

CHAPTER 4

THE SCHOOL AND PUBLIC LIBRARY SCENE IN SOUTH AFRICA IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT

4.1 Introduction

Before alternative library models for South Africa can be considered, the broad societal context within which such models have to operate, has to be taken into account. It is the purpose of this chapter to describe the organisational structure, characteristics and operation of the school and the public library systems in South Africa, as they have emerged as part of the apartheid legacy. Problem areas that impair the delivery of school and public library services are further pointed out. Finally, some parallels are drawn between the South African LIS situation and those in other African countries.

An attempt will be made to answer the following questions:

What is the particular South African context, with respect to school and public library services, in which the school-community library model would have to operate? What are the obstacles to effective delivery of school and public library services in South Africa and in other African countries?

State apartheid policies and legislation have in the past governed the delivery of school and public library services in South Africa. In terms of the *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, 1953 (Act 49 of 1953)*, services were provided separately to the various population groups. This resulted in separate organisational LIS structures in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) for White, African, Coloured and Indian communities.

In addition, school and public library services in the RSA were also divided according to geographical boundaries, namely according to the four provinces, the Cape Province, Orange Free State, Transvaal and Natal. To complicate matters even further, the *Natives Land Act (1913)*, the *Native Trust and Land Act (1936)* and the *Promotion of Bantu Self-government Act (1959)*, caused the development of “homelands” for the

different ethnic groups (Frylinck 1983a:3-4). Government structures were set up in the four “Independent National States”: Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (the so-called TBVC States), and in the “Self-governing Territories”: Gazankulu, Lebowa, KaNgwane, KwaNdebele, Qwaqwa and KwaZulu.

Against this background, the historical development, organisational structures and operation of school library services in South Africa will now be discussed, up to the new constitutional dispensation, after the establishment of a democratic Government of National Unity in April 1994.

4.2 School library services prior to 1994

4.2.1 Governance of education from 1904-1994

4.2.1.1 Education for Whites

In terms of the *Constitution of The Republic of South Africa Act, 1983 (Act 110 of 1983)*, education for each of the population groups in South Africa was declared an “own” affair. In terms of this Constitution, all education for Whites became the responsibility of the Minister of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Assembly. (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:3). After the Provincial Councils were abolished in 1986, the four provincial education departments were constituted as executive provincial education departments under control of the Minister of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Assembly (HOA) (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:1). Immediately prior to 1994, education for Whites was thus administered by five departments, i.e. the four provincial education departments providing all education, except that which was defined by law as higher education, which was the responsibility of the Department of National Education (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:1).

In April 1992, most of the state schools for Whites were informed by the government of the day that state funding to schools would be cut. If schools wanted to maintain their existing levels of funding, parents would have to take over part of the financial

burden. This had to be done by converting the schools to so-called “Model C” status. About 94 per cent of the schools of the former House of Assembly (HOA) chose to convert to Model C status. At Model C schools, the State paid the salaries of teachers according to a fixed learner to teacher ratio. All other expenses were paid by the school’s governing body, elected by the parents (South Africa. Department of Education 1995:21).

4.2.1.2 Education for Coloureds and Indians

After 1910, the provincial education departments also provided education for Coloureds and Indians. In the ensuing period, various changes in the administration of education for Coloureds and Indians took place, until, in terms of the 1983 Constitution, all education for Coloureds fell under the Minister of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Representatives (HOR), and all education for Indians, under the Minister of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Delegates (HOD) (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:1-2).

4.2.1.3 Education for Africans

Between 1904 and 1953, the administration of education for the African population was jointly in the hands of churches and of the provincial education departments. In 1954, the responsibility for African education was transferred to the Central Government (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:2). From 1968, the administration of education for Africans was gradually decentralised. A department of education was established in each of the Self-governing Territories. During the years 1976 to 1982, four of the Self-governing Territories, namely Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, became independent states and also took over responsibility for the provision of education at all levels (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:2).

In 1986, under the powers conferred on the State President by paragraph 14 of Schedule 1 to the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1983 (Act 110 of 1983)*, approval was, however, granted for education institutions to render services - under

certain conditions - to members of population groups other than the population group for which these institutions were intended (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:6).

In spite of these new conditions, the fragmented education system, and the great disparity in state funding of departments adversely affected the quality of education, the facilities and the opportunities for learners belonging to the 'non-white' population groups. The last Ministry under the previous Government, responsible for education of African persons in the RSA (outside the Self-governing Territories), was the Ministry of Education and Training (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:3).

A schematic representation, summarising the education system in South Africa in 1991, is given in Figure 4.1. From the diagram it is evident, that, apart from the Department of National Education which determined national education policy, there were eighteen executive education departments which functioned as separate entities (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:6). This had far-reaching implications for the delivery of school library services.

The existence of various education departments led to a disparity in standards, in quality of buildings, and in other facilities provided. It also created large surpluses in some areas and grave shortages in others (Kistan 1992:203-204). This was also the conclusion reached by Overduin & De Wit (1987:178), after a thorough research project to identify deficiencies in school library facilities, and to investigate the use of libraries in South African secondary schools.

4.2.2 School library services in the RSA from 1950-1994

Malan (1978:70) points out that in the RSA the situation with regard to school library services for Whites had progressed considerably since 1950. All four provinces had established an education library/media service which co-ordinated, advised and served school libraries in their areas. Olën (1988:213) attributes the development of school library (media) services in the RSA to the fact that educational authorities became increasingly aware of the impact these services could have on education. She

(1988:213), however, points out that, because of the autonomy of each education department, school media centres in the country had developed in an unco-ordinated manner.

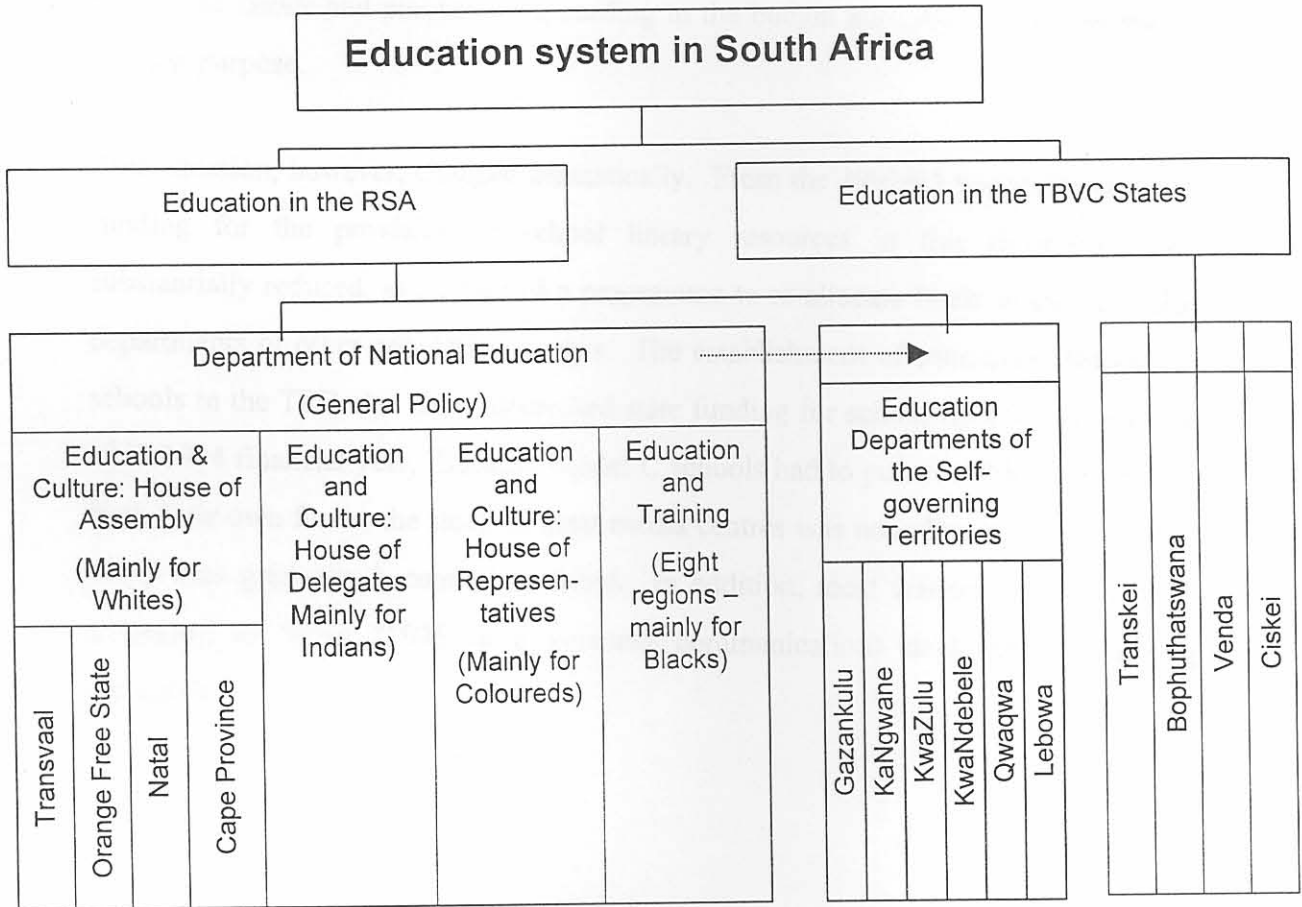


Figure 4.1 Schematic representation of the education system in South Africa in 1991 (South Africa. Department of National Education 1992:7).

4.2.2.1 Transvaal Education Department

The Transvaal Education Department (TED) was the first to establish an education library service on 1 January 1951. From 1979, school libraries were converted to media centres and library and audio-visual services were integrated. In the years following 1983, the service was known as the Transvaal Education Media Service. The media services rendered to schools included (Olën 1988:214):

- selection and guidance in the procurement of stock;
- compilation of procedures for the administration of a media centre;
- upkeep of a model media collection;
- centralised processing and centralised provision of certain books, periodicals and audio-visual materials;
- compilation and distribution of the *Media Guide*, bibliographies, reading lists and a newsletter;
- compilation of specifications for audio-visual equipment;
- technical advice regarding the purchase and repair of audio-visual equipment and personal computers;
- training in the handling of audio-visual equipment and in the production of software;
- general guidance on the use of media.

In 1988, Olën (1988:213-214) reported that almost every school in the Transvaal Education Department had a properly equipped media centre and almost every secondary school had a full-time teacher-librarian. The larger primary schools had full-time teacher-librarians, and the smaller primary schools teachers assigned part-time to the media centre. Teacher-librarians could select stock for media centres from the *Media Guide* and purchase it according to the budget allocated by the department for that purpose.

This situation, however, changed dramatically. From the 1991/92 financial year, state funding for the provision of school library resources in this department was substantially reduced, as a result of a programme to re-allocate funds to the education departments of other population groups. The establishment of state-aided (Model C) schools in the TED also led to decreased state funding for school libraries as from the 1993/1994 financial year. Because Model C schools had to purchase library resources from their own funds, the stock of most media centres was not adequately replenished and it was gradually becoming outdated. In addition, most teacher-librarians were, according to Swart (1995 in a personal communication) deployed in teaching capacities.

4.2.2.2 Natal Education Department

The Natal Education Department (NED) appointed its first school library organiser in 1950, but did not follow the example of the Transvaal Education Department in establishing a central organisation. In 1970, the NED assumed full control of school libraries, and took the lead in South Africa by establishing media centres, which were originally called 'resource centres' (Olën 1988:215).

The Natal Education Department did not support the idea of centralised library services but advocated a more individualistic system. Each teacher-librarian could assess the needs of the individual school and then select and purchase stock, subject to the budget allocated for that purpose (Overduin & De Wit 1986:266). During their research in 1982, Overduin & De Wit (1986:326) established that 97 per cent of the schools had a facility for a media centre, but that the floor-space of the various media centres varied greatly. This finding was confirmed by Kistan (1992:205) in his survey of media centre facilities in the KwaZulu-Natal Region.

In 1986, only thirty-three of the seventy-four secondary schools in the department had posts for full-time teacher-librarians, and only nine of these posts were filled by teachers who had a school library qualification (Olën 1988:215). Kistan (1992:205), however, found that a hundred per cent of the schools investigated had full-time teacher-librarians. As in the case of the Transvaal Education Department, reduced state funding for school libraries, and the establishment of Model C schools since 1991 had a negative impact on the stock in and the staffing of media centres in this department.

4.2.2.3 Cape Education Department

This Department's Education Library Service was established in 1964. By 1980, some of the school libraries had converted to media centres. A separate Centre for Education Technology was, however, responsible for the production and provision of audio-visual material for the schools. As in the case of the Transvaal Education Media Service, the Cape Education Library Service also rendered centralised services to the

schools in the department. Annotated lists of approved books, *Selected Books*, for primary and secondary schools were compiled annually. Since 1970, catalogue cards for works of fiction were supplied to secondary schools, but this service was later suspended because it was found to be too costly. The Education Library Service also maintained a collection of all the books included in the selection guide: *Selected Books*, as a reference tool for visiting media teachers. Since 1975, a handbook for the administration of school libraries was compiled, and regularly revised (Overduin & De Wit 1986:371).

Most schools in the Cape Education Department had a media centre, although the accommodation was not always adequate. A large percentage of the schools in the Cape Province had fewer than a hundred learners and, therefore, had neither a part-time nor a full-time teacher-librarian. Larger schools had part-time teacher-librarians in charge of the media centres, and schools with more than six hundred learners could appoint full-time teacher-librarians (Olën 1988:216). Schools could purchase their own books from the selection guide, subject to the allocated budget. Since 1991, the staffing of and stock in media centres also deteriorated in schools of this Department, as was the case in the other HOA schools.

4.2.2.4 Orange Free State Education Department

Ever since the inception of the Orange Free State Provincial Library Service in 1948, the Orange Free State (OFS) Education Department worked in close co-operation with this Service to provide a media service to schools. The Education Media Service determined the policy to be followed by school library services, and was responsible for the educational application of the media centre in the teaching programme. The Provincial Library Service provided books, newspapers and periodicals to the media centres in the Province (Olën 1988:216-217). However, only one person in the Education Media Service was responsible for giving professional guidance, which situation could hardly be assessed as effective. Since this person also had very little say in the provision and organisation of stock, and the fulfilling of users' needs, this policy of divided control proved to be harmful in practical terms to media centres in particular and education in general (Overduin & De Wit 1986:53).

Most of the schools had a facility for a media centre, although the standard size of the facility varied according to the total number of learners in the school (Olën 1988:217). According to departmental policy, schools with four hundred to five hundred or more learners were entitled to a full-time teacher-librarian, but those with fewer learners were entitled only to a part-time teacher-librarian. A number of the smaller schools had no post for a teacher-librarian (Olën 1988:217). Overduin & De Wit (1986:26) in their research found that 42 per cent of the schools had full-time teacher-librarians, 20 per cent of the schools, part-time teacher-librarians and 37 per cent of the schools had clerical assistants in charge of their media centres.

Audio-visual materials were purchased with the aid of a subsidy system from the Education Department and supplemented with purchases from school funds. Books were borrowed from the Provincial Library Service, and larger schools were permitted to keep books for as long as required, unless they were needed elsewhere on interlibrary loan (Olën 1988:217). Assistance to schools with respect to library practice was rendered by the personnel of the three regional offices of the Provincial Library Service in Bloemfontein, Kroonstad and Bethlehem (Overduin & De Wit 1986:9). The Provincial Library Service also compiled subject bibliographies in collaboration with, or at the request of, subject inspectors and sent those required for projects to the regional libraries, which in turn supplied the media centres with relevant material (Olën 1988:218). The position with the staffing of media centres also deteriorated, after the establishment of state-aided (Model C) schools.

4.2.2.5 Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Delegates

With the transfer of Indian Education to the Division of Indian Affairs in 1966, the library service at Indian schools in the Republic was placed under the control of a Subject Inspector of School Library Services. In 1975, a former vice-principal was seconded to the Education Planning Section to liaise with the Subject Inspector of School Library Services about the provision of audio-visual resources to Indian schools, the establishment of Regional Resource Centres, and the creation and

development of Teachers' Centres. With this step the library and educational technology services became integrated (Overduin & De Wit 1986:493). Since 1984, the School Library Resource Services were under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Delegates (HOD) (Olën 1988:218-219).

In *Circular 9 of 1980*, principals were advised to strive towards the appointment of full-time teacher-librarians. Mainly experienced, professionally qualified teachers were employed to serve as teacher-librarians (Overduin & De Wit 1986:508). According to Olën (1988:219), such great progress had been made in improving standards for, and services in, media centres in Indian schools, that these media centres compared favourably with those in the schools falling under the jurisdiction of the House of Assembly (HOA).

In their research, Overduin & De Wit (1986:510) found that 88 per cent of the schools had a full-time teacher-librarian, and 11 per cent of the schools a part-time teacher-librarian. In addition, part-time clerical assistants were provided to all secondary schools (Overduin & De Wit 1986:509). It was also found that 98 per cent of the schools had access to basic resource centre premises. However, the floor-space of the respective library resource centres varied from school to school (Overduin & De Wit 1986:513). At the beginning of each financial year, secondary schools received a monetary library allocation for the purchase of library books, periodicals and newspapers. An additional amount was spent annually by the School Library Resource Service to purchase a central stock of books for schools. Principals were also encouraged to purchase stock for their resource centres from school funds (Overduin & De Wit 1986:514).

Since 1991, a specific formula was introduced by the Department of Education and Culture of the HOD to finance stock purchases for school library resource centres in

primary and secondary schools, enabling schools to achieve a book to learner ratio of five over a period of five years (Gauteng Department of Education 1995:83).

4.2.2.6 Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Representatives

School library services for the schools of the Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Representatives (HOR), which served the schools of the Coloured population, developed slowly from 1964. The headquarters of the School Library Services was located in Cape Town. In 1986, the staff consisted of one First Subject Adviser, one Senior Subject Adviser and five Advisers (Overduin & De Wit 1986:597).

According to the research done by Overduin & De Wit (1986:617), 38 per cent of the schools had a full-time teacher-librarian, 43 per cent of the schools had a part-time teacher-librarian, and in nine per cent of the schools a group of teachers was responsible for the administration of the school library.

During this research, 87 per cent of the schools indicated that they had a basic facility for a media centre. However, as a result of a shortage of classrooms, a number of these schools indicated that their media facilities were being used as classrooms (Overduin & De Wit 1986:621). Since 1983, secondary schools were responsible for the purchase of stock for their media centres, subject to the allocated budget (Overduin & De Wit 1986:622). The annual budgetary allocation for media centre stock until 1995 was calculated according to the following basic formula (Gauteng Department of Education 1995:83):

- Primary schools: R500;
- Secondary schools (bigger schools): R1 000;
- Secondary schools (smaller schools): R500.

4.2.2.7 Department of Education and Training

Initially, little attention was paid to school library services for the schools under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Training (DET), serving the African population. In 1966 the first subject adviser for library services was appointed. Between 1976 and 1988, approximately 350 secondary schools were built and most of these had a media centre room (Olën 1988:221). Although the Department had made provision for a school library in the plans of all new secondary schools, only 388 schools, of the approximately one thousand secondary schools, used their library venue as a school media centre, according to the annual reports submitted by principals. (Le Roux 1993:8). In 1982, the decision was taken by the Department to encourage collections for classroom libraries in primary schools, because the provision of centralised school libraries to primary schools was found not to be economically viable. Consequently, most of the primary schools had classroom libraries instead of centralised school libraries.

In 1983, full-time teacher-librarian posts were instituted at selected schools with sufficient book stock, and where the services of qualified teacher-librarians could be obtained. During their research, Overduin & De Wit (1986:703) found that such posts had been established at twenty-five to thirty schools in Soweto. In 1986 there was only one post for First Subject Adviser: School Libraries who resorted under the Assistant-director of Educational Advisory Service, and a small Section School Library Services which fell under the Chief Director of Educational Development Service within the Department (Overduin & De Wit 1986:685).

During their research, Overduin & De Wit (1986:704) found that 23 per cent of the schools had a full-time teacher-librarian, 58 per cent had a part-time teacher-librarian and in 7 per cent of the schools a group of teachers was in charge of the media centre. Of the schools that responded to the questionnaires that were sent out, 80 per cent had access to basic library premises. The floor-space of the facilities, however, varied (Overduin & De Wit 1986:706-707).

As the number of learners in DET schools increased at an annual growth rate of 6,01 per cent from 1986 to 1992 (South Africa. Department of National Education 1993:9), priorities in the Department were for sufficient classrooms and the training of an adequate number of subject teachers.

From 1987 to 1995, the School Library Services developed into a fully-fledged Section, Media Centre Services, serving more than eight thousand schools. In addition, each of the eight regional offices appointed one or two media advisers to liaise with schools on the administration and organisation of school libraries/media centres. Audio-visual services to the schools were rendered by the Audio-visual Services Section which fell under the same Chief Directorate. The functions of the Media Centre Services Section were (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1993:1):

- Selecting, purchasing and providing library books and periodicals to schools;
- Compiling lists of recommended library books;
- Offering guidance in the administration and organisation of media centres;
- Offering guidance in the effective use of printed media;
- Rendering a cataloguing and classification service;
- Administering the Classroom Library Project (African language books for primary schools).

Very few full-time teacher-librarians were employed in the DET schools, as the appointment of full-time teacher-librarians was not compulsory, according to Departmental policy. This was the result of the high student-teacher ratio of 38.9:1 in the schools, in 1993 (South Africa. Department of National Education 1993:64). Principals were, however, advised, in accordance with the staff quota for the school, to appoint a teacher to assume responsibility for the media centre (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1990, Chapter 17:3).

Books for the media centres and classroom libraries were centrally provided by the Department. Intermediate and secondary schools were provided annually with collections of curriculum-related books (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1993:5). In the 1993/1994 financial year, the annual consignments of books amounted to ±R6 000 for existing secondary schools (supplementary stock), and ±R 15 000 for new secondary schools (initial basic allocation) (Gauteng Department of Education 1995:84).

A small collection of library books was also provided to every class from Grade 1 up to and including Grade 7 of the primary schools. Public and State-Aided (farm) schools were provided with books in alternate years. Most of the books were in the African language offered at the particular school to encourage learners to read for pleasure (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1993:2-3). In the 1993/1994 financial year, the consignment of books per public primary school amounted to an average of ±R2 000, while in the 1994/1995 financial year, consignments per farm school amounted to an average of ±R600 (Gauteng Department of Education 1995:84).

Although initially strict directions regarding donations and purchases of media centre stock from school funds were issued by the Department (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1990: Chapter 17:12), these were later withdrawn, and the onus was placed on the principal and the media committee to ensure that suitable material was acquired for the media centre (South Africa. Department of Education and Training 1991: Chapter 17:9).

A study by Krige in 1990, however, found that only 30 per cent of the DET schools in Natal had a stocked library of which 22 per cent could be described as adequate. It was also found that 17 per cent of DET secondary schools with more than two hundred learners had no books and no libraries (Stadler 1991:18).

4.2.2.8 Synopsis

From the foregoing it is evident that the delivery of school library services in the RSA has been stunted by divided governance as a direct result of the racially-based education departments. This has resulted in an unequal allocation of facilities and resources to schools of the different population groups. Table 4-1 illustrates the inequality in the provision of library books to schools of the different education departments in the RSA.

Table 4—1 Books per pupil in schools of the various education departments in the RSA (Overduin & De Wit 1986:787)

<i>DEPARTMENT</i>	<i>AVERAGE NUMBER OF BOOKS PER PUPIL</i>
Department of Education and Culture (HOA)	
Orange Free State	10,4
Transvaal	8,9
Natal	12,8
Cape Province	10,3
Department of Education and Culture (HOD)	5,5
Department of Education and Culture (HOR)	2,5
Department of Education and Training (DET)	2,4

4.2.3 School library services in the former TBVC States

School libraries in the former national states: Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei were the responsibility of the departments of education in these states. A centralised library structure had been adopted in these states and, according to this structure, school libraries fell directly under each state's national library (Frylinck 1980:53,54).

In 1980, Frylinck (1980:54) reported that, in general, the quality and quantity of book stock at schools in the national states was not satisfactory, although most secondary schools did have a library room. A major part of the collections consisted of donated books which were not suitable for schools. Many teacher-librarians had no formal library training, although a number had taken courses in Book Education at colleges of education. The status of school libraries in two of the national states, namely Transkei and Venda, is discussed in more detail, as no information on school library services in the other two national states could be traced in the literature.

The Transkei National Library was established in accordance with the *Transkei National Library Service Act No. 11 of 1977*. In terms of this Act, the library was governed by the Minister of Education who was advised by a National Library Council (Töttemeyer 1985:62-63). During an investigation in 1983 and 1984 by the Department of Library and Information Science of the University of Transkei to obtain an overall view of the types of libraries in the Transkei, it was found that there were twenty-five schools (out of a total of 2 200 schools), in which a school library of some sort existed. As the Department of Education made provision for a school library in the plans for all new schools, the majority of the twenty-five new schools had a library room which was larger than a classroom. The size of the stock in most school libraries was small, varying between five hundred and a thousand books. The problem of book donations not suitable for a school library was also encountered at some of the schools (Töttemeyer 1985:59-60). The conclusion reached, after the investigation, was that school libraries in the Transkei were almost non-existent and that the few libraries which did exist were disorganised (Töttemeyer 1985:63).

Venda was the third of South Africa's national states to be granted sovereign independence on 14 September 1979 (Bristow 1985:49). Until independence, there had been little library activity in Venda. In the four subsequent years, there was, however, an improvement in the awareness, use and organisation of libraries, mainly as a result of the establishment of the central national library service (Bristow 1985:51). Most progress was made in the area of school libraries. Twenty-two secondary schools were supplied with books, and national library staff regularly visited the schools to

assist with their organisation. Ten high schools that did not have library accommodation received wooden boxes containing about two hundred previously processed books (Bristow 1985:56). The criteria used in deciding which schools should receive assistance were (a) an enthusiastic principal or teacher-librarian, or (b) a school which had asked for help. According to Bristow (1985:57), this method of selection had proved most successful. No primary school had a separate library room, but, as Bristow pointed out, this was not surprising, as classrooms built to accommodate fifty learners had to house an average of sixty-nine learners. In 1984, eight selected primary schools each received a carton of 208 carefully selected pre-processed books - fiction and non-fiction - from the National Library.

Subsequent research by Bristow (1992b:77-78) into the provision and use of school libraries in Venda, however, revealed some “horrifying” facts: A viable school library was found in only eleven of the 155 secondary schools, and none at all in the four hundred primary schools. A total of R36,00 per school was budgeted for the purchase of library materials in the 155 secondary schools in the financial year concerned. In the schools that did have a viable school library the following facts emerged:

- the average number of fiction books was 1130;
- the average number of non-fiction books was 770;
- in half of the school libraries, the book stock was not efficiently organised;
- only a third of teachers in charge of the school libraries had any sort of relevant training.

It can be assumed that the position with respect to school library services was no different in the other national states, the Ciskei and Bophuthatswana.

4.2.3.1 School library services in the former Self-governing Territories

A few surveys have been undertaken in the former Self-governing Territories to establish the standard of school libraries in these areas. In 1990, Bristow sent out a questionnaire to all secondary schools in Gazankulu. Of the 135 schools that were surveyed only 64 responded. It was found that:

- Only sixteen (12 per cent) secondary schools in Gazankulu had libraries;
- No provision was made for a library when a new school was planned;
- The schools which did have libraries received little in material support;
- Books were chosen by the National Library with little or no consultation with teachers or learners;
- The circuit inspector was given an allocation and he selected the schools which were to receive books;
- There were no properly trained teacher-librarians in Gazankulu, and no courses were organised to remedy this situation (Bristow 1992a:1).

A similar situation existed in KwaZulu, which accepted responsibility for education under the *KwaZulu Education Act No. 7 of 1978*. The *KwaZulu Library Act No. 18 of 1980* included a statement of intent regarding the establishment of school libraries. The KwaZulu government, however, was faced with a formidable problem, in terms of supplying teachers and facilities for a large number of learners, which had an adverse effect on the development of school libraries (Verbeek 1986:37).

In a survey of education in rural circuits of KwaZulu by the Education Projects Unit (EPU) in 1988, the number of libraries in schools was also investigated. Table 4-2 and 4-3 illustrate the findings.

Table 4—2 Percentage of schools in all circuits of KwaZulu with libraries (Stadler 1991:17)

Primary	3,9
Secondary	46,0
Combined primary and secondary	18,6

Table 4—3 Percentage of learners at schools in KwaZulu with access to a library (Stadler 1991:17)

Primary	6,0
Secondary	43,0
TOTAL	29,4

An investigation by Krige in 1990 showed that 76 per cent of KwaZulu schools were without books or libraries. In addition, it was found that only 3 per cent of the 4 per cent of the schools that had libraries, contained books. A total of 85 per cent of the primary schools in KwaZulu had no libraries and no books (Stadler 1991:17).

In KwaNdebele there were only eighteen school libraries in secondary schools (out of a total of 120 schools) and sixteen functional school libraries in primary schools (out of a total of 171 schools) in 1994. The total book stock in functional school libraries was 1,668 books (Task Group ... 1994). In Lebowa of the 2,714 schools 698 had functional school libraries and 116 had classroom libraries in 1994 (Northern Transvaal 1994:10).

A study of the media centres facilities in the five education departments responsible for education in the KwaZulu-Natal area by Kistan, clearly showed the disparity in the accommodation and staffing of such media centres in schools. Table 4-4 and 4-5 illustrate these inequalities.

Table 4—4 Type of media centre (Kistan 1992:205)

<i>Dept</i>	<i>Purpose-built</i>		<i>Make-shift</i>		<i>Ante-room</i>		<i>Other/None</i>		<i>Total no. of responses</i>
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
HOA	5	71	2	29	-	0	-	0	8
HOD	20	83	3	13	-	0	1	4	24
HOR	2	18	4	37	2	18	3	27	11
DET	8	57	6	36	-	0	1	7	15
KWAZULU	2	14	7	50	-	0	5	36	14
TOTAL	37	52	22	31	2	3	10	14	72

Table 4—5 Persons in charge of media centre (Kistan 1992:205)

<i>Dept.</i>	<i>Full-time</i>		<i>Part-time</i>	<i>Subject teacher</i>		<i>Non-teacher</i>		<i>Total no. of respondents</i>	
HOA	7	100%	-	-	-	-	-	8	
HOD	20	83%	3	1	-	-	-	24	
HOR	-	0%	3	8	-	-	-	11	
DET	4	27%	4	6	-	-	1	15	
KWAZULU	1	7%	2	11	-	-	-	14	
TOTAL	32	45%	12	17%	26	37%	1	1%	72

4.2.4 School library services rendered by non-governmental organisations

During the apartheid years, non-governmental organisations played an important role in addressing some of the inequalities of and omissions in the formal education system (*Education update* 1994:iv). One of the organisations active in school libraries is the READ (Read, Educate and Develop) Educational Trust.

READ's work started in 1979 with the provision of books to schools for African learners, in response to the community's concern about the lack of reading material and library facilities in the schools. The organisation, however, realised that book

provision alone was not enough, but that the language, reading and information needs of the African communities of South Africa also needed in-depth intervention. READ thus became increasingly involved in in-service training and materials development (READ Educational Trust 1994:2). READ's efforts are dependent on funding from donor agencies who target specific areas, schools or projects (Bawa 1993b:176). READ's services were rendered in close collaboration with the former Department of Education and Training (Stadler 1991:17). In 1994, READ reported that it was involved in:

- the provision of resources, books and materials;
- training teachers, community educators and librarians;
- library development;
- the development and provision of materials to promote language, library and learning skills;
- promoting a culture of reading (READ Educational Trust 1994:2).

In 1985, READ operated in eighty-nine (2,41 per cent) of the 2,602 schools in KwaZulu and had established nine model libraries in KwaZulu schools (Verbeek 1986:38). With a grant of R18 million, in 1991, from the Independent Development Trust, 174 prototype schools were chosen in READ's eleven regions countrywide to be developed as "centres of influence" for the surrounding schools. These schools received full resource provision and training (READ Educational Trust 1994:8-9).

In the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area (the former PWV region), READ, in 1995, interacted with approximately 226 schools in the African communities (Gauteng Department of Education 1995:98).

4.2.5 Impediments to the effective delivery of school library services

Various factors impaired the delivery of effective school library services to the previously disadvantaged communities in South Africa during the apartheid years. Schools have been a major focal point of political struggle since 1976. Uprisings, boycotts and disruption of schools were used by the National Education Co-ordinating

Committee (NECC) in an attempt to make schools ungovernable (Stadler 1991:19). The Department of Education and Training, in particular, was seen as illegitimate and was, therefore, affected most by the disruption and strike actions.

The phenomenal increase in the enrolment of secondary school learners, from 30,700 in 1953 (Stadler 1991:19) to 3,063,685 in 1993 (Bot 1994:11) presented the state with the task of providing educational facilities and many more teachers in a greater number of schools. While there was an increase in school admissions, there was no proportionate increase in budgeted expenditure on African education until the early 1990s. This resulted in growing disparities in providing education for Africans.

These circumstances put the delivery of school library services under considerable strain. In Natal and the Transvaal the continuing violence among and displacement of learners and teachers, and the disruption of schooling, severely limited the development of school libraries where there were none (Stadler 1991:22).

Existing services were also affected. Kistan (1992:203) points out that a school media centre does not exist in isolation. Its function affects and is affected by the other elements of the school. The media centre must, therefore, be viewed within the entire system - the school, the education department, and the country as a whole. The perception by learners and teachers of the media centre is, therefore, adversely affected by the negative feeling towards the political system as a whole.

This, consequently, had a negative effect on the administration and organisation of school media centres. For example, as a result of a defiance campaign implemented by certain teachers' organisations, library advisers experienced problems in obtaining access to schools and could, therefore, not give guidance in library administration and organisation. In addition, no proper stock control took place in media centres and stocktaking was seldom done properly. Break-ins, theft and vandalism were ongoing problem in the schools. Deliberate vandalism of catalogue cards and the destruction of books was also experienced in certain troubled areas (Le Roux 1993:7-9).

The centralised book purchasing and supply system of the DET, in particular, was regarded with great suspicion by both teachers and learners. It was seen as a bureaucratic system involving 'top' management in censoring book stock, and in 'forcing' the schools to promote the use of these 'approved' materials. This had serious implications, not only for the appraisal of the resources, but also for their utilisation by the school communities (Kistan 1992:206-207):

"One cannot force teachers and pupils to use resources that they had not requested or selected."(Kistan 1992:208)

In addition, all media centres were totally under-utilised, because most of them were closed after school hours. This placed tremendous pressure on the staff and media resources of public libraries (Le Roux 1992:44; Le Roux 1993:1; University of South Africa 1990:202).

With the establishment, since 1994, of the new non-racial, national and provincial education departments, ways had to be found to address the differences and inequalities in the establishing of school libraries in the previously disadvantaged communities.

4.3 Public library services from 1900 to 1994

The development of the public library in South Africa, as it is known today, only took place after 1900. This was, according to Malan (1978:48), the result of various factors. The passing of the *Financial Relations Act of 1913 (Act 10 of 1913)*, as amended in 1945, made better financial support from the state possible. The Bloemfontein Library Conference of 1928 provided the necessary stimulus for the foundation of the South African Library Association in 1930, while the Interdepartmental Committee for Libraries, appointed in 1936, through its report, published in 1937, influenced the development of provincial library services.

According to Malan (1978:48), two factors gave a tremendous impetus to the extension of public library services, namely, the establishment of the provincial library organisations, and the economic prosperity during the fifties and sixties. With the

establishment of the provincial library services, most existing public libraries were incorporated in or became affiliated to these services (Malan 1978:49). The major urban public libraries not affiliated to a provincial library service included those of Cape Town, Durban, East London, Germiston, Johannesburg, Pietermaritzburg, Port Elizabeth, Pretoria, Roodepoort and Springs. One of the large city libraries affiliated to a provincial library service was Bloemfontein Public Library, affiliated to the Orange Free State Provincial Library Service (Shillinglaw 1988:272).

The provincial library services consisted of organisations that linked urban and rural public libraries into one large network. The provincial library services rendered administrative services for the public libraries, such as the selection, acquisition and preparation of material, while the local authorities were responsible for the provision of public library services to the community. The public libraries acted mainly as service points while their book stock was automatically supplemented and kept up to date by the provincial organisation. The province maintained the scheme financially, but affiliated public libraries had to provide the buildings, staff, reference services and a free public library service to members of the local community. Although the provincial library organisations assisted local governments in the rendering of public library services, they did not serve the public directly. They did, however, assist with displays, talks, exhibitions and the supply of information and books for study and research, while they also served as centres for book storage (Malan 1978:50-51).

The conventional pattern of public library services in urban areas of South Africa was that of a central library located in the city, with a network of suburban branches, each offering a service to the local community (Shillinglaw 1988:272). In the medium-sized towns and the small towns of the rural areas the responsibility for the provision of public library services lay also with the local authority. The local authority applied to the provincial library services for assistance in rendering a library service (Shillinglaw 1988:277).

Public library services were also governed by state apartheid policies and legislation. Besides geographical decentralisation of services from provincial to local authorities,

the public library sector was further subdivided by race, with local library authorities providing services only to the particular racial grouping to which the authority was linked. The De Vaal Committee in 1965 recommended in its *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee of Inquiry into Library Services for non-Whites*, that it should be left to each province to decide how responsibility for buildings, equipment, materials and staff should be divided between itself and the local authority. This led to great inconsistencies in the approach adopted by the library services of the four provincial authorities, the Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA), the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA), the Natal Provincial Administration (NPA) and the Provincial Administration of the Orange Free State (OFS), and in the extent of services rendered to the various population groups (Frylinck 1980:55-56).

Access to public library services was extremely limited for African, Indian and Coloured population groups. In 1988, an investigation was undertaken by Patricia Stabbins, Secretary of the Public Libraries Division, in response to a request made by the Executive of the South African Institute for Librarianship and Information Science (SAILIS), to establish how many public libraries in South Africa were open to all race groups. Table 4-6 illustrates chronologically when public libraries in South Africa started opening their services to all race groups, while table 4-7 gives an analysis by province of libraries making their services available to all race groups.

Table 4—6 Opening of South African public libraries to more than one race group, in chronological order (Comprehensive investigation ... 1990:14)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Number opened during that period</i>
1945 - 1964	1
1965 - 1969	3
1970 - 1975	11
1976 - 1979	4
1980 - 1985	26
1986 - 1988	40

Table 4—7 Analysis by province of public libraries in South Africa (Comprehensive investigation ... 1990:14)

<i>Province</i>	<i>Responses</i>	<i>Open</i>	<i>Closed</i>	<i>Half open</i>	<i>per cent Open</i>
Natal	63	34	16	10	54,0
Transvaal	101	17	54	30	16,8
Orange Free State	38	3	20	14	7,9
Cape Province	126	36	58	31	28,6

In October 1990, the *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, 1953*, was scrapped which had allowed local authorities to restrict membership of and access to public libraries on grounds of race.

The denial of access to information through closure of public library facilities to the 'non-white' population groups was further entrenched by gross disparities in resource allocation by the provincial authorities. While White communities had enjoyed the extensive development of municipal and provincial library services, virtually no such services had been extended to those communities, particularly in the rural areas. Thus the provision of library services to African, Coloured and Indian communities had been severely neglected (Dreyer 1991:102).

In the Self-governing Territories and TBVC States, the national libraries were responsible for the delivery of public library services within their respective areas (Frylinck 1980:56). The delivery of public library services by the relevant geographical authorities during the previous political dispensation will now be discussed.

4.3.1 Cape Provincial Library Service

The Cape Province was the first province in 1949 to promulgate a Provincial Ordinance establishing a provincial library service. The Cape Provincial Library Service (CPLS) was established in 1955 with the acceptance of the Provincial Library Service Ordinance (*Ordinance no. 4 of 1955*) and the relevant regulations published

under this Ordinance (*Provincial Notice 543 of 16 September 1955*). In 1981 this legislation was replaced by the *Provincial Library Service Ordinance of 1981 (Ordinance no. 16 of 1981)* (Swiegelaar 1991:40).

Until the dissolution of the four provincial authorities in 1994, the CPLS provided the most comprehensive public library service in the RSA (Cape Provincial Library Service 1994:2). In 1993, the CPLS served 483 affiliated public libraries from its twenty-four regional libraries, and operated on a budget of R48,607,000 (Cape Provincial Library Service [1994]:14,35).

There was, however, an inequitable distribution of library and information services between the different race communities in the province. A vast and densely populated area such as Guguletu (with a population of 66,000 in 1983) was, in 1985, only served by one public outlet (Nassimbeni 1986:57). During the debate on the Library Budget in the Provincial Council in June 1985, a Cape Provincial Council Member claimed in her speech that Africans in the Cape Province were the victims of 'vicious discrimination' in the provision of provincial library services. She noted that 216 libraries were reserved for the exclusive use of Whites, seventy-five were reserved for the exclusive use of Coloureds, and only six were reserved for the exclusive use of Africans. Three-quarters of the libraries in the Cape Province were closed to African and Coloured people (Nassimbeni 1986:57-58). In 1991, Khayelitsha, covering an area of 3 372 hectares with a population of 300,000, still had only one library (Nassimbeni 1991b:46).

From 1990, the CPLS began addressing, as a priority, this imbalance by establishing public library facilities for developing communities (Swiegelaar 1991:42). In its 1993 policy statement, the CPLS stated that high priority would be given to the establishment of public libraries and the rendering of services to developing communities lacking these facilities (Kaapse Provinsiale Biblioteekdiens 1993:13), while in the CPLS's 1993 Report it was stated:

"Establishing new public library services in communities which still lack such facilities is a top priority. There is a planned programme to expand services as quickly as possible to all communities, from the largest to the smallest, including those in remote rural areas" (Cape Provincial Library Service 1994:3).

4.3.2 Natal Provincial Library Service

The Natal Provincial Library Service (NPLS) was established in 1952 (Shillinglaw 1988:271). Library provision was governed by the Natal Provincial Library Ordinance (*Ordinance no. 5 of 1952*). Prior to its dissolution, the Library Service consisted of a central organisation, a central reference library, and four regional libraries (Gray 1994:5).

Legislation such as the *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, 1953* and the *Group Areas Act* all affected the Library Service's ability to render a service to all the inhabitants. Consequently, great disparities in the delivery of public library services to the previously disadvantaged communities also existed in this province. The *Zaaiman report* (University of South Africa 1990:63) drew attention to the Indian community that had been neglected as far as provision for their information needs was concerned. According to the report, the Indian rural communities, especially the working class communities, did not have access to library services.

The report mentioned that the metropolitan Indian community in Natal also experienced major problems. The large townships had book centres which developed from depots. According to Indian perceptions, these centres were so limited in the scope and quality of their services, that they could not qualify as libraries. The only adequate reference facilities for adults were at the central city reference library, access to which was, for most users, limited because of transport problems. The Natal Provincial Administration had, however, established depots in most non-urban Indian communities, and some of the larger towns had well equipped modern public libraries (University of South Africa 1990:64).

Since 1970, increased attention was given to the establishment of public libraries for Africans. By 1982 five public libraries had been established in African townships. In

1985, four more public libraries had been established (Johnstone 1989:299). Research into library and information provision in the Pietermaritzburg Metropolitan Region (PMR) by a Working Group of the Library and Information Workers Organization (LIWO), however, revealed the extent of inequity in the provision of public library services in the province. It was established that, in 1989/1990, seven of the nine public libraries were situated in areas in which about one third of the region's Indians, Whites and Coloured people lived. In contrast, an area in which approximately 250,000 African people lived (nearly two-thirds of the total population of the region), did not have a single public library (Report ... 1991:30). In June 1993, a new policy was adopted for the NPLS:

"The province, in co-operation with those library authorities affiliated to it, will aim to provide a library service to assist the development of a community by the enhancement of its quality of life, by the improvement of literacy, in the support of formal education, in the provision of non-specialist information and in the fulfilment of recreational needs, in the most cost effective manner, for all the inhabitants of Natal." (Omar 1993:5).

One of the criteria for prioritising a subsidy programme was "historical inequity in the provision of library services to the people of Natal" (Omar 1993:5). Public libraries in African townships were erected in close consultation with the communities. In terms of the new policy adopted in June 1993, approximately R46 million were to be spent in the next five years to provide standard library buildings, furniture and equipment in predominantly African areas to redress past imbalances.

Several libraries were built for the African communities (Gray 1994:5). In terms of the new policy, communities that were able to provide some form of accommodation, also qualified to receive standard furniture and library material (Gray 1994:6). For the first time, television sets and VCRs were also purchased as part of the equipment for libraries where a building or furniture subsidy was approved. (KwaZulu-Natal Provincial Library Service [1994]:3).

After the repeal of the *Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, 1953* in 1990, strong measures were also taken by the NPLS to exert pressure on local authorities who refused to make their facilities available to all (Gray 1994:6).

4.3.3 Transvaal Provincial Library Service

The Transvaal Provincial Library Service (TPLS) was established in 1944. At that time, the TPLS was divided into a head office organisation and a regional organisation comprising eight regional libraries. Until the early nineties, the TPLS underwent few major changes and remained a regional service (Hansen 1994:11). In 1944, a library depot service was implemented to extend library services to the rural areas. The service had as its aim to reach each White inhabitant:

“(Die hoofdoel was) om bestaande biblioteekfasiliteite sodanig uit te brei, te koördineer, te verbeter en aan te vul dat ieder blanke, selfs in die mees afgeleë dele van die provinsie, ‘n vrye en doeltreffende openbare biblioteekdiens tot sy beskikking sou hê.” (Veldsman 1993:20)

Since 1962, a limited library depot service was also rendered to the other three population groups in the rural areas (Veldsman 1993:21). In 1958 a public library service for Coloureds was established, and in 1959 the Advisory Board recommended that the service be extended to Indians (Meyer 1995:17). In 1962, the establishment of a library service for Africans started and in 1979 there were forty-two libraries in African residential areas, of which nine were accommodated in standard buildings (Meyer 1995:18).

In 1992, it was reported (Transvaal Provincial Library Service 1992:4) that school principals of farm schools for Africans became members of the depots and through block loans received books for their schools.

The service points of the TPLS in 1991/1992 are illustrated in Table 4-8.

Table 4—8 Service points in the TPLS (1991-92) (Transvaal Provincial Library Service 1992:4).

Public libraries	196
Branches	66
Depots	133
TPA depots	206
TOTAL	601

From 1975 until its closure in 1991, only one of the regional library services, the PWV Regional Library Service, had been assigned to provide public library services to the African community in the whole Transvaal province. On 1 April 1991, the concept of separate regional libraries to service the different population groups was abandoned, and boundaries were adjusted to those of the development regions in order to facilitate co-operation (Hansen 1992:3). Table 4-9 lists the number of libraries established and served by the PWV Region during the period 1975 to 1991, before the process of decentralisation and integration started.

Table 4—9 Total number of libraries for Africans established and served by the PWV Region (1975-1991) (Shongwe 1992:29).

	<i>Libraries</i>	<i>Depots</i>
<i>East Rand Region</i>	22	7
<i>West Rand Region</i>	19	11
<i>Western Region</i>	7	2
<i>Eastern Region</i>	14	3
<i>Lebowa (closed in 1983)</i>		12
<i>Venda (closed in 1979)</i>	1	7
<i>Bophuthatswana (closed in 1977)</i>		11
<i>Gazankulu</i>	1	
TOTAL	64	53

To illustrate the imbalances in the provision of libraries for Africans in the Transvaal, Nassimbeni in 1991, compared the facilities of two metropolitan areas, namely those in the “White” Johannesburg area and those in Soweto, its neighbouring African township,

where there was the most compelling need for redress. Table 4-10 illustrates her findings.

Table 4—10 Comparison of distribution of libraries and resources in Johannesburg and Soweto (Nassimbeni 1991a:10)

	<i>Population</i>	<i>Area (ha)</i>	<i>No. of libraries</i>	<i>Book stock (No. of volumes)</i>
Johannesburg	1 739 000	44 457	37	1 544 435
Soweto	2 100 111	7 994	6	34 500
Average (Jhb)	47 000	1 201	1	41 741
Average (Soweto)	350 000	1 324	1	5 750

In addition, Pretoria, covering an area of 62,981 hectares with a population of 554,760 in 1991, had nineteen libraries (excluding the travelling services, forty-nine depots and one branch for the coloured population and one for the Indian population), while Mamelodi, covering an area of 2,100 hectares with an estimated population of 300,000, had only two public libraries. (Nassimbeni 1991b:46).

The TPLS's commitment to alleviating the discrepancies in the distribution of libraries in the previously disadvantaged communities, was, however, clearly stated in its *Annual Report 1991/1992* (Transvaal Provincial Library Service 1992:5):

"The Library Buildings Planning Subdivision experienced an extremely busy year, being involved in the planning of 41 library projects, at different stages of development, as well as the upgrading and replanning of existing facilities. Highlights were the erection of two libraries in the developing areas of Kwa-Thema and Tsakane. These two libraries were the first where an assessment could be made whether the new concept of library community centres, especially in developing areas, is successful in practice. ... Due to the increase in the need for library facilities, in communities that are still without any library service, this Division was also involved in the establishment of services in small halls and prefabricated buildings."

Fierce opposition from certain "conservative" municipal authorities to the opening of facilities to all race groups was experienced, as indicated by the Director of the Service in her 1991/1992 annual report (Transvaal Provincial Library Service 1992:1):

"With the repeal of the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, 1953 (Act 49 of 1953), the public library found itself in the midst of politics. This resulted in many public libraries introducing exorbitant user fees. Local governments also resisted co-signing the affiliation agreement with the Transvaal Provincial Library Service."