Chapter 24
Relevance of Mixed Methods Research in Developing a Framework for Digitising Records and Archives

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the relevance of mixed methods research in developing a framework for digitising records and archives. Mixed methods research has never been extensively used to find solution to the problems experienced in digitising records and archives. Digitisation, in general, has become a diverse area whose problems cannot be solved with a mono research methodology. The application of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in finding solutions in the digitisation of records and archives would help records and archives professionals to have a deeper understanding of the difficulties associated with digitising records and archives, especially as the field is facing some rebirth due to advancement in technology. Digitisation of records and archives is revolving and gaining momentum due to the shifts of paradigms in techniques of record-keeping.

INTRODUCTION

The application of mixed methods research in developing a framework for digitising records and archives is relatively a new concept that can be used by records and archives professionals. The term mixed methods refers to "an emergent methodology of research that advances the systematic integration of or mixing of quantitative and qualitative data within a single investigation" (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013, p. 1). This chapter intends to address the relevance of mixed methods research in developing a framework for digitising records and archives. This methodology has never been extensively used to find solutions to the problems experienced in digitising records and archives. "The premise of this methodology is that such integration permits a more complete and synergistic utilisation of data than do separate quantitative

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and qualitative data collection and analysis" (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013, p. 1). Digitisation, in general has become a diverse area whose problems cannot be solved with a mono research methodology. The application of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in developing a framework for the digitisation of records and archives would help professionals to have diverse research techniques especially as technology is taking centre stage in the recordkeeping, storage and cloud computing. Digitisation of records and archives is revolving and gaining momentum as technology is changing techniques in record-keeping.

Mixed methods research is relatively a new methodology and some researchers have called it to be at an adolescence stage. Mixed methods research methodology as noticed by Creswell (2009) have five domains, namely, philosophical and theoretical issues, techniques of mixed methods, nature of mixed methods, adoption and use of mixed methods and politicization of mixed methods. The chapter pursues the application of mixed methods research in developing a framework for digitising records and archives. The purpose of this chapter is to bring at fore the use of mixed methods research in developing a framework for the digitisation of records and archives. In this chapter, a mixed methods methodology is being pursued to develop a framework to digitise records and archives. It is within this context that mixed methods research has never been extensively used to develop a framework for digitising records and archives. Therefore, this chapter intends to give guidelines on how mixed methods research can be used in developing a framework for digitising records and archives. The objectives of this chapter are to:

- Provide the discourses in mixed method research
- Illustrate the philosophical issues underlying mixed methods research
- Provide a framework for digitising records and archives
- Advocate for the use of mixed methods research in records and archives.

The chapter focuses on the birth of mixed methods research, its philosophical assumptions, the rationale for application and some controversies in using mixed methods research to find solutions in digitising records and archives.

THE BIRTH OF THE MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

After a period in the paradigmatic wilderness, mixed methods research has regained not just acceptability, but popularity in greater understanding or validation of results (Bazeley, 2002; Ngulube, 2019, 2020). Ngulube (2019, 2020) outlines that the use of multimethods can be traced to the notion of multitrait-multimethod matrix of psychological traits espoused by Campbell and Fiske 1959. According to Collins et al., (2006), Creswell (2015), Creswell and Plano Clark, (2018), Creswell et al., (2003), Greene et al., (1989), Johnson et al., (2007) Ngulube (2019, 2020), the intellectual roots of the mixed method research are generally traced to the early work of Campbell and Fiske (1959) on mixing methods. Greene et al., (2005) herald a key point in the time-line with their seminal typology of mixed methods use. Building on these foundations, mixed methods research has evolved to the point where it is a separate methodological orientation with its own worldview, vocabulary, and techniques (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2003; Ngulube 2019, 2020; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Creswell and Plano Clark (2018) stress that the 1950s to 1980s were considered the formative years of mixed methods research.

The term mixed methods has also come to be used to refer to the use of two or more methods in a research project yielding both quantitative and qualitative data (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Creswell

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