and life.

I made a conscious effort to observe individuals in a variety of natural settings within the organisation, in particular, selected school libraries, workshops, training facilities, and school excursions, NPOs, on the streets. Thus, every social situation, activity and event shed light on the experience of stakeholders and school library assistants ([DeWalt and DeWalt, 1998:260](#)). The purpose of this method is to “develop an understanding of complex social settings and social relationships by observing the case holistically” ([Bogden, 1973:303](#)). That said, accessing participants were monitored as an intern and only when breaking away from gatekeepers (in particular upper management), was I able to rectify this to gain a broader range of perspectives.

## 2.5 Sampling

Purposive sampling allowed for direct engagement with participants capable of answering the questions, as well as allowing access to the closed environment within the NPO Sector. Participants in this study were role-players in the literacy NPO sector including members of a particular division of the DBE and the school community. The divisions focused on information services and school libraries, which are Learning and Teaching Support Material ([LTSM](#)) and Education Library Information Services ([EDULIS](#)). I interviewed two members of each division who were involved directly with school libraries and who had access to information resources. Members involved directly in the NPO sector as project managers and staff (Library Support Coordinators), and one member of the Board of Trustees at The Bookery (the head of LTSM and EDULIS) participated in the study.

I completed twenty-two formal interviews (eight follow-up interviews and four in-depth interviews) with school library assistants, one former equaliser, two principals, five Grade 6 teachers, one Grade 5 teacher (library committee member), one Bookery board member, three EDULIS/ Western Cape Education Department ([WCED](#)) staff members and a group discussion session with Grade 6 learners. The inclusion of a focus-group interview strengthened the findings derived from participant observation. I found an “entangled web of inconsistencies” when comparing interview findings against information recorded in field notes that needed clarification ([Hume and Mulcock, 2004:24](#)). As opposed to identifying this as a failure or measure of interview performativity, I could draw attention to the tentative conclusions and internal validity of information. Therefore, the focus group confirmed the need to unpack the tensions within the organisation and among their volunteers and contractual staff ([Morgan, 1997 cited in Marshall and Rossman, 2011:149](#)). Most of my participants in the focus groups noted the school library assistant as the source of support and assisting the Grade 6 learners in reading, writing and information literacy skills.

The lengthy fieldwork in the NPO allowed for greater clarity regarding sample and access ([Conneely, 2002:187; Baker, 2006](#)). Through continuous field notes and audio recording, I was able to compare, evaluate and analyse different sources of data. Note taking became easier through the systematic capturing of information each day and writing memos afterwards while travelling home with the MyCiti bus. I used computer-assisted software, namely Atlas, ti 7 that assisted the data management, coding, search, and retrieval of information ([Miles and Huberman, 2007:44; Brown and Dowling, 1998:99](#)).

## 2.6 Ethical considerations

In the following section, I will discuss the ethical considerations and ethical dilemmas which emerged during the research process at The Bookery. Throughout, two recurrent themes emerged as ethical considerations, namely those of gaining access and the process of ongoing consent, became intricate in the study. Despite, the general and institutional requirements never to coerce anyone into participating, voluntary research participation for all, the right to anonymity, and protection from harm ([Neuman, 2011:240](#); [REC Documents, 2014](#)), the recurrent themes was critical in the method employed. The ethical dilemmas in this study granted greater depths and contextualised multiple factors in the methodology.

### 2.6.1 Gaining access

Throughout this study, gaining access was a cyclical process. Firstly, I approached EE to conduct the study at the organisation. Then, I was referred to The Bookery by EE. Access was about building relationships and dealing with these dynamic processes through the lives of my participants and not limited to the field site ([Feldman et al. 2003: x](#)). Personally, the time allowed for the conceptualisation of “gaining access” regarding obtaining the necessary information from participants and how to appeal to them ([Feldman et al. 2003:3](#)). Within this study, gaining access was starting afresh with each participant, with each member of the NPO Sector and with the members of DBE. This iterative process of gaining access informed my research design and the participants included.

### 2.6.2 Informed consent

Informed consent was central to the development of the study. Both WCED and Stellenbosch University Research Ethics Committee ([REC](#)) required obtaining informed consent, where the volunteer gives permission to the researcher to be included in the study. I approached individuals older than the age of eighteen years. Most of the participants were older than eighteen years old. They gave permission to be included and the opportunity to opt-out, should they wish. Then, I asked parents’ consent for including their children if they were minors in the study. Learners in Grade 6 gave assent to participate in the study. The same principles applied when I conducted the focus groups and requested permission to photograph buildings and resources.

Informed consent and institutional permission were central to my ethical application to start my research (see Appendix I). I requested ethical permission from WCED to do research at each school and speak to the learners. There needed to be an agreement between the researcher and

principal of the particular school about my duration. I requested permission from The Bookery to use information obtained throughout my internship ([see Appendix I](#)).

I needed to consider that informed consent requires that all participants should have all the relevant information. Participation is voluntarily and free from coercion. Individuals should be able to make a reasonable judgement about participation ([Thomas and Hodges, 2010:61](#)). All participants had the opportunity to decline participation. It was important that the participants knew I would give an accurate account and ensure confidentiality, regardless of their involvement being renegotiated or an on-going process.

My experience has been that participant observation, alongside the use of semi-structured interviews, informal conversations, working in the office, volunteering, and reflective sessions with participants, has pushed the logical possibilities of the study beyond the strict qualitative formal research process. My dual role allowed many opportunities to address the question of trustworthiness in the study. Through the continued contact between the participants and myself, rapport and trust developed ([Krefting, 1991; Conneely, 2002:187](#)).

## Chapter 3

### The history of the school library pre- and post-apartheid

*What in the name of reason, does this nation expect of a people, poorly trained and hard pressed in severe economic competition, without political rights, and with ludicrously inadequate common-school facilities? (Du Bois, 1903:126)*

#### 3.1 Introduction

Extensive policy and historical literature describe the influence of education policy on the lives of the learner (Spaull and Taylor, 2013; Dick, 2001; Paton-Ash and Wilmot, 2013; Mullis *et al.*, 2006; Lee *et al.*, 2005). In addition, these policies attempt to align to the deteriorating literacy rates prevalent in low-income populations as well as the academic achievement of school learners (Paton-Ash, and Wilmot, 2013; Hart and Zinn, 2007:101; Chisholm, cited by Hart and Zinn, 2007:98; van Rensburg and Lotz-Sisitka, 2000:30). In the midst of these different factors contributing to the current education context, the “South African primary schools [are] in crisis” (Fleisch, 2007). This crisis stems from the past, where there is arguably no shortage of empirical data on education pre- and post-apartheid (e.g. Chisholm, 1999; Soudein, 1992, 2013; Kallaway; 1984, 2002; Bloch, 2009; Booyse *et al.*, 2011), yet, where little has been said about the intersection between education and political policies remedying poor literacy and literacy rates (Taylor, Muller and Vinjevoold, 2003). Empirical evidence indicates a detailed account of the lengthy process of obtaining a policy to amend the “effective strategies to overcome” (Wilson, 2011:1) the void in poor learner performance in comparison to their reading, writing and computational abilities.

In this chapter, I illustrate the development of literacy and the provision thereof by missionaries, education departments and in places known as school libraries. Previously arguments have been made for the provision of reading, numeracy and computational skills based on the notion of the perceived cheap skilled labourer (Dick, 2001:44; Bloch, 2009: 17; Hart and Nassimbeni, 2013:14, 15). The main assumption concerning the school library in this chapter, and also throughout this thesis, is related to the belief that the legacy of apartheid impacts the present. From colonialism and slavery to the global neo-liberal drive to educate an individual, each policy contributed to the understanding of what a literate person should or could be. For the

purpose of the school library campaign, the trajectory at which the school library is understood as a political object misrepresents education, economic and political policies. Rather, I argue that the school library policy campaign allows for the reinterpretation of those involved in providing the school library and individuals compelled as activist and workers to implement the product.

### 3.2 Place and space of the school library

The school library as a place and space of training and developing skills have changed over time. It has created opportunities for individuals to develop themselves in a personal capacity and through the political and social transformations in school facilities. Crucially, in order for the school library to achieve this goal, it developed and transformed in parallel to the legislative and social changes within the South African education curriculum. Here, I argue for the representation of different ways in which the place and space of the school library became a political object from colonial period to the apartheid regime.

#### 3.2.1 The colonial place of the school library

In 1685, the main colonial place of educating the child of slave parents was at the Dutch East India Trade Company Cape Slave Lodge (Dick, 2012:7). As Dick (2012:7) maintains, these individuals were living in morally degraded conditions, owing to the language usage of these individuals, namely “broken Dutch” (“krom-Hollands”). The educators’ assumption was that this language (and culture) was of inferior nature and therefore these individuals were in need of a particular skill set they would not have acquired elsewhere. Educating the child of slave parents was a means to elevate the literacy levels among children, all of who attended the school.

Although the slave lodge represents linguistic imperialism and a romanticised space of teaching and learning in the colonial era, the continuation of this model came in the form of Christian Mission Education (CME) after the second British occupation in 1806 (Booyse *et al.*, 2011). Several slave schools were established, dating back to 1808 by Governor Caledon, at the Dutch Reformed and Lutheran Churches who established several schools for children of slaves. Despite, the slow entry of racial reasons for inclusion criteria of learners at schools, which forced parents to remove their children from schools based on racial prejudice, subtle discrimination presented itself in different forms. Soudien (2013:113) shows that church schools were operating for financial reasons, while the Cape Education Department schools were cheap. Because of this the Cape Education Department schools were mixed—

“Coloured”<sup>4</sup>, “White and “Native” children attended the same school. Under British Colonial reign, bureaucracy governed the development of literacy among lower-class families and communities across all races. For example, litigation processes in 1905 through the *Cape Schools Boards Act* compelled all “European”, but not “Coloured” children, in the Cape Colony to attend school. This became the advent of unfair, inferior, and unequal schooling for children of Black working-class families (Dick, 2012).

### 3.2.2 The school library policy: Apartheid and literacy

In 1922, a report was published on unfair practices in school infrastructure for children from non-European parents (Hyslop, 1999). Even if there were schools for black children, they were inferior in nature (Wilson, 2011:9). These overt discriminations were legalised to disproportionately assign different funding to different racial groups. In the funding arrangement of the 1925 Act, there is a fixed provision of expenditure supplemented by a proportion of the direct taxes paid by Blacks (Christie and Collins, 1982:61; Christie, 1991:50; Hyslop, 1999:55). From 1925 to 1945, funding the black child was inadequate as per capita expenditure was lower than that for their white counterparts (Christie and Collins, 1982:61). One challenge has been that these separatist laws have created separate infrastructure and thus separate education development.

Many litigation processes followed 1945, for instance, the *Extension of University Education Act of 1959*, *Coloured People’s Education Act of 1963*, *Indian Education Act of 1965*, and *National Education Policy Act No. 39 of 1967*. These laws were used by the National Party as a means of controlling the black individual (Booyse *et al.*, 2011:225). What emerged was an unexpected contribution to the economy and political reform (fed by the *Bantu Education Act 1953*) and a nationalist state (Christie and Collins, 1982:66). The principal effect of the *Bantu Education Act* of 1953 in this respect was a break with past practices by bringing black education under state control. Although this legislation was suggested by the 1936 Interdepartmental Committee, it was not adopted until nearly 20 years later by the National Party government. The Eiselen Commission Report<sup>5</sup> stressed that a planned, centrally-controlled schooling system for blacks should be an important element in the holistic

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<sup>4</sup> The term “Coloured” is a contested term and originates in the former apartheid regime of reclassification of individuals by physical features and ethnicity. Similarly, distinctions were made of other races, namely White, Black, Indian and Asian populations (Hoddinott, 2015). The usage of these terms in this thesis is in relation to the national segregation policies formed and to describe social and racial inequalities (Christie and Collins, 1982; Booyse *et al.*, 2011).

<sup>5</sup> The Eiselen Commission Report of 1951 influenced the existence of “Bantu Education” as the state-controlled education for Africans in South Africa (Rose, 1965: 208).

development of South Africa, in particular, to ensure its labour needs. The provisions of the *Bantu Education Act* leave little doubt that central control would be the springboard for educational policies (Christie and Collins, 1982).

Christie and Collins (1982) further explain that, by 1959, virtually all black schools (except for the few Catholic schools) had been brought under the central control of the Native Affairs Department and operated in accordance with the laws of Bantu Education. While the implementation of Bantu Education was mainly ideological, it was also economic, designed to restructure the conditions of social reproduction of the black working-class, simultaneously creating the conditions for stabilising the black, urban under-class of semi-skilled labourers and seeking to prevent black political militancy among urban youth (Fleisch, 2007).

As a result, separatist laws strengthened the inequalities by developing children “along *their own lines*” (italics my emphasis, Dick, 2012:9). The practical implication of the separatist language interpreted in the legislation pointed to the ruling party's decision that children should be taught by teachers of their own ethnicity and with learners of their own ethnicity. By social engineering, the demographic landscape of South Africa, the National Party (NP) had a greater mission for education, which situated itself in the greater development of South Africa. The exercise of mass racial classification under apartheid created unforeseen opportunities as a means to differentiate unambiguously one group of South Africans from another (Ndimande, 2013: 22; Posel, 2001:66). Legislation dictated that if a racially divided curriculum created different outcomes for different individuals, then the learner would be trained as an inferior worker as they were trained differently.

Much of these segregation laws were to hinder non-Europeans in terms of mobility and education opportunities. The degrees of opposition and unfair discrimination led to “tremendous opposition to Bantu education”, especially in the 1970s and 1980s (Ndimande, 2013). Ndimande (2013:24) accounts for the opposition to Bantu Education in the same way as Nkomo (1990:3): “*Opposition to the segregation and inferior education for blacks has been in existence since the various legislations of apartheid education were put into effect*”. Subsequently, civil organisations (e.g. National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) and Soweto Parents Crisis Committee (SPCC)) were formed as opposition to Bantu Education in relation to policy implementation (Behr, 1988:37; Simbo, 2012:168).

In an attempt to address the opposition to Bantu Education, *Education and Training Act, 90 of 1979* was passed to replace the *Bantu Education Act of 1953*. African education was now under the Department of Education and Training. The assumption was that more money would be spent on African education and teaching upgrading, and more schools would be built. Yet,

education for Africans remained segregated and unequal (Kallaway, 1990:25; Hyslop, 1999:57). In July 1981, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC report (commonly referred to as the De Lange Report) struck a blow against this. The HSRC report recommended the creation of an education dispensation (comprising among other things, a single, national department of education accommodating all population groups) based on eleven principles (HSRC, 1981:14–16 cited in Booyse *et al.*, 2001:229). As a result, these initial commissions were characterised as the initiation of the Education Charter Campaign.

Many of the policy changes in South African education created opportunities for what Chisholm (1999:89) described as a nexus where:

*schools themselves may give a particular form to policies at the point of their implementation: as the operational terrain within which policies are implemented, contingencies, institutional structures, cultures, histories and environments may produce very different kinds of possibilities of response to new policies.*

These confrontations would be public displays of resistance by community members and civic organisations (Christie, 1991) as well as overt resistance to conform or reform to policies created by the NP-led Government, for instance, the Lovedale College (Hart and Zinn, 2007 ; Hart, 2004 ). An example of unfair and unjust systems was the auctioning of the William Cuthbert Library of Lovedale College, which was one of the former Christian Mission Education schools, a remnant of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Dick, 2012:9 ; Bloch, 2009:27). The loss of this institution was not only to the detriment of the learners but the community as a whole. It opened the doors to spaces of illegitimate and legitimate places of reading for personal growth. Wilson (2011:13) identified that the situation and micro-climate of certain schools as Lovedale and Fort Hare gave rise to human capital for some privileged black scholars and exiled activists. Prior to Bantu Education destroying these sites, Lovedale equipped several descendants of Colwephi Bokwe with necessary human capital (Dick, 2012; Wilson, 2011). Lastly, this institution provided the opportunity for a full-time white librarian and a full-time African assistant librarian paid by the institution (Dick, 2012).

### 3.3 Configuration of political and economic policy reform: Neo-liberal literate

Prior to the South African first democratic elections in 1994 and the progressive Republic of South Africa Constitutional reform of this country, there were radical developments in education policy debates (for instance, ANC Policy Framework for Education and Training, 1994), Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No. 108 of 1996 and National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996). Badat and Sayed (2014:128) identify these policy changes as a need for swift education reform. This was dealt with through progressive

individuals, or politically aligned professionals through the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), which was convened in 1989 by the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) (Booyse *et al.*, 2013). The NEPI laid the foundation work to drafting the educational policy adapted from international models, people's education and education in the struggle against apartheid (Kallaway, 2002:5).

The new ANC-led Government was formed from the Government of National Unity (GNU) (1994–1996) and then the African National Congress (ANC), South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) tripartite alliance. With the change in power, there came a shift in bureaucratic vision and role. Progressive decisions were made concerning the reconstruction of education, which was aligned to international, bilateral organisations and market-driven organisations (for instance, World Bank Organisation, International Monetary Fund, OECD, etc.). This can be seen in the policy shift from the principles of “redress and redistribution” emphasised in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994–1996) to the “market and human resource development” in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy (GEAR) (post-1996) (Hoskins, 2006:241).

To overcome the effects of the past, the ANC-led National Government needed to come to terms with the particularity of the inherited educational system. That being said, it meant that the “apartheid legacy of unequal spending, access, opportunity and outcomes, distorted notions of quality” and [standards], etc. needed to be dealt with (Buhlungu, 2003:129 cited in Badat and Sayed, 2014). The ANC-led government failed to articulate the manner in which they dealt with policy changes against historical implications. Their template was an investigative plan by NEPI (1992) and the ANC's 1994/1995 Education and Training Framework and Implementation Plan (Le Roux, 2002; Hart and Zinn, 2007; Booyse *et al.*, 2011; Paton-Ash and Wilmot, 2013).

The discourse of policy shifted from redistributive and human resource or capability to outcome and performance (see sections 3.4 and section 5.3). At this point, the South African education departments were ill informed to adapt and adjust to a neo-liberal economy and align education towards it. The foreseen outcome of the economic endeavour was built on the premise of attention to "skills and education" and building a "developmental state". Recently, the National Development Plan 2030 of the National Planning Commission (NPC) – similar to its former macro frameworks, for instance, RDP, GEAR, and Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (Asgisa) – attempted to create a macro framework of change.

More recently, the NPC diagnosed problems and challenges in South African society generally and in education. The outline emphasised that “by 2030, South Africans should have access to education and training of the highest quality, leading to significantly improved learning outcomes” (NPC, 2011:296 cited by Badat and Sayed, 2014:132). If education policy change accompanies the macro-framework set by bilateral organisations, then Dick (2001:41) was correct to state that the neo-liberal policies and discourse surrounding OBE and GEAR has implications for LIS.

At the same trajectory of political advancement and economic reforms, the development of school library policies in South Africa aligned with the above-mentioned constitutional reforms. Some of these policies, dating from 1996, are: National Educational Policy Act No. 27 of 1996, National Policy Framework for School Library Standards: A discussion document (1997), the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act (South Africa DAC, 2009: 42), Draft National School Library Policy Framework (2003) and Education Laws Amendment Act No. 31 of 2007 and, National Policy for an Equitable Provision of and Enabling School Physical Teaching and Learning Environment (NPEP) (Hell, 2005; Hart and Zinn, 2007; Paton-Ash and Wilmot, 2013). These policies suggest the relational dimensions between the political, economic and school library policy formation. The *National guideline for school libraries and information sciences* was informed by these previous education policies (Dick, 2001:133).

### 3.4 Literacy and Literacy rates: national performance indicators

A large number of governmental, non-governmental and parastatal organisations all identified and committed to combating illiteracy and improving the effects it has on the adult population (e.g. UNESCO, 2006:135; DoE, 2002; Benavot, 2015; DBE, 2012a). Despite these efforts, literacy is seen as both a right and a means of achieving other rights: as “literacy is a key outcome of education, it is difficult to separate the right to literacy from the right to education or the benefits of literacy from those of education” (UNESCO, 2006:135).

In 2002, UNESCO declared 2003-2012 the United Nations Literacy Decade and passed Resolution 56/116 placing literacy at the heart of lifelong learning, in terms of which literacy was seen as

*crucial to the acquisition, by every child, youth and adult, of essential life skills that enable them to address the challenges they can face in life, and represents an essential step in basic education, which is an indispensable means for effective participation in the societies and economies of the twenty-first century. (UNESCO, 2006:155)*

The UNESCO report on Sub-Saharan Africa notes that literacy is still a right denied to many in the region, which, at less than 60%, has one of the lowest adult literacy rates in the world. The concept of literacy has changed and developed over the past 50 years and now includes competencies in the basics (reading, writing and calculation) as well as in information and technology (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2006; Pretorius, 2002). An information literate person according to the American Library Association (1989) is able to "recognise when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." South Africa maintained international trends with regards to information literacy with Curriculum 2005 and later, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) (DoE, 2002), which placed information skills very firmly as a critical outcome of learning.

The Department of Basic Education recognises literacy as including "competencies in the basics (reading, writing, and calculations) as well as information and technology" (UNESCO, 2006). The latter is a relationship between an information literate person and the employable skills set needed (American Library Association, 1989). South Africa attempts to address the need of a literate individual in terms of revising the former apartheid racially divided curriculum to one accommodating the skill set for international standards.

When the DAC and DBE spoke about improving literacy levels, they defined the structural and institutional provision of policies to serve as a guideline to alleviate resource-dependant curriculums. This is held against the *National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services* (DBE, 2012b), which insists on providing "quality education for all<sup>6</sup> the children of South Africa" through functional school libraries and access to information (DBE, 2012b:1).

The situation of low literacy rates were made daunting by the systemic evaluations by the DoE, Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ II) 1994–2004 (EE, 2010:5) and SACMEQ III (Howie et al., 2007: 30; Mullis et al., 2007: 49). The SACMEQ III study reveals reading and mathematics levels with minimal improvement by 2007 in the Grade 6 cohort (Lee, Zuze, and Ross, 2005:207, 208). The PIRLS adds to several of the studies revealing that South African Grade 4 and 5 learners achieved the lowest scores out of 45 countries tested by the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (DBE, 2008). Therefore, literacy levels in South Africa are below global

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<sup>6</sup> Education for All (EFA) is a "global initiative that was launched at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. It is led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in partnership with governments, development agencies, civil society, non-governmental organisations and the media" (Department of Basic Education, 2012).

standards, especially against less affluent sub-Saharan countries (Van der Berg and Louw, 2006; DBE, 2013b). Then again, in SAQMEQ III, it translates that quality of schooling varies disproportionately between learners from rural and low socio-economic status against those from well-resourced schools (Moloi and Chetty, 2010:88; Moloi and Strauss, 2005).

There is also evidence indicating a follow-up study on the PIRLS 2011 in the form of PIRLS 2016. This potential study suggests a monitoring of the possible improvement of literacy in terms of international standards and growth and development of a nation. It is also important to note that research concerning sub-Saharan literacy levels will monitor the basic capacity to read, write, and calculate as a means of improving the individual's socio-economic status. Findings suggest a gap in stakeholders supporting the improvement of literacy levels (Van Der Berg, 2008:145, Spaul and Taylor, 2013:2; Jet Education, 2008). Greater support of these empirical data were made, particularly, in part to the reliance on international benchmark tests of a literate individual and the access to information, defines the service provided to basic education (Spaul and Taylor, 2013:2).

Moreover, the South African DoE, in launching a *National Reading Strategy* (2008) aimed to address the challenge of learners' reading literacy development, has officially acknowledged the difficulties that South African teachers experience in teaching reading. Apart from LIS and Policy reform, Pretorius and Machet (2004) state that there is little research on reading in South Africa, while Fleisch (2007) indicates that there have been few published studies that describe and explain the patterns of classroom life that lead to academic achievement or failure (to be discussed in section 5.3). Similarly Chisholm (2004:129), in *Getting Schools Working*, and Taylor *et al.* (2003:41) argue that “*studies conducted in South Africa from 1998 to 2002 suggest that learners scores are far below what is expected at all levels of the schooling system, both in relation to other countries (including other developing countries) and in relation to the expectations of the South African curriculum*”. For this reason, I argue the importance of identifying the role-players and their narratives concerning literacy rates, improvement and performance.

### 3.5 National School Library Policy and Information Service: The panacea or not?

Karlton (1941), Hart and Zinn (2007), and Paton-Ash and Wilmot (2013) offer an extensive overview of the transformation of the school library and discourse from the colonial to postcolonial era. In the pre-democracy era the “school library” was spoken of as a place of accessing books and spaces of learning. The realisation of the school library policy continues

to make the case for the argument made by Karlton (1941:6), in particular, that a distinction by racial categories cannot be made.

Towards the end of apartheid, there is a “conundrum” in the manner in which the school library is perceived (Hart and Zinn, 2007: 89) and how this resource is used as a political tool in the current education context. The underlying assumptions were the different roles the school library had. This allowed for the possibilities of creating spaces for learning, and opportunities to challenge the different education curriculums (see Section 3.2.2). The vision of the school library was about highlighting the school infrastructure challenges (Hart and Zinn, 2007: 90). The assumption was that by the end of apartheid access to information, resources and material would be readily available to all learners. Lobbying for the school library came with “the perceived solution of the school library”, which links literacy, and literacy rates towards improving the child (Shandu *et al.*, 2014: 16; Hart, 2012:51).

Hart and Zinn (2007: 101) offers a critique of the education structure of teaching and learning as teachers themselves are not necessarily equipped to contribute to these academic performances. Prior to OBE, literacy – superficially conceptualised – was constructed with the provision of teacher training and library provision under the National Party. The vision and scope of the library were limited – and thus resources were unequal – characteristic of the apartheid regime. The reality of the changes from the OBE curriculum to the introduction and roll-out of Schooling 2025 (Jones, 2013:4), required the school environment to accommodate access to libraries and information. This is because, Schooling 2025 emphasises reading and writing (e.g. Krashen, 1995; Mckenzie, 2010 cited in Wessels and Mnkeni- Saurombe, 2012:46).

Curriculum reform in South Africa in the late 1990s brought the hope of a more conducive climate for libraries (Hart, 2004; Hart and Zinn, 2007; Zinn, 1999). The assumption was that the fairer provisioning might redress the unequal distribution of school libraries across advantaged and disadvantaged sectors, which was the inheritance of apartheid education (Du Toit and Stilwell, 2012: 127). The ethos and pedagogies espoused in the new curriculum implied a need for access to a wide array of reading and learning resources. In addition, the insistence on the need for lifelong learning seemed to indicate recognition of information literacy education and therefore full-time librarians. Apart from the recognition given to the school library by librarians and DAC, few institutions perceived this as a tool to assist reading and writing.

Du Toit and Stilwell (2012:127) illustrated the absence of legislation in the transition phase of DoE as the absence of schools libraries and standards. In response to the absence of a national

school library policy, DAC, DBE and the National Council of Library and Information Services drafted a guideline to assist the Information Science Profession. Especially in light of the failure of DoE to respond to absence of inadequate school resources, DBE (2012a) partnered with DAC to formulate The LIS Transformation Charter (LIS, 2009). It is assumed that the Charter will guide and provide a structure for the South African school librarianship domain, in improving schooling, and redressing historical inequalities (DBE, 2012a). However, it is not without its own institutional and pragmatic barriers, as it is a guideline. The Charter is not drafted as legislation that mandates schools and teaching staff to respond to the need for improved teaching tools.

### 3.6 Conclusion

Through an exploration of the school library policy formation to the present day, I demonstrated that the development of education policy is disjointed from the perceived expectations of school learners and curriculums, which include four different curriculum reforms as well as economic policy development. In this chapter, I discussed the layered complexities created in improving literacy against the policies “inherited from the apartheid regime in 1994” (Wilson, 2011:3). This shall serve as the necessary counterpoint argument for exploring the complexities of the policy formation, reform and the implication in achieving improved literacy rates.

## Chapter 4

### Deconstructing the (a) political: Nostalgia for the activist life

*You can return to your book, but you cannot return to yourself. (Stewart, 1988)*

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the manner in which the recurrent theme of being “apolitical” in the Bookery pressures the staff to be non-political as phrased in describing the fluctuating organisational identity. It explores organisational restructuring and changes in employment requirements influencing the individual’s ability to describe the loss of self, as well as the labourer after a political campaign, both past and present. The endeavours of the school library assistant intersect with the emotional and psychological tensions in the organisation.

The Bookery's changing identity forced school library assistants to reconcile with their past and present position within the organisation. Through observing the relations between the Bookery and school library assistants, I was able to understand similarities to other rights-based organisations, such as Treatment Action Campaign ([TAC](#)) post-political campaigns and EE. Being apolitical, emerged as a term that described the Bookery’s ability to separate itself from the policy movement.

Both the question of separating the organisation’s identity from the past and the individual’s longing to maintain and restore the identity of the past provides an alternative understanding of adapting and changing to organisational changes. I take this further in analysing two identity formation processes happening simultaneously. For the Bookery, identity formation is situated in the creation of being a non-profit organisation. In parallel to organisation changes, the school library assistant recreates itself from activist to school library assistant.

#### 4.2 NPO and service provider

The EE Book Donation site became more involved with the provision of school libraries through book donations, with their persistence as activists over a three-year period. The stages of lobbying for school libraries started on 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2009 and continued until 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2012. Over the last few years, EE participated in several campaigns in terms of school infrastructure, focused on broken windows, textbooks, pit toilets, sanitation, and school libraries over the period of seven years (EE, [2012](#); [Hart and Zinn, 2007](#); [Moloi and Chetty,](#)

[2010; Fleisch and Robins, 2014; Paton-Ash and Wilmot, 2013:139,140](#)). These are several examples of the adopted TAC model and use of the courts to establish themselves and their cause.

TAC was a predecessor to the processes involved in formalising mass mobilisation, and consistency in lawsuits actions against the Department of Health and pharmaceutical corporations ([Gaventa and McGee, 2010; Fleisch and Robins, 2014:4](#)). The example of TAC touches on similar aspects of the school library campaign. For instance, EE, Section27 and supporting NPOs took legal action against Minister Angie Motshekga in November 2013 to engage in formalised agreements to adopt the Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure ([EE, 2012; Paton-Ash and Wilmot, 2013:140](#)).

Similar to TAC, Equal Education had several organisational changes after political gains in court. The campaign has had a significant effect on the manner in which stakeholders perceived the school library. More specifically, the narration of Equal Education's identity tainted the manner in which The Bookery wanted schools to envision them.

*Researcher: How has the organisation changes guide the project?*

*Cameron: One is that we are received better in schools. We are not the guys that tell guys what to do. We are trying to help. So, the leadership within the schools can receive us more openly. They do not think that we are trying to work as our mothership has worked. We go in there one day promising a school library, and then you go to them tomorrow, and you have to play hardball.*

*So, they are expelling a Rastafarian boy for being at school. So, what they see is an organisation that is different to Equal Education, as we are on the softer end, the giving end. The way in which the school has viewed us has improved.*

*So, that then helped in getting the programmes that we setting up be seen as partners that are rattling the cage [Role-player Interview, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014, HSRC Building, The Bookery, Plein Park Building; original in English].*

The newly formed identity required an openness and “softer side” as a partnership was formed with schools. Instead of protesting and lobbying against DBE, the Bookery has now forged a new alliance. In this alliance, reciprocity and ongoing dialogue between the main figures sustained the relationship.

PMSA was convinced that The Bookery was running the organisation at a loss when adopting the school library campaign as a service to schools. However, a compelling financial argument

made by the Executive Project Manager and Programme Coordinator was that, as an NPO, the organisation was reliant on funding donors. Continuing the role as service providers questioned this financial feasibility of the organisation if no exit plan was determined [Field notes, 6 November 2014]. Even though the PMSA team illustrated that strategic realignment required a change in working with schools, the organisation struggled to manage the new identity. The Bookery maintained the stance and even the recent EE affiliated Board members defended the notion of schools' reliance on The Bookery and donor funds.

For the organisation, the partnerships strengthen their power in the school and the community:

*One is the funders that make things happen. Without the funders and donors, it will be impossible for us to be here and pay the rent, to pay the salaries and the stipends. That is important. The next thing is, to include to have a community that is fully engaged. These are our players in the long term ... [Role-player interview, Executive Project Manager, Plein Park, 18 December 2014; original in English]*

For the Bookery to exist in schools, the organisation has a memorandum of understanding ([MOU](#)) with the school management team and Circuit Directorates. Volunteers establish this intimate relationship based on the Board of Trustees and volunteers located at the school. Given that the Bookery is rendering a service in schools, it has to comply with the rules and regulations stipulated by the WCED Directorate devoted to Teaching and Learning Material as well as Research Development. Thus, this agreement between DBE and the Bookery stipulates the extent of their involvement as service providers.

A central feature is the underlying identity of the organisation as a registered *Section 21 NPO, Public Benefit Organisation and Value Added Tax* exempted organisation ([DoSD, 2011](#)). The Bookery constitutes an organisation with the feature that there can be no distribution or sharing of funds amongst members or office bearers. In principle, the funds and resources can be used only in pursuit of its objectives. The organisation should be “values-led” (for instance, with social development / public benefit objectives). Lastly, it will be largely dependent on donor funds and have a voluntary governing body or board ([Boyd, 2014](#)).

The Johns Hopkins Comparative Nonprofit Sector Project state that additional tasks required of NPOs include serving as linkages between “innovation and advocacy, advocacy and service, service and expression” ([Salamon, Leslie, and Chinnock, 2000: 6, 23](#)). Thus, the “demand [on NPOs are] heterogeneous, [often; these are] citizens who want more of different goods than the state provides from NPOs to supplement public provision” ([DiMaggio and Anheier, 1990: 140](#)). Providing a school library requires sourcing of resources, management and procurement of stock and oversight of the project. Every school requesting a school library from the Bookery

were asking for a context-specific school library. Thus, the NPO were required to become more than the expected support for social development or public benefit objectives.

The ongoing pursuit of providing a service required skill sets to ensure the fluidity and support of the organisation. As such, “income-generating activities [allowed for] building professional bureaucracies” within the Bookery ([Bratton, 1989: 571, 574](#)). Over the past seven years, the expansion of the organisation resulted in staff increase and greater partnerships with several NPOs and schools. Technical support and stricter organisational structures were needed to sustain and maintain forty schools, 32 school library assistants, PAY interns and volunteers in the Librarian Programme. As a result, The Bookery entered into a partnership where it is “working both sides of the equation” as a service provider and employer ([Gaventa and McGee, 2010:10](#)).

#### 4.3 Deconstructing politics: What is the “(a) political”?

Deconstructing the politics re-emerged in the manner Ms Brown spoke about who had control over the school library. She would emphasise that “this school library belongs to the school” [Field Notes, September 2014]. This explanation complicated matters by what the school allowed and what the Bookery perceived as possible. Good practices and professional boundaries were dictated by the DBE and LIS professionals.

Individuals based in the school library felt that they experienced power struggles between the Bookery and the school environment. As such, they needed to manage expectations of what to do for the school library or in the school library, despite the absence of technical and formal training. Power struggles between the Bookery and former equalisers created a personal and emotional crisis. The changing nature of The Bookery forced many school library assistants to depart from EE. It became difficult to build new relationships with the social movement and the Bookery as their operational views and missions differed. Mrs Brown revealed aspects concerning her new relationship with the school staff and the Bookery. Primarily, her focus changed from the activist stance to provide a service as she was pursuing the need for professionalising her role.

Several processes allowed the individual to participate as an activist and school library assistant at The Bookery. During the time spent with participants at The Bookery and NPO staff, I became aware of the general perception of late equalisers that lobbying for the school library is never short-lived. Ms Brown expressed her concern about the nature of her work, as school library assistants are not restricted to opening and running the school library themselves, but also extend their roles to being lobbyists in the school:

*You know, each day we are lobbying for the school library. Every time, no, every day I am an activist for the usage of the school library and books here. The Bookery does not know, but you never stop lobbying. [Field notes, 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015]*

Equalisers turned school library assistants, tread the thin line between participating in the processes of opposing DBE ([Robins, 2005: 86](#); [Jones and Stokke, 2005: 79](#)). As shown by Ms Brown, “lobbying for the school library” is an ongoing process. Equally, lobbying infringes on the staffing capacity in the school environment which relates to the paradox of the role of the activist. Learners and teachers confirmed that the school library assistant fulfilled the gap in providing literacy periods. However, the extent to which these individuals advocated for reading within the school fuels the old nature of being an activist.

It is assumed that everyone “involved in the activity of the [NPO] in question is concerned with [the same] issue” ([Feher et al., 2007:288](#)). The work of the school library assistants at The Bookery illustrated that NPOs as an organisation have conflictual goals or concerns. For instance, the organisation is concerned with introducing and providing adequate learning material to schools. When the material enters the school, it belongs to the school. Similarly, if The Bookery provides a contractual labourer to the school, this person is obligated to adhere to the rules of the school, firstly, then to those of The Bookery. These goals and issues can be interpreted differently by the volunteer when alone in the school.

The Bookery trains school library assistants and places them in schools in need of assistance. The training and support offered by The Bookery occur once a month and is supplemented by communication with their Programme Co-ordinators. Pam suggested that this training offered the volunteer an opportunity to grow and gain meaningful support. Also, the school library assistant is required to comply with certain administrative and organisation duties to fulfil the objective of improving literacy rates. Pam describes this support structure for the school library assistants alone in the schools:

*We are doing a monthly report. When we met on a Friday, we asked them when last [they did] the monthly report. Okay, they-they had Linda who checked up on them to the monthly report. Linda is now in Glory's place. So, on Friday, we agreed that first week of every month, they need to submit a report. Moreover, that should include their successes, challenges and what they plan to do the next month. We also want to see their timetable and if it changes they need to add it. So, it is reporting if the staff used the library, the readers for the month and the books that were issued (hhh). I told them that I wanted to the end of this term now. [Key informant and NPO staff interview, Program Coordinator, Pam, Field Notes 6 November 2014; original in English]*

For Ms Brown - a veteran volunteer and activist - these monthly obligations were often in conflict with the obligations mandated by the school. Similarly, the newly-appointed PAY

interns struggle with their identity. These tensions are especially difficult to those secondary school learners with a background in mobilising for the school library, and now having to maintain the school library.

To an extent, The Bookery and NPO echoed these intersections with DBE as imperative for the organisational change itself. For instance, the shift from an “activist arm” to a “service provider” were perceived as an opportunity to engage with each school on its merit to allow school libraries to succeed. The organisational shift after the school library campaign flagged the efficiency of The Bookery in delivering a service. The executive programme manager, Cameron, of The Bookery frames the logic of the shift as follows:

*The idea is to have the Bookery move away from being an **activist arm or an activist organisation** to being a **focused service provider in support of libraries in schools**. So, what we do is we engage with each school in which a library and a literacy programme can thrive in the school. We are there not to show the school what the problems are, but it is to help those that are library ready, to set up a library (hhh) and to run a programme that runs programmes to **improve literacy**. Uhm, ja (yes), I think that has been the change since being the activist organisation. [Role-player Interview, Executive Project Manager, Plein Park, 18 December 2014; original in English]*

The response, noted above, illustrate the processes and reasoning of shifting from activists to rendering a service in the school. In theory, technical and structural support are given to schools by the Bookery. As mentioned in sub-sections within the chapter, the professionalization of a political campaign to a not-for-profit programme mandated the Bookery to change its mission and vision. Here, shifting from the activist stance to a formalised, corporate or structured library programme had a greater outcome in mind.

As mentioned in [Chapter 3](#), the power and control of the School librarian programmes are restructured in the organisations planning, vision and mission. The reality is that internal conflict resulted because of changing a political campaign to mirror the needs and demands of funders and donors. Subsequently, the Bookery became “mediators between domains that are differentiated by deep and historically entrenched inequalities of power” ([Chatterjee, 2004: 66](#)). As illustrated above, the Bookery served the community goals by being a lobbyist group, then, through professionalization, it became the “mediator” in support of it ([Bratton, 1989: 574](#)).

#### 4.4 “Nostalgic” activist: Equaliser<sup>7</sup> Turned school library assistant

In my observation of The Bookery, I met one young man as a once-off encounter. This young man, Jonny Boy, inserted himself in every operational activity in the School Librarian Programme. Through the experiences of the school library assistants, I understood the complexities of identification within an organisation, followed by an association with a personal identity.

Day to day as an intern, I sat at the computer area with fellow school library assistants. Some assistants were tasked with scanning their books onto the LibWin system, while others assisted in the cataloguing process. Instead of participating in the informal discussions, I focused on drafting the PMSA presentation. I was seated beside an NPO staff member who had spent three years with EE post-Grade 12. I was also, to my pleasant surprise, given the great detail of his life through information he had on social media, for instance, Facebook and Twitter. Throughout this particular day, I quickly realised this was an attempt made by a former equaliser to think through being a youth activist, the burden of caring for change, and the loss of identity. This young man spoke of one narrative, in particular, lobbying for the school library, which continued to be The Bookery's long-standing concern:

In a subtle tone, he states, “There is no way I cannot show you these pictures. I cannot separate myself from this organisation. It is a part of me. It is hard to separate yourself from Equal Education”. [Field notes, 4 August 2014]

Like Ms Brown, Jonny Boy surmised that the role of an activist is not short-lived. Instead, the equaliser signified the difficulties in shifting from being part of a social movement to being an independent labourer in the school library. The equaliser focused on the difficulty in the shift when the mutual association is no longer to a political campaign, but instead learner performance.

As mentioned in [Chapter one](#), Equal Education obtained support from members. These members maintained the momentum of the organisation and campaigns. Youth activism and resistance demonstrated political engagement through various actions. These measures were incorporated as students were picketing, engaging in consciousness raising and voting behaviours. Thus, youth activist resurfaced the past student movements of the 1960s and 1970s, which is an under-researched issue as youth demonstrate a focus on political engagement through a policy campaign ([Everhart, 2012: 109](#)). Through the articulation of the equaliser, the

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<sup>7</sup> An equaliser is a label given to a learner who is a member of Equal Education. These learners meet once a week in groups across the country ([Equal Education, 2012:5](#)). For the purpose of this thesis, people involved as volunteers and learners working alongside the social movement are known as "equalisers".

statement of finding it “difficult to separate yourself from Equal Education”, pre-empting the case of several school library assistants challenged to dissociate themselves from the pursuit of a motivating cause.

For Jonny Boy, the narration of activism incorporated the activities of EE. EE actively mobilised secondary school learners and university students ([Fleisch and Robins, 2014:5](#)) as mass mobilizers among the poor and working class communities, as foot soldiers. The policy campaign began with several small-scale protests as follows. In July 2009, EE began the campaign for school libraries. Two months later, 3 000 equalisers marched from Salt River High to Cape Town Hall demanding a national policy on school libraries. In the following year on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2010, 5 000 people took part in a 24-hour fast to bring down the prices of books for school libraries and in 2011, EE's campaign for school libraries broadened into a national campaign for Minimum Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure.

Jonny Boy explained his involvement in these events which led up to the Minimum Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure. As an equaliser, he describes the processes of activism which allowed the secondary learner to understand the “formal structures of the school”. For Jonny Boy, this illustrated the manner the power of activism appeared at odds with the Bookery's mission within schools.

For these individuals, they experience activism with curiosity and urgency as a youth activist. There is no logical progression; instead, individuals learn while implementing school libraries. Subsequently, they identify gaps and address the need in schools as volunteers and workers (to be discussed in [Chapter 6](#)).

Jonny Boy describes this curiosity as a moment that allowed him to learn the power and influence of the social movement. Every day at St Thomas High school, learners would gather after school in one particular classroom. Day after day, Jonny Boy would return to school to find a wet mark on his desk. Concerned and curious, he monitored this for weeks when he came back to school the following day; there would be a wet mark on his desk. He was utterly curious to find the underlying cause of this situation.

A few days later, Jonny Boy remained after school to observe what happened in that particular classroom. As learners gathered in the room, Jonny Boy recounts that individuals came together to share ideas, learn from one another and engage in debates. Jonny Boy emphasised that “Government does not know what this organisation, Equal Education, has done by bringing learners together. They have brought a hub of ideas together!” [Field notes, November 2014].

Initially, Jonny Boy had no idea what the material meant. Equal Education would educate learners with the similar activist literacy and political literacy to their founding principles, akin to the right-based organisation strategy as noted by Treatment Action Campaign and Social Justice Coalition, which allowed for full political engagement ([Freire, 1989](#)). The course material had allowed him to understand what was right and wrong in his school.

Beyond this role as an equaliser and activist stance, the volunteer remained in pursuit of a cause. After the school library campaign, lobbying and mobilisation directed the implementation of school libraries. Therefore, the outcome of the school library campaign was that EE and The Bookery were able to achieve school libraries and support schools with staff through the School Librarian Programme. One step further, the Book donation site, this time, became the School Librarian Programme. Given the current DBE financial support to public schools, The Bookery and EE took on the role of a progressive socio-economic rights movement, subsequently employing former equalisers, PAY interns and volunteers as school library assistants ([see Figure 3](#)).

One cadre of schools library assistants experienced working at The Bookery as their first form of employment, while others perceived working at The Bookery from their prior experience as equalisers or activists who had lobbied for the school library. As such, the life of the school library assistant illustrated a “remembrance of a [former] home”. The nostalgic thought processes of the school library assistant illustrated how volunteers attempted to make sense of their role in The Bookery, in contrast to their identity in EE.

The fragmentation of the school library assistants’ identities and belonging affirms and relates to the work done by Dlamini in *Native Nostalgia* ([2009](#)). Dlamini traces the etymology of the word “nostalgia”, first coined by the Swiss doctor Johannes Hofer in 1688 to describe a clinical condition. The word emerges from two Greek roots, *nostos* (“return home”) and *algia* (“longing”), alternatively “evolution from physical to emotional symptoms, rather than a continuing state” ([Stewart, 1988:77–78](#)). Hofer's explanation for this incurable condition relates to “the desire for [the] return to one's native land”. Dlamini ([2009](#)) cites the work of Svetlana Boym (*The Future of Nostalgia*) who shows that the two types of nostalgia are a path of treating people, as opposed to the biomedical stance and perceiving this as a clinical condition (as in the seventeenth century).

The sense of loss is ironically not about a “fixation with the past”, instead it is about a loss in the present ([Dlamini, 2009:17](#)). For these school library assistants, nostalgia was about the difference they thought they would have made as equalisers to bring about change. Therefore,

they were frustrated as activists when they found the schools in which they work have not changed.

Situating these individuals and their political activities in context, Boym's ([cited in Dlamini, 2009:17](#)) explanation of the two types of nostalgia, namely restorative nostalgia and reflective nostalgia, encapsulate the space in which we find the school library assistant.

Restorative nostalgia puts emphasis on *nostos* and proposes to rebuild the lost home and patch up the memory gaps. Reflective nostalgia dwells in *algia*, in longing and loss, the flawed process of remembrance. ([Boym cited in Dlamini, 2009:17](#))

**Reflective nostalgia**, in particular, resounds with the manner in which the former activist involved in the organisation deals with the “imperfect process of remembrance”. There is a sense of “longing and loss” - the belonging to a common cause that meant there would be a different outcome. Right now, they are looking at their current state of affairs from within and questioning the former zeal they possessed as activists ([Comaroff and Comaroff, 1999:3](#)).

Longing for a particular identity, creates a sense of continuity, with the past and present. For the activist, both civil rights activists and reformers, there remains a yearning and remembrance to implement the school library. The principle benefit of this form of memory was that the school library assistants could pressure schools for literacy interventions. There were a persistence and maintenance of the need for school libraries and literacy interventions.

School libraries and literacy rates were foregrounded by these individuals mindful of the historical and socio-economic concern of the policy campaign. The NPO sector- created opportunities of reliving these moments of activism. In this, the school library assistant reimagines the space. The emotional elements and psychological influence of being involved in a political cause had a significant impact on the well-being of the volunteer. At the same time, loneliness and being isolated as one person in the school reinforced this state or event of remembrance. These emotional states presented as episodic and brief events was associated with the biographical, and social texts presented in controlled conditions.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated that the previous strategy of the organisation was mass mobilisation, court action and the mutually beneficial relationships with EE and funding partners. The equaliser, formerly a youth activist who became the school library assistant, subsequently experienced an identity crisis in the wake of the strategic realignment in The Bookery. Therefore, the volunteer negotiated their new identity with the attachment of their

former role. I, therefore, concur with Ybeme ([2010:496](#)) that while appropriating the past or the future, one is battling over who is the “proprietor” of the present.

These complexities of the school library campaign that I have highlighted in this chapter focus on the complexities of separating the *power of politics* in the NPO from its previous social movement to the emphasis on becoming a service provider. Following this transition from political to apolitical, stakeholders use the opening of the school library (explored further in [Chapter 5](#)) as a platform to describe the types of relationships that exist between schools, NPOs and DBE stakeholders. Several events leading to the opening of the school library, describe the interrelationship of interested parties in providing a service.

## Chapter 5

# Theatre of the opening: The place of the contemporary school library

*All the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man in his time plays many parts,  
His acts being seven ages... (Shakespeare, 1977)*

### 5.1 Social situation: Opening the school library because the “President is coming”?

The Bookery was approached to assist in stocking a barren school library in Maitland with books upon completion of the school infrastructure upgrading project (called the [ASIDI](#)<sup>8</sup> Programme). In the principal's office, we were informed that the school was notified, by DBE and the Premier's office, that the President would be coming. The school staff did not know whether it would be confirmed, as the President was not in the country at the time. Mr Gordon stated, “everything is pending his arrival, namely the opening” [Field Notes, 4 July 2014]. As the school was awaiting the arrival of President Jacob Zuma, he hoped that The Bookery could assist them with books.

The Bookery informed the school that they were willing to assist if the school met The Bookery’s requirements that 10% of LTSM funding had to be allocated to the school library, the School Management Team ([SMT](#)) had to start a school library committee with two SMT members on the committee and a library policy needed to be drafted in the days or months leading up to the opening. Finally, a school library assistant was recruited from their school community. The Bookery would contribute to paying R3 500 towards the stipend of the school library assistant, and the school would supplement the payment.

The principal felt that “all things [could be accommodated] after the President's arrival, as the opening day was more important” than accommodating the logistical oversight of the programme [Field notes, Mr Gordon, Maitland, 7 July 2014; original in English]. In the Principal’s office, Cameron came to an agreement with Mr Gordon that The Bookery would

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<sup>8</sup>The Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Delivery Initiative (ASIDI) is a programme launched by DBE to address the historical backlog of educational infrastructure. It aims to improve the current school infrastructure, through refurbishing inadequate or poorly maintained infrastructure. ([DBE, 2013b:60](#)).

assist the school and rearrange the waiting list. Typically, The Bookery would be approached by several schools on a weekly interval. Therefore, they rearranged schools on their waiting list to assist individual schools every three months in allowing for fundraising opportunities, sourcing of books and staff capacity.

The final arrangements with the school were “on condition; they provide books that have not been catalogued” [Field notes, Cameron, Maitland, 7 July 2014; original in English]. Further, “The Bookery staff will place [the books] in the library, and a week later, they will remove [the books] and then process and catalogue the books” [Field notes, Cameron, Maitland, 7 July 2014; original in English]. Provisionally, The Bookery would assist in providing 5 000 books instead of 10 000 books as requested. We then left the principal's office, after that to my surprise, the Columbia University Graduate and myself both asked each other the question, “Shouldn't the President be opening the school library for the learners, and not the learners for the President?” [Field notes, 7 July 2015; original in English].

The opening of the school is a description of the mediation between stakeholders in the school. As such, the Bookery provided the platform for invested parties to shape the scale of the literacy intervention. The NPO mediated those “who govern and those who are governed” through the school library programme ([Chatterjee, 2004; 66](#)). These relationships, in part, directly or indirectly shaped the manner in which service was delivered by both public and non-profit organisations.

Providing the school library presents a symbol of the Bookery's ability to be a service provider. In the previous chapter, I described the manner in which the Bookery and staff negotiate and mediate organisation change. Considering that the organisation changed from a political campaign to an NPO, the Librarian Programme and Book Donation site merged to create an opportunity to provide a service to schools.

By using Gluckman's Analysis of a *Social Situation in Modern Zululand* ([1949](#)), this description of various events refer to the interdependent patterns between DBE, WCED, and a particular resourced deprived school. From this analysis of the social situation, as mentioned above, I describe the various actors involved in the conceptualisation of the school library. In this chapter, I outline the fragments of the events leading to the opening of a school library in Maitland.

While the inauguration of the school library represented a bricolage of actors, the social situation, is a consolidated moment of a crisis. Underlying this argument, for example, affirms Gupta's argument ([2012:109](#)) that the discourse of development is “not a moment of arrival but

a point of departure for political action”. I emphasise this, as mentioned in [Chapter 4](#), the underlying argument of political action and complexities of engaging stakeholders is a performance through the ritualised interaction of role-players in a contested space.

During my internship, I encountered a significant amount of discussions among the Bookery staff and board members stating the need for collaborative partnerships. Several of these debates, including the failure of previous literacy programmes and the need to involve other NPOs. As Brinkerhoff ([2002: 20](#)) states that “partnerships can provide a means of developing strategic direction and coordination in this context, affording a scale and integration of services that is impossible for any actor operating alone.” For LIS Trustees at the Bookery, the need for partnerships are emphasised to bridge the gap of DBE intervention and scope:

*Researcher: Okay. At your present >state<, what do you (0.1) think are the success and failures of WCED current programmes?*

*Mrs Norman: I already said <they> failed because they have not involved libraries enough. If you look at the literacy and numeracy rates. They ^won't^ say they have failed. I think, they will say they are doing a pretty good job. But to <me>, I would think it would have been much better if they (0.5) build libraries. Uhm, I think they should be collaborating more with NGOs. I have not been to their literacy, numeracy meetings. But, I suspect that ^they^ are not really involving the <NGOs>. They can include people like Nali'Bali and Room2Read, etc.*

*Researcher: Why would you say they need to involve NGOs? I know this might sound rhetorical.*

*Mrs Norman: You know the Government and the Education Department, they run the schools, and it is always when you start something you do not see the other one doing the same thing. I think to get the equal perspective...I think... you know the NGOs are grassroots organisations, so they know what the people are feeling. That is why I think they should be involved.*

*[...]*

*Researcher: ((Giggles)). How do you see the partners in the Literacy Sector? Do they work with each other?*

*Mrs Norman: What I found is that...I can speak from the Education Department, is that we do not know what it was going on. We hear sporadically. We will hear the Bookery is opening a library here, Breadline is placing a container library or wherever. It is sporadic, and there is no cohesion. There is no cohesion among people. Mrs X from Biblionef, she tried to start an NGO forum to get ideas from each other what each one is doing. However, she has had her reservations of that often. Because I should not add or say what I think she would say. But, I think it is that people have their campaigns and own funders to worry about. So,*

*they were not so willing to collaborate. [Role-player Interview, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014, The Bookery, Plein Park, Cape Town; original in English].*

Here, Mrs Norman explicitly states the challenges for the WCED and DBE in implementing school libraries. Also, she described the complexities of partnering with other NPOs when they have their organisational demands to think of. Partnering with DBE and other NPOs are complicated by the constraints of funding and operational oversight. In this view, the Bookery and DBE, both “exist to supply collective goods or create some public benefit ... [so neither] can distribute excess revenues for individual gains” ([Word and Park, 2009: 106](#)).

Generally speaking, the partnerships between the NPO and DBE, is not to take ownership of the service. Rather, the existence of these associations present as strengthening existing systems ([Clark, 1992: 152](#)). For Mrs Norman, the collaboration between the NPO sector, schools and DBE were a means to create an alliance and network “directly or indirectly to grassroots organisations and local communities they service” ([Fisher, 1997: 454](#)).

The ceremonial opening of the school library was the first after a long political struggle between the current ruling party ANC- led by President Jacob Zuma and the then Democratic Alliance (DA) leader and premier of the Western Cape, Helen Zille. On 11 September 2014, President Jacob Zuma, Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga, then Deputy Basic Education Minister Enver Surty, Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, Education MEC Debbie Schäffer, and Principal Trevor Jacobs opened the school mentioned above.

The aim of the school library was to complete the ASIDI project. Mr Gordon explained that the school deemed this intention necessary and recognised that the school library would facilitate a different “experience of learning” [Field notes, Mr Gordon, principal of high school, 7 July 2014]. Through creating this space, the school library has created access to a whole network of opportunities in addressing literacy rates. These collegial relationships enabled a “ working consensus” with DBE to deal with other issues that affect the school community ([Goffman, 1983](#)). The response of the school staff and DBE aligns with what Hoskins ([2006:238](#)) explains as necessary:

... A **well-resourced and well-managed learning resource centre** is a vital part of any school. It has a central role in supporting the learning and teaching of all members of the school community... It **supports** and **enhances** the academic and pastoral curriculum and has a major role in promoting policies of equity, inclusion and the raising of achievement.

The school library serves as a tool that bridges the gap for individuals to receive adequate resources. To this end, as discussed in *The National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services*, the South African DBE ([2012](#)) proposes that schools with well-resourced,

functioning school library and information services will “instil a culture of reading and writing, promote respect for intellectual property, and support the acquisition of information literacy skills to access, process and use information resources in various formats, including digital formats” (see also [Mojapelo and Dube, 2014:2](#); [DBE, 2012b](#)). In principle, the school library develops the learner and community ([International Association of School Librarianship, 2003](#) cited in Hoskins, 2006: 238).

In preparation for the school library opening and the expansion of the School Librarian Programme, several social events presented as a cast of inter-sectoral relations, which may “appear only through chaotic public spectacles of ritual performance” ([Fisher, 1997: 459](#)). The social situation as a theatre is a means to negotiate the parts of ourselves we reveal and perform to the public. I see the opening of the library rather as theatre than a bridge, for reasons I shall explain shortly.

Goffman ([1956](#)) focuses on the challenge of controlling these impressions and the inherent conditions and tensions between front and back stage, and their dependency on a particular reference point in the performance. Drawing from Erving Goffman’s 1956 book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, the performances of the human condition are subjective to the social status and the manner in which the volunteer understand his / her role in it ([Schechner, 2004:1](#)). The author's argument was to emphasise the manner in which the actor accepts the difficulty in performing for the present, namely the "here and now", even though the assumption can be made that every interaction can be a theatrical performance.

Instead, Goffman proposes that people were always involved in role-playing, in constructing and staging their multiple identities. As a result of roles, people enacted their personal and social realities daily. To do this, they deployed socio- theatrical conventions (or “routines”) even as they devised personae which adapted to particular circumstances. Turner adds to this that these performances often took the form of rituals and social dramas ([Schechner, 2004: x](#)).

The usefulness of the illustration of the theatre is important, for example, in the manner stakeholders and role-players negotiated roles in particular circumstances. As it transpired, at the time of the library opening, it was the interaction between President Jacob Zuma and then Premier Hellen Zille that initiated the interaction of political key figures. For the most part, this opening allowed individuals to engage as messengers, gatekeepers and implementers.

President Jacob Zuma spoke at the inauguration of the school. He stated that the ceremony represented “delivery (with) government, nationally and provincially, working together to deliver”, whereas then Premier Helen Zille defined this as “co-operative governance in action”

(Phakathi, 2014). As such, the leaders mentioned above political parties confirm Gluckman's (1968:19) interpretation of political role-players with “a [mutual] interest which has customs of co-operation and communication”. DBE, WCED, and the ministerial cabinet members in Gluckman's terms became a unified party based on mutual interest (Gluckman, 1968:12–13).

Previously, several attempts were made by WCED to roll out school libraries, for instance in the WCED Quality Improvement and Development Strategy and Upliftment Programme (QIDS-UP). The WCED QIDS-UP programme and the City of Cape Town Numeracy and Literacy Initiative 2006 were launched to address issues related to the absence of the school library and poor literacy rates, respectively (Hart, 2013; Hell, 2005). Both, Ms Brown and Melissa indicated that there were advantages and disadvantages to these previous attempts made by DBE to implement school libraries.

*Well, QIDS-UP is no longer going... I do not know if they are still going. However, up until last year, they were still up and running. Okay (0.2). It is a National fund that people or the province get. In this funds, each department decides. QIDS-UP stand for Quality, Improvement...Developments, gits. I can't remember the acronyms. But, something like that. So iets ((something like that)).*

*So, the Western Province, oh ja (ya),... the Western Cape Province, they decided to use that for a pilot school libraries to see how it goes. I think the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal are the only two provinces that have ...; like education support, and part of the Western Cape Education support, is like EDULIS libraries, there is one in Bellville, The Head Offices, and then there is one in Kuils River. Uhm, so EDULIS, they support school libraries. They have always done that. As well... So, it was basically their pilot. They were managing the project, the QIDS-UP project.*

*So, I got involved there because nothing was happening in the Metro South District, regarding QIDS-UP.*

*((School bell rings))*

*They were looking for volunteers. We got our training, and we got placed in schools to start a library from scratch [Role-players Interview, 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2014, Plainstreet Primary School Library; original in English].*

In every depiction of the National DBE, they are perceived as a role-player in the background. For instance, it is initially EDULIS, a department within WCED that responds to the petition of the school library campaign. Then, the MEC and Premier's office serve the dual role of messenger and gatekeeper to both DBE and WCED. Furthermore, the MEC and Premier's Office grant access to schools regarding who was allowed to enter and exit the campus. Lastly, the school staff and implementing partners, partnering NPOs and community members act together in an attempt to present a particular narrative to engage with members, such as the MEC to allow for further developments.

Initially, the service-related NPO can benefit from the relationship created by the State and community organisations. For instance, The Bookery engaged with what is known as the PAY project, as well as the City of Cape Town Literacy Programme, SII UCT programme and UWC LIS School Librarian Training Programme ([The Bookery, 2015](#)). Superficially, the collegial relationship was perceived as an exemplary model “conducive to democracy”. In contrast, the collegial relationship with partners could cost the identity of the organisation and the hierarchical structures formed in DBE, WCED and the organisation itself.

There are rhetorical functions of that which motivates public and non-profit partnerships to exist which are “driven by a desire to secure those resources most scarce for the respective sector: expertise and capacity for government, [and] funding...” ([Gazley and Brudney, 2009: 389](#)). The means by which this relationship existed is coordinated by the needs of the community and learners. Each level of support given by the NPO affiliation with the inter-sectoral partners almost always transfers to school performances, both physical infrastructure and learner performance.

## 5. 2 School performance: Literacy rates as outcome

Mrs Norman and Ms Brown noted that Plainstreet Primary School was significantly placed as they “have been awarded the best results for numeracy and literacy in the systemic evaluations two years consecutively” [Mrs Norman, Plainstreet Primary School, 7 November 2014; original in English]. While there were benefits to the school obtaining these results, in particular in the ranking of pass rates for Mathematics and Languages. Ms Brown argued that some learners are only coached to do these systemic tests and that Grade 6 teachers felt that learners became test driven. She explained that learners then failed to acquire the competency to read and comprehend. Mrs Norman motivated that as opposed to focusing only on standardised test results ([e.g. PIRLS, ANAs, SACMEQ, and so forth.](#)), the school needed to nurture and motivate ongoing reading and computational skills in different spaces of learning ([DBE, 2012b](#)).

One of the most significant changes in the reading ability of the child were that learners through the assistance of the school library assistant were able to improve their reading. Cameron firmly believed that the reading for leisure in the school library was not possible without the volunteer managing the school library. As I have mentioned earlier, in the school library campaign, there has been an emphasis on the *1 School, 1 Library, 1 Librarian*, and, as a result, The Bookery insisted that schools meet particular criteria that determined how much support would be given to a school.

In such cases, I question the discourse of *performance*, as statistical indicators and the demand for more tests to scrutinise learners' poor academic performance. Currently, whether the volunteer is supported by the school library assistant, parent, teacher or the school by The Bookery and DBE, relies on the manner in which school performance and literacy outcomes are conceptualised. The difficulty in monitoring and defining performance were that performance is linked to a particular activity. Therefore, it is expressed about a “quality” of an activity presented by the behaviour of a volunteer ([Schechner, 2004](#)).

Arguably, the same can be said when both The Bookery and stakeholders rely on performance indicators expressed in studies such as SACMEQ II, WCED and City of Cape Town Numeracy and Literacy 2006 and PIRLS. The PMSA team struggled to understand the first principle of The Bookery when they framed their needs analysis by these international benchmarks and Annual National Assessment Tests (e.g. [Van der Berg, 2008](#); [South Africa, DBE, 2010:47](#); [DBE, 2013b](#)). The Bookery's reasons were that DBE held schools accountable and The Bookery needed indicators. The two Board members at The Bookery, one an LIS expert and another working at EDULIS, stated that there are no guarantees in these standardised tests as a means to ‘audit’ the learner and education system ([Jansen, 2001:555](#)).

The auditing mentioned above and performance reviewed created meritocratic evaluations and divided citizens because of the successes of others ([Levine, 1983 cited in Gupta, 2012](#)). The acts of monitoring and auditing do not end with the evaluation of the individual. Rather, it is the lingering effects of the discourses of performance that link continuous education systems. These attempts to compare the individual learner to international standards; the statistical measurement does not provide solutions on how to improve the quality of reading and writing.

### 5. 3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the role and purpose of the opening of the school library (as seen in the interaction between The Bookery and partnering school). I, therefore, concur with Schechner ([2004](#)) that the manner individuals can present themselves at a particular moment is integral in understanding partnerships between DBE, NPOs and schools. These complex relations between stakeholders and service providers are inseparable from firstly the political influence of education in the post-apartheid South Africa, where the school environment is a middle ground for civil society, NPOs and State.

DBE in this instance was not only a department run by a National Ministry and political mandate to address education in South Africa. In principle, DBE served as mediator and interlocutor to access the school and allow civil society to engage directly with learners.

Secondly, these relationships between DBE and the NPO were a representation of micro-politics and often shaped by the national political agenda which created unforeseen demands and tensions between the school and service providers. The theatre of the opening, then, is a representation of a particular situation where dependency of inter-sectoral partners and the implications thereof on learner performance are intertwined.

As I have illustrated above, several NPO staff volunteered in previous library pilot projects launched by the WCED QIDS-UP project. One invested role-player, namely the volunteer, is mentioned as a footnote in the opening of the school library. In [Chapter 6](#), I explore the roles of the individuals participating in unpaid work, especially when shifting roles as activist requires a volunteer to become a professional school librarian.

## Chapter 6

### Unpaid volunteers

*Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 Section 3(1) (b):*

*“(1) This Act applies to all employees and employers except-...*

*(b) **Unpaid volunteers** working for an organisation serving a **charitable** purpose...”*

#### 6.1 Introduction

Job titles, contracts and employment agreements were perceived as synonymous to being employed in an agency. The absence of knowing which category is ascribed to the labourer is widely determined by the Bookery's ability to stipulate the complexities of the employer and employee relations, work environment conditions, coping strategies, health and wellbeing, in return remuneration and compensation is disclosed to the employee. Basic conditions of employment are absent in the NPO sector. Thus, the volunteer experienced personal identity changes followed by job description changes which were conflicted by the particular need for remuneration in a charitable organisation.

The volunteer experiences a defining moment when the essential condition of employment is non-existent in an NPO. In the preceding chapter, I demonstrated that the changing identity of the organisation influences the identity of the activist. Similar, to the Bookery's pressure to move from lobbyist group to service-providers fraught with the tensions of upscaling volunteers, in turn, the Bookery found it difficult to move volunteers to labourers. The Bookery grappled with the meaning of the school library assistant concerning the lived experiences of “volunteers”, “interns” and “labourers” while the organisation makes sense of upscaling volunteers to semi-skilled school library assistants.

Like, the school library assistants, I experienced the tensions of being an unpaid volunteer as stipulated in my informal contract as an intern ([see Appendix I](#)). Situating these tensions of being an unpaid volunteer foregrounds the personal turning points as activist and volunteers have when entrapped in volunteer work. In this section, I explore the intricate details and difficulties in connecting and linking different cadres of school library assistants to the meaning of work in the school library. Finally, I reflect on how the three-tier model proposed by The Bookery manifests in the provision of school libraries in every school.

## 6.2 Unpaid work: Volunteer work

Amidst the silence and conflict in the organisation, Ms Brown confided in me the terms and conditions of her employment. Fragments of her involvement as volunteer continued over time through persistent engagement with EDULIS, the WCED QIDS-UP Project, Equal Education, and Open Book and finally The Bookery. Ms Brown explained her investment in many ways in creating the school library, for instance in skills development, as well as the school librarian training. Furthermore, volunteers were expected to take on the roles of parental figures in the schools. School library assistants were substitutes who support teachers and parents in helping children with reading and writing. Many Grade 6 learners in this study concurred the role of the school library assistant as “being there” and “actually investing in their lives” [Focus Group Discussion, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015, Plainstreet Primary School; original in English].

In search of why volunteers were seeking recognition from the Bookery, details of who they were in the school became more prominent. Although the volunteer pushed the agenda of recognition as workers, I surmised that the Bookery was challenged by the “effective volunteer mobilisation [which] required costly training and supervision, mostly in terms of staff but also money- transport, food, and so on” (DoSD, 2005: 49). Therefore, the organisation and volunteer experiences are in opposition to one another in unpaid work.

Seated in the school library, Ms Brown recounts her request to Open Book and weighing the conditions of being a volunteer:

*((Inaudible. The phone rings in the background. We are seated at a small round table in the school library.))*

*Ms Brown:*

*So, then I said to Felix, look, I used to work with QIDS-UP, and the programme is coming to a close and whatever. I want to be (0.2) and I ^want^ to volunteer over here. But, I need to <find> **proper income**. It doesn't have to be a **big income**. It was that <I> need to have >income<. >I< need to develop myself. I need to <pay> for my studies, and I need to do that all <for myself>. It is a long story.*

*I wanted do this work a [...] long time ago. So, I didn't want to be a teacher. But, I have enrolled myself in BibleEd [...] ((We sat for ten minutes in silence)) [Key informant and NPO Staff Interview, November 2014, Plainstreet Primary School; original in English].*

School library assistants each had a different narration of their need to find an income to support themselves. Here, it is reaffirmed that it is not about doing work for a large sum of money, rather, it is about obtaining a “proper” income. Similar to Webster’s (2005: 65) interpretation of “earning a living” and “making a living”, school library assistants distinguish between the

sum of their financial needs and creating formalised employment. Unlike the school library assistants, the Bookery Trustees and senior staff describe the participation of volunteers being driven by a “passion” and persistence to “give back”.

Altruism is one characteristic motivating community members to become a volunteer; as such described as “giving back” [Key informant and NPO staff interview, Grandma Baby, Rover, 2 March 2015; original in English] to the organisation ([Seabe, 2014:62](#); [Rose-Ackerman, 1996: 701](#)). In describing the school library assistant as passion driven or altruistic, the Bookery staff reaffirmed one aspect of the motivation for volunteering in an NPO ([Unger, 1991: 72](#)). The perpetuation of the idea of giving back is equated with “good works, whose reward is intrinsic to the altruistic act itself” ([Unger, 1991: 71](#)). However, senior volunteers in the Bookery experienced conflict with the Bookery as they could not only work.

*Moreover, I said to her look; I cannot work for **Mahala werk nie** ((Informal description- free of charge)). I cannot afford it any longer because I am getting older and I am not getting any >younger<. I need to focus on my personal development ... concerning officially. Just having the **paper** that says this person has now a degree concerning (0.2) I do not have a husband, and I do not have anything to fall back onto. So, I need to settle down.*

*Moreover, she understood that and then she said look, at the time January month, she said we can only offer you so much. I said look; I am not even earning anything right now. So, I would like to stay on. ((Inaudible)) [Key informant and NPO staff Interview, November 2014, Plainstreet Primary School; original in English].*

School Library Assistants are giving of themselves at a cost, which is not directly connected to the material gain, namely remuneration. For the school library assistants, these decisions and negotiation became a lifestyle of giving of oneself to equip another person. In turn, the school library assistant’s persistent civic engagement in the school library entrapped them as a “prisoner of love” ([Reddy et al., 2014: 258](#)).

In this context, the assistant engaged in *epimeleia heautou* as a process in which the volunteer is working on something or being concerned with something to enhance another ([Rabinow, 1986:359-360](#)). The etymology of the term, *epimeleia heautou* derives from Greco-Roman culture as the perceived notion towards oneself, others and the world ([Rabinow, 1986:45](#)). For Foucault, the act of caring described the person’s ability to discern between those who acted on free will and those who chose to care for themselves, instead. Assistants engaged in an active mental and emotional decision-making process to discern between the ability to act on free will to care for themselves, and if they should care for themselves ([Rabinow, 1986:361](#)). As a volunteer, the act of altruism and desire to care for others is also a choice that comprises self-knowledge (*gnōthi seauton*). Within The Bookery, NPO staff are aware of the techniques of

carrying for themselves. Subsequently, these individuals act on this self-knowledge for how to improve or care for others. Thus, the *epimeleia* was a form of labour, which results in free exchange, not in the Marxist interpretation, but fraught with the tensions of those involved in the service economy, namely non-profit and volunteer sector ([Muehlebach, 2009:501](#)).

Volunteerism is a form of free exchange and yet productive of intense affective bonds ([Muehlebach, 2011:50](#)). Perceiving volunteerism as work and entrapment leads to a social and emotional bond. As an active contributor to the organisation and literacy improvement, the school library assistant engaged in a range of characteristics of a volunteer. However, the outcome was financial remuneration in kind, stipend or paid wage.

[Reddy et al. \(2014\)](#) illustrate that there are various categories of staff employed in the formal welfare NPO. These classes range from management, professional, paraprofessional, administrative, support staff, to mainly full-time employees. In The Bookery, four staff members are employed full-time and permanently, namely the Executive Project Manager, Programme Developer, Reception and Office Administrator. The Bookery's contractually appointed library assistants, volunteers, PAY Interns, SGB support staff, are perceived as active citizens of waged labour.

For youth involved in the PAY Project, this time was ethical labour with the provision of social recognition and formal employment. People like Grandma Baby were early retirees and pensioners who seized the opportunity to remain citizens through “giving back”. Finally, there were people like Ms Brown, Mariaam and Melissa who are the “dependent” populations who labour to receive a salary. To some, the income was highly symbolic, and for others it creates opportunities to support single-headed households, to supplement family income and to maintain the breadwinner position ([Muehlebach, 2012:159](#)).

Volunteer work entails a form of “unpaid work provided to parties to whom the worker owes no contractual, familial, or friendship obligations” ([Wilson and Musick, 1997: 694](#)). Muehlebach ([2012:501](#)) highlights the sensitivity about and criticism made toward the emergent care sector which she describes as “a highly exploitative, low-wage, feminised social service industry”. If one identifies the volunteer as workers in the service economy, there should be an understanding of what motivates the community member to take on this active role as a citizen ([Seabe, 2014:1](#)). In the PAY programme, stipends were introduced to support individuals working at schools as interns and library assistants. As the organisation changed, the school library assistants received remuneration from SGB, external funders and external institutional bodies (see [figure 3](#)). The school library assistants fulfil the tasks of absent parents

and teachers in assisting learners in their reading and serve the roles of activists, volunteers, and caregivers.

A more common observation was that while school library assistants may have desired to do more, they did not have the necessary skills required of them. When I visited Melissa's school library, I entered her school library on a day when she had just received news from the school that a formal contract has not been arranged between the SGB, Open Book and The Bookery. Instead, Melissa was left feeling uncertain of her future as she remarked to me that:

*... Moreover, there was the one thing with the **contract** from The Bookery that did not [sit] very well with me that wasn't, the contract was explained to us. We were told to sign on it on that very day. You need to give it back. No one came and sat with us. I noticed that it was not a reference to the labour law act and a mere stipulation of what hours, working hours, [which] is just a simple thing that I would love to mention. These are the things that I would find, and it leaves me a bit uncomfortable. [Key informant and NPO staff interviews, Melissa, Mitchells Plain, 30th January 2015; original in English]*

The [MOU](#), informal arrangements and contracts broadened my knowledge of the psychological contract employed by the volunteer and NPO relations ([Vantilborgh, 2015: 607](#)). As stipulated in the *Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 Section 3(1) (b)*, the unpaid volunteer is not held against the labour laws and regulations of employee responsibilities ([DoSD, 2011](#)). As such, work environment, coping strategies and time are outside and unaccounted for in charitable organisations.

There are minimal reciprocal exchanges between the organisation and school library, like technical or bureaucratic organisation. Instead, they are focused on aspects of commitment to deliver a service to the school and NPO, respectively. The labourer in the school library works to earn an income based on the amount of time contributed to the delivery of a service. For the school library assistant, the market into which the labour contributed is situated in two domains, namely the caring sector (The Bookery) and service sector (the school). The two overlap as both the school and The Bookery employ the individual, albeit in different ways.

For Ms Brown, she was an unqualified worker in a highly skilled environment. She was not a professional school librarian or teacher librarian. Therefore, her role as school library coordinator was always contested among staff and non-teaching staff. Several questions were posed to myself: "To whom do I belong? What does my job description entail if it is split by two employers?" [Field notes, September 2014] The fact that they are earning salaries from two employers has its drawbacks. It can be functional in monetary terms, but the ability to be included and excluded by the LIS, NPO and the school environment creates reduced satisfaction for working in the library.

### 6.3 The role of the volunteer

Grandma Baby mentioned that she had been employed for The Bookery for the past seven years as a volunteer, which I was shocked to hear. I asked her if she attained any remuneration for her service. She said that she was a “full-time volunteer”. She started as a teaching assistant at her grandchildren’s school. Whenever the school needed someone to supervise the kids, she would “volunteer” to attend to the matter. This persisted for two to three years.

In this time, she was able to observe the reading and writing abilities of the learners she had invigilated. This happened especially when teachers were absent due to workshops or courses that they were obliged to attend. I asked her “So, why did you become involved in the school library?” She replied that someone informed her that she should approach Help2Read. She went to them to explain the situation that they have in Retreat. Children received books, but they were unable to read properly.

Grandma Baby informed me that she was trained by Help2Read to become an assisting reading buddy at the school. This allowed her to assist teachers in the reading periods, as well as in the times that she had to invigilate classes. In 2008, the school board proposed that the school be renovated. She was adamant with staff that they needed a library at the school.

The school informed her that they had no funds to maintain and stock the library. This resulted in a search for support from an external source. She then approached a friend who informed her about EE and The Bookery. It was then that she was appointed as the school librarian. Grandma Baby created a school library with teachers that were willing to assist, despite having no designated classroom.

As much as activists, as drivers of their campaigns were the cornerstone of social movements, volunteers from the membership foundation of EE and The Bookery. These volunteers became school library assistants in the aftermath of the national campaign (see [Appendix 1](#)). Volunteering means giving one’s time and effort for the benefit of someone other than the person who volunteers<sup>9</sup> moreover, for no financial reward ([Papadikas et al., 2004:321](#)).

As Seabe ([2014:7](#)) describes, defining “volunteering” is difficult. In my opinion, the definition given by Salamon, Sokolowski and Haddock ([2011:222](#)) is an all-encompassing expression of this driving force:

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<sup>9</sup> According to Seabe ([2014:2-3](#)), the amount of time volunteers offered amounted to 379 291 000 working hours in 12 months, equivalent to the contribution of 182 351 labour force participants working 40 hours per week ([Stats SA, 2011 cited in Seabe, 2014:2-3](#)).

*Volunteering is a complex phenomenon that has often defied definition, let alone measurement. Undertaken in **leisure time**, it is nevertheless a **form of work**. Pursued no monetary compensation, it nevertheless produces both **tangible and intangible benefits** not only for its **beneficiaries but also for the volunteers**. [Volunteering is] supposed (sic) to be undertaken as a matter of free will, it is often motivated by a sense of personal, cultural, religious, or other obligation.*

Bussell and Forbes ([2001:246](#)) discuss the difficulty in defining the parameters and standard practice in volunteering. Since volunteers operate in a heterogeneous group within organisations, taking on various roles, it was difficult to narrow down the skill set and experience of individuals involved in these organisations. Without volunteers, many organisations would be destitute regarding human resources and human capital ([Schultz, 1961](#)). [Conaan et al. \(n.d. cited in Bussell and Forbes, 2001: 248\)](#) suggest that “volunteers” sit on a continuum, with the free choice ranging from “free will” to “obligation to volunteer” and, remuneration from “none at all” to “stipend or low pay”. They conclude that the perception of what a volunteer is depends on the relative costs and benefits to the volunteer. Therefore, volunteers considered “the greater the net costs to the volunteer, the purer the volunteering activity and hence the more the costs of investment” ([Bussell, and Forbes, 2001: 248](#)).

Within The Bookery, many individuals fit into this continuum. I found a three-tier leg of volunteers and contractual labourers within the organisation ([see Appendix 1](#)). Participants confirmed their involvement in the organisation as they started as volunteers for no remuneration, whereas others started with a “stipend or low pay”. Initially, it was difficult for participants to raise these issues. Throughout the study, I engaged with individuals who “used their leisure time to improve skills and knowledge”. For some participants, it was about gaining formal training through UNISA, LIS training at UWC or night school to complete their secondary education or enhance their skills. Schultz ([1961:1](#)) identified that “such [personal] investment in human capital accounts for most of the impressive rise in the real earnings per worker”.

Previous studies have identified Government’s intervention and intention to institutionalise and utilise volunteer participation for the development of the country. Fakier ([2014](#)) and Seabe ([2014](#)) discuss in detail volunteer and contractual work initiatives such as the Extended Public Work Programme (EPWP)'s Community Health-Care Workers (CHCW), and National Development Plan (NDP) initiatives such as the National Youth Service ([Seabe, 2014:2](#)). These policies and programmes all speak to a “people-centred development and collective action” ([Patel and Wilson, 2004:365 cited in Seabe, 2014:1](#)). Furthermore, it brings to light the “upliftment” and reconstruction development discourse by National Government to “harness services by volunteers for employment creation” ([Seabe, 2014:1-2](#)).

The Bookery builds from this national argument through their three-tier volunteer structure (see [Appendix 1](#)). In one tier, the volunteer who was an activist, former "equaliser", joins the organisation post-matric as school library assistant. Then, in the second tier, individuals, namely older men and women who worked as SGB workers or volunteers, are appointed as school library assistants with an MOU between the school, external funders and The Bookery. The final tier consists of post-matriculants and unemployed youth employed in the WCED PAY Project selected and placed in schools as school library assistants. Together, these individuals form the workforce of The Bookery.

#### 6.4 The role of the labourer

Thus far in this chapter, I have tried to convey the meaning of work as understood by the school library assistant. Further, through the school library campaign, I have described the establishment of a new school library assist as a labourer. Given the intimacy of the school library assistant with implementing and appropriating the learning and teaching material, describing the role of the labourer characterises the nature of this person's employment position in the Bookery.

The translation of the word from German reveals a distinction between the notions of labour and work ([Applebaum, 1992:493-495](#)). The explicit use of the term "school library assistant" within the organisation illustrates the difficulty of naming the assistant as a "labourer" when the product (here it is in the form of a service) derives from work in the form of "volunteering". In this study, I broaden the concept of "labour" to "the undifferentiated use of the body to perform work (quantitative), while work is the use of hands and head to create man-made things which are durable and can be used to create other things" ([Arendt, 1958 cited in Applebaum, 1992:491](#)). Work frames individuals activities, which structures the way people live, how they make contact with material and social reality, and how they achieve status and self-esteem ([Applebaum, 1992](#)). Work precisely dominates the activities and livelihood strategies of the school library assistant.

According to Marx, Engels and Tucker ([1978:71](#)), labour "produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a commodity – and does so in the proportion in which it produces commodities". The worker within this NPO is not creating a commodity within his or her work environment. Instead, I suggest that the school library assistant is him or herself the commodity within the organisation.

The labourer produces more than the invested time within the organisation. The more the school library assistant invests in the product, namely the school library, the less he or she can improve

himself or herself ([Marx, Engels. and Tucker, 1978:73](#)). The higher the significance of the school library, the less the school library assistant is featured. Consequently, the amount of time and skill the volunteer invests in the product becomes the logic of capital. For the school librarian, the perception was that the commodity, namely the school library, will grant them recognition and paid wages ([Foucault, 2008:221 cited in Dilts, 2011:4](#)). Even though the school library assistants claimed that their knowledge was appropriated in The Bookery and school library, minimal public recognition was given to them. Ms Brown commented on the absence of recognition in The Bookery and the school environment, and related this to me as follows:

*There we go. I am not getting that. You saw what happened here this morning. I do not feel valued here in this place. I am seriously considering leaving here (hhh) to be honest with you. I am fed up of The Bookery as well. I am tired of people trying to capitalise on my work and not try to acknowledge what I do. Nowhere, is my name mentioned here. ((Pointing to the article in Plainsman)) [Key informant and NPO Staff interview, Ms Brown, Plain Street Primary School, 6 November 2014; original in English]*

Ms Brown worked under the assumption that she would gain acknowledgement for her role. About the article in *Plainsman* and *Atlantis* newspapers, the school library assistants perceived their work as being “capitalised” against the value of their time. Ms Brown negotiated her position and measure of “social recognition and appreciation” ([Barchiesi, 2008:123](#)) daily in her school and The Bookery. The wage labourer in the school library, therefore, takes on a different form when he/she has to fight for recognition as labourer employed by the school and The Bookery. As Ms Brown says:

*Man, I want to make a **difference**. It is about making a **difference**. If you see something is wrong, then you want to try to make it right. I do believe that there is a place for The Bookery, but they just need to know their limits. They should be aware where and when to get involved. I should still tell you how I got involved with Equal Education. [Therefore], **I was volunteering, and I practically informed Liam that I need to find employment and I cannot work like this any longer**. At the time, it was my **third year in a non-profit sector**.*

*[also], I said to her look, **I cannot work for [Mahala werk nie]**. I cannot afford it any longer because I am getting older and I am not getting any younger. I need to focus on my personal development, regarding officially. Just having the paper that says this person has now a degree concerning I do not have a husband and I do not have anything to fall back onto. I need to settle down. [Ms Brown, Plain Street Primary School, and 11<sup>th</sup> September 2014; original in English]*

From the school library assistants’ perspectives, the appropriation of their knowledge and skill set by The Bookery forced them to become a different kind of worker. While labour is intensified by the expansion of The Bookery and the increase of schools and partnerships, the labourer pushes forward with the demand for future income. The participation in unpaid work, as is the case with school library assistants, is an “object of supply and demand in the form of

labour power” ([Foucault, 2008: 223](#)). This acknowledgement of working for free and the organisational changes necessitated the school library assistant to control the knowledge obtained in the NPO sector. This push for finding formal employment foregrounds the individuals need to become a professional school librarian, but also to acknowledge the new position in the Bookery as "an active economic subject"([Foucault, 2008:223](#)).

In the absence of *National Guidelines for School Library and Information Services* ([DBE, 2012b](#)) and support for school librarianship as a profession, the school library assistant is pressed into action as a “teacher-librarian” and held accountable to the Principals, educators and NPO. For some, it is even required to write reports to funding donors and manage the small space of the library on the way to expanding the library service ([Shandu et al., 2014:14](#)). In this account, the school library assistant as labourer trusts in The Bookery to support their future income in the absence of a category of waged labourer. To this end, demands placed on the school library assistants reinforces an “internal subjugation of individuals” ([Dilts, 2011:131](#)).

Hart and Nassimbeni ([2013:2](#)) illustrated that the national policy is crucial here since the provisioning of staff is outside the provincial Education Department mandate. The school library functions when SGB contracts allow for the appointment of “extra” staff beyond national norms. Thus, schools are responsible for a local and individual capacity to provide and integrated literacy programme.

## 6.5 Conclusion

Drawing from the narration from senior volunteers, I learnt that participating in the schools were formed by their involvement as volunteers in the school library from a pilot project to policy campaign. As I have seen with Ms Brown, Melissa and Grandma Baby, unpaid work was an entry to formalised employment. Each gave detailed accounts on moving from activist/ volunteers to employed school library assistant were fraught with the involvement of several NPO partners and schools.

[Chapter 6](#), in contrast, illustrated the difficulty of distinguishing between work and labour in the context of “volunteers” and “assistants”. What I have illustrated here is the manner in which the school library assistants navigated the distinctions between those employed as “volunteers” and those whose contractual obligations established them as “labourers”. The school library assistant employed by the Bookery have conflicting obligations between the school, The Bookery and financial supporters. Thus, three tiers of school library assistants exist in School Librarian Programmes. In this chapter, I describe the volunteer and organisational turning points in accepting the changes from being a volunteer and labourer.

## Chapter 7

### Conclusion

*The library is the **starting point for any form of education**. It educates you as the librarian and the people... It is important that I move beyond this point of departure. [Key informant and NPO Interview, School Library Assistant, Adam, 4 July 2014; original in English]*

#### 7.1 Introduction

The school library campaign addressed a particular aspect of the Minimum Norms and Standards for Public school infrastructure policy stipulated in *Section 5A of the South African School Act 1996* ([DBE, 2008](#)). The policy campaign addressed multiple and conflicting influences which come to bear in the lives of individuals implementing the policy. Through the school library, campaign purposes changed when existing institutional structures, processes, and social circumstances altered the founding organisation's mandate, requiring modification of plans and actions ([Levin, 2001:5](#)).

From ethnographic research at The Bookery's office in Plein Park, Cape Town, I explored the manner in which the successes of a policy campaign have changed a social movement, and its spin-off, The Bookery. Through an internship, I became familiar with the tensions experienced in The Bookery between staff and partners. NPO staff described the outcome of a policy campaign resulted in the intersection between stakeholders and school library assistants. This thesis illustrated the complexities of the school library campaign shaped by the individual's engagement from activist to worker.

The interaction after organisational change adds to the complexities of activists becoming school library assistants. In Chapters [5](#) and [6](#) in particular, I demonstrated the manner in which the school library assistants grappled with these tensions from their former founding organisation. Therefore, what I demonstrate was how the success of the policy campaign had several outcomes for The Bookery and why these changes shaped the role of the school library assistant.

#### 7.2 Entrepreneur of the self: The role of the school library assistant

For the school library assistant to become the mediator, the volunteer strives to possess the characteristics of the "caring subject" ([Muehlebach, 2012; Hart, 2012; Dilts, 2011:5-6](#)). To become the latter, the volunteer engages in the process of "self-knowledge and self-detachment

whereby one's innermost feelings become [the] object of scrutiny and then articulation" ([Foucault, 1997:223](#)) and "whereby the acquisition of certain attitudes with the goal of self-transformation is central to becoming an ethical being" ([Foucault, 1997:225](#)). The Bookery feeds into this insistence of caring for oneself through caring for others.

These realities are constructed through the evidence of the school library assistants' participation in the Bookery. Cameron referred to this as the "passion" of people in the organisation. They are connected by their desires to help people read, despite them not knowing much about books.

Muehlebach ([2012:8](#)) highlights this process of altruism in the volunteer sector as "Souci de soi, this care of the self." What is deeply troubling are these roles of *care* are in conflict to the functions of the school library assistant as a contractual labourer ([Dilts, 2011:13](#)). The framing of "caring for the self" and "caring for others" is made possible by the desire to improve the lives of others ([Dilts, 2011:13](#)).

The desire to make a difference on the part of the school library assistant blurs as school library assistants negotiated their role as an activist, volunteer, labourer, and family member. Individuals transcend these roles as a worker when they "perform [these] two kinds of labours of care simultaneously; [as they] feel (cares about) and act (cares for others) at the same time" ([Muehlebach, 2012:7-8](#)). I found a variation and manipulation of attention in the schools. Subsequently, school library assistants are understaffed, under-resourced and struggling a waging war. They are firstly volunteers, and then workers in the school library profession. Their skillset is a rear commodity, yet it is not recognised in the professional domain.

I explored the cost of being a school library assistant. As such, I realised that their personal, emotional, health and financial costs of being a school librarian. Many are using their funds to assist learners and volunteers they empower in the process. Several school library assistants cared for others and neglected the manner in which this would change their positions within The Bookery. While equipping themselves to care for learners, they contributed to the product of the NPO, namely the school library.

Drawing from Schultz and Foucault, I find that there is a new approach to labour and understanding the *school library assistant* as a "partner of exchange" to being an "entrepreneur of himself" ([Dilts, 2011:5-6](#)). No longer is the volunteer a producer for an owner but instead is the *homo economicus*. There is an intrinsic shift that happens when the volunteer becomes the producer of the school library.

School library assistants possess the entrepreneurial character to implement a functional school library nested in the NPO service provision role. The neo-liberal *homo economicus* implies a “very interesting theory of consumption” ([Burchell et al., 1991:43](#)) in which the school library assistant is the consumer of his or her development. This is so much so that the school library assistant engages in a different notion of what it means to possess human capital.

The school library assistant becomes the volunteer “who rationally calculates its interests as an economic actor”. The choices of the subject are capable of being modified by its environment ([Dean, 2009:57; Read, 2009:29](#)). *Homo economicus*, Foucault argues, ceases to be “one of the two partners in the process of exchange” and becomes “an entrepreneur of himself” ([Foucault 2008:226, cited in Dilts, 2011:1](#)).

The school library assistant possesses these characteristics of someone who becomes a “being for himself his capital, being for himself his producer, [and] being for himself the source of [his] earnings” ([Foucault, 2008:226, cited in Dilts, 2011:1](#)). Ms Brown and Mariaam have illustrated their entrepreneurial character to source funding and support outside of The Bookery. These individuals will supplement their income, support their book collection and equip their learners.

While economic activity or exchange does not link the NPO directly, I have arrived at the conclusion that *homo economicus* and The Bookery are two integral elements. It appears that once the activist becomes a labourer; he or she is separate from the NPO, yet reconnects by waged labour ([Foucault, 2008:296, cited in Dilts, 2011:1](#)). Both the NPO in question, as well as the school library assistants struggled with these subtle shifts which are an outcome of the changes from activist to labourer.

Therefore, I arrive at the argument that the school library illustrates the interface of “government and the individual” ([Dilts, 2011: 130](#)). It is true that the depth of *homo economicus*, in practice, in the neoliberal state, market and civil society relationship is the reconfiguration of the volunteer. Moreover, this *homo economicus*, entrepreneur of the self, defines the scope, breadth and ability to become his or her own producer when the choices made determine the actual source of his or her income ([Dilts, 2011:226](#)).

### 7.3 Reading self: The activist, volunteer, worker and family member

The library assistant is now part of the care-providing family, which include parents (including spouse’s parents), grandparents (including spouse’s grandparents), siblings (brothers and sisters including spouse’s siblings) and children (biological and adopted) ([Seabe, 2014:8](#)). The absence of parents and teachers regarding selecting and working with reading material shifted the

private reading space to the school library. The school library assistant extended his or her role as volunteer and worker, which was their public position, and infringed on the single dimension of their patrons.

The school library assistants involved in the Bookery emphasised the intersection of the private and public sphere of the state and the family. Decisions made in one particular area had an impact on another. Hence, the school library assistant now possessed the responsibility of activist, entrepreneur, and worker, volunteer and family member (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The reading self: the configuration of *homo economicus*



This *entrepreneurial self*-reconnected the demands of school library policy, in particular, to produce an equitable education system to improve literacy rates. However, The Bookery and fluid stakeholder relationships posed barriers to the productivity of the school library assistant. Organisational changes pressurised the school library assistant to become creative and oppositional. Equally, then, the school library assistant negotiated different and often conflictual roles as activist, caregiver, provider and school library assistant. Several individuals engaged in these tensions reminded themselves of the lengthy process to actualise the school library.

#### 7.4 Conclusion

The utility of the school library campaign addressed larger social, economic and political concerns within the post-apartheid education context. Through engaging various stakeholders

directly, several policy gaps were foregrounded and the implementation complexities noted in different theoretical and pragmatic ways. The school library campaign became reconfigured when individuals attempted to implement the policy. Subsequently, the role of the school library assistant in the school library was shaped by the changes within legislation and curriculum reforms within the South African education context.

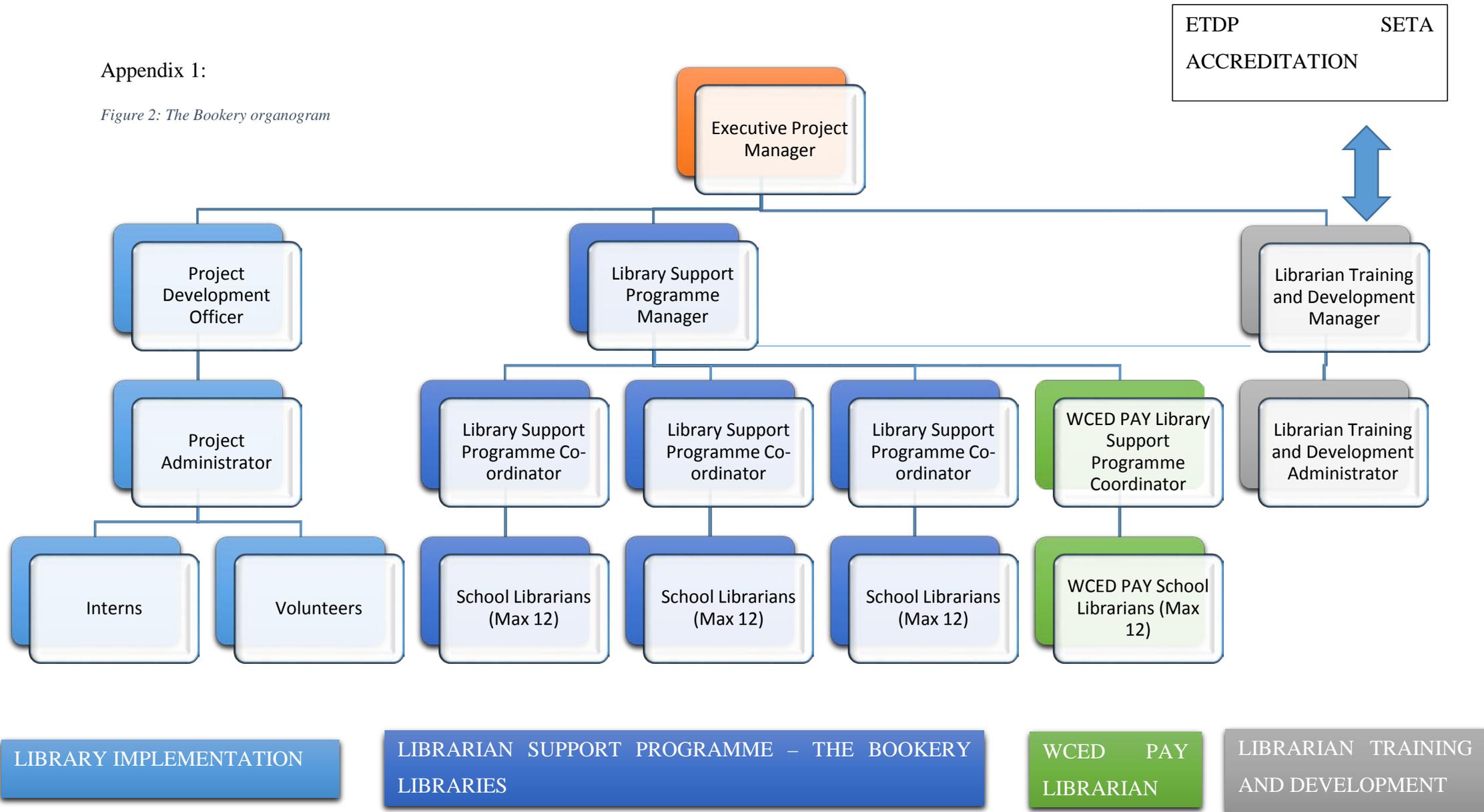
In analysing the aftermath of the school library campaign, I triangulated information concerning literacy rates, the absence of school libraries, school infrastructure and school library assistant. Several social events and encounters with school library assistants required “deeper knowledge of these factors [to] identify the obstacles literacy providers, both governmental and nongovernmental, are facing” ([Benavot, 2015:6](#)). When considering the position of The Bookery, an organisation that was formed as a result of the campaign, I became aware of the depth and intricacy in pursuing a particular narrative as a newly formed NPO.



# Appendices

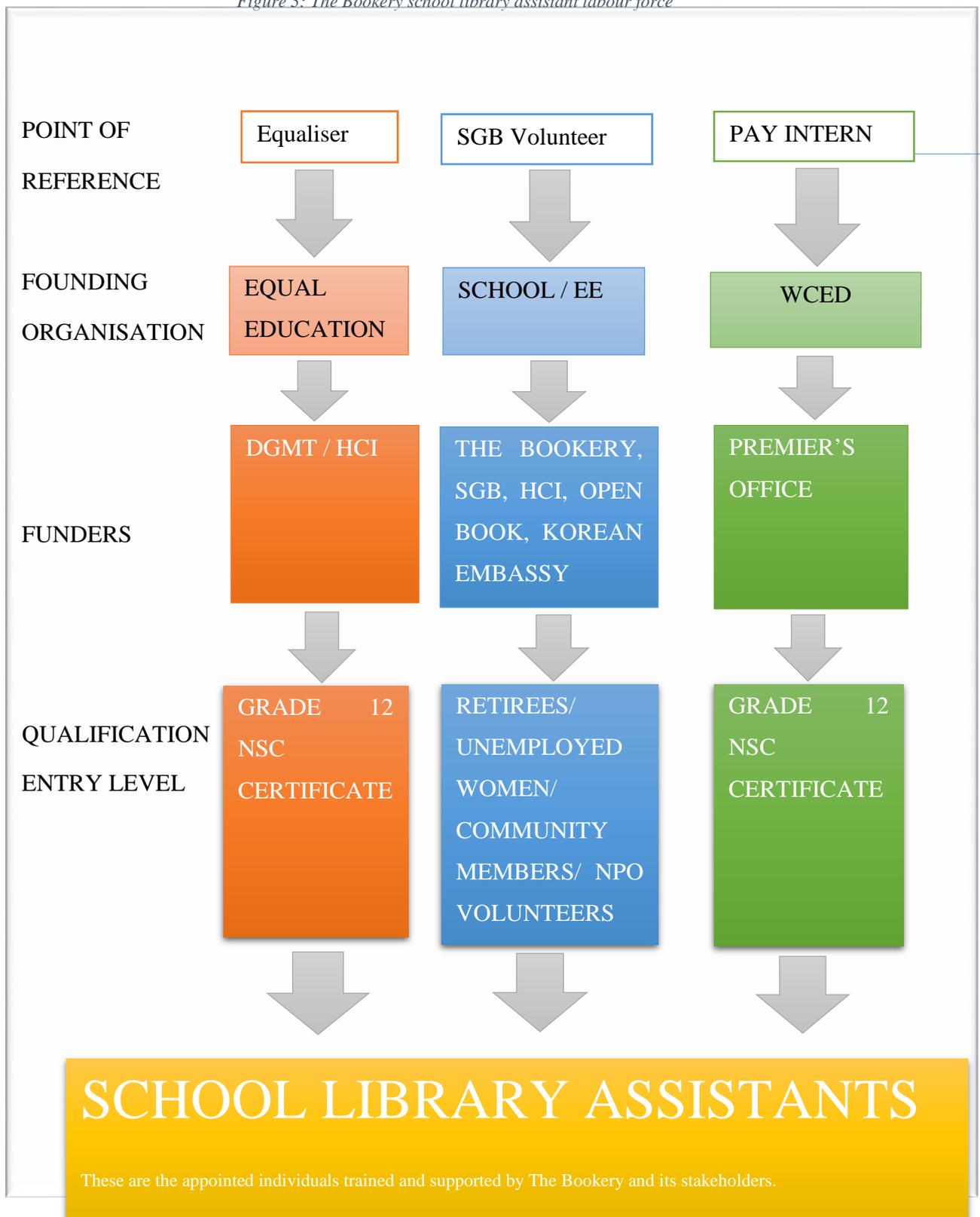
Appendix 1:

Figure 2: The Bookery organogram



Appendix

Figure 3: The Bookery school library assistant labour force



## Appendix A: Consent form

*[Participants 18 years or older will receive this consent form.]*



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### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

#### TITLE OF RESEARCH

Politics and performance of a literacy intervention in Cape Town: School libraries and the new subjection of volunteerism

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ms Gabriela P Carolus, from the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will contribute towards a MA in Sociology by Ms G P Carolus. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you form a part of The Bookery Library Trust programme.

The research focus: What is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African Education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

#### PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, this is what it will involve:

- I will contact you telephonically or via email to schedule an appointment.
- The first contact will be to explain the content and purpose of the research and signing of the appropriate informed consent forms.
- The next step would be to determine an appropriate time and place for the first interview.
- Each interview should not take longer than 45 minutes.
- If other interviews are needed, they will be scheduled in advance at the time indicated by you.

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The researcher does not foresee any potential risks to your being. Any discomfort will be dealt with immediately. You can stop the interview at any time if any discomfort may arise and you may leave the study at any point. The interviews will also take place at a location and time that best suits you.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

There are no direct benefits to the participants, but the information will greatly assist the researcher in completing her MA degree in Sociology. The researcher also hopes that this study will benefit the Literacy NPO Sector and South African Education system.

## **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

The research participants will not receive any payment for participation.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality of information will be between the participant and myself. The identities of the participants will be anonymous. The schools will be given code names, so the answers given by teachers, parents cannot be linked to the schools, in anyway.

No personal information will be released to anyone; however, the research results will be released to my research supervisor and lecturers from the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department. With the permission of the parents, teachers, role-players and Library Trust staff the interviews will be audio-recorded, to be transcribed so that the researcher has all the relevant information discussed in the interview on record.

## **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Gabriela Carolus at [15288862@sun.ac.za](mailto:15288862@sun.ac.za) or Mr Jacob du Plessis (research Supervisor) at [jmjdp@sun.ac.za](mailto:jmjdp@sun.ac.za).

**RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021808 4622] at Stellenbosch University.

<b><u>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT</u></b>
---

The information above was described to me by Gabriela Carolus in [Afrikaans/English]. I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

<b><u>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER</u></b>
---------------------------------------

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_  
[*name of the participant*]. *He / she* was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/\*English*].

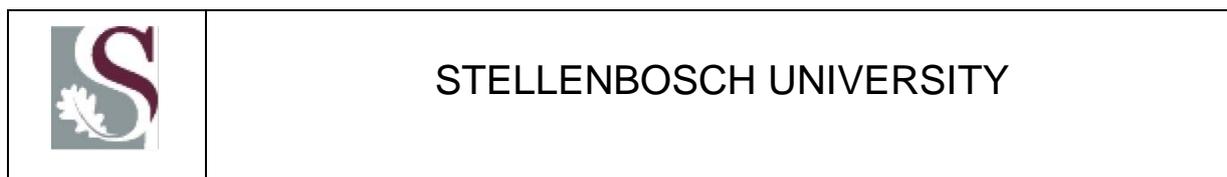
\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Researcher**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

Appendix B: Assent form



**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM**



**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

Politics and performance of a literacy intervention in Cape Town: School libraries and the new subjection of volunteerism

**RESEARCHERS NAME(S): Gabriela Carolus**  
**ADDRESS:**

56 Wagtail Road  
Sunbird Park  
Kuilis River  
7580

**CONTACT NUMBER: 076 450 7369**

**What is RESEARCH?**

Research is something we do to find **NEW KNOWLEDGE** about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about children and teenagers and the things that affect their lives, their schools, their families, and their health. We do this to try to make the world a better place!

**What is this research project all about?**

This research project is an opportunity to understand what you think about the role of the school library.

**Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?**

You have been invited to participate in the study because you are most likely to have a lot of important views and experiences to share about the school library. It is important to understand what each learner has to say concerning the school library. Your participation in the study will contribute to allow me to identify and understand the practices surrounding the school library.

### **Why are you asking me / my child these questions?**

I am interested to know what you understand by the school library. I am asking you these questions to understand the processes of the school library and literacy development within the classroom literacy sessions.

### **Who is doing the research?**

My name is Gabriela Carolus. I am a student at Stellenbosch University. I am currently completing my Master's degree and this study helps in the completion of my degree.

### **What will happen to me in this study?**

You are requested to volunteer in a conversation. I am asking you to talk to me about your school and the school library.

### **Can anything bad happen to me?**

No. If you are feeling ill or have bad experiences in the session, I would like to ask that you inform the guardian teacher and myself if you have trouble after the session with anything discussed in the conversation. This can be to what someone else said or if it affected you personally.

### **Can anything good happen to me?**

YES, you have the opportunity to speak about what you understand of the role of the school library.

### **Will anyone know I am in the study?**

I will not use information to identify you when the research will be analysed. A pseudonym (a made up name) will be used in all paper work referring to you in the research.



### **Who can I talk to about the study?**

If you would like to know about the study you can contact my supervisor, Mr Jacob du Plessis at 082 901 2987. You can also contact me, if there are any questions you have concerning the study. My number is 076 450 7369. You can talk to your teacher about the study.

**What if I do not want to do this?**

Please feel free to say that you do not want to participate in the study. You can tell me if you want to stop at any point.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES

NO

Have I answered all your questions?

YES

NO

Do you understand that you can STOP being in the study at any time?

YES

NO

Do you have any questions for me?

YES

NO

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Child

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

(Child giving assent to participate in the study)

## Appendix C: Parental permission form



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### STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

#### PARENTAL PERMISSION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

##### TITLE OF RESEARCH

Politics and performance of a literacy intervention in Cape Town: School libraries and the new subjection of volunteerism.

Your child is asked to participate in a research study conducted by Ms Gabriela P. Carolus, from the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Stellenbosch University. The results of this study will contribute towards a MA in Sociology by Ms G P Carolus. Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because he/ she attends Parkhurst Primary School.

The research topic: What is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African Education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

##### PROCEDURES

If your child gives consent to participate in this study, this is what it involves:

- The first contact will be to explain the content and purpose of the research and signing of the appropriate assent forms.
- The next step would be to determine an appropriate time and place for the first interview.
- Each interview should not take longer than 45 minutes.
- If other interviews are needed, they will be scheduled in advance at the time indicated by the learner.

##### POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The researcher does not foresee any potential risks to the participant's being. Any discomfort will be dealt with immediately. Your child can stop the interview at any time if any discomfort may arise and remove them from the study at any point. The interviews will also take place at a location and time that best suits the child.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

There are no direct benefits to the participants, but the information will greatly assist the researcher in completing her MA degree in Sociology. The researcher also hopes that this study will benefit the NPO Sector, South African Education system and role-players addressing the advancement of literacy.

### **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

The child will not receive any payment for participation.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with the child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with his / her permission or as required by law. Confidentiality of information will be between the participant and me. The identity of your child will be anonymous. The school and child will be given code names, so that the answers given cannot be linked to the school or your child, in any way.

No personal information will be released to anyone; however, the research results will be released to my research supervisor and lecturers from the Sociology and Social Anthropology Department. With the permission of the child the interviews will be audio-recorded, to be transcribed so that the researchers has all the relevant information discussed in the interview on record.

### **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your child can choose whether to be in this study or not. If he / she volunteers to be in this study, the child may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. The child may also refuse to answer any questions he / she does not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw your child from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

### **IDENTIFICATION OF RESEARCHER**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Gabriela Carolus at [15288862@sun.ac.za](mailto:15288862@sun.ac.za) or Mr Jacob du Plessis (research Supervisor) at [jmjd@sun.ac.za](mailto:jmjd@sun.ac.za).

**RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

Your child may withdraw his / her consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of the child's participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021808 4622] at Stellenbosch University.

<b><u>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT</u></b>
---

The information above was described to me by Gabriela Carolus in [Afrikaans/English]. I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Participant**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

<b><u>SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER</u></b>
---------------------------------------

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to \_\_\_\_\_  
 [*name of the participant*]. *He / she* was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in [*Afrikaans/\*English*].

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Researcher**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

## Appendix D: Library Trust (key informants and NPO Staff) in-depth interviews

**Aide memoire:**

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Organisation:</b>		<b>Qualification:</b>	
<b>Years in the organisation:</b>			
<b>Years in Library Information Services:</b>			

What is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African Education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

**Interview questions:**

1. What do you need to start a school library?
2. Where would one find the school library in the school?
3. What are the selection criteria of the Library Trust to allow for the implementation of the school library?
4. Who can use the school library?
5. How are material selected for the school library? Who selects the material? Who manages these materials?
6. What are the procedures to acquire these materials?
7. How are the school libraries monitored?
8. Who monitors the school library?
9. What forms of monitoring and evaluation occur in the school library?
10. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Appendix E: Role-players (namely, The Bookery Trustees, staff members, and key informants in the NPO Sector) in-depth interviews / group interviews

**Aide memoire:**

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Organisation:</b>		<b>Qualification:</b>	
<b>Years in the organisation:</b>			
<b>Years in Library Information Services:</b>			

What is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African Education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

**A. Role:**

1. What are your position and responsibilities in addressing school libraries?
2. What are your position and responsibilities in addressing learning and literacy development?
3. What is your role in the implementation of school libraries?
4. What role does your organisation / department serve in the implementation of school libraries?

**B. Project management/ processes:**

1. What is your project all about?
2. What is the strategy that you use to implement your project? What is the implementation of the school library?
3. What innovations arise in the implementation of the school library, if any?
4. Please, elaborate on your planning, programmes and functions.
5. To what extent do you consult with the participants of the school library, if any?
6. To what extent do your participants report on the functionality of the school library?
7. Has your organisation identified any gaps in the implementation of the school library, if any?

### **C. Relationship:**

1. What is the significance of the school library in your organisation oversight (namely, planning, project management and monitoring and evaluation)?
2. In your opinion, how has the delivery of school libraries in under resourced schools impact learning and literacy development?
3. Since your organisation/ department's involvement, to what extent is there an impact on the school community?
4. Since your involvement, have there been any changes in the school library?
5. What are the reasons for these changes? Why have these changes occurred?

### **D. Sustainability:**

1. What do you consider as "good practices" in the delivery of the school library?
2. What are the successes and failures of the current delivery programme, if any?
3. Who should be involved / participate in the delivery of the school library?
4. What forms of interaction are there between role-players implementing the school library in under-resourced school?
5. Is there anything you would like to ask me?

Appendix F: School community members (namely, learners, parents, teaching staff and non-teaching staff members) Open-ended interview

**Aide memoire:**

What is the aftermath of a policy campaign for stakeholders and school library assistants and how, if at all, has the shift from lobbyist to labourers in the South African Education context affected the lived reality of the school library assistant?

<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	
<b>School:</b>		<b>Qualification:</b>	
<b>Years in the School:</b>		<b>Grade:</b>	
<b>Years in Library Information Services:</b>			

**Personal perceptions and experiences:**

1. Tell me something about your school library. What activities do you have here: ...reading groups...clubs? Anything else? Are any of the teachers or parents helping you in these groups?
2. Tell me what it is like in your school. What is it like here?
3. Have you used the school library?
4. If so, when do you use the school library? How often do you use the school library?
5. Please, describe your experience in the school library. Tell me what it is like in the school library. What is it like here?
6. Do you know how to use the school library?
7. Tell me more about your classmates. How would they describe the school library?
8. How do your teachers use the school library?

**Interface with role-players / beneficiaries:**

9. Have you received any assistance in using the school library?
10. Who has assisted you in using the school library? Can you explain your experience when someone assisted you in the school library? Would you go to the school library coordinator or teacher if you have a problem in the school library?

**Participants' perceptions of the school library:**

11. Do you think that the school library helps you in learning? ... reading? ... and writing? How would you describe your school library to another Grade 6 learner? What would you say to another learner about your school library? What advice would you give a person interested in your school library? Can you describe to me the “perfect” school library?
12. Is there anything that you would like to ask me?

## Appendix G: Participant observation form:

<b><u>Meeting observations</u></b>	Yes	No
Who attended the meeting(s):  1. Learners 2. School teaching staff 3. School non-teaching staff 4. Parents 5. School librarian assistants 6. Library trust staff 7. Governmental officials 8. LTSM district officials 9. LIS researchers 10. LIS trainers 11. Library support co-ordinator		
1. Who participates in the meeting? (Indicate 1-11)		
2. Who has made decisions? (Indicate 1-11)		
3. By whom is the workload divided? (Indicate 1-11)		

<b><u>School librarian training</u></b>	Yes	No
Who attended the training:  1. Learners 2. School teaching staff 3. School non-teaching staff 4. Parents 5. School librarian assistants 6. Library trust staff 7. Governmental officials 8. LTSM district officials 9. LIS researchers 10. LIS trainers 11. Library support co-ordinator		
1. Who participates in the training? (Indicate 1-11)		
2. Who decides on the content of the training? (Indicate 1-11)		
3. Who pays for the training of the school librarian assistants? (Indicate 1-11)		

<b><u>Legislative / regulative practices:</u></b>
1. Who has implemented the National School Library Information Services Guidelines?
2. What barriers are raised against the legislative policy?
3. Was the legislation amended? If so, how?
4. Was there advocacy towards the implementation of school libraries?
5. Was an advocacy effort mounted for or against the legislation? If yes, was it effective? Why, why not?
6. Was the legislation passed? If yes, was there an effort to educate the public and/or youth about the legislation?

<b><u>Public Information: 1 School, 1 Library, 1 Librarian campaign</u></b>
1. What materials were included in this campaign?
2. Did the target audience(s) positively react to the campaign? If yes, why? If no, why?
3. Was there any media involvement in the campaign? If so, what was their involvement?
4. What was the origin of this campaign?
5. Who advocated for the school library campaign?
6. Was the <i>1 School, 1 Library, and 1 Librarian</i> campaign successful?

<b><u>School library / reading periods</u></b>	Yes	No
Who participates in the school library and / or reading periods:  1. Learners 2. School teaching staff 3. School non-teaching staff 4. Parents 5. School librarian assistants		

6. Library trust staff 7. Governmental officials 8. LTSM district officials 9. LIS researchers 10. LIS trainers 11. Library support co-ordinator		
1. Who participates in the school library and / or reading periods?		
2. Who decides on the content or material in the school library?		
General observations:		
3. How is the material decided upon? How are the physical books selected?		
4. How is the material monitored and evaluated?		
5. How has the school environment affected the school library?		
6. Who pays the salary of the school librarian assistants?		
7. Who pays for the maintenance of the school library and physical material?		
8. How is the library material integrated into the classroom, if any?		
9. How is the curriculum and school-based content (if any) integrated with the school library? If so, how?		

## Appendix H: Transcription symbols

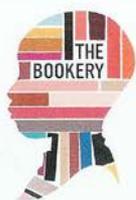
- (0.5) The number in brackets indicates a time gap in tenths of a second.
- (.) A dot enclosed in a bracket indicates pause in the talk less than two tenths of a second.
- hh A dot before an ‘h’ indicates speaker in-breath. The more ‘h’s, the longer the in-breath.
- hh An ‘h’ indicates an out-breath. The more ‘h’s the longer the breath.
- (( )) A description enclosed in a double bracket indicates a non-verbal activity. For example ((*banging sound*))
- A dash indicates the sharp cut-off of the prior word or sound.
- ::: Colons indicate that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter. The more colons the greater the extent of the stretching.
- ( ) Empty parentheses/brackets indicate the presence of an unclear fragment on the tape.
- (guess) The words within a single bracket indicate the transcriber’s best guess at an unclear fragment.
- . A full stop indicates a stopping fall in tone. It does not necessarily indicate the end of a sentence.
- Under Underlined fragments indicate speaker emphasis.
- ↑↓ Pointed arrows indicate a marked falling or rising intonational shift. They are placed immediately before the onset of the shift.
- CAPITALS With the exception of proper nouns, capital letters indicate a section of speech noticeably louder than that surrounding it.
- ° Degree signs are used to indicate that the talk they encompass is spoken noticeably quieter than the surrounding talk.
- Thaght A ‘gh’ indicates that word in which it is placed had a guttural pronunciation.
- > < ‘More than’ and ‘less than’ signs indicate that the talk they encompass was produced noticeably quicker than the surrounding talk.

- = The 'equals' sign indicates contiguous utterances.
- [ Square brackets between adjacent lines of concurrent speech
- ] indicate the onset (and end) of a spate of overlapping talk.

(Adapted from Woffit, R. 2005. *Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis. A comparative and Critical introduction*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, California).

## Appendix I: Ethical application letters

### *The Bookery permission letter*



Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology  
Private Bag X1  
Matieland  
7602

22 November 2014

**The Bookery (registered The Library Project Trust): Permission for Gabriela Carolus to undertake research**

Dear Departmental Ethics Screening Committee

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I give Gabriela Carolus permission to conduct the research titled *The advancement of literacy through libraries in under-resourced schools in Cape Town: a case study at Parkhurst Primary School*. Parkhurst Primary is one of the schools with which The Library Project Trust works. I have given her permission to interview staff from The Bookery including its operational staff.

She has worked as a voluntary unpaid intern with The Bookery from July to December 2014. She has reported to the Executive Project Manager, Cosmas Mabeya and Spokesperson, Sue Farrell. Her work has involved sourcing literature and policy documents alongside Peter Richards and Jessica Spencer from Project Management South Africa (PMSA). Her involvement has been on the periphery of The Bookery's everyday operations. She has met with Cosmas Mabeya and the PMSA team once a week.

I hope that you see merit to include this letter as proof of The Bookery's willingness for Gabriela to use all information attained in this internship for research purposes. We have requested that Gabriela give feedback on the results in publications and documentation. In addition, we hope that she will bring to light the need for school libraries in South Africa's Basic Education.

Sincerely

Jonny Wilkinson  
Project Development Officer  
The Bookery

The Bookery (registered as The Library Project Trust) | Registration number: IT3679/2012  
Postal: PO Box 254, Cape Town, 8001 | Office: Ground Floor, Plein Park, 69-83 Plein Street, Cape Town, 8001  
Email: [info@thebookery.org.za](mailto:info@thebookery.org.za) | Website: [www.thebookery.org.za](http://www.thebookery.org.za)  
Twitter: @thebookery1 | Facebook: @thebookery1  
Telephone: +27214614189

Registered S18A(1)(a) PBO | Income tax exemption number: 930042899  
Registered NPO | NPO number: 122150NPO

Trustees: Sean Farrell (Chair) | Yoni Bass | Lesley Byram | Alide Dasnois | Theresa de Young | Dr Genevieve Hart | Ntshadi Mofokeng | Lwando Mzandisi | Belinda van der Vyver

*Research Ethics Committee: Human Research (Humanities) letter*



UNIVERSITEIT-STELLENBOSCH-UNIVERSITY  
jou kenniswêreld + your knowledge partner

**Approval Notice**  
**New Application**

12-Dec-2014  
Carolus, Gabriela GP

**Proposal #:** DESC/Carolus/Dec2014/3

**Title:** The advancement of literacy through school libraries in under-resourced schools in Cape Town: a case study.

Dear Miss Gabriela Carolus,

Your **New Application** received on 17-Nov-2014, was reviewed.  
Please note the following information about your approved research proposal:

**Proposal Approval Period:** 11-Dec-2014 -10-Dec-2015

Please take note of the general Investigator Responsibilities attached to this letter. You may commence with your research after complying fully with these guidelines.

Please remember to use your **proposal number** (DESC/Carolus/Dec2014/3) on any documents or correspondence with the REC concerning your research proposal.

Please note that the REC has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Also note that a progress report should be submitted to the Committee before the approval period has expired if a continuation is required. The Committee will then consider the continuation of the project for a further year (if necessary).

This committee abides by the ethical norms and principles for research, established by the Declaration of Helsinki and the Guidelines for Ethical Research: Principles Structures and Processes 2004 (Department of Health). Annually a number of projects may be selected randomly for an external audit.

National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC) registration number REC-050411-032.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research.

If you have any questions or need further help, please contact the REC office at 218089183.

**Included Documents:**

- REC application form
- Email Correspondence
- Research proposal and attachments
- DESC application

Sincerely,

*WCED approval letter*



Directorate: Research

[Audrey.Wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za](mailto:Audrey.Wyngaard@westerncape.gov.za)  
tel: +27 021 467 9272  
fax: 0865902282  
Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000  
[www.wced.wcape.gov.za](http://www.wced.wcape.gov.za)

**REFERENCE:** 20140806-34198  
**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A.T Wyngaard

Ms Gabriela Carolus  
56 Wagtail Road  
Sunbird Park  
Kulse River  
7580

Dear Ms Gabriela Carolus

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE STAKES OF LITERACY DEVELOPMENT: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF A SCHOOL LIBRARY AS A PROSPECT OF ADDRESSING LEARNING AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN CAPE LITERACY NON-PROFIT ORGANISATION SECTOR**

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **01 September 2014 till 30 March 2015**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:  
**The Director: Research Services  
Western Cape Education Department  
Private Bag X9114  
CAPE TOWN  
8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard  
Directorate: Research  
DATE: 08 August 2014

---

Lower Parliament Street, Cape Town, 8001  
tel: +27 21 467 9272 fax: 0865902282  
Safe Schools: 0800 45 46 47

Private Bag X9114, Cape Town, 8000  
Employment and salary enquiries: 0861 92 30 22  
[www.westerncape.gov.za](http://www.westerncape.gov.za)

*Plainstreet permission letter*



PRIMARY SCHOOL



7 August 2014

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Permission is hereby given to **GABRIELA PENELOPE CAROLUS** to conduct research for her Master Degree in Sociology at Parkhurst Primary School from 1 August 2014 until she completes her research.

Yours in Education

  
.....  
**Dr I. N. Fillis: Principal**

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