Literature Review & Annotated Bibliography Assignment

During the literature review assignment you will:

1. Use Ashesi University's electronic databases (EBSCO, Taylor & Francis, JSTOR, etc.), to identify **primary and secondary source empirical research articles** from peer reviewed journals that address the topic, research question and associations you intend to examine for your individual research project in statistics.
2. Save articles in Zotero in order to easily generate citations in APA format.
3. Create an annotated bibliography that includes the full APA citation and structured notes (see below) for a minimum of five articles. **At least three articles must be research based on primary data and the remainder can be research based on secondary data.**
4. Based on the articles you have read and a more detailed look at the codebook you are using, further refine your research question.
5. Create a personal codebook which includes relevant variables for your research project.

Assignment Preparation. Before beginning this assignment:

- Install the citation management software Zotero. Follow the YouTube link shared on Canvas to watch the introductory video on Zotero and then download and install the version of Zotero that is correct for your browser. Create an account on Zotero. Watch the video on creating a collection in Zotero.
- Watch the instructional video posted on Canvas that discusses research questions and how to do a literature search using EBSCO (Taylor & Francis and JSTOR are similar).
- Read the article http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-raff/how-to-read-and-understand-a-scientific-paper_b_5501628.html

Part 1: The Search

Start your search by writing down a list of key words based on the research topic and associations you have chosen to investigate. Consider words you anticipate finding *in the titles* of relevant articles. Include words that relate to the context (Africa, Kenya) and demographics (young adults, adolescents, children) in addition to words related to the associations you intend to study (romantic relationships, educational attainment, contraception, wealth, corruption, social media, climate change, mean sea level, etc.).

Choose one of Ashesi's electronic databases (EBSCO, Taylor & Frances, JSTOR, etc.) to begin your search.

Start with a title search for primary source journal articles (i.e. those reporting original research findings on data the researchers collected themselves). Narrow or broaden your search as necessary based on the amount of relevant literature that you find. Consider these search strategies:

- Filter for full text, peer reviewed, and current research (last 10 years)
- Try synonyms of key words and phrases, for example "educational attainment" versus "educational outcomes"
- Identify the subject thesaurus terms supplied by the database and author supplied key words listed within articles that seem like a good fit for your topic; incorporate these into new searches or to refine your search
- Scan the References or Works Cited section of relevant articles
- Each electronic database indexes different journals so will come up with different search results for the same key words
- For secondary source research, try searching on the name of the dataset you are using, such as Afrobarometer or European Social research
- Review articles, theoretical papers, newspapers and other online sources, such as Wikipedia, can provide useful background information on your topic, suggest key words, and may cite useful primary

source articles in the bibliography section. However, these non-empirical sources cannot be included in your annotated bibliography.

How do you know an article is relevant to your research? Start by *skimming* the article:

a. Primary research is an original study, using data collected by the researchers. Studies analyzing existing data (such Afrobarometer, European Social Survey or IPUMS) are considered secondary research. For the purposes of this assignment, at least three articles must be primary sources.

b. If the title is promising, read the abstract. A well written abstract will give the rational of the study, state the method used, summarize results, and address the study's significance. You should be able to tell from the abstract whether the study used primary or secondary data.

c. If the abstract is promising, read the introduction, scan tables and graphs, and then read the conclusion or discussion section.

d. At this point, you should know if the article is relevant. If it is, then add it to your Zotero collection.

e. Be sure to verify that Zotero captured all the necessary citation information, if not, you will need to open up the article and type in missing fields in Zotero.

Part 2: Critical Reading & Taking Notes

The purpose of the literature review is to give you an overview of (i) current research on your topic, (ii) the different approaches researchers have used to test hypotheses and conceptualize relationships between variables, and what others have found about your topic. Importantly, the literature review can enable you to place your own research in a larger context, so that you can show what new conclusions might result from your study.

Use the annotation template below to take notes on each article. **Remember to put quotation marks around any exact wording you type or paste so that you can avoid accidental plagiarism when you later cite the article in your final paper**.

As you read the literature, there should be an exchange between your developing research question and what you are learning. The literature review may cause you to add to the complexity of your research question, further focus and refine that question, or even abandon the question for another.

APA Citation:

General topic:

Hypothesis being tested:

Explanatory and response variables & how are they measured:

Summary of results and key findings:

Significance to my research question:

Part 3: Synthesize the Literature & Refine your Research Question

      a. Based on your reading of the literature, what new understandings do you have about your research topic? Describe findings and interesting themes that you have uncovered from your reading of the literature. Did you notice any gaps in the primary or secondary source empirical literature that your study may be able to fill? **Write two to three paragraphs addressing the above questions**.

      b. Write a research question related to your topic that will guide your study.

      c. List several associations between an explanatory and response variable that can help you answer your research question. **Be sure to verify that all variables mentioned have one or more related question in the codebook.**

Part 4: Create a Personal Codebook

Copy (or take a snapshot) of the questions/variables in the codebook related to your research and paste them into a new MS Word document to use as your personal codebook for your statistics project.

ORGANIZE YOUR ASSIGMENT SUBMISSION.

    A. At the top of the MS Word document for this assignment, type your name and the date.

    B. Next, type your responses to Part 3.

    C. Follow this with your annotated bibliography.

[Do not submit your personal codebook.]