

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF MBALE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELECTED  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN UGANDA**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I, **Ayubu Kisubi**, hereby declare that this is my original work. It has not been plagiarised, and has not been submitted to any other institution for any academic award.

**Ayubu Kisubi**



24<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## APPROVAL

I declare that this dissertation has been presented with my approval as research supervisor.

**Dr. Sarah Kaddu, PhD**

Signed: 

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my parents, Mr. Abasi Kisubi and Ms. Lukia Namulondo, my Brothers and Sisters.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I acknowledge the almighty Allah, my parents, brothers and sisters, my supervisor, and my course mates Elizabeth Nalunkuma, Daisy Ashabahebwa and Rahma Nakibuule for their support and guidance throughout this program.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	i
<b>APPROVAL</b> .....	ii
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	iii
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	iv
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	v
<b>TABLES</b> .....	ix
<b>FIGURES</b> .....	x
<b>ACRONYMS</b> .....	xi
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	xii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY</b> .....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Background to the study.....	1
1.2.1 Background to Mbale Public Library .....	4
1.3 Research problem.....	5
1.4 Aim of the study.....	5
1.5 Research objectives .....	5
1.6 Research questions .....	6
1.7 Scope of the study .....	6
1.7.1 Content scope .....	6
1.8 Significance of the study .....	6
1.9 Definition of key operational terms .....	7
<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	8
2.1 Introduction .....	8
2.2 Theory that guided the study.....	8
2.3 Services provided by public libraries to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	9
2.4 Effectiveness of services offered by public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	11
2.4.1 Bridge information access gaps .....	11
2.4.2 Promote research endeavours .....	11
2.4.3 Ensure lifelong education .....	12

2.4.4 Provide a conducive environment for information access and dissemination.....	12
2.4.5 Establish branch libraries.....	12
2.4.6 Fostering collaborations .....	13
2.4.7 Promoting advocacy and awareness programmes .....	13
2.4.8 Act as archival buildings .....	13
2.5 Challenges hindering public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	13
2.5.1 High illiteracy rates and poor reading culture .....	14
2.5.2 Inadequate funding .....	14
2.5.3 Inadequate staff.....	14
2.5.4 Inadequate facilities .....	14
2.5.5 Poor infrastructure .....	15
2.5.6 Limited awareness .....	15
2.5.7 Limited content on SDGs 4 and 11 .....	15
2.5.8 Lack of strategic plans .....	15
2.6 Strategies to amplify the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	16
2.6.1 Networking and collaborating with other stakeholders.....	16
2.6.2 Conduct awareness programmes .....	16
2.6.3 Embed library services under the SDGs.....	16
2.6.4 Lobby for government or community support .....	16
2.6.5 Recruit more staff .....	17
2.6.6 Re-package information resources .....	17
2.7 Research gap .....	17
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Introduction .....	18
3.2 Research design and area of study .....	18
3.3 Research approach.....	18
3.4 Study population .....	18
3.5 Sample size.....	19
3.6 Data collection methods.....	20
3.6.1 Structured questionnaires .....	20
3.6.2 Structured interviews .....	21
3.6.3 Document review.....	22

3.7 Data quality control.....	22
3.8 Data analysis .....	22
3.9 Ethical considerations .....	23
3.10 Limitations to the study.....	23
3.11 De-limitations to the study .....	23
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>24</b>
4.1 Introduction .....	24
4.2 Response rate.....	24
4.3 Biographic information of the study participants.....	24
4.3.1 Gender .....	25
4.3.2 Age bracket.....	25
4.3.3 Highest level of education .....	26
4.3.4 Level of work experience .....	27
4.4 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	27
4.5 Effectiveness of services offered by Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	31
4.6 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	34
4.7 Discussion of the findings .....	36
4.7.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	36
4.7.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library’s services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	38
4.7.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	38
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	40
5.2 Summary of the findings .....	40
5.2.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11 .....	40
5.2.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library’s services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	40
5.2.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 .....	40

5.3 Conclusions .....	40
5.3.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11 .....	40
5.3.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library’s services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	41
5.3.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 .....	41
5.4 Recommendations .....	41
5.5 Areas for further research.....	42
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	43
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	48
Appendix 1: Informed consent form .....	48
Appendix 2: Research approval .....	50
Appendix 3: Questionnaires .....	52
Appendix 4: Interview schedule.....	55
Appendix 5: Document review checklist .....	58
Appendix 6: Excerpts for Some of the Documents Reviewed.....	58

## TABLES

Table 3.1: Breakdown of the study population.....	19
Table 4.1: Response rate.....	25
Table 4.2: Gender of the study participants .....	25
Table 4.3: Age group of the study participants.....	26
Table 4.4: The highest level of education of the study participants .....	26
Table 4.5: Level of work experience of the study participants.....	27
Table 4.6: Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	27
Table 4.7: The contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.....	31
Table 4.8: Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 .....	34

## FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Researcher interviewing one of the informants.....	29
Figure 4.1: Services provided by libraries towards selected SDGs.....	29
Figure 4.2: A group of library users having a digital skills training at Mbale Public Library.	30
Figure 4.3: A group of youths undergoing a digital literacy training at Mbale Public Library .....	33

## ACRONYMS

DA2I:	Development and Access to Information
EASLIS:	East African School of Library and Information Sciences
ICTs:	Information and Communication Technologies
IFLA:	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
KNLS:	Kenya National Library Service
SDGs:	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
TSCG:	Technology and Social Change Group
UN:	United Nations

## ABSTRACT

The roadmap to a brighter and more sustainable future for everybody is found in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs deal with issues such as environmental degradation, climate change, poverty, inequality, and peace and justice that are prevalent worldwide. This study examined Mbale Public Library's contribution towards achieving SDGs 4 (Quality Education) and 11(sustainable cities and communities). The study's objectives were: i) to examine the services provided by Mbale Public Library that contribute to SDGs 4 and 11; ii) to analyse the effectiveness of Mbale Public Library's services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; iii) to investigate the challenges (if any) hindering the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; and iv) to propose strategies/solutions to amplify Mbale Public Library's contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

A case study research design and a mixed-methods research approach were used for the study. The study population was composed of 101 study participants, of which 50 were adopted as the sample size. The data collection methods used included structured questionnaires, structured interviews and document review.

The findings revealed that the services Mbale Public Library provides to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11 include but are not limited to information service provision, internet services and offering pieces of training. The findings also revealed that Mbale Public Library contributed towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 by bridging the information access gap, fostering knowledge sharing and bridging the digital divide gap, among others. Further, the findings also revealed that the challenges that hindered Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 included inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, low compliance levels, among others.

Based on these findings, it was concluded that the services provided by Mbale Public Library equipped the library users with relevant knowledge and skills to make informed decisions and participate in society development. It was also concluded that Mbale Public Library was contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 through the services it was providing. Lastly, the study concluded that there was a need to solve the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 to enhance its capacity in promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

Based on the study findings and conclusions, it was recommended that Mbale Public Library should form strategic alliances to enhance its internal capacity in contributing to SDGs 4 and 11, embed the SDGs into its strategic plans and acquire more content on SDGs 4 and 11.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter serves as an introduction to the research. It provides information about the study's background, purpose, objectives, and research questions, as well as the study's scope. It also discusses the significance of the research and defines the key operational terms used in the research.

### **1.2 Background to the study**

The world is currently confronted with a number of challenges that have proven to be significant impediments to achieving sustainable development in the developing world. One approach to addressing these challenges is to ensure that countries work toward achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which require a number of stakeholders to intervene if these challenges are to be reduced for the benefit of humanity. Public libraries are vital in the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) since they facilitate information access (Oladokun, Yemi-Peters, & Owolabi, 2021; Olatoye, 2021). Libraries are the institutions in a society that assist people in exercising their right to information, as well as safeguarding and providing access to cultural heritage, enhancing community, civil society, organizations, and government in capacity building skills, and raising general awareness by strongly supporting the broader development targets of access to information, improved service delivery, and thus laying the groundwork for achieving the SDGs by 2030. As centres of information and research, public libraries act as places of information empowerment which can benefit communities immensely (Abata-Ebire & Adetayo, 2018). Additionally, they are custodians of knowledge which can be used to educate the public on SDGs 4 and 11. Furthermore, by serving as information service providers, public libraries act as transformation agents in the societies they serve. This is because sustainable development cannot be achieved without information access, and inclusive information access requires the involvement of public libraries. According to Zobundžija and Dolaček-Alduk (2021), sustainable development looks at the preservation of natural resources in harmony with socio-economic development for present and future generations. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) seek to alter the course of global affairs. They serve as a call to action to eradicate poverty and injustice, safeguard the environment, and guarantee that everyone can live in peace, justice, and prosperity thus it is imperative that no one falls behind (World Health Organisation, 2021). Public libraries are drivers of change

when they engage in services and activities which address sustainability issues, such as the United Nations' (UN) SDGs. This puts them in a strategic position where they act as information hubs for the implantation of the SDGs (Unegbu, Immaculata, & Emuchay, 2023). The SDGs are part of the global agenda approved in 2015 to provide a framework for global development through 17 SDGs (Olatoye, 2021). The 17 SDGs address the main global development issues such as poverty and hunger. Public libraries provide knowledge and information access equitably thus driving balanced community and societal transformation (Okojie & Okiy, 2020). Oladokun et al. (2021) observe that public libraries contribute towards SDG 4 (Quality education) by promoting information literacy and lifelong learning. This shows that their contribution to quality education involves disseminating educative information which enlightens library users. On the other hand, when it comes to SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), Oladokun et al. (2021) observe that public libraries take an active role in protecting national culture and heritage. Therefore, they promote culture and build social cohesion which foster sustainable cities and communities.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) (2012) recognised in its report that public libraries around the world have taken on different initiatives to advance SDGs 4 and 11. For example, the National Library of Indonesia has teamed up with populations in inaccessible islands to eradicate illiteracy levels; the Australian public libraries have collaborated with the International Federation Of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to promote information access (Olatoye, 2021). Okojie and Okiy (2020) reported that in Nigeria, the Oyo State Library Board was donating books to schools in partnership with government agencies and other civil society organisations as a way of promoting reading activities. Similarly, the Kano State Library Board was also advocating for girl-child education with support from women and gender-based violence advocacy organisations (Okojie & Okiy, 2020). The Borno State Library Board was also witnessed advocating against open defecation among communities displaced by the Boko Haram militia (Okojie & Okiy, 2020). Dada (2016) shares that public libraries such as the National Library of Indonesia have increased the level of education and literacy by providing public access to data and scientific information in areas where education is hard to access thus contributing to quality education. Additionally, public libraries in Romania have partnered with the government to assist over 17,000 Romanian farmers to access government portals and obtain agricultural subsidies thus contributing to sustainable cities and development (Dada, 2016). These were some of the activities public libraries had engaged in

to promote the attainment of SDGs 4 and 11. By participating in such efforts, public libraries are acting as change agents and thus showing their commitment to the United Nations (UN) SDGs 4 and 11 (Unegbu et al., 2023; Koscieljew, 2020; Omona, 2020).

Omona (2020) emphasized that Uganda as a nation has included the SDGs in Uganda's Vision 2040, indicating that the function of public libraries in Uganda extends beyond helping to realize the SDGs and also supports Uganda's Vision 2040. According to Omona (2020), the majority of public libraries, particularly those in developing nations like Uganda, are neglected, which undermines their contribution to society and the SDGs. According to Omona (2020), the majority of public libraries, particularly those in developing nations like Uganda, are neglected, which undermines their contribution to SDGs and society. Okojie and Okiy (2020) similarly, observed that not all public libraries in Africa address selected SDGs because their activities towards the development agenda were restricted to selected issues. Alex-Nmecha and Igbinovia (2020) also observe that information access underpins all the SDGs in the development agenda which makes the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of the SDGs vital due to their role as information service providers. The same is affirmed by the study of Bakare and Okuonghae (2022) who recognise information access as fundamental for each SDG. Thus, by empowering the public with information on sustainable development, public libraries can advance their host countries to fully actualize the SDGs (IFLA, 2023; Chewe & Imasiku, 2018). However, despite their relevance in the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, public libraries are constrained by a number of challenges that limit their contribution to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. Mansour (2020) examined the potential role of Egyptian rural public libraries towards the attainment of the SDG. The study that focused on public libraries as agents for development concluded that Egyptian rural public libraries were struggling to integrate and adopt the SDGs. Okojie and Okiy (2020) who examined the services of public libraries in Nigeria that were aligned with the SDGs reported that even though public libraries had been trained on how to adopt and contribute to the SDGs, the visibility of their work was still low. While many public libraries were sharing their stories about how they were contributing to the SDGs on the IFLA Library Map of the World, there was no story from Nigeria. This was prevalent much as they were implementing activities aimed at contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. Abata-Ebire and Adetayo (2018) revealed that public libraries were constrained by inadequate funding, understaffing, inadequate facilities, poor infrastructure, negligence of libraries, poor lobbying and advocacy skills among librarians and inconsistent government policies. Amidst

these challenges, it is stressed that public libraries should continuously share information on SDGs, and plan and execute information literacy workshops for public benefit (Alex-Nmecha & Igbinovia, 2020). This serves to ensure that they contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Dada (2016) examined the role of public libraries in achieving the SDGs. According to the study, given that the SDGs are a universal agenda for transforming the world, there was a need to rethink the approaches that have left public libraries out of national planning, implementation, decision-making and monitoring processes. Therefore, the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 cannot be ignored. This is because public libraries operate right from the local level where they can assist in delivering information and government programmes concerning SDGs 4 and 11 (Dada, 2016). Public libraries also increase access to research, information and data to support different disciplines, provide public access to ICT thus fostering digital inclusion and promote gender equality (Dada, 2016). Unegbu et al. (2023) affirm that public libraries can streamline services that encourage the participation and acceptance of stakeholders through their sharing, collaboration and facilitation platforms and services. Since every sector depends on public libraries, enhancing their contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 is imperative. Using this as a backdrop, this study sought to understand the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) in Uganda.

### **1.2.1 Background to Mbale Public Library**

Mbale Public Library was established in Mbale Town in 1953 by the British Council to avail, preserve and disseminate information to the and the British Administrator in Eastern Uganda during the Colonial Government. The library continued to serve at a regional level even after the handover of library services in Uganda to the Public Libraries Board in 1972 when the British left due to unfavourable conditions in Uganda (Mbale Public Library Brochure, 2016). However, following the enactment of the Local Government Act 1997 on decentralisation of the public service in Uganda by an Act of Parliament, Mbale Public Library consequently became a responsibility of Mbale Municipal Local Government Council in 2000. Currently, the beneficiaries of Mbale Public Library include the districts of Mbale, Manafwa, Sironko, Bulambuli, Kapchorwa, Bududa, Butaleja, Budaka and Pallisa. Mbale Public Library service stands in a unique position in the mobilization of public support for national development through the acquisition and dissemination of appropriate information to the above districts and all other members of the society (Mbale Public Library Annual Report, 2017/18).

The library ensures that information and the skills to use it are available to everyone making them critical institutions for all in the digital age (Mbale Public Library Annual Report, 2017/2018). It also provides information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure which helps people develop the capacity to effectively use information, and preserve information to ensure ongoing access for future generations (Mbale Public Library Annual Report, 2017/2018). Furthermore, it provides an established, trusted network of local institutions that effectively reach new and marginalized populations (Mbale Public Library Annual Report, 2017/2018). Mbale Public Library contributes to improved outcomes across the SDGs by: promoting universal literacy, including media and information literacy, and digital literacy skills; closing gaps in access to information; and helping the government, civil society and businesses to better understand local information needs (Mbale Public Library Annual Report, 2017/2018).

### **1.3 Research problem**

Public libraries across the world are championing different initiatives to advance their host countries in actualizing the 17 SDGs. Public libraries have been recognised as possible drivers for transforming countries into information societies which can facilitate them in achieving sustainable development goals (Omona, 2020; Abata-Ebire et al., 2018). This is because they serve as knowledge channels advancing information literacy and facilitating research and development which are critical to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (Abata-Ebire et al., 2018). Despite their perceived importance, in Africa, the realisation of the SDGs is still a mirage (Olatoye, 2021). The same is true with Uganda which localized the SDGs under its Vision 2040 (Omona, 2020). This called for a need to examine the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of the SDGs. This study particularly focused on SDGs 4 and 11.

### **1.4 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study was to examine the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) in order to propose evidence-backed recommendations for strengthening Mbale Public Library's contribution towards the achievement of the above SDGs if the situation was found wanting.

### **1.5 Research objectives**

The study's research objectives were:

- i. To examine the services provided by Mbale Public Library that contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.
- ii. To analyse the effectiveness of Mbale Public Library's services towards achieving SDGs 4 and 11.
- iii. To investigate the challenges (if any) hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.
- iv. To propose evidence-backed recommendations for strengthening Mbale Public Library's contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

## **1.6 Research questions**

In line with the above research objectives, this study's research questions were:

- i. What are the services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11?
- ii. How effective are the services provided by Mbale Public Library on the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11?
- iii. What are the challenges (if any) hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11?
- iv. What are the evidence-backed recommendations for strengthening Mbale Public Library's contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11?

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

### **1.7.1 Content scope**

This study's content scope was limited to the objectives of the research which aimed at finding out the services provided by Mbale Public Library which were related to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, the effectiveness of the services to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, the challenges (if any) hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, and evidence-backed decisions that Mbale Public Library can adopt to its contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

## **1.8 Significance of the study**

This study is expected to be relevant to policy makers because it provides insight into the services provided and the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs, with specific focus on SDGs 4 and 11. The information provided may therefore inform future

policy and create an avenue for increasing support to public libraries in Uganda and elsewhere.

The study is also expected to benefit public libraries in Uganda as they could use it as a benchmark to improve their services. Similarly, the study will also be important to Mbale Public Library as it provides recommendations to increase its role towards the attainment of SDGs 4 and 11 based on the findings obtained.

Lastly, the study is expected to be beneficial to researchers studying the same area as it contributes to the existing research on the role of public libraries towards the achievement of the SDGs and also acts as a point of reference for future studies under the same area of focus.

### **1.9 Definition of key operational terms**

**Sustainable development:** Olatoye (2021) defined sustainable development as the development that adequately provides for the needs of the current human populace without hampering the capability of upcoming generations to adequately provide for their own needs, and this relates to the environment, as well as socio-economic development. This study adopted this definition which was used to mean the long-term growth or development that takes into account the requirements of both the current and future generations in the achievement of selected sustainable development goals by Mbale Public Library.

**Contribution:** This is defined as the giving or supplying of something that plays a significant part in making something happen by Merriam-Webster dictionary (2024). Contribution was used to mean how library services, particularly those at Mbale Public Library, support the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

**Public Library:** Merriam-Webster dictionary (2023) defined a public library as a non-profit library that is run for the benefit of the public and is typically funded entirely or partially by local taxes. The study adopted this definition to mean a library established for public use.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Snyder (2019) defines a literature review as a systematic way of collecting and synthesizing previous research. A researcher can increase their understanding of the issue and fully respond to the research questions by reading prior studies on a related topic thus this chapter advances the theoretical body of the study by providing insight into what other researchers have discussed about the topic under study. Other researchers' views on the theory that guided the study and the research objectives were explored. The chapter was concluded with the research gap.

### **2.2 Theory that guided the study**

This study was anchored on the Development and Access to Information (DA2I) framework. The DA2I framework was developed by IFLA and the Technology and Social Change Group (TSCG) at the University of Washington Information School to demonstrate how information access and libraries contribute to achieving the UN SDGs (Omona, 2017; IFLA & TSCG, 2017). The framework was an output of the Lyon Declaration on information access and development which advocated for the need for institutions around the globe to facilitate inclusive access to information as a way of promoting sustainable development and democratic societies (IFLA & TSCG, 2017). As information hubs, public libraries play a prominent role in promoting inclusive access to information which can foster sustainable development. Therefore, this model was found relevant for this study whose underlying aim was the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. This was achieved by addressing the research objectives based on the four interdependent factors proposed by the DA2I framework. These are the available infrastructure for information and communications access, the social context of use, the capabilities and the legal and policy framework. The DA2I framework considers these as the dimensions that influence information access and its ability to advance the SDGs (IFLA & TSCG, 2017). Information and communications access infrastructure defines the connectivity that establishes the physical connection to information; the social context of use defines the local and cultural factors that shape the way information users engage with information; the capabilities define the framework of functional knowledge, skills and resources developed by a population over time that shapes the way information is used or not used; while the legal and policy landscape defines the policies and regulatory frameworks that promote or hinder

connectivity, affordability, inclusiveness, and rights (IFLA & TSCG, 2017). Therefore, the study adopted these dimensions to systematically examine how Mbale Public Library was contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. Omona (2020) notes that information access advances the SDGs while the SDGs advance information access, therefore, since public libraries are conduits for information, their position can be leveraged to advance information access in a meaningful way so as to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.3 Services provided by public libraries to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

The review of the literature revealed that various services offered by public libraries are intended to help achieve SDGs 4 and 11. 320,000 public libraries exist in the globe, according to the United Nations (UN), and they are crucial to achieving SDGs 4 and 11 (UN, 2023). According to the UN (2023), public libraries support SDGs 4 and 11 by advancing digital inclusion, advancing research and development, promoting university literacy, bridging information access gaps, meeting community information needs, and providing spaces for literacy and sustainable communities and cities programs. The study of Alex-Nmecha and Igbinovia (2020) used a literature-based approach to explore the roles of public libraries in the actualization of the SDGs. The study found out that public libraries equipped different people to effectively and efficiently access, evaluate and use information. This information underpinned all SDGs. By offering information-related services, public libraries promote learning. Oladokun et al. (2021) posit that the information provided by public libraries enables citizens to make informed decisions and participate in solving societal problems. This shows that public libraries position themselves as potent vehicles for sustainable development through information provision. A case in point is in Argentina where the Gladys Smith Public Library initiated a literacy project for Roma women which has become a school for adults (IFLA, 2023). This has reduced the gaps in information among the Roma living in Argentina and developed their capacities to read and write as well as exploit new opportunities which they could not formerly access. The study of Abata-Ebire and Adetayo (2018) analysed different ways through which public libraries could contribute to the SDGs. To achieve quality education, the study noted that public libraries should provide information literacy skills and support lifelong learning by educating and enlightening the public with relevant skills such as technical and vocational skills. On the other hand, to achieve sustainable cities and development, the study noted that public libraries should provide and protect cultural and natural heritage for posterity and participate in development of community disaster risk

management plans. Oladokun et al. (2021) examined the utilization of public libraries in promoting SDGs in Nigeria. The study argued that public libraries were important resources for achieving all SDGs and therefore, they were expected to provide relevant and adequate information to the public in the most accessible way.

By providing information to everyone, public libraries are able to close the information access gap (Oladokun et al., 2021). Therefore, communities are able to utilize chances for individual and collective growth, thereby enhancing their welfare, through open and equitable access to information. According to Oladokun et al. (2021), societies that have access to excellent information are better equipped to reduce inequality, provide high-quality education, and create sustainable communities. Public libraries also promote literacy through information provision as well as offering community spaces for discussion (Olatoye, 2021). They also advance skills acquisition by facilitating access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) which promotes creativity and innovation (UN, 2023; Olatoye, 2021). Access to ICTs makes information access easier and gives people a chance to effectively use information for sustainable development. For example, the Kenya National Library Service (KNLS) with support from different partners established a community public library in Kibera, the largest informal settlement in Africa, to promote digital inclusion aimed at meeting the education needs of students within the settlement (IFLA, 2023). One of the services the library offers is Kids on the Tab which provides digital literacy training and tablets to different schools within Kibera. The KNLS has also launched a Math-Whizz program, an online database program, in its Nakuru library aimed at improving children's abilities in Mathematics (IFLA, 2023). Through these initiatives in its libraries Kibera and Nakuru, the KNLS is advancing digital inclusion thus contributing to SDGs 4 and 11.

Furthermore, public libraries assist the public in exercising their right to information by bringing information closer to people (Omona, 2020). This gives a chance for the community to participate in development initiatives and advocate for societal inclusion and sustainable development. Public libraries also support information dissemination and research to inform policy makers and decision makers to formulate strategies geared towards the attainment of the SDGs 4 and 11 (Mukungu, 2018; Dada, 2016). This builds the capacity of communities to support and contribute to government initiatives as well as exploit opportunities that fall under SDGs 4 and 11. These are some of the services provided by public libraries to achieve

SDGs 4 and 11. The study used this literature as a background in finding out the services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

## **2.4 Effectiveness of services offered by public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

According to IFLA (2019), public libraries offer a variety of products and services aimed at promoting the achievement of each and every one of the SDGs. Libraries promote literacy, offer free access to information, act as safe welcoming places, have dedicated staff who understand local needs, advance digital inclusion, offer internet connection and skills, and promote innovation, creativity and access to knowledge for future and current generations (IFLA, 2019). Based on the services they provide; they contribute differently to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. The contribution of public libraries to the SDGs has been examined by several scholars. However, because SDGs 4 and 11 were the focus of this study, consideration was given to how public libraries in particular contributed to SDGs 4 and 11. This comprised:

### **2.4.1 Bridge information access gaps**

Public libraries are conduits of information which are utilized to promote universal literacy. According to Oladokun et al. (2021), through universal literacy, media, information and digital literacy are promoted thus bridging information access gaps. This facilitates the fulfilment of community information needs and promotes information access. They also advance digital inclusion enabling communities to develop and hone their digital skills thus fostering sustainable development. Another way through which public libraries bridge information access gaps is by building library collections which address SDGs 4 and 11 (Olatoye, 2021). This opens doors for the public to engage with information aimed at promoting quality education and building sustainable cities and communities. Public libraries also organise and disseminate information that the public can use to educate themselves on various SDG issues (Abata-Ebire & Adetayo, 2018).

### **2.4.2 Promote research endeavours**

Through information provision, public libraries offer quality information used by researchers, policy makers and community members to advance their knowledge in areas of interest as well as build their researches (Unegbu et al., 2023). This promotes research which advances innovation and development. Through this, public libraries contribute to the actualization of

SDGs 4 and 11. Policy makers are also given a wide information base to make decisions and discharge their duties based on community needs due to the information they obtain.

### **2.4.3 Ensure lifelong education**

Another contribution of public libraries is the promotion of lifelong education due to the provision of information resources. This enables community members to remain informed and educated which gives them the opportunity of interacting with different knowledge resources. These can be exploited to actualize SDGs 4 and 11. The support they offer also contributes to national development as the beneficiaries are able to utilize the knowledge acquired in their professions or vocations to transform society. Unegbu et al. (2023) also notes that they facilitate continuous professional development by filling information needs.

### **2.4.4 Provide a conducive environment for information access and dissemination**

Public libraries also provide a conducive environment for the public to obtain and share information related to SDGs 4 and 11 (Olatoye, 2021). Public libraries also provide community spaces where the public can engage in periodic discourses on development issues which address quality education and building sustainable cities and communities. Community spaces also facilitate sharing of knowledge and networking thus giving a chance to the public to gain access to new perspectives and opportunities (Mansour, 2020; Ukubeyinje & Stella, 2019). Bakare and Okuonghae (2022) examined the role of information managers and libraries in accomplishing Nigeria's SDGs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In the study, it was recognised that public libraries were friendly community spaces that fostered reading and obtaining free access to information. This made them to be vital society instruments contributing to community development and the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.4.5 Establish branch libraries**

Public libraries also establish branch libraries which act as information centres within selected communities (Olatoye, 2021). For example, the KNLS has branch libraries in Nakuru and Kibera in Kenya (IFLA, 2023). These branch libraries can be used as points of disseminating information on quality education and building sustainable cities and communities which enhances the capacity of the communities, they serve to participate in contributing to SDGs 4 and 11.

#### **2.4.6 Fostering collaborations**

Public libraries collaborate with different stakeholders such as governments and development agencies to initiate projects aimed at achieving SDGs 4 and 11 (Olatoye, 2021). Most of these projects are value-based aimed at transforming communities through information provision (Unegbu et al., 2023). Partnering with other stakeholders promotes synergies and enhances the capacity of public libraries to contribute towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. It also enables public libraries to expose local or community needs on SDGs 4 and 11 which can be solved through partnerships thus bringing services closer to the public.

#### **2.4.7 Promoting advocacy and awareness programmes**

Public libraries act as spaces for promoting advocacy and awareness programmes on SDGs 4 and 11 (Unegbu et al., 2023). This is by championing information dissemination programmes aimed at speaking for the marginalized and promoting inclusion. According to Unegbu et al. (2023), by educating the general public and conducting literacy classes on various themes, public libraries equip and empower communities which stimulates their interest in advancing SDGs 4 and 11.

#### **2.4.8 Act as archival buildings**

Most public libraries hold a wide collection of information resources built over a long period of time. This information can be used by present and future generations to accumulate knowledge on what has worked before and what has not worked concerning SDGs 4 and 11. This helps communities not to repeat mistakes made by past generations (Mansour, 2020). Therefore, by preserving and conserving library resources, not only do public libraries provide information resources on SDGs 4 and 11 but also act as information hubs which can be used by community members and other stakeholders to solve developmental issues concerning SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.5 Challenges hindering public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Despite the services public libraries offer that seek to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 as indicated in sub-section 2.3 and their contribution to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, as demonstrated in sub-section 2.4, there are still certain issues that hinder their contribution to SDGs 4 and 11. These challenges have been clarified by many investigations, as indicated below.

### **2.5.1 High illiteracy rates and poor reading culture**

High illiteracy rates and the poor reading culture hinder public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 (Unegbu et al., 2023). The study of Oladokun et al. (2021) notes this as the biggest challenge faced by public libraries. This is because irrespective of the availability of information resources on SDGs 4 and 11, the high rates of illiteracy and poor reading culture means that they will not be sought out for by the communities' libraries serve. In other words, when people cannot read or write or lack interest in reading, the information resources are not utilized which limits public libraries from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.5.2 Inadequate funding**

Most public libraries are underfunded which limits their ability to carry out initiatives aimed at contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. Lack of funds also affects their effectiveness and attractiveness rendering them unable to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11 (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021; Ukubeyinje & Stella, 2019). For example, Chewe and Imasiku (2018) reported inadequate funding as one of the challenges limiting public library service delivery in Zambia. Without adequate funding, public libraries cannot serve the purpose for which they are expected to render. This makes them ineffective and affects their capacity to contribute towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.5.3 Inadequate staff**

Many public libraries have few staff which slows them down (Oladokun et al., 2021). This jeopardizes their capacity to run initiatives aimed at contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. The presence of limited staff also affects service delivery as the available staff are usually overworked. This hinders public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. Due to inadequate staff and the lack of experienced and well-trained staff, the implementation of planned library activities aimed at achieving SDGs 4 and 11 are slowed down or jeopardized.

### **2.5.4 Inadequate facilities**

The absence of enough facilities limits the services and information provided by public libraries (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021). This is because the capacity for public libraries to meet the growing demands of SDGs 4 and 11 is affected. Inadequate facilities do not meet the growing demands of library users and thus limit the contribution of libraries to contribute towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.5.5 Poor infrastructure**

Due to poor infrastructure, library information resources are prone to deterioration and damage which puts them at a risk (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021). This hinders public libraries from providing services geared towards SDGs 4 and 11 to their patrons as most of their collections become obsolete.

### **2.5.6 Limited awareness**

Unegbu et al. (2023) recognises the challenge of inadequate exposure of both library staff and users to SDGs 4 and 11. These limit them from locating and recognizing information aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11 thus limiting their contribution towards the achievement of the SDGs. Limited awareness also prevents public libraries from giving SDGs 4 and 11 the attention they deserve (Mansour, 2020; Abiola et al., 2018).

### **2.5.7 Limited content on SDGs 4 and 11**

Some public libraries have no or few relevant information resources on SDGs 4 and 11 (Abiola et al., 2018). This hinders them from providing sufficient information on SDGs 4 and 11 which limits their contribution towards the achievement of these SDGs. It also affects the quality of services provided aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.5.8 Lack of strategic plans**

The study of Abiola et al. (2018) that surveyed the rate at which libraries and librarians in Osun State, Nigeria were aware of the 2030 agenda revealed that much a most libraries and librarians were aware of the SDGs, they were not conversant with the details and modalities of its attainment. This study's population was composed of 100 libraries and librarians, including those from public libraries, who were selected randomly through convenience sampling. The same study also revealed that none of the surveyed libraries had any immediate or long term plans for the attainment of SDGs nor did they engage in information repackaging, awareness campaigns, mobile library and outreach services and capacity building to ensure quality library service for the attainment of SDGs by 2030. public libraries lack strategic plans which are up-to-date with current developmental trends (Abiola et al., 2018). This limits strategic information access which hinders public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. The absence of strategic plans also limits public libraries from embedding their information and services under SDGs 4 and 11. This affects library service provision aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

## **2.6 Strategies to amplify the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

The following strategies have been put out to improve how public libraries contribute to achieving SDGs 4 and 11:

### **2.6.1 Networking and collaborating with other stakeholders**

Studies have shown that public libraries cannot be effective on their own (Unegbu et al., 2023; Oladokun et al., 2021). This means that working in silos is not beneficial to public libraries. Public libraries have to partner, collaborate, network and form strategic alliances with other stakeholders to garner substantial and sustainable support towards library services aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.6.2 Conduct awareness programmes**

Public libraries should hold seminars and workshops aimed at sensitizing library staff and users about SDGs 4 and 11 (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021). This will increase their interest in acquiring more knowledge about the SDGs thus increasing their uptake of library services aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11. Romania, for example, trained 1000 library staff who have been very active in steering their public libraries to contribute towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 (Unegbu et al., 2023). Information and digital literacy workshops can also build the skills of library staff and library users in retrieving and access information resources aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11 (Alex-Nmecha & Igbinovia, 2020).

### **2.6.3 Embed library services under the SDGs**

Public libraries should embed their services under SDGs 4 and 11 by ensuring that their schemes of activities are fully integrated into the SDGs (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021). This will enhance their contribution to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. Embedding library services under SDGs 4 and 11 can also help public libraries to showcase their services based on their centrality in promoting SDGs 4 and 11 (Chewe & Imasiku, 2018).

### **2.6.4 Lobby for government or community support**

Public libraries should lobby for more support from the government, community or parent institution to increase their funding levels (Unegbu et al., 2023; Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021; Chewe & Imasiku, 2018). This will enhance their capacity in strengthening library infrastructure and addressing some of the challenges affecting library service delivery

aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11. Unegbu et al. (2023) also recommends the need for public libraries to be innovative and find ways through which they can obtain more funding internally to cater for their proper running. To amplify the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, Abiola et al. (2018) recommend that governments and nonprofits should offer more budgetary allocations to public libraries. This would enhance their effectiveness in providing information services and engaging in different activities aimed at achieving SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.6.5 Recruit more staff**

Public libraries ought to recruit more skilled staff to enhance service delivery (Olatoye, 2021). Adequate skilled staff will enhance the quality of library services offered to promote SDGs 4 and 11. According to Unegbu et al. (2023), it is not just the collections that make up a public library but also the calibre of human resources possessed by it. Therefore, there is a need for the management of public libraries to employ quality staff to enhance their contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

### **2.6.6 Re-package information resources**

Unegbu et al. (2023) encourages public libraries to re-package their information resources. This would involve classifying information resources based on the SDGs and also translating them in local languages to give a chance to everybody to interact with them. Public libraries should also obtain more information resources in different formats such as audios, videos and electronic resources (Unegbu et al., 2023). This will enhance their contribution towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

## **2.7 Research gap**

The reviewed literature was based on the objectives of the study. The literature covered the theory that guided the study, the services offered by public libraries to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11, the contribution of public libraries towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, challenges hindering public libraries from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, and strategies to enhance the contribution of public libraries to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. While the reviewed literature was fundamental in building the theoretical foundation of the study, having reviewed it, the researcher found out that there has not been any study on the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of SDGs 4 and 11. Hence, the need to conduct this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the methodological steps that were followed during the process of conducting the study. It provides information about the research design, research approach, and area of the study, study population, sampling strategy and sample size, data collection methods, data quality control procedure, data analysis procedure, ethical considerations and the limitations and de-limitations of the study.

### **3.2 Research design and area of study**

Research designs are procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). The study adopted a case study design. The research design was important because it facilitated the smooth sailing of the various research operations, thereby making research as efficient as possible yielding maximal information with minimal expenditure of effort, time and money. Yin (2018) notes that the case study research design involves an in-depth study of a problem and allows the study to break down complex issues through a detailed contextual analysis of a small population. He further notes that case studies are preferred for studies that will focus on a situation or location. This study focused on the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of selected SDGs (4 and 11) in Uganda.

### **3.3 Research approach**

According to Kankam (2019), research approaches are general techniques that researchers follow when conducting a study. They provide a systematic way that governs the kind of research a researcher looks forward to conducting, including the required data. For this study. In order to inform the study, the researcher blended the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies using a mixed-methods research approach. This was done by combining qualitative and quantitative research methods, which is especially helpful for case studies (Rahman, 2020; Queirós, Faria, & Almeida (2017).

### **3.4 Study population**

A study population is defined as "a complete set of people with specified characteristics" (Thacker, 2019, p.1). The study's population was composed of 3 library staff and 98 Mbale

Public Library registered users who accessed information and education materials in August 2022 as per the Mbale Public Library August Statistical Report of 2022. The researcher believed that this study population was knowledgeable about the contribution of Mbale public library to the achievement of selected sustainable development goals. In total, the target population was made up of 101 study participants. The breakdown of the study's population is shown below:

**Table 3.1: Breakdown of the study population**

Category of study population	Frequency
Library staff	3
Library users	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

**Source:** Mbale Public Library August Statistical Report, 2022

The total population considered as the study populations thus constituted of 101 study participants whom the researcher believed would ably provide key insights to inform the study.

### 3.5 Sample size

The sampling strategy is composed of the sampling procedure followed to obtain the sample size. According to Thacker (2019, p.1), the sample size is "a subset of the study population". Obtaining an adequate sample size is recommended to enhance the generalizability of study findings and minimize the bias that comes from small sample sizes. The researcher opted for probability sampling where a sample is chosen at random. This gives an equal chance of participation for all members in a study population (Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Pace, 2021). The sample size was calculated using Taro Yamane's formula which is recommended for known or finite populations. It states that:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Whereby n is the sample size

N is the target population = 101

e is the margin of error

$$n = \frac{101}{1 + 101(0.1)^2}$$

n = 50.3

The researcher therefore adopted 50 people as the sample size. All study participants were selected by simple random sampling. This was done to ensure that they all had an equal chance of participating in the study.

The sampling procedure used included both simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Simple random sampling is where participants are selected at random (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). This was used to select library users. On the other hand, purposive sampling is where participants who are considered very knowledgeable about a topic are enrolled in a study (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). This procedure was used to select librarians.

### **3.6 Data collection methods**

Data collection methods are the "processes of collecting data aiming to gain insights regarding the research topic" (Taherdoost, 2021, p.1). The researcher used both primary and secondary data sources to collect the relevant data for the study. These are elaborated further below:

#### **3.6.1 Structured questionnaires**

Structured questionnaires contain standardised closed-ended questions used to collect data from study participants (Taherdoost, 2021). They are suitable for obtaining both qualitative and quantitative data from large sample sizes (Taherdoost, 2021). The questionnaires were self-administered by the study participants and used to obtain purely quantitative primary data for the study. The questionnaires were structured with a measurement scale of a 5-point Likert scale whose answers ranged from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Not Sure (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The questions were designed to obtain information for the first three research objectives which would enable the researcher to answer the last research objective which was part of the study's aim. These were issued to forty-seven library users who filled them in and returned them to the researcher. Out of the forty-seven questionnaires issued only thirty-nine questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The researcher used the questionnaires to obtain primary quantitative data for the study. A questionnaire guide was used to guide this process (refer to appendix 3).

### 3.6.2 Structured interviews

Interviews refer to "a fundamental way of social interaction where questions are asked and data is collected using provided answers" (Taherdoost, 2021, p.9). They enable a researcher to explore the perceptions and views of the study participants (Chowdhury & Shil, 2021). This method enabled the researcher to acquire factual information from the informants. Face to face interviews were held between the researcher and different staff members of Mbale Public Library. The researcher expected to conduct 3 interviews with the library staff however, when approached to schedule the day for the interview one staff was absent, this led the researcher to schedule appointments with 2 library staff who were present. These included the Librarian and Assistant Librarian. These informants were subjected to face-to-face interviews because the researcher wanted to gather detailed information about the study topic so as to minimize non-response issues that come along with other methods. The interview guide (see Appendix 4) had been pre-written before the interview sessions, and it was used to ask each library staff the same set of questions. In order to get their informed permission to participate in the study, the researcher first contacted the library staffs and told them about it. The interviews took place over the course of one day and lasted, on average, 25 minutes. Primary qualitative information for the study was gathered through the interviews.

**Figure 3.1: Researcher interviewing one of the informants**



**Source:** Field Data, 2023

### **3.6.3 Document review**

This data collection method is used to collect secondary data from published sources (Taherdoost, 2021). This study reviewed external and internally published documents. The internal secondary data composed of Mbale Public Library's brochure, reports and website which revealed the services offered and background information about MPL while the external secondary data solely focused on published electronic sources by IFLA and websites. This data collection process was guided by a document review guide (refer to appendix 5).

### **3.7 Data quality control**

Sadan (2017) defined data quality control as a procedure used to improve the quality of data obtained. The data's reliability and validity were at the centre of this study's data quality control procedure. The researcher provided the research supervisor with the data collection tools to assess them and determine whether they were appropriate for gathering the data for the study to increase the data's validity. With the researcher supervisor's approval, the researcher was able to use the data collection instruments to collect data for the study. On the other hand, to enhance the reliability of the data, the researcher used the same questions for all the respondents and interviewees. This enabled the researcher to make comparisons and confirm the findings based on multiple responses. The researcher also attached the data collection instruments and provided the steps that were taken to conduct this study. Lastly, triangulation was used by combining two data sets.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

Asenahabi (2019) notes that one of the ways of analysing data in a mixed-methods study is by using the findings from both data sets to complement each other and confirm the obtained facts or expand the length of the study. The researcher used findings to complement the quantitative findings verbatim and in words. Microsoft Excel was also used by the researcher to analyze the quantitative data. The researcher used figures, tables, and a graphical representation, and was able to quantify the frequency and rates of the responses. The researcher entered the interviews' transcriptions for the qualitative data into Microsoft Word, where they were organised, edited, and structured in accordance with the themes generated from the study's objectives.

### **3.9 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations concern a set of ethical procedures followed while carrying out research (Facca et al., 2020; Cilliers & Viljoen, 2021). The researcher prepared a consent form summarizing all the ethical considerations which would be followed (refer to appendix 1). These included the potential risks, research purpose and nature of participation, among others. According to Facca et al. (2020), consent from study participants should be obtained voluntarily. The researcher also obtained permission from Uganda Christian University to conduct the research (refer to appendix 2) and ensured to follow the university's research guidelines. In the same vein, permission was obtained from Mbale Public Library to conduct the study.

### **3.10 Limitations to the study**

Limitations are methodological weaknesses beyond the researcher's control while de-limitations are limitations out of the researcher's actions or steps to conduct the study and are thus within the control of the researcher (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2018). The major limitation was the presence of few library staff at Mbale Public Library which meant that the information obtained from the staff could not be verified for credibility. This also disrupted the staff's schedule as the interview with them was conducted after working hours. Secondly, the researcher was also limited by accessibility to the area of study and the study population, for example, it was so expensive in terms of transport costs for the researcher to reach the research area.

### **3.11 De-limitations to the study**

The limitations were resolved by setting boundaries for the accessible population (only those residing near the library were used to minimize costs) and secondly, the researcher had to reside in Mbale district during the time of conducting the study and thus making this particular population more accessible. Lastly, the researcher focused on obtaining credible and valid findings which would inform the study in the best way possible.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents and discusses the study findings. The presentation and discussion of the study findings is in two parts. Part I shows the response rate and biographic information of the study participants while Part II presents and discusses the study findings as per the objectives of the study.

### **Part I: Response rate and biographic information of the study participants**

#### **4.2 Response rate**

The researcher expected to conduct 3 interviews with the library staff and issue 47 questionnaires to other study participants (civil servants and community members). However, 2 interviews were held while 39 questionnaires were returned. This information is provided in table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Response rate**

<b>Data collection instrument</b>	<b>Expected</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Interviews	3	2
Questionnaires	47	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>41</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2022)

Thus, the response rate was 82%. This was obtained by dividing the actual results by the expected results and multiplying the answer obtained by 100%. One of the factors that affected the response rate was the fact that the researcher went to the field to collect data during the festive season which meant that most study participants were hard to access.

#### **4.3 Biographic information of the study participants**

The demographic information describes who the study participants are. Existing research has recommended obtaining demographic data for different reasons. Among these include eliminating false positives which may result in wrong conclusions and determining whether a

given sample is representative (Rashawn, 2020). Therefore, the demographic information of study participants can be used to show whether the response rates are balanced and if the participant pool is diverse which allows a researcher to provide suitable conclusions and recommendations that benefit the study population. According to Hammer (2011), if such information is excluded, researchers encourage absolutism which shows that all the study participants are the same, which in actual sense is never true. However, by providing the demographic data, researchers shift to universalism which recognizes and proves the distinct features of the study participants (Hammer, 2011). This enables researchers to generalize findings to the right study population. For this study, the demographic data obtained included the study participants' gender, age, highest level of education and work experience. This information was collected to find out who the study participants were. This information is provided below.

#### 4.3.1 Gender

The table 4.2 below shows the gender composition of the study participants. From the data given, 21 (51.2%) study participants identified as male while 20 (48.8%) study participants identified as female. This showed that the study had a balanced proportion of males and women indicating that it was gender inclusive.

**Table 4.2: Gender of the study participants**

<b>Data collection instrument</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Questionnaires	Male	21	51.2
	Female	18	43.9
Interviews	Male	0	0
	Female	2	4.9
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

#### 4.3.2 Age bracket

The table 4.3 below shows the age group of the study participants. The findings show that the highest percentage (43.9%) of the study participants were aged 30-39 years. This was followed by those who were aged 20-29 years and 40-49 years (22% each) and lastly, those

aged 50 and above years (12.2%). These findings indicated that all the study participants were adults with a mixture of youths, young adults and middle-aged citizens thus showing a diverse study population.

**Table 4.3: Age group of the study participants**

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
20-29	9	22%
30-39	18	43.9%
40-49	9	22%
50 and above	5	12.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

#### 4.3.3 Highest level of education

For the highest level of education, it was found out that most of the study participants (48.8%) had Bachelor's degrees, followed by 29.3% who had Diplomas, then 17.1% with Master's degrees and lastly, 4.9% with PhDs. From the findings, all the study participants were educated with all having undergone through tertiary education. This was good for the study as the study participants were considered knowledgeable with the ability to provide credible information to inform the study. The table 4.4 below shows the highest level of education of the study participants.

**Table 4.4: The highest level of education of the study participants**

Highest education level	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	12	29.3%
Bachelor's degree	20	48.8%
Master's degree	7	17.1%
PhD	2	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

#### 4.3.4 Level of work experience

Lastly, most of the study participants (39%) had a work experience level of 1-5 years, followed by those who had worked for 6-10 years (31.7%), and lastly, those who had worked for 11 years and above (29.3%). This showed that all the study participants had some level of work experience, with 61% having a work experience of 6 years and above. This was considered ideal for the study as they would dwell into their work experiences to inform the study. Table 4.5 below shows the level of work experience of the study participants.

**Table 4.5: Level of work experience of the study participants**

Work experience level	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	16	39%
6-10 years	13	31.7%
11 years and above	12	29.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

## Part II: Presentation and discussion of the study findings

### 4.4 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11

The first objective of the study aimed at finding out the services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. In the questionnaires, the researcher provided a range of responses which respondents ticked based on the magnitude of service delivery. The findings are presented in table 4.6 below. "SA" stands for "Strongly Agree", "A" stands for "Agree", "NS" stands for "Not Sure", "D" stands for "Disagree" while "SD" stands for "Strongly Disagree".

**Table 4.6: Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Measurement Items	SA	Rate	A	Rate	NS	Rate	D	Rate	SD	Rate
Information dissemination	22	56.4%	16	41%	1	2.6%				
Facilitates research	20	51.3%	18	46.2%	1	2.6%				
Supports government initiatives	12	30.8%	22	56.4%	5	12.8%				

Conducts awareness programs on SDGs 4 and 11	8	20.5%	25	64.1%	6	15.4%				
Provides literacy materials	21	53.8%	17	43.6%			1	2.5%		
Provides discussion spaces	17	43.6%	17	43.6%	4	10.3%	1	2.5%		
Facilitates local discussions on SDGs 4 and 11	4	10.3%	24	61.5%	9	23.1%	1	2.5%	1	2.5%

**Source:** Primary data

In the above results, 56.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library disseminated information, 41% agreed while 2.6% were not sure. The researcher concluded that information dissemination was provided since 97.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. To add on, 51.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library facilitated research, 46.2% agreed while 2.6% were not sure. It was concluded that research was facilitated given that 97.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. 30.8% of the respondents also strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library supported government initiatives, 56.4% agreed while 12.8% were not sure. It was concluded that Mbale Public Library supported government initiatives since 87.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

The findings also revealed that 20.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library conducted awareness programs on SDGs 4 and 11, 64.1% of the respondents agreed while 15.4% of the respondents were not sure. Since 84.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was deduced that Mbale Public Library conducted awareness programs on SDGs 4 and 11. 53.8% of the respondents further strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library provided literacy materials, 43.6% of the respondents agreed while 2.6% of the respondents disagreed. Since those who strongly agreed and agreed were more (97.4%), it was concluded that Mbale Public Library provided literacy materials.

Additionally, 43.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library provided discussion spaces, another 43.6% agreed, 10.3% were not sure while 2.6% disagreed. This led the researcher to conclude that Mbale Public Library provided discussion spaces since many respondents strongly agreed and agreed (87.2%). Lastly, 10.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library facilitated local discussions on SDGs 4 and 11,

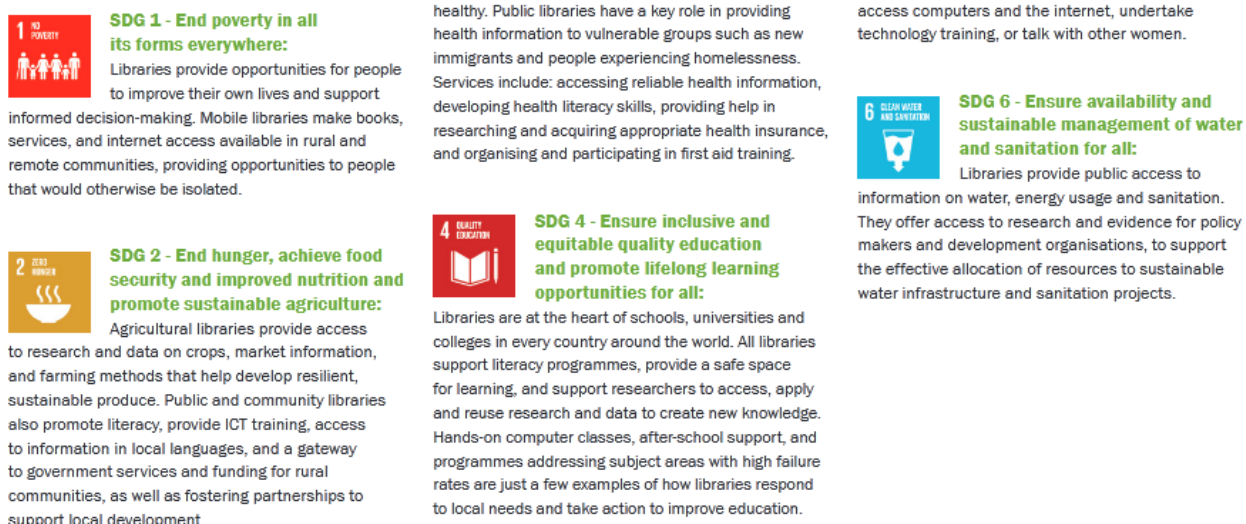
61.5% of the respondents agreed, 23.1% were not sure, 2.6% disagreed while another 2.6% strongly disagreed. Since those who strongly agreed and agreed were more (71.8%), it was concluded that Mbale Public Library facilitated local discussions on SDGs 4 and 11.

In the interviews, the interviewees gave insight into other services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 apart from those above. One of the interviewees, ILF2 added on that Mbale Public Library provided digital literacy skills training. This was seen as a way of contributing to SDG 4. Another interviewee, ILF1 had this to say:

*To promote quality education, Mbale Public Library offers information materials on various subjects, internet services, reading room spaces, reference services and information literacy training. And to promote sustainable cities and development, Mbale Public Library disseminates information, provides space for discussions, provides information resources, provides ICT training and equips youth with different entrepreneurship skills.*

The researcher also reviewed the libraries and the SDG storytelling manual published by IFLA in 2019. The manual agreed with the services being provided by Mbale Public Library above. It also demonstrated that public libraries establish local learning centers to support learning, safeguard and preserve documentary heritage and are a welcome space for marginalized groups (IFLA, 2019). The excerpt in figure 4.1 below shows services provided by libraries towards selected SDGs as seen in the Libraries and the SDG storytelling manual.

**Figure 4.1: Services provided by libraries towards selected SDGs**



**Source:** IFLA (2019)

The researcher also reviewed Mbale Public Library's Activities Statistical Form of August 2022. The form revealed that in August 2022, 3660 people used Mbale Public Library's computers; 20 library users received training in computer usage (introduction to computers, word processing, spreadsheets, database management, internet resources, Google apps and internet and device safety; 3320 library users used the library's Wi-Fi for e-learning, research, online exams/tests, filing URA returns, TIN registration, e-meetings, communication, news, job searching and applications to academic institutions; 4700 adults visited the library; 9204 books were disseminated; newspapers and agricultural books were the most read subjects; and Mbale Public Library conducted training in making reusable pads, making candles, briquettes, door mats, crafts and liquid soap with youths. These were some of the activities undertaken by Mbale Public Library in August 2022. Figure 4.2 below shows a group of library users having a digital skills training at Mbale Public Library.

**Figure 4.2: A group of library users having a digital skills training at Mbale Public Library**



**Source:** Primary data (2023)

Based on the findings above, the services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 included information dissemination, research facilitation, support of government initiatives, conducting awareness programs on SDGs 4 and 11, providing literacy materials, providing discussion spaces, facilitating local discussions on SDGs 4 and 11, conducting digital literacy, information literacy and ICT training, internet

service provision, providing reference spaces and reading room spaces and equipping youths with different entrepreneurship skills.

#### 4.5 Effectiveness of services offered by Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11

The second objective of the study aimed at analysing the effectiveness of Mbale Public Library’s services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. The respondents’ views are presented in table 4.7 below.

**Table 4.7: The contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Measurement Items	SA	Rate	A	Rate	NS	Rate	D	Rate	SD	Rate
Bridges information access gap	22	56.4%	14	35.9%	2	5.1%	1	2.6%		
Fosters knowledge sharing through community spaces	9	23.1%	20	51.3%	9	23.1%	1	2.6%		
Promotes good service delivery through information provision	14	35.9%	22	56.4%	2	5.1%	1	2.6%		
Facilitates the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use	8	20.5%	23	59%	8	20.5%				
Promotes research and development through information dissemination	21	53.8%	18	46.2%						

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

56.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library bridged the information access gap, 35.9% of the respondents agreed, 5.1% of the respondents were not sure while 2.6% of the respondents disagreed. Since 92.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was concluded that Mbale Public Library bridged the information access gap as one of its contributions towards SDGs 4 and 11. 23.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library fostered knowledge sharing through community spaces, 51.3% of the

respondents agreed, 23.1% of the respondents were not sure while 2.6% of the respondents disagreed. It was concluded that Mbale Public Library fostered knowledge sharing through community spaces as one of its contributions towards SDGs 4 and 11 since 74.4% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed.

Additionally, 35.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library promoted good service delivery through information provision, 56.4% of the respondents agreed, 5.1% were not sure while 2.6% disagreed. It was concluded that Mbale Public Library promoted good service delivery through information service provision since 92.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. 20.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library facilitated the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use, 59% of the respondents agreed while 20.5% of the respondents were not sure. Since 79.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was concluded that Mbale Public Library contributed to SDGs 4 and 11 by preserving and conserving library resources for future use. Lastly, 53.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library promoted research and development through information dissemination while 46.2% of the respondents agreed. It was concluded that Mbale Public Library promoted research and development through information dissemination since 100% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

In the interviews, interviewee ILF2 reported that:

*Mbale Public Library also promotes self-sustainability and economic empowerment/development by training youths and women in digital literacy and social businesses such as liquid soap making and paper bags making.*

This was reaffirmed by interviewee ILF1 who also added on that community members were also receiving training in crafts making. Additionally, according to ILF1:

*The digital literacy skills training provided by Mbale Public Library is bridging the digital divide gap thus contributing to quality education and sustainable cities and development.*

A document entitled "How libraries contribute to sustainable development & the SDGs" published by IFLA was reviewed. This document provided some examples of how public libraries were contributing to the SDGs. For example, the National Library of Uganda had a

digital literacy training program for female farmers while public libraries in Colombia had become social development centers by providing cultural discussion spaces. These interventions showed the contribution of selected public libraries to quality education and sustainable cities and development. The same contributions can be seen with Mbale Public Library through the findings presented above. According to Mbale Public Library's 2022 Library Flyer, the beneficiaries of its activities mostly come from the districts of Mbale, Manafwa, Sironko, Bulambuli, Kapchorwa, Bududa, Butaleja, Budaka and Butebo. Figure 4.3 below shows a group of youths undergoing a digital literacy training at Mbale Public Library.

**Figure 4.3: A group of youths undergoing a digital literacy training at Mbale Public Library**



**Source:** Primary data (2023)

From the above findings, Mbale Public Library contributed to SDGs 4 and 11 by bridging the information access gap, fostering knowledge sharing through community spaces, promoting good service delivery through information provision, facilitating the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use, bridging the digital divide gap, empowering youths and women through entrepreneurial skills training, and promoting research and development through information dissemination.

#### 4.6 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11

The third objective aimed at investigating the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. The respondents shared different views which are presented in table 4.8 below.

**Table 4.8: Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Measurement Items	SA	Rate	A	Rate	NS	Rate	D	Rate	SD	Rate
Lack of strategic plans	3	7.7%	14	35.9%	16	41%	5	12.8%	1	2.6%
Limited content on SDGs 4 and 11	3	7.7%	17	43.6%	12	30.8%	7	17.9%		
Low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11	6	15.4%	19	48.7%	12	30.8%	2	5.1%		
Inadequate funding	15	38.5%	12	30.8%	6	15.4%	6	15.4%		
Lack of top management support	15	38.5%	10	25.6%	9	23.1%	2	5.1%	3	7.7%
Limited staff	18	46.2%	15	38.5%	1	2.6%	4	10.3%	1	2.6%
Poor infrastructure	25	64.1%	12	30.8%	2	5.1%				
Inadequate facilities	14	35.9%	21	53.8%	3	7.7%	1	2.6%		
Low compliance levels among staff	3	7.7%	17	43.6%	12	30.8%	5	12.8%	2	5.1%

**Source:** Primary data (2023)

From the findings above, 7.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the lack of strategic plans was a challenge faced by Mbale Public Library, 35.9% of the respondents agreed, 41% of the respondents were not sure, 12.8% of the respondents disagreed while 2.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed. It was concluded that the lack of strategic plans was one of the challenges faced since 43.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed. 7.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library faced a challenge of limited content on SDGs 4 and 11, 43.6% of the respondents agreed, 30.8% of the respondents were uncertain while 17.9% of the respondents disagreed. Since 51.3% of the respondents strongly

agreed and agreed, it was concluded that limited content on SDGs 4 and 11 was a challenge faced by Mbale Public Library.

15.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that the low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11 was a challenge faced, 48.7% of the respondents agreed, 30.8% of the respondents were not sure while 5.1% of the respondents disagreed. Given that 64.1% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was concluded that the low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11 was a challenge faced by Mbale Public Library. Furthermore, 38.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that inadequate funding was a challenge faced by Mbale Public Library, 30.8% of the respondents agreed, 15.4% of the respondents were not sure while 15.4% of the respondents disagreed. The researcher concluded that inadequate funding was a challenge since 69.2% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

38.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library faced a challenge of the lack of top management support, 25.6% of the respondents agreed, 23.1% of the respondents were not sure, 5.1% of the respondents disagreed while 7.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed. Given that 64.1% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was concluded that the lack of top management support was a challenge faced by Mbale Public Library. 46.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that there was a challenge of limited staff, 38.5% of the respondents agreed, 2.6% of the respondents were not sure, 10.3% of the respondents disagreed while 2.6% of the respondents strongly disagreed. It was concluded that there was a challenge of limited staff since 84.6% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

64.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library faced a challenge of poor infrastructure, 30.8% of the respondents agreed while 5.1% of the respondents were not sure. Since 94.9% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it was concluded that poor infrastructure was among the notable challenges faced by Mbale Public Library. Additionally, 35.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that Mbale Public Library had inadequate facilities, 53.8% of the respondents agreed, 7.7% of the respondents were not sure while 2.6% of the respondents disagreed. It was concluded that inadequate facilities was prevalent at Mbale Public Library as a challenge since 89.7% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

Lastly, 7.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that there were low compliance levels among staff, 43.6% of the respondents agreed, 30.8% of the respondents were not sure, 12.8% of the respondents disagreed while 5.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed. It was concluded that Mbale Public Library faced a challenge of low compliance levels among staff since 51.3% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

From the interviews, it was revealed that the prevailing challenges affecting Mbale Public Library included limited financial and human resources, poor infrastructure, inadequate space and lack of support from Mbale City Authority. Interviewee ILF2 shared that:

*These challenges have affected Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 to a considerable extent (around 60%) because they have prevented the library from executing its services and planned activities related to the SDGs accordingly.*

From this assertion, it was concluded that the challenges affecting Mbale Public Library were hindering it from efficiently carrying out its activities. Interviewee ILF2 also reported that:

*For example, we have once failed to purchase the necessary books and newspapers due to inadequate funding. Due to inadequate funds, we also struggle with subscribing for the internet, servicing our computers and meeting electricity costs.*

The above assertion shed light into how the challenge of inadequate funds was affecting Mbale Public Library. From the study findings, the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11 include the lack of strategic plans, limited content on SDGs 4 and 11, low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11, inadequate funding, lack of top management support, limited staff, poor infrastructure, inadequate facilities and low compliance levels among staff.

## **4.7 Discussion of the findings**

### **4.7.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

According to Udo-Anyanwu and Anyalabechi (2016), public libraries are predominantly perceived as libraries whose mandate is to provide unrestricted free access to library resources and services to different communities. This study revealed that Mbale Public

Library provided a number of services to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. These have been categorised as information provision, training, entrepreneurial skilling and provision of space. Information provision is the core function of public libraries since they are considered to be information hubs (Omona, 2020). This was also witnessed at Mbale Public Library which provided information resources for learning and research purposes. The information was accessed from hard copies and electronic resources since Mbale Public Library also provided internet services. IFLA (2023) notes that by providing access to high-quality information, public libraries enable library users to develop evidence-based solutions that they can use to contribute to sustainable development.

Mbale Public Library also conducted different pieces of training, for example, training in digital literacy, information literacy and ICTs. These equipped the beneficiaries with different skills which they could utilize to learn more and contribute to SDGs 4 and 11. Another service provided by Mbale Public Library were entrepreneurial skilling which were most provided to women and youths to promote sustainable cities and communities. The beneficiaries were skilled in making crafts and jewellery, among other entrepreneurial activities. Through this initiative, they were able to boost their knowledge and obtain alternative income sources. It is said that such activities allow the SDGs to gain the attention or traction that they deserve (IFLA, 2023).

Lastly, Mbale Public Library provided spaces for discussions and reading, which enabled the beneficiaries to have access to a conducive climate to advance their knowledge as well as discuss issues which promote SDGs 4 and 11. Therefore, through these services provided by Mbale Public Library, it can be seen that it has contributed to the development of skills and knowledge thus supporting library users to learn and participate in activities aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

These findings are supported by earlier researchers who perceive public libraries to be potent vehicles for development and growth (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021). The work that Mbale Public Library is doing is equipping library users with the ability to make informed decisions and building their capacity in participating in societal development, thus contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. According to Omona (2020) this can result in societal inclusion and sustainable development, including contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

#### **4.7.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library's services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Public libraries, such as Mbale Public Library, are considered to be some of the most important players in advancing SDGs 4 and 11 (IFLA, 2019). From the findings, Mbale Public Library contributed towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 by bridging the information access gap, fostering knowledge sharing, facilitating the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use, bridging the digital divide gap, empowering youths and women through entrepreneurial skilling and promoting research and development. These impacts arose from the services provided by Mbale Public Library. Essentially, by providing infrastructure and information resources on SDGs 4 and 11, Mbale Public Library is contributing towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. IFLA (2023) recognises information access as a cross-cutting issue that affects all SDGs. Therefore, achieving SDGs 4 and 11 requires public libraries to deliver high quality services that bridge information gaps.

Unegbu et al. (2023) reported that public libraries enable library users to advance their knowledge on different SDGs through the information resources they provide thus fostering lifelong learning and equipping library users with necessary knowledge and skills for sustainable development. The same is supported by Mansour (2020) and Ukubeyinje and Stella (2019) who consider the provision of necessary infrastructure for reading and discussions by public libraries as an avenue for engaging in periodic discourses to address developmental issues, such as those related to SDGs 4 and 11.

#### **4.7.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

The findings revealed a number of challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. These included inadequate funding, limited staff, poor infrastructure, inadequate facilities, lack of top management support, low compliance levels among staff, lack of strategic plans, limited content on SDGs 4 and 11 and low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11. These challenges hindered access to information and good service provision which limited Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11.

Extant literature confirms that access to information advances the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 which implies that any challenge that limits access to information hampers the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 (Omona, 2020). Yet despite this, challenges that affect public libraries from carrying out their mandate are still prevalent (Oladokun et al., 2021; Olatoye, 2021; Ukubeyinje & Stella, 2019; Chewe & Imasiku, 2018). This reduces their capacity to run initiatives aimed at contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. Udo-Anyanwu and Anyalabechi (2016) note that information and education resources are the main areas of needs for public library users. However, the presence of the above challenges can hinder library users from accessing the information they need. The above challenges can also prevent public libraries from performing effectively. There is thus a need to address the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives a summary and conclusions of the research findings as per the research objectives. The chapter also provides the recommendations and areas for further research.

### **5.2 Summary of the findings**

#### **5.2.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11**

The findings revealed that Mbale Public Library provides services related to information provision, training, entrepreneurial skilling and provision of space. These services included but were not limited to providing access to information for research, conducting digital and information literacy pieces of training, providing internet services, conducting crafts making pieces of training and offering spaces for discussion and reading.

#### **5.2.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library's services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

The study findings revealed that Mbale Public Library contributed to bridging the information access gap, fostering knowledge sharing, facilitating the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use, bridging the digital divide gap, empowering youths and women through entrepreneurial skilling and promoting research and development.

#### **5.2.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11**

The study findings revealed that the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 include inadequate funding, limited staff, poor infrastructure, inadequate facilities, lack of top management support, low compliance levels among staff, lack of strategic plans, limited content on SDGs 4 and 11 and low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

#### **5.3.1 Services provided by Mbale Public Library to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11**

Generally, public libraries are local centers of information that avail different pieces of information and knowledge to library users. In this study, the findings showed different services provided by Mbale Public Library aimed at contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. The

services varied from information provision to training, among others. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the services provided by Mbale Public Library equipped the beneficiaries with relevant knowledge and skills to make informed decisions and participate in society development. This enabled them to contribute to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11, thus promoting sustainable development.

### **5.3.2 Effectiveness of Mbale Public Library's services towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11**

Public libraries play a vital role in sustainable development as information service providers. The study findings showed the various ways through which Mbale Public Library was contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. Based on the study findings, it was concluded that Mbale Public Library's contribution to SDGs 4 and 11 was achieved through the services it provided. Additionally, by contributing to SDGs 4 and 11, Mbale Public Library was offering avenues for addressing developmental issues related to SDGs 4 and 11.

### **5.3.3 Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11**

Like other institutions, public libraries are also prone to face challenges which limit their efficiency and effectiveness, mostly with information service provision which is their core mandate. Similarly, it was discovered that Mbale Public Library also faced some challenges. Based on the study findings, it was concluded that the challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11 needed to be solved so as to enhance the library's capacity in providing services aimed at promoting SDGs 4 and 11.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

For objective one, it is recommended that Mbale Public Library should form strategic alliances with other stakeholders such as civil society organisations and the Government of Uganda to enhance its capacity in contributing to SDGs 4 and 11. By forming strategic alliances, Mbale Public Library will have access to more resources which it can use to improve its infrastructure, recruit more staff, and generally improve the services it offers to promote SDGs 4 and 11.

For objective two, it is recommended that Mbale Public Library should embed the SDGs into its strategic plans. This will align all its activities to the SDGs which will enhance its contribution to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDGs 4 and 11. By embedding the SDGs

into its strategic plans, Mbale Public Library will also have a chance to evaluate its resources and capabilities to find out if they can enable it to contribute to SDGs 4 and 11 and also know the resources and capabilities it needs to develop to further enhance its contribution towards SDGs 4 and 11.

For objective three, Mbale Public Library should acquire more content on SDGs 4 and 11. This will enable it to provide more information resources on SDGs 4 and 11 thus enhance its contribution towards the achievement of the SDGs. Mbale Public Library should also consider having content which is translated in local languages as well to give a chance to more people to utilize the available content on SDGs 4 and 11. This will enable it to equip the general public, even those in the grassroots, with relevant knowledge about SDGs 4 and 11.

### **5.5 Areas for further research**

The following areas are recommended for further research:

- i. The contribution of digital libraries to the achievement of Uganda's Vision 2040.
- ii. The influence of community libraries to community development in Eastern Uganda.
- iii. The contribution of the East African School of Library and Information Sciences (EASLIS) to sustainable development in Uganda.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Informed consent form

**Title of Research:** The contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of selected sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Uganda

**Principle Investigator:** Ayubu Kisubi; Tel. contact +256-757 857294

Affiliated to Uganda Christian University, Faculty of Education; P.O Box 4, Mukono, Uganda.

#### 1. Introduction and Purpose of the Study

I am conducting a study about the contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of selected sustainable development goals in Uganda. The aim of the study is to examine the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of SDGs 4: Quality Education and 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities in order to propose strategies to increase the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of the above SDGs if the situation is found wanting. The information you give us will be treated with confidentiality and for only academic purposes as regards to this study. Your identity will also be concealed and you are free to only respond to what you prefer.

#### 2. Description of the Research

This is a mixed-methods study examining the contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of selected sustainable development goals in Uganda.

#### 3. Subject Participation

The study participants are library users (civil servants and community members) who will be selected through convenience sampling and the librarian at Mbale Public Library whose selection is based on purposive sampling.

#### 4. Potential Risks and Discomforts

Due to the nature of the study, minimal risks are anticipated. However, in the event of discomfort, the study participants are free to speak up so as to resolve any potential issues amicably.



## Appendix 2: Research approval



# UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa

05/01/2023

To: Kisubi Ayubu

0785779558

Uganda Christian University

**Type:** Initial Review

**Re:** UCU REC-2022-414: THE CONTRIBUTION OF MBALE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO THE ACHIEVEMENT (SDGs) IN UGANDA,1, 2022-11-16

I am pleased to inform you that the Uganda Christian University REC, through expedited review held on **05/01/2023** approved the above referenced study. Approval of the research is for the period of **05/01/2023** to **05/01/2024**.

As Principal Investigator of the research, you are responsible for fulfilling the following requirements of approval.

All co-investigators must be kept informed of the status of the research.

Changes, amendments, and addenda to the protocol or the consent form must be submitted to the REC for re-review and approval **prior** to the activation of the changes.

Reports of unanticipated problems involving risks to participants or any new information which could change the risk benefit: ratio must be submitted to the REC.

Only approved consent forms are to be used in the enrolment of participants. All consent forms signed by participants and/or witnesses should be retained on file. The REC may conduct audits of all study records, and consent documentation may be part of such audits.

Continuing review application must be submitted to the REC **eight weeks** prior to the expiration date of **05/01/2024** in order to continue the study beyond the approved period. Failure to submit a continuing review application in a timely fashion may result in suspension or termination of the study.

The REC application number assigned to the research should be cited in any correspondence with the REC of record.

You are required to register the research protocol with the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) for final clearance to undertake the study in Uganda.

The following is the list of all documents approved in this application by Uganda Christian University REC:

No.	Document Title	Language	Version Number	Version Date
1	Data collection tools	English	2	2022-11-16
2	Protocol	English	1	2022-11-16



Yours Sincerely

Peter Waiswa

For: Uganda Christian University REC

### **Appendix 3: Questionnaires**

#### **Introduction**

I am Ayubu Kisubi, a student pursuing a Masters in Library and Information Science at Uganda Christian University. I am conducting a study examining the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of SDGs 4 and 11 (Quality Education and Sustainable Cities and Communities). The research objectives are: i) to establish the services provided by Mbale Public Library related to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; ii) to examine the contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; iii) to examine the challenges (if any) hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; and iv) to propose strategies to increase the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11. I would like you to participate in my study by sparing some time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and for academic purposes only.

#### **SECTION A: Respondent Information**

For each of the following questions, please tick what applies to you.

Gender:

Male

Female

Age bracket:

20-29

30-39

40-49

50 and above

Highest level of education:

Diploma

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PhD

Work Experience

1-5 years

6-10 years

11 years and above

Position at Mbale Municipal Council (Please Specify):.....

**Section B: Services Provided By Mbale Public Library Related To The Achievement of SDGs 4 And 11**

On a scale of 1-5 (Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (NS) = 3, Agree (A) = 4 and Strongly Agree (SA) = 5), kindly indicate your level of agreement by ticking the most appropriate number.

CODE	Measurement Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD
<b>S</b>	<b>Services</b>					
S1	Information dissemination					
S2	Facilitates research					
S3	Supports government initiatives					
S4	Conducts awareness programs on SDGs 4 and 11					
S5	Provides literacy materials					
S6	Provides discussion spaces					
S7	Facilitates local discussions on SDGs 4 and 11					
S8	Any Other? Please specify:.....					

**Section D: The Contribution Of Mbale Public Library To The Achievement Of SDGs 4 and 11**

On a scale of 1-5 (Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (NS) = 3, Agree (A) = 4 and Strongly Agree (SA) = 5), kindly indicate your level of agreement by ticking the most appropriate number.

CODE	Measurement Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD
<b>C</b>	<b>Contribution</b>					
C1	Bridges information access gap					

C2	Fosters knowledge sharing through community spaces					
C3	Promotes good service delivery through information provision					
C4	Facilitates the preservation and conservation of library resources for future use					
C5	Promotes research and development through information dissemination					
C6	Any Other? Please specify:.....					

**SECTION E: Challenges Hindering Mbale Public Library From Contributing To The Achievement Of SDGs 4 and 11**

On a scale of 1-5 (Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1, Disagree (D) = 2, Not Sure (NS) = 3, Agree (A) = 4 and Strongly Agree (SA) = 5), kindly indicate your level of agreement by ticking the most appropriate number.

CODE	Measurement Items	SA	A	NS	D	SD
<b>L</b>	<b>Limitations</b>					
L1	Lack of strategic plans					
L2	Limited content on SDGs 4 and 11					
L3	Low sensitization levels on SDGs 4 and 11					
L4	Inadequate funding					
L5	Lack of top management support					
L6	Limited staff					
L7	Poor infrastructure					
L8	Inadequate facilities					
L9	Low compliance levels among staff					
L10	Any Other? Please specify:.....					

## **Appendix 4: Interview schedule**

### **A. LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS**

Dear Participant,

I am Ayubu Kisubi, a student pursuing a Masters in Library and Information Science at Uganda Christian University. I am conducting a study examining the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the attainment of SDGs 4 and 11 (Quality Education and Sustainable Cities and Communities). The research objectives are: i) to establish the services provided by Mbale Public Library related to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; ii) to examine the contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; iii) to examine the challenges (if any) hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11; and iv) to propose strategies to increase the contribution of Mbale Public Library towards the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11.

I humbly request you to participate in this study by providing relevant data related to the objectives above. As a way of maintaining confidentiality, I will uphold all key information that can be used to identify you. Additionally, do note that the interviews will be recorded to guide me in writing down the findings. If for any reason you feel the need to withdraw from participating, you are free to do that any time as you wish because participation in this study is voluntary. Kindly let me know when you are available for the interview so that I can update the time on my schedule. The interview will take 25-40 minutes of your time.

I await to hear from you.

Ayubu Kisubi

kisubia2013@gmail.com

### **B. CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERVIEWS**

1. I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Ayubu Kisubi, about the nature and conduct of this study.
2. I have the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study.
3. I have received, read, and understood the participant letter of information about the study.
4. I understand that all the information the researcher gathers is confidential and will not prejudice me in any way.
5. I voluntarily agree to take part in this research.

Please tick the box below to indicate your consent.

I have read the consent form and hereby agree to participate in this study.

### **SECTION C: BIO-DATA QUESTIONS**

Age Bracket (Please tick what is applicable):

20-29

30-39

40-49

50 and above

Gender (Please tick what is applicable):

Male

Female

Highest Level of Education (Please tick what is applicable):

Diploma

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PhD

Years of Work Experience:

Position at Mbale Municipal Council:

### **Section D: Services Provided By Mbale Public Library Related To The Achievement Of SDGS 4 And 11**

1. What services are provided by Mbale Public Library to facilitate the achievement of quality education (SDG 4)?
2. What services are provided by Mbale Public Library to facilitate the achievement of Sustainable Cities and Development (SDG 11)?

### **Section E: The Contribution Of Mbale Public Library To The Achievement Of SDGS 4 And 11**

3. How is Mbale Public Library contributing to Quality Education (SDG 4) in the areas it serves through the services it provides?
4. How is Mbale Public Library contributing to Sustainable Cities and Development (SDG 11) in the areas it serves through the services it provides?

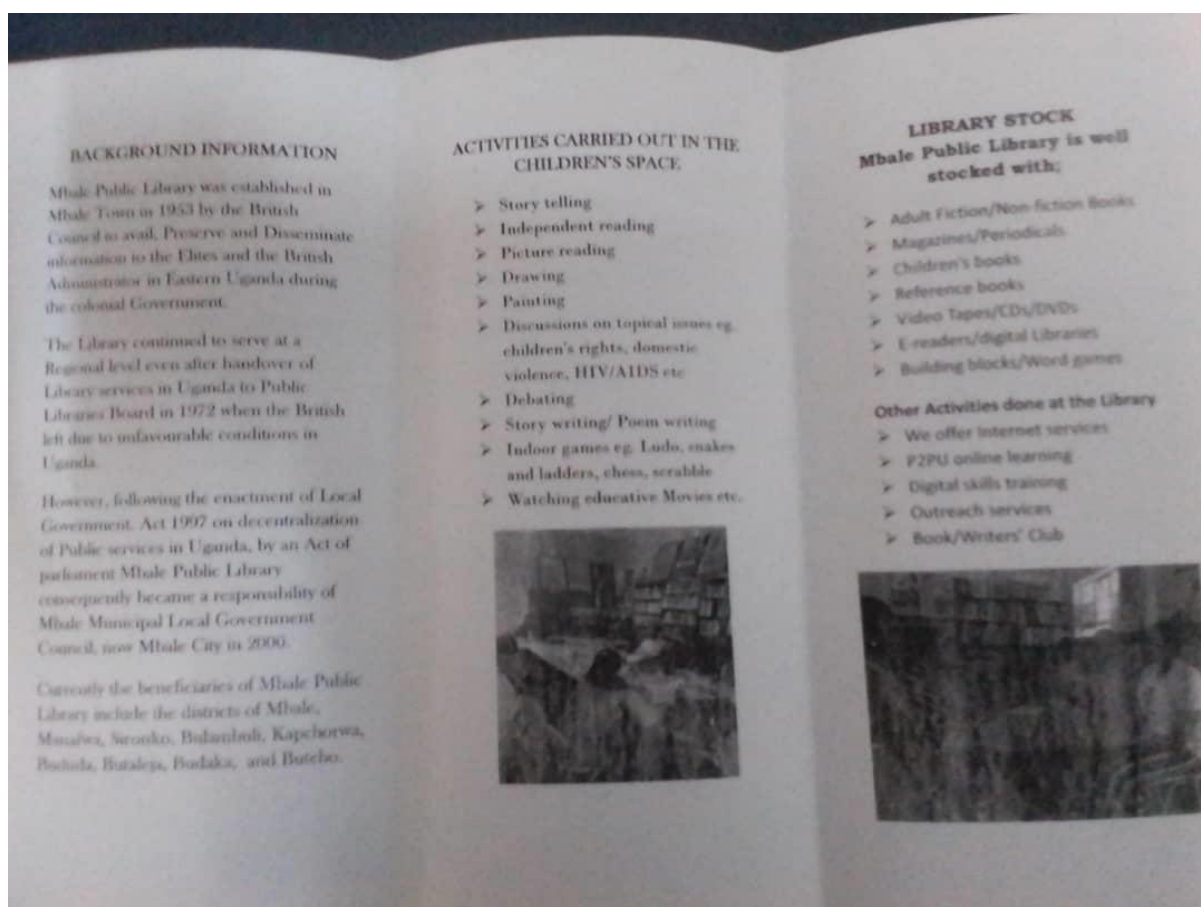
**Section F: Challenges Hindering Mbale Public Library From Contributing To The Achievement Of SDGS 4 And 11**

5. What challenges are hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11?
6. How are the above challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11?
7. To what extent are the above challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to SDGs 4 and 11?

## Appendix 5: Document review checklist

Objective	Documents Reviewed	Findings
Services provided by Mbale Public Library related to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11		
The contribution of Mbale Public Library to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11		
Challenges hindering Mbale Public Library from contributing to the achievement of SDGs 4 and 11		

## Appendix 6: Excerpts for Some of the Documents Reviewed





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SCHOOL OF RESEARCH & POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

DISSERTATION CORRECTION COMPLIANCE REPORT BY THE CANDIDATE (POST VIVA FORM)

Date: 30<sup>TH</sup> April 2024

Name of Candidate: Kisubi Ayubu

Reg. No: S19M63/216

Title of Dissertation: THE CONTRIBUTION OF MBALE PUBLIC LIBRARY TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SELECTED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN UGANDA

SN	COMMENTS BY VIVA VOCE PANNEL	ACTION TAKEN	INDICATOR
1	Describe the methods used for data collection.	The methods used for data collection have been described under the data collection methods	Refer to pages 20-22
2	Provide details about the case study and clarify whether mixed methods were employed. If so, explain which method was used and how it was implemented.	A single case study was used as the research design focusing on Mbale Public Library. The research approach involved combining both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, hence the mixed methods research approach	Refer to page 18

3	Address any discrepancies between the sample size and the population, and thoroughly explain the sampling methodology.	This has been addressed including the sampling methodology	Refer to page 20
4	Discuss random sampling concerning users and whether a similar approach was adopted for staff.	This has been addressed	Refer to page 20
5	Note that Objectives 1 and 2 seem to overlap, with one potentially not serving as a true objective. Consider removing or revising Objective 2, as it resembles the topic rather than an objective.	Objective 2 has been modified	Refer to page 6
6	Objective 4 may appear redundant, resembling recommendations found in Chapters 5 and 6. Revise this objective to avoid redundancy.	Objective 4 has been modified	Refer to page 6
7	Why did you select SDGs 4 and 11? Consider integrating their relevance into the research context.	This has been amplified in the research background and literature review	Refer to pages 3-4, and 8-17
8	Highlight the significance of this research endeavor in revitalizing libraries through thorough investigation.	This has been addressed in the significance of the study	Refer to page 7
9	Address concerns regarding mechanics of writing, including passive voice, and emphasize the need for thorough editing and proofreading.	This has been addressed	
10	Clarify the concept of 'contribution.'	This has been addressed under the definitions of key operating terms	Refer to page 7

**Kisubi Ayubu**  
Candidate's Name

  
Signature

.....**Sarah Kaddu**.....  
Supervisor's Name

..........**07/05/2024**...  
Signature