

DECLARATION

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A STUDY OF THE AVAILABILITY AND RELEVANCE  
OF CHILDREN'S RECREATIONAL LITERATURE  
IN SELECTED PUBLIC LIBRARIES

IRENE MUTHONI KIBANDI  
IN KENYA

THIS RESEARCH PROJECT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION WITH  
BY APPROVAL OF A UNIVERSITY

BY

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*A study of the  
availability and*



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OF THE MASTER OF EDUCATION (LIBRARY SCIENCE).

AT

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

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KENYATTA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

DECLARATION

THIS RESEARCH PROJECT IS MY ORIGINAL WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN PRESENTED FOR A DEGREE IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.

sacrifice secured by early education. My husband and friends  
Irene Muthoni Kibandi for his encouragement and support and our son  
Na'ani. From this work is a challenge to work hard and  
develop a good reading habit. Finally to all who believe

Irene Muthoni Kibandi

IRENE MUTHONI KIBANDI

THIS RESEARCH PROJECT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR EXAMINATION WITH MY APPROVAL AS A UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR.

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### DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents Mr. Karindi Kanyoro and Mrs. Alice Wambui Karindi whose foresight, hard work and sacrifice secured my early education. My husband and friend Isaac Kibandi for his encouragement and support and our son Ng'ang'a to whom this work is a challenge to work hard and develop a good reading habit. Finally to all who believe children's literature is not childish literature.

I am grateful to the children's librarians of the two libraries: Mrs. Ngumo of K.N.L.S. and Mr. Sigaly, one of her staff members and Mr. Muturi of Macmillan Library. Their help and cooperation made it possible for the research to go on. I would like to thank the following individuals for their help in procuring some of the pertinent literature used in this study.

I would like to express my affectionate thanks to my family for their understanding and putting up with my occasional absence throughout the course.

I am indebted to Kenyatta University for giving me the chance to study on their staff development programme.

My thanks to Minnie Gatchi for her typing this work with intelligence and dedication.

My friends, relatives and colleagues who have in one way or another contributed to the completion of this work.

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to be read or for examinations and to ensure protection at work; the reading habits can improve in Kenya if children are provided with relevant recreational literature and that these books should be relevant in as far as themes, characters, languages and style, plot and physical conditions are concerned.

The themes covered in children's literature should promote lasting moral values that are useful to our society. The characters should be children who the readers can identify with either through sympathy or admiration. The plot should be interesting with suspense that will make children read further. It should not be over-longed as they can easily lose interest. The length of the books and their physical condition should be ideal for the different ages so as to promote and not stifle the interest of children. The recreational books should be in adequate supply to keep up with the children's changing needs as they grow up.

The problem of Kenyans being poor readers is yet to be

ABSTRACT

This study on the availability and relevance of children's literature established the condition of our children's sections in the public libraries. The underlying assumptions of the study were; that Kenyans are poor readers who read only for examinations and to ensure promotion at work; that reading habits can improve in Kenya if children are provided with relevant recreational literature and that these books should be relevant in as far as themes, characters, language and style, plot and physical conditions are concerned.

The themes covered in children's literature should promote lasting moral values that are useful to our society. Such are like honesty, love, kindness, humility, respect and many others. These should be inculcated into the children as they grow up. The characters should be children who the readers can identify with either through sympathy or admiration. The plot should be interesting with suspense that will make children read further. It should not be over-prolonged as they can easily lose interest. The length of the books and their physical condition should be ideal for the different ages so as to promote and not stifle the interest of reading. The recreational books should be in adequate supply so as to keep up with the children's changing needs as they grow up.

The idea of Kenyans being poor readers is yet to be

statistically proved as true but it is rarely that adults read for pleasure. The findings showed that recreational books for children are too few in our public libraries to fully satisfy the reading needs of the active users yet the majority are not using the libraries. Most of the books are imported and only a few are written specifically for the African child. Most of these, however, were relevant since they had themes that had teachings for the children who read them. They had well-coloured illustrations and simple language. A few had no illustrations and most of them had difficult words with no explanations. The physical condition of majority of the books was not very encouraging. Some were incomplete, torn, written on while others had too lengthy stories for children.

More books are needed, the service should be publicised so as to have more children aware of it, user education is necessary and the children's librarians need to be trained so as to serve children more confidently.

The Europeans did not encourage this method of teaching children. They introduced reading and writing as the dominant way of learning. The literature they provided at that time was the eurocentric literature which was meant to be read by Europeans and portrayed the African as an inferior, less capable human being who needed guidance from the white man.

Today, with living and other developmental activities, many children have full contact and exposure to their cultural heritage. Limitations include but not limited to: poverty, lack of money, family disintegration to the

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN KENYA

Before the coming of western ideas and influences, Kenyans and other Africans had children's literature in form of fairy tales, songs, proverbs and riddles. These were provided by adults and also exchanged among the children themselves. It was a strong and rich way of passing on the community's cultural wealth. The children listened to their elders' stories and adopted for their use what they found of interest and good to do. If a story rebuked greed, laziness, cowardness or encouraged kindness, honesty and love, once told, each child was left to choose to avoid the vices and take up the virtues.

The Europeans did not encourage this method of teaching children. They introduced reading and writing as the dominant way of learning. The literature they provided at that time was the eurocentric literature which was meant to be read by Europeans and portrayed the African as an inferior, less capable human-being who needed guidance from the white man.

Today, city living and other developmental activities deny children the full contact and exposure to their cultural heritage. Limitations include; busy parents at work trying to make money, family disintegration to the

smallest unit of parents and children, tight school programmes especially the 8-4-4 and many other critical areas needing development just like the children's literature.

Despite all these reasons, children need good literature to help them in growing up. This includes both the informational and recreational literature. The future of Kenya lies in the hands of these children and giving them the best books is a blessing and benefit to them and to the country as a whole.

Literature like all art is a reflection of the world in which we live. It represents what happens and is experienced by every society. It helps internalize in children the values and attitudes held high by society like love, honesty, humility and rebukes what is not acceptable like laziness, greed and other vices. Literature therefore provides children with a means of coming to terms with past and present experiences in preparation for future ones. It helps in meeting their physical, emotional, psychological, social and intellectual needs as they grow up. It also conveys important and lasting moral values which are reflected in them when they are grown-ups. Indeed what one becomes as an adult has a lot to do with what she got and learnt during her childhood. Reading habits too depend on this. If good, interesting and adequate books are provided for young children, a good reading habit develops. On the contrary, if books within access are based totally out of the child's environment and experiences, the opposite is

likely to happen.

It is vital, therefore, to introduce books to children during the formative years. Butler (1988:xi) believes that books play a vital role in children's lives right from babyhood. She says,

I believe that books should play a prominent part in children's lives from babyhood; that access to books through parents and other adults greatly increases a child's chances of becoming a happy and involved human-being.

Literature thus has a value for children since it is at this stage that they explore, recreate and seek for meanings in human experience with great intensity. Providing books in later life has a totally different impact as indicated by Cass (1967:xv).

In later life, we admire, we are entertained, we may modify some views we already hold but we are more likely to find a confirmation of what is in our minds already.

He too, like Butler, feels that it is only in childhood that books have deep influence in our lives. The foundation for later reading skills is therefore based on provision of good books in the early years of life.

Children in Kenya are provided with library facilities in two forms; through the schools where libraries play a formal role of providing learning materials and also the recreational one by providing recreational materials. The school libraries therefore meet children's intellectual and recreational needs. Few secondary schools have good, proper libraries and primary schools are even worse of. The other form of providing library facilities to children is through the public library. This too has books that supplement

those used in schools for learning and recreational ones as well. Public libraries are meant to help in building a strong reading habit in children and have it sustained through life.

The public library system in Kenya was established in 1965 through an Act of Parliament which set up a Board to provide and ensure its smooth running. The service has fifteen branches with the headquarters in Nairobi where purchasing, organising and distribution of books is done. They also provide mobile services for areas not within reach of the branch libraries. Each branch has a children's section with books and other various activities for entertainment. The Nairobi City Commission also has public library facilities at Macmillan Memorial Library and two branches in Kaloleni and Eastlands. Macmillan Memorial Library was established in 1948 by Lady Macmillan in memory of her late husband. The children's section was started in the early 1970s and each of the branches has a reading area with books for children.

One of the Kenya National Library Services (K.N.L.S) functions as put in their guide (pg. 1) is to:

Stimulate public interest in books and to promote reading for knowledge, information and enjoyment.

This applies for both children and adults and it can only be fulfilled if children get adequate, relevant books to satisfy their informational and recreational needs. The aim of a children's service is to ensure that children enjoy adequate access to books from the earliest age till they become adults; when adult services will suit them. Books

are therefore essential if children are to enjoy their childhood thoroughly and grow up able to make full use of their abilities. Lack of this contact can bring grave loss that may be irreparable. Provision for children should be seen as a basic service, an essential preliminary to that of adults and not an inferior, optional extra that can be ignored.

The question therefore is; are our public libraries providing adequate recreational literature for our children? If not, why deny them this privilege? As for that which is provided, is it relevant and interesting enough to help in promoting good reading habits? Availability alone is not enough. It is necessary to have materials for children that are not only cheap but also strong, well presented, abundantly illustrated and relevant. Providing good recreational literature is a child's right like that of getting food, medical services, education and housing. This total provision according to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) helps in developing a 'whole' child. In their journal, UNICEF News issue 123 of (1986:16), this provision is meant to satisfy all his needs and thus;

Promote his general culture, and enable him on basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society.

It is thus never too early to expose children to the pleasure of books and reading alongside those of good health and education, so as to give them happier and more fulfilled lives. Providing one and ignoring the other is

not enough. UNICEF's 1992 New World Order to governments of the day has 'First Call for Children' as the guiding principle. This should be in relation to social, political and economic issues and providing recreational books is a social responsibility.

There are international and local organizations concerned with the provision and nature of children's literature in both schools, public libraries and elsewhere. They lend support in creating a favourable image and importance of good books for children. The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) was started in 1953 by Jella Lepman as a forum for exchanging ideas and experiences by children's literature specialists. In 1988, IBBY in conjunction with UNESCO sponsored a workshop here in Nairobi whose theme was, "Creation of Children's Book". In 1990, Kenya was represented in the IBBY Congress in Williamsburg - Virginia, U.S.A.

Other international organizations that support and promote children's books include The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) with a section for children, UNICEF and the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Professions (WCOTP). Research organizations like the International Research Organization Association (I.R.A) of U.S.A. and the International Research Society (I.R.S) of Germany have also taken children's literature as an area of study. These two coordinate research activities in literature, reading and other related fields of children and youth. Colleges and

Universities in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa are teaching children's literature as a degree paper for teachers and librarians.

In Kenya, the Kenya Library Association (K.L.A) has helped by running courses for about 300 teachers so far who are meant to organise and help in managing school libraries effectively. KLA has greatly emphasized on the need for trained personnel in both school and children's libraries but this has not yet been accomplished. Professional associations like Kenya Publishers' Association, Kenya Writers Association, the proposed National Book Development Council and others have also shown concern about children's books. Each has an objective pointing at the need to write, produce and supply for use adequate and relevant children's books as a means of promoting a good reading habit among Kenyans.

Children's Literature Association of Kenya (CLAK) was formed in 1990 to lobby for the creation, production and promotion of children's books. It aims at ensuring that Kenyans, as a whole, change their outlook towards children's literature. The Council for the Promotion of Children's Science Publication in Africa (CHISCI) was formed in 1988 under the chairmanship of Prof. Odhiambo of the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE). Its objectives are based on the fact that science as an integral part of the African culture needs to be provided to our children by way of locally written science publications in any language especially the local ones.

These should be provided while the children are still young. The publications thus help Africa solve her science-oriented problems. The science publications should be provided for both learning and recreation in form of science fiction. CHISCIS and CLAK are sources of great hope in children's literature promotion in Kenya today.

The government has been concerned all through and several ministries are involved in improving the situation. In spite of this concern, the chairman of the K.N.L.S. Board, Mr. Kettienya said recently that no books have been bought since 1987. He emphasized on the dire need for children books. On the need for an Information Policy in Kenya, Aringo, then Assistant Minister of Education commenting on reading habits of Kenyans (Daily Nation 23rd August, 1984 pg. 4 col. 2) said,

The biggest challenge facing Kenyans was how to use their leisure time profitably by cultivating a reading habit.

In relation to the Parliament Library, he expressed the view that Members of Parliament do not use the Parliament Library to the maximum yet it is meant to help them cope with the house proceedings. He felt all was a 'crisis'. Aringo expressed the need for libraries as vital objects in both rural and urban areas. He emphasized on the need for supplementary reading for children as a way to improving the existing situation.

Our publishers have awakened to this fact and are now publishing recreational books for children. These include Phoenix Publishers and Jacaranda Designs who have the child

as their main target and his/her recreational needs. The other form of materials follow later on. Longmans and Heinemann have series of recreational books for children while two of the state publishing firms have also started. Kenya Literature Bureau has several titles while Jomo Kenyatta Foundation started off recently on recreational literature. Otherwise they dominate in publishing informational and set books for use by the children in schools. CHISCI is also publishing materials for children though specifically science oriented.

Although the titles published locally cannot be said to be adequate, libraries cannot be excused for filling shelves of children's sections with donations from abroad only. These few Kenyan books and those from other African countries need to be supplemented by a few well-chosen books from abroad.

Book exhibitions have also been held in Kenya and the most recent was held in 1991 with a theme 'promoting reading habits'. There is need, therefore, to establish what books are available in our Public Libraries for children. In addition, the relevance of the recreational books is of paramount importance if we are to develop a good reading habit.

There is an indication that Kenyans have realized the need to provide our children with good literature. Libraries, therefore, have a duty to provide good recreational books to all children in both rural and urban areas. The above realisation calls for the children's

librarians to be more vigilant and thorough in their selection of books for the children.

The researcher assumes, therefore, that there are recreational books for children in Public Libraries. There are also registered users and potential users of these libraries. The question is how adequate is the supply of the books for the number of users? Secondly, the books could be nicely packed on the shelves but are rarely read for reasons ranging from being too difficult to understand, torn and incomplete, too detailed and unillustrated besides many others. There is great need to establish what kind of books are available for our children in Public Libraries. The awareness is there and the next step is taking action to alleviate the problem. User education in University Libraries and other libraries will be more effective if the students will have been introduced to libraries while young in way of preparation for the future.

adults to love them, care for them, laugh with them and help them learn.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM parents and other adults to

The idea of reading for pleasure, personal enrichment and continuous self education is not evident among many Kenyans. This could extend to our children if a reading habit is not promoted while they are still young. Kenya must build a sound reading public and inculcate good reading habits throughout people's lives and this must start with providing good children's books.

Why the claim that Kenyans do not read? This has been said by many people at different places though no can help transmit important information values.

statistical evidence is available. This researcher feels it could be true and if so, what could be the reason? For example, were the adults of today provided with adequate recreational books while young? If so, were these books locally based or imported with alien ideas and characters? If the latter was the case, then no better results would be expected from them. Our children today could have no choice either if teachers, parents and librarians are not mindful of what they read for leisure.

The school cannot in full measure satisfy the children's diverse demands and interests. More so with a demanding curriculum which requires reading almost throughout for study and examinations. Social and economic changes and demands leave little time for families to get together and exchange ideas yet Butler (1988: ix) feels that;

Babies and children need, more than ever before, adults to love them, care for them, laugh with them and help them learn.

Hence a dedicated effort from parents and other adults is essential. There are new avenues of providing leisure like television, video, radio, film shows and many others. Are these the best sources of pleasure for our children? Libraries have much better sources but if they fail to satisfy the children's recreational needs other alternatives take up the chance as expressed by Eldrige (1985:1) who asks,

What vehicle do we have to transmit good values to children? Consider the media that children are exposed to? ... Books, not micro-computers, can help transmit important information values,

and vicarious experience to children. And if teachers and parents [and librarians] are not willing to devote time to books, we end up with children who are burned at age twelve, looking for outlets such as drugs or dropping out....

Failure to provide good books will bring worse problems for the country; more expensive than buying recreational books for children. The problem therefore is: are public libraries providing recreational books for children? Are they adequate? If provided, are they relevant and of acceptable quality to help children as they grow up? Okello (1989) expressed the view that children's literature should be relevant to the realities of Africa not static and ignorant of contemporary life. Barbara Kimenye, a known writer of children's recreational books expressed the same view in an interview conducted by Akoleit (1991). Thus are the books provided in the libraries fostering values that are useful and true to our societies? Or are they harmful to both our children and society at large? If recreational books provided are useful and relevant, then they will help the child in the growing up process. The researcher hopes to ascertain whether the moral, social and cultural themes treated in the recreational books mirror the realities of our society.

Are the children's creative abilities awakened? This would help in preparing them as future writers when they become adults. Those are the issues the researcher will address herself to with a hope of getting answers to the many questions and comments made by most people concerning

these children's libraries.

The beauty of literature is spoiled by wrong grammar if used. Well chosen words combined tactfully make literature a complete work of art. A strong, adequate and relevant collection of children's books is therefore, a heritage comparable to only a few others in our society.

### 1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to establish;

1. Whether children's recreational books are available in children's sections of Public Libraries in Kenya.
2. What procedure is used when selecting recreational books for children's libraries.
3. Whether the recreational books provided for the children are on themes, practices, activities and characters relatable to children's own experiences in life.
4. If the language, style and illustrations used are appropriate to children meant to read them.
5. Whether the recreational books in the libraries are in good physical condition. Are they too torn to be read? Is the print size and entire book size appropriate?
6. Make recommendations based on the findings of the study.

#### 1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Reading is an expression of inclination towards change and accessibility to written material is vital for all individuals. Children also need to read as they grow with many changes taking place both physically, emotionally and psychologically. A society of people disinterested in reading will therefore have problems of effecting any form of change.

The habits we learn as children often stay with us throughout adulthood. These can be good or bad and a good reading habit acquired by children is sure to continue as they grow up. This can only be attained if good books are provided in public libraries. Recreational books promote reading if they are interesting and relevant to children's experiences. School reading is formal and too involving and this leaves children with little or no time for recreation.

It is true that the identity of a child becomes alive through literature. This can be orally provided or in written form. Parents and teachers have no time to provide it orally and books are left as the key source of literature. This best helps children if provided in plenty and more so if relevant and relating to known activities and ideas.

Children's recreational needs have to be provided for through availability of relevant story books. This is because the children whose needs are met, including that of providing recreational literature, do better in life than those whose needs are not adequately met. When relevant

books are made available to children, their potential of acquiring more integrated personalities and relating with other people is greatly improved. Keller (1980) refers to this as our greatest challenge in improving the quality of life for all our children.

Failure to provide relevant materials could cause more expensive problems for society to solve. Learning in schools would be affected as an interest of reading helps children in their school work where language is the key medium. Providing books that are not enjoyable will lead to their ignoring public libraries and in search of other sources of entertainment could end up being victims of drug addiction, early pregnancies and other immoral activities. Good, relevant books do not only encourage children to read but they also advise them on the results of bad behaviour. Books that hold their interest and encourage them to read more should therefore be provided by public libraries to leave them with no idle time and hence save them from being victims of these many social ills. Children are a highly impressionable group whose moral and intellectual development to a certain extent is shaped by good literature. Ruskin's comment therefore that:

Tell me what you read and I'll tell you what you are. (Chambers 1973:133)

is true and more so where children's literature is concerned.

The idea that the way a country treats its children tells a lot about its development is true in many aspects. Kenya's development in farming and the industrial sector is

quite good. How well then are the children's recreational needs met? This survey should give a cue on how well our children are treated. Lack of recreational books at an early age breeds illiterates who become 'social cripples' lacking in many ways. This is because exposure to life is limited by lack of good and relevant books. Reading habits will only thrive if children are encouraged and given interesting books otherwise they will slowly vanish. Many other ways of relaxation exist as shown earlier but reading still remains the most dignified and free of any guilt. Public libraries therefore have a duty to give children the right recreational books with the right language and themes at the right time of their lives.

Reading promotion is the most a developing country like Kenya can do for its people starting with the child. The researcher feels there is a need to study the availability and relevance of children books since they are a 'silent majority' who cannot complain openly or comment on what they are given and they do not always know what is best for them. Books compensate for the difficulties of growing up by providing solutions through other children's experiences as told in books. For example, a child fearing surgery faces it with more courage and hope if he reads a story of a child who went through surgical operation successfully.

Treatment of inter-tribal or racial aspects in stories also help children appreciate people of other tribes and races with no barriers. Our rich cultural values propagated

through story books could equip them well for life. Books expose children to challenges and awaken their curiosity if well selected and relating familiar experiences. Reading skills are a basic necessity for any society that is literate and books are sources of information. Literature helps in improving children's learning in school as reading for pleasure enables them to express themselves clearly when writing. This is possible because they learn to use the sequence of words well and express ideas they encounter in all other subjects more easily.

Problematic areas like poetry, which is thought to be difficult by most students, is approached with more ease and appreciation. This is because it is not seen as strange having been encountered earlier by way of recreating. Literature also has a cathartic effect on children as suggested by Aristotle in his book, Poetics. Recreational materials provided help children discharge repressed emotions and ideas held as they share experiences with characters in the books.

When children acquire good reading habits, as adults, they will ensure that their children get access to good books. With this kind of preparation, when children grow up, they will appreciate libraries of all kinds including special, academic and even the public ones. They will make use of them more easily and freely. Children's literature is a degree course paper in both the Literature and Library Science Departments of Universities. Hence libraries in these academic institutions need children's books and all

related literature in the subject. Kenyatta University has a special collection for use by trainee teachers when doing teaching practice and most of the books in the collection are children's books. They include both informational and recreational books. Nairobi University has a collection of 8-4-4 books used for teaching children in schools and their Literature Department has children's literature as one of the highly placed papers.

The research will be of help to many people and especially the public library personnel operating in children's sections. There is need to have available trained people to help in choosing the right books for children. They need advice on how to maintain the books in good physical condition. Also, the books should be enough and added often to keep the children busy not just a few which are read long before a child is old enough to move over to the adult section. They should be provided in a way that they start with the simplest books while small, like picture books then to more detailed books with time. Out of the results attained, parents might be encouraged or discouraged from bringing their children to the public libraries.

Well-to-do parents can afford to buy recreational books for their children to read at home and this might encourage them more. But the majority of our children are not this privileged and have the public library only to turn to. Being the sole source of recreational literature, public libraries' contents need to be surveyed. Good

literature for children will ensure development in Kenya in many spheres and should be taken seriously. If public libraries provide a variety of books to children during their informative years, we will make avid readers out of them. Keller sums up the need to cater for children by giving ten commandments that parents should adhere to when bringing up children. The second of these commandments reads (1980:159);

give generously of your time and understanding. Playing with and reading to your child matters more than a tidy, smooth-running home.

This applies to both the public library staff of the children's sections and the government who are 'parents' of the larger 'family' in Kenya.

It is therefore important to study the availability and relevance of children's recreational literature in public libraries. Imported books can easily alienate children with their ideas, settings, characters and values. This can easily kill a good reading habit as it will be contrary to what the child sees and experiences daily. The use of a difficult language when telling a story could also discourage them from reading. To avoid stifling the interest to read and learn from recreational books, there is great need to study the kind of books provided for our children.

These should be books that help children acquire some positive values of their own societies. They should also be true to contemporary life as they experience it today. It will be to the detriment of society if wrong values are

promoted, which is possible through provision of wrong books to our children. Books promoting good values will set a good base and once our children have established a good reading habit, they can then reach out and read books about other people. There is therefore need to see whether what we have for them will promote positive values like humility, love, respect for elders, honesty, devotion to duty and many others. Also whether it will encourage them to read more or stifle the interest.

#### 1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The survey was done in two major public libraries whose branch libraries were left out due to time limit and unavailability of funds. Two months was quite a short period to both attend lectures and undertake research beyond these two libraries. Some of the branch libraries are far away from Nairobi and money was therefore another necessity. The two libraries namely; Kenya National Nairobi Area Library and Macmillan Memorial Library distribute books to their branches and can therefore be said to be a good representation of our public library system in Kenya.

The recreational materials studied were books only, though the children's libraries had informational books as well as other activities like drama and film shows. These are areas that can be researched on in future.

The age limit for readers of the recreational books studied was 5-14 years. This was because children of less than five years hardly read on their own while after 14

years, they are on their way out of the children's section as our libraries do not have any sections for our young adults.

#### 1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

##### **Children's literature:**

These are drawings and writings in prose or verse expressing ideas of interest and value to children of any given country and can be in a language they understand. Heroes in these books should be children. The themes, ideas and relationships should be simple enough for the children to understand and grasp.

##### **Recreational literature:**

Refers to reading materials which cater for children's amusement and diversion from serious formal work like school work. It enables the readers to form new imaginations in their minds.

##### **Relevance:**

A factor related to the quality of a book. It included the themes in relation to what the children know and experience. The characters and environment portrayed and the overall usefulness of the books to our children was considered. The setting of the story should be familiar to the children's surroundings while the plot needs to be simple with well coordinated episodes which the readers can follow

easily. New words should be gradually introduced and explained, and simple sentences used to enhance their interest for reading. The books should be physically attractive, well illustrated and of an acceptable size or story length. They should be strong, firmly bound books to last longer and with all the pages to provide a complete story.

**Potential users:** Refers to children who are not registered but make use of the libraries both as a reading place and a source for their recreational reading needs. Those who are potential users but DO NOT use libraries due to ignorance, illiteracy or lack of awareness are excluded.

**Kinderboxes:** Boxes where books for small children are put in libraries. Kinder is a German translation for child hence children's boxes.

Boxes where books for small children are put in libraries. Kinder is a German translation for child hence children's boxes.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.

#### 2.1 IMPORTANCE AND NEED FOR CHILDREN'S RECREATIONAL LITERATURE.

Most researchers in children's literature in Kenya have so far concentrated on children's class-room interests with little on their recreational and leisure reading. Andrian Roscoe's advice that 'bend the twig when it is young' correctly applies in the development of a good reading habit with children as the best to start with. In most developed countries, the area of children's recreational literature has been seriously researched on and Kenya is also picking up and Africa as a whole.

The need and importance of reading for young children has many reasons. Mubarak (1990:6) indicates that;

Readers are made in childhood and what children read is formative in their lives. The models we provide and books we select influence young children in lasting ways. Indeed children who have satisfying experiences with books continue to turn to them as a source of enjoyment as well as knowledge.

She challenges governments, librarians and parents as to whether they provide these important materials for children. She advises on the need for good school and public libraries besides other developmental activities for this way our children will inherit the best that humanity can legate to them. Mubarak adds that reading for young children and providing them with books as they grow up;

awakens their curiosity, feeds their imagination, develops their aptitudes, refines their intellect, widens their horizons, expands their vocabulary, enriches their spiritual resources and deepens their cultural roots. (1990:6).

Children should therefore have a privileged position in the operation of public libraries. Benefits accrued by countries that provide books to their children are great and Mugiri (1990) expresses the fact that they develop better politically, socially and industrially. Those that ignore the fact that children need books remain poorly developed. The choice is left to each individual country.

Kellmer (1980) and Arbuthnot and Sutherland (1972) share the view that children have needs that require to be satisfied. These include the need for physical well-being, to love and be loved, to belong, to achieve, praise and recognition, for change, beauty and order as well as new experiences which are got from books and other sources. Pellowski (1968) advised newly independent countries to encourage and stimulate the growth of a native literature which will give children a sense of personal and national identity. To build a sound reading public, we must start by providing our children with books of good quality in both content and physical condition.

Ray (1979) says that books compensate for the difficulties of growing up and for any society to be literate, reading skills are a basic necessity. Books are essential to children if they are to enjoy their childhood thoroughly and grow up able to make full use of their abilities and their opportunities for service and

happiness. Children need an ample supply of books and libraries are the most economical way of providing them in a country like Kenya.

Waungana (1981) confirms this after trying out a home library project in Zimbabwe. According to Waungana, children need to know and appreciate their own culture and not underestimate it while considering that from developed countries as good. The project involved writing books and illustrating them then providing them in her house to children within the neighbourhood aged 6-9 years. Coping with their demands proved quite difficult and she therefore concludes that the public library could serve as the best source of recreational books to children. Her noble project had type-written and handwritten books plus a few published ones. The stories had themes ranging from individual development, acceptance and esteem of self, responsibility to family and accepting all members of society as equal even those that are different without pitying them. Like Butler (1988), she strongly believes that children need good books and potential encouragement and guidance as they grow up.

All these authors indicate that children's needs for books and other things must be met in total as a way of equipping them for the responsibility of being tomorrow's adults. They have shown the importance and effects books have on every child as sources of pleasure and knowledge. Like food is necessary for their bodies' growth, so too is reading for their mental development. Their views concur

with those of the researcher that recreational books are necessary for all Kenyan children to help them grow up as good readers and complete, capable adults.

## 2.2 SELECTION AND AVAILABILITY OF CHILDREN'S RECREATIONAL LITERATURE

Availability studies are meant to examine reasons for user needs failing to be satisfied due to the shortage of right and adequate materials in libraries. Materials needed by children for their leisure reading therefore form the basis of this research without involving them as users. The UNESCO Public Libraries Manifesto (1973) gives one of their duties as providing materials for both education and cultural propagation for all people freely. This should be regardless of their age, race, colour, sex, religion, status and educational achievements. Availability acts as a brake on efforts to improve the skill of reading. If few or no are books provided, the skill slowly atrophys but if a variety of good books is provided, the interest is fuelled and the skill well developed. Children's sections in public libraries therefore need trained staff to help in selection of the right materials for all children. A balance between the ages and genres of literature is necessary as well as providing equally for children in both urban and rural areas.

The Kenyan situation has the bulk of children in rural areas who get less or no service from our public libraries for both their information and recreation needs according

to Mulaha (1981). She stresses the need to give children special attention in as far as library services provision is concerned. This sad fact is confirmed by Nyariki (1991) who explains further that the Kenya National Library Services has no mobile services for children. As concerns what is available, Nganga (1979) declares that Kenya lacks suitable and relevant materials for children. This, he says, is largely because the bulk of public libraries' collections is made up of imported books. Thirteen years later, the situation ought to be different and this is what this research aims to establish.

An assessment of the role children's libraries play in educational development and their contribution to life-long education by Mahinda (1985) sheds some light on the issue of availability of books to children and their relevance. He sees libraries as a means of developing an interest in reading and library usage if children are introduced to them early enough. He suggests that there is need to check on the availability and relevance of books in the children's sections as this research is doing. His list of factors needing investigation includes the children themselves, the staff, parents and then the books. His work is based on the educational contribution but he appreciates the need for recreational literature as well.

The Council for Promotion of Children's Science Publications in Africa (CHISCI) in a survey of science publications available in Kenya for children aged 2-14 years expresses the fact that it is in early life that a

child's mind is purest. This is therefore the right time to introduce science and other literature so as to promote a science culture as well as a good reading habit. The group's research staff went out to bookshops, exhibitions, public libraries, school libraries and street vendors to check what was available and relevant both in language and content to the children's needs in science. To check for their relevance, they reviewed 1138 science books which included animal adventure stories, on birds and pets and how to care for them, environment and all other science oriented issues. They came up with a descriptive catalogue and hope to extend the same availability survey to other African countries. They include scientific books written in African local languages and emphasize on the need for more use of our languages for ease of understanding and appreciation by the children. But a question still remains; how many of our children can read in their first languages clearly and fluently even in rural areas? Their geographical coverage is wider but that of books is narrowed down to science only. This research, though concentrating on Kenya only covers a wider range of recreational books. The two studies agree in that a good reading culture can only be developed if children are provided with a wide variety of relevant reading materials at an early age.

Mwanycky (1990:3) refers to culture as,

... a way of life, the very system by which man is able to overcome his immediate problems and satisfy his needs of food, shelter and clothing. A cultural enrichment; a sum total of the way

people live in all aspects including the scientific ...

This enrichment is only attainable if a good reading habit is established among our people starting with the child. She confirms this fact and then adds a list of things children should be provided with; novels, music, fiction, drawings, poems, puzzles, games, magazines, newspapers and folklore where available.

Morris (1973) brings in teachers, parents, librarians and books availed as determinants of whether children read or not. Her main concern is on selection of the right book for the right child at the right time. She indicates that intermediaries in selection of children's books must aim at meeting the children's needs and interests. She underlines the fact that reading for children orally by parents and their own reading are sources of encouragement and influence children to be better readers. Her study, where she uses interviews and questionnaires, like this current one agree in that children's books should be sturdy in binding, have clarity of print and good quality paper. Literary features should include an exciting plot, realistic characters, accuracy of information, illustrations and naturalness and beauty of language. Books should be of different forms, based on different times or periods, and suiting for all ages of children. Her study differs in that she talks to even the children, publishers, authors and editors. She has no age limits and covers both public and school libraries.

Librarians are advised by Hollindale (1974) to ensure

that they measure up to children's excitement, pleasure and joy of reading when selecting books. This is because books have a deep influence in childhood acting like fortune-tellers telling children of the future. They help in shaping their personalities and nourish their imagination and need therefore to be chosen carefully.

As concerns choosing stock for the children's libraries, Sheila Ray (1979) advises on the need for relevant books that can help promote a good reading habit. She gives guidelines on what fiction literature children of 9-13 years like to read. To develop a reading skill, which is a basic necessity in any literate society, Ray stresses the need for well selected fiction books that provide children with greater insight into themselves. She adds that the stories should have plots developing from the characters and that attitudes towards violence, morality, race, class and sex roles should be those acceptable in our contemporary society. Children's fiction books should avoid expressing potentially dangerous actions like getting into deep holes or walking away happily with strangers as well as bad language and negative social attitudes.

Marshall (1991) states that children are people and customers of libraries whose needs have to be met satisfactorily. He comments on the need for trained staff so as to facilitate selection of relevant books and says that the service should fit the child not the child fitting it. IFLA standards for public libraries advise that each inhabitant of an area should have at least 3 volumes in the

public library. A third of the wholestock should be for children if they constitute 25-30% of the total population. In Nairobi and Kenya as a whole, children make up about a half of the total population and therefore should have more than a third of the library stock.

The need for books that give personal pleasure to the young reader is expressed by Colin Ray (1979). He adds that children's books should provide life experiences, offer alternatives and ideas to adolescent problems and help in contributing to their growth into adulthood. Good, relevant books give children an opportunity of accepting the book as a resource. With children who read, an efficient use of books and libraries is ensured. These authors agree with the researchers views on the need to select and avail good relevant books for children by way of preparing them for future reading and use of libraries. Where good books are lacking, then the contrary is expected of people who do not read and unused libraries.

### 2.3 RELEVANCE AND CULTURAL INFLUENCE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Class readers for standard three and four children aged 8-9 years have been reviewed by Jakoreyo (1986). Like this researcher, he gives his own assessment of the books which are read by the children in class for recreation and language improvement. The current research unlike his dwells on books read freely for leisure in public libraries and not in class under close supervision by the teacher.

This study also has no limitation of writers as Jakoreyo's which concentrates on African writers only. This is because not all that is African-based is relevant since some of the imported books are quite good for our children in some aspects and those by Africans could have many weaknesses inspite of the authors being African.

Another difference is that the age of his readers is just a part of the age - 5-14 years covered in this research. He is right in maintaining that there is need for public libraries to provide more recreational literature as our schools cannot satisfy children's demands and interests fully. His findings were that schools have very few story-books but misses to state whether there are any by non-Africans. His sample, which was quite small, comprised of ten story-books six of which he found relevant and four were not. The methodology he used is almost similar to the one this research is using where aspects of theme, characterization, language and style are reviewed. This current study goes further to assess the plot, setting and the physical structure of the book in more details. A set of questions were used in the current study to guide the researcher in assessing the relevance of the books.

Parents, like librarians also contribute to encouraging children to read for enjoyment. Thorpe (1988) did a study on children's reading habits after forming Family Reading Groups (F.R.G.) where parents and children were actively involved. The books were carefully selected for readers of 9-11 years and a diary provided for

recording what they did during their free time including reading for leisure. The books Thorpe (1988:93) states, had stories about;

Children who were roughly the readers' age, with families doing what they do, or would like to do. It must have situations which can be paralleled almost exactly by their own home or school. Sometimes the plot can even be reset in their classroom or bedroom.

According to Thorpe, children's tastes change and librarians should be aware of this and act accordingly by providing many books. Thorpe warns that difficult books do not in any way gratify the readers and therefore advises that short, exciting and funny stories should be provided for young children with a varied selection to cater for changes as they grow up.

Different schemes and series of books have been written with certain ages in mind by either authors like Barbara Kimenye and her "Moses Series" or a publisher like Longmans who have the "Anchor", "Link" and "Masterpiece" Series. Children can be attracted to such schemes and their worth can be tested through their usage in libraries and amongst the children in schools. Such studies throw light on whether a library should keep such materials and whether they are relevant.

Bird (1982) and the publishing firm of the Book-master Scheme explored its usage in a British library by 11-18 year old registered and non-registered users. This was possible because children usually have a clear idea of what they like to read. They were given questionnaires which they filled in connection with that scheme and some other

fiction collection in the library. The researchers came up with conclusion that the scheme succeeded in promoting enjoyment for reading. Bird (1982:89) adds the fact that;

... Children have difficulties in finding enjoyable books in libraries should be recognized and acted on, in both school and public libraries, both of which are potentially important sources of recreational reading for children, and both of which share at least one common aim: the desire to move children through the stage of being a child who can read to the stage of a child who does read.

Bird suggests that a fair presentation of all recreational books for children is necessary. This can be done by considering the length of the story, the arrangement and presentation of words and illustrations and the size of the print besides the relevance of the content.

Akoleit (1991) presents a similar though critical analysis of Kimenye's 'Moses Series' using primary school children 9-16 years old in both rural and urban areas. Her contention is that books for children need a critical look to ensure that children's needs are met and also that a good book is good in its own right. Dixon - Catching Them Young 2:... quoted in Akoleit (1991:19) states that;

much of the material in children's books is anti-social if not anti-human and is most likely to stunt and warp young people than help them grow.

This is true and is possible for librarians to have within their collection books of this kind. Studying the relevance of the children's recreational books may help in avoiding inflicting such harm on our children. Akoleit argues that there is need for re-defination and re-interpretation of the African's concept of himself and a

re-establishment of his humanity and dignity through literature. Relevant children's books need to have true themes, be challenging but also avoid creating fear, unhappiness and unnecessary distress. She expresses the view that young Kenyan children like plots that are compact, full of action, drama, suspense and mystery which Kimenye's "Moses Series" provide. She concludes that the Series has a good childhood setting, swift plots, a challenging and humorous language but adds that the books should be attractive and durable for children's use.

Literature can help children grasp their cultural values easily if well provided while they are still young. Odaga (1974) holds the view that literature is a mirror of society which this researcher agrees with totally. Her general description of literature provided to children ends with a call for local people to write for children instead of importing what Achebe calls, 'beautifully packaged poisons'. These imported books are designed for foreign children and we can as well design some for our own children. She visits libraries, reading rooms and bookshops to survey what they have for children as recreational literature. She holds the belief, like most writers concerned with children's literature, that the formative years of life matter most. It is this fact that brought about the interest to check on the availability and relevance of books for these young people during these crucial years of life. Like Odaga, the researcher feels that our children are entitled to inheriting what their

society still holds with high esteem culturally and even more.

Literature has great influence on children's concept formation. Barbara Githiora (1979) interviewed 5-12 years old children of different social backgrounds in both rural and urban areas and evaluated the positive and negative influence literature has on children's outlook towards life. She sees children as tomorrow's men and women and whatever literature they are exposed to whether oral or written matters a lot. A people's values form a basis of their collective and individual image formation and identity. Their culture is thus an ideological expression of the totality of their activities which literature books treat. What is propagated through children's written, acted and orally presented literature therefore influences the way they view themselves and others around them. Literature, therefore, has a social function as it provides children with dreams of the future, improves language acquisition, helps in releasing tension and also offers an enjoyable pass time. She finds that literature provided for lower primary children in Kenya is inadequate and faulty as some of it provides values that influence children into forming wrong concepts; like what is white is better than what is black. That being her view then, it is an opportune time to check once again what our libraries are providing for our children.

Mwanzi (1982) focuses on the image as a tool of literature and its influence on the 9-11 year old children

she interviews. She discusses the eurocentric, colonialist and Kenyan types of literature and their effects on children's image formation. Imaginary is an aspect that this research is treating as part of relevance if included in a story book. She finds, like Githiora, that some children hold the view that a half-caste is more beautiful than a black person since she is closer to white. She cautions librarians and other selectors of children's books to look for meaningful books with drama, vitality, humour, dignity, warmth and vividness. This way, we will help our children in growing up and socializing in a better way besides their developing a good reading habit if appreciable literature is provided.

There are two notable works that cannot go unmentioned as they are recent and concern children's informational and recreational needs. Ronoh (1990) identified administrative problems that affect children's resources and services in the Kericho Branch of the K.N.L.S. He found out problems ranging from lack of coordination when selecting books, limited seating space, low enumeration for staff, and even children's lack of control and hence misbehaving while in the library. The available books were irrelevant for the 8-4-4 programme. He finally concludes that children's resources in that branch were inadequate in terms of quantity, relevance and recency. Ronoh hastens to add that the Librarian and the Head of the Children's Section had the same contention.

He points out that libraries are pivots in education

and stresses their importance more by quoting Mwathi and Nganga;

Children must be introduced to the need to discover information for themselves as early as possible in their development if they are expected to use libraries for the rest of their lives. (Ronoh 1990:5)

This applies for both classroom learning and also learning for leisure in a 'total' manner for social, emotional and psychological maturity. Libraries' contribution to education is essential as noted by Were (1988) who convincingly states that no better service can be given to children than providing good and enough books in libraries. She compares it to a nutrition centre which provides for growth physically while the library service caters for the growth of a child's imagination and creativity.

Like Ronoh, she is concerned about children's classroom needs and the relevance of the materials to the educational system. Factors that hinder use of libraries by both children and their teachers according to Were include lack of coordination between the head teachers and their staff and this extends to the library, poor selection, inadequacy of stock, space and even strained relationship between users and library staff. She suggests an increase to the ratio of five to six books for every user of 5-15 years. Were also suggests a need for liaison between library staff and publishers so as to help satisfy children's needs.

The two works deal with K.N.L.S. branches in urban areas of rural provinces and these are not very different

from their central library here in Nairobi. Though concerned much with the school books, there is little likelihood of recreational books standing a better chance yet they too should be of good quality and quantity and also relevant.

Though the love of reading and establishment of a good reading habit, is partly a matter of personal taste, libraries have a duty of providing recreational books for children and adults to help develop a good reading society. The K.N.L.S Board (Daily Nation, April 1st 1985; Pg 5; Col.3) defines a reading society as one;

... with a majority of people who read because reading is good in its own sake and because reading is part of their lives, a habit they cannot do without.

Creating such a society is only possible if libraries provide relevant books to all members of the society and especially the young who are the beginners. Nyariki (1991:28) advises the same K.N.L.S Board to;

ensure that concrete, viable and consistent programmes for the young are developed and sustained with a deliberate aim of reaching out all Kenyan children both in the rural and urban areas.

What our public libraries have require reviewing especially what is meant for children with a view to making Kenyans a reading society. The provision of relevant and adequate recreational books for children and advertising them to ensure use will create in them a love and appreciation for libraries. This will contribute to our having a society of library users with more confidence and looking upon all kinds of libraries as beneficial and

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useful sources of information for all their needs. The trend of library usage will improve and they will be appreciated more in future.

No author refutes the fact that children need books during their formative years which is an indication of the importance of literature in their lives. They agree that what every society writes is a presentation of what they value, do, know and wish. This should be passed on to their children and other future generation and literature is the best vehicle to use. Different authors treat different issues concerning children's literature but all view it as a vital component of every society. Children's literature should therefore be a provision of the best and most relevant books and not just any book from anywhere and on anything. There is an urgent need to know what our public libraries have for our children today.

#### THE SAMPLE

The sample was made up of books which are part of the library's collection. It excluded materials that are not available for use and those that are meant to supplement those used in the library. The sample was therefore strictly made up of books that are available for use and recreation.

In order to establish the researcher got a list of all the books available in the library which was then used to make a list of registered books and an estimated list of books that were being counted. It was found that the list of registered books was not complete and the researcher had to make a list of the books that were being counted in the library.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 AREA OF STUDY

The area of study included the children's sections of the Nairobi Area Library and the Macmillan Memorial Library. The Nairobi Area Library is housed by the Kenya National Library Services Headquarters here in Nairobi while Macmillan is managed by the Nairobi City Commission.

More libraries could have been studied but since this study involved an in-depth analysis of children's recreational books, the researcher felt that this could not be done without sacrificing quality for quantity given the time limitation.

#### 3.2 THE SAMPLE

The sample was made up of books which are part of children's section's stock. It excluded textbooks for school use since they are meant to supplement those used in class. The sample was therefore strictly made up of books children read for leisure and recreation.

To assess availability, the researcher got the number of recreational books available in each library which was compared to the number of registered users and an estimated number of potential users. Since counting each book individually would not have been easy, the researcher got an average number per shelf by counting books in three

shelves and getting an average figure for one shelf. This was then multiplied by the number of shelves that had recreational books.

The figure arrived at above excludes the borrowed books which are part of the collection. To establish the number of books borrowed, the researcher used the daily statistics of books issued which was easy following the classification numbers. The number of books in the library and those borrowed gave a total number of books available in each library. A ratio of X:Y, where X represents the number of recreational books available and Y the number of registered users and potential ones as well was given for each library. For non-registered users, based on the librarians views, an equivalent of two thirds of the registered users come and use the library materials on Saturdays and during the holidays but do not borrow books. They too are users and the number of the registered users plus two thirds of the same made up the total number of library users.

For the purpose of establishing the method of selecting recreational books used, the two librarians in charge of the two children's libraries were interviewed. A questionnaire-appendix 1 was given and the interview was conducted two weeks later.

Two categories of samples were picked. Category A for recreational books meant for younger users of about 5-8 years. These are kept separately from the other books. At Kenya National Library Services, kinderboxes and a long,

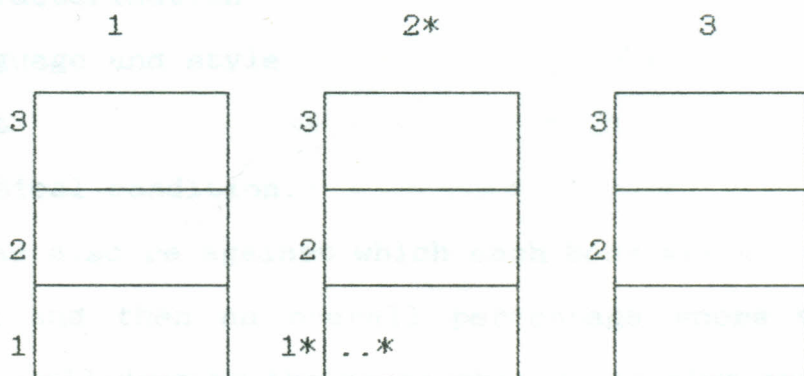
short shelf is used while at Macmillan, they are on two stacks. The second, Category B, is for books read by older children of between 9-14 years and even by young adults.

### 3.3 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sample was picked by first labelling the stacks, then the shelves with numbers 1,2,3, ---. Then using a table of random numbers, appendix II, the researcher picked recreational books at random using the random numbers as the guide. Each number had five digits where the first digit represented the stack, the second the shelf, and the third the book position on the shelf counting from left to right as indicated below.

#### Example

A number such as 21379 guided the researcher to the second stack, the first shelf and the third book from left.



This procedure was repeated with other random numbers until ten books were picked from each library. The last two

numbers were ignored since they were not necessary. The sample included five books from Category A and five from B hence making a total of twenty books for the two libraries.

The twenty story books were then read and each analysed based on the themes, characterization, language and style, plot and the physical structure of the book.

The setting was assessed on the basis of

### 3.4 DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW METHOD AND ANALYSIS INSTRUMENT

An analysis table with guiding questions was filled for each book after reading. Each analysis table-appendix III had columns for information on;

- the category of book
- the library picked from
- the author
- Title of book

and the analysis table

Each book was then analysed under the following aspects,

- Themes
- Characterization
- Language and style
- Plot
- Physical condition.

Each aspect had a score against which each book was marked after reading and then an overall percentage score was given. This was all done by the researcher since time could not allow for the involvement of the children in the assessment exercise.

Themes were examined to see if they were truthful and

honest. Also whether they were well coordinated with the sub-themes to help promote society's good values like respect for all, kindness, humility, honesty and many other virtues. Their relevance to children's lives today was assessed checking out what was likely to promote negative values. are quite appealing to children and ...

The setting was assessed on the basis of whether it enhanced understanding by providing familiar places like schools, home, hospital or the country-side. A good setting coupled with well chosen themes were seen as sources of interest and encouragement for young children in reading.

Characters were considered as either appropriate if of similar ages and experiences or inappropriate if all adults and on experiences unknown to children. The researcher checked if they tied with the themes as vehicles of carrying the message or not.

Explanatory notes, glossaries or any other form of explanations was an aspect of style that was looked for in the books. This was because children reading the stories need explanations to new words or difficult ones. Good and appropriate illustrations were assessed in the books. The researcher ascertained whether they were coloured or just plain black and white or even totally absent. She also looked for their worth and whether they were entertaining and realistic in a child's world. Other stylistic features like dialogue, songs, imagery and others were also looked for and awarded scores accordingly.

A plot that starts off in an interesting manner with

characters and the setting introduced early enough is best. Episodes that followed in a pace not too slow or too fast for the children to follow were looked for. Children like stories with action not dull episodes with suspense hanging for long. Interesting, fast moving episodes with a bit of suspense are quite appealing to children and this too was looked for.

For the physical condition of the book, the researcher checked its quality of paper, completeness, attractiveness, size of story, size of print and the strength of the binding. Once the analysis was completed, the storybooks were then categorised according to the marks scored by each. This was meant to give an indication of how suitable and relevant each book is to the children. The categorization was as follows;

- |    |          |                     |
|----|----------|---------------------|
| A. | 80-100   | Very relevant       |
| B. | 60-79    | Relevant            |
| C. | 40-59    | Moderately relevant |
| D. | Below 40 | Not quite relevant  |

No book was totally irrelevant but those that scored high marks are the story books we need in our children's libraries to help develop a reading culture in Kenya.

#### CONCLUSION

The selection of books in any library is a very important task. The selection Development Department of the Kenya Library Service is responsible for this. The selection of books for children's libraries is a very important task. It is at all times selecting books for children's libraries. This means no guidelines are followed when selecting books. This is not good because by not following the

## CHAPTER FOUR

# ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, explanations of selection methods used in the two libraries, an indication of recreational books available and their relevance will be analysed. The way books are selected determines whether they are fully, partially or not utilized at all. If done haphazardly without considering the children's needs and interests, the usage is likely to be less than where users' are considered. The availability of children's recreational materials determines how well a library's stock is used. Children can come to do their school work in the library or bring their books if what the library offers is not up to their liking. An examination of the relevance of whatever books are provided is thus necessary. These three aspects, if well taken care of, encourage children to read more and even appreciate and use libraries.

#### 4.1 SELECTION

The selection of books in any library needs to be guided by a Collection Development Policy. The two libraries had one Policy for both the adult and children's sections but none uses it at all when selecting books for their readers. This means no guidelines are followed when selecting books. This is made worse by the fact that

selection is done by the librarian-in-charge and other staff members of that section in K.N.L.S. In Macmillan, the administrators also select besides the librarian who runs the section single-handedly with others sitting-in when he goes for break. In both libraries, a need for training was expressed as no single children's librarian is trained even in their branches. "This will help sharpen their skills of both selection and serving users", they explained.

The frequency of buying books for the K.N.L.S. was expressed as rare nowadays. In the past, they used to have a standing order with the African Book Services (ABS) where they bought books on yearly basis. Macmillan also takes a long time before purchasing any. They bought a few last year some of which are already falling apart like 'Pride and Prejudice' by Jane Austen and others of the abridged paperback series. The binding is poorly done and after being handled by the children, they tear quite fast.

The torn books and those that get lost are hardly replaced in both libraries hence reduction of stock without any additions. An average of not less than two hundred books either get torn beyond repair or are lost every year with peak periods being during the holidays when users increase in numbers and the sections are quite busy. This was confirmed by the researcher after visiting the libraries during school term and when schools closed. Some users decide to keep off the library and retain library books they have failed to return for years. The methods both libraries use for tracing users after several

reminders at times help but not always. They go to the schools or guardians/parents but they are not always lucky to get the books. Light repairs are done within the libraries and Macmillan is even using hard transparent polythene paper to cover the new books. The children's Librarian at K.N.L.S. (Nairobi area) has forwarded a similar suggestion but meanwhile, she is using binding tape for temporary repairs. The Kericho Branch of K.N.L.S. has a bindery where proper repair of books is done as expressed by Ronoh (1990).

The two libraries receive donations from various organizations. At K.N.L.S., the Ranfurly Group has donated many books for both the adult and children's sections. The Lois Lenski Children's Fund through C.A.R.E. (Kenya) a Canadian organization donated books to them once. A few parents also donate what their children no longer need but this is a rare gesture but one that needs to be encouraged. Macmillan also gets books and had their last donation this April from the British Council. Once they receive the gifts, they re-catalogue them and place them on the shelves for use. In practise, none of the libraries seemed keen in using the Collection Development Policy. Neither were any gifts received discarded. This is a weakness since it is not possible for all the books donated to be relevant to our children's needs and interests. The cataloguers do the selection as the children's librarians are not involved up to the point when books are brought to the reading areas.

Children make requests for books verbally. Macmillan

has request cards but children hardly use them. Titles that are commonly asked for include the "Tin Tin" and "Asterix Series" and Enid Blyton's novels among many others. Some titles are what the children see, are told about or read and would like their colleagues to read also. Their requests are however rarely met due to lack of money and with time they give up.

Other requests for information are personal like one girl at the K.N.L.S. wanted to know why Israel is hated and fought by several countries or even requests for water, pencils and any other things they need. A knowledge of child psychology would help the librarians in handling the children's needs whether personal or informational. Other qualities like patience, humour, friendliness and clear communicating abilities are also necessary. These help in keeping the relationship between the staff and the children in good tempo.

No other form of printed materials are provided for the children. The K.N.L.S. library used to subscribe for "Rainbow Magazine" but they no longer receive it due to non-payment. Money seemed to be the main problem in both libraries while the Librarians expressed the awareness of the need to have magazines for the children. Several titles are in the Kenyan market at reasonable prices. They include, "Rainbow", "Sparkle", sections of Sunday newspapers and other cartoon magazines. Others that are informational but quite entertaining include C.A.R.E's "Pied Crow" and small magazines from UNICEF and AMREF.

When selecting materials for children, the librarians consider aspects of popularity, attractiveness, binding, price and the period taken between ordering and receiving them. In Macmillan, the tender system was assessed by the Children's Librarian as slow and resulted in delays. The two Librarians reported that catalogues are usually not adequate guides for selecting children's books. The Nairobi area (K.N.L.S.) children's Librarian noted that though Indian books are poorly bound, they are quite popular among the African users and are not as alien and difficult like other imported books. The need for locally written literature for our children was emphasized on by the two children's librarians.

They expressed the need for improvement if the sections are to be most helpful to our children. Loss in the two libraries is quite high as proved at the K.N.L.S. Library by the fact that out of the five kinderboxes they started with for books read by the younger children, only one was remaining. This too was not full of books yet at the beginning, when they were bought, all five were full of books. This is so because no replacements are bought and new books are no longer bought either hence the boxes were withdrawn to create more seating room. Children were reported having been heard saying there was no need of going to libraries as they had little or nothing to offer them.

Macmillan also loses books through either not being returned or getting worn out beyond use. Most of the

picture books are so torn that they should not even be on the shelves as nobody can use them. The rate of adding stock in the two libraries is therefore too slow compared to the rate of loss. We observed that in Macmillan, school children come to the library over lunch hour but mainly go to the informational books section. The two librarians expressed hope of the children's sections improving if money was provided but presently the sad fact is that they are in poor condition material-wise.

#### 4.2 AVAILABILITY

Inadequate books for children in public libraries cannot quench their thirst for reading and neither can too many irrelevant ones. The Public Library being the main source of recreational books for most children should have enough for all children. They should provide books ranging from those for the youngest children to those of young adults maturing to join the adult section. It is therefore right to know how many recreational books are available for how many children in Kenya.

Table 1 below indicates the number of books available in the two libraries and that of users, both registered and not but use the library.

Table 1

Number of children's recreational books available to that of users in Nairobi area Library (K.N.L.S.) and Macmillan).

BOOKS

	K.N.L.S.	MACMILLAN
No. of books on shelves	2847	1530
No. of borrowed books	205	112
Total (X)	3052	1642

USERS

No. of registered users (1991-92)	1228	678
No. of other users <sub>2/3 of above</sub>	818	580
Total (Y)	2046	1258

$$X:Y = 3052:2046 \quad X:Y = 1642:1258$$

$$\text{Ratio} \quad X:Y = 3:2 \quad X:Y = 4:3$$

The ratios 3:2 and 4:3 mean that at the K.N.L.S. Library, every three books are available for every two readers while at the Macmillan, every three users have four books. This means that at K.N.L.S., every reader has one and a half books while at the Macmillan they have one and a third books. These ratios in comparison to the IFLA Standards requirement of three books for every reader is quite low. The figures for users exclude the larger group of children who should use libraries but do not either due to ignorance, illiteracy or lack of interest. A ratio of all age 5-14 years children in Nairobi and recreational

libraries would be quite different from the above ones.

The collection at K.N.L.S. (Nairobi Branch) includes picture books like the "Sunshine Series", "Ladybird Series" and many other simple books for younger readers. There is also a collection of vernacular books which include titles like;

- "Kariuki na Muthoni" by Mareka Gecaga. A story that dwells on their childhood and youth as representative of all Gikuyu children. It starts with the birth, changes that take place as they grow up, initiation, marriage and finally death and making of a will.
- "Nehanchere Ekegaambo geito: amatoomio gi Gikuria" by Omarwa Mwita.
- "Mukamba wa Wo" - Kimilu D.
- "Achame Kutinyon: atindonik ab Kalejin by Kenduiywa Towett.

There are many others including story books in Kiswahili, French books and tongue twisters in English. The rest of the collection includes novels, plays and a few poetry books for the older children.

At Macmillan, the picture book collection is quite large but since most of them are torn, we could not establish certain dominant series. The rest of the collection has among other title books of the "Ladybird Series", abridged series of old titles now in paperback and many other story books. Both libraries use the Dewey Decimal classification scheme and have their fiction books arranged according to authors. The arrangement at K.N.L.S.

is more favourable for smaller children who easily browse and choose books from the kinderboxes. Tables and chairs are also appropriate for the children's ages. They have sitting space for 42 children and hardly any floor-sitting space and when full, children sit outside in a play compound meant for the children's use when they get tired.

At Macmillan, the shelves are high for the youngest children but alright for others. Picture books are in a shelf for adults and this therefore does not allow them to browse or choose without assistance. Their sitting space is for 24 children but more floor space is available where children sit and read. The Eastlands Branch has more space than these other two libraries. Macmillan has one member of staff while K.N.L.S. has about seven people. The two librarians have several years of experience in these sections but they insisted on the need for training. The K.N.L.S. one has a Certificate from the Polytechnic while the one of Macmillan has 15 years experience but no training.

More books are needed to improve the existing situation whereby children's enthusiasm to read dies after some time when they realise that nothing new and interesting is forthcoming in the library. The static collections are therefore likely to be discouraging children from using libraries. A big proportion of the registered users become inactive after some time and the K.N.L.S. children's Librarian suggested the above reason could be the cause. Their services are free and they give

two cards to every child who registers. Macmillan charges 10 Shillings for every card a year but the same happens after paying as not all are fully active through the year. The user population in the two libraries is made of Asians, Europeans and Africans who make up the largest percentage. The older children have more recreational books than the younger ones though this could be explained by their rate of destroying books.

#### 4.3 RELEVANCE

The sample picked was analysed and categorised A, B, C, D according to the scores they got. This categorisation ranged from 0-100 as follows;

A - 80 - 100

B - 60 - 79

C - 40 - 59

D - 0 - 39

Thus a book that satisfied most of the conditions and ideas the researcher was looking for got higher marks than one that did not. The results were as shown in table 2.

The categorization was based on the theme, characterization, language and style, plot and story line condition.

#### Themes

The theme of a book is what the reader learns after going with the story and the characters. Themes in good writing are based as proposed by Aristotle (1910)

Table 2

## RELEVANCE TABLE

CATEGORY	NUMBER	%
A	9	45
B	7	35
C	4	20
D	NIL	NIL

A list of the titles and authors of the books that were read and analysed appears as primary sources in the bibliography. Out of the twenty books, nine were very relevant, seven fairly relevant and four were just relevant while none was irrelevant. This was because any book in a language a child can understand has a word or two that a child can learn even if the other aspects are not very encouraging. The few French books that were available in the libraries can be useful for any child who knows French but are irrelevant to the majority who do not know the language. Even those books that are rarely read cannot be said to be useless. They therefore do not qualify to be termed as totally irrelevant.

The categorization was based on the themes, characterization, language and style, plot and their physical condition.

#### 4.3.1 Themes

The theme of a book is what the child learns after finishing with the story and the characters. Themes in good books according to Hazard as quoted by Akoleit (1991:99)

are those that;

... awaken in them [children] not maudlin sentimentality but sensitivity; that enable them to share in great human emotions; that give them respect for universal life - that of animals, of plants; that teach them not to despise everything that is mysterious in creation and in man ... books that set in action truths worthy of lasting forever, and inspiring ones whole inner life ... books that have the integrity to perpetuate their own faith in truth and justice.

The themes in story-books that were read included those that teach children how to grow up and some of the expected experiences. They include dealing with sickness as in Topsy and Tim go to the Doctor, the price of doing wrong things like stealing as in Komou the Monkey, appreciating those with various disabilities and realising that they are also capable of doing exemplary things like the blind man in Apt. 3 and his nice singing and many others. The book A Cow for Jaya teaches children how love can easily overpower hate. Jaya expects a fat, beautiful cow but what the father buys does not satisfy his wishes, though that was all the father could afford with his long saved rupees. His hate for the cow fails to match with her love for Jaya. Khubi, the cow follows Jaya to school, pours the milk and even follows him to the bazaar when he runs away from home to avoid being quarrelled and punished as a result of the cow's interference. The cow eventually saves Jaya from the attack by the shopkeeper for mistaken identity. Jaya accepts her as a friend and their love and closeness is appreciated by Shanti, who had witnessed Jaya's cruelty towards the cow all through.

Such love is also shown in The Happy Lion's Quest but

the boy, Francois reciprocates the lion's love. The lion leaves the zoo in search of Francois after school reopens because he misses his friend inspite of having the lioness and a cub as company. Loneliness drives him through valleys and hills risking being shot till he arrives in Francois' class. The fact that suffering, genuineness and hard work end and are replaced by happiness is well indicated in two books, Bulemu the Bastard and At the Seven Stars. In these two books, kindness, the willingness to help others, however bad they may be, hope and faith end the suffering for Bulemu and Richard Larkin who both start off as young boys of about 13-15 years. The stories are set in different periods and different countries but the teaching is parallel.

Conflict between traditional and modern life is also treated as a sub-theme in Bulemu the Bastard. His father neglects him and his mother and all the other relatives after he goes abroad and reads. He hates their way of life and finally runs away to the city where he gets another wife. The book has a lot to teach children on sufferings that fellow age-mates or even themselves can face and how that does not mean life has come to an end. Richard in At the Seven Stars is ready to work in a hotel and though a street child takes Abby, a little street girl he finds sleeping near a church. He suffers so much but he finally manages to settle in life and goes back to his home with Abby as their adopted child. Betsy, a girl he meets in one of the places he works becomes his wife.

In the two books, women are seen at one point as saviours and more helpful than the men. Bulemu's mother helps him through life till she dies but he lives with respect for women. Richard is advised by Betsy, a girl his age and size; Beatty (1963:89)

Richard looked at Betsy with new respect. She thought faster and deeper than he, and her words were sensible - far more than he had expected - and strangely enough her comments about not taking advice from a girl did not bother him.

In Potter's Sandy's Safari, family breakup is treated as having effects on children's way of growing up. The over-possessive mother breaks down and the father joins a working team to America and the children have come to Kenya to join an uncle. Though hope brings reconciliation, one sub-theme is that of portraying the African as inferior in the book. This is not right for our children but could be understood by the European users. The idea Uncle Ben raises of Sandy not working as a shoeshine boy, Potter (1971:19),

If I allowed a white boy to do a job for which I ought to be paying an African, I'd probably be out of the country on the next plane

portrays the white boy as more superior than an African which is really not true. This can easily confuse children and even make them hate being Kenyans and Africans for that matter.

Laziness and building castles as shown in Jeanne-Marie Counts her Sheep is discouraged as in the end she manages to get wool that makes only one sock and not all the things she wished to have. Her sheep manages to get only one tiny little lamb and not as many as she wished as she sat.

Kindness and concern for others is a theme well presented by Kimenye in Sarah and the Boy. Sarah helps the thief who she finds in the market crying. She forgets to take back the onions the mother sent her and goes in search of the boy's mother. The boy being an equivalent of Nairobi's 'chokoras' turns rough at one point but gets a home in the end as Sarah's parents collect both of them from the police-station. The dwarf in Snow White and Red Rose is killed because of his cruelty and evil deeds while the girls are rewarded for their kindness and willingness to help the dwarf and the bear who is actually a prince.

Play is part of every child's growing up. Murray in Games we like explains games that our children also play. These include rope-skipping, use of toys and balloons, painting faces, drawing, role-plays where boys build as girls cook, blowing bubbles and treasure hunting. Though some of the games may be strange like playing cowboys games and the idea of having snow, most of them are familiar and are practised by the children. The games are mainly favourable for urban children but some are done by rural children as well. Birthdays is a book for younger children and could help a child with a birthday. They learn the fact that once a gift is given, as others eagerly wait to see what it is, the host should open and show them.

#### 4.3.2 Characterization

Characters in stories help in enhancing the plot and the themes that are meant to be of use to the reader. They

should be portrayed as credible; people that children can believe in, see through imagination and relate them to people they know in real life or even themselves. Whether animals or human-beings, the characters should not be too difficult to visualize.

In eleven (55%) of the sample of story books that were read, the characters were dominantly children. Adults only came in to play roles that children cannot play effectively. In A Cow for Jaya, the parents, the teacher, the shop-keeper and the policeman cannot be children and have to be adults for the story to be real and possible. Jaya and Shanti are real characters that children reading the book can relate with. A boy longing to have what other boys have for example a pet, a bicycle or even a cow like in Jaya's case is acceptable. Having Shanti as a classmate and a friend who witnesses Jaya's experiences is also true to life. Their love for one another is not beyond that of children of their age. The characters are well-used in passing on good values within society like patience, kindness and loving all living beings.

In Games we like, the behaviour of Peter and Bob and Jane and Mary is as expected of children today. The girls play different games from those of the boys and where need arises, they mix. Most of the characters are not strange and readers can identify with them. In Farm Fun, Peter and Jane act like children do when they visit farms away from town. The excitement they have and freedom of movement is common of urban children. Those in rural areas see when the

urbanite children visit and the characters are thus not total strangers. In Birthdays, the unnamed child behaves like every small child would behave on receiving birthday gift parcels. Though not all children celebrate colourful birthdays, most of them are aware of birthdays and what happens.

The Runaways has older children of over twelve years as characters except Ben who is small but makes the group complete. Being an adventure story, what happens to the children could also happen to the readers. Trudi runs away from home and faces so many problems; she escapes through a window from Tina's house and finally works as a maid for one day before quitting. The encounters they go through, though scaring at one point, are what most children would not mind experiencing so long as they are assured they will survive. Asterix is a cartoon book with all characters as adults but children are likely to enjoy the activities that take place in the book.

The Prisoner of Zenda has adult characters who children of twelve years and over will appreciate in preparation for future romance. It is however not possible for younger children to appreciate the characters and all that happens. The Smugglers and other Stories and Black Jesus and other Poems are also dominated by adult characters some of who most children cannot visualize.

The other stories have children playing central roles but are surrounded by adults. The children characters are well portrayed and can be correctly perceived by the

children. They mature and change in most of the stories thus developing with time. The characterisation in most of the books is well done with majority of the characters being of the readers' likes. The roles they are given are right and none seems beyond what is possible. However, most of them are whites doing things associated with their way of life and only a few have some African taste. Bulemu's childhood is similar to that of any African child, Sarah and the boy too are fit as they are Africans but some of the games Peter and Jane play are not common in Kenya. Sandy's experiences too are not very common for an African boy since only a few could be privileged enough to go for such a safari round Kenya. Richard's experience of suffering is universal and can take place anywhere in the world including Kenya.

Very few of the characters are Africans except for the story-books with African settings. Some, like Sandy's Safari though set in Kenya has about four Africans while all the others are whites. Those others have all characters as blacks except Bulemu the Bastard which has a few white characters. However, most of the characters are fully developed and their colour can be ignored by the children if the story is interesting. In place of white people, they can imagine their fellow Kenyans as the characters.

In The Smuggler and other Stories, Paco, an old man and the main characters is well described especially his manner of dressing (Grimshaw, 1981:1);

His hat, as dusty and old as its owner, was shapeless. His shirt was grey with use and

washing. It was torn at the shoulder and had a blue patch ... trousers were worn out at the knee ... boots.

The description extends to even his donkey which had seen better days and when the guards stopped them, 'stood patiently with a hanging head'.

In Apt. 3, Mr. Muntz is described as a man who 'had a bold head and fat with a belly'. Khubi, Jaya's cow was thin and ugly unlike what the boy had pictured, a fat, beautiful cow. In Bulemu and the Bastard, Kato, the music group's assistant was (Karamagi 1980:3)

short, masculine and in his late twenties though he appears to be in his early fourties.

The lion in Fatio's The Happy Lions Quest was "sad and had characters dominates in most of the books. Those looking into space and could not respond to friends who came to see him at the zoo".

In some of the books, characters are hardly introduced to the reader. Jeanne-Marie starts off the story sitting and dreaming about the future. In Murray's Ladybird Books, the Characters are not introduced though this could be because of their being part of a series with other earlier books. In Birthdays, the character's is not even given and it is all sketchy. The illustrations in the illustrated story-books, make the characters more clearer to see and visualize. Most of the books had fully developed characters.

Like in real life, some of the characters encourage positive values and others negative ones. Paco, the smuggler successfully steals gold through the border inspite of the Customs Inspector being vigilant in checking

all his belongings. Jeanne-Marie can also encourage laziness though she learns her lesson at the end when her sheep gets only one little lamb whose wool makes only one sock.

Books like The Prisoner of Zenda have a balance between good and bad characters where finally the good ones win. Richard, in At the Seven Stars wins at the end against the Jacobite group of cruel ruthless killers. Sarah in Kimenye's Sarah and the Boy is a kind girl willing to help the boy who turns cruel and brutal at one point but her kindness persists as she comforts and consoles him after he is knocked down with a bicycle. A balance of both good and bad characters dominates in most of the books. Those that are not fully developed depict a story that is also not fully developed.

#### 4.3.3 Language and Style

In most of the books, the language used was simple with well chosen words. The libraries had a good arrangement of books starting with the simple, the intermediate and then the advanced in terms of both language use, simplicity and size of the entire story-books.

The sentences too were varying in size. The simple books had many short sentences like in Birthdays where the child says (Cowley 1988:2);

"I got a brown parcel for my birthday. If you wait a minute, I'll show you what's in it". "A new jacket".

Others had long sentences like the one below from Bulemu the Bastard, where the leader of the troupe says;

"The responsibility to my job pushes me towards him helplessly, like a baby being squeezed out of a womb by labour contradictions to be born into a strange universe".

In some of the books, a mixture of both long and short sentences is used. Bulemu the Bastard, though an interesting book has many wrongly spelt words like "gril for girl", "cebration for celebration", "strenth for strength" and "unemployed for unemployed" on pages 16, 195, 101 and 109 respectively. This could be because part of the book is a manuscript he had written as his biography but since it makes more than three quarters of the story, the spelling mistakes should have been taken care of by the editors and publishers of the story-book.

None of all the books had any explanatory notes. These are necessary unless a book is very simple with words that are commonly used. Explanatory notes or glossary help children in learning meanings of new words which are a source of encouragement to reading if well supplied. The Happy Lion's Quest had many French words like "lycee", "entrez", "lecon" and even difficult English words like, "trombones", "scuffle", "hubbub" and many others yet none of all these is explained. Almost every story had a new word that needed explanations except for Birthdays and Sarah and the Boy which were simple with hardly any difficult word.

The story-books had illustrations, some even in colour. In most books they were adequate and well done in

a clear, understandable way. Where black and white like in Sarah and the Boy, they were simple and easy to follow. Books like Sandy's Safari, At the Seven Stars, Bulemu the Bastard and the poetry book had either few like in the first two while the others had no illustrations. Most of the illustrations are however of the white people and only a few have Africans which may create a negative attitude in most children.

Some of the stories had good English expressions for example, '... It stands to reason that ...'; '... his eyes widened like two round rupees' (a simile); 'tagged along ...'; '... it sounded like a million people were in there'; and many others. Episodes are well explained for the reader to imagine and see them clearly. Dialogue and repetition are well used in especially the books for the younger readers. Personification is also used in Apt. 3 where Sam says he felt lonely just like the rain outside. However these stylistic aspects are in very few books and should be in all the books.

#### 4.3.4 Plot

The sequence of events in a story can either make it interesting or not. Also the pace at which they are brought and how long suspense is held can create more interest.

In most of the stories, the episodes follow in an orderly sequence with adequate time for suspense. The beginning of most of them is also interesting enough to make them read on. One such beginning is in Komou the

Monkey where it starts; "One Monday morning, Ali went to the field and found yellow mangoes ... ". The Snow White and Red Rose story starts with "Once upon a time ...". The setting of most stories is also ideal for our children except for some like this last one above where the idea of snow covering doors and ice flowing are strange. The story of the lonely lion in search of the friend, Francois is also set in an area that is not so easy to visualize. The others are like At the Seven Stars, which is not only set at a different age but also the area itself is strange. Sandy's Safari though with European characters is set in Kenya and this is one good aspect of the book.

Those others are set at home, in farms or playing areas, school and in towns and villages which are easy to understand. The sequence of events is a bit confusing in some of the books like At the Seven Stars where so many things happen at different places for a young reader to follow. In The Prisoner of Zenda, it is also not easy to follow the so many chapters and episodes. This is made more difficult by the setting which is also strange. Sarah and the Boy is well set in a market as the starting point and the police station as the end. The story develops in a logical manner as it would in real life.

In Jeanne-Marie Counts her Sheep, the setting and development of the story are difficult to follow. A child looking for a book that is interesting and has some action would easily ignore it. The story has little activity since the only thing that changes is the number of lambs to be

born and what they will buy with the money after selling the wool. Though it has some good aspects like sharing the benefits with the sheep, the repetition of both the illustrations and most of the words on every other page is not very good and can be monotonous.

Bulemu the Bastard is not an easy book to read and follow as the bigger part of the story is 'a story within a story'. Flashbacks to the past and his early life are intermingled with the story of his later life and that of the journey Yusuf and the two visitors are on. Linking these different times with different experiences might not be possible for young readers.

#### 4.3.5 Physical Form

Most of the books especially for the younger children have either been mended or are in pieces and worn-out. A few that were intact were either new or in languages most of our children cannot read. For the older children, most of the books were intact with only a few torn. Bulemu the Bastard is for the second category of readers and was in pieces which the researcher had to hold together with a rubber band but all the pages were available. Others like the Prisoner of Zenda, had the cover and the rest of the book separate but it too had all the pages. Komou the Monkey was incomplete and the researcher therefore got only part of the story as four pages were missing.

The Happy Lion's Quest and Topsy and Tim go to the Doctor had torn pages and words and drawings by the readers

all over the book. Snow White and Red Rose had some illustrations cut out while the Asterisk was in pieces and could hardly be read. Apt.3 had all the pages with very good colourings (painted) in form of illustrations but some were cut off. However some books like Sandy's Safari; Sarah and the Boy; Tom Thumb; A Cow for Jaya; Games we Like and Birthdays were intact and complete. A notable difference in way of binding explains this. covers and were

Some of the covers were worn out due to use and were not attractive at all as they looked faded. Others were however colourful and attractive for children willing to read a story-book. The print size was also appropriate for the ages a book was meant for. Some had large print like Joy Cowley's Birthdays while others had small print size like Kittobe's Black Jesus and other Poems. The entire size of some of the books was also ideal while others were too large for the readers. Those for the younger readers had between 12-50 pages most of which had illustrations on every alternate page. The ones for the older children were rather too big with some having 168 (Sandy's Safari), 185 (At the Seven Stars) and 201 (Bulemu the Bastard) pages. The same books had either no illustrations or just a few like in the case of the first and second ones. The size of a book can easily put off would-be readers from reading story-books. By checking the lending slip page, the researcher confirmed that these large novels which are quite many in the children's collection in the two libraries are rarely borrowed. This could be because of the

size of the books. Ironically, these big novels are in good condition as most of them have hard covers. At Macmillan, the jackets are not removed from the books while at K.N.L.S. they were not there and the books were alright with hard covers only.

Out of the twenty books, 35% were intact and in good condition. Some of these had covers with jackets still on while other had polythene covers and were acquired recently. 40% were in fair condition having either the pages torn at the edges and others worn out or the cover and the book separate. In these books, the story and illustrations were all intact for users to follow. 25% were in poor condition with either the covers faded and torn completely as well as some pages missing or illustrations cut off. Some have been repaired several times and the marks left by layers of binding tape make some of them look worse when removed by the children.

#### 4.4 RANGE OF GENRES

The sample picked was predominantly made up of novels with no plays and only one poetry book. This means only 5% of the collection is made of poetry books. Two of the French books were plays and a few others in the intermediate books section. The representation of different genres is therefore poor as plays and poems are very few. As for representation in terms of different categories of stories for children, the modern realistic fiction had 75%; folktales 15% and fantasy 10% while science fiction had

none. This representation indicates an imbalance in distribution of different types of story-books. There were some books of the science fiction type but none in the sample picked.

A good children's collection should reflect all these types and genres so as to give children a good introduction to the diversity of children's materials.

#### 5.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This study was done in two public libraries both within an urban setting. The analysis of recreational books read by children however has in mind children in both rural and urban areas, this is because in spite of the disparities between the two areas, children are children wherever they are born and have the same needs as they grow up. Children are not different creatures to be treated differently and relevance should be given to their needs with their differences in mind.

For provision of information by libraries to be complete, children's services must be included and be well stocked. Resources are limited but children should always get priority so as to give them a chance of becoming readers and inculcate a reading habit early in their lives. Mrs. X, who is processing the Asian ethnographic genre, has some children whom she called, X, Y and Z. Her story is a good illustration of the keder situation in as far as children and literature are concerned.

X is a child who lives in a village and like other children in the village does not go to school. They learn

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This study was done in two public libraries both within an urban setting. The analysis of recreational books read by children however has in mind children in both rural and urban areas. This is because in spite of the disparities between the two areas, children are children wherever they are born and have the same needs as they grow up. Children's recreational literature and its availability and relevance should therefore be considered with these differences in mind.

For provision of information by libraries to be complete, children's services must be included and be well stocked. Resources are limited but children should always get priority so as to give them a chance of becoming readers and inculcate a reading habit early in their life. Anuar (1985) assessing the Asian situation gave a story of three children whom she called, X, Y and Z. Her story is a good illustration of the Kenyan situation in as far as children and literature are concerned.

X is a child who lives in a village and like other children in the village does not go to school. They lead a

proper traditional life and learn the skills of their fathers besides farming. Y lives in a small rural town, the father is a driver and all his children are on and off school for various reasons. Y drops out of school after completing his primary education and is employed as a messenger in the same company where his father works. Distributing letters to different houses is part of Y's job and, often, reading the addresses correctly is not possible due to his limited education. He wishes to read and learn more so as to face these challenges but there is no library in the town and books are scarce and expensive to buy. He only manages to browse through some of the magazines a street vendor sells in the town or the simple newspapers the father occasionally buys.

Z is a girl living in a large city with a father who is a lawyer and a mother who is a teacher. She has many books; both informational and recreational at home and their school library is well stocked. The mother takes her to the public library every Saturday and since the parents read and exchange a lot of ideas through talking, she too does the same.

Our Kenyan situation is similar with slight variations. Children similar to X are few but exist in some parts of Kenya including Nairobi. This is in spite of the governments' encouragement and provision of education for all. Those of Y's category are many as most rural towns have no library facilities. Only provisional centres and a few other towns have branch libraries of K.N.L.S. network.

Majority of those who go beyond primary school, unlike Y, do not use libraries since most secondary schools have no libraries. The few who proceed on get the chance of using on get the chance of using libraries in institutions of higher learning.

Children of Z's type, in all aspects, are quite few. Most children in Nairobi have parents who are professionals with good jobs. In rural areas, Y's type of children are quite common while those of X's type are few. A number of children in urban areas attend schools with well-stocked libraries with both recreational and informational books. Some children have books bought for reading at home. The idea of parents reading as examples and using libraries needs more research to establish whether they really set the proper examples to their children who are likely to copy them or not.

The researcher feels that if all children in Nairobi were using public libraries the way they should, the children sections would have been expanded by now. The number of users in the two libraries should be higher than they are now if proper provision is ensured. Many factors could be contributing to their being used to the maximum by all the children. With few recreational books, children read the interesting and relevant ones then stop going to the library. Those in rural areas willing to read travel long distances to urban areas and can rarely afford to spare time and money for this. Since only a few are willing to sacrifice that much, the users are also few. Libraries

for children are therefore not being used to the maximum.

## 5.2 SUMMARY

The study aimed at establishing the number of recreational books available in children's sections of our public libraries. This was then to be compared with the number of readers meant to read them. The methods of selection and frequency of acquisitions and replacements of what gets lost or torn determine the availability aspect. Gifts are also part of the collection if acceptable and relevant to the children's needs and interests. The ultimate aim therefore was to analyse the relevance of the books that make up the children's collection. We cannot have foreign books only and call our collections complete. This is because children are born in different countries, with different cultures and environment. They therefore need books, at this age, which relate closely to what they see, hear and do besides whatever else they get from outside their country.

The library staff serving children's sections should therefore endeavour to not only know the needs, interests and abilities of their readers but also to provide materials that the children enjoy reading. The recreational books provided should have some emphasis on our culture to begin with before those other universally acceptable ideas are brought in. Even when they are introduced, they should not dominate as they can easily alienate our children.

### 5.2.1 Selection

Both libraries were found to be heavily relying on donations due to lack of money. Selection is done very rarely and purchasing of books selected takes a long time while some are never bought. In K.N.L.S., the children's Librarian was filling acquisition forms for some recreational books, most of which she did not know when they would be bought. Selection at Macmillan is done by either the children's Librarian, the administrators or any other member of staff. This is not right as it is not possible for all these people to be thoroughly aware of what children need. The children's librarian should perform the duty of selection in a better way always unless when absent.

The wear and tear rate is quite high and some books are even stolen or taken away by users who never return them. This leaves gaps which are difficult to fill within the collection. The replacement procedure for those who either lose the books or damage them and are never caught takes too long. Sometimes they are never replaced due to bureaucratic procedures where the money once receipted is taken to accounts and hardly leaves that office to buy books as replacements. The few parents who bring books already bought to replace lost ones help the children's sections much more.

A library is a living organism that should grow in a healthy manner but this does not seem to be the case since donations cannot always keep our libraries alive. Weeding

should be done regularly but this is not so with our children's sections. Requests of users are hardly satisfied and with time they usually give up. Donations should not all be distributed to the libraries before checking on their relevance. There is a need for our children's librarians to select what is relevant for their users before the processing staff re-catalogue the relevant books. The rest should be discarded since there is no need of having shelves full of books that are hardly read by the children because of their either being too difficult or irrelevant.

### 5.2.2 Availability

The available books in both Macmillan and K.N.L.S. are inadequate in quantity. The ratios of 3:2 and 4:3, which reflect the number of books to that of users, are a clear indication of this inadequacy. It means that if all registered and unregistered users came to the library at once, they all would not get more than one book. If all children in Nairobi went to these public libraries at one given time, the ratios indicate that they all would not be able to get each one book. This is because the figure of users the researcher dealt with is less than half the population of children in Nairobi meant to use the library. Hence if all public libraries in Kenya had their children's collections distributed amongst all children in Kenya, they would not even get half a book for every child. The researcher has in mind children of 5-14 years versus

recreational books available in Kenya.

The availability ratios are far below the required standards since UNESCO advocates that every child should have three books in the public library. This should be where children constitute 25-30% of the total population yet in Kenya, children make up roughly 50% of the total population. The available books are therefore too few to help children develop a good reading habit or even appreciate libraries as great sources of information as they grow up.

The fact that selection and acquisition is almost at a standstill in both libraries means that the children's changing needs are not satisfied. It also implies that the ratios are going down every time a book is either lost or torn beyond repair. Readers' population is also growing on daily basis as children are born. The K.N.L.S. had a bulk lending service for schools whereby interested schools borrowed many books every term at a small deposit fee. These were then returned and others taken the following term. This has ceased due to unavailability of books in the sections and giving out the few that are there might mean leaving an empty library. This programme was for both recreational and informational books.

The K.N.L.S. (Nairobi area) has a mobile service which takes books to rural areas that have no library within reach. This mobile service has no facilities for children except where they particularly visit schools and carry recreational books and informational books for the children

within the school only. The rest are ignored yet the likes of X and Y in the introduction of this chapter could be served this way.

Some kind of user education and guidance is also necessary for children when they come to the library as beginners. This was lacking in both libraries since children just register or walk in and start reading. The lack of this necessary advice and guidance on how important books are, how they should be handled and the effects of mishandling the books has led to the current situation in the libraries. The children write in the books, cut off nice pictures for their personal use, pull off pages thus leaving the books incomplete and others unreadable due to the writings on top of the print and smudges of ink. Such guidance may help in reducing these activities and hence give books a longer life span. Like in homes or schools, children need guidance from the adults and in this case, the children's librarians have a duty to train them how to use libraries, how to take care of the materials and for what reasons. To do this well, the staff should be friendly to the children, fluent in communication and the library should also be welcoming. The K.N.L.S. children's section has a welcoming atmosphere and is different from the adult section but no user education is provided. Macmillan has a children's section that is similar to the adult section with shelf size difference only.

Children's librarians and the entire staff in the section should be trained to enable them handle the

children more confidently. None in the two libraries has any professional training in children's literature and librarianship of these special sections.

The numbers of children registering and making use of the libraries is going down. Research should be done to help establish reasons for this. This researcher feels the condition of the books available could be one likely cause.

An active reader is likely to have nothing to read after a short period of library use if the collection remains static. For children to love and enjoy reading, our public libraries should provide more books and consider their relevance to our children. Some of the books in the children's sections of the two libraries were too large and complicated for children, even the older ones, to read. Such books, the researcher concludes should be taken to the adult sections where they will be made use of by the capable users. They are rarely read yet each book in the library according to Ranganathan should have a reader. The fast readers of the children's sections can be guided by the children's librarian to go to the adult section but it is not likely for adults to come looking for books at the junior section.

### 5.2.3 Relevance

Picture books are the starting point for most young readers. Unfortunately for the Kenyan child, our public libraries have imported picture books thus denying them a start with what they know, see or hear around them. Of the

ten books for younger readers in the sample, only two which is 20% had some African touch. These were Kimenye's Sarah and the Boy and Fadiga's Komou the Monkey both of which had teachings on honesty, kindness as compared to cruelty and lies. The virtues are rewarded while the vices are punished. The others though imported are of two categories since some are relevant while others are not. Sickness knows no barriers and the experiences sick children go through are similar whether in Kenya or elsewhere. The way doctors handle sick children especially in urban areas are similar to what Topsy and Tim go through in Topsy and Tim go to the Doctor. A rural child however has different experiences as not all have scarfs and shoes that they wear as they walk to the private doctor's clinic. However such a story offers them parallel experiences of children in the urban areas. All children have birthdays even if they do not celebrate them and Cowley's Birthdays offer chances of what happens when they are celebrated for those who do it as well as those who do not.

Curiosity is also part of every child as they grow up. Ezra's Apt. 3 does not therefore depict Sam and his brother Ben as strange characters doing strange things. Readers do not necessarily have to be living in flats with apartments but the fact that they are curious and are likely to be attracted by music from a hut within the village or otherwise makes the story relevant. However, not all were relevant as some of the stories were not as helpful to our children. These include stories

like that of Jeanne-Marie who sits and imagines a bright wonderful future yet she does nothing. Such a story could easily encourage day dreaming and laziness which are not values worth teaching in today's world. Active and contributing citizens are what books should encourage children to be. The lion's search for Francoise depicts a deep attachment between himself and the boy. This intimate friendship might not be easily imagined and accepted by the children. In spite of this difficulty, the story has a good lesson on true friendship and how costly and risky it can be to look for a loved one.

Books meant for older readers are also a mixture of both imported and African oriented ones. Some are also quite relevant but others are too difficult for even the young adults who could be users of this section. Sandy's Safari, At the Seven Stars and Karamagi's Bulemu the Bastard could be more useful and read if put at the adult section as they are relevant for adults more than they are for children.

Most of the themes treated in the story books are relevant to our children's ways of life since none can be said to be totally out of their lives context. Those that are a bit complex are the ones treated in the books the researcher felt are meant for adults.

The characters are children in most of the books and this is what Kenyan children appreciate more as they read the story books. Where adults dominate, they cannot be as easily appreciated as those above. The majority of the

characters are however white children and this could have an effect on the children's outlook towards them. Reading only about white children can give our children complexes. It can also affect their image formation and make them assume books can never have black characters. Why not black characters even in the illustrations? This is possible and was realised in the few books written by Africans within the sample. The African-ness of the story books in both characterisation and illustrations can be more interesting and helpful to our children as they grow up. The books were well illustrated with good colour distribution which can easily attract children. This is so especially for the younger readers whose books are adequately illustrated. A book like Sarah and the Boy has black and white illustrations but they serve the purpose quite well. Those for older readers have fewer illustrations while others have none at all. Complicated books without illustrations could be put in the adult sections. Those the researcher felt could be read by adults like Bulemu the Bastard have no illustration.

The Kenyan publishing firms have good collections for children of both the beginners and older readers groups. The Kenya Literature Bureau has books like Kibera's Children's Home-made Toys, Children's Riddles, Children's Wisdom Stories which promote character traits of honesty, diligence, wisdom and cooperation. They also have colouring books and many other titles for young readers. For the older ones, books like, Never Forgive Father by Muruah

G.K., A Curse from God by Ngubia, Sky is the Limit by Mwaura, Born Twin, by Ikonne and many others could be of use and great benefit. Heinemann was Saisi's The Bang Syndicate and poems collected together as in Dickin's When Bullets Begin to Flower. Almost every other publishing firm has books for recreation for children besides those for classroom use. Phoenix and Jacarada Designs are almost fully devoted to writing recreational books for children. Longmans has a wide variety of children's books in their collection which caters for the youngest reader to the young adults.

The National Council for Early Childhood Education (NACECE), has an ideal library collection for young children between 5-8 years. The collection which is in the process of growing is well selected by the librarian and is meant to help growing children appreciate reading as a habit that is useful in life. They consider language as a key facet which is encouraged as part of rearing a child and reading for the children by parents develops it as well. The need for books is high since the population of children in Nairobi of between 3-7 years according to a 1991-92 City Commission Report are 35,473. Those of between 8-14 years might be the same and what our public libraries have cannot be anything adequate.

The style and language in the story books was acceptable. The books for younger readers had simple, well chosen words. Those of the older readers had words of their standard. However one lacking, yet necessary, aspect was

that of explanatory notes. These are necessary because not all children have equal capabilities and younger children could also enjoy a story meant for older readers if such notes are provided. The physical state of most books was not encouraging. Half of the collection especially the picture books and simple stories for young readers were torn. This being their first contact with books, the torn and incomplete books can discourage them from reading.

In conclusion, the researcher has the feeling that children's sections of the two public libraries have imported story books in large quantities yet our local publishers have a wide variety of recreational books which were not among those in the collection in as large numbers as the imported ones. The loss, wear and tear of the books is higher than the rate of replacing and acquisition and hence the collection lessens instead of increasing as time goes by.

Most of the books for older readers are old and though intact physically are rarely read by the children due to their being irrelevant and above their age. The way books are repaired is not very promising since it is done by the staff in both libraries. They use binding tape or cello tape which does not take long before falling off and children can easily peel it off.

Selection of children's books is taken for granted yet it matters a lot if children have to develop a good reading habit. The researcher, therefore, after considering the number of books available for what number of children and

how relevant they are, concluded that, not all imported books are irrelevant since some of them are quite relevant to our Kenyan way of life. Most of them are well illustrated and have attractive colours that could encourage children to read. All the same we need more books written in Kenya and Africa by Africans as these books will offer children a strong base from which to start reading.

If our children grow up in the hands of trained house helpers where available and possible, in the hands of trained teachers and trained doctors, they also need trained librarians. The staff in the two libraries seemed, and the researcher was convinced, devoted to serving children in the best way but training specifically in children's librarianship would help more.

And finally do you remember what it is like to be a child? It is something different. An anonymous poet says It is to believe in freedom. It is to believe in love. It is to believe in peace. It is to believe in unity and hope. The hope of turning pumpkins into coaches; clay into limousines and fibre into aircraft and nothing into anything. For each child every dawn is a fairly tale of a happy tomorrow. You can fulfil these dreams and secure their future by saying with us; **"we believe in children, their fairy tales, hopes and aspirations"**.

Recreational books for children if well selected and adequately provided can help greatly in fulfilling these dreams. With this belief, we all will strive to provide children with recreational books especially in public

libraries where the majority of our children have access to.

### 5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.

In view of the findings, the researcher has the following recommendations to make;

- The children's librarians should be trained in children's librarianship, management and child psychology. Their assistants should have basic library training and have a liking for working with children. This will ensure proper selection, proper management of the sections and easy and good relationship between the children and staff.
- User education must be provided to all new users and gradually continue until the children are conversant with the section and all the materials. The staff should also market and publicize their services for children in all ways to ensure full exploitation by all children.
- Parents and other well wishers should be encouraged to donate books not needed by their children any more for use by others in public libraries.
- Donations should be screened and assessed by the children's librarians before they are processed for use by the children. This will ensure their relevance to our children's needs and interests without alienating them or promoting negative

- conducted values. children's recreational provision
- publ- 11 More money should be provided for children's  
 libr- libraries by the government. The children's  
 libr- librarians should also solicit for funds from  
 limit. charitable organizations and non-governmental  
 inter- organizations. The money can purchase books so as  
 to improve on availability. books was collected
- Nair- 1. A binding section should be stored in each  
 there dis- library to ensure immediate repair of torn books  
 before their condition worsens due to more use.
- 2. An exchange programme of children's recreational  
 books between African countries would also be  
 provider helpful as each title published in Kenya would  
 bring in other titles in exchange. Children's  
 libr- librarians could liaise with publishers to have  
 this done. Marketing of children's recreational  
 books should be more rigorous than it is  
 currently.
- 3. There is a serious need to create awareness  
 through the mass media so that all Kenyans know  
 the usefulness and importance of children's  
 libraries.

#### 5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research analysed only books as sources of recreation for children in public libraries. Other sources like non-book media, story hours and drama do exist and research on their availability and relevance can be



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Yes

No

3. If yes, what criteria do you use to choose what is relevant for your section?

4. Do children give requests of recreational books they wish to have included in their collection?

Yes

No

5. If yes, how do they present their requests?

i. Verbally

ii. In writing

iii. Other (Specify)

## APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARIANS IN  
RELATION TO SELECTION

1. Do you have a collection development policy for the children's section?
  - Yes
  - No
2. Who selects recreational books for the children's section?
  - i. Children's librarian
  - ii. Other staff in <sup>the</sup> section
  - iii. Children
  - iv. Other (specify)
3. How often do you buy recreational books for the children's sections?
  - i. Once a year
  - ii. Once in two years
  - iii. Once in five years
  - iv. Other (indicate)
4. Do you receive gifts and donations in form of children's recreational books?
  - Yes
  - No
5. If yes, what criteria do you use to choose what is relevant for your section?
  - Discard
  - Other (specify)
6. Do children give requests of recreational <sup>books</sup> they wish to have included in their collection?
  - Yes
  - No
7. If yes, how do they present their requests?
  - i. Verbally
  - ii. In writing
  - iii. Other (specify)





**Table A.1.**  
Ten Thousand Random Numbers

	00-04	05-09	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49
00	54463	22662	65905	70639	79365	67382	29085	69831	47058	08186
01	15389	85205	18850	39226	42249	90669	96325	23248	60933	26927
02	85941	40756	82414	02015	13858	78030	16269	65978	01385	15345
03	61149	69440	11268	88218	58925	03638	52862	62733	33451	77455
04	05219	81619	81619	10651	67079	92511	59888	72095	83463	75577
05	41417	98326	87719	92294	46614	50948	64886	20002	97365	30976
06	28357	94070	20652	35774	16249	75019	21145	15217	47286	76305
07	17783	00015	10806	83091	91530	36466	39981	62481	49177	75779
08	40950	84820	29881	85966	62800	70326	84740	62660	77379	90279
09	82995	64157	66164	41180	10089	41757	78258	96488	88629	37231
10	96754	17676	55659	44105	47361	34833	86679	23930	53249	27083
11	34357	88040	53364	71726	45690	66334	60332	22554	90600	71113
12	06318	37403	49927	57715	50423	67372	63116	48888	21505	80182
13	62111	52820	07243	79931	89292	84767	85693	73947	22278	11551
14	47534	09243	67879	00544	23410	12740	02540	54440	32949	13491
15	98614	75993	84460	62846	59844	14922	49730	73443	48167	31770
16	24856	03648	44898	09351	98795	18644	39765	71058	90368	41104
17	96887	12479	80621	66223	86085	78285	02432	53342	42846	94771
18	90801	21472	42815	77408	37390	76766	52615	32141	30268	18106
19	55165	77312	83666	36028	28420	70219	81369	41943	47366	41067
20	75884	12952	84318	95108	72305	64620	91318	89872	45375	85436
21	16777	37116	58550	42958	21460	43910	01175	87894	81378	10620
22	46230	43877	80207	88877	89380	32992	91380	03164	98656	59337
23	42902	66892	46134	01432	94710	23474	20523	60137	60609	13119
24	81007	00333	39693	28039	10154	95425	39220	19774	31782	49037
25	68089	01122	51111	72373	06902	74373	96199	97017	41273	21546
26	20411	67081	89950	16944	93054	87687	96693	87236	77054	33848
27	58212	13160	06468	15718	82627	76999	05999	58680	96739	63700
28	70577	42866	24969	61210	76046	67699	42054	12696	93758	03283
29	94522	74358	71659	62038	79643	79169	44741	05437	39038	13163
30	42626	86819	85651	88678	17401	03252	99547	32404	17918	62880
31	16051	33763	57194	16752	54450	19031	58580	47629	54132	60631
32	08244	27647	33851	44705	94211	46716	11738	55784	95374	72655
33	59497	04392	09419	89964	51211	04894	72882	17805	21896	83864
34	97155	13428	40293	09985	58434	01412	69124	82171	59058	82859
35	98409	66162	95763	47420	20792	61527	20441	39435	11859	41567
36	45476	84882	65109	96597	25930	66790	65706	61203	53634	22557
37	89300	69700	50741	30329	11658	23166	05400	66669	48708	03887
38	50051	95137	91631	66315	91428	12275	24816	68091	71710	33258
39	31753	85178	31310	89642	98364	02306	24617	09609	83942	22716
40	79152	53829	77250	20190	56535	18760	69942	77448	33278	48805
41	44560	38750	83635	56540	64900	42912	13953	79149	18710	68618
42	68328	83378	63369	71381	39564	05615	42451	64559	97501	65747
43	46939	38689	58625	08342	30459	85863	20781	09284	26333	91777
44	83544	86141	15707	96256	23068	13782	08467	89469	93842	55349
45	91621	00881	04900	51224	46177	55309	17852	27491	89415	23466
46	91896	67126	04151	03795	59077	11848	12630	98375	53068	60142
47	55751	62515	22108	80830	02263	29303	37204	96926	30506	09808
48	85156	87689	95493	88842	00664	55017	55539	17771	69448	87530
49	07521	56898	12236	60277	39102	62315	12239	07105	11844	01117

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THEME		CHARACTERISATION		LANGUAGE/STYLE		PLOT		PHYSICAL FORM		COMMENTS
i.	How strong and identifiable is the central theme? 4	i.	Are the characters credible? 4	i.	Is the language used simple enough for the intended readers? 4	i.	Is the beginning of the story interesting enough to encourage further reading? 5	i.	Does the book have all the pages? 2	
ii.	How well is the theme developed? 6	ii.	How well are they developed? 4	ii.	Are illustrations appropriately provided? 5	ii.	Are episodes presented in a logical and simple enough sequence? 5	ii.	Is the book intact from cover to cover? 2	
iii.	How relevant is the theme to today's reader? 6	iii.	Are their roles appropriate in our society? 4	iii.	Are there explanatory notes for difficult words e.g. glossary etc. 4	iii.	Is interest sustained by use of fast moving actions? 5	iii.	Are covers attractive for readers meant to read the book? 2	
iv.	How appropriate is the setting? 3	iv.	Do they deliver the message and how do they relate with the theme? 5	iv.	Are there other stylistic features used to enhance interest and understanding like -imagery, onomatopoeia personification etc.? 6	iv.	Is suspense created and sustained throughout the story? 5	iv.	Is print size appropriate and legible in all pages throughout the books? 2	
v.	What values are being promoted? 6	v.	Can readers identify with the characters? 4					v.	Is the entire size of the book too small or too large for the intended readers? 2	
		vi.	Are characters generally positive or negative? 4							

## APPENDIX IV:

Data Collection Form

CATEGORY: \_\_\_\_\_ LIBRARY: \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHOR: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

CHARACT- ISATION	LANGUAGE/ STYLE	PLOT	PHYSICAL FORM	COMMENTS