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Perceptions of staff at the University of Dar es Salaam on establishing an archival repository

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Abstract

An archival repository preserves essential evidence of an institution and provides information that promotes its mission internally and in its extended community, among others. However, despite the significance of such a facility, the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) is yet to establish its own. The absence of this facility always contributes to damage and loss of archival materials. As such, this study sought to establish the perceptions of staff towards its establishment. Specifically, the study sought to examine the perceived importance of its establishment among university staff. The study adopted a descriptive research design which adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study used a structured and standardised self-administered questionnaire with open and close-ended questions to gather data from 66 respondents. Along this method, interviews were conducted with 3 key informants while observations were used to note some of the resources available. The study's quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 21 while content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. The key result has discovered the presence of archival collections in paper and electronic media, storage places and facilities. In addition, the study has found the presence of archival policy and some positive attitude towards its establishment. However, the study has found the presence of several barriers that include lack of staff training, lack of awareness among users of the presence and the importance of archival materials, and primitive methods of handling archival materials. In addition, the study reports that staff have inadequate archival collection management skills and expertise and that there is shortage of space. Based on these findings, the study concludes that UDSM has a favourable environment that supports the establishment of an archival repository. The study, therefore, recommends that UDSM should establish a formal archival repository and promulgate the existing university archival policy.

Introduction and background to the problem

An archival repository, which is a unit given the mandate to collect, arrange, describe and facilitate wide access to archival materials generated by one or more institutions is important as it facilitates the presence and accessibility of evidence in various formats. Besides that, such

a body supports the teaching and learning activities of faculty members, students, and those of other education stakeholders by fostering their access to information hence enhancing their understanding of concepts (Van Bussel, 2022). Therefore, it is imperative for the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) to have its own body of this kind. However, for any institution to do so, there are prerequisites or requirements that need to be in place. For instance, Purcell (2012) established that campuses or units need to collect, preserve, and provide access to institutional history and agree to establish an archival facility. In addition, the administrations of these institutions should support these initiatives with budget and other resources. Moreover, these developments are recommended to go along with the development of archival policy documents that should formally establish the facility and outline its place in the institution's administrative structure. Several countries in East Africa including Kenya have attempted to establish archival repositories to serve their user communities. Although Kenyan universities have no well-established archival policies, their establishment is yet a remarkable achievement (Erima, 2022). In such, the University of Dar es Salaam's ability to establish its own archival repository can be measured based on having in place a repository together with their associated policies.

The idea of archival repositories began to emerge when societies started to write and record information on various receptive materials. This followed the need for rulers and governments to operate efficiently and support administrative infrastructures; the realisation of the value of archival materials as a means of capturing events and recording rights; and the recognition of archival materials as cultural artefacts, an expression and reflection of nationhood (Millar, 2017; Williams, 2006).

The interest in archival materials is a very old one. For instance, in the fifth century, before the Christianity Era, Athenians in ancient Greece established Metroon, a temple next to the courthouse in Athens to preserve their archival materials. Besides, around the sixth century in Rome, Justinian, who was the emperor at that time, ordered the construction of public buildings to safely store archival materials to preserve public faith in them and perpetuate memory (Posner, 1972 as cited in William, 2006). Further, in the same century, Charles I, who was the king of Spain, established the first distinct European archival repository of the Simancas (MacNeil, 2000 as cited in William, 2006).

The establishment of archival repositories in different parts of the world was fuelled by the French revolution, which occurred around the 1790s. The event led to the establishment of the first modem archival repository in the world and provided the first legislative form of the concept of public access to an archival collection (Higgs, 1996 as cited in Ngulube, 2003). As a result, the French model has been adopted by other governments and institutions all over the world.

Some universities around the world have also recognized the need to establish their own archival repositories to support the management of their archival collections in all media. These include the Oxford and London University in UK, Harvard and Toronto University in North America, Delhi and Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) in Asia, Melbourne and Sydney University in Australia, and Columbia University in South America to name a few. Similarly, some African universities have realised and worked on this need. These include Nairobi and Kampala University in East Africa, the University of Ghana in West Africa, and the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. The Nairobi University, for instance, established its archival repository to assemble and safeguard an archival collection that carries any documents that carry evidence of its official activities since its inception. The repository

acquires archival materials through periodic transfers from units and donations from private individuals and institutions (University of Nairobi, 2021).

In Tanzania, the government, through the Ministry of Education (MoE), established the national archival repository in 1964 and subsequently enacted Act No. 33 of 1965. The repository was established to safeguard the archival collection of the nation. It collected records that were seen as significant for the preservation of national history, culture and administrative decisions. Later in the 1990s, the government embarked on the public service programme, in which archival collection management was identified as one of the areas that had affected public service delivery. Following this initiative, the government transferred the national repository from the Ministry of Education to the President's Office, Public Service Management (PO-PSM) in 1999. Evenually, the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD) was established, followed by the enactment of the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 in 2002 to give the department a new legal mandate of managing public records for their entire life cycle (Katundu, 2002).

According to the Records and Archives Management Act (RAMA) No. 3 of 2002, public institutions and offices are legally required to manage their records. For example, all records produced by ministries and public institutions like the UDSM are public records. Part III, Section 9 of the Act on the Responsibility for Public Records, stipulates that:

> *Heads of public offices shall be responsible for creating and maintaining adequate documentation of the functions and activities of their respective public offices through the establishment of good record-keeping practices* (RAMA, 2002 p.9).

Part IV, section 21 to 22 of the same Act on offences and penalties, states that:

> *Any person who removes any public record from public offices without proper authorization or who destroys any public record (and) who wilfully mutilates any archival material… commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five hundred thousand shillings or imprisonment for twelve months or both (RAMA, 2002, pp. 15-16).*

Based on these provisions of the Act, public institutions, including the UDSM are legally required to preserve and manage current, semi-current and non-current records. To do this, Moshi Co-Operative University (MoCU), for instance, has established an archival repository to identify, collect, preserve and provide access to a co-operative archival collection for historical and academic purposes (MoCU, 2021).

On its part, the UDSM has been generating a lot of information and records in diverse formats during its business transactions i.e. teaching, research and consultancy. Some of these records have archival value and need to be permanently preserved for future accessibility. In a seemingly realisation of this fact, the university has been implementing various measures to effectively manage the records. These include the establishment of a programme that targets the improvement of records management systems at the central and units' registries in 1999. Through the programme qualified professionals have been recruited to manage registries, and registry clerks and secretaries have been motivated to pursue advanced training in records and archives management while some have received in-house training on records and archival collection management.

Later in 2018, the UDSM developed the Records and Archives Management Policy and Operational Procedures (RAMPOP) to ensure the presence of an effective and efficient records-keeping system and the preservation of its archival collection (historical records) for posterity (University of Dar es Salaam-RAMPOP, 2018). Section 4.6 of the UDSM-RAMPOP requires the identification, recording, and preservation of university archival materials, including lists of graduates, photographs, and selected speeches. The framework also insists that the identified archival materials should be maintained by the university archival repository. However, despite such a clear statement, the University is yet to establish an archival repository hence placing its public archival collection in jeopardy. The continued absence of such a body despite the university's obvious commitment to having it raises questions regarding the attitude of its staff towards its establishment as being one of the obstacles.

Statement of the problem

An archival repository preserves essential evidence of institutions and provides information that facilitates the achievement of their missions (Society of American Archivists, 1999). However, despite the significance of these bodies, some universities, including UDSM, have not yet established them, putting their archival materials at risk of damage and loss. In what appears as efforts to understand this state, various studies have been carried out to assess some African universities' possession of prerequisites for establishing archival repositories. For example, Israel (2020) examined perception and attitudes of registry staff of archives management at the Federal University of Technology, Akure. Similarly, Anenene, Alegbeleye and Oyewole, (2017) examined factors contributing to the adoption of institutional archival repositories in universities in South-West Nigeria. Further, Mruma *et al.* (2014) produced a survey report on the establishment of the National Cooperative Archive in Tanzania. However, the results of these studies vary in terms of the nature of archival materials studied and staff involved in the study, which meant that to find out UDSM's staff perceptions towards its establishment, this study had to be carried out. Therefore, this study aimed to establish the perceptions of staff towards the establishment of an archival repository at UDSM. Specifically, it aimed to examine the availability of resources essential for managing archival collections, explore staff's attitudes towards establishing an archival repository and investigate the barriers of managing archival collection at UDSM.

Literature review

Archival collections are referred to as the information or records created, received and maintained by an institution or person as evidence and an asset in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business (ISO 15489-1:2016). They can also be referred to as non-current information and records created, received and maintained by a university, as evidence and an asset in pursuit of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. They include charters, correspondences, reports, maps, contracts and agreements, students' certificates, pictures, and audio and video recordings. Archival collections can be used as custodians of history, tools for accountability, and touchstones for memory and identity. These materials can be housed on different media including papers, electronics media, and microfilms. Once such materials are selected, they need to be sent to an institutional archival repository for life-long protection. IRMT (1999) argued that institutional archival materials should be preserved in and managed by specialist archival repositories where they are safeguarded and made available for use.

According to Millar (2017), an archival repository is a physical building or digital platform that houses archival materials. There are several types of archival repositories based on the services they provide, the materials they collect and the institutions they belong to. These are institutional, hybrid, collecting, community-based, and museum, to mention a few. These can be further classified. For example, an institutional archival repository can be a church or university archival repository. Regardless of their categories, the function of any archival repository is to collect, arrange, describe and facilitate wide access to archival materials for organisation stakeholders and the public (Williams, 2006). Establishment of such facilities depends on availability of several prerequisites, for instance, Purcell (2012) established that campuses or units need to collect, preserve, and provide access to institutional history and agree to establish an archival facility. In addition, the administrations of these institutions should support these initiatives with budget and other resources. These developments are recommended to go along with the development of archival policy documents that should formally establish the facility and outline its place in the institution's administrative structure.

Perceived importance of an archival repository can be referred to an ability to understand or become aware of archival repository and its purpose through the senses. The level of understanding or being aware of archival repository varies among people. It is a critical factor of establishing and use of archival repository in an organization. If the level of perceived importance of an archival repository among stake holders is higher implies that they are likely to support establishment and use, hence contribute to its sustainability. Israel (2020) investigated the perception and attitudes of registry staff members towards archives management at the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA). The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A random sampling technique was used to select 50 registry staff in various departments within the University. A questionnaire was designed for the study and administered to the selected respondents. Results revealed that majority of the respondents (95.7%) were aware of an archive and its major function i.e.to store records that are no longer in regular use, increases the institutional research output and provide access to and use of scholarly publications.

Similarly, Anenene, Alegbeleye and Oyewole, (2017) examined from the library staff point of view, the factors that could contribute to the adoption of institutional repositories in Universities in South-West Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted, and the population consisted of 32 library staff in seven universities in South-West Nigeria. The total enumeration method was used, and the questionnaire was the data collection method used. Results showed that most of the respondents (86.7%) had high level of awareness and also majority had a favourable perception of institutional repository. Most of the respondents also acknowledged that institutional repository is easy to use, enables researchers to have access to and use scholarly publications and increases the institutional research output. From the above studies, it is revealed that most universities staff do have awareness about archival repository and perceive it as important in many African universities. This study aimed at soliciting perceived importance of archival repository among archival stakeholders at UDSM and then trying to determine if the results are the same as compared to previous studies. Moreover, most studies focused only on digital archival repository and also included research outputs of university staff. This study attempted to fill the gap by focusing on both physical and digital archival repository resources.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design which adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The study was conducted at the UDSM-Mwalimu Nyerere campus specifically in both academic and administrative units. It is the largest and oldest university in Tanzania established since 1961 and is located in Ubungo District, Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. Also, it was the first university accorded the status of legal deposit of the country heritage in 1962. Being the largest and oldest university as well as legal deposit of the country, UDSM has generated a lot of archival records compared to other universities in the country.

The population comprised heads of units, administrative officers, public relations, registry, Information Technology, library, academic staff, clerks, secretaries and attendant staff from 33 academic and administrative units. Heads of units were selected because they have responsibilities of ensuring that employees in their units create and keep records as an integral part of their work and in accordance with UDSM records and archives management policy and operational procedure. Also, they are in charge of safety and security of records at their units. On the other hand, administrative officers, public relation, registry, Information Technology, library, clerk, secretary and attendant staff were selected because they were sole personnel involved in keep records in units. The study had used structured and standardised self-administered questionnaires with open and close-ended questions to gather data from 66 respondents. Along this method, interviews were conducted with three key informants who were purposively selected: one head of unit, administrative and records management staff, who were assigned with numbers such as Respondent 1, Respondent 2 and so on, for anonymity. Observations were used to note some of the resources available including archival collections, equipment and storage area. The study's quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 21 while content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. To a larger extent, most of the targeted respondents could return the questionnaires and attend the interview sessions.

Study findings

Since a formal archival repository was yet to be established at UDSM, this study intended to determine the availability of resources for managing archival collections at the University since they would form the basis for establishing the archival repository. As such, one of the reasons for collecting study data was to examine the resources for archival collections management at UDSM. The resources looked at were storage place and facilities, policies, budget, access mechanisms and finding aids. The results obtained on this are as presented in the subsections that follow.

Types of archival collection held in units

Administrative officers, public relation, registry, Information Technology, library, clerk, secretary and attendant staff were asked to indicate the types of archival collections held in their units. The purpose of this question was to find out the presence of archival collections in units and give grounds for establishing the presence of resources for managing them. The results found show that all respondents 66 (100%) mentioned at least one of the archival types listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of archival collections held in units

S/N	Type of archival collection	S/N	Type of archival collection
1	Charters	18	Press releases/announcements
2	Conference proceedings	19	Letters of appointment
3	Meeting minutes	20	Speeches
4	By laws	21	Academic course catalogues
5	Memorandum of understanding or contracts	22	Yearbooks/almanacs
6	Correspondences between units	23	Prospectus, maps of university or unit
7	Correspondence between university and other stakeholders	24	Architectural drawings of university or unit
8	Reports of university or unit (s) special committees or task forces	25	Audio recordings of university or unit events
9	University or unit (s) reports of self-studies	26	Festivals, video recordings of university or unit events or festivals
10	University or unit (s) reports of accreditation	27	Photos of university or unit events or festivals
11	University or unit (s) reports of annual budget	28	Artefacts documents
12	University or unit (s) reports of auditing,	29	Documents of product (s) e.g. machine, application etc. developed by university
13	University or unit (s) reports of admission	30	Policy/guideline documents
14	University or unit (s) reports of research projects including grants	31	Manual/handbooks documents
15	University or unit (s) reports of public relations	32	Curriculum/ program documents
16	Reports of university development (fundraising)	33	Manuscripts
17	University or unit (s) posters/brochures, magazines or bulletins	34	Students' records, i.e., admission and awards

Source: Field data, 2022

In general, the results imply that all units have diverse archival materials, including reports, letters, and photos.

Respondents were asked to indicate the media of the archival collections held in their units. This question was meant to reveal some of the details regarding how archival collections are kept by the units or the resources used to keep them. Table 2 presents a summary of the results computed.

Table 2: Media of archival collections (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Media of archival collections	Printed	20	30.3
	Both printed and electronic	46	69.7
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

The results show that a considerable majority (46; 69.7%) of respondents indicated the presence of both printed and electronic media while almost a third (20; 30.3%) of them said that they keep their archival materials on printed media only. In addition to this finding,

observations showed that both print and electronic media were used to keep the archival collections of the units studied.

Purpose of keeping archival collections in units

Respondents were asked to state the major purposes of keeping archival collections in their units. This question was included in the questionnaire because knowing the purposes for which records are kept is important in making judgements regarding the suitability of media that they are kept on and the procedures used to manage them to meet the mentioned purposes. Table 3 summarises the results obtained through an open-ended question.

Table 3: Purposes of keeping archival collections (N=66)

Purposes	Frequency	Percentage
Archival collection are kept for administrative purposes	62	93.9
Archival collection are kept for historical purposes	40	60
Archival collection are kept for research purposes	34	51.5
Archival collection are kept for teaching and learning purposes	34	51.5
Archival collection are kept for legal purposes	28	42.4
Archival collection are kept for security purposes	3	4.5
Archival collection are kept for institutional memory purposes	3	4.5
Archival collection are kept for outreach purposes	1	1.5
Archival collection are kept for reference purposes	2	3.0
Archival collection are kept for evidential purposes	2	3.0

Source: Field data, 2022

The results in the table indicate that nearly all (62; 93.9%) respondents revealed that archival collections were kept for administrative purposes. The purpose that was least mentioned was outreach, which was mentioned by only one respondent (1.5%). Overall, the purposes mentioned by respondents were in line with those mentioned in the UDSM Archival Policy of 2018 According to the policy, UDSM's purposes for keeping archival materials are legal, historical and administrative.

The respondents were also asked to indicate if their units had a place to keep archival collections. The question was asked because dedicated space for storing archival collections is an important resource needed to establish an archival repository. Table 4 below presents a summary of what has been found from the responses received.

Table 4: Availability of place for keeping archival collections (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Availability of place for keeping archival collections	Available	34	51.5
	Not available	30	45.5
	Not sure	2	3.0
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

The findings in the above table show that over half (34; 51.5%) of the respondents indicated that their units had such a place whereas a few (2; 3.0%) indicated that they were not sure. Respondents were asked to mention facilities that their units use to keep archival collections.

The purpose of this question was to determine the presence of storage facilities for storing archival collections. Table 5 below summarises the results.

Table 5: Storage facilities (N=66)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Storage facilities in place	Drawers	19	28.8
	Cabinets	44	66.7
	Boxes	24	36.4
	Shelves	50	75.8
	Computer server	25	37.9
	External hard disc	3	4.5

Source: Field data, 2022

These findings show that just over three quarters (50; 75.8%) of respondents mentioned shelves as their storage facilities while a few (3; 4.5%) mentioned external hard drives. In addition to above, 30 (45.0%) respondents who indicated that their unit had no special places to keep archival records were also asked to indicate where the archival records are held. The purpose of this question was to find the alternative places used to keep archival materials. Table 4.7 below summarizes the results.

Table 4.7: Places archival records are kept (N=66)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Where are archival records kept?	In offices	21	31.1
	Head of unit office	9	13.6
	In Unit's library	4	6.1
	In UDSM library-East Africana	5	7.6
	In unit's registry	11	16.7
	UDSM main registry	3	4.5
	Estate	1	1.5

Source: Field data, 2022

The results reveal that 21 (31.1%) respondents indicated that archival records were kept within the offices, 11 (16.7%) respondents indicated that archival records were kept within units registry, 9 (13.6) respondents indicated that archival records were kept in the office of head of unit, 5 (7.6%) respondents indicated that archival records were kept at UDSM library-East Africana Collection, 4 (6.1%) respondents indicated that archival records were kept in unit's library, 2 (3.0%) respondents indicated that archival records were kept at UDSM main registry and only one (1.5%) respondent indicated that archival records were kept at Estate. Additional

results from personal observation revealed that units kept archival records in different places including offices, registries and units' libraries.

Respondents were asked to indicate if the university had an archival policy. The purpose of asking this question was to establish if the management of archival materials relied on any regulatory frameworks, which would form a foundation for an archival repository. Table 6 below presents a summary of the results computed from the responses received.

Table 6: Availability of archival policy (N=66)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Availability of archival policy	Available	13	19.7
	Not available	25	37.9
	Not sure	28	42.4
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

The findings in Table 6 show that over two fifths (28; 42.4%) of respondents indicated that they were not sure if the university had an archival policy while less than a fifth (13; 19.7%) reported that there was an archival policy. Besides, through an interview one respondent confirmed the presence of an archival policy by stating that *"yes, there is an archival policy but it is not yet distributed to all units and staff..." [Respondent III].*

This implies that the university had an archival policy but very few staff were aware of its presence.

Archival budget, policy and preservation strategies

Respondents were also asked to indicate if their units had an archival budget. The purpose of asking this question was to establish the presence of one of the most important resources for establishing an archival repository, the budget. Table 7 summarises the results obtained.

Table: 7 Presence of archival budget (N=66)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Presence of archival budget.	Presence	13	19.7
	Absence	31	47
	Not sure	22	33.3
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

The results show that almost half (31; 47.0%) of the respondents indicated that an archival budget was not present while almost a fifth (13; 19.7%) of them said such a budget was available. On the contrary, during an interview session one respondent revealed that a general budget was available, that covered everything, including archival collection management: *"there is general budget that too covers archival materials management..." [Respondent I].* This quotation confirms the presence of a budget that covers archival materials management costs.

Respondents were asked if their units had strategies for preserving archival materials. The question was asked because preservation strategies are important in archival materials management and their presence is a step closer to having an environment in which an archival repository can easily be established. Table 8 summarises the results found.

Table 8: Presence of preservation Strategies (N=66)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Presence of preservation strategies	Presence	38	57.6
	Absence	20	30.3
	Not sure	8	12.1
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

These results show that close to two fifths (38; 57.6%) of the respondents reported the presence of preservation strategies while just over a tenth (8; 12.1%) of them were not sure of the presence of such strategies. As such, UDSM had archival materials preservation strategies in place and a good number of people were aware of their presence, which sets grounds for ensuring that when original records got lost, the institution's operations could rely on backup copies. Furthermore, the 38 (57.6%) respondents who reported the presence of preservation strategies at the university were also asked to mention the preservation strategies in place. This question intended to shine more light on the types of preservation strategies deployed by the units studied. Table 9 summarises the findings generated on this.

Table 9: Preservation Strategies in place (n=38)

		Frequency	**Percent**
Preservation strategies in place	Photocopying	33	86.8
	Digitization	21	55.3
	Microfilming	1	2.6

Source: Field data, 2022

These findings show that most (33; 86.8%) respondents indicated that archival materials were preserved through photocopying while only one respondent indicated the presence of microfilming strategy at the university. The university's reliance on photocopying archival materials to preserve archival materials was confirmed during interviews where one respondent spoke about archival materials preservation as follows: *"We usually produce copies of some materials for example reports and letters we acquire and place one copy here in the unit registry and another sent to main registry." [Respondent II].*

This quotation generally confirms the usage of photocopying to preserve records of enduring value at UDSM. The university's reliance on these strategies explains the presence of print archival materials in its units and suggests that its print collections will continue to grow.

Users of archival collections

Respondents were asked to indicate the people that accessed archival collections held in their units. This question aimed to identify the main users of archival materials of the university. Table 10 reveals these groups of people.

Table 10: Main users of archival collections (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Who are the main users of archival collections held in units?	Administrative staff	60	90.9
	Academic staff	31	47.0
	Researchers	22	33.3
	Students	27	40.9
	Alumni	14	21.2

Source: Field data, 2022

From the above results, the majority (60; 90.9%) of respondents mentioned administrative staff as the main users of archival collections held in their units while a few (2; 3.0%) of them mentioned politicians. Administrative staff were the main users of UDSM's archival materials due to their dependency on using archival materials to execute various administrative tasks.

In addition, respondents were asked if their units allowed other users such as academicians, students, researchers and alumni to access archival collections. This question was specifically intended to establish how wide access to archival materials was at UDSM. Table 11 provides a summary of what has been found on this.

Table: 11 Access of archival collections to academics, students, researchers and alumni (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Other UDSM users allowed	Allowed	34	51.5
	No allowed	23	34.8
	Not sure	9	13.6
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

These results indicate that just over half (34; 51.5%) of the respondents reported that their units allowed academicians, students, researchers and alumni to access their archival collections while a few (9; 13.6%) respondents said they were not sure.

A question was asked on the mechanisms used by units to provide users with access to their archival collections. This question intended to establish the variety of archival materials access mechanisms available at UDSM. Table 12 below summarises the results generated.

Table 12: Access mechanisms in place (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Access mechanisms in place	On site in hard and soft copy	29	43.9
	On site on hard copy only	36	54.5
	Online soft copy outside the unit	1	1.5
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

According to these results, over half (36; 54.5%) of respondents revealed that users access archival collections on-site in hard copies only while only one (1.5%) respondent indicated that there is online access to electronic archival collections. However, the observations revealed that most archival collections made available on site in hard copies. Respondents were asked to indicate if their units had finding aids for facilitating access to their archival collections. This was done to establish a better understanding of how access to archival materials is provided by the studied units. Table 13 summarises the results generated from the responses received.

Table 13: Availability of finding aids (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Availability of finding aids	Available	19	28.8
	Not available	36	54.5
	Not sure	11	16.7
	Total	66	100

Source: Field data, 2022

These results show that over half (36; 54.5%) of respondents indicated that finding aids were not available while respondents 11 (16.7%) respondents were not sure about the aids' availability.

Staff perceptions towards establishing an archival repository

A question was asked to solicit the perceived importance of archival records to find out whether UDSM staff considered archival records as important. Understanding this would help to determine the attention that archival records were given, measures in place in relation to extent they valued archival records, opportunities or barriers with regards to archival records management. Table 4.14 provides a summary of the obtained results.

Table 14: Perceived importance of archival records (N=66)

Importance of Archival Records	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Archival records are useful for administrative purposes.	50	76	14	21.2			2	3		
Archival records are useful for research purposes.	49	74	14	21.2					3	4.5
Archival records are useful for historical purposes.	53	80	11	16.7	1	1.5			1	1.5
Archival records are useful for publicity purposes.	35	53	21	31.8	4	6.1			5	7.6
Archival records are useful for evidential purposes.	51	77	12	18.2	2	3	1	1.5		

Source: Field data, 2022

Results on table 4.25 show that 53(80.3%) strongly agree that archival records were important for historical purposes while 51 (77.3%) strongly agreed that archival records are important for evidential purposes. In addition, 50 (75.8%) respondents strongly agreed that archival records were important for administrative purposes and 35 (53.0%) respondents strongly agree that archival records are important for publicity purposes. Therefore, majority of respondents highly agreed on the importance of archival records on administrative, research, historical, publicity and evidential purpose. Respondents were asked to indicate their awareness about an archival repository. Being familiar with an archival repository could influence their perception on archival records management. Table 15 summarizes the findings obtained.

Table 15: Awareness on an archival repository (N=66)

		Frequency	Percent
Aware on Archival Repository	Aware	49	74.2
	Not aware	14	21.2
	Total	63	95.5

Source: Field data, 2022

The findings obtained indicate that 49 (74.2%) respondents were aware of an archival repository while 14 (21.2%) respondents were not. Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate their perceived importance of establishing an archival repository at the University of Dar es Salaam. The purpose of asking this question was to understand to what extent archival records managers consider establishing an archival repository as important. Table 16 presents a summary of the findings.

Table 16: Perceived benefits of establishing an archival repository at UDSM (N=66)

Importance of Establishing Archival Repository	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral	
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**	**F**	**%**
It will provide appropriate storage condition for archival records.	52	78.8	12	18.2			1	1.5	1	1.5
It will help to collect, organize, describe, and preserve archival records.	48	72.7	17	25.8					1	1.5
It will provide information services that assist research and teaching.	46	69.7	15	22.7	2	3.0			1	1.5
It will provide information services that assist the operation of the organization.	46	69.7	15	22.7	2	3.0			3	4.5
It will promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, aims, programs, and goals of the organization.	46	69.7	18	27.3	1	1.5			1	1.5

Source: Field data, 2022

Results on table 4.27 show that 52 (78.8%) respondents strongly agreed that it would provide appropriate storage conditions for archival records while 48 (72.7%) respondents strongly agree that it would help to collect, organize, describe, and preserve archival records. Other (46,69.7%) respondents strongly agree that it will provide information services that assist research and teaching, provision of information services that could assist the operations of the organization promoting knowledge and understanding of the origins, aims, programs, and goals of the organization.

Barriers to establishing an archival repository

Respondents were asked to point at what they considered to be barriers to the establishment of an archival repository. Answers obtained through an open-ended question regarding the barriers is summarized as follows:

Barriers of managing archival records	**F**	**%**
Lack of awareness among users on the presence of archival records	40	60.6
Primitive methods of handling archival records	29	43.9
Lack of training among staff on handling archival records	43	65.2
Lack of skills and expertise in preserving and managing archival records	35	53.0
Lack of sufficient storage spaces and facilities	47	71.2
Lack of space for externals to sit and use the archival records	24	36.4
Lack of enough budget for archival records management	39	59.1
Lack of enough staff for archival records management	2	3.0

| Lack of cooperation between records and administrative staff for archival records management | 1 | 1.5 |

Results obtained indicate that, among others, lack of sufficient storage spaces and facilities was reported by 47 (71.2%) respondents while 43 (65.2%) pointed at lack of training among staff on handling archival records. These and other results obtained indicate that much as the university had the potential for establishing an archival repository a number of barriers hampered the university to establish the repository. Based on the challenges, most respondents suggested that the university should establish a fully-fledged archival repository to manage all archives available at the university, creating awareness on the availability of archival collections as well as training staff on proper management of an archival repository to be established.

Discussions of the research findings

The study's results revealed several issues pertaining to resources for archival collection management, staff attitudes, and barriers to managing archival collections. The subsequent subheadings below provide further details for these aspects.

Resources for archival collections management

Results from this study reveal that there were different categories of archival resources in various units visited. The presence of these documents is ensured by the university's records and archival policy, which stipulate that each unit should collect and preserve various types of records of archival value. These include reports, charters, byelaws, contracts and memorandum of understanding, magazines, bulletins and others. The results corroborate those by Garaba (2018) that reported different types of archival materials kept at the University of KwaZulu-Natal including photographs and press cuts. The availability of such a diversity of documents is important because they support the management of the university, and its research and learning activities, and are a source of history.

The units studied relied on both print and electronic media to store their archival information. This suggests that the university generated its information and records in both print and electronic formats. The presence of electronic archival materials could also be considered as a sign of progress in the digitisation of some of the university's records. This concurs with Matangira, Katjiveri-Tjiuoro and Lukileni (2013) who found that both print and electronic records were present at the University of Namibia. The presence of a hybrid collection of archival materials is important because it easily meets various users' preferences as some prefer print while others prefer electronic media. Most importantly, the university's archival collection is on the right track to permit the university to provide online archival services.

Generally, results show that the major purposes for which archival collections were kept by UDSM included legal, historical and administrative. In other words, the archival materials generated by the university were majorly used to support legal, administrative and historical activities. In support of these findings, Amin *et al.* (2020) recognizes various reasons motivating organisations to preserve records permanently, including their evidential value to support administration, academic, financial and others. Observation made in the study revealed that a few archival collections were kept in various locations, including registries, offices, and libraries. These findings were also confirmed by interviewees. For instance, one of them said

"yes, there is a place for keeping archival documents however not sufficient enough." *[Respondent I].*

On the other hand, most respondents indicated that their units did not have a place dedicated to archival material storage named offices, registries and libraries as their alternative storage places. Generally, the findings revealed that official places for keeping archival collections were lacking at the university. These results are similar to those reported by Netshakhuma (2019) and Attiah, Mahama, and Abilla (2017) who found that offices were used to store archival collections at both the University of Mpumalanga in South Africa and University for Development Studies in Ghana due to lack of archival repositories. In addition, Khumalo and Chigariro (2017) suggest that archival collections cannot be kept in places whose mandate is not for archival collections management because there might not be proper control measures to secure them from theft and loss. Keeping archival collections in different places may cause difficulties in organising and making the materials widely accessible. Doing so could also increase management costs in terms of staff and facilities, among others.

It was further revealed that the university had a formal archival policy which however was yet to be widely circulated. As a result, respondents were not aware of its presence. The development of such a policy indicates the UDSM's acknowledgement of the importance of archival collection management. However, these results are different from those by Kamatula (2010) who revealed the absence of a records and archives management policy at UDSM. In other words, UDSM appears to have developed this policy after 2010. Overall, the presence of an archival policy in an institution promotes consistency in the management of an archival collection by stipulating staff's archival collection management roles and responsibilities among other things. These findings suggest that the UDSM has not yet sensitised staff about the presence of its archival policy. Similarly, Matangira, Katjiveri-Tjiuoro and Lukileni (2013) reported that the presence of a records management policy at the University of Namibia remained "a white elephant" since many people were not aware of it or did not have knowledge on how they could make use of it. Generally, these results imply that the presence of an archival policy may still not help university management to handle their collections properly due to being unfamiliar with their presence or the content. In addition, the presence of a budget at the university is a significant indicator of the likelihood of the establishment of an archival repository because the presence of other resources facilities such as computers, shelves, boxes among others to support archival collection management relies on funds. Ngoepe (2019) commented that budget is an important resource in the management of archival materials as it helps to employ personnel, buy equipment, and pay salaries and supplies.

It was also observed during the study that most units allowed some users to access their collections. Moreover, through personal observation it was noted that there were some documents with archival value which were made available in units, including the University strategic plan, policies, photos, almanac, guidelines to mention a few. Added were also, some print materials that were found at UDSM Library's East Africana collection. As such, UDSM's units provided access to their archival materials to university stakeholders. In other words, the university's archival materials were used to support the activities of various groups of people affiliated in different ways to the university. On contrary, during interviews, one respondent explained that their unit did not allow academicians, students, researchers and alumni to access all their archival materials because some of them required special permissions from UDSM management, as the statement below reveals:

"They (i.e. academics, students, researchers and alumni) are given access but not to all materials as some contain sensitive information which

requires special permission granted by university administration."
[Respondent II].

Based on this quotation, access to archival materials was determined by the sensitivity of the contents of the materials in question to merit permissions to their access.

Furthermore, observations made during the study showed that the units had some form of finding aids, namely, registers and catalogues. However, these were noted to have inadequate metadata, which would probably explain the reasons for their not being accessible by some respondents. This is an undesirable state that, according to IRMT (1999), finding aids provide basic access to archival materials in an archival repository. Therefore, their absence in the units studied suggest a deficient archival collection management environment at UDSM, which called for an establishment of a fully-fledged archival unit to allow access to the available collections.

Staff attitudes towards establishing an archival repository

The findings from this study indicate that most respondents considered archival records as important for administrative, research, historical, publicity, and evidential purposes. Similarly, Anenene et al. (2017) found that most librarians at the universities in South-West Nigeria considered institutional archival repositories important to researchers. Archival records provide a reliable and authentic knowledge base, enabling the past to be reconstructed and understood. Without archival records, it could be difficult to know about the past. In general, these records serve as the essential link in the chain of both individual and organization history through documenting their important transactions.

The findings suggest that most respondents perceived that establishing an archival repository at University of Dar es Salaam was important. An archival repository would help to provide appropriate storage condition, collect, organize, describe, and preserve archival records and provide information services that assist research, teaching and operations of the university. It could also promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, aims, programs, and goals of the university (Attiah, Mahama, & Abilla, 2017)

Barriers of managing archival collections

However, the study identified several barriers towards establishing an archival repository, major ones being lack of space to manage archival collections within individual units, lack of trained personnel to manage archival collections and lack of awareness on the presence of archival collections within units. This implies that having a fully-fledged archival repository would be an ideal solution to these and other barriers identified. According to Netshakhuma (2019), having a university archive is important as it ensures proper management of archival resources. Given the positive attitude among staff on the importance of archival repository, this study realized that its establishment remains a factor that is to be supported by the university management.

Conclusion and recommendations

The results obtained from this study imply that the University of Dar es Salaam has some of the important resources for establishing an institutional archival repository. Overall, this means that, there is general readiness for establishment of an archival repository at UDSM.

This study came up with a few recommendations as follows:

UDSM should use the existing favourable environment in terms of resources and staff attitudes to establish its own archival repository where all university archival materials will be accommodated. An archival repository will ensure the protection of university archival materials from loss and damage by providing adequate storage space and facilities for them. The facility will ensure the materials are widely accessible to the university community by providing spaces and facilities for users to sit and access archival collections.

To ensure that records are worthy of keeping permanently, UDSM should provide training to its personnel responsible for archival collections management.

The UDSM should take measures to ensure that its records and archival policy is available and known to university stakeholders. Various mechanisms including producing copies of the policy and distributing them to all units or publishing the policy on the university's website, could be employed to create awareness among staff on the availability of archival collections. Given the positive attitude among staff, the establishment of such a unit at UDSM remains possible.

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