**Sankofa tree systematic literature review method**

The Sankofa tree method of doing systematic literature reviews is simple yet very powerful. Metaphorically, the tree represents history, and by going back to history in a review, we are doing a Sankofa. The aim is to include all literature that answers the review question from old to new. Roots of trees represent old while smaller branches or twigs represent the new. The trunk represents what is currently agreed as the dominant position or answer while branches represent the different views. If literature reviews are to provide us with the best possible answer, then we should not limit them to 10 or so years, but we should examine all what is there, including orature and grey literature. This reduces publication and selection bias. Orature is included, making this method decolonising. The Sankofa tree systematic literature review template provided below is very useful to guide researchers while they review. It is a record of what was included in the literature review. The template should be attached to review publications, including reports and articles in journals. In the boxes, put the origin/author, source, year if available and main points that answer the review question as shown in the example.

Sankofa tree systematic literature review template 1

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| **Root literature** | **Stump literature** | **Trunk literature** | **Branches literature** | **Twigs literature** |
| *This is orature or oral sources of the subject or question (philosophy, proverbs, stories, metaphors etc).* | *This is historical literature or orature on the subject or question (old theories, books, articles etc)* | *This is current agreed literature on the subject or question (policies, agreements, articles etc)* | *These are divergent literatures on the subject (different views, propositions, theories, disciplines etc)* | *This is emerging literature on the subject (social media, new publications, new discoveries)* |
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Sankofa tree systematic literature review template 2

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| **Root literature**  *This is orature or oral sources of the subject or question (philosophy, proverbs, stories, metaphors etc).* |  |
| **Stump literature**  *This is historical literature or orature on the subject or question (old theories, books, articles etc)* |  |
| **Trunk literature**  *This is current agreed literature on the subject or question (policies, agreements, articles etc)* |  |
| **Branches literature**  *These are divergent literatures on the subject (different views, propositions, theories, disciplines etc)* |  |
| **Twigs literature**  *This is emerging literature on the subject (social media, new publications, new discoveries)* |  |