Developing a Culture of Reading Among Public Library Staff

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Abstract:

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*An abstract with 100-300 words should appear on the first page, after the name(s) of the author(s) and the contact information of the corresponding author(s). In a chapter titled "***Abstract:***" (without chapter number. It should be a summary of your paper, single-spaced, with Times New Roman font, 11-point size and italics (assuming the paper is written with Latin-script). Arabic (Modern Standard Arabic), Chinese (Simplified Chinese) and Russian language scripts should use the layout of this template and choose suitable fonts and font sizes.*

Keywords: Skills development, reading skills

Introduction
How can we create a culture of reading within our communities if library staff members do not have a culture of reading themselves? This basic question prompted the City of Cape Town Library and Information Services (LIS) Department to begin a number of "Culture of Reading" initiatives, programmes and interventions. This paper attempts to highlight what has been done to date in this regard and how this has contributed to the continuing professional development of our staff, as well as to improvements in services rendered to the community.

Why a culture of reading?

Why should a public library service in South Africa concern itself unduly about leisure reading? This question has been raised many times by academics, politicians and civil servants. In one paper (Raju and Raju 2010) the authors, reflecting on the vital role of public libraries, quote Julius Nyerere commenting on "… the lack of progress in taking public libraries to the villages and the fact that public libraries in Africa were still focusing on Eurocentric principles of meeting the recreational and leisure needs of the educated elite living in urban enclaves" (Raju and Raju 2010: 6).

The authors recognise the value of reading, but put it at the bottom of the list of library services:

> …given the dominance of such scourges as poverty, HIV/Aids, high infant mortality rates, high unemployment rates, information repackaged into formats that can be easily converted into knowledge should be the order of the day. This would include presenting the information in verbal format … It is unfortunate but a reality check for public libraries to break away from Eurocentric principles not just for the sake of wanting to be African but rather to address an absolute imperative and that is, to create a forum that will aid in the eradication of the prevailing scourges and in the process promote democracy and lifelong learning. (Raju and Raju 2010: 5-6)

However the viewpoints that reading for pleasure is elitist and Eurocentric, and that the chief function of reading is to study and thereby better oneself, have their opponents. Siphiwo Mahala, author and Deputy Director of Books and Publishing in the South African National Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), describes this attitude in the following anecdote:

> In 2008, during the period of continuous power blackouts known as 'Ioad-shedding I lit a candle in order to read a novel. A cousin of mine was amazed to find me doing this, arguing that the blackout gave me a valid excuse not to read. She wondered why I had to go out of my way to assault my eyes in that manner. She made this observation particularly because I was not enrolled in any academic institution and therefore I had no obligation to read. Let alone doing so with the help of a candle." He goes on to say: "It is unfortunate that we often realise the horror of a lack of a culture of reading at a very advanced stage - when we see the matric results. In order to build a progressive society it is of paramount importance to promote the culture of reading even outside the education sector." (Mahala 2010: 12)

Mahala describes the results of a 2007 DAC-sponsored study on the reading habits of adult South Africans, which showed that half of South African households have no books, and that only one in seven read regularly in their spare time. He says: 'There is an obvious link between illiteracy and poverty on the one hand, and literacy and economic prosperity on the other. Literacy underpins development in all sectors of society and is central to economic prosperity. The cultivation of a culture of reading therefore becomes one of the key imperatives in our project of nation-building." (Mahala 2010: 12)

International studies back up the importance of creating a reading culture. Rajaratnam describes a study done by the US National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) that looked at the impact of reading and reading ability on young adults and showed that "young adults who grew up with poor reading skills and strong reading aversion had a greater likelihood of poorer academic and

economic achievements later in life" (Rajaratnam 2011: 2). Similarly, a longitudinal study done by Cunningham and Stanovich describes the effects on children of early literacy and states that "reading yields significant dividends for everyone—not just for the 'smart kids' or the more able readers. Even the child with limited reading and comprehension skills will build vocabulary and cognitive structures through reading" (Cunningham and Stanovich 2001: 138).

The South African Library and Information Services Transformation Charter states that
> … a significant barrier to access to information and participation in LIS is the lack of a culture of reading in South Africa. This is due to poor reading skills, lack of motivation to read and unawareness of the importance of reading. Although reading occurs of course both inside and outside of libraries, as institutions of reading, libraries play a leading role in building a nation of life-long readers. (South Africa. [DAC] 2009: 77)

The City of Cape Town Library and Information Services are committed to this goal.

The Culture of reading among City of Cape Town Library staff
The City of Cape Town Library and Information Services comprises 104 service points including 101 libraries, two satellite libraries and a mobile library service. The service points are divided into six Districts and subscribe to a three-tier system of City-wide, Regional and Community libraries. The majority of the libraries fall into the latter category; the Central and Bellville Library are city-wide libraries and the remainder are designated regional libraries.

The staff complement of 895 (including administrative staff and management) encompasses the following designations at the library level: library aides, assistant librarians, librarians and librarians in charge (LICs). The latter category includes Senior, Principal and Chief Librarians, depending on the type of library they manage.

A reality of life in South Africa for many school children is the lack of access to reading material. Because only seven per cent of all schools have a school library, the public library remains the main institution able to assist in providing access to reading material for leisure and information reading purposes. Books in South Africa remain a luxury. Despite many requests to remove the 14% Value Added Tax (VAT) from books (an effort that has been unsuccessful with many governments over many years), books remain expensive and beyond the reach of many of the citizens of this country.

With this picture as a backdrop, the reality for the City Library Services is that many staff do not have a culture of personal reading and many join the Library service have only experienced their first contact with a library at university.

One of the fundamental principles of a public library service remains the building, fostering and provision of a reading culture. No matter how the role of the public library changes, this principle remains one of the cornerstones of the public library. In South Africa and many similar countries, a reading culture becomes even more imperative for advancing the capabilities of society. If many members of the Library staff do not join the service with a background in reading, how can they be expected to create a culture of reading within the communities they serve?

A report to the Library Management Team (LMT) in 2010 examined the problem of the slight reading culture among LIS staff members. At the time this problem was addressed through

'Book Knowledge and Reader's Guidance' training, given by a former Library manager and through monthly staff book discussions aimed at familiarising staff with their book stock and various genres of writing.

The report stated that this system was not having the desired outcome. Although the Book Knowledge courses themselves seemed to have an immediate effect on the staff who attended this was not necessarily nurtured back in the Library. Attending the book discussions themselves was becoming more a matter of fulfilling a performance management target than a meaningful exercise. It was argued that while these methods worked in libraries where the joy of reading had always been a top priority, the same methods did not filter through to libraries where this was not the case (Cape Town 2010). It appeared that Book Discussions seemed to be a chore rather than a 'fun' activity and that in addition the staff was not effectively prepared for proper book discussions.

The report stated further that the calibre of staff who were joining the Library Services was a problem. Those who were interviewed appeared not to recognize the value of reading as a habit, particularly reading for pleasure, and viewed IT skills as being the means to solve all library problems.

The first survey
After receiving this report, the LMT agreed to conduct a survey among all Library staff working directly with the public, to investigate their reading habits and attitudes towards reading. This survey took place in March 2010. At the time the survey was conducted the staff complement of the Library and Information Services Department was 756, and the number of respondents was 585, which yielded a participation rate of 77%. Some results of this survey are discussed below.

The most notable result of the survey was that it demonstrated very clearly the results of deprivation caused by the apartheid regime. 73% of the Xhosa-speaking respondents had no library exposure when growing up, as opposed to 14 % with Afrikaans as home language and 7% with English (Figure 1 below).

Lack of Early Library Exposure According to Home Language
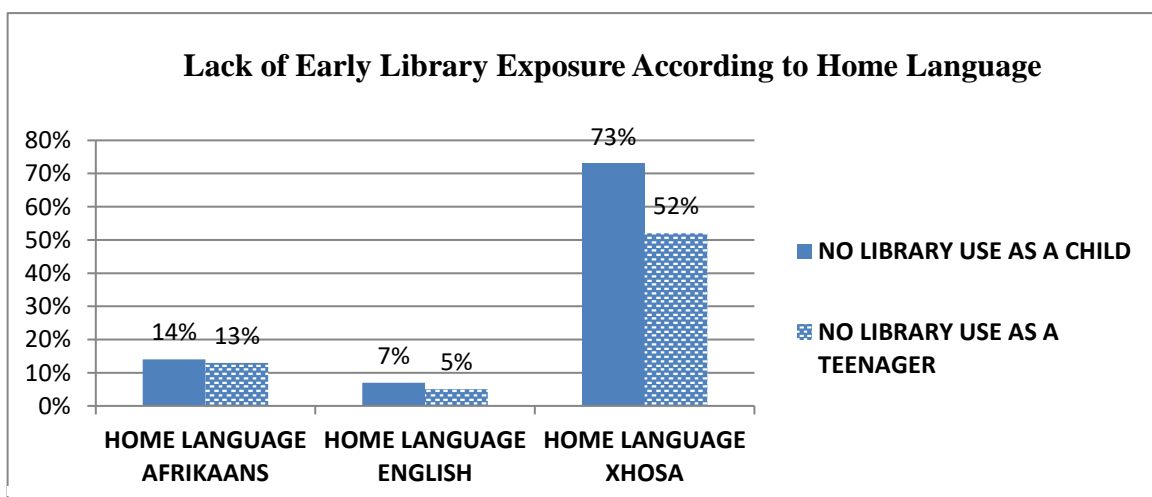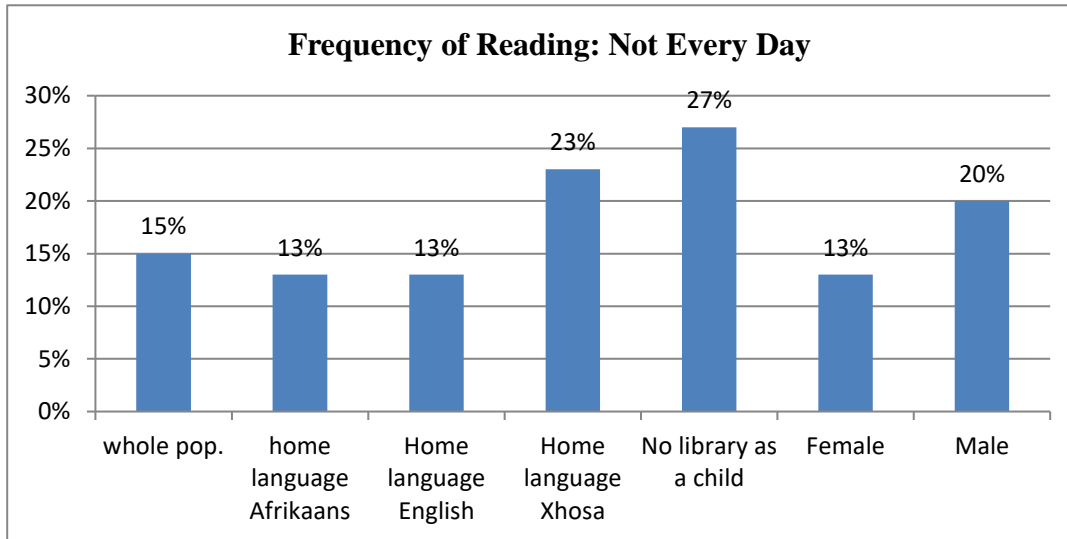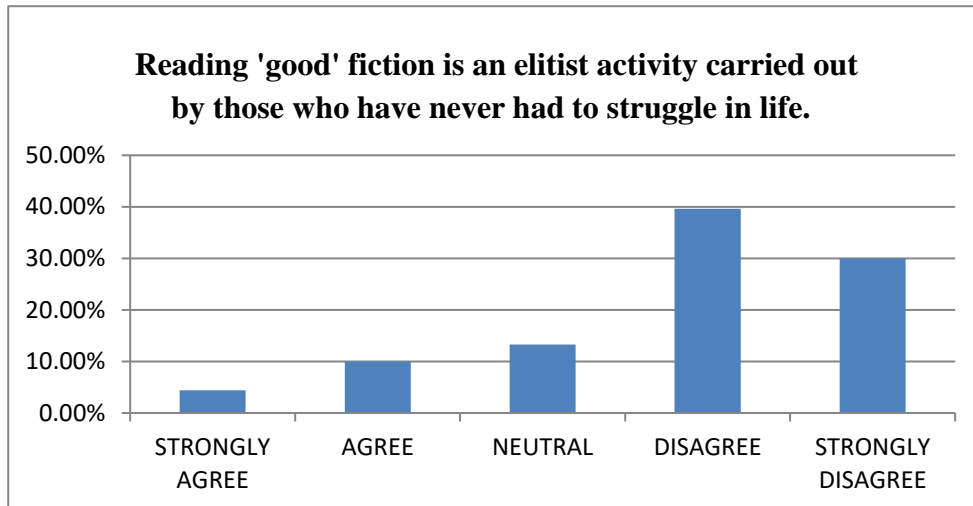

Figure 1

Figure 2

In the category "Frequency of Reading" (Figure 2 above) 27 per cent of respondents who had no library exposure as a child answered that they 'do not read every day'

In response to the question 'How many books do you read?', only 31 % reported reading one or more books per week, while 60 % read one or more per month, and 6% read only one book every six months. (Figure 3 below)
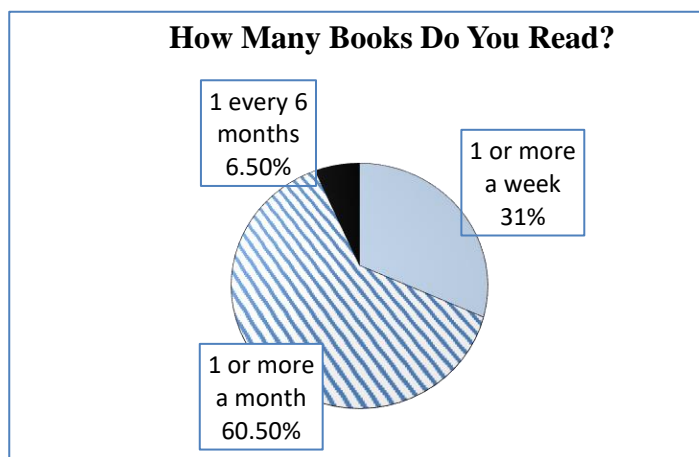
Figure 3

Regarding attitudes to reading, 15 % of respondents agreed, on a scale ranging from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' with the statement that 'Reading "good" fiction is an elitist activity carried out by those who have never had to struggle in life', with a further 13 % opting to remain neutral – thus echoing the attitudes displayed by the Raju paper quoted above.

Reading 'good' fiction is an elitist activity carried out by those who have never had to struggle in life.

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
~4%	~10%	~13%	~40%	~30%

Figure 4

It should be noted that what was meant by the term "good fiction" was left to the respondents to interpret themselves, since at this point we were trying to inculcate the reading culture by not being prescriptive about what was "good" and "not good". The significance of the responses lies in their attitudes towards reading in broader terms rather than just reading popular, formulaic fiction. Elsewhere in the survey (not noted here in this paper) we had tested to what extent they read other categories of fiction, including "literary fiction".

Further results of interest were that only 11% of respondents said that they took part in a reading group or book club; and that only 4% used an e-reader, Smartphone or other device for reading purposes. (Cape Town 2011)

Subsequent Decisions

Based on the results of the survey, the LMT created the following three developmental initiatives to address the problem:
- a "Culture of Reading" workshop should be developed internally, aimed at training Librarians in Charge to promote reading among staff in their libraries, and manage formal and informal staff book discussions
- the development of reading groups comprising both staff and the public should be encouraged
- the existing 'Book Knowledge' training for staff should be revised in light of the findings of the survey.

Developmental initiatives

Culture of Reading training

The Culture of Reading workshop was developed and took place with all Librarians in Charge. Its aim was for these Library line managers to learn to share their knowledge and experience so that they might develop their ability to encourage readers and reading amongst their staff. The workshop covered the following:
- Agreement on the attributes and importance of a reading culture and the line manager's role in developing such a culture among Library staff;
- Gaining confidence in talking about books concisely and enticingly and developing the skills to enable Library staff to do so also;

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- Developing the skills to run enjoyable, vibrant and instructive formal and informal book discussion sessions by means of
  o Understanding the purpose of book discussions;
  o Being able to plan and prepare for a book discussion;
  o Being able to facilitate a group book discussion and ensure participation, learning and enjoyment.
- Being able and willing to encourage and promote reading amongst staff members in the face of indifference and/or resistance, through
  o Understanding the reasons for indifference and/or resistance to reading
  o Being aware of a range of ideas and mechanisms for encouraging reading among staff within a library setting, and motivated to apply them

Workshop outcomes

Feedback sessions were held six months after the workshops, to investigate how staff were implementing the learning received. The aim of these sessions was to review progress in the development of a culture of reading among Library staff, through identifying successful programmes/plans that had been implemented and changes in staff reading behaviours, and determining how to use these new skills with the public to build a culture of reading within the community.

The feedback in these sessions was very encouraging, as can be seen in the following summary table:

CULTURE OF READING ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY	
ACHIEVEMENT AREA	**DETAILS**

Staff reading sessions:	• 1 hour staff reading per week:
	   o Week 1: select a book and read
	   o Week 2: present book
	   o Week 3: book review, how to write
	   o Week 4: book list, display list
	 • Reading combined with tea, teambuilding
	 • Reading sessions every Friday morning
	 • Staff continuously reading including library aid
	 • Half hour for staff to read internally twice per week
	 • Newspapers/magazines etc. – daily follow topic of interest (e.g. RWC 2011)

More book discussions:	• Book discussions every month (fewer previously) • Started a book discussion (none before) • Monthly discussion with all staff (Friday mornings) • Book discussion formal (buddy) informal (library) • Monthly formal internal discussion by staff • With new stock added to Library collection staff do informal discussions among themselves • Informal talks about books amongst staff and patrons
Using new ideas for book discussions:	• Introduced different genres as well as DVDs and CDs • Incentives and prizes for best review • In the year plan, including juvenile titles in adult book

CULTURE OF READING ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY	
ACHIEVEMENT AREA	**DETAILS**

	discussions
	• Plan six months ahead choosing different genres per session:
	    o five minutes discussion about genre
	    o five minutes literary game
	• Short story read by all
	• Keeping to physical plan (i.e., dates, genres, moving from presentation to discussion)
	• Voting for best book/best presentation at last meeting of the year
	• Facilitator to use workbook and toolkit when preparing for meeting; everyone to have a turn.
	• Quizzes (radio, Internet, newspaper reviews, books)
	• Planning ahead as a staff team
	• Websites shown by presenter reviewed by staff and presented to group
	• Staff teams – quiz
	• Got to read technique (from Workbook and Toolkit)
	• To whom and how book will be recommended – rather than review of book

Displays and reviews:	• Individual staff members read and review and create posters for public display
	• Borrowers invited to write reviews for public displays
	• Buy-in from all staff as a direct result of displays and posters made *(ontwikkel leeskultuur)*
	• Collages of authors
	• Author events stimulate reading displays: 'Who writes like…'
	• Each staff member has own reading Culture plan
	    o Reading list for crèches
	    o Write reviews for school newsletters
	    o Displays relating to 'hooked on books'
	    o Library cut out all new book reviews
	• Objective to draw up book list, with annotations and genres
	• Librarian's choice: Staff choices, with page in each book asking patrons their view on the book
	    o Excellent
	    o So…so
	    o You must be joking
	    o Good
	• Display photocopies of book covers discussed by staff plus relevant book reviews
	• Copies of recommended books on desk
	• Choose books from 'returns of the day'
	• Displays for bestsellers
	• Out of the book discussion, a Reading Circle has started with staff and opportunity

CULTURE OF READING ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY	
ACHIEVEMENT AREA	**DETAILS**
	• New pamphlets displayed at the back door of staff and public toilet • Display of recommended book reviews by staff: and public • Internet quizzes – give address to staff and public • Facebook page book reviews by staff • List of new books on newsletter – Best 10 • Staff recommendations / Book Bingo • Written reviews to be displayed • Staff encouraged to create genre lists • Posters – local authors • Display: 'Never judge a book by its movie.'
Staff encouraged and developed:	• Library Aids (ones who work on counter) encouraged to read and tackle new books • Getting to read genres out of comfort zone • Staff are confident to discuss and recommend books to patrons • Staff developing because of the criteria/checklist • Improved understanding of genre • Improved language usage • Improved eagerness and confidence • Eager for change (chance?) to discuss books by using the recommended template • Email on books to all staff • Book conversations in isiXhosa to instil love of reading • Encouraging staff to go on Book Knowledge training • YES WE ARE READING!! JA ONS LEES!! EWE SIYAFUNDA!!

The Librarians in Charge (LICs) also identified many ways in which the public were benefitting from the improved reading culture amongst staff:
- Staff drawing attention to titles (staff have broader knowledge of book stock and are reading out of comfort zone and therefore shifting public out of reading comfort zones; changed perceptions on reading transferred to public; enthusiasm which is transferred to others and encourages them to read further)
- Reading lists developed for schools
- Genre/author displays
- Staff book reviews on display, and borrowers are also doing reviews: 'What am I reading?' display; public are inspired, also recommending books
- Staff more confident in dealing with public queries and have increased confidence in talking about books; are acquiring the skill of 'saying something' about any book even if they haven't read it
- Competitions for children/adults: Get Reading; Quiz with children: 'treasure hunt'; Quiz with adults: 'Who am I?'
- Research skills improved (looking at web sites - genre method encourages research) – public are benefitting
- Library has started Reading Circle with public (Cape Town 2011).

At the end of these sessions a challenge was issued to libraries to volunteer to take part in a pilot project: volunteer libraries would start Reading Groups with the public, using the methods and skills learned in the Culture of Reading workshops and since practiced with the staff.

Reading Groups

The Reading Groups pilot project took place from March to September 2012. Eleven libraries volunteered to start Reading Groups for the public, with two libraries that had existing Reading Groups acting as advisors. None of the libraries except the advisors had done this before, and they were given very few instructions, beyond being told to "go and try it", and to agree on the following overall aims:

- To promote reading for pleasure and entertainment
- To provide the opportunity for readers to share their love of reading
- To challenge readers to move outside their reading comfort zones
- To inspire infrequent and/or reluctant readers with a love of reading

Each of the pilot libraries took up this challenge and addressed these aims in different ways: it was clear that there are as many ways to start and maintain a Reading Group as there are libraries and different communities and groups in Cape Town.

However some common success factors stood out. The first was perseverance. At one library two seemingly enthusiastic groups faded away, but the LIC's third attempt attracted a large number of people. Another library tried with teenagers first, before concentrating on the ten-twelve year olds, the "Star Readers" club. At a third library the Librarian kept going with her teenage group in spite of dramatic seasonal variations in attendance.

The second common factor was the ability to adapt to the circumstances and resources available. One LIC identified the local Tuesday Culture Club as the springboard for a reading group. Another had little success until she invited people to join the staff book discussions. Where there was no identifiable meeting room, libraries made a plan.

The third success factor was apparent when Library staff members taking part in the reading group initiatives were prepared to play a variety of roles. One LIC is facilitating three reading groups for different ages and interests and in different languages. At another library the group members lead the discussions themselves and the Librarian plays the role of mediator and enabler. Elsewhere the Librarian is running the reading group himself, but members of the club are planning to establish further small groups in the area.

All the libraries that participated in the pilot strongly confirmed the value of Reading Groups as a means of increasing the culture of reading in a community.

The results of this pilot were presented to the Library Management Team and the Broader Management Team (consisting of all the LICs), and all libraries were encouraged to make the attempt themselves. To date, fifty-eight reading groups of various types and sizes have been established across the City.

Book Knowledge training

The Culture of Reading workshops were complemented by a revised, internal Book Knowledge and Readers' Guidance training initiative run by a District Manager with an extensive public library and reading background, who is also a trained educator and an avid reader. These training sessions are conducted four times a year and concentrate on familiarising staff who do

not have much reading background with fiction genres and popular authors, and introducing them to websites and other sources where information about fiction can be found. Participants are also trained in how to conduct a reader's guidance interview. This training has been successful. Librarians in Charge report that staff who have attended show much more familiarity with the book stock and much more confidence in dealing with queries from the public and recommending suitable reading.

Other initiatives

Amaboekies Reading Team Award

In 2008 the LIS Department instituted Departmental Service Awards, at the request of the Executive Director. Different categories of awards were workshopped with Librarians in Charge and the Library Management Team and several categories were established to celebrate staff achievements. One of these awards was entitled the Amaboekies Reading Award. This award aimed to celebrate reading among staff. They were invited to enter, read a set list of books and then answer questions about these titles. The books were in all three official languages of the City of Cape Town, namely English, Afrikaans and Xhosa, with the major emphasis on English. The competition was open to all staff except the Library Management Team whose task it was to read all the books and set the questions.

For the first three years this award was conducted as a solo competition and rather like an exam. Entrants were invited to a venue, handed a list of questions and, in a set time, had to answer approximately 100 questions. Following the start of the Culture of Reading initiative, however, the Amaboekies award became a team competition. A booklist was still compiled for the participants and the management team still had to read all the books and set the questions. Each District then had to select a team of four members and one reserve member and compete against each other. The semi-final round saw six teams whittled down to two and these competed in the final.

This award has grown over the years to the point where many staff members at different libraries read the books on the set list and have library and individual discussions aiming to boost their District teams. District teams have in some cases additional staff members who act as a support base to the official District team by reading the books, helping their team to prepare and providing moral support. The award has also seen the fun element of reading coming to the fore with each District passionately vying to become the winner of this coveted award.

The LIStener

In 2006 the LIS Department started a newsletter that would inform staff about developments in the LIS sector both locally and abroad, celebrate staff and departmental achievements and highlight trends in books and reading-related topics. One of its other primary aims was to develop the writing skills of Library and enable them to write for both this publication and other LIS journals.

Books and reading have always played an important role in compiling the newsletter. The latest news in the book world constitutes the bulk of the content, but during the last year, in an effort to support the Culture of Reading initiative of the Department, a segment was developed to encourage staff to share their reading habits and love of reading with their colleagues.

Each month a District, together with Head Office and Technical Services, is invited to submit their responses to a list of questions set up by the editor. These include:

- First book I ever read/remember reading
- Best book I ever read
- Favourite author
- Most memorable fiction character
- Currently reading
- On my bedside table.

There are no right or wrong answers and no judgement on the choices submitted. In an informal and non-threatening way this encourages staff to be passionate about books and reading, whether they are just starting out on a reading journey or are veteran readers.
The column has elicited numerous responses and showcases a wide and varied response to these questions.

Email campaign "I'm reading…"
A short-lived but very noteworthy campaign undertaken by the LIS Department was the "I am reading …, what are you reading" slogan campaign. It was first picked up by one of the Librarians in Charge who sent it in as a suggestion and followed up with the Library service who initially created it, to obtain permission to use it. Library staff at all levels were allowed and encouraged to add this slogan to their email signature, indicating what they were reading, and invited comment not only from inside the Department but from external correspondents. In some cases whole conversations were started about a book, a character, a series, the need to take up reading again, the lack of a reading culture in South Africa and many other topics.

The City of Cape Town later rebranded itself and in the process prohibited the use of taglines and slogans in email signatures. Attempts to allow the use of "I am reading…" to continue were unsuccessful.
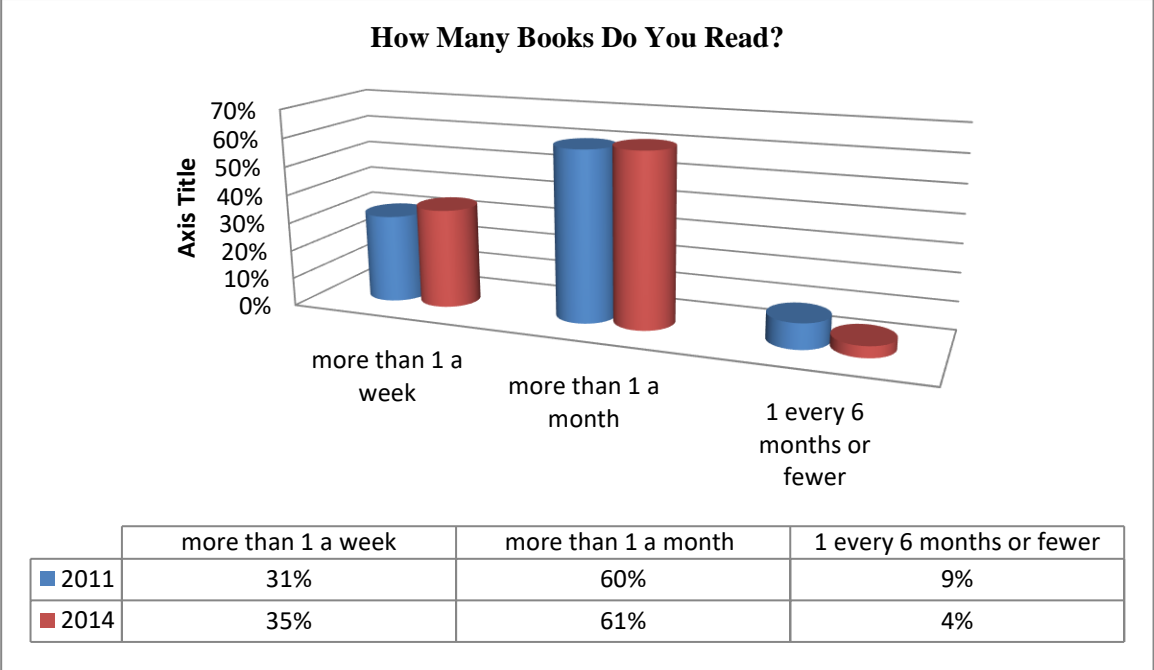
Follow-up staff reading survey
A second staff reading survey was held in June 2014 as a follow-up to the 2010 survey described above. The original questions were repeated to facilitate comparison between reading patterns before and after the Culture of Reading projects. Three hundred and sixty-five responses were received out of 698 staff members, a participation rate of 52%.

The responses to the two surveys (2011 and 2014) were analysed but not all the responses are compared in detail below. The analysis and description of the surveys was done for this paper with two different purposes: from the first (2011 survey), to highlight the problems about reading behaviour of Library staff and from the second (2014 survey), to highlight where the most obvious changes had taken place.
On the whole the survey results showed very little difference with respect to respondent details such as age, gender, home language, and early library exposure. Superficially the other results showed little change as well. However there were six areas where an obvious change had taken place, possibly as a result of the programmes described above, and these are highlighted in the paragraphs below.

1. Frequency and volume of reading
While reading frequency has remained relatively constant, there has been a slight increase in reading volume, as seen in the table. (Figure 5 below) Notably, the number of staff members who responded that they read only one book or less every six months decreased from 9% to 4%; and the number who read one or more books a week increased from 31% to 35%.

How Many Books Do You Read?

	more than 1 a week	more than 1 a month	1 every 6 months or fewer
■ 2011	31%	60%	9%
■ 2014	35%	61%	4%

Figure 2

2. Reading preferences

As in 2011, staff members were asked whether they read in different categories and genres "Often", "Sometimes" or "Never". Initially there seemed to be little difference in preferences when the responses were compared in terms of what they "often" or "never" read; however when the "Sometimes read" field was compared, significant differences emerged, namely a marked increase in all variables for both category and genre reading preferences (See Figures 6 and 7 below). From this the tentative conclusion may be reached that Library staff are becoming more adventurous in their reading, and while their basic preferences remain, they are showing more willingness to read outside their comfort zones.

Sometimes Read (Category)

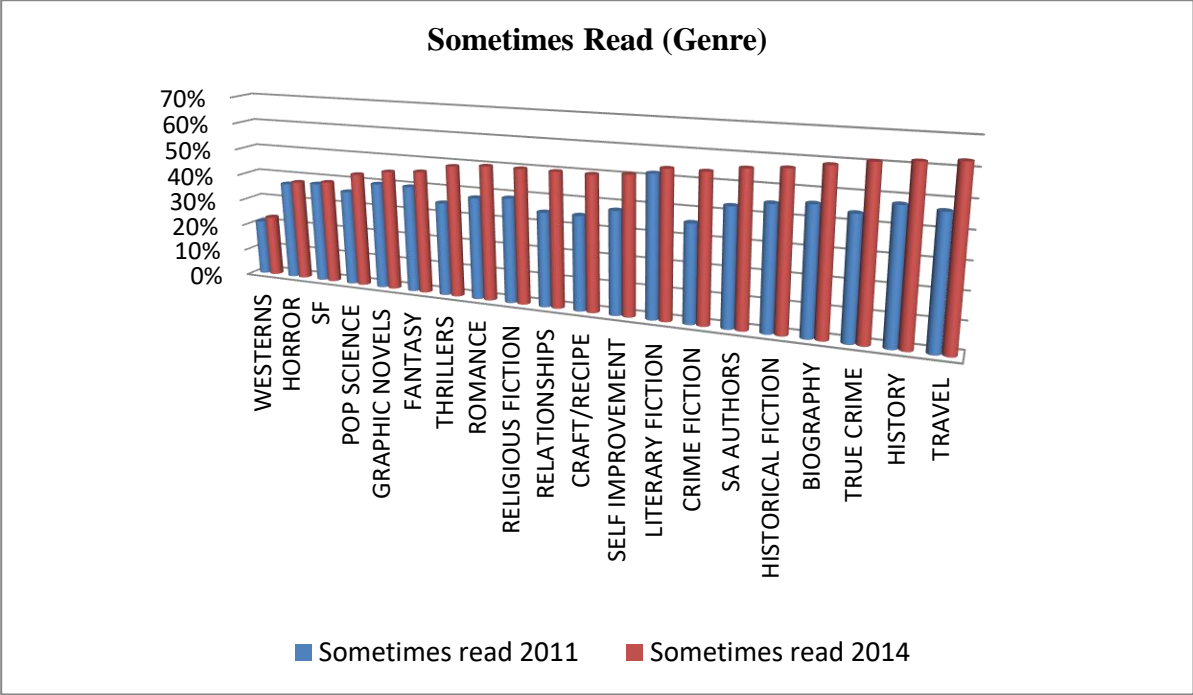Sometimes read 2011   Sometimes read 2014
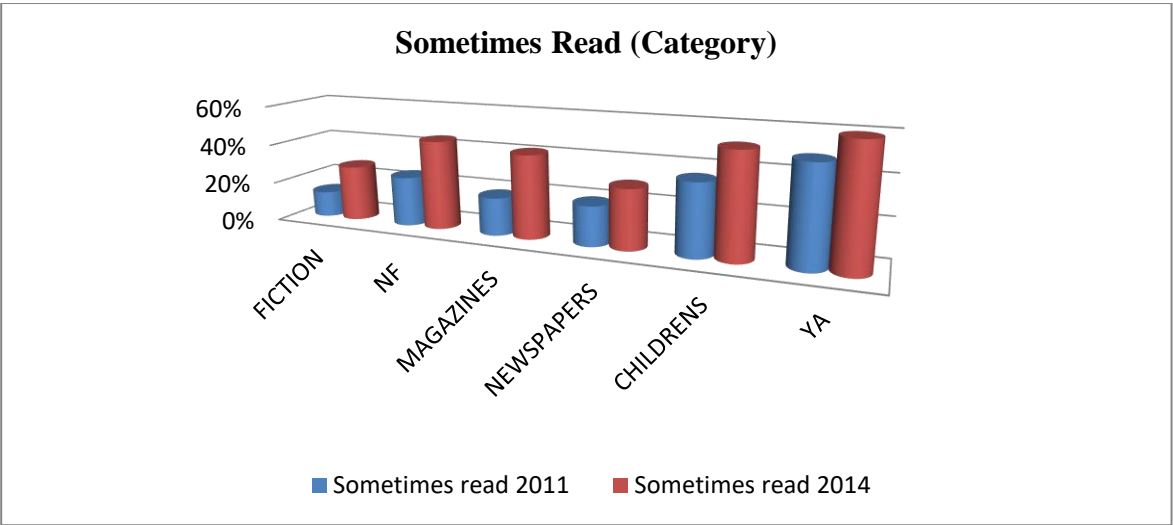
Figure 3

Figure 4

3. Book Club participation

The Culture of Reading project included encouraging Library staff to start book clubs and reading groups for the public at their libraries. Figure 8 below shows a marked increase in the number of staff participating in book clubs, from 11% in 2011 to 45% in 2014.
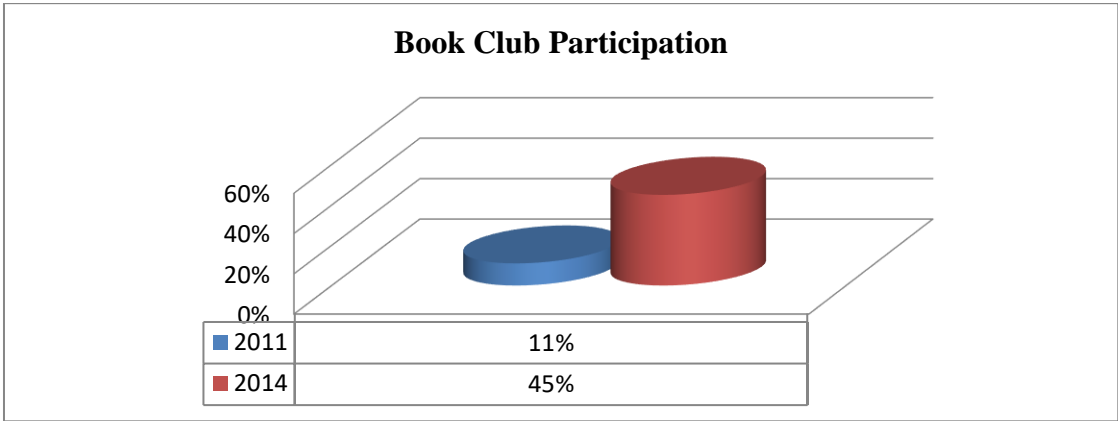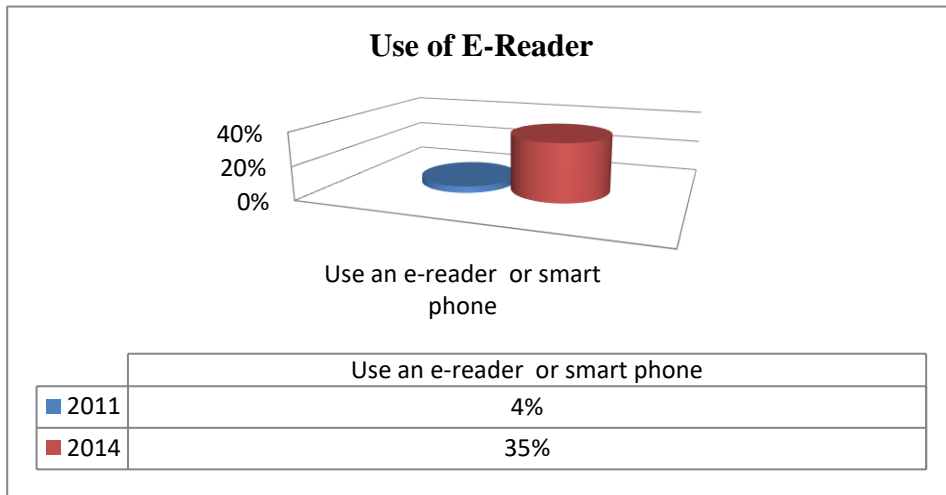

|	Book Club Participation
2011	11%
2014	45%

Figure 5

4. Reading format

The other dramatic change has been in reading format usage. In 2011, only 4% of respondents said that they ever used an e-reader, tablet or Smart-phone for reading. This has increased to 35% in 2014.

Use of E-Reader

	Use an e-reader or smart phone
2011	4%
2014	35%

Figure 6

5. Factors preventing or hindering reading

Respondents were asked whether they were "often", "sometimes" or "never" prevented from reading because of a number of identified factors. A comparison between the responses from 2011 and 2014 shows a marked decrease in the percentage of respondents who answered that they are "often" prevented from reading. The percentage varies from 2% to 20% across the variables (see figure 10 below). Once again a tentative conclusion may be reached that library staff are putting more value on reading and allowing fewer things to get in the way of their reading.
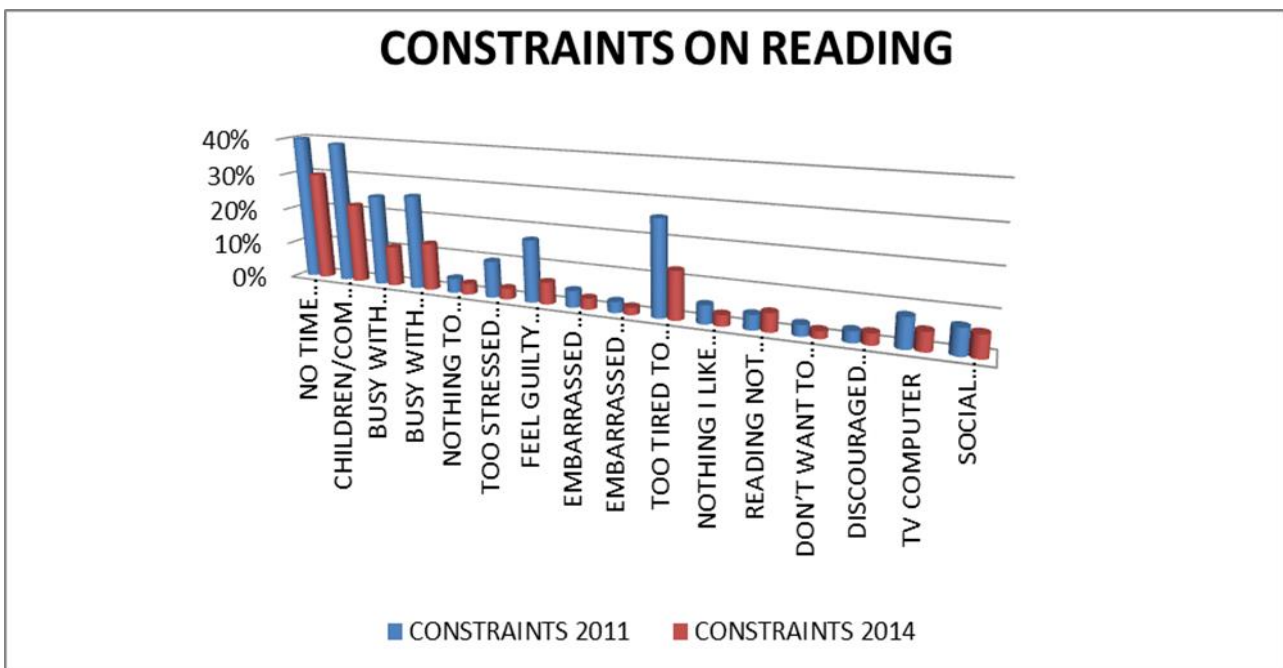
Figure 10

6. Reading attitudes

Finally, as regards attitudes to reading, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with a number of statements. While responses have remained constant to most of these statements, (including the response to the statement "Reading 'good' fiction is an elitist activity carried out by those who have never had to struggle in life", described above), it can be noted that in response to the statement "Reading is an essential part of my life", the number of respondents in agreement has risen from 92% in 2011 to 97% in 2014. (Figure 11)

Reading Is an Essential Part of My Life

	AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE
■ 2011	92%	5%	3%
■ 2014	97%	1%	2%
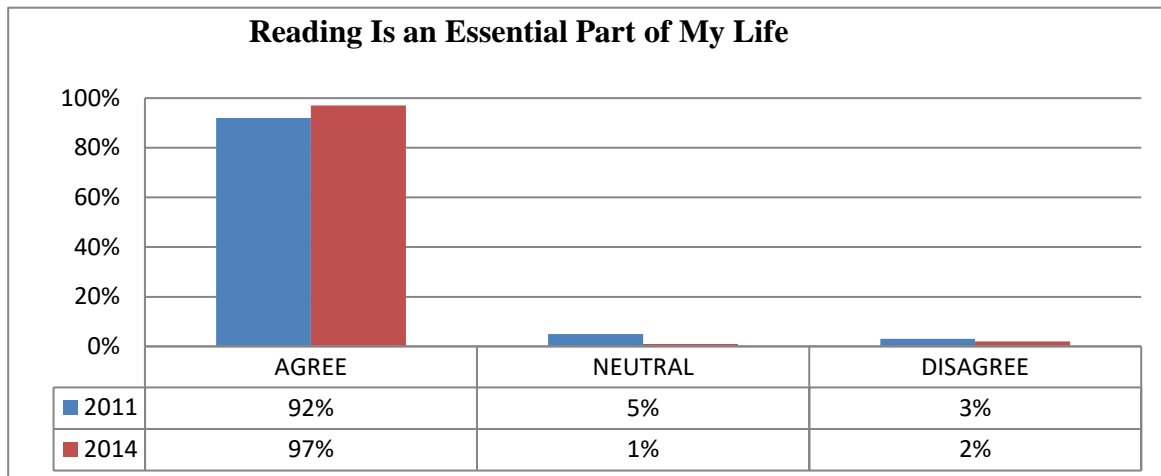
Figure 11

This follow-up survey has shown that while there are few dramatic indications of a shift in staff reading habits and preferences, there is evidence that staff are reading more widely in previously unfamiliar genres and that they are allowing fewer constraints on their reading. Finally, and most importantly, just under half of the respondents are now engaged in reading groups or book clubs, as opposed to just over 10% in the previous survey. This demonstrates a successful result for the Reading Group project that has taken place in the intervening time between the two surveys (Cape Town 2014).

Moving Forward

The Department firmly believes in developing a culture of reading among its staff as a form of professional development, and so the initiatives described within this paper will continue and new initiatives will be explored and implemented. What emerges above all is that even adults with a limited background of leisure reading can discover that reading can be a fun activity, that they can become excited about reading, and that they can then transfer their excitement to the public that they are serving.

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