What is the role of libraries in disseminating knowledge about South African intellectual property laws in rural communities?

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This study investigated a rural community in a village in KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa, to access what was known about South African intellectual property (IP) laws. The study sought to establish whether the local libraries played any role in educating the community about these laws. A qualitative method using grounded theory was adopted for this study. Focus group discussions were used to elicit data from twenty-nine community members. They were chosen purposively because they were knowledge holders in various indigenous knowledge practices. Semi-structured interviews elicited data from two primary school educators. They were selected because the studied community members indicated that they shared knowledge with them on crop farming. The findings revealed that the community members did not have any knowledge about South African IP laws. Local libraries, such as school libraries, did not play any role in educating them about local IP laws as the two educators who were interviewed also did not have any background knowledge about South African IP laws. The study concluded that the community needs to be educated about these laws. Because of the low levels of information literacy of the community members, libraries must help in repackaging and simplifying this information to facilitate its access. The community can be educated on how to register individual and communal IP. In post-colonial South Africa, this action is crucial for socio-economic development purposes.

Keywords: Intellectual property laws, rural community, educators, libraries, adult education, economic development

1 Introduction and background

Since South Africa became a democratic country in 1994, it has been striving to reduce poverty, inequality and social exclusion. Policies and legislations that aim to redress imbalances in society have been introduced, including South African intellectual property (IP) laws (Mukuka 2010: 136). The *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008) was passed into law in 2013 (Tsekea 2016: 213, Sibanda 2014). Since then, the Bill has translated into the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Act, No. 28 of 2013* (2013) (IPLAA). The IPLAA (2013) was enacted to ensure effective protection mechanisms for indigenous knowledge (IK) as a form of IP (Tsekea 2016: 213). South Africa has also made amendments to various related Acts, such as the *Copyright Act, No. 98 of 1978* (1978), *Trade Marks Act, No. 194 of 1993* (1994) and *Performers' Protection Act, No. 11 of 1967* (1967) (Tsekea 2016, Sibanda 2014). The IPLAA (2013) recognises some form of indigenous knowledge systems (IKS) as aspects of IP. The Act (IPLAA, 2013) prohibits the registration of indigenous knowledge (IK) without consent and seeks to provide further protection of geographic indications (Sibanda 2014). In this paper, all these Acts, which are components of the IPLAA (2013) will be referred to as South African IP laws. One advantage of South African IP law is that it has managed to protect IK through patenting. One example is the well-known case of the Hoodia cactus, an indigenous plant, for which the San people, who discovered the plant's appetite-suppressing properties, are today receiving royalties from Pfizer (an American company that bought the patent from Pytopharm, who were the original owners of the patent) (Tsekea 2016: 213).

For Mukuka (2010: 93) and Saurombe (2009), the South African *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008) is viewed as highly reputable, but it has its limitations in that it does not adequately recognise and protect some aspects of IKS, such as traditional foods and some medicines. Mukuka (2010: 93) stated that, in some cases, the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008) is considered a threat to indigenous communities' cultural maintenance. To substantiate his argument, reference is made to two cases where the Bill (2008) was used to misappropriate knowledge without recognising knowledge holders by, for example, granting patents to the Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) for the invention derived from the Hoodia cactus' properties. Another example is of the *Hypoxis rooperi*, the African potato, that is known to have the potential to slow the progress of HIV/AIDS infection. Mukuka (2010: 93) argued that the patent to this

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indigenous plant was awarded to one person, while the knowledge belongs to the indigenous communities of South Africa. For Mukuka (2010: 93), this one person reaped the benefits that should have been more widely shared.

Saurombe (2009: 196) reiterated that the challenge of the South African *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008) is that it allows individuals to protect their inventions and IP rights but does not allow communities to collectively protect their traditional knowledge. In those areas where collective property registration is possible, communities are not exercising their rights, hence Mukuka (2010: 5) underscores the significance of understanding IP rights and how these rights are related to IKS and its protection. IP rights are awarded through governments and mandated international bodies to individuals or companies over their creative endeavours evidenced in inventions, literary and artistic works, musical performance, symbols, names, images and designs used for commerce. In South Africa, IP rights give the creator the exclusive right to prevent others from making unauthorised use of their property for a limited period. For example, a patent is protected for twenty years from the date of registration (South African Bureau of Standards Design Institute [SABS] 2008). Copyright is granted for a period of fifty years after the death of the author or from the date of publication of a work (SABS Design Institute 2008). Trademarks are protected for ten years, from the date of registration (SABS Design Institute 2008). They can be renewed indefinitely for further consecutive periods of ten years, subject to the payment of the prescribed renewal fees (SABS Design Institute 2008). Aesthetic design is protected for fifteen years and functional design for ten years from the date of registration (Mukuka 2010, SABS Design Institute 2008). When the stipulated period expires and there is no renewal, the work then falls into the public domain and can be used freely by anyone (Mukuka 2010: 5).

The importance of IP rights in protecting the IKS of communities, especially rural communities, cannot be overemphasised. However, studies indicate that South African IP law has its limitations as it does not sufficiently protect some aspects of IKS. In certain instances, it promotes misappropriation of IK as it prioritises commercial benefits at the expense of primary knowledge holders and owners who are, in most cases, financially unstable (Mukuka 2010, Saurombe 2009). Saurombe (2009) further argues that in some areas, where collective property registration is possible, communities are not exercising their rights as they are not educated about IP law. Given the foregoing evidence, the importance of this study, that aims to establish the level of knowledge about these laws and the role of libraries in disseminating knowledge about South African IP laws in rural communities, cannot be disregarded.

2 Problem statement

Tsekea (2016: 211) asserts that the exploitation of indigenous communities' knowledge practices has triggered debates regarding the applicability of western IP systems in the protection of IKS. IKS are misappropriated mostly without financial gain to communities (Tsekea 2016). If the unregulated use of valuable and legitimate IK is perpetuated, the future seems bleak for Africa, including South Africa. For Saurombe (2009: 202), the protection of IK as a form of IP rights, holds the key to the majority of South Africans' participation in the national, regional and global economy. Under the South African *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Act, No. 38 of 1997* (1997) and the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008), misappropriation of individual and community IK could take place and it continues to occur at the directive of certain sections of the economy (Saurombe 2009). Furthermore, Saurombe (2009: 201) indicated that, at a brainstorming session of the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008) which took place between various stakeholders such as university professionals and indigenous communities at the North-West University, some of the key issues that were discussed included that South African IP laws were considered too bulky and covered too many areas of IP. Some proposed that separate bills for every different domain, patent, trademark, copyright, design, geographic location and body of traditional knowledge be developed. The traditional communities did not understand the role of databases and ownership of such mechanisms and some stakeholders felt left out of the drafting of the Bill, with chiefs feeling they were being marginalised. For Tsekea (2016: 213), the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Act, No. 28 of 2013* (2013) attempts to address some of the major issues that were not addressed by the *Intellectual Property Laws Amendment Bill* (2008), such as the protection of IK through patenting. In addition, South Africa continues to make amendments to some IP domains such as the *Copyright Act, No. 98 of 1978* (1978), *Trade Marks Act, No. 194 of 1993* (1994) and *Performers' Protection Act, No. 11 of 1967* (1967) (Tsekea 2016).

Raditloaneng (2007: 121) asserted that professionals (including adult educators, extension officers, legal specialists, librarians and other relevant stakeholders) must educate communities about IP rights. They must prove that learning continues beyond the four walls of the classroom (Raditloaneng 2007). This study resonates with Raditloaneng's (2007) perspective as its objectives were to:

1. understand IK practices commonly practised in the village studied;
2. establish ownership protocols;
3. understand the level of knowledge about South African IP law; and
4. explore the role of libraries in disseminating knowledge about South African IP laws in rural communities.

3 Literature review

The discussion in the literature review is guided by the objectives of this study.

3.1 Indigenous Knowledge practices

Mhlongo and Ngulube (2019) argued that there has been a plethora of definitions and views on what constitutes IK and IKS. It is due to the lack of consistency in the definitions that Ngulube and Onyancha (2011) found seventeen labels by which IK is referred. However, they observed that 'indigenous knowledge systems' seemed to be preferred in the literature (Mhlongo & Ngulube 2019). Mukuka (2010: 3) referred to IKS as a collection of societal systems represented by the totality of products, skills, technologies, processes and systems developed and adapted by cohesive traditional societies and produced, applied, practiced and preserved over generations to ensure their long-term persistence, sanctity and progress with their natural, social and economic environments. Odora-Hoppers (2002: 9) reiterated that IKS is not only about woven baskets, handicraft for tourists or traditional dances but the unearthing of the technologies behind those practices and artefacts: the looms, textile, jewellery and brass-work manufacture; exploring indigenous technological knowledge in agriculture, fishing, forest resource exploitation, atmospheric and climatological knowledge and management techniques. It is apparent that what constitutes IK is very wide and that it encompasses many forms. It includes cultural heritage in the form of traditional stories, songs, dances and ceremonies that reflect beliefs related to spirituality, family, land and social justice (Akinwale 2012: 5). IK is embedded in culture and is unique to a given location or society. It is the basis for decision-making of communities about food security, human and animal health, education, and natural resource management (Hart & Vorster 2006: 9, Mwaura 2008: 21, Mpofu & Miruka 2009: 85). Green (2007: 136), Hountondji (2002: 36) and Ntuli (2002: 54) asserted that, although IK is local knowledge it is not static in nature; it changes its character as the needs of the people change. Mukuka (2010: 3) asserted that IK is knowledge that is stored in peoples' memories and activities and is expressed in stories, songs, folklore, proverbs, dances, myths, cultural values, beliefs, rituals, community laws, local language and taxonomy, agricultural practices, equipment, materials, plant species, and animal breeds. IK is shared and communicated orally by specific example and through culture. IKS consists of a total system of knowledge that encompasses soil and plant taxonomy, cultural (identity, history and language) and genetic information, animal husbandry, medicine and pharmacology, ecology, education, religion and philosophy, climatology, zoology, music, arts, architecture, justice, politics, and many others (Mukuka 2010: 3).

3.2 Ownership protocol

IK is viewed as the sum total of local knowledge that has been passed on over generations (Janke 2005, Ocholla 2007, Ranasinghe 2008). Many IK authors agree that IP laws do not cater sufficiently for communal ownership but place a strong emphasis on the centrality of the individual (Moahi n.d, Mukuka 2010: 12). Britz and Lipinski (2001: 235) and Moahi (n.d) called for the harmonisation of IP laws worldwide in order to ensure that African communities benefit from their own IK. Britz and Lipinski (2001) are of the view that justice must be used as a normative tool to protect the communal ownership rights of the original creators of knowledge through commutative justice, contributive justice, distributive justice and retributive justice. Commutative justice implies that the digitisation of the African heritage cannot take place without the consent and fair compensation of Africans. Contributive justice implies that African knowledge holders should make available their vast wealth of knowledge for the benefit of humankind globally. Distributive justice means that Africa must distribute its documented heritage wider and must be helped and educated on how to access it once it is digitised. Retributive justice refers to the fair punishment of those who trespass IP laws by stealing or damaging Africa's digitised heritage (Britz & Lipinski 2001: 240, Britz & Lor 2004: 220).

Because of the complexity of IK ownership protocols, this topic has been discussed in many international and national forums, such as by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); and the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). IK's inherent value has informed governments about the need for protecting IK by developing policies and legislation to serve as guiding frameworks (Zimu-Biyela 2016a: 57), hence, the importance of educating communities about these policies and legislation.

3.3 South African intellectual property law

South Africa is party to various international agreements and conventions relating to the protection of IP. Being party to the World Trade Organization (WTO), WIPO and the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS), means South Africa is obliged to comply with minimum standards for the protection of IP (Saurombe 2009: 197, Mukuka 2010: 138). In South Africa, IP laws comprise of various domains such as the *Patents Act, No. 57 of 1978* (1978), *Copyright Act, No. 98 of 1978* (1978), *Trade Marks Act, No. 194 of 1993* (1994), *Designs Act, No. 195 of 1993* (1993), trade secrets, *sui generis*, Certificates Of Origin, geographic indications (GI) and traditional knowledge (Saurombe 2009, Mukuka 2010). A trade secret is a practice which is kept secure within a business or similar entity in order to give it an advantage over its

competition. The recipes for popular products such as Coca-Cola are protected as trade secrets. According to Mukuka (2010: 212), the law of trade secrets has been used for a very long time to protect indigenous knowledge. It is the traditional means of passing down secret knowledge. Saurombe (2009) explains that *sui generis* is a Latin term meaning 'of its kind' and is used to describe something that is unique or different. What makes an IP system *sui generis* is the modification of some of its features to properly accommodate the special characteristics of its subject matter (traditional knowledge) and the specific policy needs which led to the establishment of a distinct system. For Sibanda (2014), the *sui generis* for GI helps in protecting the original source of the product and its quality. However, in South Africa, there is no specific legislation to protect GI; it relies on other laws such as common law and the Trade Marks Act. South Africa is a signatory to international treaties such as the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property of 1883. These instruments may somehow be used to protect GIs (Sibanda 2014). The Department of Science and Technology's IKS Policy (2008) reiterates that South Africa is a signatory to TRIPS, and the protection of aspects of IKS within the context of trademarks is possible within this framework. Protection of IKS is therefore feasible under the TRIPS agreement, but additional *sui generis* protection is required beyond this agreement. Protection of trademarks, trade secrets, genetic and biological resources, cultural and heritage issues are feasible under the law of geographical indications.

3.4 The role of libraries in disseminating knowledge about South African IP laws in rural communities

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (2011) explains that public or community libraries are more than just rooms with books and computers because they provide public access to knowledge and information. They also promote reading and literature to all ages and the whole of society, enabling learning and literacy from the cradle to the grave. Libraries serve as a hub to deliver essential services to local people and act as a cost-saver for society by combating ignorance, alienation, isolation, division and lack of aspiration. Furthermore, they stand for important values in society including intellectual freedom, equality of opportunity, engaged citizenship, informed democracy and a society in which people have the chance to reach their potential (Mnkeni-Saurombe & Zimu 2015). According to Hoq (2015), rural libraries need to be a one-stop centre for fulfilling various information and communication requirements of local people. Stilwell (2016) reiterated that public libraries need to make themselves more visible and lead projects that can help rural communities transform their knowledge into economic resources. Furthermore, they need to monitor and evaluate the impact of these projects (Stilwell 2011). Sipilä (2015) asserted that strong libraries are those that have adequate capacity to meet the information needs of their user communities; Anwar (2010), Anyira, Onoriode and Nwabueze (2010) and Chisita (2011) all agreed that libraries can also assist in educating communities about IP rights. According to Raju and Raju (2010: 5), libraries can help to facilitate the repackaging of information so that it becomes re-usable information.

4 Conceptual framework

The theory constructs which informed this study are post-colonial theory, economic theory and adult education theory for self-reliance. Mukuka (2010: 43) and Mapara (2009) agree that post-colonial theory deconstructs the western imperialism process and accords more value to IKS. It does this by explaining the current situation through historical development of the encounter between Europe and the East. The theory sheds light on how IP has been undermined and disregarded by the West. According to Mukuka (2010: 43), economic theory is associated with economic benefits and IP rights. Economic benefits and protection from economic exploitation are important for the cultural continuity and well-being of indigenous peoples. Economic theory helps in understanding how protection of indigenous rights from exploitation can exist as complementary and competing elements informing reforms sought by indigenous people. In his study, Mukuka (2010) used post-colonial and economic theory to understand IKS and IP rights of indigenous communities in South Africa.

Raditloaneng (2007: 121) recommended the use of adult education theory to share knowledge about the protection, existential meaning and economic benefits of IKS. Adult education has a strong legacy of advocacy for the plight of socially disadvantaged groups. According to Raditloaneng (2007: 120), the promotion and protection of local knowledge, including music as one IK form, is an important part of the business of adult educators globally. Uzomah (2018: 33) advocates for the use of Nyerere's concept of education for self-reliance from 1967. For Uzomah (2018: 33), this type of education is based on a premise that education should be able to promote self-confidence, independence, responsibility, and democratic involvement. Uzomah (2018: 33) explained that Nyerere argued that any educational reform in Africa must be relevant to society. Education must be problem solving and work oriented, characteristics for which educated individuals should strive (Zimu-Biyela 2019: 50).

5 Research methodology

A qualitative approach and grounded theory design were used in this study. Grounded theory method was adopted because it uses the systematic inductive approach to inquiry followed by a constant comparison of categories in order to generate theory, which is grounded in data of the sampled participants (Bryant & Charmaz 2012). Qualitative research was used to

find cases that were relevant to the problem being studied (Leedy & Ormrod 2001: 219). A focus group comprised twenty-nine rural community members. They were chosen purposively because they were knowledge holders in various IK practices such as crop farming, livestock keeping and folklores. Semi-structured interviews helped to elicit data from two primary school educators. They were selected because the focus group participants indicated that they had shared knowledge with them on crop farming. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to engage in an in-depth qualitative interviewing process with the participants in their natural setting. The interviews would also accommodate questions that emerged during the interviewing process (Adams 2010: 367).

After the focus group discussions and interviews, transect walks were taken to observe vegetable crops, domesticated animals (such as cattle and goats) in the fields, and folklores (such as beadwork). Data were analysed thematically, guided by the basic principles of grounded theory. The basic principles are based on constant data comparison until data saturation is reached. When there is no new information coming out of the data, then the theory can be developed from the repeatedly analysed data (Charmaz, 2002, in Gubrium & Holstein 2002: 675). Data were analysed manually and electronically using the software program NVivo10. For this study, data collection and analysis were done using the language of participants, which was Zulu. Therefore, misinterpretation of some statements might have taken place during data analysis. Given that, this study cannot claim to be completely unbiased.

6 Findings and discussion

The findings of the study are discussed in line with the objectives of the study. Regarding biographical information, most of the participants were women above the age of 50 and they had no formal education. Some used thumbprints for signatures because they cannot write.

6.1 Indigenous knowledge practices

Participants were asked about the types of vegetable crops that were commonly planted in the location of the study and why they were considered important. Findings were that leafy vegetables such as cabbages, spinach, green pepper, chillies, tomatoes and pumpkin were commonly planted, as were root plants such as beetroots, carrots and onions, and plant tubers such as potatoes, sweet potatoes and madumbe. Legumes or grain plants such as soya beans and maize were also planted. Responses indicated that vegetable crops were important for food security. They helped participants in feeding their families. The surplus was distributed to the local clinic and schools to help reduce hunger and poverty in the village. The local clinic further distributed fresh vegetables to poor families and to elders who were bedridden. Local clinic professionals emphasised that fresh vegetables from the garden were important because they are nutritious and healthy. It emerged that the practice of recycling (drying) of seeds was gradually becoming obsolete; it was no longer a common practice. However, educators from the local primary school occasionally shared knowledge on the drying of seeds and donated seeds during planting seasons. As regards soil fertilisers, participants revealed that an educator also shared knowledge on how to prepare permaculture manure. Given this information, snowball sampling was employed, and semi-structured interviews conducted with the educators.

6.2 Tangible, intangible and artistic expressions

When participants were asked about other IK practices besides crop farming, the findings revealed that these practices included tangible, intangible and artistic expressions. The tangible folklore that emerged as prevalent in the area of study included beadwork, grass mats, shield work, woodwork, sculptures, African artwork and jewellery. It transpired that, in this contemporary world, the metaphorical communication significance of beads was superseded by cultural and economic values. The intangible folklores included oral poetry and oral history. The artistic, intangible folklores included rain prayers or prayers to Nomkhubulwane, and the initiation of girls or *umkhehlo* also called *umemulo* (Zimu-Biyela 2016a: 114). In many African countries, folklores were important because they were used as tools to educate younger generations using oral traditions like proverbs, riddles, songs, dances, legends and myths (Zimu-Biyela 2016a: 146).

6.3 Livestock keeping

Participants indicated that cattle, goats and chickens were the common types of livestock that were kept and the importance of keeping these types were propounded: domesticated animal types were important for food security as well as for cultural and economic reasons. For example, participants indicated that they used them to perform rituals like paying a bride's price or *lobola* or conducting cleansing ceremonies after the death of a family member. Responses were in line with the views of other IK proponents, that livestock keeping was a significant activity that allowed many households in rural and semi-urban areas to remain food-secure and kept them from extreme poverty (Reddy et al. 2015). When asked about the livestock-keeping challenges experienced, the responses were that challenges included high death rates of livestock, especially

cattle, due to drought or the scarcity of water (for example, artificial dams and dipping tanks drying out), scarcity of food, and various diseases (Zimu-Biyela 2016b: 4). Government support was limited or non-existent (Zimu-Biyela 2016b: 4).

6.4 Indigenous knowledge practices promoted by educators

When the educators were asked about the IK practices which were shared with community members, they responded that the school was involved in a project known as the School Environmental Education Project (SEEP). The project was based on a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs (EDTEA). The vision of SEEP was to empower citizens to participate in the environmental governance of their province and thus become an environmentally literate community. SEEP was integrated into the school curriculum to help promote IKS. Knowledge acquired through SEEP, such as the preparation of permaculture manure, seeds and other resources, was then shared with community members who were crop farmers (Zimu-Biyela 2019). The IK which was shared with the learners included landscaping, gardening, organic and permaculture gardening, water conservation, energy saving, natural resources management and conservation. Subjects such as Economic Management Sciences (EMS), and Life Skills and Life Orientation were integrated with some themes of SEEP, such as the Green Project. In EMS, for example, learners were taught to be economical by learning how to recycle paper and plastics, of the importance of using surplus crop yields for the school feeding programme, and about informal trading to generate money to buy more seeds. The findings indicated that through apprentice education, the learners and the community members were groomed to become crop farming artisans and technicians. As Nyerere in Uzomah (2018: 33) recommended, the learners and some community members were educated for self-reliance, self-confidence, independence, responsibility, and democratic involvement.

6.5 Ownership protocols

When asked about ownership protocols, the findings revealed that knowledge was communally owned. Sampled participants routinely indicated that knowledge about IK was acquired from parents and grandparents through word of mouth, demonstration, observation and imitation. For example, one woman crop farmer indicated that her mother used to take her along when she went to the fields for crop farming purposes. Similarly, one woman livestock keeper indicated that she acquired knowledge through apprentice education from her parents.

6.6 Knowledge about IP laws

The sampled participants, including educators, indicated that they did not have any knowledge about South African IP laws. Community members, however, indicated they were keen to be educated about these laws (Zimu-Biyela 2016a). The community members recommended that villages work together in communities of practice, sharing knowledge about important matters in relation to IK, such as its protection through its use.

6.7 The role of libraries in disseminating knowledge about South African IP laws in rural communities

When community members were asked whether they were using libraries to share knowledge about IK and IP rights, the findings revealed that knowledge sharing with the educators took place on a limited basis. However, knowledge about South African IP laws was not shared, as educators did not have any background knowledge about these laws. The study discovered that one primary school library was functional but that it only catered for the information needs of the learners. In addition, one high school library was not well-resourced and was not functional. One female educator who holds qualifications in Agricultural Science did share knowledge with the community members on seed recycling and seasonal agricultural farming, but knowledge about South African IP laws was not shared.

7 Conclusions and recommendations

This paper concludes that the village in which the study was located is rich in various IK practices, such as agricultural farming, including both crop and livestock farming. It is rich in tangible, intangible and artistic folklores. However, its IKS is not effectively and efficiently protected because villagers do not have any basic knowledge about IP rights – community members were not practising collective property registration of their IK or benefiting commercially from it, as they did not have any knowledge about IP laws. Britz and Lipinski (2001: 235) posited that justice must be used as a normative tool to protect the communal ownership rights of the original creators of knowledge through commutative justice. Mapara's (2009) post-colonial theory avers that there is a need to use IK for the revitalisation of lost cultural identities. Educational methods – such as the use of audio-visual aids, library conference rooms and library halls – suitable for the community's educational levels may be used to educate the community about IP laws. Libraries can collaborate with relevant stakeholders such as the South African Companies and Intellectual Property Registration Office (CIPRO) to educate the community about the

registration of patents, trademarks, designs and copyright. In line with the economic theory adopted for this study, educating the community about these laws is crucial for socio-economic development purposes.

In this study, adult education intervention programmes about South African IP laws are viewed as important in helping the studied community gain knowledge about these laws and how to use them to become financially independent. Because of the low levels of education of community members, this study agrees with Raju and Raju (2010) that South African IP laws need to be repackaged and simplified to help the community understand their content. Raditloaneng (2007: 116) states that education is a process of acquiring knowledge, skills, attitudes and practices beyond the walls of the classroom. It is a component of lifelong learning. Education may embrace some form of organised or unorganised instruction conducted by community or school librarians, relevant stakeholders and facilitators in adult education. Lifelong learning is normally embedded in social relationships and is mostly associated with adult learning (Raditloaneng 2007: 117). Given that participants were knowledge holders and educators who were above the age of 40, adult education about South African IP laws is thus deemed fit for the studied group.

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