

Training Needs and Management of National and Institutional Archives and Records for National Development

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Abstract

This study critically examined the role and impact of training on records and archives managers for effective management of national and institutional records and archives for national development. It highlighted and defined some basic concepts such as training, records, archives, national archives, institutional archives. The needs for training of managers of national and institutional records and archives were examined and their relevance for national development x-rayed. Sources of archival records and the context in which there are organized were indicated. The paper further appraised the processing of organizing archival materials to include packing, labeling, shelvings which are considered crucial in the management of archives and records. It is observed that management of archival materials differ from that of library materials because their organization followed some basic principles such as provenance, sanctity of original order, arrangement determines description and description moves from general to specific. Some challenges relating to institutional and national archives identified. The paper concluded by recommending that: adequate funds, training, opportunities, creation of an ideal classification schemes and provisions of conducive working condition for Archives and records managers to operate successfully have become essential.

Keywords: Training, records, archives, national archives, institutional archives.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is not a thing of doubt in this information oriented age to suggest that records and archives form an essential and significant aspect of a nation's information resources. It should therefore be imperative that programmes for their management and use be integral part of the national information system. Records are the basic tool of any administration. Rhoads (1983) observed that records are the means by which many operational processes and functions are performed. They include all recorded information materials created or received by an organization in the course of performing its business. Records often take the form of conventional documents, or paper, but they may also be in microform, or on machin-readable media such as computer tapes or disk, and they include photographs, sound recordings, motions pictures and all other media on which information may be recorded or conveyed in the process of performing and organization's functions. Noting the relevance of records in the life of mankind, Records Management Unit of Public Works and Services, a department of Northwest Territories (2002) opined that records are necessary because they contain all the information vital to the daily operation of a business, organization, government, associations, institutions and even persons. They serve as a tool for references and identification.

Archives refer to non-current records that have been formally appraised and found to have continuing or permanent values as evidence, or for research purposes (Rhodes, 1983). Madumere and Ezeani (2012) see archives as collections of historical methods as well as the place in which they are kept. They are mainly primary documents of an institution that accumulate in the course of running the institution or organization.

Balardo and Balardo (1992) defined archives as "the document created or received and accumulated by a person or organization in the course of the conduct of affairs and preserved because of their continued value". Therefore, Archives can be viewed as a collection of records and documents in different formats which are organized and managed by professionals because of their importance to their parent institution or organization. They consist of records that have been selected for permanent preservation because of their value.

The focus of this study is institutional and national archives, importance, training and management of records and archives to national development challenges and way forward.

2. National and Institutional Archives

The national archives often referred to as the nations "information repository", cultural heritage and knowledge treasurer, all are attempts to showcase the rich values that are in National archives of Nigeria. In this context, national archives can be defined as the repositories for the primary and historical records or documents of a

nation where these archives exist. Zaid and Abioye (2009) revealed that the need to preserve cultural heritage materials in Nigeria was organized by archivists and museum curators as the early institution such as libraries archives and museums established in the early 1950's. Abioye (2009) remarked that the National archives of Nigeria came into existence in 1954 as the Nigerian Record Office due to the uniting effort of the Kenneth Onwuka Dike who showed much concern about the state of public records in Nigeria. Abioye (2009) further noted that the National Archives of Nigeria has branch offices in Enugu, Kaduna, Uyo in Akwa Ibom State and other locations in Nigeria. The National archives is domiciled in the information and communication ministry, and it is entrusted with the responsibility of preserving and as well promoting the cultural heritage in Nigeria.

2.1 Institutional Archives

Institutional archives are those libraries that are established in the institution of higher learning, comprising those libraries statutorily established for the universities whose primary mandate is to cater for the teaching, learning, research and general administration needs of the parent organization establishing them. The other institutional libraries include libraries established for the polytechnics, Colleges of Education, and Research Institutes. They are referred to as college libraries. Institutional libraries either universities or colleges have archival units house special collections in a special collections division where historical records of the institutions are stored. Therefore institution libraries can be defined as collections of historical records of values of and institution as well as the document created or received and accumulated by the university or college of education or similar institution in the Couse of the conduct of affairs and preserved because of their continued value. The archives of university are repositories for the primary historical documents of the university where they exist.

3. Training and management of archives

Training for effective job performance is essential and is required for carrying out assigned tasks in the organization or institution. Madumere and Ezeani (2014) in sigh (2001) opines that document handling and it's care should be part and parcel of training programme of each and every archive and librarians should be taught all the core skills and the latest methods involved in processing archival materials. This implies that the librarians in the university libraries as repository staff need professional training in order to gain the knowledge, skills and the competencies in handling of materials and documents in archives. Training therefore, should be seen as inevitable tool for staff development in different field in the scheme of things especially universities and national archives. In context, Ajidahu (2009) maintained that training is an integral part of vocation of career development. The absence of training can result to failure of any institution or organization. It determines the strength and success of an institution like the universities, college of education and the polytechnics where the man power development of a nation lies or depends.

According to Onuoha cited in Azino (2010) training is the teaching of lover level or technical employee on how to perform in their present job. By this definition, training is limited to lover level technical employs on best ways to do the function of given to them by their employers. Chanted as cited in Ajidahun(2002) believes that training is a short term process which requires the utilization of a systematic as well as organized procedures by which non-managerial personnel learn technical knowledge and skill for a definite process.

The librarians need to develop more skill in order to become competent in archival science as this will improve the management of archives. Also, training will help librarians to be more resourceful and creative. Hodge (2010) states, that training is important in the development of and retention of good employees and that good training routine is to be established to absorb everyone smoothly.

Management of archival records or resources could be defined as the act or process of enquiring, budgeting, organizing, arranging, directing, storing, coordinating archival documents or records for proper dissemination and use by cleinteles. Miller and Osinki (2002) note that for effective management of archival records (documents) in the universities libraries there is need to access the content of the archival collection and what constitute the relevant and immediate need. The librarians in the university libraries need to acquire the necessary and required skill and competencies in the archival science if not there will be existence of knowledge and skills – gab between the required and existing knowledge and skills. Cook (1981) as cited in Madumere and Ezeani (2014) enumerated those areas librarians need to train in archival science to include acquisition, custody, care of the central historical archives, the arrangement and description of theseresource, provision of access to search room service, repairs and restoration, reprographic series, record, management and disposal.

Azino (2010) highlighted the various forms of training open to librarians to effectively organize and manage archival records to involve on the job training methods and of the job simulation. On the job training take place in the normal working situation, the trainees use the actual tools, equipment, documents or materials which there are supposed to use when they are fully trained. This type of training is generally regarded as the most effective for a vocational work. It is also simplest, cheapest and most acceptable method of training and professional development. On the other hand, Taylor (2010) argues that on the job training is usually informal and as a result of that the trainer does not concentrate on the training as much as required and may not likely

have a well-articulated picture of the trainees need to learn. This implies that there are no clear objective set and goals to release at the end of the training exercise. This type of on-the job training are job rotations, apprenticeship, special, assignment, internship and coaching.

Off-the job training relate to inculcation of concept and ideas. It takes place out on-the- job situation, that is outside work stations, meaning that the trainee is permitted to go out and concentrate on the training properly. Azino (2010) observed that off-the-top training requires external training than the one acquired through on-the-job process. This is geared towards expanding knowledge and experience of the trainees outside what is learnt within the job environment. Other methods of training identified by Taylor (2010:45) include: programme institution (PI), computer-assisted instruction (CAI), Audiovisual techniques, Simultaneous, Business games.

Bellardo and Bellardo (1992:28) cited in Madumere and Ezeani (2014:43-55) maintained that the effective management of archival records in universities libraries require appraisal of the record, because of some of these records or documents have ending values; they can be reference administrative, historical and research values. The acquisition of archival records is carried out after appraisal of records. Therefore, appraisal of records for permanent reservation precedes acquisition but often times they synchronize. The basic glossary of archivist, menu script, curators and record managers (1974:415) cited in Madumere and Ezeani (2014:43-58) defines acquisition as process of identifying and acquiring by donation or purchase, historical materials from such outside the archival institution. Hence, acquisition can be defined as the means of examining and procuring the records with continued values in archives of university libraries for researchers use. There are three common ways of acquiring archival documents, records and manuscripts. There are; through legal deposit, gift and purchase. IFLANET (2010:45) defines a legal deposit as “a statutory obligation which requires that any organization, commercial or public and any individual producing any type of documentation in multiple copies be obligate to deposit one or more copies with a recognized national institution” (P.2). it indicates that publishers both individuals and corporate bodies are mandated to send some copies of their published materials to a depository library. Omeku and Uguanyi (2009) describes a depository library as a library that has the legal right to collect documents issued in a country such as books, periodicals and other information materials in order to preserve the country’s intellectual output for posterity such as the national library of Nigeria . A legal deposit can be define as a legal procedure which allows the library that has the legal right to collect indigenous publication from the publishers Prytherech (1999) and Saka (2010). In archival context, legal deposit referees to the law that exist in an organization mandating that non-current records be preserved archives such records are now acquired in archives through legal deposits.

Archival records can also be acquired through gift/donations. Hornby (2000) and Paytherch (1995) define gift as what is given out or received without request while donation is acquired usually by asking for it. Archive records can be obtained through gift and donation especially if there is a gab that exists in records that are in series. The archivist who is a trained librarian in archive science or manuscript curator who is also a professional staff member within a manuscript repository responsible for any aspect of the selection, preservation or use of archival record can appeal; to the individual who hold such records to donate same to the archives or photocopy the records for the archives.

The organization of archives according to Verzona (2010) has existed for centuries. It is assert that a case file system was established in Rome around AD 1200, the registry system was developed in 15th century in Europe while the concept of provenance started in France in 1840. In 1880s, the principle or original order was established by Russian.

The first archival catalogue was to catalogue at item level. The online Encyclopedia of Archives public Records, Record Appraisal and Management (2010) reveal that there are two major advances in the organization of archival records. They are the Machine Readable Cataloguing (MARC) and the Encoded Archival Description (EAD). The MARC can be used by librarians working in the archives of university libraries to enter brief description of their collections into the National Bibliographic Utilities, hence the MARC has archival format. The EAD gives definition of common element that is found in finding aids and prescribes how they should orderly emerge. It is also flexible which implies that it can be applied in different archival settings.

The organization of archival records is crucial in the management of archives of the university libraries in order to bring archives under physical control. The process of packing, labeling and shelving of archives, records and manuscripts is intended to achieve physical and or administrative control and basic identification of the holdings. Jimerson (2002) describes organization or arrangements as a process of gaining physical and intellectual control over archives and manuscripts in accordance with archival principles. This means that organization of archival records is a process of ordering, grouping and describing archival materials in order to be accessible to researchers as guided by fundamental rules of arranging archives. It aims at protecting the integrity and the identity of the records so that all they will be accessible for clients.

There are basic principles to follow while organizing archival records. Mason (2010) opined that archival description consists of four principles. These principles connect directly to the arrangement of materials.

They include the principle of provenance, the sanctity of original order, arrangement determines description and description moves from general to specific. The archival records are organized in groups based on the principles of provenance and original order. Verzona (2010) and Mnjama (2002) affirm that the arrangement of archival records is different from that of library materials. The archival records organization is carried out according to the principle of provenance and original order while library organization follows predetermined order using library of Congress Classification Scheme or Dewey decimal classification.

There are different things produced by librarians in the archives in order to pass (convey) information across to researchers in archives. Mnjama (2002) believes that for effective management of archives, the librarians working in archives should understand the history of the organization that created the records in order to exploit the archives fully. Verzona (2010) listed some of the archives to include: continuation in the arrangement of items which appear first on paper and later physical inventing, description of record, writing the administrative history or bibliography note making of the descriptive guide. This reveals that organization of archives requires skilled personnel to carry out the function effectively.

4. Importance of Records and Archives Management in National Development

With the creation of National Archives of Nigeria, government demonstrated its willingness to preserve and promote its national heritage. As such, Nigeria's cultural heritage would not only be preserved but showcased to the whole world. The information contained in records and archives is as important to a nation as individual is to each person. The university libraries where records of various types and archives are domiciled provide the rich information resources in various format, in print, non-print and computerized format to lecturers, researchers, administrator for teaching, learning, research and general administration. In summary, the importance of records and archives in National development can be listed as follows:

- 1. Research Value of Archives and Record.** They serve as the collective institutional memory of the government and of its component parts. As such act as essential tool in behalf of government's past experience, including its successes and failures.
- 2. In their role as the institutional memory,** archives can also contribute significantly to economic and social development, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, because there are unique source of information on earlier developmental initiatives, and of demographic, economic and social information useful in planning and development on local, regional or national scale.
- 3. Archives and records also contain vital documentation of the identity, rights, privileges, entitlements and responsibilities of individuals and organizations.** Most of the research values of archives relate in greater or lesser degree, to the purposes for which the government created the records in the first place.
- 4. The value of Archives and Records in promoting Administrative Efficiency and Economy.** Any government of agency thereof will have a frequent need to refer to records it has created in the past and to verify past decisions and continuing obligation, to determine precedents, to conduct ongoing research operations and for host of other legal administrative, political and diplomatic reasons.
- 5. The Contribution of Archives to Economics and social Development.** Closely related to the role of the archives as the government's institutional memory, it is the potential contribution of the archives to national economic and social development.
- 6. Archives and Records as an information Source on past Programmers, Measures and Procedures.** Economic and social development may be viewed as a continuum of efforts by modern governments to create physical and social infrastructures that produce wealth and apply it or part of it to the social betterment of the society. If information is viewed realistically as a continuum of effort of the past informed decisions, then most new initiatives will be based in some level of degree on previous decisions. Even though the context in which certain new initiatives are undertaken may be quite different than for earlier one, a knowledge and understanding of previous effort is likely to have full account of the programs, measures and procedures that have been proposed attempted or implemented in the past, as well as data to support the reasons why they may have failed, been abandoned or successful. If this information is available in the national archives and used in current decision-making, governmental actions will be more likely to be soundly based and successfully implemented. There is less likelihood of unnecessary risk of failure and the resulting waste of scarce resources.
- 7. Archives and Records as a source of Demographic, Economic and Social Information for Planning and Development.** All governments, in the normal course of performing their basic functions, acquire substantial quantities of information on population characteristics; on the vital statistics (births and deaths), on the functioning of agriculture; industry and trade (both domestic and foreign); on social welfare programmes (including social security and pensions, assistance to the indigent, population control; Health and Medical Services and nutrition programmes); on literacy, education and training; and on social behavior (marriages and divorce); crime and other matters adjudicated by court of law.

8. The value of Archives in Documenting the Rights, Privileges and Responsibility of individuals and organizations, and of the state itself. In every nation the individual citizen obligations and responsibilities to the state, and the state, in turn, owes certain rights to, and confer certain privileges upon the citizens. A similar relationship prevails between the and a wide range of organization, institutions and corporate bodies.

9. The Value of Archives and Record as means of Developing the National Culture and identity. The archives and records of a nation, if properly organized, managed and supported, will come to embody a comprehensive account of the national experience. The archives and records will document the origins and migration of the people, the successful and failures of their leaders, and relationship with other leaders, the economic and social development of social society, wars and natural calamities, and relationship with other people and nation. The information they contain constitute a priceless national treasure which can be used for the betterment of the people in myriad ways.

Archives and records, if effectively exploited as educational and cultural resources, can be invaluable in the process of developing a sense of national identity, and in fostering a people's understanding itself and its relationship to the rest of the world.

4.1 Some of the challenges of institutional and National Archives to National Development

1. There is lack of standardization in the classification of records and archival documents
2. The need of manpower and training on record and archival science need to be look into.
3. There should be a clearly define government policy to regulate the management records and archives in our national development agenda.
4. The government need to established a legal framework to guarantee the independence of this institution to exist as an independent body as to have a sense of control and expansion of functions and services.
5. The advent of modern information and communication is another area of concern. Priority should be gives in area of finding, ICT training and purchase equipment to enable services perform be in line with the cement electronic system.

5. Summary and Conclusion

The role of institutional and national Archives for national development cannot be over emphasizing. Records and Archives is viewed as the nation's cultural heritage. There requires the commitment of government of all levels, organization, institution, agencies, individuals and other stakeholders to give the nation's priceless records and archives the recognition, attention they deserved. The universities, the government at all levels, other institutions of higher learning be encouraged to perform their roles towards the management of records and archives in order to generation who will come to need them for national development and transformation. The training of needs of librarians for the management of records and archives of our universities and other institutions of learning are crucial. The librarians need training in various aspects of records and archival science.

The challenges involved in training in the librarian university libraries for proper management of records and archives include inadequate training resources and funds, lack of sponsorship, limited resource personnel for the training programmes and administrative bottleneck.

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