

2014

Community building, multiculturalism and the suburban public library

Rajeswari Chelliah
Edith Cowan University

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Community building, multiculturalism
and the suburban public library

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Edith Cowan University

Doctoral Dissertation

Community Building, Multiculturalism and the Suburban Public
Library

**A thesis submitted to the Graduate School in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the**

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy and Information Science

By

Rajeswari Chelliah

Principal Supervisor: Dr. Justin Brown

School of Computer and Security Science
Faculty of Health, Engineering and Science
Edith Cowan University, Western Australia

USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the role of public libraries in building communities and cross-cultural citizenship through provision of equitable information resources and services to English as Additional Language (EAL) speakers, particularly in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia. The rapidly changing demographic profile of Western Australia is producing an ever increasing diversity of people who need to access information in order to thrive in their new community. However, access to these information services pose challenges to users who lack competency in language, computer and general literacy, while the increasing diversity in the local population creates widely divergent competencies in information seeking skills among library clients. Diversity, which has become evident in many contemporary communities, unveils a wide range of information seeking skills, which varies from individuals who are illiterate (often from an agrarian background) and others who are highly educated with substantial English language and computer skills. In this research, the concept of equity in the provision of library services for EAL speakers was investigated by reviewing the library environment in Perth, Western Australia from the perspective of library staff and EAL clients. In-depth interviews were conducted with participants from across various EAL backgrounds as to their knowledge, understanding and current usage of library services. The interview sessions identified the extent of user acceptance of these services and the factors which indicated levels of perceived equity of these library services. The findings from the responses of the public library staff and EAL speakers revealed a complex and diverse local library environment. The public library system, in Western Australia traditionally modelled to serve English language clientele, is yet to fully recognise the presence of the multicultural clientele in its library service provision. Thus, the shift in public library perspectives towards service provision for diverse ethnic groups is evident in isolation but not in adherence to a transparent, consistent government policy which filters down to the local libraries as a guide for normal practices. The EAL speakers' responses revealed a dire need for English language and computer skills education for some ethnic groups, in order to facilitate their public library access. The findings revealed that some of the EAL groups are unaware of the public library system, its intrinsic value or its culture including that the services are free and offered in a democratic and safe space. Some of the EAL

groups also distrust government entities and figures of authority per se as officials symbolise maltreatment of their families and ethnic groups in their countries of origin. Reliance on natives from their own communities, revealed within the interview data, has led to an emergence of bonding social capital tendencies and limited integration with the host culture. The public library is strategically located to draw diverse individuals from its local suburb and contribute towards community building strategies and integration in Western Australia. Having located gaps between library service provision and library service needs, this research developed a model for possible future strategic directions for public libraries in Western Australia.

DECLARATION

I certify that the thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

- (i) incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher degree;
- (ii) contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; or
- (iii) contain any defamatory material.

Signed _____

Date _____

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This thesis is indebted to the library staff and interview participants in Metropolitan Perth, Western Australia. Their input underpins this community building endeavour for a harmonious and sustainable future for all. The Honourable Edith Cowan's life of courage and determination to make a difference in her community was foremost in motivating my application to pursue my long cherished dream of post-graduate study. Edith Cowan University's motto of "*Reach Your Potential*" became a reality for me.

Individuals encountered in the journey of life impact outcomes. Learning from each experience enriches our life. One such individual is Sujatha, we were discussing ways of overcoming isolation in Western Australia in a casual phone call, and as a result, of that conversation we both launched on an ambitious plan to reinvent our teaching careers. My PhD journey commenced with a young, very positive ECU staff at Student Central who definitively advised a PhD candidature for me in ECU to build on my existing Masters by research degree. My long delay in enrolling in PhD due to child nurturing commitments was fast-tracked by ECU's acceptance of my PhD application. Sujatha was accepted into ECU as well for a degree program. Fate compelled both mothers to commence on long term academic careers.

Dr Mark Brogan my first supervisor was instrumental in recognising my desire to build cohesive communities in a world rife with unrest, fear and distrust by defining my research focus. Cross cultural communication and cohesive community building may happen in public libraries if libraries are re-defined as community hubs. Dr Brogan's input in actualising the topic of the research is highly valued. When Dr Brogan relocated temporarily on long service leave, Dr Barbara Combes supervised the completion of the research my PhD proposal and its presentation. With the retirement of Dr Combes, Dr Justin Brown battled the challenges that persist in supervising a PhD study. Attention to details, insistence on thorough coverage of each section and his commitment to persist until I completed (an assurance made during a fact-finding visit to ECU way back in 2009 on a very wet, rainy day) were Justin's strengths. The completion of the thesis is possible due to Justin's in depth knowledge about the demands of a PhD thesis and his many suggestions for inclusion of holistic content.

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This PhD endeavour is dedicated to all women. I dare you to enrol, educate and empower yourself to optimize the opportunities in life. I hope my persistence, perseverance and patience will encourage others to pursue their dreams.

Family support from my daughters and spouses, Chandra and Sheldon, Kala and Vimalan, Shiva and Shan, and my husband Senathi provided a vital backup essential for completion of a PhD.

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The research investigation and the findings are property of the ECU, however, the thesis is gifted to

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Rajes Chelliah

3rd November 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COPYRIGHT AND ACCESS DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
DECLARATION	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
Chapter 1	1
Introduction	1
1.0 Overview	1
1.1 Statement of the problem	1
1.2 Background to the study	3
1.3 The Western Australian Context	4
1.4 Purpose and rationale of the study	10
1.5 Statement of the research questions	11
1.5.1 Supporting question one	11
1.5.2 Supporting question two	12
1.5.3 Supporting question three	13
1.6 Significance of the study	14
1.7 Organisation of this thesis	16
1.8 Key Concepts	17
1.9 Acronyms frequently used	18
Chapter 2	20
Literature Review	20
2.0 Overview	20
2.1 Introduction to the literature review	20
2.2 Population changes in metropolitan Perth	21
2.3 Multicultural aspects of public library service provision	23
2.4 The library and information needs	24
2.5 Public library initiatives: International and Australia	26
2.5.1 United States	26
2.5.2 Europe	29
2.5.3 United Kingdom	31
2.5.4 Eastern States of Australia	32
2.5.5 Western Australia	35
2.5.6 Collaboration and Partnership	36
2.6 Drivers for migration	38
2.6.1 Employment	40
2.6.2 Context	40
2.6.3 Education	41
2.6.4 Land ownership	42
2.6.5 Social status	42
2.6.6 Refugees	43
2.6.7 Diversity in EAL communities	43
2.8 Public library significance and community building role	44
2.8.1 Library evolution	44
2.8.2 Western context	45
2.8.3 Free and democratic spaces	45

2.8.4	Origins of multilingual collections.....	46
2.8.5	Monasticism and the growth of libraries.....	47
2.8.6	Asian context.....	47
2.9	Public libraries	50
2.9.1	Europe and United Kingdom.....	51
2.9.2	United States and the public library EAL service.....	53
2.9.3	Public libraries and Australia.....	56
2.10	Public libraries and social capital.....	58
2.11	Conclusion	61
Chapter 3		63
	Research Methods	63
3.0	Overview	63
3.2	Research framework.....	66
3.3	Data collection techniques	67
3.4	Research design.....	68
3.4.1	Quantitative web survey.....	68
3.4.2	Qualitative and semi structured interview data.....	81
3.4.3	Comparison of data from research instruments.....	85
3.5	Literature on research methods in the EAL space	85
3.5.1	Considerations for interviewing EAL participants.....	87
3.5.2	Recruiting EAL participants.....	87
3.6	Qualitative data analysis	89
3.6.1	Conducting the content analysis.....	90
3.6.2	Theoretical framework in content analysis	91
3.6.3	Contribution to new knowledge	92
3.6.4	Inductive content analysis	92
3.6.5	Emergence of concepts and theories	95
3.6.6	Validity and Reliability	96
3.6.7	Pilot Testing of Instruments	97
3.7	Recruitment.....	97
3.7.1	Library staff participants	97
3.7.2	EAL participants	98
3.8	Limitations of the research design	99
3.9	Conclusion	100
Chapter 4		101
	EAL Participants Qualitative Interview Responses	101
4.0	Overview	101
4.1	EAL Speaker's English language proficiency and the public library	102
4.1.1	Educational background.....	102
4.1.2	The public library and English language services.....	107
4.2	Community building	112
4.2.1	Multicultural associations	112
4.2.2	Family.....	113
4.2.3	Meeting place	114
4.3	Computer access and literacy.....	116
4.3.1	Computer literacy	116
4.3.2	Computers and the public library context	122
4.4	Perceived barriers.....	126
4.4.1	EAL perceptions of barriers	126
4.4.2	EAL perceptions of library system barriers	128
4.5	Multicultural aspects in the public library environment	129
4.5.1	EAL perceptions of library staff.....	129

4.5.2 Multicultural staff.....	133
4.5.3 Volunteers and the EAL associations.....	134
4.5.4 Multilingual resources.....	135
4.5.5 Multilingual signage and classes.....	137
4.6 EAL preference for public library services.....	137
4.6.1 Community hub.....	138
4.6.2 Advertising public library services	140
4.6.3 Academic assistance.....	143
4.7 Conclusion	145
Chapter 5	146
Library Staff Quantitative Web Survey Responses	146
5.0 Overview	146
5.1 Web Survey.....	146
5.2 Section One: demographic information	148
5.3 Section Two: EAL speakers and library use.....	150
5.4 Section Three: EAL library users and diverse services	160
5.5 Section Four: EAL library services, technology and community spaces.....	168
5.6 Section Five: The following affect our library's capacity	177
5.7 Bias in Survey	181
5.8 Funding	182
5.9 Conclusion	182
Chapter 6	183
Discussion of Findings.....	183
6.0 Overview	184
6.1 Key findings.....	185
6.1.1 The expectation gap	185
6.1.2 Traditional and diverse services.....	187
6.1.3 Library centred / client-centred	189
6.1.4 Library concept, known and unknown.....	189
6.1.5 Democratic, neutral and safe space	191
6.1.6 Library welcomes all and respects all clients.....	191
6.1.7 Staff.....	192
6.1.8 Repository of knowledge / education.....	193
6.1.9 Digital services.....	195
6.1.10 Information centred services	197
6.2 The EAL speaker groups and diversity	198
6.2.1 Background of participants	200
6.2.2 An integrated library services model	204
6.2.3 Evolving library staff profiles	205
6.2.4 Relevance of the library to EAL speakers.....	206
6.3 Stakeholders for change	208
6.4 Libraries as community hubs	211
Chapter 7	214
A Model for Sustainable Library Services.....	214
7.0 Overview	214
7.1 A Model for Sustainable Public Libraries (MSPL)	214
7.1.1 Community.....	217
7.1.2 Staffing.....	220
7.1.3 Services and Policy	222
7.2 Conclusion	225
Chapter 8	226
Conclusion	226

8.0 Overview	226
8.1 Addressing the primary research question	227
8.2 implications for further research	228
8.3 Limitations of the study	229
8.4 Concluding remarks	229
References	231
APPENDICES	246
Appendix 1: Invitation to participate- Web survey-library personnel	246
Appendix 2: Invitation to participate: interviews	247
Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form - Interviews And Background	249
i. Library personnel	249
ii. EAL participants	249
iii. Ethnic Association Personnel	249
Appendix 4: Semi-structured interview questions- Library personnel	252
Appendix 5: Semi-structured interview - Ethnic association personnel	254
Appendix 6: Semi-structured interview questions- EAL individuals	256
Appendix 7: Web survey invitation letter to library staff	258
Appendix 8: Metropolitan Perth Local Government Authorities	261

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1: Metropolitan Perth, LOTE speakers by suburb	22
Table 4-1: Breakdown of EAL participant education background	103
Table 5-1: Library staff qualifications and roles	149
Table 5-2: Library staff roles	149
Table 5-3: Age of public libraries	150
Table 5-4: EAL as percentage of library users	151
Table 5-5: Specialist services for EAL library users	151
Table 5-6: Policies for EAL library service provision	152
Table 5-7: Libraries meeting the needs of EAL clients	153
Table 5-8: Development of community profiles for EAL service provision	155
Table 5-10: EAL English proficiency	160
Table 5-11: English language proficiency as a hindrance to library access	161
Table 5-12: Information about EAL users enhancing library services	162
Table 5-13: EAL library usage increase over last 5 years	162
Table 5-14: Language classes to enhance library use	163
Table 5-15: Separate language collections for EAL users	164
Table 5-16: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to availability	164
Table 5-17: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to cost	165
Table 5-18: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to linguistic limitations	165
Table 5-19: Library provision of virtual LOTE materials	166
Table 5-20: Library staff liaising with EAL users	168
Table 5-21: Recruiting and training more EAL staff	169
Table 5-22: Concept of compliance guidelines for EAL service access	170
Table 5-23: Computer literacy for EAL users in accessing library resources	170
Table 5-24: Meeting spaces for EAL users	171
Table 5-25: Community activities for EAL users	172
Table 5-26: Public libraries creating barriers to EAL access	173
Table 5-27: EAL information needs similar to mainstream library users	174
Table 5-28: Library interaction with ethnic associations	175
Table 5-29: Media channels for marketing library programmes and community services	175
Table 5-30: Library use of Web 2.0 for marketing library services	176
Table 5-31: Inability to promote EAL services	177
Table 5-32: Inadequate physical space	178
Table 5-33: Inadequate staffing	178
Table 5-34: Inadequate staff training for provision of EAL services	179
Table 5-35: Lack of access to EAL resources	180
Table 5-36: Lack of EAL as a priority	180
Table 6-2: Characteristics unique to EAL groups	201

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2-1: Visual outline of Australian migrant demographics	22
Figure 2-2: Drivers for migration (origin to destination)	40
Figure 2-3: Historical movements of peoples - origins and destinations	58
Figure 3-1: Mixed methods and research instruments	67
Figure 3-2: Local Government Authority (LGA) of public library	70
Figure 3-3: Suburb of the public library	70
Figure 3-4: Library and staff details	71
Figure 3-5: Qualifications of public staff respondents	72
Figure 3-6: Questions relating to EAL speakers and the public library	73
Figure 3-7: EAL patrons.....	74
Figure 3-8: EAL public library users and diverse services.....	75
Figure 3-9: EAL public library services, technology and libraries as community spaces	77
Figure 3-10: Factors affecting capacity to provide EAL services	79
Figure 3-11: Funding for public library services.....	80
Figure 3-12: Comments or observations on the issue of EAL service provision.....	81
Figure 3-13: Semi structured questions for EAL participants.....	82
Figure 3-14: Increase in EAL population question	82
Figure 3-15: Question regarding barriers to EAL participation in library services	83
Figure 3-16: Coding process example.....	93
Figure 5-1: EAL public library users' ethnic and language backgrounds.....	157
Figure 5-2: Funding sources for public library services	182
Figure 6-1: Identified perceptions of the expectation gap between Libraries and EAL clients	187
Figure 6-2: Diverse library services identified by EAL speakers.....	188
Figure 6-3: EAL Community Types and public library service preference.....	203
Figure 6-4: Spectrum of EAL Community Types and public library service provision	207
Figure 6-5: Key stakeholders for redefining public library services for community and nation building.....	210
Figure 6-6: Public library at the crossroads	213
Figure 7-1: Model for sustainable library services (MSPL)	216

Chapter 1

Introduction

Libraries need to adopt an ideological shift that moves away from suppositions regarding libraries as inherently valuable. Such assumptions about users' conceptions of value may not be grounded in fact, and instead support more romanticized notions of the societal, cultural or educational benefits of libraries that may or may not be aligned with patrons', or potential patrons', perceptions of actual worth. The resulting disconnect between library and patron could easily, manifest itself in decreased support due to the fact that the user or customer perception of worth is not met (Germano, 2011, p. 102).

1.0 Overview

The public library is often described as an interface between the community and knowledge resources (Dolan, 2007). The role of the urban public library as a repository of knowledge, information services, reading, life-long learning, resources and services is the predominant traditional view (Usherwood, 2007). Current debates in the research literature centre on the future direction of public library services due to changes in population demographics and the availability of numerous digital information resources. Usherwood (2007) argued that public libraries have always functioned on the concept of social equality and now need to be active contributors to education and digital citizenship. However, in order to find a continuing place in the modern world, public librarians need to identify and remove barriers to access to information resources, and to promote and develop inclusive services and programmes for the community. Usherwood (2007) believes that the marginalised and disadvantaged segments of the general population fail to maximise their use of the public library. Equity of access to information is the foundation of a just society and it is crucial that equality of opportunity and citizenship prevail, irrespective of age, race, ethnicity, culture or gender (Brophy, 2007; Usherwood, 2007; Vårheim, 2014).

1.1 Statement of the problem

This research project aimed to investigate the capacity and scope of community building programmes demonstrated in public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australian for English as Additional Language (EAL) speakers. It aimed to investigate the range of services available in public libraries for those from non-English speaking backgrounds, and to ascertain the information requirements of these community members. As demographics are

changing in Australian society there is need for individuals, regardless of ethnicity and country of origin, to access information and thus be able to participate equitably as citizens. Walker states in a submission to the Local Government Librarians' Association of Western Australia (Local Government Librarians Association of Western Australia, 2009) in a paper presented to the 2009 ALIA (Australian Library and Information Association) Public Library Summit, that,

As well as providing the traditional library roles of lending books and other resources and the reference service that libraries have always provided, our public libraries are embracing the role of social inclusion to ensure equity for all communities they serve; to assist other agencies in the role of building stronger, to enable individuals and community groups to realise their full capacity and to provide opportunities for the disadvantaged and the unemployed in the community (Local Government Librarians Association of Western Australia, 2009, p. 2).

This study examined how the public library system, which was introduced to provide the average citizen with access to information, is performing in this role in metropolitan Perth Western Australia (Appendix 8) for EAL speakers. It also attempted to determine the nature and scope EAL library services delivered by public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia. Metropolitan Perth was selected as the sample for the present investigation due to the multicultural demography based on the population diversity exhibited in its suburbs and the speed at which these populations have grown, with Perth exhibiting the fastest population growth of any Australian capital city (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013b).

Additionally, the study investigated the information needs of the EAL speakers and aimed to identify any gaps that exist between user needs and service provision.

The investigation on public library services explored the alignment between the needs of EAL community members and current library services in Perth, Western Australia. As Berger stated in a Danish study of multicultural library services;

The immigrants of the last 25-30 years bring with them different language, religious and cultural backgrounds and traditions. An essential question in this context is: to what extent and how can the public library system play a constructive role as an integrative force (Berger, 2002, p. 80).

1.2 Background to the study

Migration sees large numbers of people relocating from countries of birth to other countries each year, with 3% of the world's population currently living in countries other than that of their birth (World Bank, 2011, p. ix). In terms of the countries that are the top destinations for migrant flows (as of 2010) include the United States, the Russian Federation, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Canada, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Australia and India (World Bank, 2011, p. 1). With this movement of large populations host countries can encounter challenges in providing support mechanisms and services to culturally diverse segments of their evolving communities. One of the core services available to these evolving communities is that of the public library, in that it offers a free, open and welcoming space alongside a number of information, computing and educational programs (Hallberg & Sipos-Zackrisson, 2010).

In the U.K. context Brophy explains that the public library potentially facilitates the transition of new migrants into mainstream culture as EAL users access the public library for social support visits, with the library acting as a channel of contact with the wider community (Brophy, 2007). The public library is perceived as a trusted service provider, which can facilitate social learning in a safe environment, as well as being a venue for building social capital between the host culture and the new arrivals (Audunson, 2005; Varheim, 2008).

Library professionals, governments and policy makers in the U.K. are in a dilemma as to the decision to adopt a modern customer-cantered model for service provision, or to continue with more traditional methods and services, which do not necessarily have a multicultural or multimodal delivery focus (Usherwood, 2007). The House of Commons Select Committee in the U.K. declared,

we are in no doubt that while libraries are about more than books, these traditional materials must be the bedrock upon which library services rest no matter how the institution is refreshed or rebranded (Brophy, 2007 pp. 41-42).

However, in contemporary society where, “individual rights and the need to know is at a premium” (Brophy, 2007, p. 36) the key to sustainability for present-day public libraries is to not only engage public interest and meet demands for information services (Dolan, 2007), but to build harmonious communities and provide access to information for all citizens.

Essentially, the background to this thesis is that the public library system is at a crossroads (Scrogham, 2006), whereby traditional service provision is no longer adequate to meet the rapidly changing needs of a diverse and ever changing user base. A report on examples of best practice of multicultural library services highlights a number of initiatives that have been undertaken across Australia by state, local government and individual libraries draws attention to the needs of multicultural users of the public library system (Steed et al., 2011). Whilst this report is primarily focussed on the good work being done by various library systems in terms of services to multicultural clientele, it also indicates a lack of a consistent, national approach to these issues.

1.3 The Western Australian Context

Public libraries in Western Australia (WA) operate under the governance of the State Library of Western Australia (SLWA) and Local Government Authorities (LGA).

The SLWA functions as a centre for processing the cataloguing of library resources, which are exchanged regularly amongst the local council public libraries around the state. The SLWA also provides access to the main catalogue for all users across WA and local libraries operate a public inter-library loan service to ensure equity of access to resources for all citizens. The SLWA oversees the regular exchange of library resources amongst the public libraries in WA, providing a regular turnover of stock for the approximately 230-240 public libraries in Western Australia. At the time of writing, 78 metropolitan public libraries were operating in the Perth metropolitan area (Lockyer-Benzies, 2004; State Library of Western Australia, 2013).

Many public libraries also include collections that are funded by their local councils and these remain within their local systems, although they may also appear within the state library catalogue and be available for inter-library loan (Australian Library and Information Association, 2012a). Local Government Authorities (LGA's) are responsible for providing the public library premises and staff and fund around 80% of the public library services with the remaining 20% being provided by the state government (Public Libraries Western Australia, 2011). Whilst the local and state governments share costs of providing public library services, the SLWA coordinates public libraries across WA. The most recent framework agreement between the State and Local Government Authorities for the provision of public library services in WA was agreed upon in 2010, and is valid through 2014 (State

Library of Western Australia, 2010a). The shared vision of the Framework claims that public libraries in Western Australia are:

... free public libraries that are hubs of community life...and seen as primary points of access for an extensive and diverse range of current information, meeting the business, recreational, cultural, life-long learning needs of members of the community, no matter their economic status, social status, cultural or language background, level of ability or geographical background (State Library of Western Australia, 2010a, p. 4).

The main service currently provided to EAL speakers by the SLWA consists of discrete collections of foreign language resources within the larger state collection. At the commencement of this study the SLWA indicated that it held volumes in twenty-five languages in its special collections, including foreign language newspapers and periodicals (journals and magazines), a figure that was later updated to 45 languages and 73 000 individual resources (State Library of Western Australia, 2010b). The foreign language books are exchanged with public libraries in the metropolitan area in units of thirty and are replaced every six months.

In Western Australia, the public library system operates in a relatively independent manner within the guidelines established jointly within the framework established between the SLWA and the Local Government Authorities. Nationally, a more expansive vision of the mission of public libraries is being debated. At the Public Libraries Summit held in 2009, the then president of ALIA, Richards (2009), announced,

the desire by the public library sector to have some form of national framework, which could enable us to develop a stronger, more united voice (Richards, 2009, p. 356).

Recommendations from the Summit included the development of a united public library system across Australia, the development of national standards, and advocacy for Federal Government funding of the library sector. The Director General of the National Library of Australia, Jan Fullerton (as cited in Richards, 2009) highlighted the lack of recognition and

the absence of funding by the Federal Government for public libraries throughout Australia. While acknowledging the significant role of public libraries in Australia's public information infrastructure, Fullerton (as cited in Richards) that "public libraries are a critical part of the country's infrastructure, but have not been sufficiently recognized as such" (Richards, 2009, p. 355).

The Public Libraries Summit emphasised the critical lack of a national policy for public libraries in Australia which are currently involved in advancing social, educational and cultural programmes as well as providing access to recreational resources and information services via digital delivery. The Summit stressed the need for a stronger partnership with the Federal Government and the increasing importance of public libraries in the community. The importance of public libraries in community building is particularly relevant for new Australians as they integrate into wider social networks that provide emotional and economic support, while retaining their cultural identity and thus ensuring a truly multicultural Australia.

At the state level in WA, the SLWA has recognised that the information needs of Library users are changing due to the introduction of the Internet/World Wide Web (WWW or Web), new resource formats and delivery modes. This evolving user need means that more is expected from public libraries in terms of services and resources. In response to this changing information environment, the SLWA and many public libraries have included a range of methods for clients to access information resources and offer training in skills development for using electronic devices. Even though there is an increasing availability of digital resources, particularly via the Web, the SLWA has recorded an increase in the number of people visiting and accessing the public library resources and services (State Library of Western Australia, 2007). These increases in library usage are also echoed in public library use worldwide and are an indication that public libraries are more than repositories for books (Brophy, 2007). According to Brophy (2007),

Libraries are hugely complex organizations which need to operate across many boundaries. ..yet they have survived for millennia, changing to meet new circumstances and adapting to their users' needs. They are there for the long term, not only in their duty to preserve humankind's recorded memory, but, as centres of expertise in accessing, using and, increasingly, creating information

and knowledge. Doomsday scenarios have come and gone, yet excellent libraries keep renewing themselves. The challenge for all librarians is to find that judicious blend of traditional service and courageous innovation which will secure their libraries' future (Brophy, 2007, p. 212).

Public libraries are community spaces and provide information services that are not available elsewhere in the community. In the case of EAL users, the community services and access to essential information are vital components of their successful integration into a new social environment. This thesis explored evidence of best practice in the provision of EAL services in public libraries in Metropolitan Perth, Western Australia.

The SLWA's Strategic Directions set the framework for the operation of all the public libraries in the state (State Library of Western Australia, 2009). Sections of this framework that are relevant to EAL services include the following;

- Priority Area 1.2 acknowledges "the increasingly diverse nature of society, in Western Australia and ensuring our collection represent this" (p. 5) as one of the key directions.
- Priority Area 4.2 and 4.3 state that "working with other libraries to promote the role of libraries in democratic societies and working actively with partners on programs that promote literacy and information literacy" (p. 8) is a basic principle for the public library system in WA.

While the SLWA's (2009) targets for the twenty-first century aim;

to help people learn, enjoy and play in their own time, in their place, or in our place, so that our communities thrive, flourish and support creative and economic opportunities (State Library of Western Australia, 2009, p. 3).

there are no strategic priority areas in the Framework that deal specifically with EAL service provision. These Strategic Directions guide the current policy and future directions of the SLWA. According to the current State Librarian, these policies are grounded in early 1950s' thinking and attitudes about public libraries, and deliver a limited perspective. This limited

perspective is due to a lack of reform in addressing the changing social, demographic and technological environments that are part of twenty-first century life/society in Australia (State Library of Western Australia, 2008).

In 2007 the SLWA in conjunction with the WA state and local governments developed the Structural Reform for Public Libraries report which created a detailed proposal for 10 outcomes in terms of new library directions and services (State Library of Western Australia, 2007). The vision for public libraries in WA included significant aspects of the library:

- i. the promotion of literacy and learning
- ii. the enhancement of cohesion, inclusion and social justice
- iii. the recapture of local heritage and history
- iv. identification of relevant resources in alignment with needs based on community profile
- v. attention and articulation of community needs
- vi. identification of new and emerging skills, collaboration with learning providers, online training packages, teleconferencing and a skilled and innovative workforce.
- vii. improvement of traditional shared material movement to meet needs of the changing environment to reduce duplication of investment and resources especially in the Perth metro region. Review of assessment standards based on outcomes and not on input and output numbers, establish guidelines for quality services and not workload figures and collections should consider various categories, literacy levels and engagement levels with local communities' presence.
- viii. advocacy through Joint Advisory Committee needs to be assertive and cohesive as a vital strategic partner for public libraries in Western Australia and identify community clusters such as growth councils and library for resource sharing.
- ix. reduce the "one size fits all" concept and advocate for funding allocation, such as the per capita grant model of NSW and Victoria, ensure funding from State Governments, and monitor expenditure in relation to outcomes and quality service.

- x. increase awareness of the value of the library with a state-wide marketing strategy aimed to draw interests of stakeholders and the community, that can be outsourced to the local library and tailored according information needs.

Increase forums with stakeholders, LGAs, WALGA and Local Government Managers Association (LGMA), organise dialogues on literacy issues, showcase new services, activities and innovations through presentations. Introduce study tours, site visits in and outside WA. The reform initiative advised on internal cost economies rather than seek funding, for vital programmes for enhancing literacy, social justice and building strong communities. The report concluded with the assertion for the reinvention of the WA model for public libraries service delivery with the claim that,

what may have suited Western Australia in the 1950s is no longer applicable in the face of changing demographics, trends in library service delivery and new technology (State Library of Western Australia, 2007, p. i).

Since the current agreements between the Library Board of Western Australia and the Local Government Authorities were originally developed in the 1950s and 1960s and as a result were recognised as needing modernization, with the Framework Agreement (State Library of Western Australia, 2010a) aiming to “lead and facilitate implementation of the Framework Agreement and structural reform of public library services 2010” (p. 5).

While the prospect for addressing current demographic and technological changes appears to be likely in the wake of the current State and Local Government discussions on reform for the public library system as it operates in WA, the stated aims within the current frameworks in terms of EAL relevant services appear to be recognised, but yet to be realised. As the concluding chapters of this thesis will show, through the field work and data collected from the research instruments, the vision of the structural reforms outlined above align closely with the findings of this thesis and a proposed model of sustainable libraries in the EAL context.

1.4 Purpose and rationale of the study

Issues now facing these public services include a multi-lingual clientele with major language differences and the challenges in accessing printed and digital information services. These issues are evident across Europe, the U.K. and U.S., Australia and other countries which are desirable destinations for migration patterns. This research project examined how far public libraries in Western Australia have progressed in adopting multicultural approaches to service delivery. Do multicultural policies adequately describe and provide for the level of service expected of EAL communities, or do they cater primarily for the dominate ethnic groups and provide only superficial coverage to those on the margins (Beck, 1992). Australia is populated by people from over 250 nationalities, with many coming from countries rife with hatred and deep-seated conflict and loyalties. Individuals who choose to relocate due to a multitude of reasons, leave behind family, social networks and their familiar environment and embrace a new culture, social norms, political circumstances and economic challenges. The local public library is the space, after one's home and work that is deemed as the third welcoming social outlet for individual interaction with the local community, offering channels for reconstructing all that was left behind in the country of origin. Varheim (2007) describes the option of the library as a third place as,

The library is a "third place" a place that is neither work nor home where people can spend time. Even though it has a purpose and is not purely a place for socialising like the ideal third place, the library is unique in offering services. Users do not have to buy anything the service is truly universal and inspires social trust (Varheim, 2007, p. 6).

The main objective is to generate social capital of the community through the channel of the public library with its principles of democratic values of a universal, safe and neutral space that welcomes all, promotes life-long learning and builds sustainable communities (Skrzeszewski, 2004; Smallwood & Becnel, 2012; Svendsen, 2013; Switzer, 1999; Tripp, Payne, Diodorus, & Ebrary, 2009; Varheim, 2007).

This study examined these issues from the perspective of EAL community members and their understanding of the public library in their community as well as from the perspective of libraries as services providers.

1.5 Statement of the research questions

This thesis proposes a primary research question, which has the objective to investigate the phenomena of the public library environment in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia from the perspectives of EAL speakers. This informs the primary research question;

What is the extent of EAL service provision within public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia in the new millennia?

This primary research question is addressed through the exploration of three supporting research questions that provide evidence and discussion to inform the overall question. The first of these supporting questions looks at the service provision aspect of the research by examining public library staff perceptions of EAL patrons and their information needs

1.5.1 Supporting question one

What services are offered to EAL users by public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia?

This question primarily explores the availability of information services, resources, policies, literacy levels, staff diversity and funding for EAL speakers by the public libraries in the sample selected for the study. The question also explores the views of public library staff as to the challenges in providing EAL services for a very diverse, ever growing multicultural community in metropolitan Perth. Librarians face new challenges as

migrants from around the world will continue to shape how library services respond to changing communities-in terms of place, culture and language. Diverse communities need to see themselves reflected in all aspects of service, with implications for staff knowledge, training, recruitment, retention and ways of working. We must apply the strength of our professional commitment as energetically

and confidently to the dynamic digital environment as we do to the traditional roles we so well (Edmundson & Morgan, 2013, p. 2).

While the *Standards and Guidelines for Australian public libraries* offer a framework for public libraries, their funding bodies, stakeholders and other interested parties, this research project attempts to address some of the challenges encountered by the Perth metropolitan public libraries in the context of multicultural communities. As outlined in an ALIA report (Australian Library and Information Association, 2012b), the aims of public libraries should be to;

- evaluate current services
- set targets for improvement
- implement continuous improvement in library service delivery
- plan for future needs
- provide a framework for equitable service delivery across Australia (p.1)

These aims are in alignment with the overall objectives of this research, viewed specifically in the multicultural context.

1.5.2 Supporting question two

The second supporting question addresses the perspectives of the EAL speaker community, their information needs, their experiences and awareness of the public library as an institution.

What are the information needs that influence EAL speakers' perceptions of public library access in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia?

Whilst the first supporting question examines EAL services from the provider perspective, this second supporting question adopts the user's view of EAL services and the public library. The real life experiences of the EAL speakers in the context of their local public library, is investigated through interviews with a cross section of the EAL community.

The interviews aimed to ascertain the awareness of the library system and the information services required by the EAL speakers along with any identified enablers and barriers to library access. Indeed the information demands of the new emerging communities are far different from previous information services due to their multifaceted dynamics of cultural, educational, social and emotional backgrounds. The information needs of the population mix are the focus of the present investigation. The *Executive Summary of the Structural Reform of Public Library Services* in Western Australia (State Library of Western Australia, 2007) states that:

Metropolitan (Perth) libraries are facing increased pressures with many facing unprecedented growth and huge lags of in infrastructure, poor facilities, inadequate staff, increasing diversity in the population mix and high levels of expectation and demand (State Library of Western Australia, 2007, p. ii).

And that;

This environment is exacerbated by the need for ongoing training of staff, cultural barriers such as Aboriginality, or literacy limited to languages other than English (State Library of Western Australia, 2007, p. ii).

This research aims to identify and conceptualise the information needs of these multicultural groups and their own issues of language, literacy, training and EAL. By comparing and analysing responses to data collected against supporting questions one and two, gaps in EAL service provision as well as perceptions of actual services required (and desired) can be identified.

1.5.3 Supporting question three

The final supporting question for this research seeks to combine the accumulated evidence gathered for supporting questions one and two along with the literature from the

field of multicultural library services into a proposed model for future, sustainable EAL services in public libraries.

What are the components of a sustainable model of EAL service provision in a public library context?

This supporting research question aims to provide a model, which captures the ‘best practice’ elements of EAL service provision in public libraries, which includes elements of existing traditional services as well as new initiatives that may sustain and enhance the relevance of the public library in multicultural communities. The State Library of Western Australia (2007) in its structural reform assert that,

There is also a need to channel energies into things that really matter, such as building literacy, social justice, and strong communities. To do this there must be a reinvention of the Western Australian model for public library service delivery (State Library of Western Australia, 2007, p. vi).

The key words of the proposed model for public libraries are in alignment with concepts of “reinvent”, “restructure” and “redefine” the traditional service provision model. The model that will be proposed and explored in this research builds on the vision of the Western Australian government and other stakeholders who have already indicated that a need for structural renewal already exists.

1.6 Significance of the study

Contribution of new knowledge about the public library environment in metropolitan Perth in the context of emerging migrants groups is the primary objective of the study. Community building through the platform of the services, resources and programmes of the local public library underpins the primary objective of the investigation on the role of public libraries. Cohesive communities rich in social capital contribute to nation building.

Two key global events influence the dynamics underpinning the public library environment, namely, the digital revolution and the dramatic increases in migration. The present research investigation aimed to present qualitative and quantitative research evidence about the public library environment from the perspectives of the service providers and the public library service users in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia. The dramatic increases in EAL speaker population in Western Australia, compel the need for empirical research evidence to support advocacy for non-traditional library services for multi-ethnic clients who exhibit a multitude of characteristics in terms of backgrounds and literacy. The digitization of library information services poses challenges to users who lack computer skills hence equity of access to information is limited. Efforts to expand the scope of inclusive services are prevalent in multicultural U.S., Canada, U.K., Europe and Australia as affirmed by (Muddiman, 2000),

There is thus evidence that it will be necessary to both shift the institutional culture of the core library service and to innovate with newer, social roles if public libraries are to become relevant to working class and disadvantaged users. Research has an important part to play in this process, in particular as a way of identifying information and reading needs, which disadvantaged people find it difficult to express or conceptualise themselves. Moreover, at the library authority level, there is clearly a case for initiating a number of action research projects which develop and evaluate new modes and models of service that aim to tackle social exclusion (Muddiman, 2000, p. 187).

Thus, this empirically grounded investigation on the community building role of public libraries set out to achieve these aims of enhancing relevance of library services it attempted to identify information needs from the perspective of EAL speakers, and employed the findings to develop a model for sustainable future public libraries. The aim is to highlight,

the contrast between weak, voluntary approaches, to exclusion by public services and stronger more interventionist approaches (Muddiman, Durrani, Dutch, Linley, & Vincent, 2000, p. 155).

by using the empirical evidence from the findings of the investigation to outline the rationale for developing recommendations for a sustainable model for future public libraries. One of the most significant recommendations is the need for collaboration, which is echoed by Hillenbrand (2005a) who advocates,

in your face style librarianship which involves being seen in your community-by going out into shopping centres, into classrooms, attending council meetings, and making connections with community agencies such as CentreLink (Hillenbrand, 2005a, p. 50).

The present study aims to draw the attention of various stakeholders to the invaluable asset that the local public library represents in terms of engaging residents of its suburb with inclusive services that may enhance cross-cultural communication, gradually build trust, mutual respect and harmonious neighbourhoods which uphold democratic values of Western Australia. According to Varheim (2007),

Not only does the library provide a universal service to all citizens without any means testing, it also provides a public space for the diversity of information and creation of meaning crucial for democracy. Being for all, the library enhances not only social capital but also democracy... The public library thus makes a potential contribution to both social and political fabric of society and government (Varheim, 2007, p. 7).

This view is further elaborated by Coleman (1988) and Putnam (2000) who indicate that social inclusion and social capital, invariably, enhance the residents' capacity for productive tendencies, which potentially increase their wealth and purposeful inclusion in their local community.

1.7 Organisation of this thesis

The statement of the problem, the background to the public library environment, the purpose and rationale for the investigation, the research questions and the significance of the research project are outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of the literature about the public library environment in the context of the multicultural demography in metropolitan Perth. The criticality of public library services is explored, as is the need for inclusive public library services. Chapter 2 discusses public library services to EAL speakers in the US, Europe, U.K., Eastern States of Australia and in Western Australia. A brief discussion on collaborative initiatives among the public libraries Australia wide is included, as is a historical background to the evolution of public libraries and eventually EAL services. The literature review also includes a brief description of the drivers behind migrants' decision to re-locate, methodological issues in migrant research and the social capital building capacity of public libraries.

Chapter 3 details the methodology and testing procedures employed in the quantitative and qualitative research investigation. The rationale for the selection of mixed methods approach, specifically the administration of a web survey for public library staff and semi-structured interviews for EAL speakers is outlined.

In Chapter 4, the quantitative findings of the public library staff web survey are reported with a detailed data analysis. A detailed recount of EAL speaker interview findings and data analysis follows in Chapter 5. The interview data analysis is substantiated with relevant quotes as evidence of the lived world experiences of the EAL participants.

The discussion and summaries of the research investigation are covered in Chapter 6, whilst chapter 7 includes a proposed model for sustainable public libraries which is the practical contribution of this thesis, followed by the conclusions of the research project as discussed in Chapter 8.

1.8 Key Concepts

The word “migrant” applies to non-natives, which in the context of this thesis, means those born outside of Australia. Governments with large migrant populations endeavour to refer to the diverse non-natives groups in different terms and with varying definitions. While the definitions have evolved over time with increasing diversity in the dynamics of the new arrivals, the words, “migrant” and “multiculturalism” are globally applicable. In alignment with the word “multiculturalism”, the vocabulary in this research expands to use such terms as multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi-culture and ethnic minority groups (Clyne, Grey, & Kipp, 2004; Colic-Peisker & Hlavac, 2014).

In Australia, policy makers and government agencies tend to use definitions that best fit the migrant characteristics. In Australia, migrant definitions include English as Second language speakers (ESL), Languages Other than English speakers (LOTE), Non English Speaking Background speakers (NESB) and Culturally and Linguistically Different speakers (CALD) (Bogdanovic & Johanson, 2007; Jupp & Clyne, 2011) and of late English as Additional Language speakers (EAL).

EAL is referred to in a similar context (in this thesis) to;

- English as Second Language (ESL).
- Languages Other Than English (LOTE),
- Non English Speaking Backgrounds (NESB) and
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

The shifts in definitions of migrants indicate an enhanced awareness of the unique differences among the migrant population. For instance, the acronym ESL was inapplicable to ethnic groups who totally lacked literacy in English. Thus, English was not their second language. It appears that LOTE became a more accurate definition of groups who lacked English Language competency. Additionally, migrants from English speaking countries such as the U.K., USA and New Zealand are migrants too, acronyms such as ESL, LOTE and NESB fails to include these groups in the categories. It seems clear that the acronyms which refer to migrant ethnic groups display variations that whilst easy to interpret as having the same meaning, are in fact quite different. The thesis investigates migrants who speak English as a second language and others who have no knowledge of English, categorised as mentioned above, as EAL, ESL, NESB and CALD. However, the overriding definition that will be predominately utilised throughout this thesis is that of English as Additional Language (EAL) speakers as this definition most accurately represents both the participants and the overall objective of the investigation and its outcomes.

1.9 Acronyms frequently used

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

ALIA: Australian Library and Information Association

CASL: Council of Australian State Libraries

IFLA: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions

LGA: Local Government Authority

SLPASC: Strategic Local Partnership Agreement Steering Committee

SLWA: State Library of Western Australia

TAFE: Technical and Further Education System

U.K.: United Kingdom

UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

U.S.: United States (of America)

WA: Western Australia

WAIN: Western Australian Information Network

WALGA: Western Australia Local Government Association

World Wide Web: WWW or the Web

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The social and economic structure of the society at a given time and place, the level of learning, the level of literacy, the technical development of medias, the status of gender, of age etc., are all aspects relevant to the history of libraries. The library and the library's services may be seen as a result of these factors (Byberg, 1999, p. 4)

2.0 Overview

The evolution of libraries and civilisation in ancient settlements in Assyria, Mesopotamia, Greece, Egypt and Asia are linked due to the need for written records of conquest, trade, tributes, folk legends, marriages, religious practices, common law and medical treatment and medicines. Written record originated in clay tablets, storage of information in jars and special spaces are evidences of early libraries the desire to seek and collect knowledge from far and near was not common among invading marauders. Diverse collections whether plundered or accepted as gifts in diverse languages from neighbouring countries imply that multiculturalism and libraries are entwined (Brophy, 2007; Krasner-Khait, 2007; Murray, 2013).

2.1 Introduction to the literature review

This chapter outlines the literature that has influenced this investigation in terms of its origin, data collection and analysis. The chapter will examine the Western Australian (WA) context in terms of public library services and structures, and will then broaden its view to look at such services on the international library arena. A historical background to the evolution of public library services will be presented with a specific focus on the multicultural aspects in the context of the community building role of such services and will be followed by literature on research considerations in a multicultural context and finally some thoughts on social capital. The literature review is a cross sectional account of studies which include overarching aspects of

- i. multicultural issues
- ii. multicultural public library services in the West and Australia ,
- iii. drivers for migration, relocation and information needs

- iv. evolution of libraries Mid East, Europe and Asia
- v. evolution of public libraries in the West, Asia, and Australia
- vi. social capital and public libraries

The long history embedded in the evolution of public libraries endorses the perceived value of such institutions and the role they play in the innate desire of growing communities to seek and utilise knowledge. The widespread value placed on public libraries in advanced nations, the current increases in migration and the demands of the information society herald a new era from the ancient clay tablets of Nineveh and modern digital tablets towards redefining and restructuring the traditional institution into community hubs for social integration and nation building.

2.2 Population changes in metropolitan Perth

Recent trends suggest that diversity in population is particularly evident in WA which has experienced a major mining boom and as a result, saw an influx of people from both the east coast of Australia and overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, 2010; Koper, 2009). According to the ABS estimates, WA had a population of 2.28 million by the end of 2009 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010) which had increased to 2.56 million as of March 2014 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014a). As of the 2011 census, 31% of Western Australians were born overseas, compared to 27% in the 2006 census (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2013, p. 2). In addition, the 2011 census showed that 15% of the WA population spoke a language other than English compared to 11% in 2006. In 2011 87% of the overseas-born population lived in the Greater Perth area as compared to 85% in 2006 (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2013, p. 6).

Demographic data shows that 27% per cent of people in WA were born overseas and approximately 12% cent were EAL speakers (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2008, p. 165). According to the 2006 census, 27% of people living in the metropolitan areas surrounding the capital city of Perth were born overseas with 11.6% speaking a language other than English in the home (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2008, p. 165). Figure 2-1 shows a visual summary of the figures for WA and Australia as a whole taken from the discussion above (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013a; Office of Multicultural Interests, 2013).



Figure 2-1: Visual outline of Australian migrant demographics

The Local Government areas in metropolitan Perth with the highest number of languages other than English (LOTE) speakers are listed in Table 2-1 below.

Table 2-1: Metropolitan Perth, LOTE speakers by suburb

Suburb	LOTE speakers	% of LGA	Suburb	LOTE speakers	% of LGA
Stirling	36,439	20.6	Victoria Park	5,414	19.4
Canning	17,406	17.5	Belmont	4,536	15.0
Wanneroo	16,956	15.3	Fremantle	3,773	15.2
Melville	14,491	15.6	Rockingham	3,421	3.1
Swan	13,095	14.0	Perth	3,039	26.3
Joondalup	12,605	8.4	Kalamunda	3,036	6.1
Gosnells	12,538	13.7	Armadale	2,903	5.7
Cockburn	12,233	16.4	Subiaco	2,364	14.4
Bayswater	12,217	21.9	Cambridge	2,209	9.3
South Perth	6,563	17.1	Nedlands	2,133	10.5
Vincent	5,624	20.9	Mandurah	1,680	3.0

(Office of Multicultural Interests, 2008, p. 108)

The percentage of EAL speakers in local government areas in metropolitan Perth is highest in the City of Stirling, Bayswater, the Town of Vincent, Perth City and Victoria Park with about one in five speaking a Language Other Than English (LOTE). The substantial numbers LOTE speakers indicate that the demographic composition of the population in metropolitan Perth is very diverse. It is important, particularly for new Australians, to be able

to maintain their cultural integrity, while adjusting to the Australian way of life. As a free community service and part of a nationwide information network, public libraries have an integral role to play in this area. This study addressed the current lack of information about service provision for EAL speakers in metropolitan Perth, WA.

2.3 Multicultural aspects of public library service provision

The importance of public libraries in the provision of EAL services was officially recognised at the global level with the acceptance of the Multicultural Library Manifesto (International Federation of Library Associations, 2008), which was driven by a previous joint document from the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (International Federation of Library Associations, 1994). This document provides a guideline for librarians to address “cultural and linguistic diversity” (p. 1) issues in their work, and guide them in providing library services that serve diverse interests and communities and respect cultural identity and values (International Federation of Library Associations, 1994). The dissemination of information, the identification of needs for community members who do not reach out due to language barriers and the establishment of partnerships with all sections of the community are pressing issues for the future of public libraries. According to the IFLA/UNESCO Declaration:

The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and [the] cultural development of the individual and social groups (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 1994, para 2).

The Declaration calls on national and local governments to provide public library services that adhere to the principles of “equality of access for all regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, languages and social status” (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 1994, the public library, para 2).

This global response places the public library as a centre for community development and access to information regardless of race or creed and socioeconomic status. As part of

the global community, public libraries in Australia to a large extent adhere to these commitments.

2.4 The library and information needs

The research literature does highlight local programmes that based on some indicators represent best practice. Strategic directions with a positive view towards inclusive services are essential for the future success of public libraries according to Skrzyszewski (2004), who concluded that “current multicultural library services are in a state of denial. Instead of looking forward [to] a sublime new vision, they focus on minimalism” (Skrzyszewski, 2004, p. 16).

Skrzyszewski (2004) described the situation in Canadian public libraries and maintained that the complacency towards EAL user needs echoes the lack of interest among public libraries around the globe in being disinclined to respond pro-actively to changes in local demography. Responding to local ethnic needs is a necessity for creating multicultural Library services in Australia and moving towards an Australia where cultural diversity and languages other than English are valued.

A seminal author in this area, Usherwood (2007) believes that segments of the population lack access to the public library system, and for the foundations of a just society, equality of opportunities forms pillars for sustainable communities. The EAL group is growing into a substantial library user group in Australia, US, Canada, U.K. and Europe. Catering effectively for these diverse user groups presents library professionals, local governments and policy makers with a major problem as they try to adapt to a modern customer-centred service model which is difficult to integrate with the traditional principles of custodianship inherent in public library service provision that have prevailed in the past (Brophy, 2007; Usherwood, 2007). Personalization is one of the areas discussed in the literature whereby libraries can provide systems, typically of a digital nature, to allow customised, patron-centred services to be delivered according to need, such as by education level, literacy, disability, or in this case, the multicultural context (Duffy, 2012; Ferran, Mor, & Minguillón, 2005; Jeevan, 2008; McLaughlin, 2011; Zimmermann, Specht, & Lorenz, 2005). Personalization in the modern societal context moves away from the mass production line analogy of ‘you can have any colour you like as long as it is black’ to ‘here are our existing services, how can we make them more appropriate to your needs’. Whilst the literature across the broad area of personalization indicates that personalization has its own

challenges and that not all services can be customised, certainly in the library context there are many diverse opportunities for such activities to take place. A prime example, as will be explored later in this thesis, is that of library computer interfaces personalised by language (Shiri, Ruecker, Doll, Bouchard, & Fiorentino, 2011; Wu, He, & Luo, 2012).

The information needs of ethnic communities vary according to their status as per the length of residence in the new host country. Studies demonstrate that, information seeking coincide with the stages of relocation, in terms of pre-migration, immediate, intermediate and long term (or integration) needs. Host nations attempt to provide appropriate information accordingly.

What are the “information practices” of a new migrant? In the sphere of information studies, information practices refer to concerted efforts in seeking information by realising the need for a particular knowledge (McKenzie, 2003). The individual’s information seeking attempts includes informal sources such as one’s social circle and the Internet. In addition, information practices embrace an individual’s cognitive ability (inability) to become conscious of the need for specific information and one’s initiative in pursuing or abandoning the key information that is retrieved. The sphere of information practices further addresses the individual’s skills in coping with numerous hindrances that affect the accomplishment of intended goals. Research demonstrates that information practices are associated with individual’s motivation, natural tendencies and circumstances in the environment (McKenzie, 2003). Information seeking can often relate to basic needs of individuals arriving in a new country, including education, health and employment (Silvio, 2006) alongside information on ESL language learning, document translation services, language interpretation services, housing, employment assistance and connections with their ethnic groups (Caidi & Allard, 2007). These essential needs shift after some time in the host environment to seeking less urgent information about health care, education opportunities, transportation, local political news, social, religious and cultural events in order to integrate with their new environment (Caidi & Allard, 2007; Silvio, 2006).

These information seeking needs can possibly be facilitated by the public library and its central role within local communities (Lloyd, Kennan, Thompson, & Qayyum, 2013; Lloyd & Williamson, 2008; Silvio, 2006; Van der Linden, Bartlett, & Beheshti, 2014). Such information needs of EAL clients discussed above provide insight into the dilemmas of new migrants in the new country. There are localised library programmes to serve migrants, however, the evidence tends to be descriptive narratives rather than information services which are outcomes of rigorous research methods for the implementation and evaluation of

the programmes. These are typically reports of local initiatives implemented as one-off programmes in a response to local needs. These reports on localised programmes are useful when viewed in the context of the academic literature that conceptually deals with traditional as well as proposed services in the EAL space (Lloyd & Williamson, 2008). The present investigation's objective of identifying EAL groups' information needs intends to contribute new knowledge about the vital role library and information services can play in the lives of migrants as they attempt to establish themselves in their country of destination.

Various international and local initiatives that embrace diversity in public library services and in the eastern states of Australia and in WA are considered in the following sections.

2.5 Public library initiatives: International and Australia

Internationally public libraries have attempted to address the increasing demand for library services and resources from a diverse client base. A review of the current literature indicates that the introduction of initiatives and programmes to cater for EAL user needs are being actively pursued.

2.5.1 United States

In the U.S. public library sector, there have been far reaching advances in meeting the information needs of diverse population efforts in response to the large number of immigrants arriving since World War 1 (Malone, 2000). Population forecasts predict that African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans and Indian Americans will constitute 47% of U.S. citizens by 2050 Kim and Sin (2006). The research literature demonstrates that the current public library services to ethnic groups are diverse and reflect sensitivity to the immigrants' immediate information needs. Several public library professionals in the U.S. have addressed the needs of migrant communities with a variety of initiatives.

One of these initiatives is the effort by Kim and Sin (2006) to increase diversity in public library staff profiles. The Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) is concerned with the need to address and develop a comprehensive plan to recruit librarians who will reflect a proportion of the ethnic minority population in the U.S. Evidence showed that students of colour that enrolled in Library Information Service (LIS) courses accounted for only 11.3% in comparison to the 31.3% (p. 81) of white American

students (Kim & Sin, 2006). These authors surveyed 182 ethnic librarians using a Web based questionnaire and identified the need for the ethnic profile of librarians to reflect the user community. They assert that if public services do not reflect the diversity of the community they serve there will be shortcomings in the delivery of services due to the fact that users do not feel comfortable (Alire, 1996; Kim & Sin, 2008).

Mor Barak, Cherin, and Berkan (1998) claim that interpersonal similarity such as speaking the same language eases communication, fosters trust and reciprocity, and instils a sense of belonging. Similarly, Kim and Sin (2006) elaborate the role of library employees with the claim that,

The mission of libraries is to serve the public, and the public is becoming more ethnically and culturally diverse. The increasing diversity in the user population requires changes in library services including reference, collection management, and outreach. Libraries whose staff is not as diverse as their users might not be able to serve the public effectively, as their employees' lack of expertise in different cultures and languages could be a barrier in understanding and helping users (Kim & Sin, 2006, p. 82).

In 2010 in the U.S., the Department of US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued a report *Library Services for Immigrants: A Report on Current Practices*. This details current services for immigrants and highlights efforts by public libraries to new services and resources. Partnerships with immigrants, outreach programmes, the introduction of client sensitive information services and the inclusion of client focused activities were showcased and present a new profile of the public library sector in the U.S. (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013). According to this report, public libraries in the U.S. endeavour to welcome migrants into the library as well as to impart a message that immigrants are valued clients. This is accomplished by recruiting migrants to be active participants on their local library committee where they contribute as members to discussions on policy and services. Other initiatives include tours of the library, presentations on topics based on migrant issues and interactive workshops. The report highlights book clubs which were established primarily to promote the assimilation of migrant community members. Members include peers from early migrant groups working together with new migrants of similar ethnicity. Interacting with people from the same community has enhanced mutual

understandings and helped alleviate initial culture shock and obstacles related to assimilation (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013).

The USCIS report also mentions the importance of the participation of library professionals in public functions held by migrant community organisations so that they can showcase the services and resources of the public library. Library professionals visited adult migrant colleges as well as employers of migrants to advertise the services of the library. Brochures in English and languages other than English highlight the services of public libraries and are disseminated to community organisations. The report adds that the local media, particularly radio services are encouraged to promote or broadcast library events (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013).

Some U.S. public libraries also assist in the citizenship application process for adults and seniors in the migrant community. The King County Library in the State of Washington, in collaboration with the Church Literary Organization and the Seattle USCIS, launched a programme called *Centred on Citizenship*, which was aimed at assisting immigrants who want to become naturalised citizens. Teenagers were engaged as tutors to teach immigrants English language dictation skills as these areas are components of the naturalisation test. The teenagers also tutor on the U.S. naturalisation test questions and management of test related stress. ESL teaching programmes have been introduced by the Jones Library in Massachusetts, which employs volunteer tutors to teach English on a one-to-one basis. The Jones Library tracks and records the progress of its clients as a long-term goal.

It also maintains statistics on the number of clients who successfully became citizens or entered college and even follows the employment rate of previous clients (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013). Colorado predicts a decrease in white majority of 8% by 2015 (Alire, 1997) and an increase in EAL groups, particularly African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos and Native Americans (Alire, 1997). As these people were not accessing services of their local library a state wide movement was mooted by the persistence of the state librarian and an ethnic member of the Colorado Council on Library Development (CCLD). This state library advisory board launched a long term plan of action. Subsequently, a Colorado state-wide committee was established which comprised of members from a diverse range of the state's population (of particular relevance to this research, were citizens from minority community groups). This government sponsored initiative became the catalyst for initiating change in librarian traditional attitudes. Additionally, the vision to address information needs of diverse clientele adopted five main goals:

- i. staff: recruit, employ, and retain ethnic EAL staff combined with a mentoring component
- ii. Colorado libraries: development of activities and programmes which meet the information needs of EAL groups.
- iii. recognise diverse cultures with an events calendar and supply a Diversity Tool Kit for the celebration of heritage milestones aimed at enhancing inclusion
- iv. collection development that meets the EAL groups' information needs
- v. partnerships; among stakeholders, schools, academic libraries and public libraries and community associations.

The aim is to integrate these initiatives into the traditional services and programmes of the Colorado public libraries (Alire, 1997).

The public libraries in the U.S. represented values of the dominant Caucasian population and the values of the librarians who managed them (Malone, 2000). However, this is actively encountering changes in the light of the increasing diversity in the U.S. The traditional role of the public library as a repository for books or as a service centre for the provision of knowledge resources is in a phase of rapid expansion. The Internet, technological change, information overload and increasing multicultural demographics mean that the importance of the public library as a place/space for the introduction of a variety of community centred activities is changing the way they deliver information services.

2.5.2 Europe

One indicator of change in libraries is the relationship between the public library and the primary stakeholders namely, politicians, stakeholders and users. If public libraries are to remain as legitimate and viable public institutions, they need to demonstrate that service delivery is valuable, up to date and legitimate to the stakeholders (Kann-Chistensen & Pors, 2004). The change process should include three aspects:

- i. public libraries should undertake a range of projects which are relevant to changing circumstances within the communities they serve;
- ii. Library professionals need to increase digital services and introduce a national catalogue for maximum access; and
- iii. the public library system should address the information-seeking behaviours of users to assist digital access (Kann-Chistensen & Pors, 2004).

In Denmark, the principles which govern the public institutions are based firstly on the 'concept of state' which establishes a contract between a public library and the community. The contract establishes a framework for the provision of a democratic environment which focuses on the provision of equal treatment for all users. Secondly, a public institution deals with a 'community' which exhibits values, emotions, attitudes and symbols that are indicative of the fundamental right to belong to the civil society. Third, the 'Public institution culture' serves the primary purpose of binding the society into one entity and specifically, libraries have the moral obligation to do so (Kann-Chistensen & Pors, 2004). Public institutions such as the library, more so now than ever before, have the obligation to bind society which is becoming increasingly diverse (Harbo, 1997, 2001; Svendsen, 2013).

In countries such as Denmark, public library service delivery is about the provision of services and more importantly, community building and equity of access for everyone. There have been several Danish projects for expanding Information Technology (IT) services and training librarians' skills on recent developments such as the increasing diversity in the user profile (Kann-Chistensen & Pors, 2004). In summary, public libraries in Denmark are actively addressing the need to meet the changing library environment in order to legitimise their position and remain viable in the midst of pressures from developments in technology and readily available information sources that are independent of the public library.

In Norway, public libraries have begun to shift their focus away from catering only to a mono cultural group towards services to ethnic minorities by improving access for multiple cultures and values, and promoting the role as meeting places for a multicultural and digital society (Audunson, 2005). Such places are important in a world where the increased use of digital networks for communication may lead to segregated, ethnic niches where citizens do not become exposed to other values and experiences, a theme that recurs in the later findings of this thesis. Cultural and social changes due to migration, digitisation and the growth of information technologies have a dramatic impact on the fundamental role of public libraries as community building platforms. Audunson (2005) points to local government agencies and their crucial role in bridging the gap between political institutions and the digital world, and to providing an anchor for the neighbourhood community within the nation.

The public library is a platform for the local culture of the community it serves, with the local library typically being equipped with digital and virtual resources and offering various community services and programmes. Inevitably, due to these reasons, it is often the initial point of contact with the host culture for migrant newcomers. A public library can enable such newcomers to participate in the community and ease them into their adoptive

environment (Audunson, 2005). To assist migrants who are threatened by isolation as the result of digitisation and multiculturalism, direct political intervention may be needed to recognise the library and the communities they serve as entities which could function as a centre for the exchange of values as well as information on cultural, social and political boundaries across ethnic groups. Audunson (2005) describes the public library as a “cross cultural meeting place” (p. 438).

2.5.3 United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, (Elliott, 1986b) reported on three research studies, which extended over a period of 30 years, and evaluated their outcomes for public library services to minority groups. Extensive research such as the landmark national study by (Clough & Quarmby, 1978), *A public library Service for Ethnic Minorities in Great Britain* had little impact on Library professionals. Subsequent research efforts by Elliot (Elliott, 1986a) in *public libraries and Self-help Ethnic Minority Organizations*, (Roach & Morrison, 1998) in *public libraries, Ethnic Diversity and Citizenship*, and Elliot in research into public libraries and ethnic minority communities in the U.K. (p. 174) lament the lack of, “high profile action based on sound research into public libraries and cultural diversity, including monitoring and evaluation of existing provision and services” (Elliott, 1999).

These early studies recommended collaboration between the public library, minority communities and welfare service providers and added that professional training is essential for working in an ethnically diverse population. Despite these national research efforts, little appears to have been achieved at the local public library level in Britain up to the time of writing. The profile of public libraries in the United Kingdom which were first established 150 years ago, is moving away from the Victorian values of social control to a needs-based (p. 9) approach where “each according to their ability (staff), to each according to their needs (community)” (Pateman, 2007). Pateman (2007, p. 9) feels that the traditional aim of public libraries was a ‘*form of positive action*’ to promote values of self-help to enable, facilitate and empower individuals and communities. Public libraries’ roles were to provide the general public with the information they needed and to produce a level playing field economically, socially and politically (Pateman, 2007). The *Framework for the Future* (Pateman, 2007) encouraged public libraries to adopt a community’s needs approach, with strategies which:

... define the libraries' modern mission. The future of the libraries depends on their renewing and communicating a sense of mission which is relevant to the needs of society today...What individual library authorities do must reflect the needs of their local communities...What they offer needs to be what people want... (Pateman, 2007, p. 24).

Pateman (2004) draws attention to a deeply significant gap concerning the monolingual English speaking staff and the multilingual diversity of the local community in the U.K. Pateman (2004) also stressed that social cohesion achieved by social inclusion will develop sustainable communities and social capital for the nation. The literature reviewed, demonstrated that public libraries are so much more than repositories of books for borrowing by middle class users. They are information, community and social spaces for all citizens in a modern society. As societies and nations become increasingly multicultural and population demographics change to reflect a more global citizenry, public libraries must also cater for more than the perceived dominant library user. While there have been some localised initiatives in Australia, the public library system caters predominantly for English speaking Australians, as outlined in the next section and presented later as findings later in the thesis.

2.5.4 Eastern States of Australia

In the Eastern State of Australia several programmes have been reported that could be said to represent best practice in EAL service provision. One of the notable initiatives is the *new paradigm for the Open Road Project in Victoria* (Cunningham, 2004). The Project is funded by the State Library of Victoria and attempts to expand library electronic services to include multi-ethnic languages. It provides multilingual services to the general public, as well as conduct research into the provision of multilingual public Internet access (Portal, 2014); information literacy, information-seeking behaviours and information needs of migrants and refugees (Cunningham, 2004).

Another project which focused on services for minority EAL communities, was carried out by Fairfield City Library in Metropolitan Sydney. Fairfield community contains 133 nationalities and 70 languages (Hoegh-Guldberg, p. 39). Funded by the State Library of NSW, a report was commissioned (Dunn, 2005; Hoegh-Guldberg, 2006) to examine why older immigrants across three language groups (Spanish, Arabic/Assyrian and Vietnamese) were not using public library services, and how more active participation could be

encouraged. This research found that the availability of a native language speaker in the library, the provision of English language classes, community events and multilingual resources such as DVDs and magazines were significant factors in encouraging EAL users into the Library.

The *My Language* Web portal is a joint partnership between the State & Territory Libraries of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Victoria, Western Australia, Northern Territory and the Australia Capital Territory (Bogdanovic & Johanson, 2007; Portal, 2014). The portal provides links to support services, best practice community programmes and a multilingual links page for users. While a link to the *My Language* portal appears on the front pages of state Library websites, these websites are in English and there is no explanation or indication that the link leads to a multilingual resource/tool. A large component of the *My Language* website is also available only in English. While a link appears on the State Library website, links to the *My Language* portal do not appear on local public library websites in WA, meaning that a very useful, and free EAL resource is being under-utilised. While these programmes represent an attempt to address the needs of EAL users of public library facilities across Australia, they are generally isolated and localised programmes that have evolved as a response to local needs. The only national programme in this review so far is the *My Language* project, which appears to be available only at the state library level. The fact that this programme does not appear to have been adopted and disseminated by local public libraries indicates that there are major issues in the area of EAL services.

In the state of Victoria library professionals are engaged in research investigations and innovative programs (as mentioned above) which attempt to address the needs of newly arrived emerging communities in their local suburbs. One noteworthy investigation attempted to assess the value of public libraries in relation to community welfare. The value of public libraries was measured namely by the cost benefit assessment and economic impact assessment. While the former measured the net benefit to community welfare, the latter, assessed the value in economic transactions for local businesses from the library buyer and supplier activities which stimulated sales and profits. The aim was to establish,

the cost benefit analysis telling us if libraries are good value investments and the EIA telling us how much local economic activity the libraries generate (State Library of Victoria, 2010, p. 9).

And that

This study has closed this gap and has found that Victorian public libraries contribute significantly to community welfare. Indeed, the benefits contributed by public libraries outweigh their provisioning costs by a factor of 3.56. This represents a sound return on community investment and provides a compelling case for further investment. Importantly, these numbers have been generated using conventions and disciplines that align with the requirements of commonwealth and state treasury guidelines for conducting cost benefit assessments. Moreover, the data used to populate the CBA framework were derived from representative market samples. As a result the results are both robust and defensible. This study has also found that the economic activity induced by Victorian public libraries in Victoria is significant after accounting for all of the multiple rounds of transactions induced by library related expenditures. In short, public libraries contribute some \$120 million to Victorian Gross state product and support 4,430 full time equivalent jobs each year (State Library of Victoria, 2010, p. 105).

The initiative to quantify the value of public libraries in Victoria was emulated by the State Library of Queensland which found that,

Public libraries contribute approximately \$295 million to Queensland Gross State Product and support 3,135 full time equivalent jobs each year (State Library of Queensland, 2012, p. 92).

These studies provide quantitative evidence to support the case for the valuable contribution public library services offer to communities in Queensland and Victoria. Apart from the monetary aspects of the library contribution, both these reports were important in that their common findings and recommendations reiterated the role of the library as a community hub and one-stop centre for community service and liaison.

In a similar context to the above, this thesis seeks to address these issues by thoroughly examining existing EAL service provision in WA public libraries in the Perth metropolitan area and determining the critical success factors that will assist public libraries in providing multicultural services and encourage EAL clients into the public library system, with the library again assuming the role as a community hub.

2.5.5 Western Australia

As mentioned previously, EAL services in public libraries are localised and are responses to local needs. The City of Swan library service in WA which has six satellite or branch libraries (namely: Midland, Ballajura, Guilford, Altone Park, Ellenbrook, and Bullsbrook libraries) have introduced a number of EAL programmes. Adult literacy resource materials assist adult learners to enhance their literacy levels, and their premises are used by the *Read Write Now* staff for teaching English to EAL students in a neutral and non-threatening space. Additional funds were raised to purchase books in languages other than English (LOTE) including Italian, Indonesian, Japanese and Spanish for the Midland library. These collections are located in the branch libraries based on the ad-hoc observations of the demographic makeup of resident populations in the local area, and are available to all residents in the City of Swan via inter-library loan. Funds from the LotteriesWest and the Office of Multicultural Interests were also used to establish Language Learning Centers at the main library in Midland and at branch libraries in Ballajura and Altone Park (Lockyer-Benzie, 2004).

Another WA project designed to assist disadvantaged communities is *Reclink* provided by Local Government Authority (LGA) via the public library in Armadale. This programme assists homeless and mentally ill individuals in the community. Armadale public library also runs the *World of Words (WOW)* programme, which offers weekly conversation group sessions in a non-threatening environment, with participants including EAL residents who do not have adequate English language skills and who are unable to cope with formal TAFE and other migrant language services. These informal group sessions assist EAL residents by providing immersive conversation and key English literacy skills with library staff and other members of the community (Local Government Librarians Association of Western Australia, 2009). The summit paper highlighted that,

As well as providing the traditional library roles of lending books and other resources and the reference service that libraries have always provided, our public libraries are embracing the role of social inclusion to ensure equity for all of the communities they serve; to assist other agencies in the role of building

stronger communities; to enable individuals and community groups to realise their full capacity; and to provide opportunities for the disadvantaged and unemployed in the community (Local Government Librarians Association of Western Australia, 2009, p. 2).

Whilst the above provide an example of some of the documented service provision for EAL users found in the literature, it is likely that other libraries organise programmes for EAL as part of their normal services without formally publishing about such activities. As part of the data gathering process for this thesis, all 78 metropolitan public library websites were analysed according to specific references to EAL services, with the data showing widespread, but isolated EAL activities. What this analysis did show was that libraries did appear to be working together in terms of EAL programmes, but rather ‘going it alone’ with a lack of recognizable collaboration.

2.5.6 Collaboration and Partnership

Partnerships are critical success factors for a public library’s success. Collaborations at local, state, national, and international levels are essential for the efficient use of funding and minimization of duplication of library resources. Partnerships with other service providers such as ICT providers, ethnic organisations, Lotterywest, the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) and community groups, help to develop and deliver multicultural services at the local, national and international level as proposed by the Council of Australian State Libraries (CASL) review *Languages in Transition: Towards a National Electronic Multicultural Library Service* (Council of Australian State Libraries, 2004). Such partnerships and collaborations have been recognised internationally in the *Multicultural Library Manifesto* as discussed in Section 2.3.

Disseminating information, identifying the needs of those in the fringes of the host culture and partnerships with other community services and organisations are pressing issues for the viable future of the public library system, which is primarily an information network. The international declaration places the public library as a centre for human development regardless of race or creed and Australia’s multicultural community stands to benefit if local libraries adopt these principles.

Reforming the provision of services is critical to the success of public libraries as reported by the Chief Executive Officer of SLWA who stated that:

the fundamentals of the West Australian public library system have remained unchanged since its development in the early 1950s and in the light of significant social and technological change, need to be reformed if it is to continue to meet community expectations into the future (State Library of Western Australia, 2008, p. 12).

Traditional practices that stem from long established library service operations, the absence of change in the thinking processes by library personnel, and historical programmes that remain in place are likely hindrances to maximum participation by EAL users, as these policies and practices traditionally targeted the needs of an English speaking (Davis, 2009; Malone, 2000; Pateman, 2007) populace. Recent changes in population demographics and the ongoing rapid changes in technology have not been a major focus by the majority of public libraries in WA. Australian public libraries also have not addressed the technological possibilities available for the provision of national EAL library services (Council of Australian State Libraries, 2004).

The primary purpose of public libraries is to provide community spaces and places that encourage social inclusion, build social capital and provide equity of access to information. This philosophy necessitates physical access to the library and technology, and cognitive access to education in language and the information seeking skills to be able to find and understand the information citizens may need to be able to function successfully in society.

The complex information landscape based on texts and digital resources in Australia are deemed overwhelming to new arrivals due to lack of English and literacy and to some extent due to the absence of similar information services in the country of origin. Research by (Lloyd et al., 2013) demonstrates that access to information requires that care givers (case workers, negotiators or mediators) attempt to enhance comprehension of regulations, appointments and official documents in more client sensitive modes such as visuals or social assistance of earlier arrivals. Libraries access requires reading in English and digital knowledge, the study points that both of the above exclude the non-English speaking migrant. Essentially, handing a English language form to a newly arrived migrant and telling them to

‘fill it in and submit it’ is insufficient in terms of support for that individual, and that follow up and follow through with the individual is essential.

Changing population demographics mean that public libraries need to cater for all resident groups in Australian communities. The lack of documented programmes in Australia, and in particular in WA, programmes that cater for the needs of this increasing population of EAL citizens, means that this section of society can be defined as marginalized.

This lack occurs despite the prevalence of some specific programmes, internationally and domestically, which can be drawn upon to assist in the generation of appropriate models. However, there appears to be a gap in the research literature in the area of models for sustainable library services with EAL clients as the focus. As the previous sections have shown, there is quite the body of literature on individual programmes that are being conducted within Australia and internationally, as well as policy documents that refer specifically to EAL service provision. What appears to be missing, and is the focus of this current research, is that policy models that focus specifically on EAL communities and their long term interactions with public library services.

2.6 Drivers for migration

This section of the literature review examines some of the factors which lead to migration, and in turn, the issues that migrants face when arriving in their new host country. As this thesis will later illustrate, the issue of ‘ethnic’ collections and services in libraries is far more complex than it appears on face value, with much of that complexity driven by the circumstances of the country of origin as well as the country of destination. This section looks to explore some of these issues as raised in the wider literature on migration.

Multifaceted causes underpin an individual’s decision to relocate from one’s familiar environment, social bonds, economic station and overarching political system. Cross border migration, whether its walking across the border from Chitwan Valley, Nepal to India due to the shortage of firewood (Shrestha & Bhandari, 2007), or opting to board a boat to cross the oceans to a distant land such as Australia or North America, stems from a combination of environmental, political, economic, cultural, social and context specific drives.

The influence of both macro and micro level considerations of the migrant needs recognition. Looking at the historical context, we can see in the work of Ravenstein (1885; Ravenstein, 1889) that issues analysed the initial migration processes in Europe and North America as far back as the late 1800’s. These studies attempted to address laws governing

migration, with Ravenstein's contribution being a treatise to migration history in Europe and North America, which has been applied in controlling and predicting migration.

Interestingly, we see that 125 years or more after the work of Ravenstein, modern authors are still examining the reasons for migration and humanities' ongoing search for a better life (p. 1)

These studies provide useful evidence for scholars and policymakers in understanding how environmental factors interact with political, economic and social factors to influence migration behavior and outcomes that are specific to international movements of people, in highlighting promising future research directions, and in raising important considerations for international policymaking (Obokata, Veronis, & McLeman, 2014, p. 1).

Comprehending the research theories on the migration process is crucial to this investigation on EAL speakers who are all migrants who arrived via a variety of transport modalities. They are government approved official migrants, refugees, boat arrivals and asylum seekers, despite the prevalent innate diversity, they are all referred to as migrants by the host country. An analysis of the background factors which underpin the origins, causes for migration and the contexts that influence people to move in search of a better life, enlightens the research investigation and provides compelling grounds to recognise differing social behaviours in the host countries. The lived world spells complex issues for different migrant groups. The real phenomena of the migrant holds a multitude of issues, these issues then influence the characteristics of the migrant, how they fit into their host country, and how they interact with the services provided to them.

Transnational border migration studies, attempt to include country of origin and destination, background factors which are usually an interplay of environmental, political, social (such as, class, age, gender and current livelihood), economic, demographic factors, the influences multiple levels of macro and micro contextual roles, and to a some extent the relationship between migrant agency and others who have migrated earlier (Obokata et al., 2014). Figure 2-2 summarises some of the core issues that have been identified in the literature as to what drives migration from countries of origin to countries of destination.

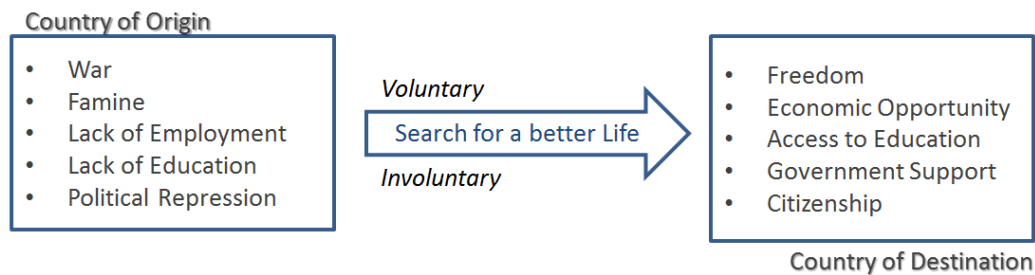


Figure 2-2: Drivers for migration (origin to destination)

2.6.1 Employment

Overarching the economic and political circumstances is lack of employment and its ascribed lack of government support for demographic sectors to consider options for relocation. For example, hurricane Mitch in Honduras caused mass destruction to homes, capital and infrastructure which resulted in increased migration (Wrathall, 2012). There seems to be, as Obokata (Obokata et al., 2014) indicates when citing Wrathall (2012) and (Alscher, 2011), a “dynamic interplay between agency and structure in migration decisions, individual and small group geography, wealth and power” (p. 11).

The literature in this area would seem to show that the drivers for migration tend to operate at the individual level, but are viewed in more macro perspectives in terms of government policy, environment, war and poverty.

2.6.2 Context

Studies point strongly towards context specific cause for migration, with the nature of context specific processes which result in migration varies in degrees. In context related causes for migration, the magnitude of macro-historical influences are substantial. For example, the drying up of Lake Chad and the Niger River in North Africa demonstrates the historical dependence on the lake, it compelled the local population to migrate in search for more greener options (Afifi, 2011). The environmental change in water level in Lake Chad, intertwined with other factors which resulted in complex interactions, such as adaptive capacity of the region, the innate strength of the local group, absence of government support, and so on. In the Western Sahara region, nomadism and mobility are inter-changeably linked, with the Sahrawi group in the Sahara, for example, typically, adheres to a seasonal migratory routine and may exhibited migratory tendencies when their grazing and farming

land was adversely affected (Gila, Zaratiegui, & Lopes de Maturana Dieguez, 2011). This can be seen across international borders where post-colonial migration patterns have been determined by access to passports, cross border travel and support services being made available to those travelling from former colonies to the colonial home country (Albrecht, 2012; Borah, 1992; Caragliu, Del Bo, de Groot, & Linders, 2013; Grosfoguel, 1997; Guiraudon, 2008; Haynes & Roy, 1999; Lem, 2013; Mahmud, 2000; Murphy, 2005; Sharpe, 2005; Uusihakala, 2014). As Caragliu et al state

The migration choice ultimately depends on factors that influence costs and benefits of migration. The costs and benefits are affected by factors specific to the country of origin. These include emigration restrictions and heterogeneity in migrant shares caused for example by differences in average risk aversion or age structure of the population and by so-called intervening opportunities, expressing how attractive emigration is on average for residents of a country of origin. Destination-specific factors also influence the attractiveness of migration. These include average immigration restrictions and institutional quality reflecting the socio-economic and political environment (Caragliu et al., 2013, p. 12).

Contextual causes unique to a community group and a specific locality invariably compel relocation of individuals, a number of which are outlined in the sections below detailing issues of education, land ownership, social status and refugee definitions.

2.6.3 Education

Education seems to influence in decisions on migration in differing ways. In some nations a high level of education enables re-location. Nepal and Ecuador are just two examples where education facilitates migration (Gray, 2009; Massey, 2004). While in other nations (such as the Dominican Republic) individuals with lower education level are the dominant migrant group (Alscher, 2011). There is a significant body of literature which examines the role of education as either the driver for migration or the outcome of the migration process, for example access to education in the destination country (Aisa, Cabeza, & Larramona, 2014; Rao, 2010; Robertson & Runganaikaloo, 2014; Salomone & Beine, 2013; Tselios & Rodríguez-Pose, 2010; Webb, Holford, Jarvis, Milana, & Waller, 2014; White & Knapp, 2013). Some of these studies examine the cost benefit of migration in terms

of income loss versus possible income weighed against the cost of the migration process (White & Knapp, 2013) whilst others see education as the sole reason for migration, citing Australia's tertiary education sector as an example for incentivised education and migration (Robertson & Runganaikaloo, 2014). The other broad category of migration is those without reasonable access to education in their home country due to civil unrest or war, and who see the destination country as a chance for a safer, secure life with educational opportunities, or as Rao states;

The primacy of education in development agendas is unquestioned. With the gradual acknowledgement of the potential benefits that migration can hold for development, the relationship between migration and education is a growing area of research (Rao, 2010, p. 137).

2.6.4 Land ownership

Research shows that land ownership affects migrants in a variety of ways. Disadvantaged individuals and wealthy landowners make differing decisions about migration, with the wealthy landowners in Ecuador using their wealth to migrate (Gray, 2009), while impoverished landowners in Nepal are unable to move in search of a better life (Massey, 2004).

2.6.5 Social status

Studies suggest that household status and its related assets influence one's ability to migrate. The researchers' claim, the combined assets and personal livelihood valued as social capital could take the form of family connections with members who have migrated earlier, significantly, impact decisions about relocation (Afifi, 2011). The may take the form of whole ethnic group inclination, cultural trends and social class that the migrant originates from. The Nepalese migrant trend seems to function in this cultural flow. Another example, are the Tuaregs who are more wealthy than their neighbours, in Niger, migrate to Europe (Afifi, 2011). This tendency for people to go where other people of a similar ethnicity have gone will be raised later in this thesis in terms of people wishing to use library services where are staffed by people from their own ethnic background.

2.6.6 Refugees

Migration diaspora includes another sector, namely refugees whose are increasing worldwide. The main cause for their relocation rests with political distrust where Government fail to protect its people. Dauvergne (2005) refers to refugees as,

Refugees, of all the people admitted under migration laws to live permanently in these nations, the label “refugee” describe those who at least theoretically, differ most markedly from the members of the nation. While family and economic migrants are selected because they have something for the nation values, family ties or a contribution to economic growth- refugees are accepted because of something they lack the protection of another state (Dauvergne, 2005, p. 81).

Migration research requires perspectives on the historical causes which are linked to colonial history, post-colonial obligations, and mushrooming colonial powers. These macro-historical circumstances are key factors for initiating some forms of migration (Afifi, 2011; Gila et al., 2011).

2.6.7 Diversity in EAL communities

The discussion above highlighted general trends about the migratory movements in the world. However, diverse characteristics underpin these general trends and it is essential to note that, as Markus, cited in (Jupp & Clyne, 2011) indicates

In addition to these generalisations concerning the nature of response to a range of general and specific propositions, variance within the population needs to be recognised. The marked division between those of English-speaking and non-English speaking background, highlighted by Betts and others, is a key social variable. Within specific ethnic groups, level of education provides a key indicator of openness to other cultures and support for cultural maintenance (Jupp & Clyne, 2011, p. 100).

It follows from the discussion about the origins of migrants that the causes which motivate relocation are unique and varied as per individual or group. Studies demonstrate that

the repressed, marginalised, homeless individuals are juxtaposed with the wealthy, highly educated and the social capital rich migrant in the pivotal migrant waves. The modes of pathways to relocation vary, while human traffic agents and destination nations' policies influence decisions about relocation. It follows from the findings and discussions about the origins of migrants that there is wide range of diversity embedded amongst the individual who arrive at chosen country of destination. Invariably, the EAL speakers selected for the public library research are likely to reflect substantial diversity in their skills, literacy and abilities in accessing their local public library.

2.8 Public library significance and community building role

The following sections of this chapter examines literature regarding the origins of the library as a concept, it traces the innate interest in learning that led to the development of the public library as we currently understand it, and the inherent concept of information exchange between different cultures and nations.

2.8.1 Library evolution

The concept of the library evolved with development of human civilisation. Literacy, written records and repositories of knowledge denoted political dominance and commercial advancement in ancient societies of Middle East, India and China. Written records progressed from the clay tablets of Mesopotamia, through any number of printed and non-printed mediums, through to modern hi-tech digital tablets. Governance, art and trade compelled the necessity for the emergence of written artefacts which evolved from clay tablets, papyrus scrolls, parchment manuscripts, into written texts on paper and then to micro-film and DVD formats. While early written records assisted rulers in matters of governance, literature and commerce, access was limited to the powerful elites. Growth of literacy and libraries were outcomes of the written language culture. Mesopotamia, Egypt, Assyria, Greece, Rome and Medieval Europe paved the way for fundamental forms of classification and catalogue systems. For example, the size and shape (four sided for financial and round for agricultural records) of the tablets varied according to its contents, and they were placed in shelves for ease of access. Nineveh's collection (King Ashurbanipal royal collection) of tablets were written in several languages and were placed in different rooms as per subject such as government, history, law, astronomy, legends, hymns, zoology, mineralogy, Gilgamesh Epic

and scientific records. The earliest libraries were found in Ebla (in Northern Syria), Nineveh (in Assyria), Nimrud and Pergamum (in Asia Minor) (Brophy, 2007; Murray, 2013).

2.8.2 Western context

While the literacy tradition in India and China evolved, the Mid Eastern and European environment resulted in the foundation of libraries, such as the personal collections of Aristotle in Greece, the ancient Alexander Library and the monastic libraries of Europe (Krasner-Khait, 2007). The clay tablets unearthed in Mesopotamia, papyrus scrolls of Amarna and Thebes, Assyrian King Ashurbanipal's (625-587 BC) royal collections of 30,000 Phoenician and hieroglyphic terracotta-tablets and the parchment theological manuscripts of the numerous monasteries around Europe, are testaments to the emergence of exclusive private libraries, which evolved into public repositories of knowledge. These are inevitably, the forerunners of the library system of the current era (Murray, 2013).

The early ancient tablet rich collections were ceaselessly enriched by their rulers who sent scribes across various parts of the kingdom with the task of copying foreign texts for inclusion in the royal library. Royal patronage enhanced the scholars to an eminent position in the ancient societies. This ancient era facilitated the growth of learning. The culture of learning, libraries writing and books flourished in Greece around 600 BC, with Government sponsored public and specialist libraries in medicine, science and philosophy and private libraries of the wealth (Murray, 2013)

2.8.3 Free and democratic spaces

Greek philosophers, such as Aristotle, were famed for their personal collection and the Greek decree for a repository of trustworthy collections underpin the concept of modern day library.

The origins of the Great Alexander public library are steeped in multiculturalism due to the cross boundary dominance of the Greek and Roman Empires, founded by King Ptolemy 1, in 300 BC, it held collections from around the world for scholars of the period. Incidentally, evidence shows that, the Alexander Library was closely connected to the Greek precedents and that Aristotle's disciple Demetrius mooted the idea of a universal public library with collections from around the world to the ruler of Egypt. The targeted total collection of half a million papyrus scrolls consisted of multilingual collections which comprised of Latin, Hebrew, Persian, Egyptian, Sanskrit and Buddhist texts. Modes of

gathering these collections (papyrus or leather scrolls) included edicts to political sovereigns, texts purchases from markets in port cities, confiscation from new arrivals, and barter trade of silver for Greek original manuscripts of Sophocles and Euripides. Authentic scholars wrote the originals, scribes wrote copies in the writing chamber (scriptorium) produced the scriptoria (similar to modern day reprints. Hand copied into multiple copies they were put for sale by book dealers. Funded by the royal treasury, the chief librarian and a team of staff, the Alexander public library set the precedent for Government funded public library model for the world (Brophy, 2007; Murray, 2013).

The library became a beacon of scholarship, political dominance and commercial superiority (Krasner-Khait, 2007). The Alexander Library in its role as the most renowned centre for knowledge and learning set the yardstick for a measure of a nation's civilization and status. History shows that this pride of a nation was often the target of invading hordes, who inevitably set fire to libraries to assert their hegemony, as shown in the numerous attacks on the Great Alexander Library and even the Library of Congress (set fire by British forces in 1812) in the U.S. (Krasner-Khait, 2007).

The foundations and esteemed tradition for the future growth of libraries were, thus, established, notwithstanding, the roots of Western academic culture were seeded in the Alexander Library. Along with this repository of knowledge, came honour and respect for the head librarians and its associates (philosophers, scholars, scientists, teachers, copyists, pages, scribes and even language specialists).

2.8.4 Origins of multilingual collections

Cross border implications super-ceded ethnicity, language and religion. Conquests, destruction and pillage of treasures were characteristically cross-cultural, one notable example, is the bounty of Aristotle's collections landed in Rome. In matters of love and war, the library collections were highly sought after treasures of exchange (or tributes), Caesar in 48 BC transported enormous number of collections from the Alexander Library, with a dream to build a public library in Rome, it was subsequently compensated by Mark Anthony's gift of 200 000 scrolls presumably taken from the Pergamum library (Brophy, 2007; Krasner-Khait, 2007; Murray, 2013).

The most dominant contemporary power of that era, the Roman Empire aspired to emulate scholarly tradition and the library culture beyond Rome to their colonies such as Constantinople which thrived as centre for books and learning. Emulating the Alexander

Library, they established functionality enhanced public library concept around the second century with papyrus scrolls in Greek and Latin (and not in Italian) which were arranged along the walls and tables in the centre for scholars, a catalogue system with regular opening hours were introduced. The funding structure followed the Alexander model of obtaining finance from state sources (Brophy, 2007; Krasner-Khait, 2007; Murray, 2013).

2.8.5 Monasticism and the growth of libraries

Interestingly, the political dimension had an equally dynamic movement with its origins in the spread of Christianity. Adherence to the teachings of Christ, persecution or innate desire to live in isolation under rigid religious vows resulted in the rise of monasticism. The rise of Eastern monasticism in the deserts of Egypt was the forerunner for the monasteries of the West. Saint Anthony's disciple Saint Pachomius is recorded to have established a monastery in Upper Egypt around 232 (Bacchus, 1911; Fortescue, 1911). Self-driven and self-reliant, monasteries often located in unpopulated barren land, were centres of learning, reading and writing. Monks were assigned tasks to sustain the monastery, and reading and copying of theological works occupied a large portion of duties. Eastern Monastic libraries grew in numbers these encouraged inter library loans and promoted the writing of theological manuscripts. The rise of Christianity led to a tremendous increase in monasteries all over Europe. Theological collections, writing and manufacture of multiple copies resulted in monastery libraries, and sponsorship of schools and universities. To a large extent, the Monasticism contributed considerably to the evolution of Western academic and scientific culture (Huddleston, 1911).

Constantinople had three libraries around, while Charlemagne had a large library in the 8th Century, Italy was famed for its aristocratic collections and the Vatican Library opened in 1400. University libraries mushroomed in the U.K. and Europe along with the private libraries of nobles and the wealthy.

2.8.6 Asian context

The discussion above illustrates that the concept of the formal library is primarily an outcome of Western civilisation. This study investigated the role of the public library in a multicultural focus and a post-colonial background based on principles of the British public

library system. The next section briefly recounts the literary aspects of the Asian context, particularly as some of the populations involved in this study are of Asian origin.

The ancient religions of the East, namely, Vedic Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Shamanism were forerunners of the oral and written tradition. Palm leaves, parchment and later paper were used in theological texts. Monastic culture was steeped in spiritual discipline, numerous monasteries and scholarly activities in the remote mountains and caves of South and East Asia, particularly in India, Tibet, China and Korea. Tibetan monastic culture in the Himalayas is evident even today (Murray, 2013). Inadvertently, these monasteries emerged as early repositories of knowledge, and the ancient scriptures described as whisperings of god to the spiritual aspirant, to the present day, comprise of chants, hymns, and prayers, which are prevalent in mosques, ashrams, temples and monasteries. In addition, discoveries of knowledge about astronomy, sciences, medicine, agriculture, mathematics and the arts by the monastic scholars of Asia were forerunners to modern learning and teaching content (Murray, 2013). Missionaries from China travelled to the ancient libraries such as the famous Nalanda University in Bihar in the sixth century A.D. It held a large collection of manuscripts. The early ancient universities, such as Taxila and Vikramashila, are well known for their collections (Wani, 2008).

In the Asian nations, the post classical era led to the advances in literacy, education and printing processes. Early libraries were initiated by royalty, the rich capitalists and philanthropists who contributed towards the library movement. In India, patronage of the Indian kings and the rich resulted in the collection of manuscripts and books, whilst scholars were favoured and encouraged by the rulers to promote literacy and the arts (Wani, 2008). The Maharaja Sawai Man Singh of Jaipur, Maharaja Ranjit Singh and the Maharaja of Tanjavar who established the famous Saraswati Mahal Library in 17th century A.D are a few examples of the contribution of the Indian kings to the interest in libraries. However, it must be noted these early centres of learning provided limited access to the public.

The library saw further development with the arrival of the Muslim and British invaders. In the 13th Century, Muslim rulers such as Emperor Babur, Humayun, and Akbar were patrons of art and literature thus they not only built magnificent buildings for libraries, but they also promoted scholars as librarians. The speed of library development increased in the early nineteenth century, due to British influence. Public libraries were established in the main towns of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay. The public library in Calcutta which was established in 1835, eventually became the national library of India. During this period,

subscription libraries based on the British style were established in many towns of India. The 20th Century heralded the growth of public libraries all over India with the passing of the Imperial Library Act of 1902 (Patel & Kumar, 2001; Wani, 2008).

The highly evolved culture in China had a similar history to the development of libraries as other parts of the world in that the original collections resided with the rich, educated, and leadership classes. These collections were owned and accessed by private individuals, official libraries, college libraries and monastery repositories. These ancient repositories of knowledge functioned in close resemblance to the operation of a library with activities such as acquisition, classification, cataloguing, lending and preserving the collections. The ancient “book storage buildings” evolved with the influence of Chinese intellectuals who wanted to introduce social, political and educational reforms based on Western institutions between 1840 and 1912. Guangying Zheng (1842-1922) and other reformers realised the need for streamlining the education system and in the 1860s, suggested the establishment of a national library system (Liao, 2008). Around the same period, Youwei Kang (1858-1927) and Qichao Liang (1873-1929) advocated for the Western library model (Liao, 2006). At the time, Western missionaries contributed significantly to the establishment of libraries in China. As a result of the reformist fervour, the first Chinese modern library called Shanghai Xujiahui Tu Shu Guan was established by Catholic Christian community in Xujiahui district, Shanghai in 1847. In 1901, the first formal public library was established in Anhui province. This led to a rapid increase in the number of libraries in China during the Qing dynasty, as a result, in 1910 a library law was passed. The ancient term of “book storage buildings” reference to libraries was finally changed officially to the term libraries, along with it were the introduction of laws, rules and policies for the management of these libraries (Gong, 2011.; Liao, 2006).

The establishment of the Republic of China in 1912 heralded an increase in the number of public libraries to about 2492 by 1936 (Yi, 2013). Indeed there was New Library Movement which promoted the library as a social institution. Inevitably, there was a simultaneous need to establish schools of library science, with the first being established in 1920 by an American named Mary Elizabeth Wood. As early as 1918, China was welcomed the introduction of library associations which further enhanced the professional quality of the library system.

The 1949 shifts in political power and the Cultural Revolution hampered the progress of libraries, but with the opening of China to the modern world has seen the rapid increase in library activity. The 2005, 21st Century New Library Movement (Yi, 2013, p. 4) has great

ambitions of closing the digital divide, promoting equity of access and building links between the library and society. Even from as early as 1912 the library system in China was seen as “a social institution” and one of “the most important institutions of social education” (Gong, 2011., p. 3), an observation which aligns closely with the modern context of this thesis and the public library environment in Western Australia.

2.9 Public libraries

Beyond the early libraries which were predominately privately owned or monastic scriptoriums, public libraries began to appear as state sponsored entities, allowing (for the most part) members of the general public access to large collections of books and other texts. The following sections will look at some the developments of public libraries and their eventual introduction of multilingual collections to support increasingly diverse community.

The libraries of the pre Christian era, evolved throughout civilisation, they were destroyed repeatedly nevertheless literacy, interest in learning and the search for knowledge sustained this repository of knowledge. These early repositories of knowledge and learning were embraced by nation states as symbols of prestige, civilisation and economic status. The evolution of the libraries from the ancient world of the Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek and Roman eras led to the rise of the Byzantine, Moslem, Monastic, in the Medieval period. The Renaissance and the invention of printing press heralded university libraries, and national and state libraries (Krasner-Khait, 2007; Malone, 2000).

Private collections of royalty, popes and monasteries, wealthy aristocrats and scholars, doctors (for example, London physician, Dr. Hans Sloane), lawyers, bankers and merchant princes were transformed into libraries. Many of these collections contributed to the establishment of national libraries (Lerner, 1999). For example the Pope’s collections formed the greater part of the Bibliotheca Vaticana. From early as Charlemagne, kings of France in the tradition of other monarchs, used their powers to amass extensive collections for education of their families and their statesmen, these evolved into the Bibliotheque Nationale de France. King George’s 11, Royal Library was presented to the British Museum in 1759. Its notable librarian, Antonio Panizzi, holding the title Keeper of Printed Books built a multi-lingual collection, with the ambition to add every book, “that was printed either by Englishmen or in English or relating to England”, In addition to raising the status of the British Museum to “the best library of each language outside the native country of that language” (Lerner, 1999, p.77-78).

The multi-lingual rich collections in the British Museum were accessed by eminent international users, such as, Karl Marx, Vladimir Illyich Lenin and others who appreciated the ease of access and the extensive collections not found in their own nations' libraries. Besides, they appreciated the user-friendly services in comparison to other national libraries where they encountered rigid, unfriendly red tape to borrow or access a text.

The nations' diplomats, missionaries, traders and travellers contributed to the collections. This initial process of evolution from private into public libraries was a normal trend as nationhood and national pride increased in the global scene. This moment in history heralded the preservation of national history with objectives of building social, political and religious views among the citizens of the nation (social capital) (Lerner, 1999).

The first public libraries, it must be acknowledged, were national libraries and access to all referred mostly to the literate and wealthy rather than the general masses (Harris, 1995; Lerner, 1998, 1999). These national libraries facilitated the establishment of municipal or suburban public libraries. Early efforts in Europe, around the 1830, were challenged by lack of space for libraries and absence of a reading culture by the wider community.

Thus, patronage of public libraries by national governments meant alignment to political and religious beliefs of the day be it totalitarian or democratic, this institution was an effective channel for nation building goals. As a result, the public library was utilized in a prescriptive or democratic dissemination in line with its government's ideology at the time (Harris, 1995).

2.9.1 Europe and United Kingdom

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press revolutionized the mode of written texts from hand copied documents into mass produced, printed books, transforming knowledge creation, storage and access. The Renaissance, Monastic schools and universities, growth of state schools and universities, the impact of printing and personal collections opened the pathways for growth of learning and libraries in the 1600s and 1700s. The fervour for knowledge patronised by national and state governments led the establishment of national and state libraries.

Of all the libraries of modern Europe, the most outstanding have been the national libraries, those rapidly growing collections dedicated to preserving every book and manuscript which in any way related to the national heritage...

they benefitted from the spirit of nationalism and often survived and even flourished while other libraries suffered in wars or depression...they had the permanency and economic security, if not generous budgets and well trained staffs (Harris, 1995, p.133).

Collections by royalty and those in monasteries played a crucial role in the development of public libraries in Britain. Closure of monasteries (16th Century) meant loss of monastic libraries. In the U.K., the modern concept of public libraries evolved from parochial libraries, social libraries and the circulating libraries. Parochial libraries in the 17th Century served the parishes. Circulating rental libraries were commercial in concept, where a fee was for loans (or for rent) and interestingly, they grew in popularity with many mushrooming in the larger towns of the U.K. As they had their roots in commercial motives, they were owned by booksellers who published, printed and rented the books hence it was not surprising that altruistic interests were limited as the collections targeted the masses with cheap paperbacks (Harris, 1995). In the 18th Century, reading society or lyceum, functioned as subscription libraries and gradually these groups purchased their own premises and these evolved into the London Library (1841), Leeds Library, and Liverpool Lyceum.

One of the earliest public libraries in the U.K was the London's Guild Hall which opened in 1425 (Murison, 1971). The historical Library Act of 1850 led to the growth of public libraries in U.K. Mechanics institutes were established as vocational libraries for tradesmen and artisans such as, the Birmingham Artisan's Library in 1795. The Glasgow Mechanics Institute established in 1823 was noted for its role as a library as well as its pioneering efforts at conducting classes, which eventually led to its growth of an educational institution. There were around 700 of these libraries in the 1850s and not surprisingly the Public Libraries Act of 1850 absorbed these libraries into the British public library system. Patronage by the British parliament sealed the fate of public libraries in the U.K., the Committee on Public Libraries was appointed in 1847 to establish free public libraries throughout the nation (Harris, 1995). This vital role of the British parliament was the forerunner of public library concept across the world to all its colonies, including Australia which is the focus of the present research project. While the original concept of libraries professed interest in multilingual collections which attracted a multicultural clientele, this research project aims to investigate availability of inclusive library services in the context of the local demography in metropolitan Perth.

France's national library had its origins in 1367, whilst Germany opened its library in 1661, while Spain and Portugal establishing their libraries in 1711 and 1796 respectively. France's national library named as *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* had its origins around 1367, and as early as 1537 received the "right of deposit" ensuring a copy of every book published in France for its collections. The French Revolution added to collections of the library by confiscation of royal collections of fleeing royalty and aristocrats. These nation sponsored libraries were in their national lingua as they catered mostly for the local lingua, however, foreign languages collections such as Latin and Greek Hebrew, Syriac, Coptic, Turkish, Persian, Greek and Arabic collections were also included for example in the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* (Harris, 1995). Harris (1995) recounts the similar trends as in the past, where armies of conquering nations (for example Napoleonic Wars) looted collections of other parts of Europe. Germany opened its library in 1661, while Spain and Portugal established their libraries in 1711 and 1796 respectively.

These early accounts cement the position of public libraries in the Western context, leading to the public system as we currently know it in the modern era. The thirst for knowledge is in alignment with the inherent quest for enhancing one's livelihood. Unavoidably, the information age facilitates a knowledge rich era, it shapes change, affects modes of communication, improves networks among social groups, and opens channels for human movement more than ever before. The constant waves of migrants had formidable consequences on the long established tradition of monolingual public and state libraries in Europe and U.S.

2.9.2 United States and the public library EAL service

The discussion above outlines the rise of the Western academic tradition developed along with the establishment of public and state libraries in Europe, the U.S., Canada and much later in Australia. Unavoidably, these monolingual libraries represented values of the dominant ethnic demography and were largely products of democratic governments and the rise of intellectual freedom. Managed by members of the dominant population, the traditional libraries evolved as esteemed centres of knowledge and learning. The traditional institution of the library, confronted with an influx of migrants, was destined for dramatic changes. In its infancy, the struggle for inclusive public library services were fraught with long embedded values, traditions, perspectives on racism, religious intolerance, ethnic prejudices and a predominantly intractable (*rigid, inflexible*) profession (Malone, 2000).

In the U.S., libraries had their beginnings in the 1600s and 1700s but the concept of public libraries grew with free education and arrival of large numbers of migrants throughout the 19th century. The public library in Peterborough, New Hampshire (established in 1833) is acclaimed as the first public library in the U.S. (Malone, 2000). Notably, Andrew Carnegie was responsible for the establishment of over 1700 public libraries in the U.S. between 1881 - 1919 (Krasner-Khait, 2007; Malone, 2000).

Private collections set the precedent for the rise of libraries as evidenced by the 1870 United States Census figures, which recorded a total of 107,637 private libraries, while public libraries numbers were about 3000 by 1913 (Harris, 1995).

Pioneering events in the evolution of American libraries resulted with lasting impact on the library culture around the world. One notable contribution was the emergence of the Library of Congress Classification, which was devised to accommodate the proliferation of specialized subject areas and the professionalization of academic processes (Lerner, 1998). Equally, significant is the contribution of a librarian from Amherst, New York, named Dewey who published his (Dewey) Decimal Classification in 1876, based on numerical codes which defined the subject areas and his subsequent establishment of the library periodical publication called the Library Journal (Lerner, 1998). The formation of the American Library Association in 1876 is another notable precedent for the library tradition (Harris, 1995). The American Library Association was the forerunner of the organizational structure of the library profession and a platform for public forum on library matters

In the U.S., research shows that early attempts to introduce inclusive library services commenced in the context of African Americans. The foundations of multicultural library services of today, are rooted in the long struggles and challenges against what could be perceived as deep seated racist policies and practices in the library system. Malone (2000) shows that it was as late as 1960s, that the first non-White (American African) staff members was employed in a public library, followed later by a Puerto Rican employee in the New York public library. Soon multicultural library services expanded to more Puerto Ricans, migrants from West Indies and South American region. While these early immigrants set the precedent for inclusive services, soon ship loads of arrivals from Poland, Italy, Greece, Germany and Russia led to the establishment of the American Library Association's (ALA's) Committee on Work with Foreign Born (McMullen, as cited in Malone, 2000).

This set the stage for the evolution of inclusive library services with librarians working behind the counter as front line services providers, drawing attention to the importance of employing ethnic staff as an effort to embrace diversity in clientele, including

library services that met the information needs of the new immigrants. Additionally, public library staff interaction with library users from ethnic neighbourhoods (for example, Polish) led to cross cultural interaction, encouraged clients' input on collections, besides impacting the staff profiles and library programmes and services (Drzewieniecki & Drzewieniecki-Abugattas, as cited in Malone, 2000). The new arrivals had considerable influence to impart knowledge about their unique culture and even educated the American librarians to appreciate their ethnic culture, resulting in programmes and resources to information needs of their community (Beck, as cited in Malone, 2000).

The American history on the evolution of multicultural library services paid a heavy toll. Bigotry had strong consequences, when a white American librarian was shot for disapproval of racism and views on intellectual freedom (Robbins, as cited in Malone, 2000). Even the dominant population paid its price in the pioneering days of initiating multicultural services, with parties on both sides fighting for equality universal access to education and information. The research on the American public library experience in the context of specialist services to immigrants recounts the challenges and agents of change, with the literature review detailing numerous studies conducted in the U.S. in terms of library services to migrants. Such literature provided valuable context and background to the current study into public library services to migrants in metropolitan Perth, where the demography is currently experiencing a significant influx of migrants, in a similar vein as in the U.S. 100 years ago (Molz, 1985; Walley & Davinson, 1976). While the numbers of immigrants are comparatively smaller than the American figures, the documentary evidence offers insights about multicultural information needs and the public library environment evolving to meet these needs.

Furthermore, the research draws attention to the role of stakeholders, whose top down hierarchy of politician, educator, administrator down to the actual service providers, is a considerable shortcoming for driving change. This top-down approach can substantially limit the effectiveness of equitable library systems, dominated as they are by those from an English speaking background, and not being engaged with the ethnically diverse users of the library. In general, such stakeholders are unaware of the achievements of the agents of change, namely, the librarians at the service counters who managed the libraries' collections and services. Thus, the role of stakeholders as drivers for change is vital for any research investigation into public libraries and changes to services provision, with such changes relying more on those far removed from the public library itself, such as those residing at the federal and state levels of government.

If lessons on multicultural public library services are emulated, the present research investigation needs to heed a salient point about library system in the U.S. (Laughlin & Latrobe, 1992; Molz, 1985; Smallwood & Becnel, 2012; Walley & Davinson, 1976). Malone (2000) reiterates that the U.S. multicultural library tradition symbolised the stifling of the dominant cultures' power over ethnic minorities and in some instances, these groups turned the libraries around to serve their motives. These strong views held by Malone and other authors who contextualise their work in the library field in terms of power relationships are not the views that drive the current study. The work of Malone and others is extremely relevant in terms of describing the evolution of multicultural library services, and provides models for consideration for this current study. The documented literature above illustrates the need for the present investigation to go beyond ethnic library collections and ethnic staff, it provokes thought about ethnic access, encourages reflections about users and those who avoided the library, and details of location and timing of the library also are vital (Malone, 2000). The pioneers of the multicultural public library services in the U.S. set the precedent for others to emulate and even improve, when U.K., Canada, Europe and Australia welcomed large scale immigrants arrivals/waves into their communities. The timing and location for the current study provides a fertile research ground to examine how the public library environment in metropolitan Perth is catering for an influx of new migrants and their information, communication and social interaction needs.

2.9.3 Public libraries and Australia

The First Fleet introduced books and the printing press to the Australian continent. The numerous private collections of individuals in Greece, Italy, the USA and the U.K. contributed to the establishment of libraries, similarly, personal collections of books on law, religion, science and navigation instilled the idea of formal libraries around 1820s and 1830s (Biskup, Goodman, & Balnaves, 1988).

While the 1820s heralded the subscription libraries, the 1830s welcomed the establishment of Mechanics Institutes which were also known as Schools of Art or Literary Institutes which catered for the working class by offering lectures on their work, loans of books from its library related to their work and thus enhanced their knowledge on relevant topics (Webb, 1995).

Australia 's first was Van Diemen's Land Mechanics' Institute in Hobart, Tasmania, opened in 1827, which soon led to about 1000 Mechanics Institute by the year 1900 around the towns and country areas of the nation. These Mechanics Institutes were financed by the colonial government, in addition to the provision of the land for the buildings. Due to the support of the government, these Mechanics libraries infrastructures became a centre for community cultural activities. In Western Australia, the first notable library of size was the Swan River Mechanics Institute established in 1951 (Biskup et al., 1988; Clyde & Sharman, 1990).

Mechanics Institutes evolved as municipal and central libraries, the latter became the State Library in each state in Australia (Biskup et al., 1988) and were "Australia's first civic centres, and their libraries and reading rooms performed an important cultural function" (Biskup et al., 1988, p. 19). The Public Libraries Act of 1850 passed in the British parliament set the impetus for establishment of free public libraries in the U.K. The interest in establishing public libraries had its impact on Australia, the first public library was established in Melbourne, Victoria in 1853 which is now the State Library of Victoria. Next, the New South Wales Government established the free public libraries in 1869 by taking over a subscription library, this was the forerunner of the State Library of New South Wales. The New South Wales promoted the public library concept through the 1935 Free Library Movement. In 1896, the Queensland government established the Brisbane Public Library, this library was based on the private collections of Honourable Justice George Rogers Harding (Biskup et al., 1988).

In Western Australia, Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations in 1886 allocated 3000 pounds for a public library. Even though the foundation stone for the library was laid on St George's Terrace in 1887, the Public Library of Western Australia was realised in 1897 at its present location in James Street. For the interim period the Victoria Public Library was established in temporary premises in 26th January 1889 and its Chief Librarian was James Sykes Battye.

In the year 1951, the Library Board of Western Australia Act was passed. The aim of the 1951 Act was to formalise the opening and supervision of public libraries in Western Australia by the Local Government Authorities. Thus the Library Board established a state wide public library system with Francis Aubie Sharr as the first State Librarian. Although the Library Board failed to take control of the Public Library of Western Australia due to Battye's resistance, the Board gained control after his passing in 1954 and renamed it as the

State Library of Western Australia in 1956. J.S. Battye Library of West Australian History and State Archives commemorates Battye's contribution to the state's public library system (Clyde & Sharman, 1990).

2.10 Public libraries and social capital

The public library system as an institution for the promotion of knowledge is ideal for generating social capital due to its engagement with its local residents. The traditional public libraries are embarking on inclusive and diverse services which spontaneously generate collective social capital for its local community.

Migration and national events seem to shape these tendencies for enhancing local community collective trust and mutual respect. The increasing numbers of non-English speaking migrants into the U.S. in the 19th and 20th century generated the demand for more extensive engagement between ethnic communities and public libraries. These historical movements of people were vital in shaping the community building role of their local libraries. Figure 2-3 illustrates some of the key migration events from the last two centuries and the outcome they have had on the destination countries in the context of public libraries.

Origin	Destination	Timeframe	Outcome
Europe	U.S.	1850's onwards	Shaped Library Policy and Staffing
Europe	Australia (Eastern States)	1950's onwards	Multicultural Library Policies
Asia Middle East Africa	Western Australia	2000's	EAL Services in WA Public Libraries (this study)

Figure 2-3: Historical movements of peoples - origins and destinations

Additionally, the tragic events of 9 September 2001 re-awakened the stark reality of the multi-ethnic presence and its attendant challenges and outcomes, which accelerated (rather than widened the cultural divide) the spirit of inclusion and mutual respect in the 21st century (Kranich, 2001). In the light of unforeseen national events including natural disasters such as cyclone Sandy, the public libraries functioned as an all-purpose community centre by remaining open, providing shelter, Internet connection, phone banking service, disaster

updates and information on aid from charitable organisations and government agencies. Kranich, (2001) asserts that

Instead of seeing their efforts as “library building”, our traditional approach, librarians are beginning to refocus their vision to the perspective that we are creating “social capital”. We still have to learn how to articulate the importance of that role and what it means to the community (Kranich, 2001, p. 40).

Public libraries as strategic infrastructures hold the potential for creating social capital. Social capital literature focuses on two aspects, namely, a society-centred and an institution centred perspective (Hildreth, 2012; Varheim, 2007). The key element, of interest to the present study, relates to the generation of social capital for community building objectives, with social capital being seen as key to sustainable community building. Hillenbrand (2005a) shows that, “community capacity building is intimately linked with development of social capital in communities” (p. 55).

The scope of capacity building involves individuals, families, community groups and their acquisition of competencies, computer and language literacies, application of tools, and the ability to take advantage of resources and services of the library for self-empowerment. Increasingly, traditional public libraries are embracing a “social and community development role” (p. 56), a trend that adds an intrinsic dimension to a library’s numerous contributions. Putnam (1993) demonstrates the essence of social capital, defining it as, “an accumulated stock of networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate co-ordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (p. 35).

Distinct from the concept of human capital which is the accumulated asset of individuals, social capital reflects the collective micro and macro assets of trust, community networks and interactions and collaborations of a community (Svendsen, 2013). The most commonly accepted concepts of social, bonding and bridging capital relate closely to the public library’s many functions with Svendsen (2013) describing the role below.

Libraries are, however, also, important breeding grounds for social capital, including three important types: **bonding** in the form of exclusive, intra-group networks based on strong ties such as family or friends with whom you meet regularly; **bridging** in the form of inclusive, inter-group networks based on weak ties such as business connections or people you meet with in the local soccer club; and **institutional** in the

form of collaborative networks comprising both public institutions and voluntary associations in the local area such as the community library working together with, among others, the local art association, the pensioners' association and the local school. Hence, we may see public libraries as important generators of 'full-scale' social capital including all three types of social capital (Svendsen, 2013, p. 53).

According to a number of authors (Cox, Swinbourne, Pip, & Laing, 2000), the accumulation of social capital from the democratic values operating in the institution of library are conducive for diverse interactions, which impart a sense of inclusion in the community, besides, it promotes attributes of equity and weaves a cohesive energy, which is a holistic extemporaneous intangible outcome. Coleman describes social capital as an extension of financial capital, physical capital and human capital, nevertheless, since it is embedded human interaction it has its own unique qualities (Coleman, 1988). Thus, the collective wealth of a community defines its social capital.

Harvard University's political scientist, Putnam (2000) highlights dangers of community isolation after the 1960s, whereby generalised "civic disengagement and social disconnection" (p. 231) result in decline in civic participation citing the reduction of social interaction in churches, union halls, social clubs and committees. Putnam demonstrated that past generation larger numbers voted, were more aware of national matters, and displayed concern for the welfare of the common good of the community. In contrast, the newer generation, were less socially engaged and more inclined towards privatised lifestyles and were more alienated from the political system.

The social engagement akin to one in the public library culture, when, leveraged to enhance community interaction and communication is founded on Putnam's precept:

Internally, associations and less formal networks of civic engagement instil in their members habits of cooperation and public spiritedness, as well as, practical skills necessary to partake in public life (Putnam, 2000, p. 338).

Individual interests and accumulation material wealth superseded the common good, partly due to globalization, television, technology, media influences and emergence of mega-corporations it deconstructed social networks and interpersonal engagements. The present research project aims to re-visit the human element of civic awareness and concern for the welfare of all through the neutral space of the local public library. The aim of investigating

the community building role of the public library is to identify channels for heightened social engagement. Optimising the infrastructure and its accompanying facilities, resources, personnel and universal values of equity and inclusion, the library space strategically offers possibilities for generation of social capital for its local residents. In alignment with current rise of activists movements, the public library is positioned to re define its services and programmes to generate social capital for its citizens (Andreas, 2009; Andreas, Sven, & Eisaku, 2008; Ferguson, 2012; Gong, Japzon, & Chen, 2008; Hillenbrand, 2005b; Johnson, 2010a, 2010b, 2012).

The impact of mushrooming activists groups seem to shape human rights and values through the voice of community groups, journalists, academics and even politicians. Counter trends, such as anti-nuclear activists, anti-poverty campaigns, Greenpeace, gay rights, environmental groups and refugee groups mobilise and lobby for change, significantly succeed in shaping policy (Boggs, 2001). These community organisations are agents of social change for greater good of all. Putnam's research on individualistic trends among communities combined with Boggs' reference to the voice of activist cultures seemed to illustrate potential in recognising the value in generating social capital. Putnam asserts the need for concerted community interaction, the current environment of increasing diversity, makes a compelling case to heed these findings. Whilst not all of these authors agree with each other on the scale of social engagement, individualistic versus group voice, it would seem that they do agree that social capital is a vital aspect of a modern, burgeoning society. This thesis takes this chain of thought into the community building aspects of the modern public library to overcome the isolation that can be experienced by newly arrived immigrants.

2.11 Conclusion

The literature examined in this chapter has looked at the public library system in WA and the eastern states of Australia, along with examples of international best practice in terms of EAL service provision. The history and evolution of the public library as we currently know it was examined, as was examples of multilingual collections coming to public libraries, particularly in Europe and the U.S. Literature in regards to conducting research with EAL participants was also presented in terms of what Charmaz (2008) defines as "historical, social, economic locations and cultural understandings" (p. 57) as background to the next

chapter on methodology, and the role of public libraries as builders of social capital was examined in detail.

A recurring theme identified in this literature, which reflects findings later in this thesis, is that public libraries have, in both modern and past times, risen to meet the requirements of the societies they serve, and are not only repositories of books and printed materials. They have been and can be, places of learning, training and community building.

Chapter 3

Research Methods

In the process of transmission and transformation of culture, the subjective consists in the meanings, that are held and communicated by individuals and groups. The objective consists in social practices ordered across time and space. In practical terms, a combination of research approaches, focusing on the subjective and the objective, can result in optimal results (Williamson, 2002, p. 71)

3.0 Overview

A combination of qualitative and quantitative research Methods were employed for the exploratory investigation of public library services for EAL users in the Perth metropolitan area, WA. Since no current statistical information or empirical data appears to be available in this specific topic area, it is important, to first establish the current ‘state of play’ in service delivery for EAL speakers in Perth, WA. To establish this state of play, members of the EAL community were interviewed as to their perceptions of public library service delivery, whilst a web survey was conducted with a number of public libraries in order to ascertain their views as service providers. Analysis of the data retrieved from these qualitative and quantitative approaches informed the outcomes of this research.

3.1 Rationale for mixed methods approach

Research on the phenomenology displays dimensions of objectivity and subjectivity which are described as positivism and interpretivism. While the former relies on rational empirical instruments, the latter dwells on the fact that there is no objective reality with the claim that reality is socially constructed (Al-Habil, 2011).

Positivism as a philosophical concept has its origins to the French thinker Auguste Comte (1798–1857) who “rejected the theological and metaphysical explanations of human behavior in favor of scientific ones” (White, 1999). White (1999) elaborates that positivism was an outcome of the Enlightenment era where logical reasoning based on scientific and empirical facts superseded practices of mysticism, spiritualism, and traditionalism for social progress. Indeed objectivity supersedes subjectivity! Findings based on neutral, value free, scientific and objective methodologies. Reality is based on empirical facts and not on assumptions arrived through subjective value laden processes of qualitative analysis.

Positivism lends an objective foundation to the social sciences of socio-economics and politics. Data analysis involves associations among variables in a cause and effect relationships. The objective researcher formulates hypotheses which are tested from the quantitative data to predict socio-economic issues (White, 1999).

Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls and Ormston (2014) state that theories on interpretivism, qualitative methodology and research on the human phenomena are related to analysis of language, hermeneutics and real life experiences. The spoken descriptions emerge as reality of participants' background, experiences, challenges, values and expectations. The researcher is positioned to grasp meanings from the participants' point of view during the interview and capture the reality of the particular social phenomena that is investigated (White, 1999).

The mixed method adopted for this investigation, thus, optimises research framework by combining concepts embedded in positivism and interpretivism. The quantitative data provides a scientific and objective dimension to the investigation. On the other hand, the constructivist interpretivist qualitative data obtained from utterances in a social context disclose the subjective reality which is unique to the circumstances.

The rationale for research design using mixed methods is in contrast to conventional empiricism and scientific method. The mixed method approach has been used by previous research in public service provision, where Olsen (2004) refers to studies by Bolton (2003) and Bain, Bunzel, Mulvey, Hyman, and Taylor (2000) to show research in public service provision, which deals heavily with people skills, provides more in-depth data when qualitative approaches are included in the research design. The case for using a mixed method approach and a variety of data collection techniques in the study is also supported by the cross-cultural nature of the public library research, which aimed to investigate services to EAL groups who originated from numerous ethnic backgrounds. Karahanna, Evaristo and Srite (2002), maintain that successful cross-cultural studies require associations among variables, which have cross-cultural equivalent research instruments, appropriate cross cultural data collection options, and cross cultural respondents.

The public library sector is confronted with revolutionary challenges with technological advancements, digitisation and changes in the demography of client populations. These global changes across nations advocate a case for a shift from a predominantly empirical research design to the increased inclusion of qualitative

methodology, so that stories are captured rather than numbers. Changes in the demographic profile of public library users, demands research techniques that measure equity in human rights and social justice (Denzin, 2010).

These subjective variables are likely to be more accurately evaluated with the application of equally subjective tools of measurement. The unique characteristics of the public library sector justify triangulated qualitative-quantitative research design. Using a Mixed Methods approach allows for the collection of empirical data as well as qualitative data by engaging:

The principle of inclusion has a democratic dimension, ensuring that all relevant voices are heard. The principle of dialogue insists that stakeholders be involved in the ‘give and take’ of conversations involving how and why certain things work and ought to work. Critical dialogue involves bringing expert knowledge to bear on a situation (Denzin, 2010, p.423).

Using a range of research methods and data collection techniques allowed for ‘triangulation’ or ‘the combination of methodologies’ where each section of the investigation provides support and enlightenment for other sections (Brannen, 1992, 2005; Burgess, 1994; Jick, 1979; Morse, 2009). Jick in particular demonstrated that triangulation:

Can also capture a more complete, holistic, and contextual portrayal of the unit(s) under study. That is, beyond the analysis of overlapping variance, the use of multiple measures may also uncover some unique variance which otherwise may have been neglected by single Methods. Triangulation may be used not only to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives, but also to enrich our understanding by allowing for, new or deeper dimensions to emerge (Jick, 1979, pp. 603-604).

Figure 3-1 illustrates the triangulation of approaches used in this research. Triangulation also ensured that sources and techniques which may have different biases and strengths can be complementary (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The proponents of triangulation maintain that using only a scientific method is too simplistic, fails to consider real feelings, construes social objects from a researcher’s perspective, and emphasise statistics rather than

gaining insights into the inherent subjective nature of community relationships (Sayer, 1999). The authors (Bryman, 1988; Denzin, 2010; Olsen, 2004) concede that researchers too, are social objects (human beings) and are socially and not always scientifically construed to claim objectivity in the selection of variables, the evaluation of findings and in the construction of relationships.

The triangulation of research methodologies followed that defined by Terrell (2012) Concurrent Triangulation Strategy, whereby collection of quantitative and qualitative data collection occurs simultaneously during the span of the investigation. The perspectives of library staff from the web survey and the interview respondents are weighed equably. The data are compared and integrated during the analysis to lend support to claims for the findings of the investigation. The level of convergence in the two sets of data varied according to variables, these variables often being related to the perceptions and even biases of the different participants. Identification and comparison of similar variables highlight perspectives of library staff and the EAL participants. Comparisons across the quantitative and qualitative data provide confirmation about issues from the service provider and service receiver perspectives, and in the context of this research, the integration of such data lead to the findings outlined in Chapter 6, including a diagrammatic representation of 'Identified perceptions of the expectation gap between Libraries and EAL clients'. The comparisons of staff and client data are positioned to highlight the differences in the two sets of responses which are likely indicators of gaps in the knowledge about the public library phenomena.

The use of different research methods and techniques is particularly valuable in this research which dealt with factors for the provision of EAL services via the public library system. The collection of empirical data about current service provision was used to inform the subsequent phases of this research, which used qualitative techniques to gather data from library professionals, para-professionals and non-professionals, as well as potential EAL library patrons. Combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies in this study provided the opportunity to obtain diverse viewpoints from those who provided the services (public libraries) and those who received the services (EAL speakers).

3.2 Research framework

In view of the previous discussion, a range of methods was used for the collection of data to investigate the research questions of this study. Quantitative data was collected in Phase One of the research using an anonymous Web based survey instrument. The Web

survey targeted staff in metropolitan Perth public libraries to ascertain current EAL services and any issues with service delivery.

A qualitative approach was used during Phase Two and Three of the data collection. The qualitative component utilised semi structured interviews of library personnel and EAL speakers. A diagram of the research framework is presented in Figure 3-1 below.

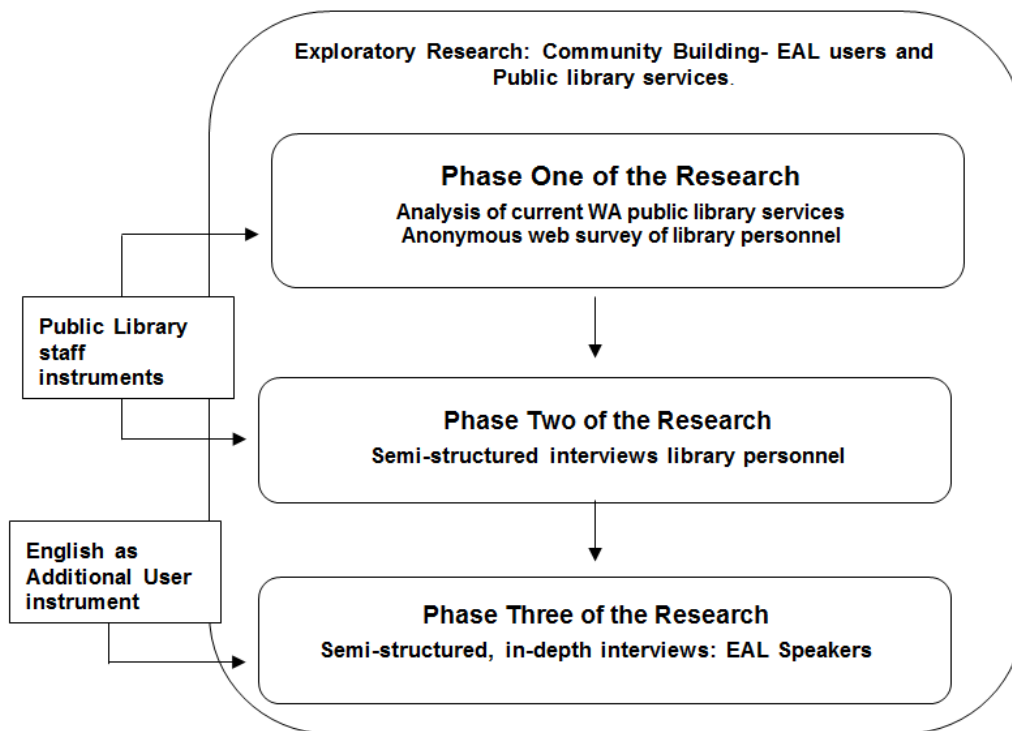


Figure 3-1: Mixed methods and research instruments

3.3 Data collection techniques

Phase One included a quantitative, anonymous web survey which gathered information from library professionals about EAL service provision, the availability of multilingual services and staff issues associated with providing information services to a range of culturally diverse ethnic groups. The web survey included mainly closed-questions, with some open-ended questions for participants to express their views, whilst adding some qualitative depth to the instrument.

Phase Two included semi-structured interviews with library professionals to investigate issues related to public library service provision for EAL users based on library staff (predominately librarian) experiences. These interviews were designed to obtain critical information from a range of staff involved in the provision of information services to EAL clients.

Phase Three used interviews with the EAL speakers to gain insights into their perspectives on information seeking needs and the role of the public library in their ethnic communities. The interviews followed a semi-structured format and observed a time limit for each session.

Appendices 1 – 6 contain the invitations to participate in the web survey, semi structured interviews, consent forms, semi-structured interviews questions.

3.4 Research design

3.4.1 Quantitative web survey

The web survey instrument used in this research is a descriptive and an exploratory instrument, as was delivered using the Qualtrics web survey software suite. Data collected from the web survey was collated and analysed using both the Qualtrics analysis tools and SPSS. The data was systematically and statistically analysed using the SPSS functionality within Qualtrics. The responses to the web survey by library staff were then summarised and analysed with a view to identifying the availability of services to EAL speakers, levels of service and the characteristics of these services. The responses are presented as descriptive data and findings in the quantitative research analysis in Chapter Five.

1. Responses were computer tabulated into percentages.
2. Responses were categorised into sections according to the structure of the web survey instrument.
3. Data was analysed using the SPSS function in Qualtrics and tables on variables investigated were included in the data analysis chapter according to the segments outlined in the questionnaire.
4. Descriptions and associations were formulated based on the research findings.
5. Conclusions on public library services to EAL speakers were drawn from the relationships displayed in the data (including relationships between EAL interview responses and library staff web survey responses).

6. The design of the instrument opted for the multi-point Likert scale. The Likert scale consists of a five-point scale. The participants registered their views and level of agreement with statements on the research topic on the five-point continuum. The five points in the Likert scale gauges the intensity of respondents' views on the issue embedded in the question. The five points range from "Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree or Disagree, Agree and Strongly Agree. The mid-point, namely "Neither Agree or Disagree" in the Likert scale is referred to as the "Neutral" response to a bipolar agreement-disagreement scale (Cook, Heath, Thompson, & Thompson, 2001; Croasmun & Ostrom, 2011; Hartley, 2014; Shulruf, Hattie, & Dixon, 2008).

The web survey instrument was divided into five sections;

Section one: Demographic information dealt with demographic information about public library, details about the library staff's role and qualifications.

Section two: Views on EAL and public library use

Section three: EAL public library user and diverse services

Section four: EAL public library services, technology & libraries as community spaces

Section five: Funding for EAL public library services

Each of the above sections of the survey seeks detailed information from a list of statements enclosed in a web questionnaire, which was emailed to the public libraries in metropolitan Perth, WA.

The web questions were formulated with focus on the research questions, specifically to seek information about library services to migrants, to gauge service providers' perspectives on issues related to non-English speaking clients, to identify demography information and funding. The actual sections of the survey and each of the questions and a rationale for their inclusion in the survey are elaborated below.

Section one – Demographic information

The questions in this section dealt with demographic information about the library.

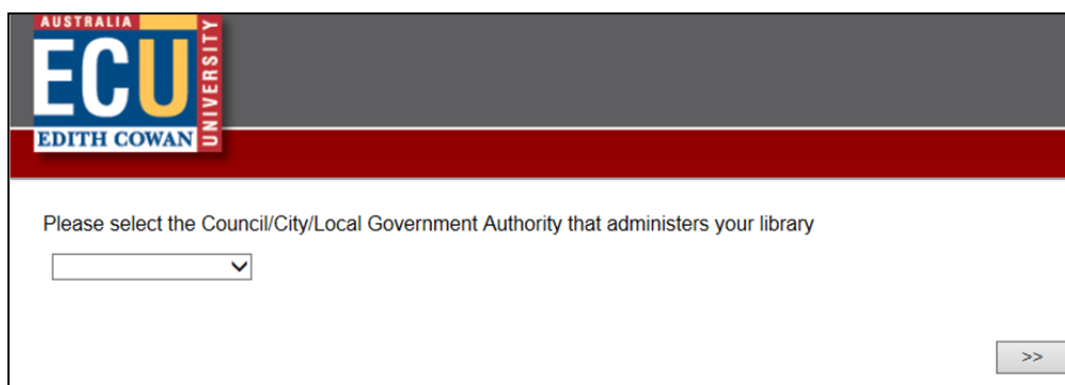


Figure 3-2: Local Government Authority (LGA) of public library

Section one of the survey focussed on the Local Government Authorities (LGA) responsible for the management of the particular library (Figure 3-2). There were twenty LGAs in the sample selected for the research investigation. Some LGAs had a number of suburbs under their management. The location of the public library contributes towards identifying the demography of the locality.

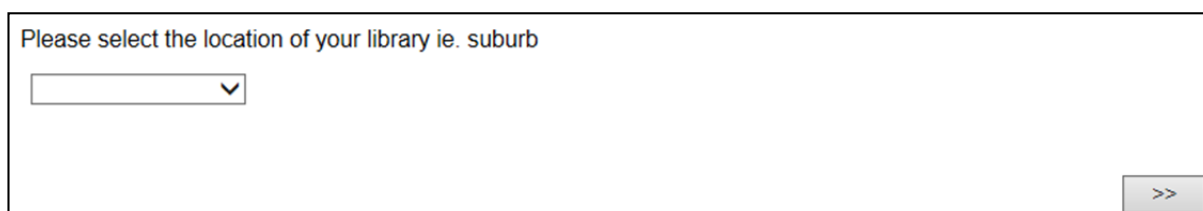


Figure 3-3: Suburb of the public library

Question 2 identified the suburb the public library is located in and is shown in Figure 3-3. A number of suburbs are governed by LGAs, with most suburbs in WA having their own local public library. This question identified the exact location of the public library and its accessibility to local residents. Thus, the two questions identified the LGA and the suburb of the public library, which were used to identify exact numbers of EAL speakers and their ethnicity from Australian Bureau of Statistics for the purposes of discussing population demographics for the libraries involved in this study. Suburbs with large numbers of EAL speakers were identified in this thesis.

Our library is:

- ☐ new (less than 2 years old)
- ☐ been recently refurbished (during the last 2 years)
- ☐ between 5 and 10 years old
- ☐ between 10 and 20 years old
- ☐ 20 years and older

Our library is:

- ☐ a branch library and part of a larger library system.
- ☐ the main library with a number of smaller libraries attached to it.
- ☐ a single library.

I am currently employed as:

- ☐ A librarian-in-charge (manager)
- ☐ A librarian
- ☐ A library Technician
- ☐ A library officer/clerk/Assistant
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Other

Figure 3-4: Library and staff details

Statements identified the age of the public libraries (Figure 3-4) in metropolitan Perth with aim to assess the time frame for the library, its place in the local suburb and how that might reflect the needs of the local residents. Since the library system was established before the influx of the present increases in migrant numbers, this question could be a factor influencing the presence (or absence of) inclusive library services.

The next statement shown in Figure 3-4 explores the status of the library in view of its ability to act autonomously in the management, acquisition, services, programmes, and policy areas.

The third statement in Figure 3-4 seeks to identify the role of the library staff respondent, whilst Figure 3-5 seeks information regarding any qualifications the library staff

member may possess. The identification of staff roles could impact the responses to the Likert scale questions which followed. Employees in the public library, in particular, managerial roles may have a different response to some of the web survey statements in comparison to a volunteer or others whose roles may be more oriented towards client interface duties. At the same time, the identification of the staff roles could offer information about the respondent's perspectives.



I am qualified as:

- ☐ A librarian
- ☐ A librarian technician
- ☐ A teacher librarian
- ☐ An Archivist/Records manager
- ☐ I have no formal library qualifications
- ☐ Other

Figure 3-5: Qualifications of public staff respondents

These questions and statements were designed to provide insights into library system and employees who managed the public libraries selected for the research. The qualification of staff respondents could provide insight into quality and professionalism of the public library system in metropolitan Perth. Furthermore, knowing the qualification of respondents enhanced the credibility and value to the responses.

Section two – English as an additional language (EAL) persons and library use

The second section of the web survey was designed to elicit the nature of library services for EAL clientele from the perspective of the library staff.

Please rate the following					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our library has a high percentage of EAL users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has well developed specialist services that cater for EAL users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library focuses on specific policies that provide services to cater for EAL clients.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library adequately meets needs of our EAL clients.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has developed a community profile which is used to provide and develop EAL services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please describe the nature of these services.

Figure 3-6: Questions relating to EAL speakers and the public library

Figure 3-6 displays statements in a positive frame and were deemed as critical to gauging the availability of library services to EAL speakers. First, the statement aimed to confirm the extent of EAL speaker presence in the public library, next, specific issues of EAL specialist services and policies were investigated. Affirmation of the core statement;

our library adequately meets needs of our EAL clients

is designed to gain accurate insights about the issue of EAL library services. The final statement on community profile surveys intended to establish whether public libraries attempt to identify the demography of the residents in their catchment area in view of the recent influx of population in WA as shown in ABS figures as well as in the local media headlines. The awareness of increases in population in WA and, in particular, the concentration of EAL speakers in the metropolitan area drives the need to understand the local population diversity, and any specific information needs of that population.

In addition to the five statements shown in Figure 3-6, participants in the web survey were presented with an open-ended statement, providing the participants an opportunity to express their take on the EAL public library environment in their particular library in greater detail, in the context of each suburb.

Our library provides services to large numbers of people in the following ethnic languages

▼

Figure 3-7: EAL patrons

Figure 3-7 identifies the multi-ethnic presence in the public libraries in the sample selected for the investigation with the aim to gain an insight into the extent of diversity of languages and the countries of origin. Research literature shows that the countries of origin impact the education, social and psychological characteristics of the EAL speaker (Amelina & Faist, 2012). This option provided a drop-down list of languages from which the participants could select a single option. In hindsight, after data collection had been completed, this option should have allowed for multiple languages to be selected.

Section three: EAL public library user and diverse services

The third section of the web survey was designed to capture the diversity of services offered to EAL patrons, and the staff participant understanding of EAL client needs.

Please rate the following					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EAL user groups in our library have high English proficiency skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that poor English language proficiency is a hindrance to library access?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that collecting background information about EAL users will enhance library services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
During the last 5 years there has been a noticeable difference in EAL user numbers accessing our library?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that organising EAL classes using library premises will enhance library use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has separate language collections that cater for EAL users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has requests for print EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to the cost of the resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has requests for print EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to the availability of the resources (resources unavailable in local bookshops)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library has requests for EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to staff linguistic limitations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library provides virtual Language Other Than English (LOTE) resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that employing EAL staff at the library to liaise with EAL users is likely to increase numbers in EAL users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please expand on your responses to the above					
<div></div>					

Figure 3-8: EAL public library users and diverse services

Figure 3-8 displays statements about public library EAL user characteristics, in particular, their English proficiency. Public libraries in WA traditionally, offer services in English, catering mainly to an English educated clientele, thus, these statements are critical to understanding the accessibility of services and programmes to EAL patrons. As identified in the literature review, the English proficiency skills of EAL patrons are critical to their ability to seek access and utilise information. In the survey mechanism the intent of the term ‘high English proficiency skills’ was to represent those individuals from an EAL background who could converse in and read English clearly at a level similar to native speakers of the

language. On reflection, such a description or clarifier should probably have been included in the questionnaire so that the research participants did not have to make a value judgement on what they considered to be 'high proficiency'.

I believe that collecting background information about EAL users will enhance library services.

The increases in EAL patron numbers are also explored, to establish the magnitude of EAL presence in a library. This in turn leads to a statement for library staff to respond to regarding the premise of the library organising English class in the library to assist EAL patrons and enhance their library usage. These statements evaluate respondents' views on the significance of English proficiency for EAL library access, and indeed, the statements build a case for English language teaching and learning programmes.

Multilingual aspects are investigated next in terms of statements on collections, requests by EAL patrons, costs of multilingual resources, lack of resources in local bookshops, staff linguistic skills, availability of virtual multilingual services and potential effects of training and employing multi-ethnic staff to encourage EAL speakers is explored. These in depth queries and statements were design to provide insights into the public library and the real life phenomena of the information seeking environment of the EAL speakers. The current era of digital library information services and the potential role of the public library as a community hub are investigated next.

Section four: EAL public library services, technology & libraries as community spaces

Having established the presence of EAL patrons and the services made available to them by the public libraries, section four of the web survey sought to elicit views of library staff in terms of the public library moving beyond traditional service provision.

Click to write the question text					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe there is a need recruiting and training more EAL staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are compliance guidelines for disability access to government websites. There should be similar guidelines for EAL access.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe computer literacy essential for EAL users to access resources is provided by our library.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe establishing a meeting or multipurpose room in our library for EAL users will increase their use of the library.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorporating community activities for EAL users as the target group will increase their use of the library.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The public library system in WA creates significant barriers which hinder EAL users from accessing information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe information needs among ESL users are similar to mainstream users of the library.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library visits ethnic association meetings and functions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library uses ethnic television, radio stations and community papers to market library programs and community services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our library uses Web 2.0 technologies such Twitter to market library programs and community services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please explain what you think some of the barriers to the above					
<input type="text"/>					

Figure 3-9: EAL public library services, technology and libraries as community spaces

Figure 3-9 commences with statements around the recruitment and training of EAL staff, in view of providing more inclusive and diverse services (or at least a more diverse interface) to library services. The investigation builds upon the importance of EAL public library policies with a statement on compliance guidelines for EAL services, essentially setting ‘minimum standards’ requirements for public libraries in WA. The next two statements revolved around basic computer skills for information access as an attempt to gain staff views on the relevance of computer literacy and its impact on accessing public library resources and services. As the literature has demonstrated, computer literacy and access to information have become inseparable, and in terms of EAL library patrons with limited

computer literacy, creates significant barriers to library use. The potential role of the public library as a community hub was assessed in the key statements;

establishing a multipurpose room in our library for EAL users

and

incorporating community activities for EAL users as the target group.

The aim of these statements is to gauge the feasibility of the library as community hub from the practitioners' perspectives, and in part is influenced by the concept of reinventing their traditional role of the library as a book exchange repository. Enablers and barriers to EAL speakers' library access were vital for the present investigation. In view of the long established history of the WA public libraries, the statement,

the public library system in WA creates significant barriers which hinder EAL users from accessing information,

offers information about the public library system and whether library staff agree with such notions. Continuing the theme of barriers to information access, the statement,

information needs among EAL users are similar to mainstream users of the library,

attempts to assess the respondents' views about their patrons. Given the diversity of issues embedded in education levels, computer literacy skills, social and psychological trauma of the EAL sector, it is crucial that the library staff's perspectives are identified. A statement on visits to ethnic association meetings and functions attempted to draw information about staff contact with local ethnic organisations.

As alluded to earlier in this thesis, the EAL speakers' dependence on multilingual media services cannot be understated. Some EAL groups, due to lack of English rely on television (for example, SBS channel which telecasts ethnic news and movies), radio stations, and community papers in their mother tongue to keep abreast with information. Hence, the statement on the public library's use of these multilingual modes of dissemination of information, attempts to assess their degree of incorporating inclusive services to market

library programmes and community services. Statements on the multilingual websites and social media (Web 2.0 technologies), such as Twitter, were included to gain insight into library staff views about their use of multi-ethnic language options in marketing library programmes and community services. An open-ended statement requesting respondents to expand on any of the questions or statements shown in Figure 3-9 was included as a conclusion to this part of the web survey.

The web survey went on to define and elicit information on the public library's capacity to provide EAL service, as shown in Figure 3-10.

The following affect our library's capacity to provide EAL services					
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Lack of recognition of EAL as a priority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate staffing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate staff training for provision of EAL services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate physical space	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of access to EAL resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inability to promote EAL services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 3-10: Factors affecting capacity to provide EAL services

The current era of widespread human migratory trends around the world, affects host nations immensely, particularly first world nations, such as U.S., U.K., Europe and Australia. These regions are encountering large increases in refugees, asylum seekers, boat arrivals and official migrants, with their presence creating emerging communities that have their own specific information needs that require addressing.

The statements shown in Figure 3-10 seek to identify the priority of EAL service provision in the public library. This statement is followed by additional statements, on staff numbers, staff training for EAL customer service, availability of space in the library, accessibility of multilingual resources locally, and the ability of the library to promote EAL library services.

We receive funding for EAL services from			
	Yes	No	Does Not Apply
Local government/council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
State government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Federal government	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community organisations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other bodies (e.g. Lotteries West)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 3-11: Funding for public library services

Figure 3-11 examines issues surrounding funding sources for the public libraries, though as the literature review indicated, the public libraries in WA are predominantly managed and funded by local councils. Research shows that,

Public libraries are political entities because it is politicians who make the funding decisions for them and their future. Those who wish them to continue, need to impress not only their user community, upon whom the mercurial favour of the relevant elected representative relies. They also need to be sincere, mature and strategic in their political planning such that they can secure long term funding for the continuation of this valuable community service (Smith & Usherwood, 2004, p. 9).

The web survey attempted to identify possible stakeholders who might also fund public library services, especially if public libraries were to initiate innovative services in the light of an ever increasing EAL presence.

The web survey concluded with a final open-ended statement requesting respondents to write comments on their observations on issues of EAL service provision as shown below in Figure 3-12.

Please feel free to write any other comments or observations you may have on the issue of EAL service provision in public libraries

Thank you for your participation in this research, it is most appreciated.

Figure 3-12: Comments or observations on the issue of EAL service provision

The web questionnaire encompassed diverse areas of public library information services to EAL speakers in metropolitan Perth from the perspective of staff who worked in those libraries and dealt with EAL issues on an ever growing basis. The data analysis of the survey results examined the responses to the variables embedded in the instruments based on the research questions upon which this research was based, particular variables involving library services to EAL speakers. Procedures employed descriptive statistical methods; they produced results, which were stated as findings or observations.

Standard descriptive statistical procedures were used to select, sort and classify observations. The theory based approach in social research attempted to select and identify variables for the questionnaire in order to operationalize the theoretical concept that the investigation intended to measure and then present the findings as discussions and conclusions.

3.4.2 Qualitative and semi structured interview data

The real life experiences of the EAL speakers, in the context of their local public library, were investigated with the use of a semi structured interview questionnaire. Rather than expect EAL speakers to respond to a web questionnaire as in the case of the public library staff survey, it was decided that the researcher could reach out to multi-ethnic groups, by engaging individuals in an interview. The premise that new arrivals may encounter complex challenges resulted in the rationale that, it seemed appropriate for an outreach approach. The interview questions were guidelines, which were aimed to investigate various aspects of public library experiences and the information needs of EAL speakers. The questions or statements functioned as probes to lead into an exchange of information which mapped the; *who, where, when, what and why* of the EAL community in the context of the public library environment. For instance, question one (Figure 3-13) explored library usage

patterns by EAL speakers, followed by probes about the enablers and barriers to library access;

Do you think that EAL speakers use their local public library?

Probes:

If the answer is no:

- Why do you think they don't use public libraries?
- Do you think they know about the services provided by their local public library?
- How did you find out about these services?
- What might encourage them to join and use their public library?
- What sorts of services do you think EAL speakers would like their public library to provide?
- What are some of the things that might prevent an EAL speaker from using their local library?

If the answer is yes:

- Why do you think they use public libraries?
- How do you think they found out about the services provided by their local public library?
- What things encouraged them to join and use their public library?
- What sorts of services do you think EAL speakers would like their public library to provide?

Figure 3-13: Semi structured questions for EAL participants

First, the question above attempted to initiate a discussion about awareness and use of the local library and this was followed with an enquiry about the kinds of services which were preferred by the EAL speakers and moved on to a probe on barriers to library access.

Question two (Figure 3-14) attempted to address issues related to particular ethnic groups and their arrival patterns in WA over the previous five year period;

Has there been an increase in the number of people in your ethnic community over the last 5 years?

Probes:

- If yes, has there been a corresponding increase in the services provided by community and government groups/organisations?
- What services does your community need most?
- What are the some of the things that prevent better services for your community?

Figure 3-14: Increase in EAL population question

The recent arrival of increased numbers of EAL speakers to WA was of relevance to the research investigation. The country of origin, the causes of re location and the education level of EAL migrants are likely to influence their ability to access the resources and programmes of their local library. Information gathered from ethnic groups about their relocation will add credibility to ABS figures about new arrivals to WA. This question recognised the ethnicity of new arrivals as it was envisaged that each group will be representative of its unique story.

Whether there was corresponding increase in public library EAL programmes was also raised. In addition, the query on the information services, which were required by their community members, aimed to identify essential programmes that could be considered by the local library. Characteristics specific to each ethnic group may vary according to their level of English proficiency, literacy level and the nature of events that underpinned their move to Australia. Hence, the next question probes about the

kinds of services their community needs most

with the objective of identifying the specific information needs of each ethnic group that participated in the interview. In pursuing the query on library information services, interview participants were encouraged to share their views on barriers, to library access by members of their community with the question shown below in Figure 3-15.

What are some of the things that might prevent members from your community from joining and using their local library?

Probes:

- *<**Possible suggested issues – technology, language barriers, library staff attitudes, location and transport, knowledge, education and illiteracy>*
- *How could we fix these problems? <**Adult English classes, native speakers on staff, translation services, more audio books, audio on websites, access to computers and the Web in other languages, welcome messages and directions in different languages>*

*** Indicates possible answers. Interviewer will try to extract information from participants rather than lead/suggest these to participants.*

Figure 3-15: Question regarding barriers to EAL participation in library services

The interview session introduced aspects of library service that may pose as barriers such as technology, language barriers, library staff attitudes, location and transport, knowledge,

education and illiteracy to elicit EAL participants views. The in-depth interview session concluded with query on

How could we fix these problems

whereby the researcher attempted to draw suggestions from the EAL participant in order to gain accurate information about their library information needs. The list of enablers and barriers, as shown in Figure 3.15, were not presented to the participants, but were concepts the researcher was particularly listening for, as these were the types of concepts raised in the literature in relation to EAL services. As it turns out, the participants and their life circumstances led to spontaneous outpourings of experiences and substantial amount of discussion around these enablers and barriers to EAL public library services emerged.

The interview responses were transcribed into an Excel spread sheet to assist with the identification of patterns in the participants' responses. The data was coded and categorised into variables (or categories) discussed in the conceptual framework. Data was analysed and inferences were summarised in the qualitative research analysis Chapter Four.

1. Transcripts of interviews were tabulated in the Excel spread-sheet.
2. Participants' responses were categorised and coded with close adherence to the responses to the public library services.
3. The interview transcripts were re-read numerous times to draw out key words. The Excel spread sheet was used to classify the key words. The key words were used to create a code or alternatively referred to as a variable, from the responses of the EAL participants. Percentages for each of the variable were calculated to gain an insight into the magnitude of the issues raised by the participants. From the analysis of these variables, a number of themes emerged from the EAL responses, with these themes forming the framework for the presentation of the qualitative evidence, with the inclusion of quotes from participants (EAL users and Library professionals).

Conclusions based on responses to the interviews were used as a primary source of evidence to highlight EAL public library services in metropolitan Perth.

3.4.3 Comparison of data from research instruments

The responses from the interviews and the web survey were compared to identify trends which provided evidence for the factors which impacted on public library service provision to EAL speakers. Additionally, evidence shown in the responses of the web survey and the interviews were examined together to enhance insights and conclusions on the current level of services to EAL speakers. The conclusions based on the findings formed the baseline for recommendations for the present research project.

Analysis of the web survey was primarily performed as descriptive statistics, based around levels of agreement to the questions and statements provided to participants in the survey instrument. As the analysis in Chapter Five, will show, where particularly high or low levels of agreement were demonstrated by library staff to specific questions or statements, an analysis was performed as to the staff roles of the respondents. This approach allowed some light to be shed on, what type of staff role was responding, in what way, to a given question or statement. As Chapter Five will illustrate, in some cases participants in the web survey responded differently depending upon whether they had a managerial role or client interface role. This provides one example of the process of analysis that was utilised when addressing the data that came from the web survey.

In the same way, the raw interview data from the EAL participants was organised and analysed according to categories of response, or the variables. Relationships between responses and the background of the participants became dominant indicators of the EAL phenomena, and what will later in the thesis become characteristics of Community Types. Thus, analysis procedures not only tested the research questions, in addition, they operationalized the research questions this study aimed to investigate (Aneshensel, 2002; Holstein & Gubrium, 2012; Moustakas, 1994).

3.5 Literature on research methods in the EAL space

Whilst the next chapter will explore the specific research methods and procedures used in this research, this section will discuss some of the overarching issues raised in the literature in terms of ethnic and multicultural research approaches. As the previous section illustrated, there can be a number of diverse, complex issues associated with migrant communities, complexities which can influence how we work with such individual in a

research context. Research studies demonstrate that despite the increasing prevalence of global migration in the current environment, the research methods on migrant issues are underdeveloped in the literature. Research theories may have outlived their validity due to changing original historical circumstances and the constant state of flux in the world. As DeTona, Frisina, and Ganga (2010) indicate, the methodological approaches in migrant studies “still lack a set of clear and dominant theories and approaches to help make sense of this complex phenomena” (p. 1). These researchers highlight that the influence of Western academic research methodologies and the embedded presence of varied disciplines, hinder efforts to formulate unified theories for migrant studies, research questions, research methods and guidelines for fieldwork. This is particularly relevant in this thesis as the issue of complexity in terms of motivators for EAL library use and service is provision is a recurrent finding throughout the latter stages of this work. Castles (2007) demonstrates the relevance of interdisciplinary and comparative analyses for exploring current phenomena of participants in any given study. Research methodology on the transnational migrant environment advocates attention to the innumerable diversity in the migrants’ identities with the use of multiple scales to capture the phenomenon, and where possible, the underlying complexity. A non-prescriptive, as opposed to a traditional prescriptive mode of research questions is proposed.

Castle’s (2007) works on migrant studies advises the inclusion of multi-ethnicity relative to origin (departure) and destination (arrival), rather than just one or the other. This viewpoint is of a particular relevance to this current study in that it examined both the experiences of the EAL origins as well as the destination (arrival) environment, in terms of both the public libraries in WA and the EAL participants interacting with those libraries. Castle goes on to propose a multiple location research approach. For example, research inclusive of country of origin and destination may allow insight into of background of migrants’ trauma, or research on public library services to EAL in a number of cities with an influx of migrants, will capture the phenomenon in a broader and more accurate perspective. Additionally, the researchers recommend strategies for researcher-participant power balance and self-reflexivity with Amelina and Faist (2012) stating that;

to invent scientific narratives which are produced not only by researchers but also by the researched subjects or institutions (Amelina & Faist, 2012, p. 10).

The literature cautions researchers about over emphasizing the ethnicity (nationality) as it may preclude real life phenomena and lived world problems which may override ethnicity. The interviews with the EAL participants in the present study, while selecting sample representatives from different countries of origin, the focus was to draw information specifically about their public library interactions and lived world experiences. In terms of the arrival (destination) environment for the EAL participants in this study, the lived experience include such issues as, does the person own a car, do they have the literacy to fill in forms and interact with government services, and are they even aware of the role of the public library in the community. Aspects of these lived experiences in the destination country can in part be determined by their background experience in the country of departure, including language, access to education, lack of government welfare services, or even a fear of government in any form. This investigation aimed to identify areas of concern in relation to the use (or non- use) of their local library with minimal ethnic labelling.

3.5.1 Considerations for interviewing EAL participants

Investigating the real world phenomena of the participants and their patrons, engaging them in qualitative participatory methodology ensure a holistic approach, this is appropriate for studies on migrants. While interviews would capture their real world experiences, researchers involved in migration studies draw attention to the relationship between the participant and researcher, so as to safe-guard the vulnerability of the migrant participant (DeTona, 2006). Relevance of power balance in the dialogue context during fieldwork poses options for the viability of researcher and participant from the similar ethnic background, as having a similar background can endorse the content of claims due to insights of similar lived experiences (Berryman, SooHoo, & Nevin, 2013; DeTona, 2006). Ethnicity may result in power imbalance and posits variations in responses. Additionally, attention to research instruments (for example semi-structured questions) and modes (individual or group, venue of investigation) adopted in the fieldwork are vital considerations (DeTona et al., 2010), and such literature assisted in the development of such considerations for this study.

3.5.2 Recruiting EAL participants

The research literature on migrant studies alerts researchers on the methods of recruitment of participants for qualitative research processes. Caution in recruitment processes is vital for

ensuring the validity, reliability, and credibility to the findings if the new knowledge is to make a difference to the phenomena studied. Moreover, the complexity of the migrant diaspora demands validation of recruitment processes. Multiple layers of differences related to ethnic sensitivities, literacy levels, technology access, socio-economic status, mind-set, trauma, social networks, mobility and religious affiliations are some of the challenges encountered when recruiting participant (McLean & Campbell, 2003). The authors demonstrate that researchers encounter “differential experiences” (p. 42) when recruiting interview participants, and stress that,

methodological challenges facing those who seek to access different communities result from the processes whereby ethnic identities and coalitions are constructed and from characteristics of local social networks - recruitment issues reflect wider social dynamics (McLean & Campbell, 2003, p. 42).

Some vital guidelines for recruitment processes include, channels of contact be it individuals, organizations, affiliations and participant’s access to technology, composition of research team and gender sensitivities, effects of previous experiences, and social networks, socio-cultural values and mores in the multi-ethnic sample. Participants require assurance about the credibility of the research process and the researcher as well. They would like information about the ownership of research sponsorship with proof of official letters of invitation and ethics clearance. Furthermore, motivation for volunteering in interviews, appropriateness of research for the selected sample, degree of impact from report (findings) whether their input could make a difference to the phenomena in the research project are critical guidelines.

It is also essential for researchers to review the invitation processes, which can take the form of visits, emails or phone calls to organisations to gain contacts of potential participants. Literature shows that third party introductions, or alternatively personal introductions to potential participants, and payment of honorarium for time, transport and service obliged assist in gaining participants. Adoption of variations in procedures, flexibility not rigidity in approaches to recruitment efforts are recommended (McLean & Campbell, 2003).

The research literature discussed above formed the framework for the methodological approaches discussed in detail in the next chapter. The recommendations of the literature

underpinned the methodological procedures for this investigation into the community building potential of the Perth metropolitan public library system.

3.6 Qualitative data analysis

The present research on the public library services to EAL speakers, with data analysis involving content analysis of experiences in the real life phenomenon related to the public library environment, which emerged from the responses to the EAL interview instrument. The conceptual framework for the qualitative data analysis was guided by the concept of conventional qualitative content analysis. Conventional qualitative content analysis is described “as a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). The processes, as outlined by a number of methodology researchers, can be summarised as that shown below:

1. Reading data repeatedly, Immersion and obtaining a sense of whole view
2. Word codes were identified, for example: no English skills, computer illiteracy
3. Observations by researcher
4. Initial Analysis by researcher
5. Labels are assigned for word codes; for example, Literacy, Community, Multiculturalism
6. Labels or themes signified several issues
7. Categories emerged from word codes leading to relations and links
8. Clusters formed within 10-15 codes/categories
9. Specific utterances and word codes generated general themes into smaller groups.
10. Relationships, Associations, Concepts, Theories and Abstractions emerged

(Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Holstein & Gubrium, 2012; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Moustakas, 1994)

The findings and reports with this conventional content analysis approach, allowed dominant issues to be identified. The findings highlighted current library phenomenon, as a result it contributed to knowledge in the area of public library use by migrants and consequently provided recommendations for library practices, policy and future research. The conventional content analysis method relied solely on content of data from participants’

words without interference by previous research or theory. Content analysis allows a flexible, realistic approach to analyse data, develop theories and contribute to knowledge (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

3.6.1 Conducting the content analysis

The two approaches to qualitative content analysis of interview data are discussed below:

1. Inductive content analysis and
2. Deductive content analysis

In the inductive approach, the categories are induced from an examination of the participant responses, in the case of this research, the categories increase knowledge, contribute towards new theories, insights and concepts on the phenomenon of the public library. The categories function as a yardstick for identifying the characteristics of EAL participants and their perceptions of the public library system (Krippendorff, 1980). The literature asserts that inductive content analysis is appropriate when applied to data when there is insufficient research and information on the phenomenon (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Gladwell, 2010; Glaser & Strauss, 1973), or in the case of this research, an exploratory study is being conducted. The categories identified from the interviews are outcomes of an inductive process, which define meanings, intentions, consequences and context (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992). Consequently, in inductive content analysis specific information gathered at interviews was applied to formulate concepts and issues. The individual responses, observations and views shared during the interview were combined to form categories which contributed to formulation of concepts and theories (Chinn & Kramer, 1995; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Krippendorff, 2004; Marsh & White, 2006). The units of analysis, as Graneheim and Lundman (2004) indicate, are the phrases, words and sentences of participants. More specifically, “the most suitable unit of analysis is whole interviews or observational protocols that are large enough to be considered as a whole and small enough to be kept in mind as context for meaning unit during the analysis process” (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004, p.106).

The categories adhere closely to the research questions and the aim of the study (Robson, 2002). The research questions underpin decisions, choices and selection of the content provided in the interview data for outcomes as categories. The process which categorised interview data provided order to the mass of information collected, and the

categories identified concerns of respondents, defining the participant's world view and sense of individuality in the issues investigated.

3.6.2 Theoretical framework in content analysis

This theoretical framework of this research was based on the premise of the public library acting as a community hub and as a platform for lifelong learning, particularly for individuals of an EAL background. The underlying concept around how this study was conducted involved speaking with people from EAL communities in the “context of departure and destination” (Amelina & Faist, 2012, p 12) and how both places impacted their perceptions of the public library. In order to achieve this, Dey (1993) outlines the following approaches to interview questions:

- whose story,
- where it occurs,
- when is the phenomenon is investigated,
- what aspects are examined and
- why does the phenomenon need investigation.

These raised awareness to all the responses and facilitated categories which resulted in concepts, abstractions and theories such as barriers or enablers of library use. The specific information provided by the EAL participants were grouped into broader issues, thus, the phenomenon was described with evidence, increasing the understanding of the reality in the phenomenon and evolved as new knowledge. The process of content analysis generated knowledge on the phenomenon of the public library experiences of the EAL participants investigated in the present project, or as Flick (2005) states when citing a range of authors;

focus is on how meanings are jointly constructed in natural contexts and how processes of understanding develop. Here the subjective interpretations involved in understanding and meaning making are seen as central - the question of what subjective interpretations are held by actors under the study and what characterizes them. This is studied in analysing “small worlds”...and how meaning systems are produced which are shared by members in these life worlds...This approach is useful in studying ...expert knowledge and techno cultures (Flick, 2005, p. 12).

The present qualitative research explored the phenomenon of the public library environment from the perspective of multi-ethnic patrons and their perspectives (categorised as themes) as identified from analysis of the interview transcripts.

3.6.3 Contribution to new knowledge

The themes identified during the content analysis of the interview transcripts contributed to new knowledge about the public library environment in the context of multi-ethnic communities, and formed the basis this research in terms of discussions and conclusions. In particular, this process of content analysis provided meaning to participant responses, providing labels for intentions from context and consequences (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992), which in turn lead to the development of community characteristics and a potential model for library services.

3.6.4 Inductive content analysis

Inductive content analysis is particularly relevant to the qualitative interview method for data collection, and in this research the contents of the interview data fundamentally spoke to the concepts embedded in the research questions proposed in the project.

Addressing Dey's, approaches to interview questions, through inductive logic this thesis mapped the who, where, when, what and why as follows;

- Who: story... multi-ethnic groups
- Where: setting...metropolitan Perth, WA
- When: at a time when western nations are seeing a marked influx of migrant populations
- What: EAL and public library community
- Why: library as a community hub, life-long learning, the library as a democratic space, equity, inclusion, cross-cultural communication, integration, sustainability and social capital

The codes based on words and expressions of respondents constitute the findings of the research and contribute to the formulation of conclusions, abstractions and concepts (Dey, 1993). Figure 3-16 shows samples of the coding process, whereby the raw interview

responses have been categorised and then applied with some empirical process of identifying the frequency of a response type.

User	User	Orientation programs on local culture/behaviour	Meeting place for neighbours/kids	Family day at library	Multilingual resources	Driving licence tutorials	English classes/IELTS/ethnic conversation	Free computer training/Internet access/advance search skills	Diverse info on visa/rental/child care/police/fire	Functions/workshops	Teacher supervision	Homework help	Holiday activities	Opening hours to suit work
U01A	Malaysia	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	
U02B	Vietnam	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
U03C	S Africa	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
U04D	Thailand	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
U05E	Poland	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
U06F	Nepal	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
U07G	Serbia	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
U08H	India	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
U09I	Pakistan	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
U10J	Kenya	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
U11K	Burma	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
U12L	Serbia	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
U13M	S.Africa	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1
U14N	Oman	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0
U15O	Thailand	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
U16P	Bhutan	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
U17Q	Nicaragua	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
U18R	Ethiopia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
U19S	Sri Lanka	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
		68.4%	84.2%	63.2%	78.9%	5.3%	63.2%	47.4%	42.1%	57.9%	42.1%	57.9%	78.9%	36.8%

Figure 3-16: Coding process example

Standardised coding was used to determine themes, variables, common practices and issues for the interview participants. Themes emerged from the responses, observation of expressions, silences and flow of dialogue during interview sessions, as the researcher engaged participants on their library experiences from the inside as shown below:

We can know about a world by describing it from outside. Yet to understand what living in this world means, we need to learn from the inside. Starting from the inside is the initial step to develop a rich qualitative analysis (Charmaz, 2004, p. 980) .

During the interview, the researcher entered into the participants' real world phenomena, the utterances were recorded and quoted to provide evidence for the experiences (Charmaz, 2004; Holstein & Gubrium, 2012). As Charmaz (2004) states;

Entering the phenomenon also means that your active involvement with data shapes the analysis...We enter the phenomenon to discover what is significant from the viewpoints and actions of people who experience it. We cannot already assume that we already know what is significant (Charmaz, 2004, p. 981).

Hence, the interview engagement described the experiences and viewpoints of the EAL participants and revealing the reality of participants in the context of the library in their locality, much to the enlightenment of the researcher. The interview data analysis adopted a literary style in order to capture the experiences of the EAL speakers in their information needs, presented around the primary themes drawn from the coding process. The interview data analysis attempted to capture the human dilemma and its reality in the context of public library access in an objective manner.

The researcher is compelled to set aside preconceived notions of rationality and perceptions of realities to understand the phenomena investigated, as once again Charmaz (2004) explains below,

Professionals are imbued, for example, with assumptions about what reality rationality is-and make judgements based on these assumptions...However, what stands as rational depends on definitions that reflect meanings. Hence, rationality is relative to time, place, context, and situation-and people. Our task is to learn the logic of experience we study, not impose our logic on it. As we learn this logic, our participant's meanings and actions become clear (Charmaz, 2004, p. 982).

In the present study, the experiences of the EAL speakers are affected by the diverse characteristics of their backgrounds, literacy levels and the environment in metropolitan Perth. The research literature and examination of government policies seems to indicate a grouping or categorisation of EAL speakers into one migrant category. The tapestry of diversity and complexity increased significantly during the span of the interviews much to the

bewilderment (as Charmaz would define it) of this researcher as new knowledge emerged spontaneously.

3.6.5 Emergence of concepts and theories

The data collected from the two primary research instruments, the EAL interviews and the library staff Web survey, were interleaved and analysed to arrive at new knowledge about the public library environment. As the findings in later chapters will explore, the characteristics of the EAL community and their library needs are far more complex, than, those typically defined under the banner of ‘multi-ethnic’ as a single entity, and that traditional library services, may not be aware of such complexity. A multifaceted perspective underpins the dynamics of emergent concepts and theories as explained by Charmaz (2008):

We may construct generalizations, but they are qualified, more anchored in time, place and space. Theorizing has become more conditional, partial, situational and less universal and reveals more variation than a unitary explanation. The interactive emergent properties that constitute inquiry become more apparent and acknowledged (Charmaz, 2008, p. 57).

Conceptualising and operationalising public library research in empirical social science research employed methodology that measured the theoretical frameworks outlined in the literature review. The findings demonstrated the interrelated areas, revealed the level of library services and accessibility of these services to the EAL speakers. These qualitative and quantitative data were triangulated, or as stated above, interleaved to determine if there were any common factors for EAL service provision by the public library sector. Evidence obtained from the findings from all phases of the research was then used to develop a possible model for sustainable and equitable information service provision for multi-ethnic communities. Aneshensel (2002) demonstrated that conclusions are based on cause and effect relationships described as the focal relationship theory, and that analysis of cause and effect are effective tools for evaluating relationships among variables and arriving at conclusions. That is to say a variable explored in the web questionnaire in the present study showed the relationships among the questions and contributed to the identification of new knowledge about public library services to EAL speakers.

The web questionnaire and the interviews facilitated observations, were quantitatively measured, conceptually interpreted, and then formulated as theoretical constructs and subsequently become the conclusions for the study (Creswell & Clark, 2006).

3.6.6 Validity and Reliability

The present investigation is an exploratory research. The research procedures ensured that canons of the research discipline were adhered to in order not to compromise on the findings of the data and the contribution of the new knowledge about the public library. The research investigation attempted to establish the current public library environment in the context of EAL speakers. Thus the research project explored the research topic, *community building, multiculturalism and the suburban public library* from varying perspectives and using diverse methodologies. The absence of hypotheses and tests to provide answers to research questions indicate that this exploratory research is an initial investigation to establish the current library services and programs for EAL speakers. Brown (2006) states that exploratory research investigates a phenomenon which has limited or no previous research based on the literature reviewed in the problem area (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979).

The validity and reliability of the research investigation were taken into account during the construction of the research instruments and deployment during the data collection and analysis process. Validity was built into the data collection process by ensuring sufficient number of participants for the library staff Web survey and the EAL speaker participants were recruited in order to allow for generalisation of the results (Hartwig & Dearing, 1979; Kirk & Miller, 1986; Stebbins, 2001). The validity of the present investigation minimised bias by eliminating as much as possible any personal bias during the data collection process, particularly in terms of the EAL participant interviews. These interview sessions adhered to guidelines prepared as probes to the area investigated, including a time allotted to each interview session, a limited scope for digressions away from the prepared interview probes. The balance in this research, as with any other of a qualitative nature, is ensuring a reliable and consistent data collection process whilst at the same time allowing new, spontaneous information to be revealed. The setting for each interview did vary according to location of the participants, though for the most part interviews were conducted in business or organisational settings or on the university campus.

Reliability of the data collection process was addressed in the manner by which the instruments were presented and the data was collected. The Web survey was administered in an anonymous manner via a recruitment email sent out to library staff directly and also via the Western Australian Information Network (WAIN) discussion boards. Once the data collection period had concluded for the library staff Web questionnaire the collected data was thoroughly examined for levels of completion, the professional position held by the respondent and the location of the library. Incomplete responses and those containing responses from libraries located outside the sample area (ie outside of the Perth metropolitan area) were eliminated from the final data set.

3.6.7 Pilot Testing of Instruments

Before the library staff Web questionnaire was administered it was piloted with a small group of library professionals outside of the intended sample population, including academic library staff and regional public library staff. There were no identified issues raised as a result of this piloting process and no revisions to the final instrument were deemed necessary. In a similar approach, the EAL interview questions were also trialled by using a specific group from selected EAL support organisations not involved in the main study. Again, these users did not deem any changes necessary to the interview questions.

Both the library staff Web questionnaires and the EAL speaker interviews data collections were run concurrently over the period of 12 months to allow maximum time for data collection.

3.7 Recruitment

3.7.1 Library staff participants

Metropolitan Perth public libraries were the focus for this research investigation. An invitation to participate (Appendix 1) in the Web questionnaire was emailed to all the metropolitan public libraries via direct email to the public libraries, the WA Information Network (WAIN) distribution list and the Public Library Association website. Public library personnel sought as participants in the Web questionnaire included:

1. library managers;
2. qualified librarians;
3. library technicians;

4. library officers/clerks/assistants; and
5. volunteers

The recruitment letter included a link to the Qualtrics (Appendix 7) based survey, and indicated to possible participants that participation was both anonymous and optional. Essentially, by clicking the link in the invitation letter and entering their responses, participants were providing opt-in consent to be involved in the study. The data collection period ran from November 2011 until March 2012. Two follow up reminders seeking participants in the research were sent via the same communication methods (email and distribution lists) during the period of data collection.

3.7.2 EAL participants

A total of 27 EAL participants were interviewed with the objective of gaining insights about their information needs and public library use. The interview process established two distinct groups from the sample chosen for the research.

Group One: EAL library non-user

1. Firstly, EAL speakers included those who disregard the services of the local public library are referred in the study as non-user. The non-user sample of participants originated from Mauritius, Sri Lanka, India, Kenya, Burma, Pakistan, Sudan and Iran. In Table 6-1 these participants primarily represented the ‘divergence’ column of the table.

Group Two: EAL library user

2. The second group comprised of individuals who frequently visit the library and are termed as library users. The user sample of participants originated from Malaysia, Vietnam, South Africa (2 participants), Thailand (2 participants), Poland, Nepal, Serbia (2 participants), India, Pakistan, Kenya, Burma, Oman, Bhutan, Nicaragua, Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. In Table 6-1 these participants primarily represented the ‘alignment’ column of the table, though it is interesting to see that there is some overlap the countries of origins. This difference can primarily be associated with levels of education and literacy, that is, the higher those levels the more likely the participant is to have an appreciation of the public library and to use its services.

The library User and Non User participants included:

- i. Ethnic Association leaders
- ii. Officials employed by the Government Welfare Services
- iii. Individuals from different ethnic communities.

It turned out that ethnic association leaders and ethnic individuals who were employed in state government welfare services realised that the research project provided a platform to raise concerns of the ethnic groups they were involved in.

For the EAL interviews, a number of EAL organisations and or support groups were approached to participate in the semi structured interviews for staff running these organisations. Selection of EAL organisations was determined largely by accessibility and the size of the EAL population in Perth metropolitan area.

Interviews with individual EAL speakers were determined by their accessibility and their willingness to participate. Participants were selected from as a wide range of cultural, ethnic and language groups as possible. All participants were required to sign off on the participation agreement (Appendix 3) and had to be of an adult status (18+ years). In nearly all cases, interviews with the EAL participants took place in the offices of the relevant EAL organisation to which the person was associated, or on the university campus from which this researcher was based. Interviews were typically limited in time to around 30 minutes so as to minimise the impost of the participant's time.

3.8 Limitations of the research design

Participation, as with all studies, was the primary issue arising from using a survey mechanism to gather data from library staff. Given that the Web survey contained questions and statements that could have been interpreted as reflecting on their professional integrity. It was envisaged that a combination of factors could affect the library staff responses to the web questionnaire. The Web survey was designed to counter such issues by being generally worded in a positive manner to engender a willingness and interest by library staff to respond honestly and completely. Apart from the content of the Web survey, the distribution method both maximised participation, but also lead to responses being gathered from people outside the target population. In other words, library staff from libraries outside for the Perth metropolitan area (including the Eastern States of Australia) accessed the invitation and link

and filled in the survey instrument, though these were removed from the final data set. Another shortcoming of the web questionnaire was the inability to control the number of participants from one particular library, though for this study all staff views were deemed relevant, regardless of whether they came from the same organisation.

Another issue with the Web survey was that none of the questions were defined as being mandatory, a choice made by the researcher in order to make the instrument more user friendly and less demanding. However, in some cases, responses were incomplete for the data to be included in the final study. Both these factors lead ultimately to an original 187 commenced survey responses being reduced to 152, which in turn was reduced to a final 52 consistent, reliable and completed responses.

The EAL interviews posed a number of limitations, primarily in area of recruitment and language. As recruitment was primarily conducted via EAL community organisations and individuals, a great deal of face to face community and travel around the Perth metropolitan area was required in order to lay the groundwork for actual recruitment. Typically, a successful recruitment of an EAL individual might lead to a referral to yet another person, requiring another introduction and follow up meeting(s). Unlike the recruitment process used for the library staff with the Web survey, the recruitment process was not one to many, but rather one to one. Language barriers between an interviewer and interviewees were overcome with the selection of only English speaking EAL participants, which was also a requirement of the ethics process associated with this research. Given that this research was aiming to obtain as broad a cross section of ethnic groups, locating and hiring qualified interpreters for all participants in the interviews was not practical. Even with these restrictions, a total of 27 interviews were conducted, leading to a rich and diverse data set from which analysis could take place.

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research methods, instruments and design utilised in this research, to address the research questions driving this work. Chapter 4 will present the themes identified from EAL interviews whilst Chapter 5 will outline the responses to the library staff Web survey. Chapters 6 and 7 will then discuss the core outcomes of this data in the context of the overall thesis.

Chapter 4

EAL Participants Qualitative Interview Responses

What we need to do is to wade through the literature, and to try to find some sort of common definitions that we can use to help us as we plan to provide multicultural library services, which, we will see, we should surely be doing. (Barter, 1996, p. 10)

4.0 Overview

The data presented in this chapter is at the core of this thesis as it captures the results of detailed interviews conducted with EAL speakers from across the Perth metropolitan area. The interviews explored the participant's experience, or in some cases, lack of experiences with the public library system in WA. The interview participants were individuals from various nationalities, representing a wide variety of ethnic groups from across the greater Perth metropolitan area. These individuals were members of the community, community leaders or staff from government welfare organisations. Interviews were conducted from January to June 2012, and included a total of 27 participants.

The aim of the interview discussions was to explore the supporting research question of;

What are the information needs that influence EAL speaker's perceptions of public library access in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia.

The large amount of data returned from the interviews was analysed using qualitative content analysis methods, with discussion being categorised according to themes identified in the responses. The structure of this chapter will follow these identified themes and explore the facets of each in detail. The main themes to be explored are;

1. English Language Proficiency
2. Community Building
3. Computer Access and Literacy
4. Perceived Barriers to library Access
5. The Multicultural public library
6. Preferred EAL library Services

Each section will present the quotes from the respondents which contributed to the identification of the themes and the overall perceptions of the EAL speakers in terms of the public library system.

4.1 EAL Speaker's English language proficiency and the public library

The level of English proficiency of this group presented distinctive challenges for the public library environment. The EAL groups reflect diverse characteristics in their educational backgrounds. Firstly, the language of the education acquired and level of education are factors, as EAL individuals may be highly educated in their mother tongue, but lack English proficiency, or they may lack education and literacy in their own tongue. Language of education, and previous experience in actual learning (be it academic or language) can dictate the ability of EAL individuals to become proficient in English in their host country. Secondly, the public library system established around the 1950s in WA caters for a predominately English speaking clientele, thus, it can limit non English speakers' access to the library resources and programmes. Thirdly, public libraries offer digitized library information services in English, which invariably creates barriers to accessing these resources by EAL speakers. The Office of Multicultural Interests (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2012) stated in reference to New and Emerging communities in WA that, "more than 25% of arrivals after 2001 had good or very good English, while 75 % had low or no English Language proficiency" (Office of Multicultural Interests, 2012, p. 4).

4.1.1 Educational background

The educational background of EAL speakers is analysed below in relation to English proficiency and public library access. The analysis attempts to include the linguistic challenges encountered in the context of the public library environment from the interview responses from the EAL participants. The theme of English language proficiency and public library is further elaborated with an account of information services which are required by the EAL participants. Three distinct groups emerged from the interview data was classified as:

- 1) English educated are individuals held high proficiency in English
- 2) Mother tongue educated are individuals who were educated in ethnic languages prior to their arrival to Australia and

- 3) Individuals with an absence of an academic culture are individuals from agrarian or tribal cultures and lacked an educational background in any language.

The educational background of EAL speakers was investigated from their language of education, with all EAL participants in this study being educated in and speaking fluent English. It must be noted here that, it was stipulated during recruitment phase of this investigation, that only English speaking EAL individuals would be selected for participation in interviews for the study. While the EAL speakers expressed their own public library experiences, they were encouraged during the interview process to expand on the information needs of their community.

The EAL participants discussed their public library experiences, additionally; they described their community's concerns in relation to access to the library which offers services in English. They were English educated individuals who displayed various types of employment in WA, as listed below in Table 4-1.

Table 4-1: Breakdown of EAL participant education background

Multicultural Services Officers	P2, P3, P14, & P20
Government Welfare Services Officers	P17, P19, & P21
Ethnic Associations leaders	P5 & P18
IT professionals	P1, P10, P12, & P24
Western Power staff	P8
Environmental Officer	P16
Medical doctor	P7
University staff	P6
Nurse	P13
Librarian	P26
Accountant	P27
Mature age university students	P4, P15, P22, & P23
Private sector staff	P11
Homemakers	P9 & P25

The sample of EAL participants consisted of individuals who used the public library and others who chose not to use the services of the local library. Parents with school children expressed the weakness in English language skills among their children who faced challenges with English homework and academic reading and writing skills (P9, P11, P13, & P27). The

need for English language tutorials to assist with inadequate English skills in the form of summer reading sessions, reading competitions and inculcating reading habits to enhance English were highlighted (P22, P23, P24, P26, & P27).

The school kids were lacking in English Language skills, they need help in Mathematics and English as parents are not educated in English (P14).

The EAL speakers who accessed the public library used the resources to enhance their English language skills,

I used books on English from public library ...joined the library to improve my studies (P20).

While other participants borrowed books related to management and employment as per their personal interests (P22 & P24). One salient observation about English language inadequacy was in relation to job applications,

Language assistance as we are unfamiliar with job application. It is a cultural hurdle or issue, the application process and the choice of words to promote oneself professionally (P16).

The Australian job application process seems to pose challenges for EAL speakers. From the above, it seems apparent that, children of English educated parents as well the parents themselves accessed the public library resources and programmes for a range of information needs. A second feature emerged from the interview data was that of individuals who were educated in their mother tongue. While literacy was not a problem (in their own tongue), many lacked English language skills. Older migrants, spouses of English educated professionals, new arrivals, asylum seekers and refugees from Non English speaking countries constituted the group. Some of the nationals include, Persians, Pakistanis, Indians, Sri Lankans, Serbians, Vietnamese, Thais, Poland, Omanis, Nicaragua (Spanish speakers) and Bosnians.

EAL speakers who were young and within the employable age expressed concern over their low proficiency in the English language. The response from a spouse of an English educated professional illustrates this point,

Lack of English, we need English classes for new arrivals, English tutorials on ways of communication, for example, Australian greetings, culture, about employment services, presenting self for interviews, writing curriculum vitae, job application, editing, offer free classes, like the ESL classes in the church (participant was attending) as fees are high in TAFE, English colleges and Universities for ESL and IELTS (P1).

The respondents reported that older EAL speakers lacked English language skills. They were educated in their mother tongues, and displayed a preference for mother tongue resources. The respondents demonstrated that the seniors were reluctant to learn English as they felt “*too old to learn English*” (P14), whilst Participant P20 felt that,

My community is not keen to learn English, most are not proactive, believe that they are too old to learn English. Their mind and attitude are the barriers to learning English. They were confined to their ethnic satellite television.

One of the respondents explained that the mother tongue educated individuals’ lack of English created problems for reading information about government services such as Centre Link, Medicare, or reading pamphlets in English and they were unaware of translation services (P27). The low proficiency in English also posed doubts about EAL speakers’ accents which may not be understood by locals (P8), leading to a sense of self-imposed isolation from the wider community (P20). This finding was re-enforced by participants who reported that a number of the spouses of English educated professionals are women who are not fluent in the English language, although they have free time during the day, they felt lonely and isolated at home (P16).

A third feature emerged from the responses of the EAL participants is that some of their community members were illiterate as they lacked formal education of any kind. Individuals who had relocated from agrarian cultures often lacked formal school education,

Sudanese migrants have no English, no formal education...English Language is a critical barrier (P3).

The ethnic association leaders explained that refugees from the hill regions of Burma lacked formal education, or a desire to seek education,

no English skills, no academic skills...illiteracy is high and are not ambitious (P5).

And that the hill folks within Burma (Karens),

had no English ...were shy to ask for help (P18)

The EAL participant who worked as a welfare services staff member stressed that,

they lack education, language barriers prevail hence are not sure of English skills to ask for help...they could be invited and be informed about English programmes (P17).

The staff from welfare services also reported that it was essential to address issues related to English language deficiencies,

Look at demography and identify percentage of illiteracy in immigrants, introduce literacy programmes, see the migrants needs, their tragedy behind the move from war zones, in short the public library is a “One Stop Shop” for addressing problems (P21).

The participant with an Ethiopian background, reported that,

Literacy is the main problem. Teach information seeking skills, education seeking skills are lacking...even if it is too late to learn English...invite them to the public library on a social level and give talks using an ethnic staff or volunteer (P26).

Thus, the participants' responses illustrate the widespread literacy problems among the EAL speakers who relocated from rural and agrarian backgrounds. Undeniably,

individuals from these sectors fail to access the services of the local public library, whilst also struggling to utilise services from other branches of state and federal government.

4.1.2 The public library and English language services

Having identified a number of the issues facing EAL speakers and levels of English proficiency and education, this section will explore some of the English language services identified by this group as being relevant to their needs.

4.1.2.1 English language classes

The public library located in the suburbs could be leveraged to address some of the English language challenges encountered by their local community. The EAL participants appreciate the location of the library as an advantage in view of its proximity to their homes and general ease of transport access. The principles on which the public library functions as a safe and democratic service provider seem to underpin requests for English classes, International English Language Testing System (IELTS) instruction, conversational English classes and academic assistance. EAL speakers appreciate the free services and express a desire for information services from the library with costs in mind, with the assumption that fees will not be charged. The following analysis attempts to address some of the public library services that are sought by the EAL participants in relation to English Language issues.

English language classes and workshops emerged as the most dominant service sought by EAL participants from the public library. English classes which tutor individuals on IELTS preparation, English as an ESL lessons, job application letters and curriculum vitae preparation, school English homework, completing English language forms (house rental deeds, bank account forms, immigration forms) and general English language skills for academic reading and writing. The list below recounts the participants' responses,

Offer free ESL classes, suggest IELTS sessions and workshops in the library (P1).

Library needs to promote IELTS, provide test questions, Listening and Speaking books, past exam papers (P16).

We need Programmes for marginalized individuals to learn English, people can “dictate” needs, parents’ input can help to decide programmes, link the public library with Pre School to educate the connection with the library (P2).

One way of attracting the EAL speakers to the library is through ESL classes and promoting life-long learning values (P3).

These English language services were recurrent suggestions of the EAL speakers (P8, P9, P5, P10, P11, P12, P17, P18, P19, P23, P24, P25, P26 & P28), with Participant 19 going on to state that,

ESL classes should be broadened to kids and adults, introductory ESL classes to those with no English or illiterate.

The social benefits of linking the community through public library English classes, were highlighted by a multicultural services staff,

It is a good place to teach English, it will link people in the suburb, residents walking to the public library’s free classes ...learning about local culture ...learn about neighbours...will grow their capacity by building English skills and integrate them into the local community (P21).

Whilst the responses show a strong desire for the public library to provide English proficiency training, some participants were more specific in their requirement for adult oriented training.

4.1.2.2 Adult English classes

Adult English Language classes were requested by a number of respondents (P8, P9, P16, & P22), with one EAL participant volunteering to assist in ESL classes organised by a local library (P25) while ESL night classes were also suggested (P17). Participant 26 suggested classes for seniors:

ESL programmes for seniors to meet and learn English besides, they are probably illiterate, helps them to communicate and build their confidence.

Participants explained that adults were reluctant to learn with the younger students,

They are not keen to learn with the young and shy away from Australian teachers (P3).

Studying English with people from their locality was also seen as promoting awareness that others too encounter similar language problems,

Take advantage of the public library's nonthreatening space. They will feel that others have the same problem and learn English together (P6).

The potential for the public library to organise English classes while the children were at school was proposed as parents could study (with other parents) while the children were at school,

I suggest English classes during school hours (P23).
ESL mother's group when kids are in school (P17).

EAL participants who had school children utilised the library regularly, however, expressed the need for English language classes, reading activities to promote the reading habit and homework help, a recurring theme across the literacy findings from the EAL participants. EAL participants felt that by developing their own English language skills they could help support their children in other library-based activities,

Requests for school holiday activities, Book Week, Story time and English Language skills tutorials (P26).

4.1.2.3 Collaboration

Collaboration with TAFE, schools and the Ethnic associations was suggested as an approach to address the provision of English language assistance.

Work with NGOs with specific aims, with funding by the Government (P2).

Collaborate between the school and the public library and encourage Reading culture (P6).

Collaborate and organise a volunteer roster from ethnic groups to assist, have paid staff, and increase the English teachers' pool (P8).

The Ethnic Association is the only source of help. Conduct a demography survey, identify large groups in the suburb and offers services (English help, read government pamphlets) to this group by employing staff from that group, organise a multicultural roster (P27).

To a certain degree this goes back to the core concept driving this thesis, which is the library as a community hub. As chapter six will discuss in more detail, the role of collaboration between the public library, EAL community members and external service providers (such as Registered Training Organisations) is one approach to addressing some of the service and training requirements raised by the EAL participants. While informal English sessions are held in the library, an EAL speaker advised collaboration channels by providing information about other English teaching centres,

the library could pass on information about other ESL teaching centres (P3).

Collaboration with TAFE and the public library was suggested,

Address illiteracy with adult classes in TAFE and the public library ...look at the demography and introduce literacy programmes ...if they are coping direct them to the appropriate help centre (P21).

As will be discussed towards the end of the thesis, an enhanced model of collaboration, with the library at the nexus of the community and external services, would require a shift in library service provision from a traditional to an innovative stance.

4.1.2.4 Conversation classes

A suggestion for conversation classes on Australian ways of communicating, greetings, local history, local culture (reading road maps), local slang words, local customs, performing at job interviews and modes of respecting different cultures were cited by the participants. The Australian lifestyle and culture was identified as being quite different from the cultures of the migrants, thus many were concerned about conflict due to cross-cultural differences in choice of words and dress codes (Muslim attire cited as an example).

The data analysis from the interview data above revealed EAL speakers' concerns with cultural differences in conversation styles. In addition to linguistic elements of syntax, semantics, lexicon and phonology, spoken discourse has paralinguistic cues, communicative, functional and cohesive aspects which include social conventions which are acquired by speakers from birth. The engagement with the local residents, in reality, is a cross linguistic discourse between mother tongue and English. The comprehension of spoken discourse, therefore, rests on the spontaneous construction of meaning in the situation, listener's interpretation, shared expectations, possible worlds (PW) and the real world phenomena (Chelliah, 1991). Hence, the cross-linguistic discourse is embedded in linguistic variations with possibilities for a lack of comprehension and misunderstandings of intended messages. So, the repeated call for conversation classes by the interview participants is perceivably an outcome from experiences across counters, schools, government agents and other oral encounters.

Adults among the EAL participants further expressed their lack of English skills in Australian casual conversational terms, such as, "hi", "thank you" and "please" which were not the norm in their mother tongue conversations (P4). Australian English conversation, particularly Australian "slang words" and "body language" such as the terminology in greetings (how are you?) and other common etiquette posed cross-cultural challenges (P8). Participants expressed their lack of English to cope with the Australian culture,

Teach Australian history, how to speak when shopping, Australian life style, slang words, and expressions (for example, how is it going is new to migrants), difficult to access information from catalogue in the public library, main barrier for migrant access to information is English, in Thailand English is limited (P23).

In the response above, the shopping situation was of particular interest, as the EAL participant did not come from a culture where etiquette dictated that a shopper would say ‘*can you please hand me that product*’ and upon completion of the transaction, say ‘*thank you*’ before leaving the premises. The experience of the respondent was that it was a shop owners job to pass them a requested product, and having paid for the item, they were not required to offer thanks to the proprietor. This was not due to the EAL participant being ‘rude’, but rather being outside of their culture experience and social norms. To this end, it is crucial to teach new arrivals not just how to speak English, but how to speak it in the culture context of the host country.

4.2 Community building

The data analysis will next attempt to investigate the community building aspects of the public library environment and EAL community concerns about integration and community building strategies will be analysed.

4.2.1 Multicultural associations

Ethnic Associations hold the potential for engaging EAL speakers with the services and programmes offered by the public library, and as such act as bridges between the EAL speaker population and the public library. Participants indicated that their Ethnic Association (EA) were quite well organised, for example, the Vietnamese EA was focussed in ensuring that their community maintains their ethnic language proficiency. The Serbian EA collected signatures from community members to ensure books, magazines and newspapers in their language were placed in their local library.

Community school teaches ethnic language. Reading is taught by community school (P10).

We got 50 signatures and obtained subscription for magazines and books. Our EAL Association helps in obtaining books in our language. So now they read Croatian books with the claim they are too old to learn English (P14).

The public library could collaborate with the EA’s for purposes of advertising its location, services and programmes, informing EAL speakers about the principles

underpinning library system in WA and establishing a volunteer team. One possibility is that these organisations could organise workshops and talks about the library. The responses below are samples of the views about EAs' value as a platform for informing EAL speakers about their local library.

The public library should inform the Ethnic Associations, they [EA] could advertise the library services through Committee members who could inform ethnic members about public library services (P1).

Library needs to expose services through the media, word of mouth and sponsor EAL personal, figureheads and community leaders to become advocates. For new arrivals, the EA is the connection between library and the community (P2).

MCS (Multicultural Community Services) Centres organise workshops to encourage use of the public library (P3).

I suggest collaboration between EAL organisations and the public library. Public library could build a volunteer member list from ethnic groups. Select people from one's own country especially from the larger ethnic groups according to the suburb's demography (P4).

The commonality between these statements speaks to the need for collaboration between local ethnic associations and the public library. This may take the form of library staff visiting EA meetings and functions to inform the EAL community about the library system. Alternatively, invitations to the library to orientate and educate EAL speakers about the library could also inform them. The ethnic radio stations are mentioned as another channel for advertising the library's services.

Ethnic Association via community radio services such as 6EBA (P5).

4.2.2 Family

Whilst the role of the community is a strong driver in many of the EAL responses presented in this chapter, the family unit has an even stronger role in embracing the local

public library as they value its free services, safe democratic environment and its offer of educational resources. Participant (P24) valued the opportunity for children to interact with kids of the same age, particularly from their class in school,

It is a family educational outing the library is free and safe. Kids want to meet other lads of same age, interacting and being seen makes them happy. They have friends from the same age, same class in school, or else there is no contact. Social interaction happens! (P24).

This is a critical response as it alludes to the role the library can play in driving social interaction and cross cultural communication. Children of EAL families lacked opportunities to interact with children outside of their ethnic community groups, especially local Australian children who live within close proximity. Participant P24 indicated that even though his children attended a state government primary school, the opportunity for unstructured social interaction was not as apparent as it was in the public library space. In a similar vein, adults from EAL communities could benefit from the local library's potential to engage the talents of its residents,

We are encouraged to visit the public library by fact that we do not need to pay money. Homesick mums' skills can be used by the library, for example, music class, and recreation for women staying at home. The library could, tap skills of ethnic individuals in areas, such as weaving, traditional dance, ethnic food, talks on customs and traditions (P23).

Again, this sees the role of the library as one of a community hub, an unstructured, neutral place where individuals of all backgrounds can come and interact in a purely social context, within the safe setting the library and its government principles provide.

4.2.3 Meeting place

The EAL speakers' responses indicate the need for opportunities to meet local residents within the neighbourhood, particularly Australian born residents, to overcome their sense of social isolation through a process of bridging social capital. The public library could offer programmes for locals to become familiar with one another as a,

A meeting place role. Introduce the public library as a meeting place for neighbours, now we feel isolated, at the least know one's neighbour (P4).

The public library could attempt to unify different cultures, with Participant P8 viewing the library as a space to ease the meeting of people from different cultures.

Unity programmes to meet neighbours (P4)

It's a place to meet other people who use the library. Public library could organise social networking events about local culture, interaction with users and nonusers. Public library events are opportunities to mix Australians, Iranians, Iraqis and other (conflicting cultures) (P9).

The last sentence in the above response is interesting in that it promotes the public library as a place where existing social or cultural conflicts can essentially be 'left at the door', with attitudes being reset in the adopted host country. As the literature review indicated, this ideal may not always be as practical in application as it is in theory; however, it is a worthy concept with which to drive the community building objectives of the public library. Participant 13 lamented the lack of social interaction among residents in the local suburb, as described below,

Multicultural communities are understated. The public library can be used to make everyone feel accepted, learn about others cultures, as we are ignorant of others' cultures. There is a need to build respect. Multicultural interaction is relatively low among school, district, and parents in comparison to U.S. Parents here are unfriendly and reserved. There is no integration for new immigrants, no efforts to engage them in the community. WA is like an island within the mainland. There is a need to promote social cohesion.

The potential in initiating programmes that may indirectly result in community cohesion is illustrated in the quote below,

The public library can build multicultural sustainability in WA I miss my Spanish mates in U.K. (P27).

4.3 Computer access and literacy

Whilst the discussion of computing issues covered a relatively broad range of topics, most of the EAL responses were contextualised in terms of the following.

- ownership of the computer hardware,
- individuals' awareness about the intrinsic value and benefits computer skills and
- respondents' inclination and availability of spare time to learn and use computers.

Computer issues recur as one of the predominant themes in the responses by the EAL participants' about access to the local library services and perception of the public library system. It would seem that EAL participants perceived the public library as repository of computing facilities as well as collections of multilingual printed/audio-visual materials. The purchase of personal computers was not considered vital among the emerging groups as they had essential family related expenses such as budgeting for rent, food and clothes. An Ethnic Association leader, reported that,

not everyone can afford to buy a computer (P18).

The ability to purchase personal computers depends on the individual's financial circumstances and on the awareness of its value. Participant P21 stressed that,

Computers in the public library are essential, however, many are unable to buy them (P21).

4.3.1 Computer literacy

Participant 11 explained that the absence of computer skills among EAL individuals is not recognised by the library staff. The participant holds the view that the library staff failed to realise that some of the EAL individuals lacked computer literacy. The participant assumes the responsibility to impart computer skills depends on the library.

The new arrivals lack of computer skills are not addressed (P11).

In fact, the vital need for training in computer competency is a recurring one, as can be evidenced by the following participants' views. Participant P2 indicated that refugees usually fail to be competent in computers,

refugees lack computer skills (P2).

It was reported that many of the individuals in the ethnic groups had no education, lacked computer literacy and many of them did not own a personal computer.

Some of the migrants from Africa, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka, in particular, the new arrivals have no computer skills to search for jobs (P27).

The Ethnic Association leader (P5) described the community members as,

They (the people in my community) have no English, no computer skills, no academic culture, or literacy (P5)

Though the EAL participants sought computing resources and training from the public library, not all members of the migrant community appreciated the intrinsic benefits of owning a computer and becoming competent in its use;

but we require computer classes, and support for homework, they (people in my community) are unaware that computers will help school children (P17).

In fact, the responses from the EAL participants not only illustrate a lack of understanding of the benefits of computing technology, but also that a divide exists between the computing literacy of the adults and their children. Community leaders such as P5 and P17 indicated that many EAL parents relied on their children for computing related assistance and web based information. The data revealed that large sections of the ethnic groups lacked knowledge about computers or the Internet, which may be related to the transition from rural backgrounds to an information rich setting in WA which overwhelmed some of the ethnic groups. Participant 5 reported that, they were challenged by the new environment as a result they opted to remain with people from their own ethnic group.

They come from a rural culture they choose a simple life and interact among people from their own community (P5).

These individuals bond together and rarely interact with other members of the community who are more information and computer literate and as a result such individuals may not know the benefits of knowledge seeking processes or the value in acquiring computer skills. An inclination to learn computer skills is hindered by limited time, lack of language skills and lack of awareness of the value in computer knowledge. According to the Ethnic leader (P5) whose community is from rural backgrounds, most of the EAL speakers worked in the lower income sector, such as cleaners, taxi drivers and factory workers, positions which did not have a meaningful reliance on computing knowledge. The nature and level of jobs held by EAL speakers from rural backgrounds did not offer opportunities for computer use.

One participant reported that the fees were high for computer and English classes in local colleges (P1), thus even if the value of computing skills was recognised, the ability to acquire such skills could be limited by financial restraints. EAL speakers from rural backgrounds typically lacked an academic background, thus, information seeking skills were unknown to them. This situation creates a circumstance where EAL speakers could not effectively "*teach themselves*" as they did not have ready access to computing hardware, computing skills and the research mind-set to find and assimilate relevant learning materials.

The lack of computer background emerged as a barrier to library access in sectors of the EAL population who had education in ethnic languages. While the lack of English limits access to the local library, undeniably, the dominance of digital library services is an additional hurdle to EAL speakers with mother tongue education. Respondents who were educated in ethnic languages also had difficulty in accessing the catalogue and comprehending the library systems which are in predominately in English (as evidenced by a number of library staff responses in Chapter 5). The introduction of multilingual access and online content is seen as desirable by the EAL participants, including the following view.

The people from country were not able to use the catalogue to find books due to computer illiteracy the public library is encouraged to introduce ethnic websites (P8).

This issue of multilingual interfaces is actually very complex, both from the perspective of the EAL library user and the library staff. As an example, most public access to computers in the library is via basic level user accounts, which do not allow users to install new software or change existing settings. If an EAL user were to navigate to a website that is written in their native language, and that website required an add-on language pack (Mandarin for example) the user would not be able to install the language pack as they would not have sufficient access privileges to do so. The other approach to catering for multilingual users is to change the language settings in the actual computer operating system, something that library staff would be very reluctant to do. If an EAL user were to leave machine set to their native language after using the machine, the next user to come along (or even the library staff) would likely be unable to change the settings back if they were not fluent in that language. So, issues of multilingual interfaces are complex and whilst not the focus of this thesis, they emerge as vital issues of equitable access.

The lack of adequate Internet skills is related to the language of education as education in ethnic languages hinders access to the Internet. Compounding the issues related to computer access and literacy, access to and utilisation of the Internet and the World Wide Web was, as one might expect, also a problem for some of the EAL speakers' who were educated in ethnic languages. It is not surprising that the seniors were not inclined to learn computer skills,

Our senior folks are not keen to learn about the computer, they were happy with satellite television in our ethnic language and remain isolated (P22).

Participant P25 asserted that,

It is difficult to access information in English as English skills are limited (P25).

The responses indicated a preference of ethnic resources in the public library, as expressed by participant,

Computer classes for seniors will help them to network through the computer, for example the Urdu Web Sites, as many in my community are highly educated in Urdu (P18).

These three participants' quotes indicate that the lack of English Language would seem to be a key barrier to information access, along with the computing literacy aspect. Providing access to websites in ethnic languages of the EAL speakers could possibly be a way of attracting these ethnic community members to the library and thus reducing their preference for self-imposed isolation, though as detailed above, this issue is a complex one to address.

This issue is compounded by a majority of library services moving to the digital domain, particularly the online public access catalogue and online renewal services. The public libraries in WA display details about their libraries in web pages, which include a site map of the location, opening times, information about programmes and services and contact details in English. Computerised catalogue services for the search of books and resources means that individuals who lacked English and computer skills were unable to use the library catalogue, even to find information about multilingual resources housed in the library. This key information about the services of the library is inaccessible to EAL speakers who are educated in ethnic languages other than English.

In terms of this theme, computer literacy refers not just to the language barriers around interacting with computing interfaces, but, to EAL speakers' ability to switch on the power, log in, use word processor documents, browse the Internet, use email and search for information. Whilst these would be considered fundamental computing skills for most people, in terms of those EAL individuals coming from agrarian backgrounds and no English competency, such activities can be seen as insurmountable barriers.

The interview data revealed varying levels of computer literacy, with some of the EAL speakers having no computing skills at all through to those who were educated in the English language and held professional qualifications and deemed as having high levels of computing literacy. According to Participant 9 parents who were educated in English admitted that they had basic computer literacy, but lacked sufficient computer skills to make optimal use of the Internet, such as in assisting their children with school assignments, particularly, in identifying relevant articles for a homework topic.

The lack of computer literacy emerged among sectors of the EAL population who had education in ethnic languages, unlike the English educated, professionally employed and computer literate mentioned above.

Computer skills are lacking among our seniors, computer in ethnic languages such as Serbian or Croatian is necessary as they (my community folks) are not into learning English (P14).

However, the EAL groups from rural origins faced many challenges related to their lack of computer literacy which is expressed as,

computer illiteracy is a huge barrier (P3).

The skills to browse the Internet and select relevant material seemed a vital need, particularly for parents with school children. Multicultural and welfare staff who worked with EAL groups from rural and agrarian backgrounds expressed the urgent need for computer classes due to school homework demands as,

They (people from rural communities) were unable to assist kids with school work, we need to organise English/Computer class in the public library (P2).

The need for basic computer classes for adults and school children is evident in the response below from the same participant.

There is a need to establish computer teaching centres in public libraries, school kids from emerging communities are required to use computers, they have no computers at home to follow up on their homework, computer illiteracy is a huge barrier

The role of computer literacy, access to computer training, especially in terms of Internet tools is a constant theme emerging from the EAL participants. Whilst not all EAL participants recognise the value of computers and Internet connectivity to daily life in a Western community, those who did recognised that literacy in this area could aid their children's academic progress, their ability to find work and communicate with people online from their country of origin. Given the open access nature of the public library system in WA, the EAL participants saw the library as a place where their computer access, learning and literacy needs could be met.

4.3.2 Computers and the public library context

Computer and the public library context refers to EAL speakers' computer challenges in relation to recognition of the diversity in computer skills of the public library staff and their implementation of programmes and services to address the diversity in computer literacy of EAL library patrons.

The interview responses from the EAL participants indicated that there seemed to be a lack of awareness about the prevalence of different levels of computer literacy among the residents in the library's catchment areas. The library personnel continue with traditional library services and the EAL groups function independently without visiting or accessing the library's resources due to lack of computer knowledge and the English skills that would allow them to gain such knowledge. According to the participants, the unique information needs of the emerging communities were not recognised by the library at the time of writing. The participants highlighted the need for stakeholders such as the local councils or the Local Government Authority (LGA) as well as library staff to identify lack of computer skills among the new arrivals through community profile surveys (P2, P3, P6, P17, P19, & P21), and the diverse nature of the computer background needs to be acknowledged by Public Libraries (P2 & P21). The presence of illiterate individuals who have no knowledge about computers needs recognition by the local library if their services are to reflect inclusion and equitable principles. This could take the form of computers having multilingual interfaces, interactive training tools or regular computing classes with multilingual translators to assist. Such approaches are touched on by an Australian welfare services officer from an African nation, who expressed the view,

The library is well equipped with computers and staff, but we require computer classes (P17).

Another Australian welfare services officer (P21) stressed the need for training of librarians in multicultural service provision so that, library staff could recognise the EAL individuals lack of literacy in English and computer literacy, acknowledge the value in migrants presence and identify their reluctance to access the local public library. In short, the participant (P21) indicated the need for ethnic library staff to address the information needs of the emerging communities in WA, stating that,

Ethnic library staff is required. They need to identify migrants' information needs such as illiteracy in English and computers (P21).

In general, the shortcomings in the computer background of the emerging communities were not addressed, and the EAL speakers resorted to dependence on their community leaders for support in areas where digital knowledge was essential. While school children had exposure to education and computer usage, the adults merely survived on community support.

The government re-settlement initiatives cater to the needs of the EAL speakers and could allow the public library to be leveraged in complementing the services offered by the government. The data showed recurrent demands for basic computer classes from EAL residents.

Public library could organise computer training for Email set up, Log in systems and Word Skills for resume writing (P15).

Many of the EAL participants did not own personal computers at home. As a result, they were compelled to access computers in the library, as these computers were the only freely available devices to which they had access. The personal experiences of assisting school children with assignment work prompted the following response from one participant (P7),

We used the computers in the public library as there was no computer at home, I suggest computer activities for children, the library could install about 20 computers in a meeting room in the public library and run sessions on Face Book, Twitter etc., with own (community) presenters if public library staff is tied up. Lessons on computer use, how to use Internet, You Tube, Google, how to browse for ethnic movies, they are not able to use catalogue to find books due to computer illiteracy,(and lack of English). Encourage Ethnic Language web sites, as they have no computer (and English) skills.

The lack of computer literacy and ownership among some sectors of the EAL speaker population indicated the need for training in computer awareness, the benefits of computer

knowledge and basic skills in operating a computer. Participant P5 suggested that the public library could,

Establish a computer learning centre in the public library for school kids from emerging communities, as they have no computer at home.

The respondents requested that the library could offer free Email services and run computer classes (P1&P4).

Conversely, EAL participants who had some level of computer literacy, identified areas of training in computer skills to further enhance their literacy in computer applications, rather than just the provision of a computing resource. The computer literate participants' required the assistance of the public library to enhance their school children's Internet search skills, and in the use of Smart Art, PowerPoint, Excel and Photoshop (P10, P12, & P13).

We need computer lessons in Internet search for school lessons and assignments (P13).

Parents explained that their school children were unable to search and identify Internet resources related to their school assignments or even select appropriate articles from their Internet searches. In addition, participants who were parents claimed that they too lacked Internet search skills (P9 & P13). It should be noted that the issue of locating and identifying Internet resources that are of a good quality is not just limited to those in EAL communities, but is impacting the wider community as well.

Some parents suggested that computer classes could be held while the children were in school (P24). Multicultural services officers (P2, P3, P14, & P20) or ethnic association leaders (P5 & P18) who worked closely with refugee arrivals pointed out these individuals prefer to learn with other adults with similar computer background.

adults prefer to learn with adults, they are reluctant to learn with kids (P3).

Adult participants expressed the need for assistance in word processors for resume writing, formatting and job application letters. The participants stressed that the library is a non-threatening environment for enhancing keyboard skills (P6, P9, P12, & P13). Participant 8 raised the issue of the limited number of computers in their public library and indicated a

need for more computers, whilst parents of school children expressed the need for computer activities and classes for both primary and secondary students (P2, P3, P7, P8, P10, P13, P17, & P19).

Parents who were highly educated in computer education such as computer degree holders (P10, P27 & P24) were aware of the electronic educational learning programmes offered in the public library. They encouraged their school children studying in primary and secondary schools to maximise the use the e-learning resources offered by their local public library. The online tutorial for school help was highly valued,

We used the computers, we used the Online Tutorial regularly, we appreciated the speedy responses by tutors (P10)

Respondent P10 indicated the need for a wider exposure by the library for this online educational service for school children. Furthermore, Participant 27 who used e-educational resources stressed that,

The library could increase E Services in the library, kids have iPad, want to download E Books, participate in E Activities, join other students in WA, NSW, Victoria and other International students for study activities, E Games, e.g., MATHLETICS. Library could promote these activities e.g. promote these among student interested in Maths in Maths competitions via the Web at international level and win points to purchase E Shop items for example E Dress, E Dolls, library could promote E Games to motivate kids.

Participant P24 had encouraged children to use e-learning programmes called Study Ladder which followed the same school curriculum outlined for mathematics and English. The above responses show a significant gap in the service requirements from the various EAL users, particularly the parents of children, with some parents requiring only basic computer literacy training from the library, through to those with complex requirements reflective of their family's education levels and professional employment. As will be discussed later in the thesis, these widely varying requirements of the EAL respondents could be excessive demand on library staff in terms of the service they could realistically provide. This thesis explores and identifies these specialised EAL needs and service requirements, and

will later compare those to library staff attitudes, but in terms of practical solutions such outcomes are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Web communication through social media such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and email are potential areas of training and support that the library could facilitate for the EAL speakers in their catchment areas. While extensive communication via social media is a reality in the modern world, the public libraries are yet to take advantage of this channel to optimise library access and use. As the next chapter will illustrate, most public libraries are heavily constrained in terms of their ability to deliver social media access or services.

The public library staff and the EAL associations are likely channels for identifying the computer challenges encountered by some sectors of the EAL groups, with the public library being strategically located to contribute substantially towards meeting the computer information needs of its local citizens. The need to educate the emerging communities in the value of accessing the resources of the library is critical to equity in access and integration in the community. The EAL speakers' background characteristics emerged as factors that influenced language and computing access and caused barriers to their usage of the local library services, as will be explored below.

4.4 Perceived barriers

Perceived barriers, embedded in an individual's background and in the public library system, are identified as influences that affect cognitive and social processes, which result in the failure to access resources, programmes and services in the local library by EAL speakers.

4.4.1 EAL perceptions of barriers

Interactions with EAL speakers' reveal diverse circumstances, which emerge as causes for their seeming inability to access public library services. The political environment, in the EAL speakers' countries of origin prior to their relocation to Australia impacts their perception of the public library system and other government institutions. The interview responses highlight that some EAL groups encountered unjust treatment by the home governments which were the compelling reasons for them to flee from their villages, and ultimately, their nations. The personal experiences of groups from countries such as Burma and Sudan influenced their perception of authority and government institutions which is evident in Participant 2 response below,

Refugees see institutions as an evil place. The refugees see that their own governments and institutions have not looked out for their welfare (P2).

The overall distaste for authority would seem to underpin some of the EAL speakers' indifference to the public library system in WA. Additionally, the indifference to the local library by the EAL speakers relates to their lack of knowledge about the library as an institution of knowledge and learning. This is due in part to the limited number of libraries in their original home environment, thus, the concept of a public library is new to some EAL families as shown in the response below:

Due to lack of awareness of the library institution, its location, due to aversion to institutions, as a result of background—where there is no idea of institutional set up (P2).

Public library culture is non-existent in their own country P3.

As they do not have a library culture coming from a war torn country with a rural culture (P5).

The absence of large numbers of libraries in EAL countries of origin in comparison to the prevalence of libraries in the local suburbs in WA accounts, in part, for the EAL lack of awareness of the principles, which underpin the library system. In particular, the fundamental principles of democracy, the concept of a neutral space, and that services are free to residents, are unknown to some EAL families as evident from the response below,

They are unaware that the library is part of the Big Brother system and there is no need for such fear. They have no understanding that the public library system as an organisation that it is a fair and democratic system (P2).

Fear of authority, the lack of knowledge about the democratic principles behind the services in a public library and the fact that resources and programmes are offered free of charge are some of the perceived barriers of the EAL speakers. Participant 26 added that,

Library staff attitudes need to change- they need to become more, friendly, and not remain behind counter, communicate and engage with community, as some fear staff and feel intimidated (P26).

Furthermore, the ethnic groups hold preconceived views about the public library as a space for English speaking clientele described in the response by Participant 2 and 5.

As in the past, the public library is an English set up, not having English imposes limits. They see the public library as an English set up, it's not seen as a Multicultural library. It's seen as purpose built-perception of as an educational resource centre (P2).

They do not visit the library, for example, Africans, Mid-Eastern groups, Serbians and Burmese (Kechin & Karens), (P5).

The public library environment imparts the message that it caters for English educated users.

The Participant from the Croatian community mentioned that, some of our migrants have low use of the public library due to their low level of education, limited material possessions and are busy making ends meet to buy food, accommodation (to pay mortgages) hence have no time for reading and leisure (P14).

Assurances that the public library caters to the information needs of all residents regardless of ethnicity or educational background are not obvious to people from ethnic communities. As well as providing training opportunities in English language proficiency and a meeting place for all community members, access to computing training and resources proved to be a recurrent theme from the EAL respondents.

4.4.2 EAL perceptions of library system barriers

There seem to be agreement that many of the EAL speakers are not aware of the library and its services. Participants raised the need for the public library management to inform EAL groups about the services they provide and educate EAL residents in their locality about

the principles of operation. Participants (P2, P3 & P5) reiterated that there was a dire need for informing the services of the library to the EAL groups.

Promotion of public library use can be encouraged by EAL Association, working in collaboration with the public library. To create awareness, in the future ECU (from findings of this project), Local Government, Government Agency, Office of the Premier advocate to pass information about public library services. Multicultural Service Centres (MSC) could organise workshops to encourage use of public library and advertise services (P3).

If the public library aims to include the diverse groups in their locality it is inevitable that concerted efforts to educate marginalised ethnic groups about Australian public library services are going to be required.

Some are surprised at services as they are unaware of services as in their home country they only borrowed books and there were no other programmes and workshops. They had no idea of programmes and held the old view of the library as a repository of books (P14).

The above view seems to be recurrent response among the EAL participants as most find the local library services to be quite different from their own countries. The numerous resources, services and programmes are evidence of a long tradition of high standards practised in the WA public library system, however these standards may not be prevalent in the countries of origin of some of the EAL groups.

4.5 Multicultural aspects in the public library environment

Perspectives of EAL speakers' about their experiences related to the public library system, of the public library staff and about library collections, services and programmes are addressed in this section.

4.5.1 EAL perceptions of library staff

The public library system in WA has a long established tradition of public service to the West Australian population where the majority are English speaking Anglo-Saxon

families. The dramatic rise in ethnic numbers, particularly in the last five years, requires inclusive library policies for equity of access. Many of the newly arrived ethnic groups indicate that visits to the local library were not a regular habit. Unlike WA, the countries of origin of the participants did not promote a culture of participation in their public libraries. Comparatively, the presence of a public library in the local suburb is obvious in WA, the circumstances were significantly different in the countries of origin; regular visits were rare and many lived in environment where libraries were unheard of. The public library staff can pose challenges to EAL speakers, many of whom have cultural inhibitions besides the lack of knowledge about the working of a library as demonstrated by Participant 2 below.

public library staff are English speaking, while the ethnic visitor has a cultural (block) barrier about Dewey Decimal system, about international standards and mechanisms of living (P2).

The numerous inhibitions that are embedded in the migrants' personal experiences requires empathy by public library staff who hold the unique position of authority and patronage within a long established information service provision tradition. Service provision stems from professionally trained staff and clear guidelines which potentially hold the key for enhancing lifelong learning for these new arrivals. In other words, the staff, are in a position to make a meaningful difference to the EAL residents in their locality if they act more proactively in welcoming the ethnic groups. Participant 21, who works in the government welfare services highlighted the vital role of the public library Staff.

Librarians need training in culturally appropriate customer services. When an ethnic enters the library, one is unsure if they are welcome or not. Staff could a little bit more time and effort, be proactive and understand that it takes a lot for a migrant to walk in and ask for help. A minority group is always a minority. Others in the library learn from librarians 'body language and act similarly. Public library staff could model appropriate behaviour for others to take on board. Rather than hide behind desk, and be too busy with tasks, they could be more concerned about public relations with these ethnic visitors. The public library is a public service, which is more than a place for books. Public library should give directions about how:

1) how to get what I need,

2) what is available,

3) where is it available.

Migrants are individuals each with own issues, just an ethnic staff is insufficient, it should be a staff well trained in ethnic matters. Even a Diversity Officer could be employed in the library (P21).

The need for training staff on the socio-cultural backgrounds of EAL clientele could assist in conveying the need for a more proactive approach to ethnic clients.

Train staff to deal with Non English Speaking Backgrounds NESB, include training in body language, so as not to be misunderstood by librarians and be sensitive to ethnic needs (P8).

The above illustrates the critical position of the library staff in encouraging and enabling EAL visitors to the library, particularly in light of the library's role as a welcoming and safe place in their new environment. This view evidenced by Participant 19 who works closely with migrants as a welfare officer,

People feel safe, one among the many in the mixed local community.

Some feel that they are not welcome. Many of the newcomers have no transport, no car, they work long hours and are illiterate (P19).

Invariably, the librarian who holds a position of authority can initiate inclusive customer services to the current practices. Reach out to the marginalized sectors in their suburb who have not accessed the local library services and programmes,

Library staff have no experience or contact with people who are not using the library (P6).

Participant 9 pointed out that the public library is a viable space for engaging EAL speakers from conflicting nations, where conflict is driven by religious beliefs, national boundaries and other causes underpinning the decision to relocate to Australia. These groups who are in conflict reside within the suburbs where the public library is located, with the

library potentially existing as a neutral space for these groups to meet and perhaps overcome past differences. The potential for community building by the library is a viable opportunity and possibly, these migrants can rise above their differences in their new Australian context.

Staff behind work desk is not a help, when there is opportunity to mix with Australians, Iranians, Iraqis and others in conflict (P9).

Participant 9 expressed the need for librarians to come forward beyond the confines of the counter and interact with new visitors in their library. Many of the participants asserted that despite the increase in ethnic numbers in WA there was an absence of increase in the diversity of library services.

Though there is an increase in ethnic numbers, there is no increase in ethnic services (P19).

There is an increase in ethnic numbers, but initiatives (of inclusive services) by the public library are limited or none. Services are similar as in the past (P11).

Additionally, the participants (P11, P14, P17, P19 & P26) confirmed that the numbers in their ethnic community had increased in the past five years in response to such an interview question. The number of refugees and asylum seekers from Iran and Iraq (P1), Ethiopia (P26), Sudan (P3), Kenya (P6 & P17), Sri Lanka (P8 & P27) and Burma (P5 & P 8) had increased dramatically in a five year period.

According to the ABS (2013b) the population of WA was 2.52 million in June 2013, an increase of 24% in ten years and 3.3% between 2012 and 2013, proclaimed as the fastest growth of all states. Metropolitan Perth, the area selected for the present study, had a population of 1.97 million which constitutes 78% of the total WA population. The substantial increase in WA's population, especially in terms of ethnic numbers is of particular import to public libraries, where a move to re-defining traditional services to more ethnically relevant programmes is apparent. Such changes are discussed more fully in chapters six and seven.

The presence of substantial number of EAL speakers supports the call for increased diversity in library services and programmes as mentioned by Participant 11,

The legitimacy of public library can be increased by including migrant services or by redefining the public library as a community centre (P11).

Principles of inclusivity in staff appointments and library services could possibly engage a wider range of clientele from the local EAL community.

4.5.2 Multicultural staff

The analysis of the public library staff aspects revealed participant views relating to the benefits of employing ethnic staff. Participant 4, explained that ethnic staff members will be familiar with information needs of the people from their community and will be seen as one from their ethnic sector,

I suggest a roster of Multi-lingual staff, who is comfortable with EAL speakers and one who can identify with EAL needs (P4).

Many of the participants stated that marginalized groups particularly from rural backgrounds did not access the library facilities, with Participant 4 being of the opinion that ethnic staff would have contact with their community members and are likely to promote the benefits of accessing the library services.

A multicultural staff would be able to encourage the nonusers to visit the library. Native speakers might help (P6).

The Ballajura and Girrahween public libraries employ Vietnamese staff and hold collections in Vietnamese. Participant 10 asserted that the libraries are widely accessed by their community and the community school and that most members of the Vietnamese community are proficient in speaking and reading in their language,

The Vietnamese staff is handy. The section in (Ballajura, Girrahween) on Vietnamese books are accessed by individuals and the community school (Vietnamese).

Participant 14 narrated her father's reluctance to visit the library after the Croatian staff relocated to another library,

Ethnic staff was much appreciated by dad, who stopped visits after staff moved away.

The specific background details of traumatic experiences and subsequent trials encountered during the journey to Australia by the refugees and boat arrivals are familiar to residents from their own communities who had arrived 20 or 30 years previously (often encountering similar experiences). Undeniably, the ethnic community individuals will be familiar with the many complex issues related to the new arrivals as confirmed by Participant below,

An ethnic staff will definitely be familiar with their own ethnic issues. Library staff need training in dealing with migrants (P16).

The identification with ethnic socio-cultural challenges could share their experiences and encourage their community members to access the facilities in the library,

A multicultural staff would be able to encourage the nonusers to visit the library. Native speakers might help (P6).

Obviously, few public libraries in WA would have the financial resources to appoint staff representative of each of the EAL communities in their catchment areas. However, as highlighted in the literature review, drawing upon those local communities in the form of volunteers is one possible solution to this issue.

4.5.3 Volunteers and the EAL associations

The participants were keen for some sort of ethnic presence in the public library due to the fact many were not accessing the services of the library and were denied the benefits it offered. Alternatively, some of the participants suggested that engaging ethnic volunteers might assist in promoting the public library services to ethnic groups. In addition, the services of ethnic associations are potential channels for advertising the local library. It is

envisaged that library staff could inform the ethnic associations about library events which subsequently could be conveyed to their community. Participant 4 proposed a roster of ethnic volunteers from different ethnic groups living in the suburb as shown below,

I suggest a roster of Multi Lingual staff, who is comfortable with EAL speakers and one who can identify with EAL needs. There could be collaborations between public library and EAL association and form a group of volunteer members from these ethnic groups (P4).

Participant 17 who works as a librarian suggested seeking the assistance of English speaking ethnic individuals,

Public libraries could include visits to Ethnic Associations. The library could appoint a Support Officer and function as an Information Centre. A multicultural staff is essential or ethnic volunteers from English speaking backgrounds could convey public library services to the Ethnic Associations. The library could approach Ethnic Associations for volunteers.

The EAL participants' responses revealed serious concerns about the limited access to the local library by many of the families and children from the ethnic groups and that the presence of ethnic staff members may enhance their access to the library.

4.5.4 Multilingual resources

The analysis of ethnic responses also revealed the repeated requests for multilingual collections in the public library. The different ethnic groups displayed a preference for books, newspapers, magazines and DVDs in their native languages. The excerpts below recount some of the examples of multilingual library resources desired by the interview participants,

I suggest Persian collections as we sufficient have numbers of highly educated families. Introduce ethnic Internet access (P1).

Participant 6 suggested that,

The Gujarati language DVDs, magazines, and newspapers will be used by Kenyans (Gujarati migrants from Kenya) in WA.

While Participant 8 expressed the need for,

*Ethnic books, newspapers, multilingual internet access and movies.
A notice board for community news and notices from ethnic groups could be useful too.*

These suggestions, were sometimes accompanied by definitive action, for example, the Urdu and Croatian participants elaborated that they had successfully introduced collections in their ethnic languages to the local library frequented by their group,

I wrote to the Nedlands library and sought permission to place Urdu books (a total number of 12-15books) on a trial basis. My community would like Urdu DVDs, novels, magazines, Women's magazines, serial novels and monthly periodicals (P7).

The Urdu speaker (P16) also suggested,

The library could purchase Urdu collections such as suspense Thrillers, stories subscribe on a monthly basis. Weekly newspapers such as the Nawa –e-Waqt, The Nation (English papers) were cited. Pamphlets in ethnic languages according to the demographic composition provide Ramadan news, educate the community by using the public library.

The Croatian group successfully facilitated the subscription of magazines in the Serbian language.

We have an isolated niche community among seniors. We got 50 signatures and subscribed magazines in Serbian language (P14).

Participant 17 requested resources in Swahili so that the African community could have access to news from that part of the world.

Swahili books are lacking in the public library. Subscribe Swahili newspapers and magazines, to keep abreast with the latest in Africa.

The participants from Croatia (P20), Burma (P18) and Nepal (P13) expressed the need for similar resources in their ethnic languages. As chapter five will demonstrate, the issue of multilingual resources and their provision by the public library generated some interesting responses from the library staff participants in this research, including the core issue of language as a barrier to resource selection and acquisition.

4.5.5 Multilingual signage and classes

Most of participants' responses included requests for signage in ethnic languages according to the demographic composition of the local suburb. Welcome messages and directions on the use of the library facilities were suggested for promoting access, for denoting respect to diverse groups as well as creating a welcoming space (P2, P6, P8, P15, & P19).

Welcome messages and directions in diverse language according to demography (P19).

Place welcome signs and computer screen in different languages (P5).

Some of the participants expressed the need for multilingual conversation classes in various ethnic languages (P12 & P25). These could be casual conversation sessions to promote cross-cultural communication between all members of the local community. Participant 25 suggested the library could engage the local EAL residents to participate in informal ethnic language sessions.

4.6 EAL preference for public library services

The interviews with EAL participants revealed a wide range of public library services which could be offered in addition to current resources and programmes. The range of

information services preferred by participants in this research is reflective of backgrounds of both high and low literacy within the EAL communities. Essentially, the EAL community members coming from high literacy backgrounds have different service expectations than those in the EAL community who have limited literacy and awareness of the library. While requests for English language classes and computer literacy skills are the predominant services emerging from the interview responses, the data indicates the need for public library to redefine its traditional service delivery. In principle, the data points towards reinventing the traditional public library from a book repository into a community hub. The EAL interview responses lean towards social, educational and cultural library activities.

4.6.1 Community hub

The response below is representative of a high literacy EAL participant and the needs services require of their local public library. Participant 1 holds a Master degree from an Iranian University and the individual expressed the personal aspirations for the local public library as,

There is lack of programmes for migrants, international community and new arrivals. The library could organise leisure time activities and programmes, free painting, poetry reading, cultural movies for international audience and diverse music events. Sharing programmes from diverse cultures during weekends and holidays are positive past times for the community. These events are aimed to introduce different cultures, for example, organise a coffee morning with invitations. The library could organise workshops on real environment, for example, provide assistance in finding jobs, writing curriculum vitae in English, assist in identifying employment services, and train migrants in presenting oneself for interviews. Information on rental rules- just basic information will help talks or consulting services on ESL courses or buying cars. The library functions as an Information Centre concept.

The responses distinctly indicate that EAL speakers, particularly those with high literacy characteristics, require a local link for their numerous information needs. It is likely that the democratic and neutral principles which underpin the concept of public libraries provide support for requests for library services that are more than mere book exchanges.

Furthermore, evidence from the data shows the need for assistance in a wide variety of information sources in order to cope in the new environment. The quotation below further reiterates the request for the library to diversify its services and function as a community hub,

I suggest redefining the public library as a Resource Centre about services in Australia; induction on local culture, behaviour, language, everyday information on the bus system, rental bonds, tenancy, driving licence, and Visa guidelines. Information Services on childcare, school systems, dress code, behaviour (to participate or not participate in kids' school voluntary programmes), fees (for banks, school, TAFE and Universities), Fire Services, Emergency services, public library orientation sessions, Australia Post, public library timings and so on. These can be enclosed in a public library brochure. It will be useful (P4).

The responses above indicate the experiences encountered by the EAL participants, the sample probably represents the lack of ethnic information services and it reflects the perceived inability to obtain assistance by many new arrivals. The sentiments above are further evidenced in the quotation below,

Public library could assist in filling forms, such as Bank accounts, they are shy and backward, with no library culture, we would like an usherette to ask, "Can I help you?" These people from the Hills (Karen) find staff unfriendly, they would like staff to approach them (P18).

The interview data revealed that the public library's programmes could operate in collaboration with services available in the local council along similar lines to the types of collaboration raised in section 4.2.2.3. For example, some of the potential areas of cooperation include the services of the Ranger, the Community Services Officer and the Youth Services Officer in the Local Council. The long summer holidays could be utilised more expediently, particularly for teenagers, as explained below,

Collaboration between the public library and the Local Council services is proposed – use the public library as meeting point for activities- summer

swimming, use services of Ranger services, Red Cross and other Council staff - organise holiday activities to engage children and keep harm away.

Public library needs to function as a community centre. Teenage son borrowed Manga books, DVDs, however, we require more attractive library services for teenagers (P12).

The recurrent themes in the interview responses illustrate the distinct divide that prevails between the library service provided and the information services required by the EAL groups. Whilst natural born Australian members of the community may think of their public library as a place to go for books, movies and internet access, it is apparent from the above interview response that EAL members of the same community in the same suburb have distinctly different views of the library as a service provider. Essentially, the EAL community members approach the library with queries not pertaining to ‘can I borrow’ but rather ‘where do I go..’ or ‘how do I fill in..’, with the expectation that such information requests can be satisfied on the spot. Whether such expectation on behalf of the EAL participants in this research is both reasonable and achievable is not for this thesis to answer, though some suggested approaches are raised in chapters six and seven.

4.6.2 Advertising public library services

If the public library’s system is to enhance the lifestyles of emerging communities, these communities need to know that the library exists in the first place. The findings of the interview data focus on advertising and informing marginalised sectors of the population about the value and potential in accessing the local library for their families. Overall, the respondents stressed that there was a lack of advertisement about the programmes and services of the local library for EAL newcomers.

There is a lack of advertisement about library services to new arrivals and the public. The library could advertise services, organise courses for new arrivals, and show the facilities and location of the library. Advertise in the International arrival hall, Internet, TV, Brochures in airport, IGA, shopping centres, Bus Station, Mosque, church, and through EAL associations (P1).

Participant 7 asserted that advertising materials are abundant about offers in local shops (such as supermarket leaflets) and noted the absence of similar efforts in showcasing the services of the local library,

I am unaware of services of the library. There is no source of information on public library services, yes there is abundant advertising about sales in shops in letterboxes, these letter drops, but none on public library, there is no information about library events. No one talks about the public library.

Participant 9 explains that,

Public library services are unknown to new arrivals, there are no notices about the library, some are unaware of the public library. For example, booking Online for programmes many are unaware of this procedure. public library needs to interact with Users and nonusers. More advertising is necessary on public service notice boards, such as – train stations and public spaces. Introductory sessions for housewives on child rearing. Place welcoming messages on public library's free services.

Participant 3 expressed concerns about EAL groups' from rural regions of Africa whose presence in the fringes of the WA community are often associated with low education and high unemployment,

Universities, the Local Government Authority, Educational Institutions (TAFE) need to organise workshops to pass on information about the public library, ESL Centres and Computers schools. One way of attracting is through ESL classes and introduces them into the system of lifelong learning. There is high unemployment, I suggest employment workshops by the public library will help these groups.

New arrivals to Australia have to complete compulsory English lessons, with Participant 2 suggesting that the public library staff could use these classes to introduce the WA library system to arrivals,

Education about the public library is essential during English classes and organise educational trips for EAL speakers to the public library.

The seniors among the EAL speakers represent substantial numbers, Participant 19 works with seniors as a Welfare Officer described the information needs as,

List the facilities for the elderly, encourage meeting groups for seniors and facilitate socialising among the diverse (EAL) senior population in the locality. Some lack the knowledge that the public library exists. The lack of knowledge that the public library is free is common. Library staff are not friendly, many are lost as their education is limited. There is a need to conduct demographic analysis to offer relevant services.

The public library could engage with the local schools to promote the programmes and resources of the library. Participant 17 elaborated that the children's Reading Programme collaborated with the local library and it drew many EAL parents to the public library,

The kids Primary School morning tea informed parents about the public library. The kids' kindergarten too used the public library. The school staff were encouraging primary students to read. They organised Reading Programmes in the public library (Loftus Library in Vincent, Stuart Hill). The school advised Mums to attend Reading sessions in the public library. Librarians could inform Primary Schools about their programmes. The public library can be proactive in promoting the public library in Primary schools. The school Reading Programme drew parents to the public library and facilitated access to its services. It was safe, free, relaxed atmosphere children's section was very attractive to kids. Public library can advertise its services and promote its programmes in schools and EAL Associations. Reading stories assisted in English acquisition. While accompanying kids to the public library, (EAL) mums browsed newspapers, books and magazines.

Participant P18 then suggested that,

the public library could use the school teachers to provide information about the library. And school teachers can advise their kids to visit the public library.

The role of the preschool appears to hold a vital function in inculcating reading habits at a young age as mentioned by Participant 2,

Pre School Education should function with the public library to promote reading and encourage the habit of visiting the library among young and new comers to the country (P2).

The public library is perceived as a channel for community building outcomes, as elaborated by Participant 16,

Connection with others with similar circumstances is likely in the library. The library needs to engage the community, reach out to the people in the suburb, informing, promoting and advertising about public library programmes with the aim to remove cultural barriers. The library could arrange a pick up bus for the community with tours to the library. Some do not know the existence of the library or its location.

4.6.3 Academic assistance

The limited education in English and computers among some the EAL groups implies that they are unable to assist with their children's school homework, an issue alluded to earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, many of the EAL adults are busy working, and it restricts the time available for assisting their children with schools assignments. Some of the EAL groups also lack academic skills which are essential for information seeking processes. In view of the rationale above, the EAL participants suggested that more focussed educational services with specific target audience such as year 12 students could be trialled by the public library, with the educational assistance offered in the local library acting as a complement to the school curriculum. The library could collaborate with the local school and offer programmes in alignment with the school schedule of holidays and examinations. The EAL participants acknowledge that the public library is an invaluable facilitator of education,

in particular the resources are hailed as relevant and helpful in enhancing learning goals as evidenced by Participant 20 who stated that,

I used the reference books for studies and assignment in SLWA widely. The SLWA staff were helpful and friendly, and sent emails about availability of resources to assist in library search.

The library staff's guidance and assistance are highly regarded by the EAL participants, as is the library itself as a place of study,

Public library is useful for studies, loans of books, DVDs, and assistance in children s homework (P17).

Participant 5 added that,

My community finds the public library helpful for school homework and references. These services are very useful. The access to books for reading (for homework) especially information with latest information helps the children in my community (families have no books at home). Appoint a Support Office it may help these people (P5).

A sample of a response of a parent with teenage children summarises the views of EAL participants,

The library can purchase students' Study Guides, advertise the Internet Tutorials. Public library needs to stock Exam Papers (TEE) like the collections in the SLWA. Opening for longer hours during weekends, holidays and public holidays will assist students to study in the library. As school students study in the local school, the library should promote group study corners in the quiet areas. There is a need for workshops on TEE Maths, Physics, Literature, Study Skills, Time Management and other subjects. One way is to use volunteers or retired teachers who are specialist in the subject areas. Collaboration with school teachers to organise workshops for Year 11 and Year 12 is another approach (P8).

There is a suggestion for enhancing EAL access by teaching information seeking processes in the public library,

teach knowledge seeking processes to people (P26).

Continuing the theme of public libraries interacting with their local school system, most schools offer foreign languages as part of the regular curriculum, thus, similar language activities in the public library could assist with the acquisition of a second language. Participant 12 comes from a mixed background of Japanese and Thai languages. The diverse nature of the local population is evident in the suburbs in WA hence language activities are likely to be mutually beneficial. The quotation represents the EAL participant's view on the potential for the library to engage in foreign language sessions,

The library should offer or facilitate language classes with links with local school and Local Council in Japanese, Mandarin, French, as additional instruction to the school curricula. These sessions could be organised according to the ABS demographic statistics. Survey the diversity in the suburb and schools and offer languages accordingly (P12).

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented data and analysis around the real life phenomenon of the public library experiences of EAL participants and the communities. The data demonstrated that EAL speakers have challenges unique to their individual socio-cultural background. Responses from the EAL participants indicate a need for library staff to acknowledge the complexity embedded in the EAL scenario as well become more aware of the wide diversity of information services that are essential for EAL groups. The data analyses highlighted two core themes, namely, the characteristics of the EAL speakers and their expectations of the public library system along with the prevailing public library service provision as it currently stands. The information needs of the former require a proactive and a more empathetic approach by the latter.

Chapter 5

Library Staff Quantitative Web Survey Responses

The key question here is 'Where does our product/service sit within the wider context?' The focus is the final output and how it accords to the expectations and requirements of target communities (Dobрева, O'Dwyer, & Feliciati, 2012, p. 249).

5.0 Overview

This chapter encompasses the data analysis of responses from staff employed in the public libraries in metropolitan Perth, WA. The data analysis includes the responses to the web questionnaire emailed to staff in the public libraries in metropolitan Perth, identified for the sample area for the research project. As a follow up to the library staff survey, a sample of four public library staff interview responses was incorporated to allow comparison with the findings of the electronic web questionnaire.

The data on public library staff perspectives was generated through two instruments:

1. Quantitative online web questionnaire administered to library professionals,
2. Qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted with library professionals.

It should be noted that the 2nd instrument listed above, the qualitative semi-structured interview with library professionals only returned responses from four participants, and thus the data cannot be deemed as either reliable or generalisation. Rather than omitting these limited set of responses, where they have some relevance to reliable data, such as that presented in findings of the library staff Web questionnaire, that have been presented as supporting statements.

5.1 Web Survey

An online web questionnaire was used as it is an efficient instrument for gaining data from a large number of library staff. The absence of research evidence regarding public library services to ethnic users in WA, defines the rationale for an exploratory approach to the

present research. Specifically, this web survey was administered to library staff to gain perspectives on existing levels of service, resources and programmes for EAL speakers. The premise, that staff members are a source of information about the current services for ethnic users, underpins the decision to gain quantitative data through a web survey.

This web questionnaire was designed to complement the qualitative semi structured interviews with EAL participants as outlined in Chapter Four. The qualitative interview data and the quantitative web survey data explored insights as to whether WA public libraries offer services and programmes to meet the information needs of the EAL communities in their suburbs. The study aimed to contribute new knowledge about public services to EAL speakers in WA.

The web survey was prepared using the Qualtrics web-based survey tool. Once the survey was completed, an email link and invitation to participate in the Web survey were disseminated to public library websites such the WA Information Network (WAIN), Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) and Email addresses of public libraries in metropolitan Perth. A total of 187 library staff responded to the Web survey. It was noted that email URLs are likely to be freely disseminated; as a result responses from library staff whose libraries were not located within the sample for the study (metropolitan Perth) were removed. A total of 152 participants from 42 identified public libraries located in metropolitan Perth, WA were included for the data analysis.

This instrument primarily relied on a Likert scale questions, along with open-ended text response questions. Participants registered their views and level of agreement or disagreement with relevant statements across the following five sections to the survey.

- Section one - Demographic information:
- Section two - Views on EAL Users and Library use
- Section three - EAL library user and diversity in library services
- Section four - EAL library services, technology & libraries as community spaces
- Section five - library's capacity to provide EAL services and funding

Each of the above sections of the survey sought detailed information across a total of sixteen questions. The five points in the Likert scale gauged the intensity of respondents' views on the issue embedded in the question on the scale of *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *agree* and *strongly agree*. The mid-point, namely *neither agree or disagree* in the Likert scale is referred to as the "neutral" response to a bipolar agreement–disagreement scale (Armstrong, 1987). As well as providing a comparison point to some of

the qualitative data gather in chapter four, the Web survey was designed to gather data against this thesis's supporting research question:

What services are offered to EAL users by public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia?







5.2 Section One: demographic information

Twenty Local Government Authorities (LGA) in metropolitan Perth administer the 78 public libraries located in the suburbs (at the time of writing), to which a total of 152 relevant library staff responded to the web survey. The demographic data was designed to give some idea of the age of the libraries as well as the qualifications and roles of the library staff participating in the survey. The following will present the question as presented to the Web survey participants followed by a breakdown of the responses. It should be noted that the web survey instrument did not require every question to be answered in a mandatory fashion, thus, not all questions were answered by all participants.

Question: I am currently employed as...

The data in Table 5-1 shows that 59% of the respondents held professional library qualifications, while 22% of the staff lacked formal professional library qualifications. A minority (8%) of respondents describe themselves as library Technicians, while another 2% were archivists and records managers, with the other categories comprising 7%. The evidence indicates that the majority of the library personnel who responded possessed professional library qualifications.


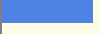




Table 5-1: Library staff qualifications and roles

Answer		Response	%
Total		123	100%
A librarian		73	59%
I have no formal Library qualifications		27	22%
A librarian technician		10	8%
Other		9	7%
A teacher librarian		2	2%
An Archivist/Records manager		2	2%

Question: I am qualified as...

Looking further, the data from Table 5-1, we see in Table 5-2 that 29% of the respondents were library managers, these staff holding responsibility for shaping the programmes and services of the library within the guidelines of the Strategic Directions of the SLWA. One third of respondents (31%), were employed, as Librarians, indicating that overall 60% of the respondents were professionally qualified personnel.

Table 5-2: Library staff roles

Answer		Response	%
Total		124	100%
A librarian		38	31%
A librarian-in-charge (manager)		36	29%
A Library officer/clerk/Assistant		34	27%
Other		8	6%
A Library Technician		5	4%
Volunteer		3	2%






The next question established the age of the public libraries in metropolitan Perth.

Question: Our library is ... years old

The data in Table 5-3 indicates that the public library system is a long established tradition in WA, with most of the public libraries adhering to a system that has been

established more than 10 years (68%). New libraries were constructed in suburbs in response to population increases, for example Joondalup, Gosnells and Success. The age of a public library could possibly influence the extent of diversity in services and resources, with a possible alignment with new ethnic arrivals living in the newer suburbs which in turn have the newer libraries.

Table 5-3: Age of public libraries

Answer		Response	%
Total		124	100%
new (less than 2 years old)		16	13%
been recently refurbished (during the last 2 years)		6	5%
between 5 and 10 years old		18	15%
between 10 and 20 years old		33	27%
20 years and older		51	41%

The large number of professionally qualified staff and the long established tradition of the WA public library underpin the background for the evaluation of public library services to EAL residents in the next section of the data analysis.

5.3 Section Two: EAL speakers and library use

This section of the data analysis shows the responses to the current public library environment (at the time of writing) in the context of EAL speakers in metropolitan Perth, according to the questions posed to library staff. The responses to each of the questions presented to the survey participants will be examined individually below.

First, the question of EAL speaker numbers frequenting the library is established, with participants' responses failing to indicate a definite view about the percentage of EAL users in their library. As Table 5-4 demonstrates, 39% of the respondents agreed that their library had high level of EAL patronage, with an almost similar percentage (38%) of the respondents' disagreeing. The remaining 24% held a neutral view.

Table 5-4: EAL as percentage of library users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library has a high percentage of EAL Users.	9	21	19	25	6	80	2.98
	11%	26%	24%	31%	8%	100%	

According to the ABS 2011 Census statistics, WA's population totalled 2,239,170 (ABS, 2012); of these a total of 1,728,867 million people live in Greater Perth area in 2012. The statistics show that 46.4 % of the latter came from families where both parents were born overseas while 38.5 % indicated that both parents were born in Australia. The data indicates that nearly 50% of the population in metropolitan Perth are overseas born. Of these, nearly 17% came from non-English speaking backgrounds, which in turn reflects the levels of diversity in the population of WA.

These figures relate strongly to the present research, which focuses on public library services to EAL groups. While the ABS Statistics reflect increases in EAL numbers in WA, the absence of obvious affirmation of such a high percentage by library staff, suggests that some of these groups are not regular visitors to the library. Leaving the Web survey for a moment and looking at responses from library staff who participated in the interviews, responses to similar questions regarding demographics indicated a lack of knowledge about EAL users, with interview participants affirming that community profile surveys were not practiced in their libraries.

The question on specialist services for EAL users adds further information on the current level of public library services and programmes.

Table 5-5: Specialist services for EAL library users

Question	SA	D	NA/ND	A	SD	Responses	Mean
Our Library has well developed specialist services for EAL Users.	4	30	29	15	2	80	2.76
	5%	37%	36%	19%	3%	100%	

Table 5-5 above shows that a total of 22% agree that their library has well developed specialist services. Conversely, the number of staff who disagree as to the existence of a such services was much higher at 42%. This is a possible indication of the absence or limited specialist services for EAL users. The number of staff who neither agreed nor disagreed totals 36%, which is an indication of a neutral view on the question on EAL library services. It is likely that the neutral view (by 36%) and the 42% staff who disagree are an indication that the prevalence of EAL specialist services is not explicitly evident. The attempt to elicit information on current services for EAL speakers was made with the next question (Table 5-6) on specific policies for EAL clients.

Table 5-6: Policies for EAL library service provision

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library focuses on specific policies that provide services to cater for EAL clients.	5	28	30	15	0	78	2.71
	6%	36%	38%	20%	0%	100%	

This question on specific policies showed that around a third of the survey participants (38%) adopted a non-committal, neutral stand. The unwillingness to make a clear decision could be an indication of what is described as a priming effect where the preceding question impacts the response to subsequent questions (Schuman & Presser, 1981; Shulruf et al., 2008).

The previous question (in Table 5-5) seeks information on specialist services for EAL speakers and this raises issues on service provision. The question on specialist services provides a framework for interpreting the next question, which raised views of EAL library policies. The issue of socially desirable responses is relevant as respondents are members or employees of a cultural context such as the library system or corporations, thus, bound by concepts of collectivism, responses may be affected (Schwarz & Oyserman, 2001).

Group responses whether as a professionals (i.e., librarians) or political groups may be embedded in the group dynamics and hence socially desirable influences impact responses (Shulruf et al., 2008). Collectivist respondents are inclined to select the neutral option as they associate the response to others, particularly in their profession (Shulruf et al., 2008). This phenomenon, along with a lack of staff knowledge in the area of EAL services may have influenced the relatively high rate of neutral responses seen throughout this survey data. Only

19% of staff agreed that specific policies cater for EAL information needs, whilst nearly half of the respondents (42%) disagreed that there were specific policies, which regulate services to EAL users. The 38% of respondents who take a noncommittal view together with the 42% who disagree that the library focuses specific policies for EAL services provides evidence for an absence of transparent EAL library policies.

A literature review for policies regarding EAL service provision in WA public library system did not reveal substantive documents or policy provision. However, the Eastern States of Australia; New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and South Australia have implemented EAL public library services policies and guidelines and have subsequently revised them to keep abreast with changes to the EAL population profiles that reflect an increasing African and Middle Eastern demography (unlike the earlier European demography). These libraries are actively pursuing services, which cater to the emerging communities which hold diverse literacy levels. A review of multicultural public library services are detailed in the accounts of policy revisions enclosed in the article, *“Responding to our diversity.”* This article traces the multicultural policies of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia. Additionally, interviews with library staff, suggest that policy issues remain the province of the SLWA, and libraries in the suburbs focus on the promotion of routine services and programmes. The library staff responses to meeting the information needs of EAL speakers once again indicate a non-committal view by the participants as shown in Table 5-7 below.

Table 5-7: Libraries meeting the needs of EAL clients

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library adequately meets needs of our EAL clients.	3	15	34	23	4	79	3.13
	4%	19%	43%	29%	5%	100%	

For this question, almost half of the respondents (43%) neither agreed nor disagreed on adequately meeting the information needs of EAL clients, while 23% disagreed that EAL client needs are addressed, with the remaining 34% indicating agreement with this assertion. The substantial number responding with a neutral stand raises doubts as to which category a respondent is most likely to take when pressed to decide on the issue. Alternatively, it raises

doubts when nearly half the respondents (43%) are unsure if EAL user information needs were adequately met. The respondents who disagreed (23%) indicate inadequacy in services to EAL users, whilst the remaining 34% of staff that some libraries offer diverse information services. Once again, the neutral views suggest that respondents adopt an uncertain stand on the matter or it is an indication of lack of sufficient knowledge to respond in a more specific view.

Schuman and Presser (1981) claim that respondents adopt a neutral position, even when they are fully knowledgeable about the subject investigated, they are inclined to be non-committal due to lack of sufficient conviction and intention to reply meaningfully. Researchers highlight that questions, which are relevant to participants' professional knowledge, may compel a neutral stand. Schuman and Presser (1981) explain the rationale for a neutral response, as an implication of a lack of clarity and conviction. The authors demonstrate that, in the case where respondents are knowledgeable about the services investigated, they lacked the depth of conviction to respond with a substantive evaluation of the issue (Schuman & Presser, 1981). Thus, when respondents are unsure of the facts related to a question they tend to place equal weight to varying scales in the Likert questionnaire. Whilst there are any number of factors which can impact on participant responses in the neutral view, the remainder of this chapter will focus on the disagreement and agreement values rather than the prevalence of the middle ground.

During discussions with staff at the interview sessions, the librarians clarified that meeting the needs of the EAL user generally meant the provision of ethnic resources such as books, DVDs and CDs. The predominant view of library staff indicated that provision of multilingual resources suffices for meeting EAL speaker information needs. This view is contrary to the evidence shown in the EAL speaker interviews in Chapter 4 which indicates a need for computer assistance, English language instruction besides and other information needs. This theme of libraries seeing multilingual resources as a single entity in resource provision rather than the complex, multi-layered concept it is, will be explored in more depth in Chapter 6.

A discrepancy between the view of public library staff and the EAL participants about EAL library services seems to prevail. The interview data demonstrates that a wide variety in service needs identified by the EAL participants, two of which, include assistance in education and employment areas. Thus, diverse library services for meeting the specific information needs of EAL speakers are not currently evident in the libraries, apart from the extensive collection of multilingual resources. This lack of EAL public library policy or

specific services is a likely outcome due to lack of information on the changing demographic profile of metropolitan Perth. The findings of the Web survey highlight the current lack of information about population demography as shown in the Table 5-8 below.

Table 5-8: Development of community profiles for EAL service provision

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library has developed a community profile which is used to provide and develop EAL services.	5	23	27	22	4	81	2.96
	6%	28%	33%	27%	5%	100%	

The responses are similar in total (34%, 33% and 32%) for agreement, disagreement and neutral categories. The equivocal distribution in the three views fails to provide a clear insight into whether public libraries conduct a community profile survey in the suburb the library is located.

The librarians interviewed explained that privacy issues hindered access to personal details such as ethnicity, library users perceived questions on native language (or their level of English proficiency) as invasive and stressed that public libraries practised a principle of universality or a neutral approach to library clients who originate from diverse backgrounds. The library staff customarily refrained from detailed community profile studies hence they lack information that would allow them to respond more explicitly. Population statistics on exact ethnic numbers in a suburb are freely available from the ABS website. The library staff who were interviewed were unaware of community profiles conducted by their libraries. Population increases for EAL persons in WA reflect increases in official migration, boat arrivals and humanitarian refugee intakes by the Australian Government as well interstate relocations in response to employment opportunities.

Despite conspicuous increases in recent WA population figures, the public library remains generally constrained to the concept of collecting demographic data, and about their user population that is vital to library service provision. In particular, libraries tend to primarily ‘survey’ their active user base in regards to collection development and management (Baird, 2004; Futas, 1995; Shane, Jan, Kate, & Kristen, 2013) and consult usage

data to determine which materials to keep and what new materials to purchase. On reflection, this question might have needed to have been more specific, indicating to the participants that it was not related to collection development but rather to general services offered to EAL clients such as educational programmes, computer classes and literacy activities. It should be noted that rapid changes in population demography in WA are a recent event, and as such it is perhaps understandable that the public library has not been alerted to the dynamics underpinning the new arrivals to the state. Stakeholders such as the local government authority and the library system continue to function via their traditional services and programmes even though the next question reveals the ethnic diversity prevalent in WA.

The next question posed in the web survey was a list of ethnic languages deemed to be largely representative of the multicultural population in Perth. The list was presented as a drop-down box, from which the respondents could select a single language. In hindsight, this selection method was limiting, as respondents should have been able to select more than one language representative of their library users. The question read as;

Question: Our library provides services to large numbers of people in the following ethnic languages

The list of ethnic languages is perhaps a sample from the diverse range of groups residing in WA. Communities listed by library staff include Arabic, Afrikaans, Italian, Vietnamese, Sudanese, Cantonese, Mandarin speaking Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Indian (Hindi), Polish, Spanish and Japanese (see Figure 5-1).

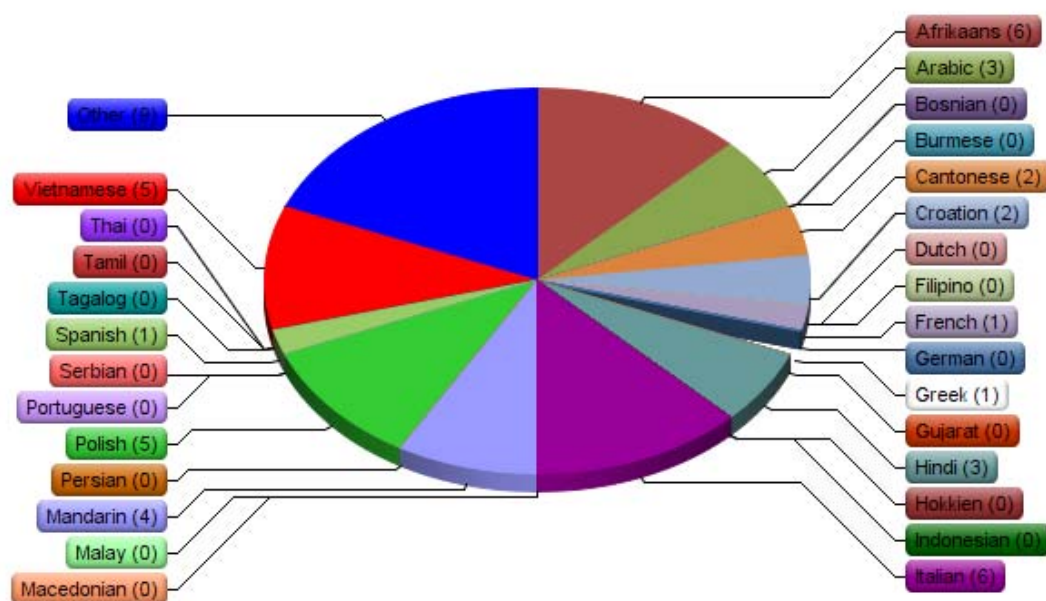


Figure 5-1: EAL public library users' ethnic and language backgrounds

Even with the limitations of the input mechanism, Figure 5.1 shows a diversity of languages, representing Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. These languages and the regions of origin were representative of the EAL groups interviewed in Chapter 4. After the question relating to ethnic languages of library users, an open-ended question was presented to the Web survey participants;

Question: Please describe the nature of these EAL services.

To which the staff respondents indicated the following. In order to contextualise the staff responses in terms of their role and equalisations, a code has been place next to each response indicating the staff respondent id, their role and also their qualifications against the following legend (Table 5-9).

Table 5-9: Legend for library staff roles and qualifications

Library Staff Roles and Qualifications		
	Role	Qualification
1	Manager	Librarian
2	Librarian	Technician
3	Technician	Teacher Librarian
4	Library Officer	Archivist/Records Manager
5	Volunteer	No Library Qualifications
6	Other	Other

As an example, the first respondent below is respondent number 35, their roles are that of a librarian and their qualification is also that of a librarian.

- Our population reflects approximately 0.1% ESL language speakers (SR35/2/1).
- Community profile will highlight diversity in User population (SR42/5/3).
- Large LOTE collection; English Conversation Group; Vietnamese speaking staff and some forms translated to Vietnamese (SR8/1/1).
- English Conversation Groups, Books in foreign language (SR74/1/1).
- Borrowing ESL collection, English conversation classes targeted to new migrants (SR71/1/1).
- Print & audio collection; assist in running of a group for learners, provide space for lessons (SR24/2/1).
- Some IELTS items are available. Also general literacy, but not catered for those learning English (32/2/1).
- Wide ESL collection for borrowing, weekly free discussion classes, recognition of staff ability to speak in different languages (72/1/1).
- We have 31 different languages represented in our Languages other than English Fiction collection. We provide many of the IELTS books and learning English items students and refugees ask for (SR22/1/1).
- Materials in languages other than English based on the demand for these languages (SR12/1/1).

- Foreign Language section is present. Information on various EAL services available in the community (SR53/4/2).
- Special language collection, conversation sessions, bi-lingual storytelling etc (SR9/4/1).
- The only service is a small community languages collection, with bulk loans from SL in languages in response to customer request(SR9/1/1).
- Only multi language books supplied at the moment (SR33/2/1).
- Multi-language collection (e.g., novels) in languages other than English, ESL & adult literacy collections. Liaison with Read Write Now tutors. Library Staff have attended basic Read Write Now training (SR25/2/2).
- We provide an ESL collection, which has recently had updated materials added (SR27/2/1).
- Non-English Collections in 21 different languages, English learning collection in print, audio CD, DVD and interactive CD-ROMs, weekly English conversation classes, host for English language tutors (SR73/1/1).
- Is this English as additional language? If so, most of these services are run centrally at our main Library Joondalup, rather than in the branches (SR81/4/5/).

The written responses clearly indicate the diversity of initiatives undertaken by the public library staff to meet information needs of their clients. The responses indicate that multilingual resources are prevalent in public libraries, but that these primarily follow the traditional norms of books and audio/visual media, rather than education, training and facilitation.

In summary, non-English collections are typical of the services provided to EAL users, while English language learning and conversation sessions are among other services that may be provided (particularly in terms of the IELTS and ESL issues) as raised by the respondents. It is interesting to note that the second open-ended response was the only one to indicate a need for conducting community profiles, a response at odds with the views expressed earlier in this chapter by the librarian interview participants. The participant who indicated the need for a community profile identified their role as library volunteer, a position more at the coalface of library service than perhaps the policy and management context of paid employees or library management.

5.4 Section Three: EAL library users and diverse services

Whilst the previous two sections of the web survey established the demographics of library staff and their understanding of their EAL users, this section delves further into the actual diversity of services offered by the public libraries and any characteristics of the users they are engaging with. This section of the Web survey was considered crucial as it focuses on library staff and their understanding that proficiency in English is vital for library access, and the assessment of language skills of the EAL speakers and related issues impact on the complexities encountered by the library staff and users alike.

Table 5-10: EAL English proficiency

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
EAL User Groups in our Library have high English proficiency	3	9	25	16	3	56	3.38
	5%	16%	45%	29%	5%	100%	

Table 5-10 above shows that the majority of respondents (25) neither agree nor disagree. Twelve respondents claim that English skills are not strong among EAL users, whilst one third of the respondents agree that their EAL users are proficient in English. The responses indicate that formal evaluation of English proficiency among EAL users is not a practice due to privacy issues and the universal public service principles embedded in the library policy as highlighted by librarians interviewed. As such, library clients are welcomed with respect and neutrality, a Librarian interviewed (participant L4V) claimed that it is not the practice of the library to seek information on English proficiency or other personal detail.

However, informal assessment does occur as indicated in Table 5-9 alongside the Librarian interview results, with the latter indicating that contact with EAL members seeking library assistance ranged from individuals with formal English education and others with no English whatsoever. The librarian stressed that some suburbs have ethnic groups with high English language proficiency.

Table 5-11: English language proficiency as a hindrance to library access

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe that poor English language proficiency is a hindrance to Library access?	0	16	4	33	2	55	3.38
	0	29%	7%	60%	4%	100%	

Table 5-11 posed a question to participants' that was essentially the converse of the previous question, with more than half the respondents (64%) agreeing that English language is a hindrance to Library access, whilst 29% disagreed. The outcome with library staff confirming that English language (or lack of) is a barrier to seeking information from the public library is a crucial one for this research, and will be explored further in later chapters. It is perhaps worth noting that in this particular question, the highly neutral results seen previously were not apparent for this particular question, indicating the significance of English and its impact on library access. Currently, public library access relies heavily on English language not just for interaction with library staff and printed materials, but with computer catalogues and web based resources which have become the front line for information storage and retrieval. The issues associated with English literacy were also paramount for the EAL speakers, as highlighted with the extract below summing up the participants' views described earlier in Chapter Four.

In simple terms, the respondents were reluctant to visit the Library or approach Library staff as doubts arise on their inability to comprehend Australian English accent of staff, the staff may not comprehend their kind of low proficiency English and the ethnic English pronunciation will not be familiar to locals (P1, P3&P5).

The Non users have, "No English...no formal education (P3 &P5).

In the US, Canada, the U.K. and Europe, public libraries encounter similar problems related to lack of English among their migrant communities and some Public Libraries are

addressing it by initiating English classes on the premises (Kann-Chistensen & Pors, 2004; U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013).

Table 5-12: Information about EAL users enhancing library services

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe that collecting background information about EAL Users will enhance Library services.	1	1	6	37	11	56	4.00
	2%	2%	11%	66%	20%	100%	

As indicated in Table 5-12, a majority of staff (86%) affirmed the need for collecting background information about EAL library users. Library staff members show agreement on the need for background details to enhance library services. Notably, only 4% disagreed while 11% took a neutral stand. The professional library staff acknowledgment of the benefits of collecting EAL user background information for enhancing library services indicates support for concept of conducting demographic surveys, though the findings indicate that it is not carried out as a routine library policy. It is perhaps also worth that of the eight respondents who either disagreed or were neutral to the question, six of these classified themselves as librarians or library managers.

Table 5-13: EAL library usage increase over last 5 years

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe that during the last 5 years there has been a noticeable difference in EAL User numbers accessing our Library.	0	9	18	17	12	56	3.57
	0	17%	32%	30%	21%	100%	

Table 5-13 shows 51% of staff agreeing to the statement that there was a noticeable difference in EAL numbers over the previous five years, whilst 17% disagreed with the statement. This result of more than half the library respondents noticing an increase in EAL numbers would seem to align with ABS statistics that report an increase in EAL numbers in WA.

Table 5-14: Language classes to enhance library use

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe that organising EAL classes using Library premises will enhance Library use.	2	1	12	29	12	56	3.86
	4%	2%	21%	52%	21%	100%	

Table 5-14 shows that a majority of respondents (73%) agreed that EAL classes would enhance library use by EAL speakers, with only 6% disagreeing to such an assertion. Case studies in the U.S. show that outreach programmes such as English classes aimed at new ethnic residents succeeded in attracting,

Interviews with a few public library directors in the US indicate that outreach activities, example, ESL-classes, directed towards immigrants attracting them to the library create trust in the library. Just the fact that it is possible to get these distrusting people into the library is in itself a manifestation of generation of trust and social capital (Varheim, 2007, p.7).

The term “distrusting people” refers to those who generally feared authority or government organisations, as a result, of unjust experiences prior to their arrival to the U.S. However, gradually these EAL individuals began to venture into public spaces such as the public library. Such outreach efforts were optimised when English classes, civic lessons, literacy classes and native language courses were organised to encourage library use among the low socioeconomic status groups. The study demonstrated that membership numbers

increased dramatically (Varheim, 2008), due mainly to the library projects targeting non-English speaking emigrants who were considered marginalised sectors of the community. Interview data gathered from the EAL speakers in the present study strongly highlighted the demand for English language education to face challenges in their new country, Australia.

Table 5-15: Separate language collections for EAL users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library has separate language collections that cater for EAL Users.	1	4	1	36	14	56	4.04
	2%	7%	2%	64%	25%	100%	

When asked about having separate language collections for EAL users (Table 5-15), a majority (89%) of library respondents confirmed that they stocked separate language collections. This high level of agreement is not surprising given that the SLWA supplied “materials in more than forty-nine community languages provided through the public libraries” (State Library of Western Australia, 2009, p. 19).

Table 5-16: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to availability

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library has requests for print EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to the availability of the resources (resources unavailable in local bookshops)	4	10	25	15	2	56	3.02
	7%	18%	45%	27%	4%	100%	

When asked about issues pertaining to providing printed ethnic resources (Table 5-16), a majority (45%) of the library staff neither agreed nor disagreed on the inability of the public library to cater for such resources due to an inability to source such materials from local book sellers. A total of 25% and 31% staff disagreed and agreed respectively. It is perhaps not surprising then, that the EAL speakers interview data showed evidence that two

ethnic groups collaborated with their local library and purchased resources (books, newspapers and magazines) in their mother tongues from their countries of origin. Proactive ethnic groups as well as the local libraries' willingness to work with the EAL library users seem to provide a solution to the problem of purchasing ethnic resources.

Table 5-17: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to cost

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Responses	Mean
Our Library has requests for print EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to the cost of the resources.	4	13	24	12	3	56	3.02
	7%	23%	43%	21%	6%	100%	

The data in Table 5-17 shows that 30% of respondents strongly disagreed that requests for EAL materials were not being met due to cost of resources. An almost similar number (27%) agreed that costs were indeed an issue with provision requests for printed EAL materials. However, most of the respondents (43%) were unsure about requests for library resources in ethnic languages.

Table 5-18: Inability to cater to EAL print item requests due to linguistic limitations

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Responses	Mean
Our Library has requests for EAL resources but we cannot cater for them due to staff linguistic limitations.	4	17	23	8	3	55	2.80
	7%	31%	42%	15%	5%	100%	

An interesting issue that arises (in Table 5-18) around the provision of ethnic language books is that library staff may lack ethnic language skills and thus the library may not be able to purchase them, especially if they cannot read the title, the topic and the content classification of a given resource. As a result, the purchase and distribution of ethnic books

seems to be the domain of the SLWA, where access to such language expertise is more available. Having said this, staff linguistic limitations were not indicated as a hindrance to library services by survey respondents (as shown in Table 5-18), with 38% disagreeing as to staff linguistic limitations, and only 20% agreeing that linguistic limitations prevail among library staff. The librarian (L3F) highlighted during the interview session that there are practical problems involved in staff linguistic limitations as the demography of the user population changes over time. The library staff explained that new arrivals relocate from temporary homes to greener pastures so that short term, transient visitors to the library relocate speedily and the numerous languages accessed by ethnic users make it impractical to train staff to meet the ever changing linguistic demands that underpin requests for EAL resources.

Table 5-19: Library provision of virtual LOTE materials

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Our Library provides virtual Language Other Than English (LOTE) resources.	1	16	17	20	2	56	3.11
	2%	29%	30%	35%	4%	100%	

Collections in virtual language resources in ethnic languages evoked a fairly balanced response from library staff in Table 5-19, with 39% of respondents agreeing that their Library holds ethnic Virtual language resources and the remaining 61% disagreeing or adopting a neutral view. To a certain degree, the issues associated with this question are not dissimilar to that in the previous question, in that there is an inherent limitation in provider multilingual resources without appropriate levels of staff expertise. Once again, in the current WA context, the SLWA shoulders most of the burden in supplying such materials to 238 public libraries in WA. Using census data in the form of ABS statistics, the librarian (L1S) confirmed that ethnic collections were, managed from a demographic perspective based around demographic data for each suburb. The predominant role of the SLWA in overseeing the collections in ethnic languages frees the branch libraries of the linguistic challenges entrenched in the process of purchasing resources in non-English languages. The participant (L1S) emphasised that local libraries operated autonomously and could budget for purchases of resources in languages of their user community if they wished to do so.

The points below recount the written responses regarding public library services by the library staff to the question;

Question: Do you have any comments about EAL resources further than above comments?

To which the staff respondents indicated the following:

- We have a small collection to cater for the small number of EAL patrons in the area. We make it clear to people that we can obtain materials for them in their language via interlibrary loan (SR 38/2/1).
- We are fortunate to have staff with a variety of languages other than English_which assists with our collection development. We respond to requests for EAL resources through purchases or Inter Library loans (SR4/1/3).
- No programmes other than providing stock in languages other than English (SR32/2/1).
- The state supply of non English language material makes it readily available, the difficulties lie in identifying the content when selecting to cater to specific demand, e.g., genre fiction; supply in some languages is also an issue as some are not plentiful in terms of what is published or sold outside the home country. This library has a good number of people with poor English skills, staff who can assist is a bonus, but lack of that does not seem to preclude repeat usage (SR16/1/1).
- Rely on state library funding and supply for EAL resources (SR33/2/1).
- Staffing levels and lack of expertise to process LOTE and learning English resources limits availability and promotion of resources (SR5 2/1).
- Most of our ESL Users are literate in English and looking to get professional level English for tertiary courses (27/2/1).
- I believe the problem lies with available resources, there simply isn't enough of them in a Library. It would be great for funding to be directed to supplying more materials (SR 47/4/1).
- Lack of funding is the biggest hurdle in providing resources and services (SR 28 4/5/).
- Staff languages cover Polish, Italian, Chinese (Mandarin) Russian, Austrian. These do not of course, cover all EAL users needs (SR 30/1/1).

On close reflection of the above comments, it is clear that the issues raised in Tables 5.15 through 5.19 are issues that the library staff wished to voice. Prominent issue include the reliance on the state library system for the provision of EAL resources (SR16), a lack of staff linguistic expertise in dealing with LOTE resources and understanding the content of those materials (SR 16). Availability in terms of materials being able to be purchased in Australia was a concern, as some items were simply not available outside of the original country of publication (SR16). Respondents (SR32, 47, 28) were candid in their admission that programmes and services for EAL clients were not available, beyond the supply of EAL materials. Perhaps the most important issue raised by these responses, and one which is a current theme throughout this thesis, is that of materials simply being classified and treated as ‘non English’ (SR27) and SR38 and SR33). This ‘non English’ or ‘ethnic resources’ concept is essentially a black box into which library services traditionally place their provision of services and materials to EAL patrons. The black box effect masks the complexity of the various issues and characteristics, which can define these very same patrons. The next section investigates the viability of employing EAL library staff, guidelines for EAL service delivery, computer literacy and libraries as community spaces.

5.5 Section Four: EAL library services, technology and community spaces

The following data analysis describes perceptions on diversity and inclusivity issues in the public library environment. The viability of employing staff from EAL groups was raised.

Table 5-20: Library staff liaising with EAL users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe that employing EAL staff at the Library to liaise with EAL Users is likely to increase numbers in EAL Users.	2	6	18	17	9	52	3.48
	4%	12%	35%	33%	16%	100%	

Half of the respondents (50%) in Table 5-20 agreed that employing EAL staff to communicate with ethnic users is a viable option, with only 16% disagree on the viability of this option. Looking at the two responses to interviews with librarians, views in relation to ethnic staff in the Library were diverse. Librarian (L3F) drew attention to the fact that all

librarians were trained in customer services and as a result, they were already adept at addressing the information needs of EAL Users. Conversely, Librarian (LG2) highlighted that staff from an ethnic background caught the attention of ethnic Users visiting the Library. The interviews with EAL users highlighted that one senior (as in age) user frequented the Library when a staff from the same country of origin (Croatia) was employed and subsequently discontinued visits when that individual had moved away. The EAL participants' responses in the interview sessions strongly support the case for the presence of EAL staff in public libraries. The participants reiterated that an ethnic library staff member is likely to reduce the cultural barrier posed by the majority of staff being from English speaking backgrounds.

Table 5-21: Recruiting and training more EAL staff

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe there is need to recruit and train more EAL staff	4	8	18	15	7	52	3.25
	8%	15%	35%	29%	13%	100%	

In terms of recruiting and training more EAL staff (Table 5-21), 42% of respondents agreed with this assertion, while a minority of respondents (23%) disagree with the suggestion, even fewer (15%) were noncommittal. This outcome is certainly in line with evidence from the literature, where Kim and Sin (2008) suggest that public service providers such as libraries have a mission to serve the community. In situations where public library staff profiles do not reflect the diversity of the community, shortcomings in the delivery of services can arise due to the fact that, not all users feel comfortable in the library space (Kim & Sin, 2008). Mor Barak et al. (1998) also address this issue, claiming that inter-personal similarity, such as speaking the same language, eases communication, fosters trust and reciprocity, and instils a sense of belonging. Kim and Sin (2006) maintain that employing sufficient librarians of different race and colour means that paves the trend for the future libraries, creates a feeling of familiarity, broadens cross cultural experience, and is somewhat reflects the community demography (Kim & Sin, 2008).

Table 5-22: Concept of compliance guidelines for EAL service access

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
There are compliance guidelines for disability access to government Websites. There should be similar guidelines for EAL access.	1	5	25	13	6	50	3.36
	2%	10%	50%	26%	12%	100%	

Table 5-22 shows that 50% of respondents were neutral on the introduction of EAL compliance rules in public libraries, while some 38% agreed on the need for guidelines. With only 12% of respondents disagreeing with the concept of compliance guidelines, the concept was obviously not totally unacceptable. This question was influenced in part by the evolution of web accessibility guidelines in Australia under the auspices of the National Transition Strategy, whereby government run websites must be usable and access by users with varying types of disability. In many ways the issues of disability parallel those of the EAL communities represented in this thesis from the perspective that disability can often be labelled again as a black box, where the underlying complexity and diversity of the user's needs are opaque to the untrained eye. In terms of the web accessibility space, it has required the intervention of government policy to drive compliance towards set standards of accessible website design. In the same way, the responsibility may lie with federal and state governments to develop and enforce policies which specify minimum standards in terms of EAL service provision in public libraries.

The literature indicates that WA lacked detailed guidelines which could systematically provide EAL library services to the increasing numbers of EAL speakers in the state, though the Structural Reform document released by the SLWA certainly alludes to the services that should be provided (State Library of Western Australia, 2007).

Table 5-23: Computer literacy for EAL users in accessing library resources

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
I believe computer literacy is essential for EAL Users to access resources provided by our Library.	4	7	12	21	8	52	3.42
	8%	14%	23%	40%	15%	100%	

The question shown above in Table 5-23 sees the Web survey move away from questions oriented to more traditional library service concepts to those that are more specifically aligned to the promoting patronage by EAL community members. As shown in Table 5-23, a majority of staff (55%) agree that EAL users need computer literacy to access and utilise resources in public libraries. Fewer staff, (21%) disagreed and another 23% remained noncommittal. The data from EAL interviews in the previous chapter strongly highlights the need for varying levels of computer education, due in part to the wide range in computer literacy (and illiteracy) indicated by the EAL participants. The digital services in the public library require computer skills to access the catalogue and perform internet searches, though the problem remains that currently most public libraries offer only digital services in English. The issues of EAL users and computer literacy are recurring issues in the findings of this research and will be explored in greater detail in the discussion chapter and conclusions.

Table 5-24: Meeting spaces for EAL users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
I believe establishing a meeting or multipurpose room in our Library for EAL Users will increase their use of the Library.	2	6	20	17	7	52	3.40
	4%	12%	38%	33%	13%	100%	

The question posed in Table 5-24 continues the theme of questions relating to EAL access to the library in terms of the provision of space, facilities and training. The data shows a fairly large percentage (46%) of the respondents agreeing with the premise that establishing a meeting room for EAL users would encourage library visits by these community members. The group that neither agrees nor disagrees is quite substantial (38%). The option for facilitating a multipurpose room is opposed by a minority (16%). When looking further at the 28 respondents who disagreed or were neutral in their response, 19 of those were identified as librarians or library managers, numbers which may indicate a certain level of discomfort with the proposition of changing the library's role away from that of a classical information provider. It may also be related to issues of resourcing, particularly in terms of space and staff administration of such a service.

Encouraging community meetings at the library premises could help in engaging the local community in cross-cultural communication. Inevitably, attendance at meetings and

other community activities in the library might encourage attendees to browse and borrow library resources and see the library as a safe, democratic space to visit on an ongoing basis. The potential for engaging in cross-cultural interaction with others in the library would be a possible, beneficial side effect of more EAL community events in the library space, and community engagement facilitated by the library staff could enhance interaction among neighbours and could discourage embedding of niche ethnic communities who socialise only with members from their own group.

Table 5-25: Community activities for EAL users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Incorporating community activities for EAL Users as the target group will increase their use of the Library.	2	5	9	26	10	52	3.71
	4%	10%	17%	50%	19%	100%	

The majority (69%) of respondents (Table 5-25) agreed that the incorporation of community activities for EAL users will increase their library use, fewer respondents (14%) disagreed on community activities for EAL users. It would appear that while, the provision of library space may not be as readily supported by all respondents, the concept of the library playing a community hub role is far more palatable to the library staff.

Interviews with the EAL participants expressed the need for cross-cultural activities in the public library, with the desire for community programmes stemming from experiences of isolation and loneliness in their new country. Many considered that such programmes organised by the library would be mutually beneficial to the hosts and the new comers. The rationale is that the engagement of neighbourhood families in library activities should inform them of social values, culture, and codes of behaviour prevalent in their local suburb. Researchers argue that community engagement promotes social networking and trust. Pettigrew (1998) cites various sources when discussing particular situations that encourage interaction and trust as; spaces which impart qualities of community cooperation, feelings of equity, goals which are similar to one another, and the patronage of authorities and local norms and culture (Pettigrew, 1998).

Pettigrew (1998) argues that the public library is representative of the above characteristics. Undeniably, the support of authorities (library staff as government

employees) and laws of the nation in the public library premises can be a safe platform for social interaction and building trust. Varheim (2008) elaborates that,

Very few contexts can fulfil these ideal conditions. One of the very few candidates that can hope to come close is the public library. This makes the institution of the public library an interesting case for studies of contact through informal face to-face interaction. In view of catchment area of its services the library is more universal than many other universal public places...the library is also more universal in that we find public libraries offering these universal services, if not in every country, we find them across different capitalistic models, illustrating the worldwide distribution of the universalistic public library model (Varheim, 2008, pp. 5-6).

Varheim (2008) claims that the library holds the potential generating trust among the residents in the catchment area of the library. The library, due to its long heritage, offers a platform for, “new library initiatives, strategies, and activities are based upon trust built over time and built into the institution itself” (p. 7).

Indeed researchers claim that the library is the third place after one’s home and work place for some library users (Varheim, 2007). This view is supported thus far by the findings of this research, primarily through the views of the EAL participants, and to a significant degree, the library staff web survey respondents.

Table 5-26: Public libraries creating barriers to EAL access

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
The Public Library system in WA creates significant barriers, which hinder EAL Users from accessing information.	4	16	22	7	4	53	2.83
	8%	30%	42%	13%	8%	100%	

Table 5-26 shows a question which could be deemed as slightly controversial when viewed from the perspective of the library staff, particularly library management. The question raises the issues of significant barriers to EAL users accessing library information, which to most staff would be contrary to their perception of how their particular branch is being run. This would seem to be confirmed by a minority (21%) of staff agreeing that public

library creates barriers. The remaining responses are primarily neutral or in disagreement, with only two of the ‘agreeing’ respondents being librarians or library managers. Professionals with library qualifications deliver information services of a high standard in the public libraries in WA, and as a result such professionals may not perceive barriers to library access as being evident.

Contrary to the view above, research evidence indicates that caution is essential in addressing EAL information needs. Research conducted in the US (Alire, 1997) and the U.K. (Pateman, 2004) provide evidence to illustrate that the public library is

Often perceived as an institutional symbol of the white middle class, yet one of our basic Library principles maintains that everyone in our service communities should have equal opportunity to access information provided in or by libraries. Although libraries offer equal information access, simply offering does not change perceptions or convert our traditionally underserved minority communities into communities of library users (Alire, 1997, p. 1).

Alire asserts that libraries need to meet information needs and contribute towards enhancing the economic status of the marginalised sectors. The traditional view about locals and migrants often reflects a social divide, *those people, or them and us*, as such, bridging the divide is vital, and changing service providers’ perspectives is essential (Pateman, 2004). The next question looks at the ‘us and them’ aspect by asking the library staff if they feel the needs of EAL (ESL in the question) users are the same as that of the mainstream library users.

Table 5-27: EAL information needs similar to mainstream library users

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
I believe that the information needs among ESL Users are similar to the mainstream Users of the Library.	2	12	13	19	7	53	3.3
	4%	23%	24%	36%	13%	100%	

Nearly half of the Web survey respondents (49%) agreed that the information needs of EAL users are similar to those of non EAL users (Table 5-27), whilst 27% disagreed and 24% were neutral. Given that only 1/3 of the library staff indicated that their library had

performed some kind of community profile (Table 5.8), it is interesting that half the library staff would agree to the proposition that the information needs of ESL users were similar to mainstream library users. An effective community profile conducted by libraries would have likely identified some of the same issues becoming apparent in the findings of this thesis, that the needs of EAL users are not the same as mainstream library users, and that the underlying dynamics associated with EAL communities are far more complex. The library staff responses to this question would seem to indicate a gap in needs perception between library staff and EAL users, a gap which will be explored further in the next chapter.

Table 5-28: Library interaction with ethnic associations

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Our Library visits ethnic association meetings and functions	11	25	8	6	2	52	2.29
	21%	48%	15%	12%	4%	100%	

In terms of library staff visiting ethnic association meetings (Table 5-28) in the EAL community to spread understanding of the library service, a majority (69%) of library staff disagreed that public library staff visit ethnic association meetings. It is clear that visits to ethnic association meetings are not a common practice for library employees and that less than 30% of staff either agreed or were neutral to such a proposal. Collaboration between the public library and ethnic associations is emerging in the US, U.K., and Europe (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013), where public library personnel are actively involved in such outreach programmes with ethnic associations in their community. It would seem that if libraries were to actively conduct the community profiles discussed previously, that such data would indicate the predominate EAL groups in their community, and that such groups should be the target of outreach activities. The following questions explore the use of technology for promoting EAL user library access.

Table 5-29: Media channels for marketing library programmes and community services

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Our Library uses ethnic television, radio stations, and community papers to market Library programmes and	13	29	5	5	0	52	2.04

community services.						
	25%	55%	10%	10%	0%	100%

The public library system has not taken advantage of ethnic television, radio stations, and community papers in disseminating public library services, as shown in Table 5-29. The majority (81%) of respondents disagreed that such media are used to promote library services. Although the public libraries function within the Strategic Directions implemented by the SLWA, each library administers their library services autonomously, though advantage of ethnic media as a mode of advertisement has not been a priority for the public library staff in this research.

Table 5-30: Library use of Web 2.0 for marketing library services

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Our Library uses Web 2.0 technologies such Twitter to market Library programmes and community services.	13	17	10	10	2	52	2.44
	25%	33%	19%	19%	4%	100%	

Table 5-30 shows that over half of respondents (58%) disagreed that their library uses Web 2.0 technologies to market Library programmes, with 19% and only 23% agreeing on the use of Web technology as a marketing tool. The written responses listed below were in response to the open question:

Question: Do you have any further comments about barriers to EAL library use?

To which the staff respondents indicated the following;

- Advertising resources and services (SR42/5/3).
- Customer service regardless of language skills is of primary importance to us. We believe good, current and interesting resources that are regularly changed (we use the same strategies for the whole collection) will continue to encourage people to use our resources (SR4/2/1).
- Very multi-ethnic community creates difficulties - the need to try to reach people in 10 or 20 different languages (SR8/1/1).
- We find that we lack the time to do more than we currently do (SR32/2/1).

- Staff can assist, but the number of languages exceeds the number of staff; many issues mentioned, e.g. Web & computer access, apply equally to English speakers, marketing using sources mentioned is not done here as a mainstream activity so misses all community groups SR16/1/1).
- Lack of library space makes providing some services difficult (SR33/2/1).
- (Name withheld) has a strong ethnic user group using the internet, young mothers meeting up with other mothers for children's play time in the library (SR52/1/1).
- Our library is not allowed to use Web 2.0 technologies at all (SR17/UNSTATED/1).
- Space in the library, social media use restrictions (SR27/2/1).
- A library tries to meet its community's needs but often there isn't enough funding to provide what is really needed and it's safer to stay on the path well trodden. That is ensuring that 99% of the library's materials, resources & services are for the English population (SR47/4/1).

Whilst the responses presented above are all very salient and interesting, perhaps the most telling themes are those relating to barriers around numbers of languages that library staff need to deal with, space restrictions and an inability to provide access to social media. The last response (from a library clerk/officer) was particularly indicative of the concepts this thesis is exploring, where the library staff member indicated that 99% of the libraries resources were aligned to the English speaking population (SR47/4/1).

The next section of the web survey (Section 5), presents the factors that impact the library's capacity to provide EAL services and the sources of funds for the library.

5.6 Section Five: The following affect our library's capacity to provide EAL services

The public libraries in WA are recognised for their long tradition as knowledge centres, and as a result the views of the librarians towards potential barriers to service provision are important to understand service provision to EAL users.

Table 5-31: Inability to promote EAL services

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Inability to promote EAL services	2	11	21	11	5	50	3.12
	4%	22%	42%	22%	10%	100%	

Table 5-31 shows that only 32% of respondents agreed that the inability to promote EAL services was a barrier, with most respondents remaining neutral (42%) or disagreeing with the assertion (26%). Looking at the open ended responses on the previous pages, an ability to advertise services, or to use social media to do so, would seem to support the negatively weighted response to this question. Given that another respondent indicated that 99% of the library services are oriented towards English speaking patrons, promotion of EAL services may not be a library priority.

Table 5-32: Inadequate physical space

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Inadequate physical space	3	14	14	15	4	50	3.06
	6%	28%	28%	30%	8%	100%	

Lack of physical space did not seem to appear to be a crucial issue for service provision as views were fairly equally distributed among the respondents, with Table 5-32 showing 38% of respondents agreeing, 34% disagreeing and 28% indicating neutrality. It may be that physical space is not deemed to be critical to service delivery as the library normally focuses on books, videos, newspapers and magazines as primary library resources. The librarians who participated in the interviews explained (L3F and L2G) that when the local population increased dramatically, multiple land development projects met housing demands, however, the library's physical space remained unchanged. Even though new libraries are established as part of the new land development, older libraries remained unchanged in terms of increases in space. The librarians who were interviewed explained that adjustment within limited space was the only option in times of rigorous economic austerity.

Table 5-33: Inadequate staffing

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Inadequate staffing	5	11	20	10	4	50	2.94
	10%	22%	40%	20%	8%	100%	

Table 5-33 demonstrates that inadequate staffing did not draw a strong response, with 40% of participants indicating a neutral view, and the remaining views being split almost

equally between agreement and disagreement. The data shows that the public libraries in WA employ qualified professionals and it is likely that staffing problems on a strictly numerical basis are not prevalent, certainly in the context of the participants in this study. Whilst inadequate staffing may not have engendered a strong response from the web survey participants, staffing issues in the context of staff training for the provision of EAL services in the library most certainly did.

Table 5-34: Inadequate staff training for provision of EAL services

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	A	Mean
Inadequate staff training for provision of EAL services	2	9	13	21	6	51	3.39
	4%	18%	25%	41%	12%	100%	

More than half the respondents in Table 5-34 (53%) agreed on the inadequacy of staff training programmes for EAL services, thus providing support for addressing the issue of EAL customer services. The numerous ethnic groups and their diverse information needs support the need for appropriately trained public library staff. Whilst most library staff have a professional library qualification of some kind, this does not necessarily imply that such qualifications included formal, explicit coverage of EAL information needs and support for multicultural clients. Even if some qualifications do address these topics, library staff could have been working in the library for a considerable length of time, and received their initial qualifications before the influx of migrant communities created such a diverse need for EAL skills. In terms of the statement posed in Table 5-34, participants are likely to have interpreted ‘training’ in terms of on the job training or professional development programmes, rather than tertiary level education. Regardless, whatever the source, training was an issue for the library staff in terms of providing services to EAL patrons. Moreover, EAL service provision may differ from mainstream information needs, and that training in customer service is a priority in the library training programmes (L3F). The Librarian (L3F) noted that library staff were trained in customer service and that it may suffice in dealing with EAL speakers. Evidently, many EAL patrons lack English, originate from agrarian cultures and may require different kinds of support, therefore, the regular customer training may not suffice as evidenced by responses by EAL interview participants who stressed that the librarians should proactively reach out to EAL individuals who do not yet utilise library services.

Table 5-35: Lack of access to EAL resources

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Lack of access to EAL resources	1	14	17	15	3	50	3.
	2%	28%	34%	30%	6%	100%	

The respondents' data in Table 5-35 displays a relatively uniform distribution among agreement, disagreement and neutrality. As demonstrated in Section 3, where in Tables 5-15 to 5-19 similar types of questions as this were posed, issues of access to EAL resources, while evident, were not particularly preeminent in the minds of the library staff. These responses, in with some of the previous open-ended comments, indicate that it is likely the extensive array of ethnic languages and the limited availability of both resources and language specialists are serious considerations in the area of EAL resources (L1S).

Table 5-36: Lack of EAL as a priority

Question	SD	D	NA/ND	A	SA	Responses	Mean
Lack of recognition of EAL as a priority	3	10	13	20	4	50	3.24
	6%	20%	26%	40%	8%	100%	

Nearly half (48%) of the respondents agreed that there was a lack of recognition of EAL as a priority, with an equal percentage of respondents (26%) disagreeing or holding a non-committal view (Table 5-36). Of the 24 staff who agreed to this assertion, nine were identified as either librarians or library managers, with the remainders being library officers or volunteers, figures which may indicate a small gap in perception for this issue between those who manage libraries versus those that work at the client interface.

The literature review for the present study demonstrated a lack of recognition of EAL as a priority for public library service in WA. Documented evidence on specific policies for EAL library service delivery was largely absent in WA, although the SLWA's Strategic Directions and state government policies included diversity as one of the components of public library policies. Moreover, literature review shows that the public library system in WA is founded on the Library Act of 1950 and alerts the need to address the significant social and technological change if the libraries intend to serve the community expectations (State Library of Western Australia, 2007).

5.7 Bias in Survey

The data from of the ABS census statistics, the web survey, library managers' interviews and the EAL interviews provides insight into the changing profile of the EAL public library environment. However research studies show that response bias is inevitable. Bias to a question occurs during the cognitive processes of retrieval of content, context of the information, influences of circumstances, values, feelings, and comprehension and judgement of the question. These cognitive processes precede the final decision or response to the question in a survey (Shulruf et al., 2008).

Additionally, bias occurs during the interpretation of the decision, that is, the selection process of the best fit in the Likert options and then a final adjustment occurs, possibly, independent of content. At this stage of the decision, the respondent addresses researcher identity, textual impact, compliance to organisation culture, target audience, social influences, and actual setting of the research area (Shulruf, et al. 2008). The setting of the present research is the public library, and the above considerations are critical factors for professionals who are employed by an organisation, which, in this instance, is the public library. In addition to participant bias, research demonstrates further bias according to the Hawthorne Effect which illustrates what Macefield (2007) describes as,

Experimenter effect whereby the participants, in any human-centred study, may exhibit atypically high levels of performance simply because they are aware that they are being studied. As a result, participants may be inclined to respond in a dissimilar manner due to individual disposition and test conditions (Macefield, 2007, p. 145).

Invariably, these theories may have affected the investigation conducted in the present study thus, to a certain extent, influenced the outcomes. From the responses shown across the majority of this chapter, some influences of bias or the Hawthorne effect are most relevant in terms of the library managers and librarians, a group, which tends to disagree or remain neutral to questions or statements that have negative connotations regarding library service provision.

5.8 Funding

The final section of the data analysis briefly explores the financial issues related to the public library and EAL service provision. Figure 5-2 illustrates the various sources of funding reported by the library staff, revealing a dependence on the Local Councils and state government budget allocation for the operating costs of the local public library. Other sources of non-traditional funding were indicated as being not applicable or not being utilised, an issue that will be discussed in the following chapters. The Federal Government, due to federal/state government structures, is not a major source of funding, whilst community organisations such as Lotteries West play a minor role in funding public libraries.

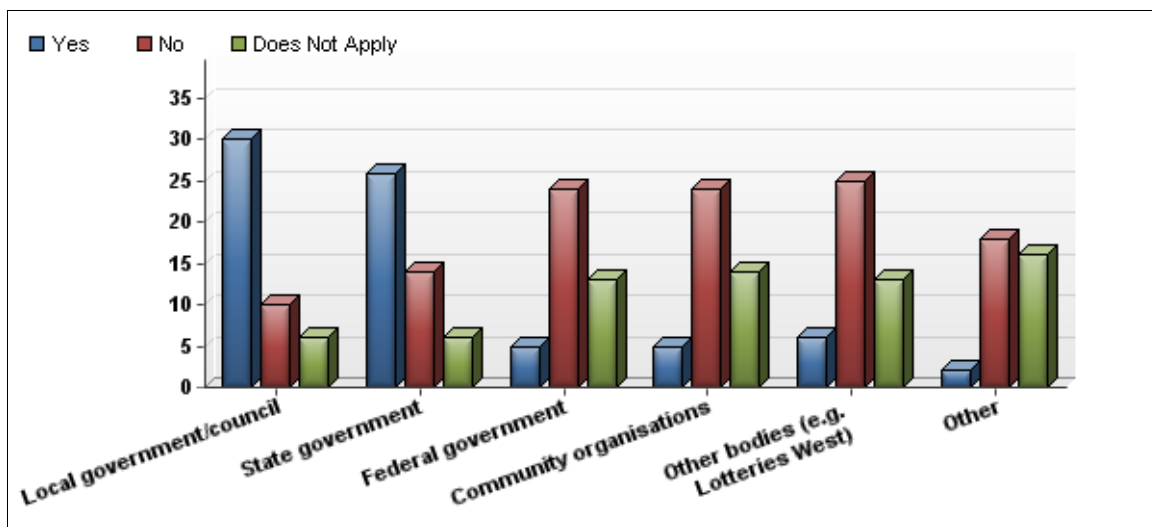


Figure 5-2: Funding sources for public library services

5.9 Conclusion

The web survey and the staff interviews established the current level of public library service provision in the context of supporting EAL speakers. Invariably, the responses of the library staff members resonate with some of the views expressed by the EAL speakers who participated in the interview sessions explored in chapter four. The combination of the perceptions of the library staff and the EAL speakers lends support to the need for public libraries to review EAL service delivery in WA. The findings demonstrate the set of circumstances for initiatives by stakeholders to explore options to redefine the traditional library system's role as the hub of the local community.

Chapter 6

Discussion of Findings

The role of a learning framework in a changing (library) culture is to provide an environment of positive engagement in an area that focuses on building individual and organisational capacity. It is always forward looking, preparing people for next steps and catering for diverse development needs (Edmundson & Morgan, 2013, p. 13).

6.0 Overview

The research investigation on the community building role of the public library in WA established the phenomenon of information seeking experiences of EAL speakers and the current level of library service provision for this group. The key findings of this research revolve around the themes of diversity of EAL communities and their highly varied understandings of library services, coupled with the ongoing traditional approach to the provision of library services in the WA context. The discussion of these findings will be centred around the primary themes of;

- **Expectation Gap,**
- **EAL User Groups and Diversity,**
- **Stakeholders for Change and**
- **Libraries in the Modern Community**

The discussion will flow from findings informed by the research data presented in Chapters 4 and 5, moving towards recommendations for sustainable library services in light of ever growing multicultural community. The chapter will conclude by addressing the outcomes of the primary and supporting research questions.

6.1 Key findings

Foremost among the findings extracted from the collected data were the apparent diversity of EAL communities, and the lack of English language and computer literacy within these groups, contributing towards a sense of marginalisation. The barrier created by the English and computing literacy issues lead to a perception by these communities that integration with the host culture was reduced, leading to bonding social capital tendencies and the creation of niche ethnic groups (Jakubowicz, 2006). Furthermore, changes in policy whereby, government ethnic programmes are assigned to the dominant individual groups, can result in widening the *they* and *us* gap.

6.1.1 The expectation gap

The increased mobility of human capital across borders appears to enhance the ethnic national cultures and bonding social capital among the new arrivals with the unfavourable effect of embedding ethnic loyalties in localised clusters. Inter faith contact and inter communal interaction demarked by public and private education will deepen social segregation (Ulrich, 2004). The notion of ethnic and public culture is raised, that is

In practice, Australia separates the private/communal realm from the public realm, requiring conformity to the core culture in public but accepting a vast range of behaviors as acceptable in private (cultural and sexual among them). The tensions emerge when the private and public collide –as in the request for use public facilities by Muslim women who wish to exclude men and non-Muslims (Jakubowicz, 2006, p.11) .

It is likely the bi-cultural tendency will further aggravate segregation, as government policy promotes inter communal cultures, with adherence to mainstream Australian culture. The future of Australia depends on creating equal opportunity to optimise individual potential, promote social cohesion, and reduce marginalization. The policy of mainstream culture may reduce barriers in a multicultural society, however,

For multiculturalism to work, the apparent paradox of respecting difference while eroding barriers between cultures can be perceived as an integrated strategy-where education, cultural work, political discourses and social relations

interlock to create a sustaining fabric based on human rights for everyone within the society. In a world of economic exploitation, replete with ideologies of anger, envy, and hatred, such a vision may seem overly idealistic. Yet if we are to learn the lessons of the Anglo West, it teaches us that engagement and interaction provide a far better pathway to social stability than isolation and exclusion (Jakubowicz, 2006, p. 12).

Public library staff recognition of the increasingly diverse demography in WA is a key outcome, which indicates that libraries need to more fully understand and engage with the demography of their catchment areas so as to recognise the changing cultural landscape and the service provision that it implies. A shift from traditional library service provision towards re-inventing and re-defining sustainable library services seems inevitable. Formal acknowledgment of diversity in the population could lead to initiatives towards inclusive information services and library staff diversity, reflecting the multicultural composition of the local population. Library staff acknowledgement of the lack of concerted efforts towards inclusive, multicultural services is likely to have an impact on library's multicultural community engagement.

Figure 6-1 below illustrates the findings emerging from the qualitative and quantitative data gathered from both the library staff participants as well as the EAL user participants. The findings highlight the gaps that emerge from the analysis of the gathered data and is broadly reflective of library service provision and EAL user expectation. Figure 6-1 presents a high level overview of the gap this research has identified between the library view of its role within the community and the services it provides versus the EAL library user's perspectives of the types of services and spaces the library should be providing to their varying cultural groups. The findings outlined in Table 6-1 are representative of the original contributions of this research to further understanding the evolving role of the public library as a community hub and how members of the actual community perceive that role.

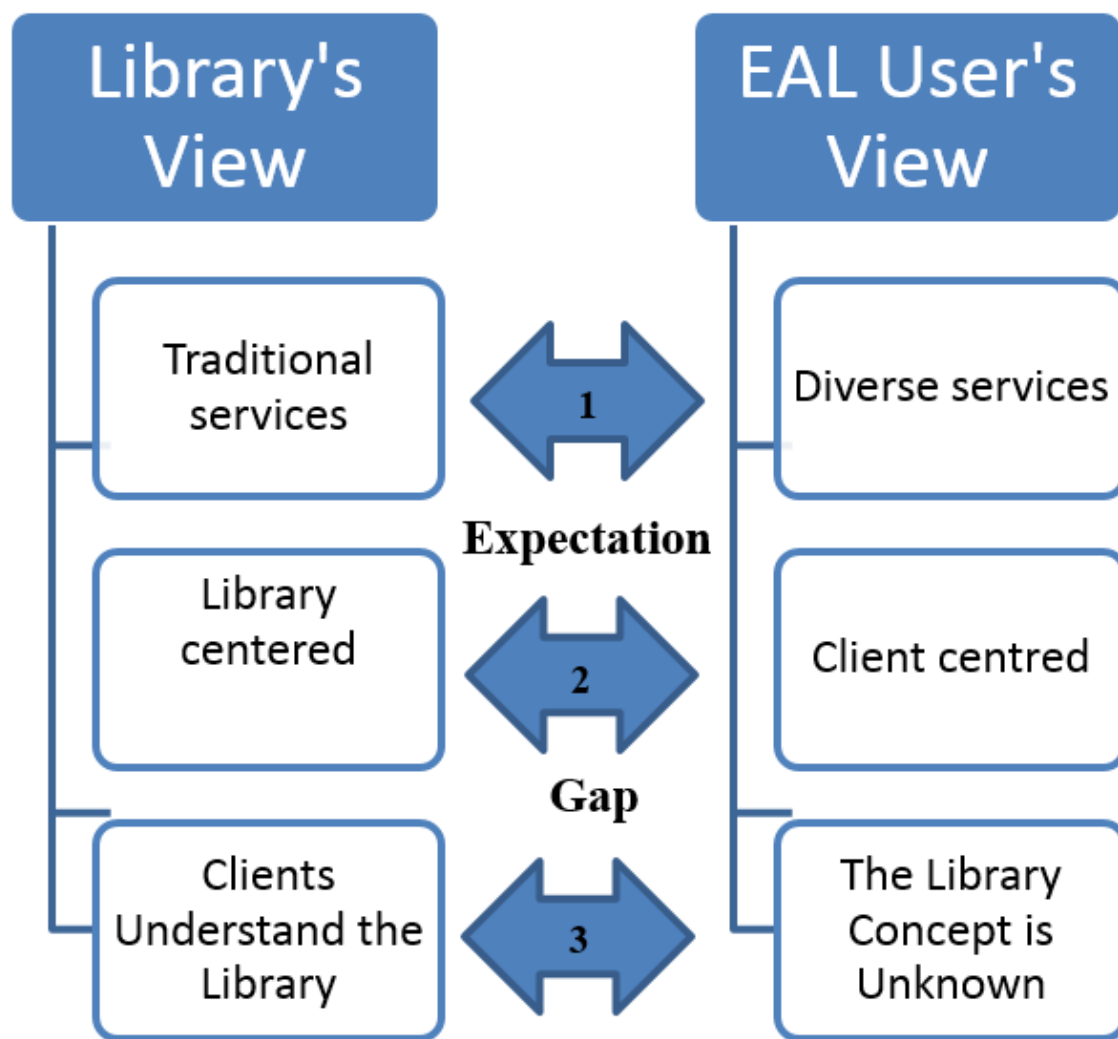


Figure 6-1: Identified perceptions of the expectation gap between Libraries and EAL clients

6.1.2 Traditional and diverse services

The responses by public library staff to the web questionnaire showed that most libraries lack community profile statistics on the residents in the local suburb and thus reflects nonalignment between information service provision and services desired by the EAL speakers. The traditional public library services offered were quite different from the demand for services that emerged from the EAL interview findings, a summary of which is presented below in Figure 6-2.

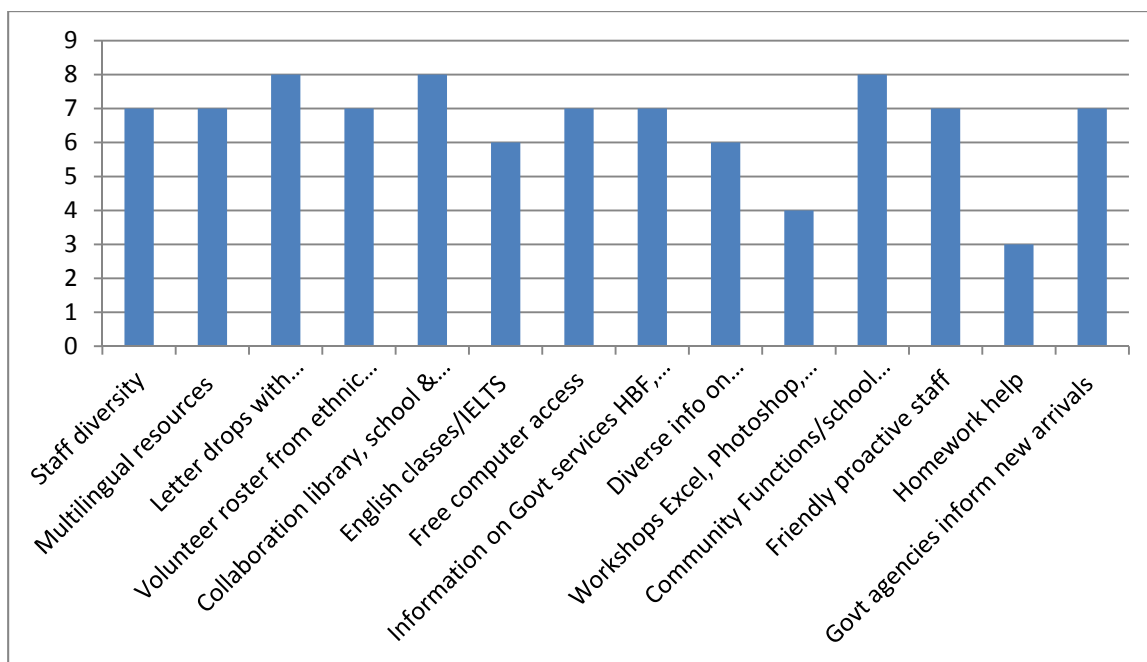


Figure 6-2: Diverse library services identified by EAL speakers

While it may not be possible for a modern library service to address all the information services identified by the EAL participants in this particular study, in the context of long- term sustainability, the public library system may consider incorporating some of the more impactful ones. These include creating multicultural spaces within the public library, multicultural public library policies, free computer access and training, English classes and the integration of other government services, especially immigration and those providing financial support. For instance, the absence of a distinct multicultural public library policy and specialist services for EAL speakers is evident from the electronic web questionnaire responses by the library staff. Interview data presented in chapter five detailed the need for English Language classes in the public library premises, as a service option for the near future. Diversity among the EAL speakers' education, computer skills and their library expectations demand a wide range of new (additional) public library services, however, traditional perceptions seem to prevail in the library sector.

6.1.3 Library centred / client-centred

The absence of a proactive service provision beyond the confines of the library counter seemed a common practice. The interview participants' expressed the need for library staff to reach out to EAL clients who visited the library premises. Outreach programmes such as visits to Ethnic Association meetings or attendance at ethnic functions would suggest a client centred library approach towards inclusive library services. The findings affirmed that EAL specific policies and EAL services were uncommon. The absence of state wide multicultural library policy was noted.

The traditional notion that that users visit the public library voluntarily, they make an informed decision to seek information from this repository of knowledge which is a regular presence in their culture. The research investigation raises attention to the residents who are unaware of a public library presence, in the light of increased numbers of new arrivals from non-English speaking countries. In some of the countries of origin of EAL speakers, the local library as mentioned by EAL participants is located in the main capital city or there are no libraries at all (for arrivals from hill tribes and agrarian cultures). Thus, it seems that for many of the EAL speakers the public library system or regular visits to a library were an unfamiliar activity. Hence, the library needs to rise beyond its somewhat limited scope, and reach further out into the community to draw in non-traditional clients.

6.1.4 Library concept, known and unknown

Library centred services presume that clients access the services offered by the library. The assumption here is that the local library residents (including new arrivals to the suburb) are aware of the public library system in totality. However, an important finding of this research is that most of the EAL participants lacked knowledge of an actively/efficiently operated public library similar to the system of operation in WA. The public library system's limited advertising efforts failed to reach a majority of the EAL groups. The public library culture, its extensive services and its proximity to local residents were not obvious to EAL speakers. An absence of awareness of the insecurities/barriers among the EAL speakers, which originated from a lack of English education and an absence of a Western academic background, prevailed in the library environment. The traditional library perspectives expect residents to visit the library, whilst the need to inform and educate local residents about the library as a service has never really been apparent. Currently, the shift in the demography of the population entails the need for educating local residents about the salient points of the

public library system that WA offers to its citizens. Sensitivity to complex issues, which inhibit visits to the library requires a shift from the library centred approach to an inclination towards a client focussed library services and outreach initiatives and programmes.

It appears that there is a gap between services provided by the current public library system and the services preferred, based on the responses to interview with the EAL speakers. Gap between services provided by public libraries and services preferred by EAL speakers are listed below. Table 6-1 shows an overview of the identified differences in view of the library staff and EAL participants in terms of the main aspects of the library in the community. As the table shows, in terms of alignment, some of the EAL participants agree that the library is a safe, neutral and democratic space that welcomes all in a comfortable, modern environment. Other members of the EAL community have a divergent view, where they see the library as a government entity, of which they either have no knowledge or as a place to be avoided because of a lingering fear of authority or government run organisations. The information presented in Table 6-1 is relatively telling as it would seem that most library staff interviewed in this research would not recognise, on face value, the issues underling the ‘divergence’ column of the table, and speaks to one of the recurring themes of this thesis, that underpinning the ‘multicultural’ element of library service provision, there is a great deal of hidden complexity.

Table 6-1: Perceived gaps between services provided by public libraries and services preferred by EAL speakers

<i>Public Library</i>	<i>Alignment</i>	<i>Divergence</i>
Traditional and long established public library system for English speakers	Democratic space	Unadvertised democratic principles of operation
Neutral to host culture	Neutral space	Fear of authority, as previous abuses underpin relocation, concept of neutral unknown
Safe for locals, threatening for non-academic cultures	Safe space	Absence of recognition of traumatic backgrounds
Government establishment. Absence of multicultural library policy	Respect to clients	Staff located behind counter, unwelcoming to some EAL speakers
Library user and non-user client service aspects	Welcomes all	“All” does not actually represent all
Infra-structure with modern amenities	Comfortable environment	Social interaction among neighbours and kids/parents lacking
Professional staff training for traditional English educated customer service	Friendly staff and approachable	Lack of proactive gesture to new visitors-unable to approach (no English)
Public library information services as offered in past	Repository of knowledge	School tutorials and homework help
Computerised catalogue in English	Digital services	Lack of Computer/English-limitations
Public library system for life-long learning for locals	Public Information Service	Information centre role preferred. Opening hours unsuitable for some

6.1.5 Democratic, neutral and safe space

Democratic principles underpin the public library system and form the pillars of strength for viable service provision. The universal public library model prevalent in WA offers free services to all, irrespective of creed or colour in a neutral environment with the aim to promote lifelong learning.

6.1.6 Library welcomes all and respects all clients

To what extent is access to all a reality? To what extent is library access a reality if only a selection of local residents visit the library, and even less participate in library activities. The interview data clearly identified two groups: users and non-users. The non-

users are mainly represented via the emerging communities of ethnic minorities, and typically those coming from traumatic or poverty driven backgrounds, many of which struggle to acclimate to Western style communities and governmental structures, as raised by (Henry-Waring, 2011) when quoting former government minister, Kevin Andrews; “some groups don’t seem to be settling and adjusting into the Australian way of life as quickly as we would hope” (p. 3). Henry-Waring (2011) elaborates;

specific circumstances of certain (African)... groups, such as low levels of education and English language skills, and long duration in refugee camps after emanating from war-torn areas, mean that these particular groups face special challenges which make their adjustment to Australia more difficult than others (Henry-Waring, 2011, pp. 3-4).

Henry-Waring’s point is well made and is reflective of the findings of this research, where participants from backgrounds similar to that stated above not only have no working knowledge of government organisations such as a public library, but in fact have no experience or frame of reference by which to judge the usefulness of such services.

Collaboration between government agencies and local councils to educate new arrivals about the public services in WA is essential if they are to resettle within our communities on an equal platform. The public library located at the core of communities is strategically positioned to address some of the minority issues by welcoming these new community members in a proactive manner, particularly, those who no experience with library services.

6.1.7 Staff

Staff diversity issues displayed in responses by librarians and EAL speakers highlights the need for training and employing EAL speakers in the library. The current mainly Australian staff may benefit from cross-cultural orientation, training in ethnic information shortcomings and visits to Ethnic Associations. Invitations to EAL leaders or representatives to participate in occasional library meetings would open channels for cross cultural communication and identification of specific information needs. The view held by librarians proposes that library staff could be trained in cross cultural matters rather than employ ethnic staff. Library staff are usually trained in customer service and many are adept

at meeting information needs of ethnic clients. The complex diverse experiences among the new arrivals may be a consideration for reviewing criteria for staff recruitment and training.

6.1.8 Repository of knowledge / education

Whilst it may seem that the Internet is replacing the Library in the role of a knowledge repository, recent research shows that the two are complementing each other. The SLWA reports that visits and numbers of books borrowed from the State Library are increasing. While EAL participants expressed a dire need for basic Computer education, so as to access digital resources and free Internet services, non-digital traditional resources are also in demand.

The changing circumstances due to heterogeneous information services and the varied information seeking skills among the library catchment population, entails a more focussed role of the public library as an education facilitator. The public library strategic directions may review their priorities and include literacy programmes as a prominent agenda, as it could benefit both migrants as well as the local host population. The literacy divide among local citizens and EAL speakers is a concern for the nation, as at the local level, the public library may need to identify and address educational needs of its clients and the lack of English Language and computer skills as identified in this research. Unavoidably, English is essential for education, whether it is computer education or literacy in the traditional '3 Rs'.

A salient recommendation of the present research findings is the imperative need to explore literacy divide in greater depth. Literacy issues refer to dual aspects, that is, literacy in the 3Rs and literacy in computer skills. Indeed, literacy in computer skills comes close to fundamental literacy needs, due to the current digital environment, where the dynamics underpinning service provision and delivery in most fields of life, demand a wide variety of technological expertise. Researchers seem to draw attention to the vital need to address literacy in computer language and skills, as literacy in 3Rs was promoted in the past, notwithstanding, the fact that, literacy in reading and writing fundamentally enable computer access. Literacy levels in the 3R's require the attention of stakeholders due to the diversity in the educational backgrounds of individuals. The literacy range includes individuals with absolute lack of education to highly educated professionals, in a wide variety of areas in medicine, mining, IT, engineering, and scholarly academics. Invariably, the resources and programmes of the public library need to reflect the wide literacy range depicted by its clientele.

These unique English Language requirements are deserving of attention. For example, even in the case of participants who were educated in English, they expressed the need for orientation in Australian culturally related terminology and norms, as raised in chapter four. The inherent prevalence of the language divide is evident in the origins the spoken language traditions which developed

From circumstances which have firm basis in intentional communications from preverbal period. Language comes to serve acts of meaning, that is, the need to communicate in society. Language acquisition stems for a social need to communicate, utilising the symbolic communicative systems which serve the functions and values imposed by mankind. Speech evolves millions of years ago, long before ability to read and write. It is evident that wherever human beings have existed they have had a language, and in every instance, the language existed initially in spoken mode (Chelliah, 1991, pp. 6-7).

The EAL speakers exhibit the wealth of their own linguistic traditions in their encounters with individuals of the host culture, who are equally equipped. But due to the fact that spoken language evolved from the culture of the individual's origins, stark linguistic differences are inevitable. Indeed it is a conflict of cultures which need to be cautiously addressed in cross cultural communications in libraries, shopping centres, schools, among neighbours and work places. Invariably, language and culture are intertwined, embedded linguistic cues surface during dialogue and display underpinning differences in the migrants' and hosts' communication dynamics. In terms of the argument of language versus culture, some authors see that the issue of language cannot be disassociated from culture and the influence that culture has on the use of any given language. As Lam states when citing Gumperz and Levinson (1996),

A definition putting less emphasis on language as the facilitator of thought was offered by Gumperz and Levinson (1996) who suggested that culture, through language, affects the way we think. That is, although speakers of different languages may experience the same event differently, the reason for the difference is attributable primarily to cultural differences in interpretation of the event and not to differences in the structure of different languages (Lam, 2009, p. 2).

In other words, in the case of EAL speakers interacting with services such as the library, their use of language and the cultural norms that drive it can lead to negative or unfulfilling communication or dialogue with library staff. Further, such issues can be exacerbated by interactions between multilingual EAL speakers and monolingual library staff in what Cruz-Ferreira describes as.

Research has so far not aimed at finding parallels between monolingualism and multilingualism at all: monolingualism has instead been anointed the default norm of language uses, against which multicultural users must therefore be gauged (Cruz-Ferreira, 2010, p. 1).

Another area of education facilitator role of the public library is focussed on academic assistance, in particular, parents of school students seeking school help for their Year 11 and Year 12 children. The cost of private tutors was beyond their means and group sessions for intensive exam revision workshops could draw this age group to the library. Middle school children too are victims of self-imposed barriers to library access. EAL parents of teenagers who participated in the interviews expressed that their teens viewed the public library as not a fashionable place to be seen by their classmates. The library could evaluate its user age groups and offer evidence based services which meet information needs of younger teenagers, namely the Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 students. Engagement with these younger community members by Youth Services Librarians engaged by the library, to identify their information needs should enable relevant library service provision. The Youth Services Librarians could advocate for teen services, such as facilities for music, increase numbers of computer hardware (iPad, iPod) and the expansion of digital social media facilities.

The traditional public library role of a repository of knowledge fails to meet present day needs of the new arrivals to WA, and the gap between service provision from the library perspective and service expectation from the EAL community continues to widen.

6.1.9 Digital services

The digital information needs elicited from the EAL respondents relate to the onslaught of digital technology in their daily life. Even library catalogues and other library services are now largely digital in nature, making access difficult for the EAL arrivals who lack both English to and computer skills to utilise such services. Literacy in computer

technology is likely to provide EAL individuals with pathways in their transition to meet the demands employment, education and online communication in their new country. Data elicited from interviews with EAL participants demonstrate that information seeking processes changed from paper based to digitized systems. The transition from traditional service provision to digital services renders many with inadequate skills in information seeking processes. The contemporary reliance on the computer in almost all aspects of modern life means that information is embedded in software, hidden behind complex digital interfaces. Everyday activities such as education enrolments, booking airline tickets, locating the phone number of the local library and almost all basic life's needs requires computer hardware and the skills to drive it. As digital information services are the norm, inevitably, it can deter EAL speakers from accessing the information offered by library services. To some library users, the presence of computers in areas of information services can seem insurmountable, with the digital gap seen as an increasing concern among the EAL speakers. The literacy in computer skills depicts levels of diversity which reflect a similar trend to the literacy in 3 R s. While socio-economic factors affect computer literacy, computer literacy levels are more complex. Socio-cognitive and self-efficacy factors impact access and use of the computer.

As such, the key to solving the issue of digital inequality is not going to be found with corporate or government funds and resources providing physical access to technology. Instead the key to solving digital inequality is inside the individual user. We need to develop programmes and services that support the individual (Partridge, 2008, p. 11).

Whilst, the wider community encounters diverse barriers to computer use, undeniably, the EAL speakers, as the present study highlighted, who stem from diverse backgrounds and literacy levels, are bound by even more deeper socio- cognitive hindrances to computer access. Added to their fear of authority and other cultural and psychological barriers, it is essential that stakeholders develop programmes and services that support the individual. Researchers, reiterate that, "one off" computer sessions are insufficient to sustain the literacy skills acquired, on the other hand, on- going, and longer term computer instruction is crucial sustain levels of computer literacy. The findings indicate that it is essential to reassess information technology services from the perspective of the community, library users, electronic services and the information seeking demands. Transfer of computer skills in the

light of new technologies to the community is highly desirable, and should be considered a strategic direction in terms of increasing funding for enhancing computer equipment, software and skills for the library community. While this research is not advocating turning the public library into a training school, the public library does hold a key position in facilitating education programmes through collaboration with their local schools, TAFE Colleges and Universities. Ready computer access can reduce the digital divide, hence, it is not unrealistic to envision public libraries as computer centres with an extensive range of digital services in place of the traditional paper and print library motif (Börner, Chen, & Springer, 2002; Bryant, 2004; Candela, Castelli, Fox, & Ioannidis, 2010; Dahl, Banerjee, & Spalti, 2006; Dobрева et al., 2012; Faranak & Alireza, 2011; McShane, 2011; Rydberg-Cox, 2006; Sharma & Vishwanathan, 2001; Shen, Goncalves, & Fox, 2013).

Public libraries are usually strategically located in the centre of a suburb, an ideal location from which to collaborate with local schools, universities and colleges to facilitate a wide variety of education and training programmes by utilising the staff, facilities in the premises and educational material of those institutions. The library could function as facilitators by identifying information needs of its local clients and advertising relevant programmes available within close proximity to the local community. Thus, life-long learning is possible with public library's ability to shift from its traditional role of service provision to a more educational facilitator and life-long learning role (Bordonaro, 2013; Edwards & Library Specific, 2009; Gilton, 2012; Melling & Weaver, 2012; Shannon, 2014).

6.1.10 Information centred services

The proposition for the public library functioning as an information centre is raised repeatedly throughout this research. While library professionals stress that the Library functions as an information provider, it would seem that EAL users would benefit from more understanding of this role, for as the previous discussion has shown their view of the library role is quite different. Ethnic respondents seek a broader range of information services about educational courses, government welfare services, regulations on accommodation and rental matters, and employment assistance. With dramatic increase in migrant numbers as well as the range of lived differences among new arrivals, these individuals seem to require assistance in a wider range of information, social and educational services. For the public library to remain sustainable in the future context, the potential requirement for expanding and diversifying services seems apparent.

6.2 The EAL speaker groups and diversity

Migrants in destination countries are classified by national boundaries rather than individual differences, as highlighted below,

In the last two decades, community studies and micro-historical approaches have in turn rightfully restored the voices of the immigrants themselves and have been the crucial foundation stones of the field. However, perhaps the community paradigm has reached its limit, bound by national boundaries. Is it possible to re-integrate a structural approach that looks at individual decisions, cultural choices, and structural constraint? By examining individual and group choices within comparative, historical frameworks, we can perhaps move toward a "post-structural structuralism." For migration studies, this means examining and reinterpreting the structures surrounding the migration process in light of individual choice and vice versa. In this respect, comparisons bring us back to the question of generality and difference. But while regulating the macro- or microscope to stress one or the other, we cannot truly understand the one without the other. Similarity and specificity, structures and their variants can only be understood in relation to one another (Green, 1994, p. 8).

Library professionals in the modern context are tasked with trying to understand and both the 'similarity' of the traditional library client group along with the 'specificity' of individuals coming from backgrounds that feature their own cultural constraints, which can include a lack of English literacy, education and understanding of the library as a community entity. A core finding of this research is that such diversity prevalent within the different EAL groups was not always recognised by the libraries. In particular, literacy levels in English or mother tongue, levels of education and computer literacy were distinctly varied. The current tendency is for libraries to categorise ethnic groups as one general entity rather than the specific groups identified by Green (1994), each with their own specific constraints in regards to information seeking skills. The disparity shows that some groups are unfamiliar not just with library services, but the concept of the library, as well as the location and the services offered by a public library. Some ethnic groups had no time or found the services to be irrelevant in terms of the basic needs of establishing themselves in their new environment.

So, there is a wide disparity in library experiences of educated and less educated EAL speakers, with a lack of English language hindering support for their children in terms of schoolwork and education. Isolation in the new environment compels visits to the public library in view of its democratic public service concepts, however, the EAL information and social needs are not catered for due to the fact, as shown from the library staff questionnaire, that community profiles are seldom conducted. Research shows that community surveys contribute towards more defined service provision and that,

It follows that detailed knowledge and understanding of the needs, preferences, skills and reactions of users is utterly fundamental to the future Library. The closer the Library can get to its users as individuals the more likely it is to find a place in the portfolio of services they choose to use. If Libraries get this right then they can become the services of choice for their users...So it's not enough for Libraries to offer services and hope that users will come to use them, they have to establish new ways of providing seamless integration (Brophy, 2007 p. 140).

Community profiling provides insight about the community. In the case of WA, EAL speakers are English educated professionals in some suburbs while other areas may have EAL speakers who are from non-English speaking countries of origin. The interview process revealed that most suburbs displayed characteristics of mixed populations which included professionals such as specialist doctors (highly proficient in English and computers) while their parents were educated in their mother tongue with little or no English. This supports the need for community profiling so that strategic plans and services of the local Library are focussed on customer needs for optimum use of funds and personnel.

Personalisation of library services and sensitivity to user intelligence of the local community can facilitate the identification of levels of the users' information seeking skills besides offering a wide range web related information services with the use of individual password logins. Even when a fee is involved, for example, for an access to specialist software such as, Photoshop, Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, the public libraries have the potential for tailoring of these services. Lifelong learning and provision of educational resources requires an understanding of learning processes and information seeking behaviour of a diverse clientele. Training library students who are studying to become librarians in

learning styles might enhance sensitivity to some of the inhibitions displayed by EAL individuals who lack education.

To offer diversity, libraries must become diversified. They become must become multicultural organisations, they must develop multicultural knowledge bases, and they must provide leadership (Riggs & Tarin, 1994, p. 22).

6.2.1 Background of participants

EAL Association leaders are actively involved in meeting the information needs of their ethnic group. As a result, they voiced the information needs of their community members some of whom lacked English, computer, literacy and information seeking skills. Table 6-2 displays three distinct groups of characteristics emerging from the participants.

Characteristic One: Participants who fall into this grouping are those who are English educated, mostly professionals and who seek assistance in enhancing their employment opportunities thus would like their local library to organize workshops on enhancing job seeking skills. Assistance in responding to selection criteria, interview rehearsals and resume writing were identified. Doctors and IT specialists are examples of professionals in the sample EAL group, with representation from Iran, India and Sri Lanka.

Characteristic Two: Participants within this grouping are native language educated and indicated that they were isolated due to a lack of English, rely on mother tongue resources in the library, claim that they are socially confined to their homes and to the ethnic community from their own country, examples include individuals from Bosnia and Pakistan. The language divide was exacerbated by an inability to learn English and contributed to self-segregation of this group which largely includes older migrants who express an aversion to enrolling in formal English classes. Costs, age, mind-set, transport issues and a lack of motivation are cited as reasons for the indifference to learning the English language.

Table 6-2: Characteristics unique to EAL groups

	Characteristic 1: English Educated	Characteristic 2: Mother Tongue Educated	Characteristic 3: No education	Services preferred	Researcher Observations
Literacy	English Literacy high	Mother Tongue Literacy high	No literacy in 3Rs:reading,writing & arithmetic	Group 3: Intensive Literacy classes	Group 3: Refugee arrivals from war torn nations.
English	English proficiency high	English proficiency low	No English proficiency	Group 3: English classes	Group 2: prefers mother tongue collections
Computer competency	Computer literacy high	Computer basic skills or none	Computer literacy nil	Group 2 & 3: Computer classes	Group 2 & 3: Computer literacy to reduce knowledge divide
Information seeking skills	Information seeking skills high	Information seeking restricted to mother tongue resources	Information seeking skills nil	Information Literacy classes	Group 2 & 3: No access to digital Library information services (LIS)
Employment	Professional jobs	Most unemployed	Non-professional employment	Group 1 & 2: English, job application help, interview skills & resume preparation	Group 1 and 3 assistance in enhancing current employment. English critical need.
Library awareness	Aware of Library	Aware of Library	Library unknown	Group1&2: need relevant services. Group 3 needs Library orientation	Group3: lack time, information seeking and academic skills

Characteristic Three: Participants in this group demonstrate a lack of literacy (in terms of reading and writing) and are primarily from tribal and agrarian cultures, including the Sudan and Burma. They encounter the language, digital, socioeconomic and knowledge divides and require assistance in order to cope with challenges of a high tech, knowledge society such as that found in WA. These non-literate groups are likely to face challenges in integration, taking advantage of equity in economic opportunities and integrating into the Australian community. In summary, these three groupings of community characteristics have

been identified in this research along with their varying information needs, and can be more broadly defined as.

- i. Community Type 1 (CT1): English Educated
- ii. Community Type 2 (CT2) : Mother Tongue Educated
- iii. Community Type 3 (CT 3): Non Literate

The identification of these Community Types addresses this thesis's support research question of '*What are the information needs that influence EAL speakers' perceptions of public library access in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia*' and underpins the remaining supporting and primary research questions as addressed in the chapter seven. As Figure 6-3 illustrates, as we move across the Community Types we see those (in CT1) that have maximum alignment with public library services as they currently stand, through those that are looking to the library as an educational vacillator (CT2), especially in terms of language training and finally those in CT3 who would like the library to act as their singular reference point and interface to a range of diverse government and social services they require to meet basics needs.

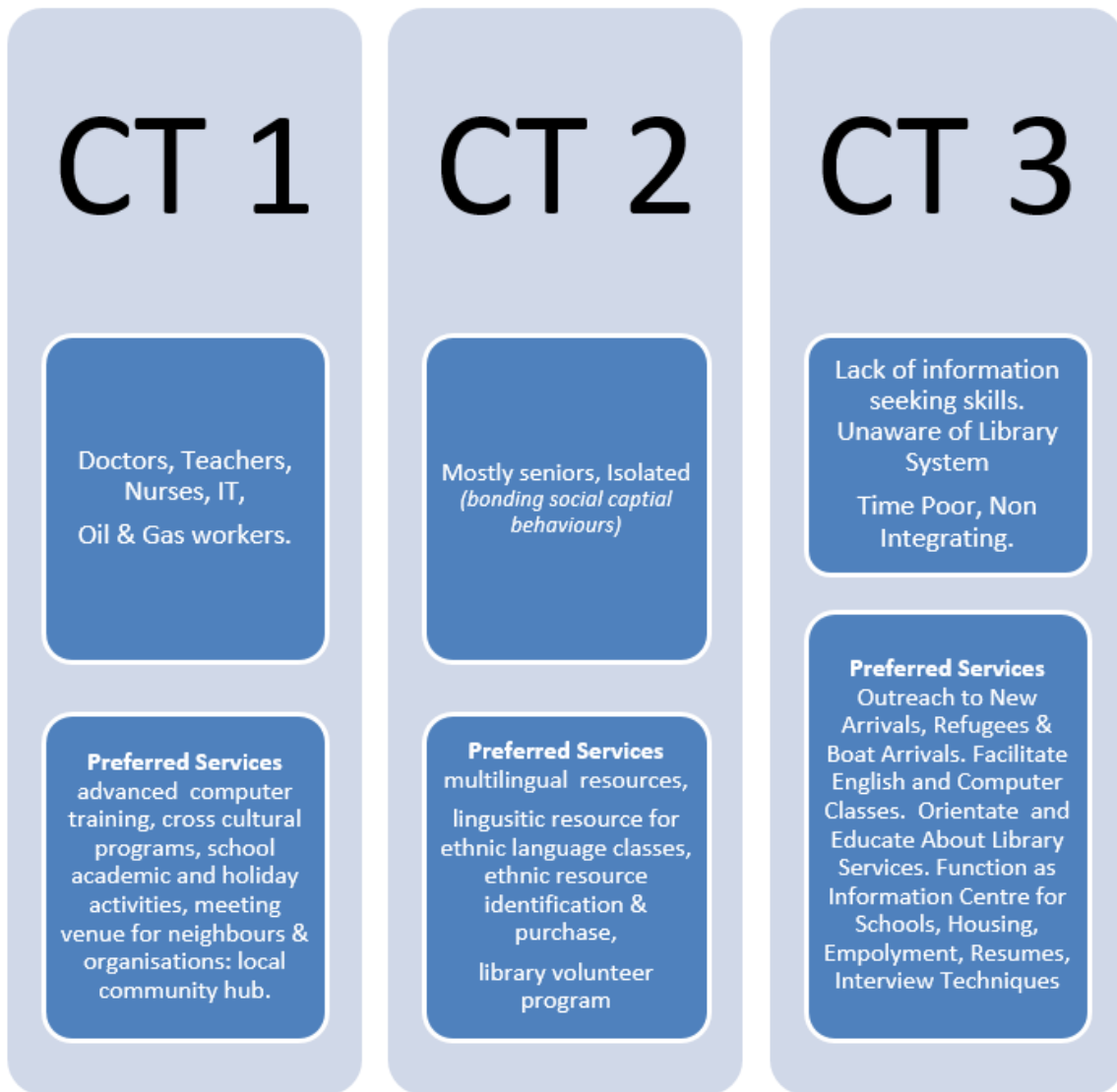


Figure 6-3: EAL Community Types and public library service preference

Public libraries may need to address the different kinds of information services to these community types. Regular community profiles and surveys would be critical to revealing the specific information needs and the educational background of residents in the library's suburb and catchment area. The interview data supports the view that EAL groups are heterogeneous and library services and programmes may benefit from being able to identify the distinctive information needs of the residents in the local suburb, with a distinct view that one library model does not fit all. The characteristics shown in the above community types demonstrate that treating 'ethnic' community members as a single entity does not capture the true nature of their diversified information needs.

The digital world consists of informed citizens, regardless of their country of origin or method of arrival at their chosen destination, in this case of this research, Australia.

Advances in advocacy in human rights, equity, civil liberties and the presence of guidelines and support services for various aspects of law means that individuals are aware of their rights as citizens, which in turn creates a certain level of service expectation. Sensitivity and respect to individuals and ethnic groups leads to sustainable communities, with the public library strategically located within these communities, with the potential to promote cross-cultural engagement and life-long learning. In terms of this thesis's first supporting research question

What services are offered to EAL users by public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia

the data shown in the previous chapter and the discussion to-date in this chapter would seem to indicate an answer of 'quite a lot, but more could be done'. Essentially, the libraries are offering services and responding to the needs of EAL community member, but not in a way that would seem to capture the dynamics and diversity of the community type factors shown above. As the analysis around the community types shows, there is a great deal of complexity relating to the information needs and information usage capabilities of EAL library users (and non users) and that as of the time of writing, public library services did not have the necessary policy and information gathering tools required to bridge the gap between service needs and provision.

As a result, of this research, this thesis proposes a model for a sustainable library service which can more broadly understand the diversity of its user groups and community types and provide services which can go some way towards closing the gap which presently exists between the contemporary library service and EAL communities.

6.2.2 An integrated library services model

An information centred role for public libraries of the future seems inevitable. Some would argue that this is a role that the library already performs within the community, however this research sees that role as being extended along the lines of the findings presented thus far. The Internet has grown to become a 24/7 repository for information, leading to a shift in role for the public library, from a primary information provider to more diverse role such as conducting research and building community profiles, project coordinators for outreach programmes, facilitators for training and education programmes,

informal counsellors for new arrivals, and advisors on Medicare, childcare and education. Indeed the local public library's legitimacy heralds a thriving, centralised community hub strategically placed to foster cross-cultural engagement and the building social capital for the suburb, the state and in some ways, the nation (Kranich, 2001)

6.2.3 Evolving library staff profiles

A multicultural Australia is a reality, ethnic diversity will increase steadily, and embracing its complexities and addressing the information needs of these heterogeneous communities is highly desirable, if not essential, for nation building.

Reflecting the diversity in public library staff profile requires training and employing staff from within the EAL communities explored in this thesis. The library staff participants within this thesis failed to define information services for EAL speakers in the current library services in relation to specialist services, multicultural library policies, information about their local ethnic residents, their information seeking abilities, or even their English and literacy skills. The responses point towards a lack of attention to specific ethnic information needs which implies that now more than ever before, library staff need to evaluate their perspectives and understanding of the characteristics which define 'ethnic' communities. The results of the library participant responses foreshadow the need to re-examine their perception of EAL speakers and their lack of definitive affirmation of information services to these ethnic groups.

Library staff need to accept change is inevitable in view of the digitisation of library services and increasing diversity of their patrons. Librarians' acknowledgement of the above realities is essential and it requires a mind-set to engage with and understand the diversity evident among their clients. More importantly, their traditional service delivery requires a shift towards acquiring skills in the complex web technologies that dominate library information services, so that these skills can be passed on to the clients who seek them but are not placed to utilise them. The public library system in WA, like most library systems, was established long before the onslaught of digital technologies, and from the evidence gathered in this research, library staff seem to be complacent about acquiring these skills and using them in library service delivery. Social media and other web technologies, the data showed, are not excessively employed in the libraries examined.

Leadership for initiating change is vital, and who provides and manages that leadership has a significant impact on the future of the public library service provision.

Currently, the public libraries in WA are fairly autonomous, operating under the management of the SLWA, though there does not appear to be a strong driving force for change in terms of EAL service provision. Change transferred from top down demands that the state government, SLWA, Local Government Authority and local councils acknowledge the diversity amongst their population. Strategic directions for public libraries need to identify policies and guidelines for initiating change in the light of the increasing ethnic presence. Rather than the minimalist outmoded references to multicultural library services, the time seems right for a generous, compassionate and client sensitive perspective towards EAL library services. The shift from the traditional library centred to a more client centred approach and proactive library customer service signifies such generosity and compassion.

6.2.4 Relevance of the library to EAL speakers

The democratic principles which underpin the public library system and form the pillars of strength for viable service provision, with a vision statement that the universal public library model prevalent in WA offers free services to all, irrespective of creed or colour in a neutral environment with the aim to promote lifelong learning (State Library of Western Australia, 2008). These universal objectives of library service provision combined with the recognition of the increased numbers of EAL speakers are critical factors for future service providers. Equity and diversity in library information service provision is vital to inclusive libraries, with activities and programmes aiming to bridge the social divide.

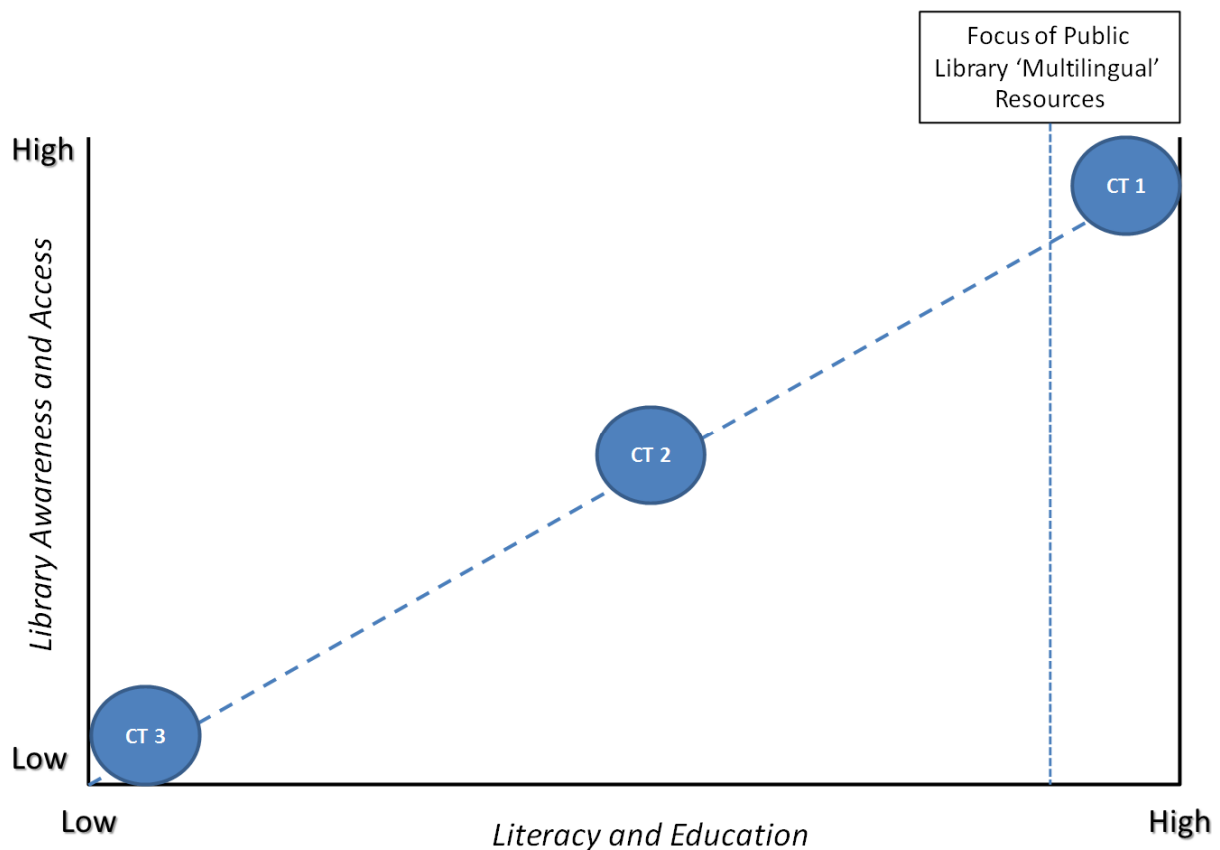


Figure 6-4: Spectrum of EAL Community Types and public library service provision

As Figure 6-4, illustrates, the wide variety of education and literacy levels found in the EAL speakers, aligned to the Community Types 1, 2, and 3, provide challenges to the provision of Library services to ethnic communities. Figure 6.6, proposes that for the most part, current public library service provision in terms of ‘multilingual’ resources and policies is essentially aimed at Community Type 1 individuals. These are people who are highly literature, professionals and who use the full range of library services, including the English language resources. In effect, Figure 6.6 indicates that the other community types (1 and 2) are less well catered for due to their issues of education, literacy and propensity for bonding social capital tendencies. The critical success factors to such service provision require attention to the wide range in literacy levels among the EAL speakers. On one hand, there are the agrarian war torn traumatic backgrounds coupled with absence of an academic culture are dominant factors which affect library access and perceptions of the current public library services. Employment and socio economic demands, along with their preference to stay within their own ethnic groups, prevent their ready access to the library. These groups tend to be very self-reliant within their own ethnic community settings, including specialist

schools, places of worship and social gatherings. With the appropriate provision of services to these groups, the public library service has the opportunity to exploit bridging capital objectives by bringing these groups into the larger community, with the library and its activities and services as the hub.

6.3 Stakeholders for change

As the previous sections have in discussed at length, the public library encounters a diverse clientele and no one service fits all. The information needs of these EAL groups vary, and without a clear understanding of the characteristics of these groups, service provision can be inadequate or irrelevant. Information on local demography and research on client characteristics (for example language spoken or availability of Internet access) are available via the ABS website, and do not require Libraries to survey their residents directly if they feel do not feel it is their place to do so. Optimising the understanding of the detailed information contained in the ABS website are likely drivers for initiating shifts in current established services.

Chief among the shortcomings in service provision and client empathy is that displayed by the State Government, Local Government Authority as well as the local councils (WALGA) and government of WA. Financial investment towards training, research and a review of the role of the public library as a community building agent is dependent on these stakeholders. Budgets assigned to the public library are likely to build social capital for the suburb and the nation. Cross-cultural sustainability and building social capital empower the suburb economically and socially (Jakubowicz, 2006). Sustainability depends on equity and opportunities for all. Equity and opportunities to make a living are significant challenges for refugees and migrants who are visibly different due colour, religious symbols, language and cultural dress codes.

Inclusion is more than celebrating ethnic festivals, it concerns, as Dunn cited in (Henry-Waring, 2011) states “reconfiguring a local and more diverse form of citizenry and therefore also of governance” (p. 9) and not that

the host society/community merely has to tolerate external cultures. It does not have to exchange or enter into dialogue or conversation. Therefore, it never is obliged to change or adapt, with the focus remaining on migrants and others to accept “our values” and “commit” to Australia (Henry-Waring, 2011, p. 9).

Lack of interaction and cross-cultural communication is a recurrent theme in the data as well as the literature. The public library holds a key role in bridging the cultural divide by engaging the local residents within its catchment area. The local suburb is the microcosm of the nation, the local public library enriches its community, informed citizens enhance the social capital of their environment which contributes to socioeconomic growth and nation building. The future of multi-ethnic Australia stands to benefit from investment in diversifying the services of the local public library and promoting inclusive services. Sustainability in multi-ethnic Australia may originate in the local suburb, with the public library located in the geographical centre of the suburb functioning as the agent for multi-ethnic sustainability. Rather than ignoring the assets of the traditionally established government library service, authorities could optimise the public library system due to its historical relevance as an institution to local communities. State, LGA and the Federal Government paid minimal heed to calls by professional librarians in high positions in the library environment to recognise the innate potential in the community building role of the public library (Richards, 2009).

However, community unrest around the First World nations with large numbers of diverse groups resident in their regions may draw the attention of the Australian authorities in an attempt to prevent unfavourable outcomes in our increasingly multicultural community. In recent decades there have been examples of cultural clashes and unrest, leading to such disasters as 9/11, the Bali Bombings, the Spanish rail bombings and the British rail and bus bombings to name but a few of the most prominent. Australia has largely avoided such cataclysms, though events such as the Cronulla riots of 2005 hinted at the discontent that can come of communities not integrating as well as they might. Henry-Waring, (2011) contends that “instead of retreating or being discarded multiculturalism needs to be pushed further, to provide effective strategies and policies at all levels. It should not be viewed as a ‘one size fits all’ model” (p. 11).

Indeed, it is about the Australian community, building communities for a sustainable future for Australia with democratic values. The literature would indicate that the library does indeed have a role in providing a point of integration for those diverse communities willing, or able, to utilise its services.

Funding, inclusive strategic directions and redefined library services need collaborative efforts and transparency for successful implementation. Shift in library perspectives commence at top level, the transfer of new initiatives and funding, essentially, needs to reach the librarian. Mere advocacy is insufficient (Richards, 2009). It is noted that, and librarians

holding high profile positions in WA assert that, advocacy has proven to be futile in the past. The present circumstances, in view of digital information services and the inevitable rising numbers in migration endorse the plea for initiatives to redefine, restructure and reinvent the local public library in WA. The proposition is to optimise the current library services for community and nation building. The appeal is for optimal interest in re-defining and re-structuring the library system and not a critical stance that condones a minimalist, business as usual approach. Figure 6-5 below displays the potential key players and their roles in the public library environment. The stakeholders in implementing change in public library are the government officials who hold the budget allocations and negotiate policies. A transparent top down process which filters through to the local public library, underpins success towards redefining and reinventing the library services, programmes and resources. Strategic asset management, a state-wide policy (including the state library), and effective Local Government Authorities (including the local government authorities and the local councils) hold the key to creating a more inclusive and social sustainable library system in WA and Australia as a whole. Redefining this national asset for building strong communities in the local suburbs is vital for nation building. The community builds social capital, a highly informed community practices mutual respect, is progressive and contributes to the nation's economy (Edmundson & Morgan, 2013).

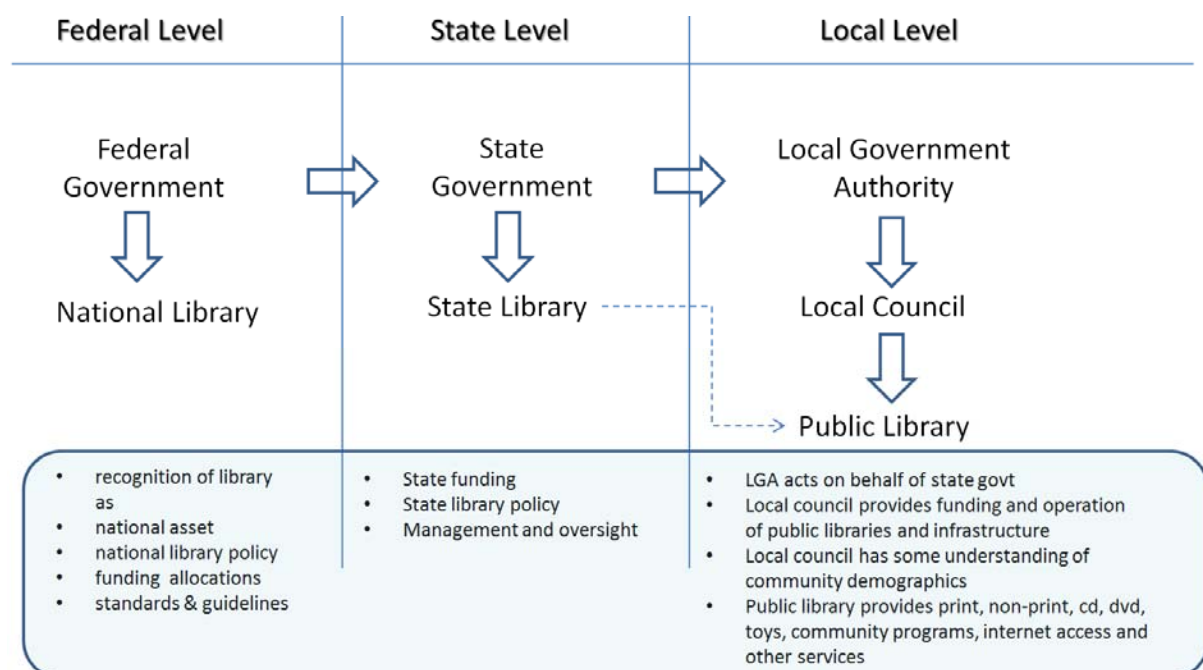


Figure 6-5: Key stakeholders for redefining public library services for community and nation building

6.4 Libraries as community hubs

The public libraries in OECD nations are currently reviewing the traditional services and programmes due to the impact of information technology and increases in population diversity (Audunson, 2005). The public library as a local educational facilitator could enhance individual potential which will inform users about opportunities for personal growth. The information exchange role educates the community. The library becomes the centre for community collaborations and for activities and programmes which could involve a diverse range of residents from across the neighbourhood community. As a consequence, cultural exchange, engagement of the locals and interaction with neighbours are likely to occur, hopefully in a positive and productive way. The public library staff could source grants and funds and implement short-term programmes to engage their local community and promote public libraries in a community building role. Some of the public library environments in the Eastern States of Australia have embraced the changing environment, introduced multicultural library policies, initiated multilingual computer access and conducted surveys on ethnic groups within their clientele base in efforts to address their changing customer profiles (Hoegh-Guldberg, 2006).

WA has demonstrated a certain level of complacency in the past, due to its demography and a lack of ethnic numbers demanding services relevant to members of the EAL community. As part of this population change, EAL speaker numbers made up a growing proportion of the influx, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics reporting (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014b);

Perth is an increasingly important site of migrant settlement in Australia. Between the 2001 and 2011 Censuses, the number of migrants living in Perth grew 51%, higher than the growth seen in either Sydney (24%) or Melbourne (31%) during the same period. Perth suburbs with large concentrations of overseas-born populations were located near the city centre, to the south-east, and to the city's far north. In the city centre, this included Northbridge (68%), Perth CBD (57%), and East Perth (61%) where more than half of residents were born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Perth, para 1).

It was from these residential areas that a bulk of the EAL participants for this study was drawn. The changing population profile signals changes in the local demography and information needs of the local population. The public library located close to residential

nucleus is strategically positioned to offer services that may enhance EAL speakers' chances of succeeding in the new country, though the library has to recognise their role in this process. The time would seem appropriate for Federal Government's involvement to initiate change from a top down process from federal to state to local government levels. Community building for a sustainable Australia relies on Federal Government multicultural policies and democratic practices which currently, are subject to contest due to Australia's past.

Obviously, Henry-Waring, Jakubowicz and other authors who write a similar vein have strong views on a perceived lack of progress in Australia towards functional multiculturalism. As an immigrant, the author of this thesis has had long term experience of the evolving multiculturalism in Australia, and whilst some aspects of Henry-Waring's assertions ring true, perhaps nowhere near as stark as claimed.

The present study provides evidence to support the redefining of the public library service to that of a community building role. The current library environment noted in the quote below by the American Library Association President (Stripling, 2014) highlights that,

Every day, we must listen to our colleagues and community members, develop empathy for the challenges they face, and then take positive steps to alleviate any hint of discrimination or injustice, whether it's through a simple offer to help or through a major policy change. Each one of us is responsible for ensuring a just society for all (Stripling, 2014, para 9).

The diagram below (Figure 6-6) provides a summary of the perceived current state of the public library service in WA, in terms of a relatively passive, traditional system, combined with aspects of current literature which supports a more transformational role for the library service of the near future.

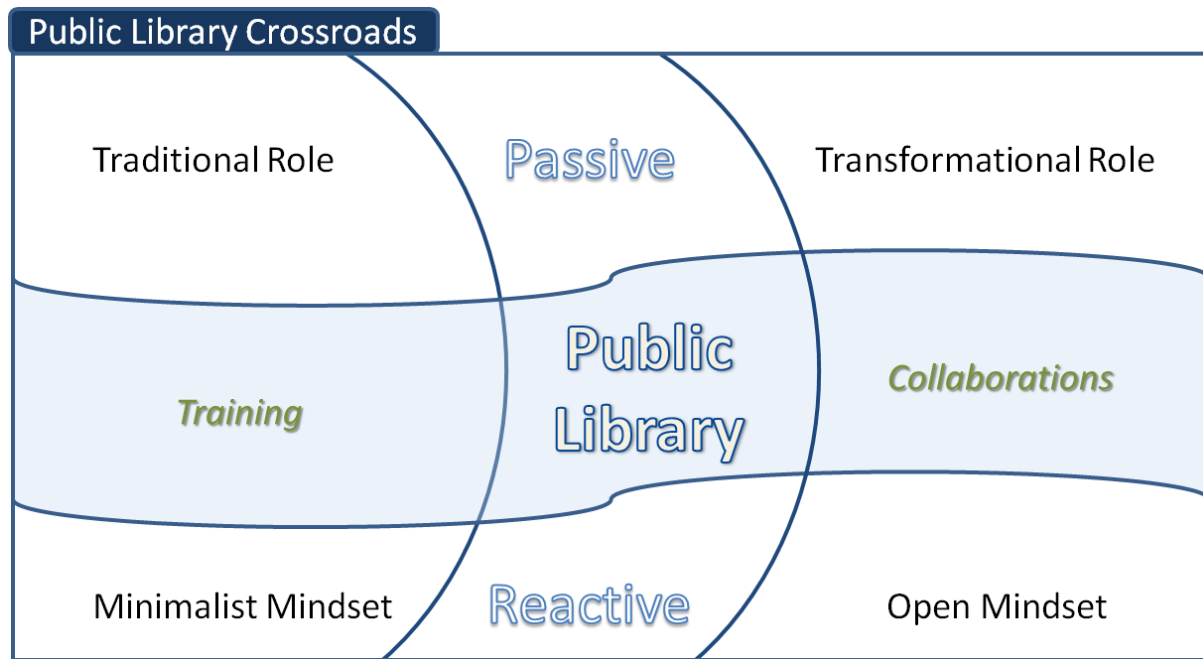


Figure 6-6: Public library at the crossroads

Such ambitions for the public library, as raised by Stripling (2014), recognise the trusted role and centrality of such intuition's to local communities, and lead to a recommendation of this thesis for a model of which encapsulates social sustainability of library services in WA, moving away from the traditional model as represented in the figure above.

Chapter 7

A Model for Sustainable Library Services

Major public libraries have seized on the concept of participatory culture to develop new relationships with their audiences, gather new knowledge about their collections, and create new platforms for innovative practice (McShane, 2011, p. 392).

7.0 Overview

This study examined the capacity and scope of community building programmes demonstrated in public libraries in metropolitan Perth, WA for EAL speakers. It determined which EAL programmes, if any, are currently available and explored the notion that there are number of considerations which help define the actual makeup of a ‘multi-ethnic’ community, captured in this thesis in the form of Community Types. These Community Types must be understood before public library services can be offered effectively to these communities and the individuals who reside within them. As demographics are changing in Australian society there is need for individuals, regardless of ethnicity, to access information and services and be able to participate equitably as citizens. This study examined how the public library system, which was introduced in the 1950’s to provide the average citizen with equitable access to information, is performing in this role in metropolitan Perth, WA for EAL speakers. As a part of the research processes, this thesis has attempted to create a deeper understanding of the EAL communities which exist in the Perth metropolitan area and their perceptions of the library both as a community information service and as a readily accessible branch of local government. By understanding the perceptions of these EAL community members, along with the views of the library staff as to the role and provision of library services, this thesis has tried to identify service gaps, cultural divides and opportunities for more broadly inclusive library services. As a result, of these findings, and as part of this research’s contribution to knowledge, a proposed model emerged which captures the core elements of future public library services which attempts to narrow the identified gaps.

7.1 A Model for Sustainable Public Libraries (MSPL)

The findings of the data along with the detailed discussion of user needs in the previous chapters underpin the rationale for a Model for Sustainable Public Libraries

(MSLP) in the modern community, with the findings of this thesis's supporting research question,

What are the components of a sustainable model of EAL service provision in a public library context?

to form the basis of this model.

The model is structured around:

- i. *inputs,*
- ii. *actions and*
- iii. *outcomes*

The inputs represent the primary functional areas of the library system and those areas identified in this research as requiring re-structuring and development. As demonstrated in Figure 7-1 below there are seven main inputs, grouped according to three classes of:

- iv. *community,*
- v. *staffing and services and*
- vi. *policy*

Each **Input** leads to an **Action** (a series of initiatives) that need to take place within the public library service, leading to an **Outcome** which in turn should drive a more inclusive role for the library in an ever more diverse community.

As an example, Input 1, community profiling leads to an action which has a number of initiatives designed to gather information about the local community in terms of ethnic presence, diversity and levels of literacy. The outcomes of such actions and initiatives should be greater inclusion in the library service for those individuals identified in this research as non-users of the library, such as Community Type 2 and Community Type 3.

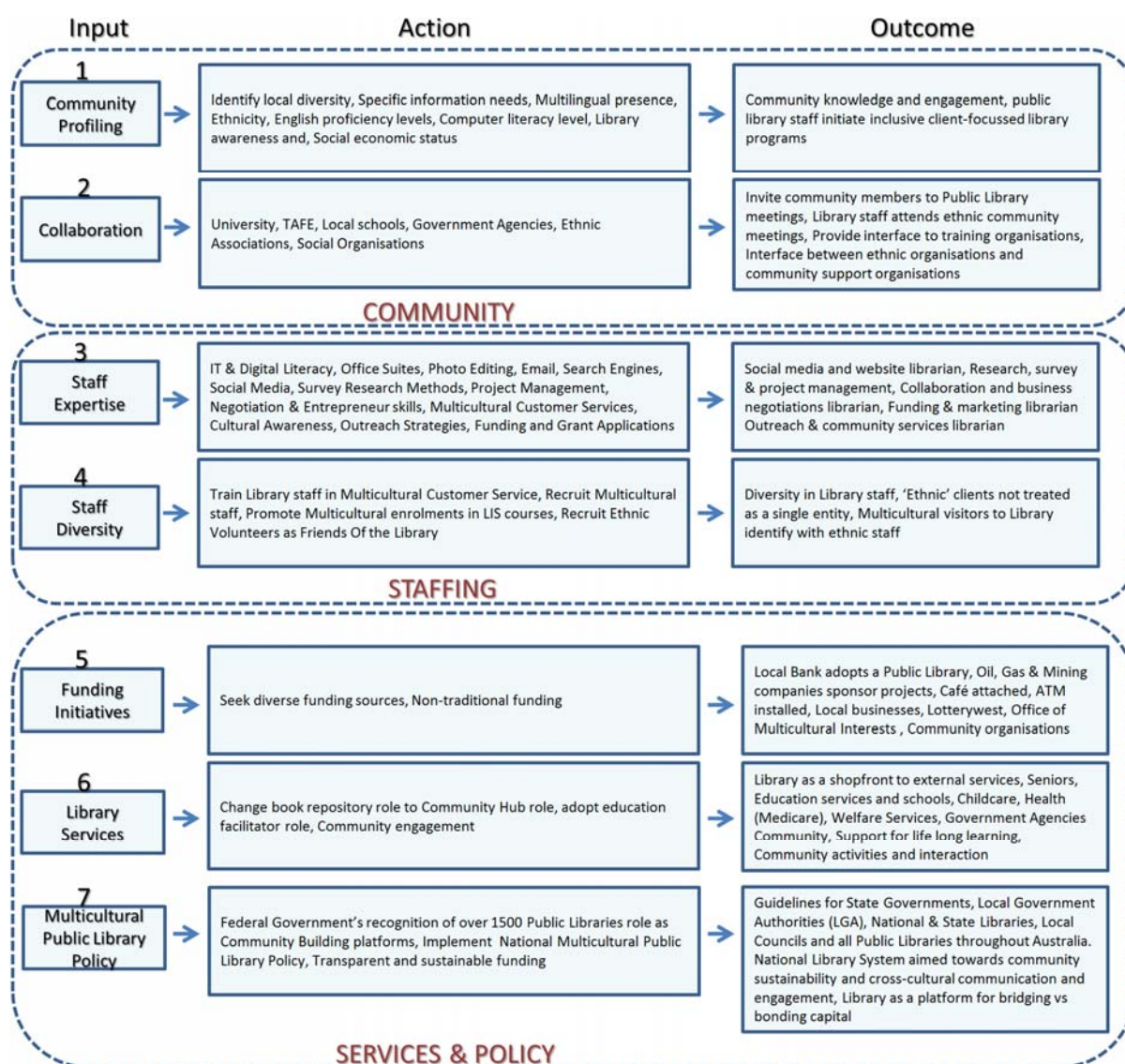


Figure 7-1: Model for sustainable library services (MSPL)

This model is not designed as a one size fits all solution to library services for multi-ethnic communities as such a model is unlikely to be workable given the widely diverse nature of Australia's ethnic mix of population. In fact, this diversity is an international phenomenon and presents service provision challenges around the world. However, this model does attempt to make a contribution to these issues by presenting initiatives and processes that are grouped according to the people, professionals and the services that formed the basis of this study. This thesis acknowledges that perhaps some, maybe all of the elements of the model may not currently be defined as practical, however it does propose a shift in perspectives from traditional library practices, to more flexible and outward looking service provision. It also parallels a number of the broad recommendations of the Western

Australian Structural Reform of Public Library Services document, which outlines a number of key strategic outcomes (State Library of Western Australia, 2007, pp. ii-vi) of;

1. Well-informed, literate and learning communities
2. Connected and resilient communities
3. Community memory
4. Accessible and relevant content
5. Community hubs
6. Skilled and innovative workforce
7. Continuous improvement
8. Strategic partnerships
9. Good governance
10. Visible and valued

These 10 strategic priorities proposed by the WA government outlined above align closely with many of the recommendations outlined in the Model for Sustainable Public Libraries (MSPL) below. The broad areas of community, staffing and services and policy seen in the model capture most of the strategic priorities that the WA government put forward in 2007, but are seemingly yet to deliver on in a consistent, identifiable way. Certainly from the perspective of the EAL participants in this study, many of the concerns they raised are items that appear in the governments strategic priorities, but where more could be done. The breakdown of the Model for Sustainable Public Libraries (MSPL) is elaborated below.

7.1.1 Community

Input 1: Community building

This input involves community profiling due to the diversity among the residents in a suburb. The library operates as suburban information centre for its local population. While library system established in the 1950s catered for a mainly English speaking clientele, the contemporary library is challenged with diverse ethnic groups whose literacy levels, English language proficiency and computer skills are of varying competencies. Thus the traditional library services and programs may require re defining and restructuring. Understanding the demographic makeup of the library's catchment area is crucial to the design and implementation of services which more readily reflect the needs of the local community. In

Action 1

Refers to the need for community profiling of the residents in the suburb where the library is located. This process is feasible with the cooperation of the local council that administers the library as it has both the resources and administrative processes in place to administer an instrument to collect demographic data. A questionnaire which elicits information about residents' information needs, linguistic strengths, computer skills, awareness of the locality and library culture and their socio economic status will inform the library staff as to the background of clients and facilitate an increased awareness of the real life phenomenon of the client population. A questionnaire enclosed in collaboration with local council official mails to its residents, such as the rates notices, will assist in identifying addresses and names of the population in the suburb. Alternatively, library staff can access the ABS statistics which enclosed details of ethnicity, NESB and ESB, Internet access, languages spoken at home and other facts which are listed in raw numerical figures free of charge for public access. Essentially, the raw data available through the ABS can inform the content of the questionnaire based on the country of origin of the residence of the suburb, with the questionnaire then addressing the specific needs of these groups. This Action is basically a needs analysis process.

Outcome 1

Is the increased knowledge about the demography of its local community and the potential for inclusive client sensitive public library services. To a large extent, the attempt to identify community cultural background and information needs can result in efficient and economic service delivery which is tailored to demographic characteristics of the local community rather than being based on possible broad based assumptions about the needs of the local community. The ABS data on community profiling names ethnic groups and the exact number of individuals (based on ethnicity) residing in each suburb all over Australia. The suburbs reflect to some degree the diversity evident among the residents. For example, in the Western Australian context, Peppermint Grove, Applecross and Nedlands typically display affluent and English educated EAL residents, whilst the suburbs of Stirling, Gosnells and Midland display a mixed group which includes resident who lack literacy, English Language skills, computer literacy and originate from agrarian backgrounds. The information needs of the latter vary from the highly literate EAL speakers in the former. Hence, community profiling by the library staff will alert staff about the wide variety prevalent in their local demographic profile. Additionally, community profiling holds the

potential for starting dialogue and engagement with the local community and leading into a more inclusive collaboration.

Input 2: Collaboration

The public library role as a liaison between library users and the educational institutions in the suburb can be trialled as an interface for training programs. It was noted that the local infrastructures such as the universities, TAFE colleges and schools, are equipped with computers facilities, phone connections, seating capacity for large numbers and are normally free during the noncontact hours.

Action 2

The public library could initiate, for example, computer classes in collaboration with the computer labs in the local university during the inter-semester breaks. University students could be encouraged to participate in voluntary social service activities to teach library clients who request computer lessons or even English language sessions. Alternatively, library clients could be charged a minimum fee which could be used to pay computer teachers to run training sessions. These recommendations could be attempted during the normal opening hours of the library, with library staff facilitating collaborative activities during their normal working schedule, which implies that costs to the library are kept to a minimum. This is a crucial aspect of the collaboration component of the MSPL that library staff act as facilitators between library clients and external service providers, but not as the actual service provider themselves. Otherwise, staff compliance and engagement with the process will remain limited and ultimately unsustainable.

Secondly, collaborative ventures include the engagement of ethnic members of the community. Inviting leaders of ethnic organisations to occasional meetings in the library will further inform the library staff about the unique information needs of different groups. Another recommendation is for library staff to visit these same ethnic organisations and their functions, using the opportunity to showcase the library programs and activities so as to drive two way communication and engagement. Engagement should also be extended so as to include any community support organisations that might offer services relevant to ethnic members of the local community.

Outcome 2

By developing collaborative relationships between ethnic community organisations and community support groups the library can once again act as the interface between such organisations.

In order for library staff to provide such innovative services training would be vital in order to manage, promote and execute collaborative activities and programs.

7.1.2 Staffing

Input 3: Staff expertise

This input involves innovative in-house programs for library staff due to increased diversity in its local population and the digitalisation of information and service provision. The shift from the traditional service delivery parallels an equivalent need for reviewing the traditional library training programs. Library managers would need to assess the current level of their staff in terms of expertise and capability for delivering new and evolving services and then implement appropriate training opportunities.

Action 3

This action includes advocating for changes in the curriculum of library information service (LIS) training programs offered at tertiary institutions. Future LIS programs could include a wider range of computer literacy for library trainees as well as research methods related to compiling and analysing demographic information. Rather than shy away from Information and Computer Technology (ICT), equipping librarians with advanced computer knowledge is could encourage the use of computer systems and applications for developing new initiatives among library staff. Training in office suites (such as Microsoft Office of Open Office), photo editing (such Adobe Photoshop or GIMP), E-mail communication, information about search engines, database systems and social media will provide the necessary expertise and confidence for the development of new service initiatives. For example, Twitter and Facebook could be utilised as regular modes of communicating library programs, collections and seeking input from library users, whilst at the same time providing libraries with usage analytics as to their ‘followers’ and ‘likes’. The added benefit of staff developing skills in social media usage is the potential to control their own online communication with their clients, as very few public libraries control their own website presence, this falling within the purview of the shire or local council.

Secondly, if librarians are required to conduct community profile and needs analysis then it is essential that survey research techniques are included in LIS programs as mentioned above. The use of web based survey tools such as Qualtrics or Survey Monkey, skills in collating data in Excel spreadsheets and analysing data with the use of statistical programs

like SPSS will equip the future librarian with necessary skills to carry out simple investigations about their library clientele and possible gaps in the services they are offering. Thirdly, it is recommended that library staff are trained in writing proposals for projects and funding in order to implement and offer improved, innovative library services. Developing the requisite skills to write business cases to government agencies seeking funding and support for new services would be a key driver to many of the proposals within the MSPL as it is unlikely that existing funding structures and allocations would suffice.

As well as these skills in working with government agencies, library staff would likely need to develop negotiation skills and some degree of entrepreneur skills in order to meet with other organisations to discuss options for shared use of facilities, staff and services. In this context, library staff require guidance in outreach strategies which are likely to get staff out of the library to reach out to potential collaborators rather than the traditional perception of the library staff passively waiting for clients to come to them. Finally, library staff may require frequent training on multicultural customer services and cultural awareness about the diversity embedded among ethnic groups such as those identified in this study (Community Type 1, Community Type 2 and Community Type 3).

Outcome 3

This outcome includes the enhanced ease and efficiency of library staff to implement new initiatives such as Social Media, administer surveys, develop projects and associated funding, negotiate collaborative projects and become more sensitive to the diversity among their client population. Ultimately, libraries and their staff should be in the position to leverage these new skills to constantly evolve their services in sync with the ever changing environment of the local community and client base.

Input 4: Staff diversity

This input refers to a concerted effort in engaging ethnic members to participate in the library as members of the library staff in one form or another.

Action 4

This action leads to appointing of EAL individuals as members of a more diverse staff. Input 4 to a certain degree is influenced by the result of Input 1, as an in-depth understanding of the local EAL community could lead to the appointment of ethnically diverse staff who can more readily engage with their local communities. This could take the form of a casual staff member, a volunteer, or perhaps the creation of a community liaison role within the library structure in collaboration with the ethnic organisations as outlined in Input 2.

Outcome 4

This outcome suggests that with heightened knowledge of the diversity among the EAL groups would mean that ethnic individuals will perceive an increased sensitivity to their doubts about authority figures, their literacy shortcomings and even an awareness of some groups' lack of awareness about the democratic nature of public library services. Multicultural library staff would enable EAL visitors to identify a reflection of their own community and culture with the library staff which in turn might promote a feeling of familiarity.

Obviously, any discussion of staffing, training and development of new services will have an absolute requirement for funding and a foundation in policy so that such developments become the expected norm for library services.

7.1.3 Services and Policy

Input 5: Funding Initiatives

Some elements of the MSPL are based on existing library services and structures, such as Inputs 5 (funding), Input 6 (library services) and Input 7 (library policy) (though the latter is primarily evident in the Eastern states of Australia rather than in Western Australia), though the actions and outcomes presented here extend these elements. In particular, while the Federal Government, State Government, Local Government Authority and the Local Council fund the operating costs of public libraries, it is recommended that non-traditional sources of funding could be approached.

Action 5

This action would involve initiatives by trained library staff to communicate with local banks, oil and gas companies, local businesses and the Office of Multicultural Interests for sponsorship and financial support. It may be that relevant local businesses, such as coffee shops or bank ATM's could embed their services inside the library premises, with the generated rent being used to fund the new library services. At same time, whilst generating a source of income, such a model could also generate increased client traffic coming to utilise the new embedded facilities.

Outcome 5

This outcome ensures that the wider community is invited and encouraged to participate in their local library, moreover, funds set aside for charitable and sponsorship programs by large corporate organisations are also accessed by the library. Indeed the public

library is encouraged to seek out and develop such funding sources as government funding is always under scrutiny and may never meet the requirements for an expanded set of library services.

Input 6: Library services

This input refers to the traditional library services and programs. It is recommended that the public library reinvent, restructure and redefine its services in the context of the ever evolving multicultural and digital environment. If libraries are to remain relevant in future communities they must reflect the service and information needs of such communities or cease to exist as an organisation.

Action 6

This action is required to change the book repository image of the public library to a community hub for ever evolving services reflective of community need. It is recommended that the library increases activities which involve community engagement. Programs which engage school children through reading story narration competitions, school holiday activities and organised class library visits are some suggestions for promoting library services to younger groups. Teenaged students would require library programs which are attractive and relevant to their peers, such as those featuring modern computing and Web technologies or facilitating year 11 and year 12 tutorial sessions during school holiday periods. The library organises the program, engages staff and advertises to its local high school students.

The interview data highlighted the need for cross cultural communication and interaction among the residents in the suburb. To address this need, community engagement is recommended. Local residents could be encouraged to attend talks, morning coffee meetings, or volunteer their services to the library. The library could broaden its services and function as information centre. Information on seniors,' welfare services, childcare, educational courses, Medicare and government agencies are of great value to EAL individuals who are new to Australia. Again, the library could act as an initial interface between these external service providers and those seeking their services, with library staff directing individuals to appropriate organisations and clarifying the services offered by these organisations.

Outcome 6

This outcome is to have the library as the focal point for residents in the local community to locate services, seek training opportunities, engage and integrate with other community members and organisations. By becoming such a focal point the library as an organisation should have the ability to adapt and thrive, as the inability to embrace change, in

the view of current closures of public libraries (for example in the UK) and evidence from the wider library literature, spells demise for public libraries. Diversification of the services of the library increases its legitimacy and community engagement adds intrinsic value.

Input 7: Multicultural Public Library Policy

This input refers to recognition of the unique information needs of ever increasing EAL populations. This input identifies the need to more coherently design services around ever changing populations and the very different information needs of each culture represented in a local community. As advocated throughout this thesis, a one-size-fits-all approach to ‘multicultural’ services is outdated and not reflective of current trends.

Action 7

This final action advocates that the Federal Government have more of a role in developing public library policy at a national level, with a focus on multicultural needs in the provision of library services. It is essential that the Federal Government recognises the economic value of the 1500 and more public libraries in the nation. Federal Government policy to establish the public library as community platform and social hub would legitimise and strengthen the position of the library. A transparent national policy which follows a top down channel would mean that compliance is assured from the Commonwealth to State, Local Government Authority, to the local council culminating in inclusive public library services in the suburbs throughout Australia. Through the use of community profiling at the local level, libraries would have policy and funding support to deliver both services and collections relevant to their own clients, rather than a general, uniformed ‘multicultural collection’ which does not meet the information, service or cultural needs of the community.

Outcome 7

This outcome has two specific recommendations;

- a) Federal Government Public Library Policy for establishing community hubs,
- b) National Multicultural Public Library Policy

These policies would include guidelines for State Government, Local Government Authority, local council and the public library in the suburb. The national library system adopts an extended role to promote community sustainability, cross cultural communication and engagement which potentially builds mutual respect for diverse cultures in the light of recent unrest in the world. The 1500 and more public libraries in Australia are traditionally established infrastructures for local communities. The time might now be appropriate for the

library to be the organisation that builds bridges across diverse communities who are unable to overcome conflicts from their countries of origin.

7.2 Conclusion

Elements of the this model which propose newer roles for library include Inputs 1- community profiling, Input 2 - collaboration, Input 4 - staff diversity and Input 5 – funding initiatives. Of all the inputs recommended in the MSPL Input 1 is the most critical of all the inputs as it defines, on a per library basis, all the other Inputs and their associated actions and outcomes which propose a client centred perspective in library service delivery.

Essentially, whilst this model has been developed based on data collected in Western Australia for this research, many aspects of the model have in some part or other been raised in the literature and in some elements of government policy. This model does not propose to replace existing library services but rather propose a new perspective on the development of relevant and innovative services which public libraries can implement in various stages or selectively in order to meet to evolving needs of their patrons. The model presents some possible approaches to not only introducing new services to the library, but also new users.

Chapter 8

How we shape relevant services and, thus, communicate our value to management, councils, and partner bodies is critical. Libraries have much to offer in furthering local and national agendas for literacy, digital and information confidence and in providing access to services supporting employment and cultural engagement. Yet, this contribution is infrequently spelled out in any detail, if at all, in government policy documents, in a way that makes it easy to recognize and test (Gildersleeves in Rankin & Brock, 2012, p. 208).

Conclusion

8.0 Overview

Information practises vary according to an individual's background, knowledge, skills and abilities. In the digital era, information is stored and disseminated through multifaceted electronic tools and services. Information providers and professionals who deliver services can be challenged by the enormity of the ever progressing digital phenomenon whilst the consumer is often overwhelmed by the deluge of information services. As an information service provider, the public library has a unique role in the digital era, whereby the public library becomes a community hub, functioning as an information provider and an interface to allied services and organisations. Information about government social welfare programs, aged care, Centre Link, Medicare and English language classes are some of the information needs expressed by the interview participants in this study. Recognising the diversity in its local citizens is vital for offering relevant library services and programs. Proactively reaching out to diverse community members and organisations enhances the library's legitimacy in terms of educating and informing citizens in its local suburb.

The local council and its suburb constitute the microcosm of the whole population. The library has a vital role in engaging its local citizens with its library services, programs and resources. Informed citizens in the suburb are likely to respect others who are unlike themselves, engage in cross cultural interaction and strive to build sustainable communities. Mutual respect, social networking and cohesion are likely outcomes from informed and socially engaged citizenship. In the current environment of unrest and distrust, the Commonwealth Government, State Governments and the Local Government Authorities can leverage the services of the public libraries located in the suburbs all around Australia for promoting cohesion among the local citizens in the nation. Unlike other parts of the Western world which witnessed historical migratory waves, the multicultural population in Australia is a fairly young and currently an increasing phenomenon. The potential for social

engineering, building a bridging social capital culture and ensuring sustainable communities in Australia is achievable.

8.1 Addressing the primary research question

This research investigated service delivery for EAL speakers in public libraries within the Perth Metropolitan area, WA by exploring the primary research question;

What is the extent of EAL service provision within public libraries in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia in the new millennia?

The qualitative and quantitative data presented in Chapters Four and Five, followed by the discussion in Chapter Six and the culmination of the Model for Sustainable Public Libraries (MSPL) indicate that the primary finding of this research question (and its supporting questions as previously addressed) is that in WA at the time of writing, there is a strong level of service provision to EAL library users. However, it is also the finding of this thesis that the diversity of the EAL community and the traditional EAL library services are not aligned as broadly as they could be. Library staff, and to a certain degree, existing library policy, treats multi-ethnic services as essentially a single entity. What this thesis has found, is that this multi-ethnic entity is far more complex and multifaceted, and requires a deep understanding of not just the ethnic diversity of a library's catchment area, but also knowledge of the social issues associated with different cultural groups. As the community types identified in Chapter Six demonstrate, issues with cultural diversity go beyond merely supplying information sources in a given language, but also understanding that issues of literacy, education, cultural inhibitions, social disorientation and bonding social capital tendencies mean that some multi-ethnic individuals do not even recognise the role of the library in their community, and are thus marginalized from information and services.

The finding of this thesis is that libraries need to move their focus from the current EAL library services that are aimed at those who already do use the library, and recast their perspective to capturing those who do not. As the model for sustainable library (MSPL) services in the modern community proposes, community profiling is critical to understanding the information needs of both users and non-users of the public library, so that a majority of EAL community members can eventually come to be library users. This will entail library managers and staff developing a greater culture of awareness, and an understanding that the multi-ethnic concept of service provision is not a one size fits all solution. This finding,

whilst presented in the Western Australian context, could readily apply to any country which has growing multicultural populations as well as an already developed public library system. From evidence presented throughout this thesis, particularly in the literature, library services around the world have addressed some of these issues to varying degrees however none that were identified have done so to the level indicated in the model presented in Figure 7.1. This study, unlike others, looked at the issues from both the service provider and user perspective, and tried to reconcile both perspectives in the outlined model for sustainable library services.

The final aspect of addressing this research question is that the library needs to evolve to become more of a community hub (Audunson, 2005; Edwards, Robinson, & Unger, 2013; Senville, 2009), diversifying services away from multi-ethnic materials to that of education facilitator, as an information centre for government services, as a community meeting place, a location for cross-cultural engagement and community participation with the operation of library services (Nguyen, Partridge, & Edwards, 2012). Whilst the model for library service provision proposed in this thesis addresses some of these issues, it must be said that there exists a wide gap between how EAL participants in this thesis see the evolution of the library versus that of the library staff.

8.2 implications for further research

The findings of this research open a number of avenues of further research as a result. The primary research goal could be to take one or two of the recommendations from the proposed sustainable library model and actually work in collaboration with selected public libraries and community member representing Community Types 2 and 3 in order to ascertain if these elements of the model were successful in bringing non-library users into the library space. Such a study would be hands on action research, where the researcher is intervening in the traditional library environment in order to bring about the intended outcomes of the model. Such a study would also provide evidence as to the feasibility and practicability of the recommendations.

Another avenue of research, which is implied in the model in Item 4, is conducting a study to ascertain the current level of staff diversity in WA public libraries. In hindsight, this was an opportunity this thesis might have included in its library staff web survey, though at the time it was not known that staff diversity was a critical factor in EAL speakers' library access. The outcomes of such a study could go some way to informing recruitment and training for public library professionals at the state and local council level.

Studies on EAL speaker diversity and the information services associated with the diversity will inform service providers about the real life phenomenon of newly arrived migrants. Rather than allowing marginalised sectors of the population to become more embedded in their information poverty, these groups can be empowered through education and subsequently, they can contribute positively to the nation's economy, instead of depending on direct support from the government.

8.3 Limitations of the study

While this exploratory investigation highlighted the current public library environment in the context of EAL speakers, it presented the quantitative and qualitative findings in descriptive statistics. The literature review evidenced the absence of empirical research investigations in the public library in a multicultural environment, thus the findings illustrate the characteristics of the phenomena. Associations, relationships, correlations or factor analysis trends were not attempted with the data collected. The limitation in the statistical analysis offers pathways for more advanced studies about the phenomena. Many of stakeholders outlined in the MSPL, such as federal, state and local governments were not interviewed as to their views on public libraries, policies and funding. Whilst this stakeholder perspective would have been informative in the final analysis, it should be noted that contents MSPL were derived from the collected data and analysis, leaving little time to devise, deliver and analyse a new set of survey instruments.

8.4 Concluding remarks

Australia as a nation has a rich multicultural heritage and an international reputation for offering new arrivals a 'fair go'. Within the context of this national diversity, this research has examined the role that public libraries in WA perform in the lives of EAL individuals. The research gathered interview data from a wide variety of EAL participants across a large number of national ethnicities, focussing on their perceptions and understanding of the public library as an organisation and the role (if any) it performed in their community. Survey data was also collected from library managers and staff as a complement to the EAL interview data, so that both alignment and gaps in service provision could be identified. As chapters four through seven have shown, both EAL participants and library staff do see a measure of recognition of multi-ethnic information needs by libraries

and the provision of associated services. However, such alignments are seemingly outweighed by the expectation gap this thesis has identified between service provision and service requirement. Part of this gap is driven by the complexity of the EAL communities, their backgrounds and the characteristics that define their understanding of libraries and library services.

As well as exploring and identifying characteristics of EAL communities and their use of library services, this thesis has made a number of recommendations in terms of possible future initiatives and innovations in the ongoing evolution of library services, specifically from the perspective of EAL speakers. These recommendations would require strategic thinking at the federal and state levels of government, and tactical level implementation within public libraries and the communities in which they operate. The benefits would be a key role for the library in community building in the short term, and nation building in the long term.

As Australia continues to evolve as a multicultural nation, there exists an opportunity to build sustainable communities, where all members of society have the opportunity to interact and engage in a safe, democratic environment. It is the contention of this thesis that such an environment should have its roots in the public library.

Library and information services are undergoing change at several levels, and library staff are facing increasing demands for skills and new ways of working. The libraries are confronted with a society which is rapidly changing, in terms of technological development as well as social differentiation, diversity and individualization. The knowledge society entails more specialization, and people have rising expectations of quality, effectiveness and service. Our society is characterised by an open economy and internationalization. The library's role is changing from being a retreat for individual studies to becoming a space for active and social interaction, and the library is seeking to be a meeting place and an arena for learning and culture. Library staff must change from being passive communicators to becoming active producers of content and events. The library managers in particular need skills in how to lead and implement change in libraries, as well as in how to develop ideas, implement ideas and lead projects through to their completion (Golten, 2012, p. para 3).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Invitation to participate- Web survey-library personnel

Dear Library personnel,

My name is Rajes Chelliah and I am a student at Edith Cowan University. I am currently doing my PhD research on Community Building, Multiculturalism and the Suburban Public Library. One of the key data collection tools for this research is a web-based survey of all public library personnel in the Perth metropolitan area.

The survey will ask you questions about your workplace, qualifications, and any services your library may provide for EAL clients. If you choose to participate in this survey you will be making a valuable contribution to our overall knowledge of the role of public libraries in WA and how they can build strong communities where EAL clients are supported.

The survey is an anonymous web-based questionnaire and takes approximately fifteen minutes to complete. The responses to the survey are confidential and will be held in secure storage by the researcher at the School of Computer and Security Science, Edith Cowan University. The data will be held for a period of five years for reference purposes, after which time it will be destroyed. Data will not be provided to other parties and only aggregated results will be published.

This research project has been approved by the Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee. If you require any further information about this research or the ethics process please contact:

Kim Gifkins
Research Ethics Officer
Edith Cowan University
100 Joondalup Drive
JOONDALUP WA 6027

The researcher is Rajes Chelliah, PhD candidate, Edith Cowan University. Please feel free to contact me for further information by email at r.chelliah@ecu.edu.au

If you would like to participate in this research please go to [web survey URL]

Many thanks for your participation.

Rajes Chelliah
School of Computer and Security Science
Edith Cowan University, Perth Western Australia
Email: rchellia@our.ecu.edu.au

Appendix 2: Invitation to participate: interviews

Dear Library personnel, EAL participant,

My name is Rajes Chelliah and I am a student at Edith Cowan University. I am currently doing my PhD research on community building and the role of the public library in service provision for English as Additional Language (EAL) clients. One of the key data collection tools for this research is a series of interviews of EAL public library users, EAL service providers and public library personnel in the Perth metropolitan area.

The survey will ask you questions about current EAL service provision, future services and issues with service provision for EAL clients. If you choose to participate in either the interviews or the focus groups you will be making a valuable contribution to our overall knowledge of the role of public libraries in WA and how they can build strong communities where EAL clients are supported.

The semi-structured interviews sessions will take approximately half an hour to complete. The responses to the interviews sessions are confidential and will be held in secure storage by the researcher at the School of Computer and Security Science, Edith Cowan University. The data will be held for a period of five years for reference purposes, after which time it will be destroyed. Data will not be provided to other parties and only aggregated results will be published.

This research project has been approved by the Edith Cowan University Ethics Committee. If you require any further information about this research or the ethics process please contact:

Kim Gifkins
Research Ethics Officer
Edith Cowan University
100 Joondalup Drive
JOONDALUP WA 6027

The researcher is Jes Chelliah, PhD candidate, Edith Cowan University.
Please feel free to contact me for further information by email at rchellia@our.ecu.edu.au

If you would like to participate in this research please go to [web survey URL]

Many thanks for your participation.

Rajes Chelliah
School of Computer and Security Science
Edith Cowan University, Perth Western Australia
Email: rchellia@our.ecu.edu.au

Appendix 3: Participant Consent Form - Interviews And Background

- i. Library personnel**
- ii. EAL participants**
- iii. Ethnic Association Personnel**

I, _____, voluntarily agree to participate in this research project. I understand that this interview is being conducted by Rajes Chelliah, a Doctoral student enrolled at Edith Cowan University as part of her PhD and that the results of the interviews will be used in a PhD research study.

I understand that the research method will involve:

- responding to semi structured questions about the provision of EAL services in public libraries.
-

The interview/focus group will be approximately 20 – 30 minutes in duration.

I grant permission for:

- the interview to be recorded and transcribed by Jes Chelliah; and
- the evaluation data generated to be published in the researcher's PhD dissertation and future publication(s).

I understand that:

- the recordings will be destroyed and the transcribed data collected from the tasks and the interviews will contain no identifying information.
- the de-identified data will be held in secure storage by the researcher at the School of Computer and Security Science, Edith Cowan University.
- the interview will preserve my anonymity and that no identifiable information in regard to my name or personal details will be listed in the dissertation or any future publication(s).
- my responses will be made in the utmost confidence.
- I am free to withdraw at any stage if I feel uncomfortable about answering any of the questions.
- my withdrawal from the research will not result in any negative consequences.

Research Participant: _____ <name>

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher:

Rajes Chelliah

Signature:

Date:

Do you want to view the outcomes of the research? YES / NO

If YES please provide your Email

Email:

Interviews/Focus groups - demographic data- Library Personnel

Library name:

Qualification- Highest:

Name:

Contact/Email

Date:

Location:

Age:

Gender:

Job title:

Interviews- demographic data- Ethnic Association personnel

Association name:

Qualification Highest:

Name:

Contact/Email:

Date:

Location:

Age:

Gender:

Job title:

Interviews - demographic data -EAL individual

Ethnic group:

Language/s:

Name/s:

Contact/Email/s:

Date:

Location:

Age/s:

Gender/s:

Country of origin:

Appendix 4: Semi-structured interview questions- Library personnel

1 Does your library have identified user groups that have English as a second language?

Probes:

If the answer is no:

- Do these groups live in your catchment area?
- What services do you offer that might appeal to these users?
- Why do you think they aren't using the library?
- What do you think your library could do to provide service delivery to these groups?
- What are some of the issues for your library when providing services to EAL users? Could you please elaborate.

If the answer is yes:

- How would you rate the use of your library by these particular groups?
- What services do you offer that are used by these users?
- Do you think they aren't using the library as much as they could? Could you please elaborate.
- What do you think your library could do to improve service delivery to these groups?
- What are some of the issues for your library when providing services to EAL users? Could you please elaborate.

2 Have you noticed an increase in EAL users over the last 5 years?

Probes:

- If yes, has there been a corresponding increase in the services you provide for these users?
- What services do they seem to want most?
- What services do you think they need most?
- What are the some of the issues for individual staff members when dealing with EAL users? Could you please elaborate.

3 Do you think there are any barriers that influence the library's capacity to provide services for EAL clients?

Probes:

- What do you think these barriers?
- How could these barriers be overcome?

- Do you think leadership from the State Library is needed to promote change at the local level? Could you please elaborate.
- Do you think leadership from the local authority is needed to promote change at the local level? Could you please elaborate.
-

Thank you for your time and for being a willing participant in this research

Appendix 5: Semi-structured interview - Ethnic association personnel

1 Does your Association provide information services for your various ethnic members?

Probes:

If the answer is no:

- Where do these members live mainly? How broad is your catchment area?
- What services do you offer these members?
- How does your organisation get this information to members?
- What do you think your organisation could do to provide information services to members?
- What are some of the issues for your organisation when providing information services to members? Could you please elaborate.

If the answer is yes:

- Where do these members live mainly? How broad is your catchment area?
- What services do you offer these members?
- How does your organisation get this information to members?
- What do you think your organisation could do to provide even more information services to members?
- What are some of the issues for your organisation when providing information services to members? Could you please elaborate.

2 Have you noticed an increase in members or enquiries by EAL speakers over the last 5 years?

Probes:

- If yes, has there been a corresponding increase in the services you provide for these users?
- What services do they seem to want most?
- What services do you think they need most?
- What are the some of the issues for the Association when dealing with members? Could you please elaborate.

3 Does your Association encourage members to seek out and join other community services?

Probes:

- Which services does your Association direct members to?
- Does your Association make use public library information services?

- Have you received any feedback from members about other community services? Can you discuss this feedback?
- Have you received any feedback from members about using their local public library? Can you discuss this feedback?
- Do you think there are any barriers that influence members when joining community groups?
- How do you think these barriers could be overcome?
-

Thank you for your time and for being a willing participant in this research

Appendix 6: Semi-structured interview questions- EAL individuals

1 Do you think that EAL speakers use their local public library?

Probes:

If the answer is no:

- Why do you think they don't use public libraries?
- Do you think they know about the services provided by their local public library?
- How did you find out about these services?
- What might encourage them to join and use their public library?
- What sorts of services do you think EAL speakers would like their public library to provide?
- What are some of the things that might prevent an EAL speaker from using their local library?

If the answer is yes:

- Why do you think they use public libraries?
- How do you think they found out about the services provided by their local public library?
- What things encouraged them to join and use their public library?
- What sorts of services do you think EAL speakers would like their public library to provide?

2 Has there been an increase in the number of people in your ethnic community over the last 5 years?

Probes:

- If yes, has there been a corresponding increase in the services provided by community and government groups/organisations?
- What services does your community need most?
- What are some of the things that prevent better services for your community?

3 What are some of the things that might prevent members from your community from joining and using their local library?

Probes:

- *<**Possible suggested issues – technology, language barriers, library staff attitudes, location and transport, knowledge, education and illiteracy>*
- How could we fix these problems? *<**Adult English classes, native*

speakers on staff, translation services, more audio books, audio on websites, access to computers and the Web in other languages, welcome messages and directions in different languages>

*** Indicates possible answers. Interviewer will try to extract information from participants rather than lead/suggest these to participants.*

Thank you for your time and for being a willing participant in this research

Appendix 7: Web survey invitation letter to library staff

Community Building, Multiculturalism and the Suburban Public Library.

Please click on the link below and answer the web survey:

https://ecuai.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9FGxeAvfblcAAEQ

ECU RESEARCH PROJECT

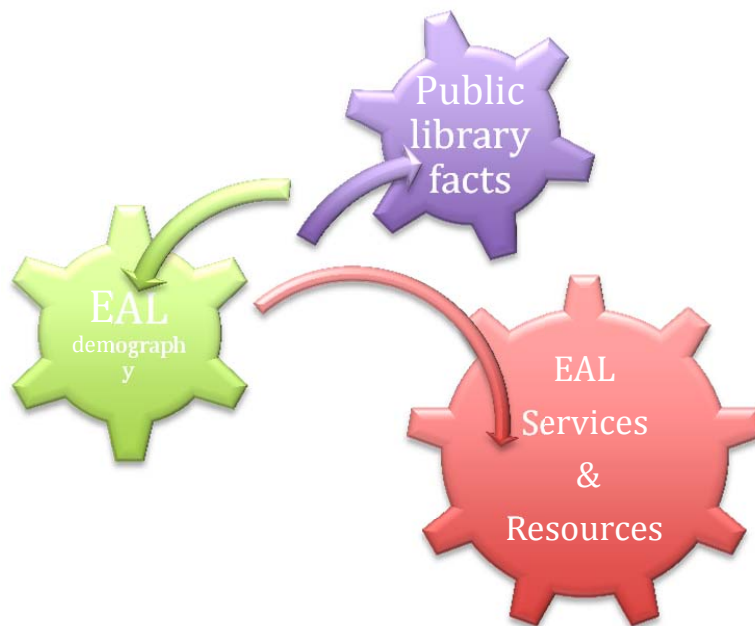
Your time and generosity contribute towards building sustainable communities in
Australia

Libraries play an important role in our globalized and multicultural world as they serve diverse communities and function as language, cultural and information centers (IFLA, 2009).

The Web questionnaire will seek information about your public library.

Areas investigated will include:

- a) EAL services and resources ,*
- b) EAL demography and*
- c) Public library services to EAL communities*



The research design includes:

- a. Web questionnaire,
- b. Interviews with ESL individuals and;
- c. Interviews with public libraries with substantial numbers of EAL (ESL) population.

This project investigates the role of public libraries in building communities and cross cultural citizenship through provision of equitable information resources and services to English as Additional Language (EAL) users in metropolitan Perth Western Australia.

The focus of the study is public library services in the context of EAL users in metropolitan Perth, Western Australia. The concept of equity in the provision of library services is investigated. Public library services are analysed from the perspective of developments in the U.K., U.S., Eastern States in Australia and Western Australia.

The operation of public libraries in Western Australia including partnerships with the State Library of Western Australia and the local governments is outlined. The current level of public library services to EAL users in metropolitan Perth is discussed based on best practice services to EAL users. In particular best practices with inclusive policies are highlighted.

Both EAL library users will be encouraged to participate in the interviews. The variables investigated will be explored from the context of demographic changes in metropolitan Perth, State Library of Western Australia's policy, local government plans and the programs of the public library.

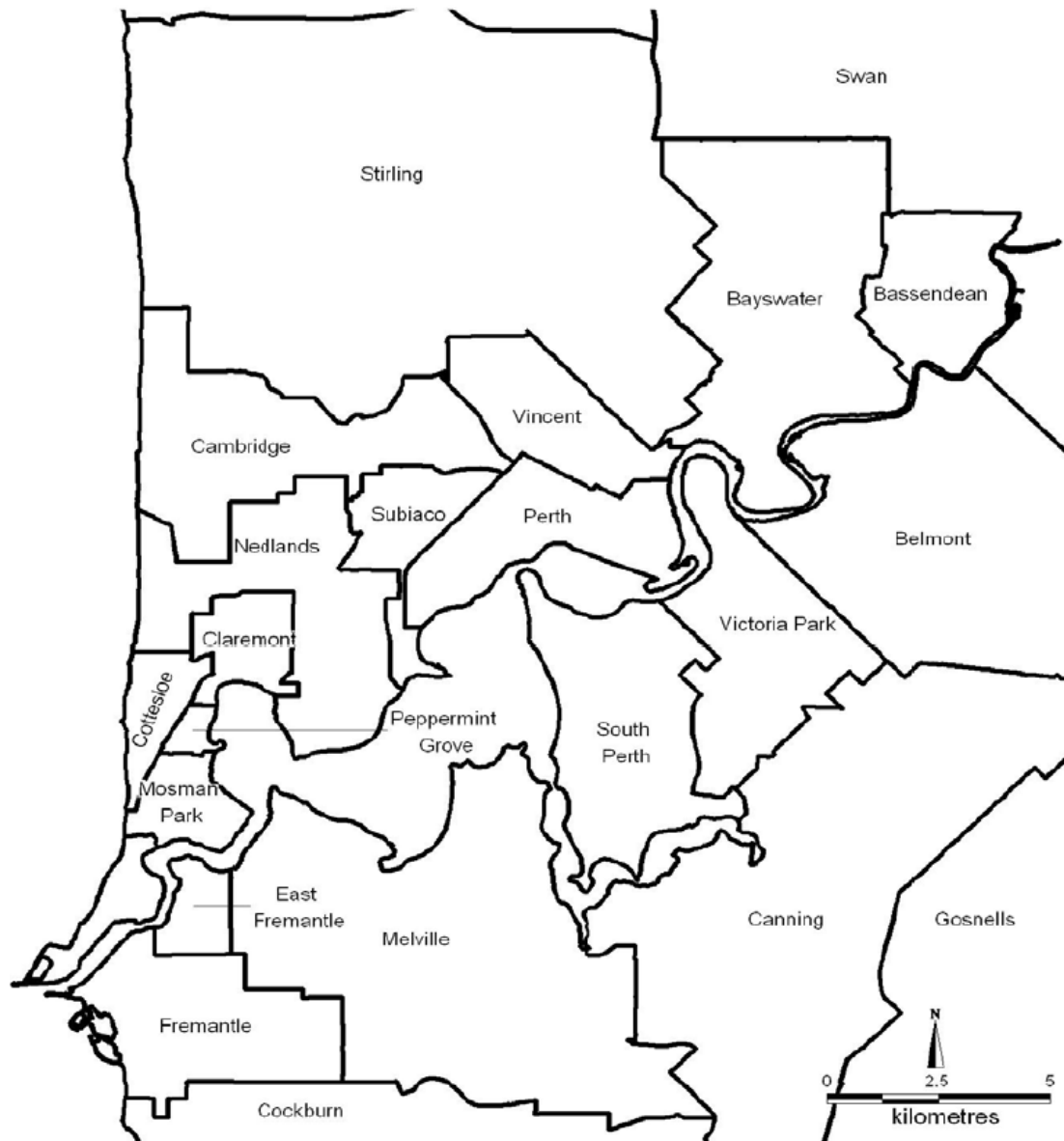
The digital revolution and increase in global migration places new challenges to the traditional roles of the public library, the project aims to explore the current state of play and fill a gap in current information and knowledge.

Contact details: Email: rchellia@our.ecu.edu.au

Mobile : [REDACTED]

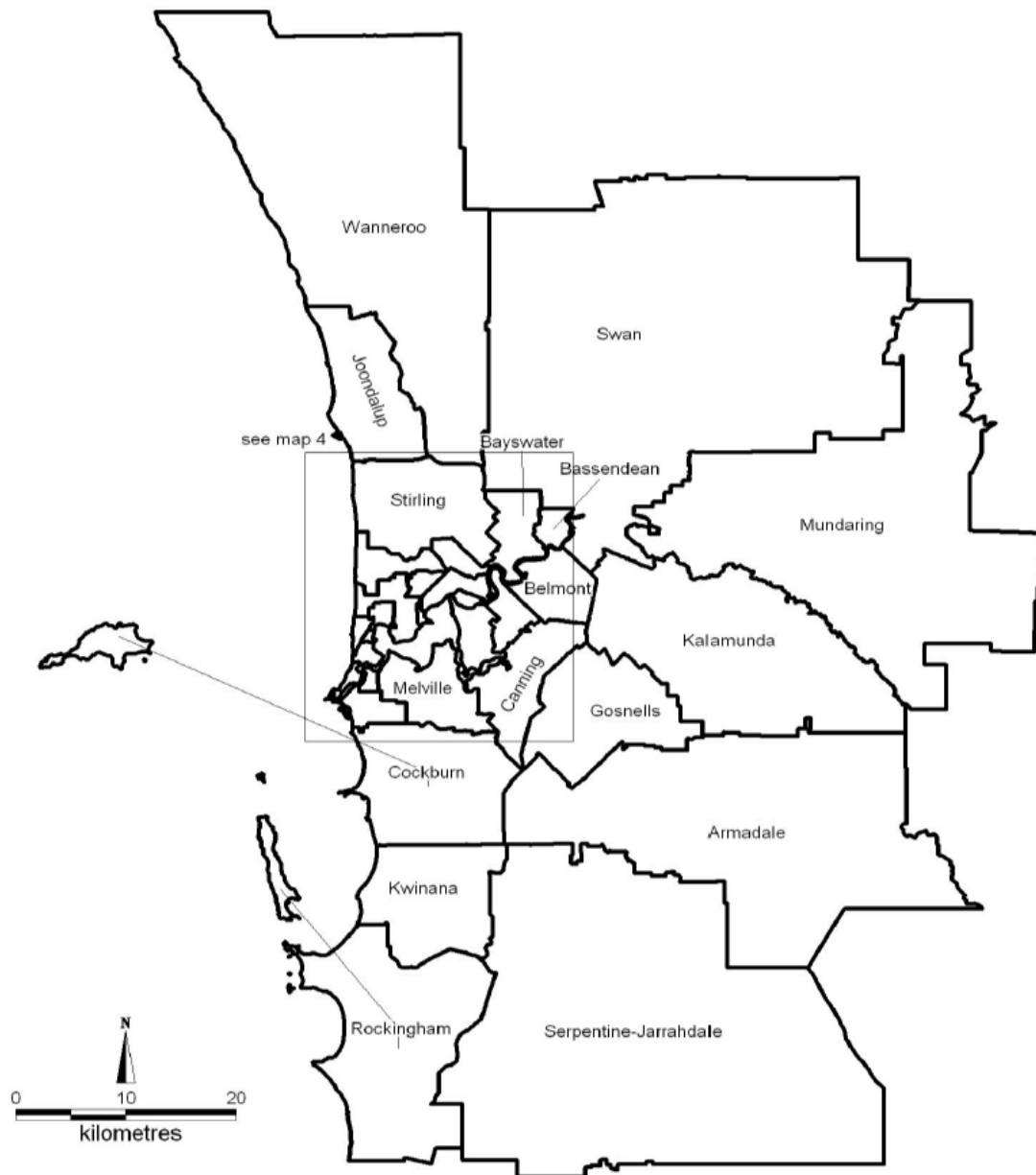
Appendix 8: Metropolitan Perth Local Government Authorities

Local Government Areas in Perth Statistical Division - Inner



(Office of Multicultural Interests, 2008, p. 300)

Local Government Areas in Perth Statistical Division



(Office of Multicultural Interests, 2008, p. 299)