LITURATURE REVIEW

1. Literature review

The review of literature involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem being investigated. Literature review should be extensive and thorough because it is aimed at obtaining detailed knowledge of the topic to be studied (Mugenda O. M and Mugenda A.G, 2003).

According to Mugenda A.G (2008), literature review is founded on the premise that knowledge is cumulative. This implies that researchers must first establish what is already known in an area and then attempt to build upon it. The assumption is that existing knowledge is accurately and properly documented and stored in a form that allows other users to retrieve it easily.

2. The Purpose of literature review

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Mugenda (2008) the purpose of literature review is:

(a) To determine what has been done already related to the research problem being studied. A detailed knowledge of what has been done helps the researcher to:
- Avoid unnecessary and unintentional duplication.
- Form the framework within which the research findings are to be interpreted.
- Demonstrate his or her familiarity with the existing body of knowledge. This increases the reader's confidence in the researchers' professional ability.

(b) To reveal what strategies, procedures and measuring instruments have been found useful in investigating the problem. This information helps one to avoid mistakes that have been made by other researchers and also helps one to benefit from other researches experiences. The information may also help to clarify how to use certain procedures which one may only have learned in theory.

(c) The review will suggest other procedures and approaches. Other procedures and approaches will improve the research study.

(d) To make the researcher familiar with previous studies and thus facilitate interpretation of the results of the study. For example results can be discussed in terms of whether they support or contrast previous findings. If there is contradiction, the literature review might provide rationale for the discrepancy.

(e) In some cases the researcher may have not have narrowed down to a topic at the start of a literature review. In such cases, the literature review helps the researcher to limit the research problem and define it better. The review of the literature will give the researcher the knowledge needed to convert a tentative research problem into a detailed and concise plan of work.

(f) It helps to determine new approaches and simulates new ideas. The researcher may also be alerted to research possibilities which have been overlooked in the past.

(g) Approaches that have been proved to be futile will be revealed through literature review. This helps in the research because there is no point in repeating a certain

approach in a study if that approach has been found to be consistently unproductive or unreliable.

(h)   In most cases, authors of research articles include specific suggestions and recommendations for those planning further research. These suggestions are usually found when reviewing literature and should be considered very carefully.

(i)   Literature review pulls together, integrates and summarizes what is known in an area. A review analyses and synthesizes different results revealing gaps in information and areas where major questions still remain.

3. The scope of literature review

The following are hints towards determining the scope of literature review according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003):

(a)   If the area of study has been studied for a long time and therefore there is a huge body of literature, one can only read those studies that are reasonably close to one's research topic. In these thoroughly explored areas, much greater depth is available and the researcher can personally cover a narrower topic range to greater depth.

(b)   In new or little researched areas, where little depth is available, a researcher would require to review any relevant material in order to develop a logical framework for the study and appropriate hypothesis for the study.

(c)   The researcher would avoid the temptation to include all available material. Excessive material does not mean great research information. Avoid putting studies that are remotely related to the problem.

(d)   Another indicator to abandon literature review is to constantly re-encounter material already reviewed.

4. Literature search strategies

It's necessary for a researcher to identify relevant sources of information that should provide him/her with the relevant literature to the subject matter. Once this is done, the researcher should devise a strategy of locating the materials from such sources to a usable and friendlier format to support the research work. Various approaches have been developed but the following two are most commonly used as per (Mugenda A.G, 2008)

(a)   Browse-and-peruse strategy

This involves hunting for books, journals, papers and any other relevant documents within the broad area of the research problem and reading through volumes of text with the hope of finding ideas that might apply to the study. When the researcher has not defined the research problem well, there is tendency to bounce from one idea to another without a focus. In this case, the researcher does not really find material that is specific to what he/she imagines to be the search problem.

(b)   Specify-and-look technique

This approach is more efficient and saves time and the process involves the researcher avoiding wading through volumes of text which are of no use and guides the researcher to where relevant materials should be located. When employing this system, the researcher must be very clear on the functions that the literature survey is supposed to serve. Those

functions can be cast as questions such as; what key terms have other authors used that can be related to the proposed study and how were those terms defined? Which theories have previous studies applied? What are strengths and limitations of the methods used in the previous studies? What conclusions did authors of previous studies draw? Using the above questions, the researcher is able to read through documents and journals to find answers to the questions. The researcher uses key words, concepts or phrases to identify documents that might be relevant to the proposed study. One may not actually read through every book or article that he/she locates but in other instances, the situation may demand a detailed perusal of one or more chapters of the book.

When the conceptual framework, the variables and the hypothesis of the proposed study are well articulated, the literature review tends to be lean, focused and scholarly appealing.

5. Steps in carrying out literature review

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), the researcher is recommended to use the following steps:

(a) Be very familiar with the library (area of study) before beginning the literature review.

(b) Make a list of key words or phrases to guide your literature search. For example, if the study deals with family conflict, other phrases that could be used to search the literature are "family violence" or "abuse", "family dissolution" etc.

(c) With the key words and phrases related to the study, one should go to the source of literature. Library staffs are generally very helpful in offering guidance.

(d) Summarize the references on cards for easy organization of the literature.

(e) Once collected, the literature should be analyzed, organized and reported in an orderly manner. Such organization, analysis and reporting represents the hardest part of literature review.

(f) Make an outline of the main topics or these in order of presentation. Decide on the number of headlines and sub-headlines required, depending on how detailed the review is.

(g) Analyze each reference in terms of the outline made and establish where it will be most relevant.

(h) Studies contrary to received wisdom should not be ignored when reviewing literature. Such studies should be analyzed and possible explanation for the differences given. They should be analyzed with a view to accounting for differences of opinion.

(i) The literature should be organized in such a way that the more general is covered first before the researcher narrows down to that which is more specific to the research problem. Organizing the literature in this way leads to testable hypotheses.

(j) Some researchers prefer to have a brief summary of the literature and its implications. This is however, optional depending on the length of the literature under review.

6. Sample literature review adopted from Mugenda (2008)

…….Although the desired number of children has been used as a predictor of family size, it may mask the effect of other important factors on the African family (NCPD, 1993). For example, men's influence in the family and their motivation for offspring has been documented in Africa. Isiugo-Abanihe (1994) observed that African men place a high premium on children because of the tangible and emotional benefits derived from them. Children bring a high sense of satisfaction, they provide help around the home and the farm and they constitute an important source of parental old-age support. Sons in particular are considered agents of continuity for the family tree.

Research has also shown that men with families may report a large ideal family size because, on average, they are older hence tend to hold on to attitudes they have acquired over a long period of time (NCPD, 1993). Younger men, on the other had, are less conservative and are open to new ideas. Older, more conservative men would therefore be expected to desire more children compared to younger men. The relationship is however, not that simple when sex-role identification is considered. According to Block (1984), sex-role identification is related to one's view of self in relation to expected roles for members of the same sex.

Bem (1981) proposed four categories of sex-role identification; feminine, masculine, androgynous and undifferentiated. Feminine-identified and masculine-identified individuals possess the psychological traits and attitudes, which a society stereotypically attributes to females and males, respectively. Androgynous individuals are said to posses both feminine and masculine characters in relatively equal proportions. Undifferentiated individuals do not identify with any sex. The process of sex-role identification starts early in life and continues to be reinforced by societal norms until it is fully developed. Block (1984), sex-role identification differs among individuals depending on the degree to which one has internalized the standards and expectations of the society.

Men who have internalized the expectations of the traditional African society would therefore be expected to exhibit a high sense of masculine identity. Such individuals may express their sense of masculine identity in the desire for more children. They may consider it their obligation to continue the family name by having many children. Because sex-role identification starts early in one's life, a high sense of masculine identity may have the same effect on the desire for more children among younger men as it does among older men. It is therefore important for both age and sex role identification in predicting the size of the family in Africa.

Religion too has a strong influence on the number of children that a couple chooses to have (Obermeyer, 1994). Although family planning has generally become increasingly accepted in the world and although the trend is now towards smaller families (Population Information Programme, 1994), the fact still remains that many individuals may not have the necessary flexibility in controlling their own fertility. A direct approach to the issue of family planning is often made more complicated by religious and moral beliefs (Kasirsky, 1972). Every individual possesses a conscience that affects his or her decision-making process to a certain degree. One's conscience is therefore influenced by those moral values people acquire through religious teachings.

However, religious convictions differ across and within faiths. It is therefore not surprising that some individuals often turn to their religion when making decisions regarding the use of

family planning methods. While certain religious faiths openly approve the use of contraceptives, some religions oppose their use (Kasirsky, 1972). Members of those religions that approve family planning will probably have no conflict of conscience when deciding on a particular method. However those who profess to religious dictates that eschew family planning may find making decision emotionally painful (Obermeyer, 1994). Surprisingly, research among the young population in Kenya indicates that the contraceptives-restraining effect of religion might be suppressed by the urgency to avoid pregnancy (Kiragu, 1991).

Adapted from Mugenda (1995)

7. Sources of information
These can be classified into two broad categories:

(a) Primary sources
A primary source is a direct description of any occurrence by an individual who actually observed or witnessed the occurrence. In research, this is the description of a research by a person who actually carried the research. The review of literature should be based on primary sources as much as possible because information from the secondary sources can be altered by writers.

Primary sources include documents such as official reports, speeches, authentic letters, eyewitness accounts, original research reports. Books, essays and stories authored by novelists and scholars. It also include artistic materials such as original paintings, photographs, newsreels, music, coins, artifacts, etc.

(b) Secondary sources
These include any publication written by an author who was not a direct observer or participant in the events described. A secondary source is therefore a document that is constructed from primary sources by a person who was not a direct observer or a researcher in any of the events or studies.

Example of secondary source is the biography of a historical figure in which the author constructs a narrative out of variety of primary sources such as letters, diaries, photographs and official records. Example is the trial of Dedan Kimathi which has been well documented.

8. Examples of sources of information

(a) Scholarly journals
These are crucial research documents. They are to be found in libraries. Recent ones will be paper copies while older journals are retained on microfilms. Today, owing to access to the internet, many journals are on the web. Properly referenced journal articles will have the author's name, year of publication, title of the article, title of the journal and volume number to enable one to locate it easily.

(b) Thesis and dissertations

All graduate students who wish to receive a Master's degree or Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) undertakes original work which they write up as a thesis or dissertations. Such manuscripts could prove of great value to the researcher

(c)   Government documents
These include policy papers, and research reports owned by governments, some of which are normally sponsored by international agencies. In Kenya examples are the 'Master plan of Education and Planning' (MPEP), 'Kenya Demographic and Health Survey' (KDHS) and the 'Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Kenya'.

(d)   Papers presented at conferences
Research papers presented at conferences are also good sources of literature. Eventually such papers are published in conference proceedings or referred journals. However, a reader is able to make reference to them as presentations even before they are published

(e)   Books
Subject bibliographies are available in most libraries. These give a list of books in general. If one is interested in a particular book, then the card catalogue which is alphabetically indexed by the author, subject and title can be checked to see if the book is available in the library.

(f)   References quoted in books
The references given at the back of a relevant book may reveal more relevant source e.g. books or journals

(g)   International indices
These are important sources which list thesis and dissertations which have been written in a particular area of specialization, for example in the USA, there is "Dissertation Abstracts International" which lists dissertations with their authors, titles and universities.

(h)   Abstracts
Abstracts give list of journal articles with summaries. Abstracts will give the name, volume and issue number of the journal where the full article can be found. Examples of such abstracts are;

- Nutritional abstracts
- Home economics abstracts
- Biological abstracts

(i)   Periodicals
As there name suggests these include journals, magazines or local newspapers which are published periodically. In some libraries, for example Moi library at Kenyatta University, there is a periodical holding list which lists all the available journals in the library classified by subject. A very useful source of information

(j)   The African section of the library
This is a special area in a library (libraries in Africa) where any material on Kenya by Kenyans is kept. However, unique materials which are irreplaceable or which are very

scarce may be kept in Africana for safety. In most libraries in Kenya, all thesis and dissertations by Kenyans are kept in the Africana.

(k)   Translated documents

Given the colonial history of the continent, written documents related to African issues can be found in a variety of languages including, English, French, Arabic, Germany, Portuguese, Spanish, Afrikaner e.t.c. Therefore the researcher may have to cast the net wider and search for literature written in languages other than English. This is likely when one is studying in an area that has been studied widely in non – English speaking countries. For example, it is possible that some of the information in Rwanda genocide is in French. Reviewing such literature would require translating the material from French into English. In most cases, the researcher will request a competent person to translate for a fee. Alternatively, if the researcher is bi- lingual, he or she can do the translation to save money and time. If the translation is not accurately done, important details can be omitted. This dilutes the contents of the document and the researcher does not benefit much from the translated material.

The main challenges associated with translated documents is identifying the source and obtaining the document either in hand or soft copies. To identify the source, the researcher may have to request for help from other researchers in the area of study. Such people will be familiar with scholarly work published in other languages. Institutions such as universities can also help the researcher in identifying the relevant documents written in various languages. Once the source is identified, the researcher can then request for the document from the author or institution. Books can be purchased direct from the publishers.

The materials may be recorded voices or video footages with narratives. In such cases the researcher would require a competent person to interpret the recorded voices and narratives from the original languages into English. The interpreted material is then used as secondary information to support the researcher's study. In cases where interpreted material is analyzed to feed into the results of the study, it constitutes primary data and not literature r

This type of literature refers to documents that are not controlled by commercial publishing interests or where publishing is not the primary goal of the organization. Such documents may originate from government, academia or business and industry in both print and electronic formats. Grey literature comprises newsletters, reports, working papers, government documents, bulletins and other publications. These documents could be distributed free or could be available by subscription. Alternatively, they could be on sale from the authors. Instigators often desire additional information to help place their research in a wider perspective. Grey literature can fill the investigator's knowledge gaps by presenting the topic in greater detail by allowing the reader to gain a larger perspective on a subject. Thus grey literature, covering nearly every aspect of the physical and social sciences, serves scholars and lay readers alike with research summaries, special publications, statistics and other information that offer a more comprehensive view of a given subject or topic.

(l)   Grey literature

This type of literature refers to documents that are not controlled by commercial publishing interests or where publishing is not the primary goal of the organization. Such documents may originate from government, academia or business and industry in both print and electronic formats. Grey literature comprises newsletters, reports, working papers, government documents, bulletins and other publications. These documents could be distributed free or could be available by subscription. Alternatively, they could be on sale from the authors. Investigators often desire additional information to help place their research in a wider perspective. Grey literature can fill the investigator's knowledge gaps by presenting the topic in greater detail by allowing the reader to gain a larger perspective on a subject. Thus grey literature, covering nearly every aspect of the physical and social sciences, serves scholars and lay readers alike with research summaries, special publications, statistics and other information that offer a more comprehensive view of a given subject or topic.

(m) Internet
The internet means "an interconnected set of distinct networks". Some people capitalize the term and in this sense it is taken to mean the world-wide, publicly available network via which websites such as wikipeadia are accessed. However, "an internet" can exist between any two remote locations. Any group of distinct networks connected together is an internet and each of these networks may or may not be part of the internet. The internet is therefore a 'network of networks'

That comprises millions of smaller domestic, academic, business and government networks, which together carry various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, file transfer and the interlinked web pages and other documents of the World Wide Web (WWW). Approximately 86% of the world's internet users are based in Europe, Asia, and North America. The majority of internet visitors use English although the information can also be available in other languages including Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, German and French. Internet can be accessed in many such as cyber cafes, libraries, and offices where computers with internet connections are available. There are also internet access points in many public places such as airport halls and coffee shops. It is also possible to access the internet via phones and wireless systems. The internet has become an indispensable tool in many areas especially in the discovery, documentation, storage, retrieval and sharing of knowledge.

(n) Libraries
A library is a collection of information resource and services organized for use and maintained by an institution such as a university or government. In the more traditional sense, the term library means a collection of books. This collection and services are used by people who need material that is expensive to acquire or who may require professional assistance with their research. Many libraries are also repositories and access points for other materials and documents including maps and other documents stored in various formats such as microfilm, microfiche, audio tapes, CDs, gramophone records, cassettes, video tapes or digital video decoders (DVD).

Most modern libraries are fully computerized and have access to the internet. Today, libraries are increasingly being redefined as places where one has unrestricted access to volumes of information in many formats and from many sources. The inter-library loan

system, for example, facilitates users to search for materials located in other libraries and request for them. Trained librarians also provide services in locating information as well as organizing and interpreting various types of information. More recently libraries extend beyond physical wall of building. This ranges from mobile library where communities can borrow books transported in vehicles, to accessing materials by electronic means and navigating and analyzing tremendous amounts of knowledge using a variety of digital tools.

It is unfortunate that libraries in Africa have not grown with technology and especially the public libraries. Use of libraries has also remained low among the general population possibly because of a poor reading culture. Researchers sometimes struggle to get reference materials for their literature review, which otherwise should be readily available in public libraries. However, researchers should bear in mind that there are many libraries beyond public library system and the universities. Libraries exist within UN system, NGOs, Government ministries, foreign embassies and high commissions and within many other settings including faith based organizations. Some individuals also maintain small libraries at home that can serve as sources of important and rare documents.

(o)   Museum
The word "museum" originated from the Greek word mouseion that denoted a place or temple dedicated to the goddess or spiritual guides. These spiritual guides embodied the arts and were assumed to inspire the creation process through song, writing, traditional music and dance. The first museum cum library is said to have been established by Ptolemy I in 280 BC.

Today, a museum is a public institution, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and publicly exhibits a variety of items, documents and materials that are considered to be of great value to the society. They safeguard and make accessible artifacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for the society. These items are taken as tangible and intangible evidence of people and their environment. Museums enable people to explore the various collections for research, inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They contribute new knowledge to different fields and continue to build collections that are useful to both research and display.

There are very many types of museums all over the world covering many areas of knowledge such as archaeology, anthropology, natural science, technology, botanical gardens. Pieces of art, history e.t.c. objects come to the museum collection through a variety of means. Either the museum itself or an associated institute may organize expeditions to acquire more items or documentation for the museum. More typically however, museums purchase or trade for artifacts or receive them as donations or bequests from owners.

Large museums will often have a research division or institute, which is frequently involved in studies related to the museum's items. In addition there is often a department of education, which is in charge of providing interpretation of the materials to the general public. Investigators in many fields use the resources available in the museums for reference. In Kenya, for example the national Museums of Kenya are rich

source of unique information for investigators in various fields but perhaps novice researchers may not be aware.

(p)   Classified and declassified documents
Some information generated by the government is held in top secrecy and kept out of reach of the public including writers, scholars and researchers. It is considered that such information is likely to compromise the national security of the country. However, information should not be classified merely to cover illegal activities or because it is embarrassing to the government. Oppressive regimes have nevertheless used classification of information to prevent information from being made public because it is feared that such information would reveal criminal acts, corruption, mass murders and other scandal involving top government officers. This has been a common phenomenon in African countries. Information that is classified is restricted in its dissemination but could be shared upon clearance. However, clearance may not give the researcher access to all documents that are classified at a given level.

Declassified information refers to information that is no longer considered as top secret and whose sharing would not compromise national security. Many documents are automatically declassified after a period of approximately thirty (30) years depending on the laws of a country. For example, Great Britain, USA and Germany have declassified post world warII documents, which were formally classified as top secret or confidential and are now accessible to researchers. Declassified documents provide rich source to of rare information for researchers. It is unfortunate that the systems and laws relating to declassifications of information are not very effective in Africa thus denying researchers access to important information. In Kenya, for example, a lot of materials in form of written documents, video footages, speeches, photographs, e.t.c relating to nationalist movement of the 1950s are yet to be released to the public domain. The materials continue to be held in high secrecy without reasonable grounds.

In the USA, the national security archive, a non profit research institute, collects, organizes and stores declassified materials obtained from public and private sources. The organization has a retrieval system for such materials/ the organization comprises journalists and scholars whose objective is to create a centralized repository for declassified documentation obtained from the US government. The National Security Archive has become the largest non-governmental library of declassified documents in the world. A computerized indexing technology is used to organize the massive amount of materials released by the US government on international affairs, trade, politics, agriculture, education, e.t.c thus making the material accessible to researchers, scholars, and the international community.

(q) Archives

The word archive may refer to a collection of records but also to the location in which these records are kept. As a collection of records, archives are made up of records, which have been created during the course f time. In general an archive consists of records, which have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation and which may be in danger of being lost permanently. Such records which may be in any media, are normally unpublished, unlike books and other publications. Archives can also be generated by governments and corporations.

The Highest level of organization of records in an archive is known as the fonds. This is a term that implies a system of cataloguing and is usually used to describe the whole of the archives of government, organization, community or individual. An example of archive is the National Archives in Nairobi, Kenya, which houses some of the oldest documents, objects and works of art and other materials of historical importance. Researchers can access some of these materials for their work. Unfortunately, archives are not frequently used because many researchers may not recognize them as good sources of information.

Archives are distinct from libraries. While libraries mainly hold many authored information, archives hold records that are unique and in danger of perishing. The term 'archives' is the correct terminology, whereas 'archive' as a noun or a verb is related to computer science. A person who works in archives is known as archivist. The study and practice of organizing, preserving and providing access to information in archives is called archival science. Documents can also be archived in soft copies using existing computer technology and systems of retrieval of such information exist.

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