

POSITIONING OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES EDUCATION IN UGANDA: AN ANALYSIS OF THE TREND

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Abstract

The value of good records and archives management in the promotion of accountability, good governance and human rights cannot be overemphasized. However, this can only be possible when a pool of well-trained human resources exist in the field of records and archives management. This article, based on a literature review explores and makes the situation analysis of records and archives management education in Uganda. The article reviews the administrative history of Uganda to highlight the value of good records and archives management for the promotion of national heritage. It makes among others a review of records and archives management demand in Uganda; and states the intrinsic values of sound records management. The syllabus of Bachelor of Records and Archives Management (BRAM) in Uganda is presented. The challenges of records management education with reference to Uganda and the way forward are addressed.

Keywords: Archives education, records management, Uganda

Introduction

Good records and information management is key in instituting rule of law, good governance and national accountability. Without access to good records, officials are forced to take decisions on an ad hoc basis without the benefit of institutional memory (Piggot 2002).

According to Shepherd (2006), a record is recorded evidence of an activity, which is of an action undertaken by an individual or a work group in the course of their business, which results in a definable outcome. Its physical form, its age, or the fact that it contains information does not define a record. Its essential characteristic is that it provides evidence of some specific activity. Activities may be undertaken by people or may be largely or wholly automated. Records can exist in any medium and in many forms, including documentary, databases, photographs and audiovisual. Most organizations have hybrid record systems, with some records in paper and some in digital form (Shepherd and Yeo 2003: 20).

The evolution of records will always pose challenges to both practitioners and educators world over. According to Kallas and Johnson (1992), most of the business records before 1600 were based upon simple transactions and provided evidence of moneys received and spent, lists of articles bought and sold, and simple contracts. Such records were created by hand (that is manually) until the printing press and later the typewriters were invented. These machines including now the computers increased the speed at which records are created and processed exponentially. This exponential increase in records generation has necessitated the need to manage them efficiently. Records which are well managed as part of an appropriate records management programme will help an organization to conduct business in an efficient, accountable manner, deliver services consistently, support managerial decision making and transparent policy formation and ensure continuity in policy execution, management and administration (Shepherd 2006). How then can the records be managed? This makes the issue of human resources central in records, archives and information management. The article makes a review of literature and events in Uganda on the education for records, archives and information management.

Administrative history of Uganda (1858-1978): an overview

To underscore the significance of the records management, it is imperative that we look at briefly National Archives of Uganda now located in Entebbe and their potential use for historical research. This article gives a brief administrative history of Uganda (according to

Akita 1979), starting from the arrival of European travellers about the middle of the 19th century.

According to Akita (1979) the first British Commissioner for Uganda, Gordon Portal, was appointed in 1893, and it was through his instrumentality that Uganda was declared a Protectorate. He concluded a number of agreements with the Kabaka of Buganda and the Rulers of Toro in 1900 and with Ankole in 1901. In 1933, the then Governor signed an agreement with the Ruler of Bunyoro. From the time of the declaration of the Protectorate in 1905, responsibility for the administration of Uganda rested with the Foreign Office, but later in that year the Colonial Office assumed direct control, and appointed its first Governor. It was not until 29 June 1920, that an Executive Council and a Legislative Council were established in Uganda. The members were the Governor, four Government officials, and two unofficial members - all of whom were Europeans. By 1945, however, the membership of the Legislative Council had risen to 28, including 14 Africans and 7 Asians.

There was yet another change in 1956. For the first time a ministerial system of government was introduced and the membership of the Legislative Council rose to 60, including 30 Representative members. But in 1958 all the Representative Members were returned to the Legislative Council through the ballot box. A general political awakening in the country began just about this time. A general election was then held in March 1961 to elect 82 representatives by universal adult suffrage.

The stage was the set for the final move towards complete independence. In 1961 a constitutional conference was held in London and the future Constitution of Uganda was agreed upon. By the Constitutional Instruments of 1962, Uganda was created a Federal State consisting of 4 Kingdoms, 1 Territory, and 10 Districts. On 1 March 1962, self-government was inaugurated and the Chief Minister became Prime Minister and President of the Cabinet. Besides, the Legislative Council became the National Assembly and ex-officio members ceased to be members of the National Assembly. But the Assembly was dissolved on 10 March 1962 and General Elections took place on 25 April 1962, to usher in Independence. On 9 October 1962, Uganda became independent with the Queen repre-

sented by a Governor-General. However, on 26 September 1963, the National Assembly recommended the 1962 Constitution and declared Uganda a sovereign state with a Constitutional President as Head of State (Akita 1979).

Later, on 8 September 1967, a republican constitution, which abolished the Federal States and the monarchy, was introduced and Uganda became a Unitary Republic. Then on 25 January 1971, there was a change of government and the administration was taken over by His Excellency Al-Haji Field Marshall Dr Idi Amin Dada, who eventually declared himself Life President, Head of State and Governor and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. The entire records in the archives at Entebbe date back to when Uganda became a British Colony (Akita 1979; Musinguzi 2007).

The purpose of this article in giving this brief account of the administrative history of Uganda is to show that there are a variety of records of the Administration, the Executive and Legislative bodies which should be properly managed so that they are not lost to posterity. For example, the records of the Executive and Legislative Councils from 1921 to 1958 are being preserved in Entebbe. The Chief Secretary's records from 1905 to 1962 as well as the earlier records going back to 1893 were deposited in the National Archives of Uganda in Entebbe. Why not then value the education of the human resources for these enormous tasks of protecting Uganda's historical and national heritage?

The terrain of records and archives management demand in Uganda

Uganda's economy has great potential. Endowed with significant natural resources, including ample fertile land, regular rainfall, and mineral deposits, it appeared poised for rapid economic growth and development at independence. However, chronic political instability and erratic economic mismanagement produced a record of persistent economic decline that left Uganda among the world's poorest and least-developed countries (United States, Bureau of African Affairs 2007). Despite that, the Government of Uganda has been implementing an ambitious and successful programme of macro-economic adjustment and structural reform since 1987 – with strong

support from multilateral and bilateral creditors and donors (Okello-Obura *et al.*, 2007).

The government's continued implementation of appropriate fiscal and monetary policies – and its programme of substantial economic liberalisation – has maintained high growth, low inflation, a steadily improving balance of payments and an increasingly vibrant and diversified private sector (Uganda Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development 2002). During the 2003/04 financial year, Uganda's economy registered strong growth of 6 % compared to a growth rate of 5.2 % in 2002/03 (Central Intelligence Agency 2004). Solid growth in 2003 reflected an upturn in Uganda's export markets. In 2007, Uganda's growth rate reached 8.9% (Uganda, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development 2008). These developments have created a vibrant private sector and active government departments. Ultimately there are more business documents being generated in both private and public sectors today than before, calling for efficient and effective records management. Despite that line of argument, the situation remains appalling.

According to the Ministry of Public Service (2005:8), records management systems in Uganda are not fully developed. Records are not captured and stored in a systematic and easy to retrieve manner due to among others lack of well-trained human resources. Uganda is the only country in East and Southern Africa that does not have an independent national archives, although the institution was established by law and the first archived records were acquired and preserved in 1955 in Entebbe (Musinguzi 2007). It is argued that this situation is soon to change since under the current Public Service Reform Programme, the government of Uganda plans to secure USD \$10 billion to construct a national Records Center in Kampala by 2008, though this is yet to be seen. Compounding the problem is the fact that the "National Archive" at Entebbe has only three staff members. Consequently there is a need to produce human resources to serve in various capacities in the National Records Centers and Archives in order to realize the objectives of Uganda National Records and Archives Act of 2001.

According to a survey done in two leading newspapers in Uganda (The Monitor and New Vision Newspapers) between December 2007

and June 2008, there were 23 professional jobs advertised for records and archives managers. This scenario implies that the demand for records and archives managers in Uganda will continue to grow. There are enormous tasks but there are not enough human resources. This situation requires the attention of the records and archives management educators in Uganda. How then have records and archives management education institutions in Uganda responded or are responding? Before that is examined it is imperative that the intrinsic values of sound Records and Archives Management (RAM) to national development are highlighted.

Records and archives management and corporate governance

In today's public and private sectors, corporate governance is a key focus, and management of records, archives and information is an increasingly important preoccupation. A number of authors (Barrett 2002; Mnjama and Wamukoya 2004; Willis and Fox 2005; Mnjama 2005; Piggot 2002; Okello-Obura 2007) have argued and pointed out the intrinsic values of sound RAM management in any country. Some of the benefits highlighted include the following:

- Records are an indispensable element of transparency, both within the organization and externally. The records held by an organization are what make it possible for people who have a right or an obligation to know what has been done, to see exactly what has been done and how it has been done (Willis and Fox 2005).
- Piggot (2000), a senior information solution consultant with the World Bank, once said that without good records, officials are forced to take decisions on an ad hoc basis, without the benefit of institutional memory. Fraud cannot be proven, meaningful audits cannot be carried out and government actions are not open to review.
- Sound records management does not only underpin the due process, but enables accountability. Public accountability is the foundation of a democratic system. It is imperative that record-keeping practices should not be seen in isolation, but rather as a vital accountability element of a sound corporate governance framework. All organisations need to keep records of business decisions and transactions to meet the demands of corporate accountability. Effective maintenance of, and appropriate

- access to, accurate and complete information and records (i.e. transparency) enables those with a right to know to see what has been done and how. This enables them to hold those charged with the management of organisations, the conduct of processes and the delivery of outcomes accountable (Willis and Fox 2005). Any government or country committed to the rule of law should ensure good records and archival materials management.
- The protection of the citizens' entitlements depends on pension records, social security records, land records, birth and death records. Willis and Fox (2005) argue that efficient archival systems must have correspondingly efficient retrieval and information manipulation systems if they are going to meet organisational, and legal, requirements.
 - To preserve the rule of law, the government relies on legislative, court, police and prison records. Organisations need to determine what records should be captured and retained as evidence in case of legal and other challenges (Kennedy and Schauder 2000:48). Proper management of information and retention of records can be used by those charged with corporate governance to demonstrate compliance with the rules, even if the desired outcomes have not been achieved. In areas like environmental law, occupational health and safety law and trade practices, it will be critical for directors and other office holders to show an exercise of "due diligence" in order to avoid both corporate and personal liability. In such circumstances, the records will show what matters were considered, what steps were taken, what protective measures were implemented etc (Willis and Fox 2005).
 - Legislation, ranging from the Archives Act and Corporations Act, through occupational health and safety and environmental legislation etc, require proper maintenance of records. Foreign relations, international obligations, communication with national and international bodies require good management of national and international obligation treaties (Okello-Obura 2007; Willis and Fox 2005)
 - Good management of policy files, hospital records, school records, budget papers, accounting records, personnel records, tax records, election registers, procurement records, etc, demonstrates government's commitment to accountability to its

citizens and promotion of good governance (Okello-Obura 2007)

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) summarizes different purposes for using records as: business purposes; accountability purposes; and cultural purposes. They went on to identify three further underlying values of records, which motivate these different purposes for records use. They are: the evidential value of the record; the value of the record as an information source; and the value of the record as an artifact or object.

Generally, sound records, archives and information management facilitate fast decision-making and transparency in government operations for national development. The efforts of preserving Africa's rich archival heritage within both private and public sectors are a very important issue. This in my view will only be possible if the issue of educating records and archives managers is addressed. How then are the educational institutions in Uganda responding to these important tasks? The subsection below gives both a narrative and analytical picture of events as far as RAM training is concerned in Uganda.

Records and archives educational institutions in Uganda

There is growing interest in professional circles concerning issues of education and training for records professionals. Ideally professionals bring to their calling a specialised set of knowledge, skills and attributes. They need knowledge of the underpinning theory and principles that students should acquire in an education programme, or in other words, what they should know about their profession (Anderson 2007).

The education of records and archives management in Uganda can be described as still inadequate but strongly growing. Although some institutions, like, Uganda Management Institute, Kabale University, Busoga University have come up to design paraprofessional courses for records managers, it is the East African School of Library and Information Science (EASLIS), Makerere University that has been providing the education since 1989 as part of the degree Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) and at paraprofessional level as the Diploma in Records and Archives Management (DRAM) since

1999. It is for that reason that this article makes a focus on the syllabus of East African School of Library and Information Science in relation to records and archives management education in Uganda.

Strategic directions for records and archives management education at EASLIS

According to Anderson (2007), a sound education at the point of entry to the profession; competency-based training for continuing professional development and involvement in research-based inquiry and knowledge creation all have essential roles in developing and sustaining well-rounded records professional, to the greater benefit of the profession as a whole. The records and archives management profession, in common with other professional work groups, requires a complex knowledge base of theory and intellectual technique to underpin its special expertise. As long argued by Wilensky (1964), professional work is technical and based on systematic knowledge and training. Records and archives graduate education sets parameters for professional work, defines the range of the profession, provides a gateway for entry and lays the foundation for career development. Typically, professional education and training is long, specialized and strongly conceptual (Shepherd 2006). This implies that any training design has to be based on experience and deeper understanding of the contextual requirements for the course. The records and archives management profession is still at the infant stage in Uganda and requires concerted effort to develop a strong and useful curriculum in order to produce able managers and policy makers to implement records and archives management programmes in both private and public sectors.

In actual terms, the education of professional records and archives management in Uganda is “presumed” to have started in 1989 with the introduction of the degree Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). In the syllabus, there was only one subject called records management done in first year first term. This could in no way be enough for someone to be a records manager and leave alone an archivist. Nevertheless, the system continued. Those who completed the BLIS and had an interest in furthering their studies went abroad for further studies in the field of records management but not archives. This could probably account for the inadequate

number of professional/educated archivists in Uganda. Because of this inadequacy in records and archives management and the new demand in the field of librarianship, the BLIS was comprehensively revised in 2003. This revision brought in some courses specifically to address the needs of organizations that require records and archives managers. In the syllabus, the following records and archives management courses are covered:

- Records Management (done by all BLIS students); and
- Archives administration and museology (done by all BLIS students).

Third year students doing the Records Management option do the following subjects

- Analysis of Records Management Systems
- Preservation and Conservation
- Automation of Records Management Systems
- Records Management and the Law

An analysis of the syllabus shows that in the third year, students interested in pursuing records and archives studies are expected to specialize in the records option. In the curriculum review committee consideration was given to help address the needs of Records and Archives Managers in Uganda and in the region. However a critical look at the syllabus indicates that the training does not cover exhaustively the areas records managers and archivists require. Except for IT based courses, most courses for archivists are theoretical in nature. In order to close this gap, a curriculum development was initiated in 2004 for purely Records and Archives Managers. This process culminated into the development of the degree Bachelor of Records and Archives Management (BRAM) which was approved in June 2008. This seems to be the situation in most countries. A study by Shepherd (2006) reports that until recently, no universities in United Kingdom offered undergraduate programmes in archives or records management, even as a minor subject although course units were taught as first professional qualification at graduate level. This slow development in records and archives management could probably be attributed to what Cox said in 2000 that records professionals are only just beginning to come to terms with the greater value of records in society.

The Bachelor of Records and Archives Management degree programme is designed to:

- Satisfy the increasing demand for trained records and archives professionals;
- Create upgrading avenues for existing undergraduate diploma programmes like DRAM, Secretarial studies, etc;
- Strengthen local governments by providing personnel for records and archives management; and
- Provide an opportunity for A-level school leavers to develop a career in records and archives management.

Syllabus of BRAM

Anderson (2007) argues that a professional education programme should introduce the learner to the theory and principles underpinning professional practice in the discipline. Education encourages reflection and should provide foundation knowledge, together with a problem-solving approach and reflective learning habits that are transferable to the wide range of situations the student will inevitably encounter in the course of professional life. The BRAM programme, which was approved in June 2008 by the University Council, is expected to start in the near future after accreditation by Uganda National Council of Higher Education. The syllabus is as given below.

YEAR ONE

Semester 1	Course Name	CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Principles of Records and Archives management	3	45		45
	Organization and Office systems	3	45		45
	Paleography and Oral history management	3	45		45
	Supplies and Materials Management	3	45		45
	Information Technology I	4	30	60	60
	Communication Skills and Practice	3	45		45
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	19			

Semester 2		CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Papermaking and Reprography	3	45		45
	Audiovisual Records Management	3	45		45
	Classification and Cataloguing	4	30	60	60
	Applied Organizational Psychology	3	45		45
	Government Information Resources and Systems	3	45		45
	Information Technology for Records and Archives work	4	30	60	60
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	20			

YEAR TWO

Semester 1	Course Name	CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Information and Documentation Services	3	45		45
	Ethics in Records and Archives Management	3	45		45
	Records Processing and Organization	3	45		45
	Database Management Systems	4	30	60	60
	Desktop Publishing and Editing	4	30	60	60
	Research Methods	3	45		45
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	20			

Semester 2	Course Name	CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Management Principles and Practices	3	45		45
	Analysis of Records Management systems	3	45		45
	Health Records				

	management	3	45		45
	Archives Administration	3	45		45
	Records Storage and Security	3	45		45
	Research Data Analysis	3	45		45
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	18			

RECESS TERM

Recess Term	Course Name	CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Field Attachment	5		300	
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	5			

YEAR THREE

Semester 1	Course Name	CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Project Planning and Management	3	45		45
	Management of Business Records	3	45		45
	Preservation and Conservation	3	45	60	45
	Automation of Records Management Systems	4	30	60	60
	Website Development and Internet Technology	4	30		60
Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	17			
Semester 2		CU	LH	PH	CH
Core Course	Management of Museums	3	45		45
	Managing of Records and Archives Institutions	3	45		45
	Management of Electronic Records	4	30	60	60
	Records Management and the Law	3	45		45
	Dissertation Writing	6		150	75

Electives	None	-	-	-	-
	TOTAL CREDIT UNITS	19			

Key

CU = Credit Units

LH = Lecture Hours

PH = Practical Hours

CH = Contact Hours

A look at the syllabus shows that there is a better coverage to address the education needs of records managers but with little emphasis on archives management. It is on this basis that the Department of Records and Archives Management at EASLIS has aggressively started to seek for collaborative initiatives and donor support to develop the postgraduate programmes for records and archives management. This argument to seek for partnerships anchors very well with Shepherd's (2006) argument, where it is said that a training school for new practitioners is usually established, sometimes beginning independently, but always eventually seeking contact with universities, in order to develop standard terms of study, academic degrees and research programmes.

Needful to point out is the integration of the research component in the education programme of RAM. Starting research at Bachelor level is the basic foundation to inculcate the spirit of research in the mind of professionals. As argued by Anderson (2007), to ensure the future of professional education programmes the profession must stop thinking of recordkeeping education as a form of training, merely adequate to perform daily tasks. Efforts to encourage a lively and pervasive research culture are essential to ensure the discipline becomes truly reflective in its approaches to the challenges continually met in our fast-changing environment.

Regulatory and legislative framework for records and archives management in Uganda

There are many other good reasons to invest resources in effective records management. Legislative and regulatory compliance often feature in organizational objectives and act as part of the environmental and strategic framework for records management.

In Uganda, library, records and archives legislations do exist. These laws provide the legal framework for records and information management to operate. Some of the relevant laws in place include:

National Records and Archives Act 2001

Uganda did not have a law relating directly to records until 2001. According to this law, all records with historical, administrative, legal, fiscal, informative, research and educational value must be deposited with the National Archives. The law also demands the surrender of memorabilia, maps, cartographic drawings and blue prints of important national buildings. Although the implementation of the National Records and Archives Act 2001 is hampered by the slow flow of funds to its programme (Musunguzi 2007), it gives a pointer to the need to educate records and archives managers to take charge of Ugandan heritage.

The Local Government Act, 1997 (with Amendment Act 2001)

This act provides for the governance of district local entities. For purposes of accountability, the Ministry of Local Government expects the Councils to keep records of activities and transactions and the Act requires that councils keep proper books of accounts and other related records.

Income Tax Assessment Act

The Act requires a person carrying on a business to keep records and the records must explain all transactions. The records must include any document relevant for ascertaining the person's income and expenditure. The records must enable a person's tax liability to be readily ascertained implying that there is a need for sound records management.

Access to Information Act 2005

Dramatic growth is widely anticipated in records management employment due to changes in legislation and other compliance regimes. These translate into a number of identifiable business

drivers that continue to raise the profile of the records sector. The growing awareness of the challenges of digital records is increasing the demand for records management skills and professionals. The Access to Information Act (2005) provides for a Code of Practice on records management for public sector organisations which is expected to include a requirement to employ qualified records managers. Indeed laws like the Access to Information Act are failing due to years of poor records management and lack of coherent and concerted efforts to educate the next generation of records managers to meet the needs of such legislation. EASLIS as a responsible institution should not sit and watch the situation. Willis and Fox (2005) argue that efficient archival systems must have correspondingly efficient retrieval and information manipulation systems if they are going to meet organizational, and legal, requirements. The problems can only be addressed if there are well educated and trained human resources.

Conceptual analysis of education and training: which is which for records and archives education?

All over the world, Educators sometimes face the criticism that their graduates do not go to the workplaces able to perform right away. As argued for example, by Anderson (2007) graduates may not know how to use particular systems that have been implemented by the organisation. Anderson (2007) argues that this type of criticism results from confusion of the purposes of education and training. Training leading to such specifically situated knowledge and skills is the responsibility of the employing organisation. All organisations have particular procedures tailored to their particular environment. No professional education qualification can substitute for the comprehensive induction programmes that are the responsibility of the employer (Anderson 2007). EASLIS after realizing this loophole, with employers has designed a number of tailor made short courses to enable graduates and paraprofessionals perform at work places. Some of the training conducted so far includes:

- Modern Office management
- Records and Information management
- Records and Office management
- Advanced Records and Information management
- Management of Libraries and Information Centers

- Databases management
- Communication skills and minute writing

All these are aimed at helping graduates perform at work places. In the interest to help employers in the training, educators need to continuously organized tailor made training. The training should be designed in consultation with the employers. This is because employers are aware of the best practices for training such as providing induction programmes, introducing the way systems work or are tailored within the organisation, or how decisions are made and documented.

Every change or newly implemented system, however small or large, needs some kind of training programme to ensure proper uptake and best use of the new system and facilities it provides. Without well-designed appropriate training, few people, if anyone, will know how to use the systems properly to the full benefit of the organization (Anderson 2007). The best employing organisations also accept responsibility to nurture employees' professional development, providing an environment that encourages lifelong learning. This does not mean that educational institutions should leave the aspects of training to employers alone. Education and training are ideally intertwined. In my view, RAM educators should get in touch with employers in respect of continued training. In part, this will help the RAM Curriculum designers to focus on the relevant needs of the employers by providing relevant education.

Challenges faced in providing records and archives education and training in Uganda

It is no secret that the circumstances affecting records management have changed drastically even in the last decade. There are several factors in this change. One is technological development in the field of information creation and dissemination, which includes the increasing use of computers, microforms, word processing equipment, and the use of lasers and a wide range of developments in the field of communications, including satellites (Smith 1983).

The challenges of educating records and archives managers stem from the original perception of librarianship. Most LIS schools like EASLIS, for long have focused on libraries and information centers

ignoring the importance of records and archives education. Generally the problems in records and archives education in Uganda are:

Lack of adequate education and training schools

There are inadequate education/training schools in Uganda that meet the education/ training needs of records and archives managers. It is only recently that EASLIS comprehensively revised its BLIS programme. The creation of the BRAM as discussed earlier will boost the education and training.

Lack of adequate records and archives management educators

There are inadequate educators/trainers in the field of records and archives studies. Most of the educators/trainers in Uganda have much attention to library science, information systems and information science but ignored the special aspect of records and archives studies.

Lack of appreciation of the role records play in the development of a country by policy makers

The importance of archives administration and records management is little appreciated among administrators and bureaucrats in Uganda

As argued by Okello-Obura (2007), Sound records and information management facilitates fast decision-making and transparency in government operations. Given the well recognized importance and the benefits of good records management as explained under sub-section 1.3.1, a cross-section of Ugandans were very disappointed by the action of the Government of Uganda (Ministry of Education and Sports) to scrap the Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) and Diploma of Records and Archives Management (DRAM) of Makerere University from the list of courses under government sponsorship (Okello-Obura 2007). BLIS and DRAM are the only courses in public universities that train human resources for national and international records management. The person who advised the Government to make this unhealthy decision did not make any meaningful consultation and narrowly looked at the needs of Uganda in terms of human resources. What signals does the scrapping of

these important courses send to the public and the national policy-makers? That good management of records and information is not a priority in their national planning. This kind of decision discourages the potential applicants from secondary level education to develop an interest in pursuing a career in library, records and archives management.

Professional bodies

No single body unites the whole records sector (Rankin 2003). The main professional body in Uganda for professional archivists, records managers and conservators is the Uganda Library and Information Association (ULIA). ULIA membership includes librarians, records managers, publishers, archivists, documentalists among others. Although records managers are members, ULIA's focus has been more on librarians. Records managers in Uganda have not been participating in the ULIA activities. In the recent (June 2008), Symposium organized by ULIA, only one records manager participated. This lack of a uniting body is not making records managers contribute significantly in the quality of education of records and archives management in the country. As argued by Rankin (2003), the Records Management Society has a strong tradition of supporting records training and education and this needs to be tapped in the long run (after developing RAM capacity) to improve records and archives education in Uganda.

Lack of adequate integration of ICTs into records management education

An important challenge is for individual records managers and the profession collectively to adapt to technological change by acquiring sufficient knowledge to be able to use computers. A related challenge concerns professional education, which will prepare records managers to handle more comprehensive responsibilities. The challenge of adapting to technological change provides the opportunity to handle information more effectively in every respect: creation, storage, retrieval and dissemination.

Conclusion

The analysis of records and archives education in Uganda is hoped to give a pointer on how best records and archives management education can be provided. An overview of the administrative history of Uganda signifies the relevance of good records and archives management in Uganda. All efforts should be made to ensure that the national heritage of Uganda is preserved. This is because the value of records and archives management cannot be questioned. Good records and archives management promotes accountability, good governance and human rights. RAM education in Uganda is picking up and is on the right track. With the introduction of the BRAM programme, the RAM sector will be developed in terms of human resources. Needful to point out that collaboration with practitioners and employers to design a useful curriculum for formal education of RAM and training should be emphasized.

Way forward

There is a need for the establishment of distance education for records and archives management education in Uganda. There are many students today who have jobs and would prefer studying from either their homes or from their work places. These categories of students need to be catered for with the help of distance education. Secondly, not everybody can manage to cater for the high costs of living in Kampala (Makerere University) to study full-time. Distance education would be the way out.

To address the problem of inadequate educators in the field of records and archives management, there is need to create good international partnerships that can promote teaching, research and innovations in the field of records and achievements. Furthermore, Anderson (2007) advises that curriculum designers and teachers of professional education courses can do a great deal to help make new professionals become independent lifelong learners is vital. Assessments can be designed not only to test mastery of course content, but to develop new skills needed to write and present the assignments. Learning resources can be provided in such a way that students further develop their own information-seeking skills. This implies that the research component should be emphasized in the curriculum.

Both education and training are essential to ensure optimum performance by practitioners, but the concept of education that is held by the profession needs extension beyond an entry-level qualification to embrace a culture of lifelong learning including higher education and research. As argued by Anderson (2007) and Shepherd (2006), the development of professional training, which will equip records managers to perform effectively in the context of technological changes and promotion of relevant standards and procedures, should be emphasized. Records and Archives management education institutions should involve practitioners in not only the design of the educational curriculum but also in the design of the curriculum for short courses.

There is a need to advocate among both private and public policy makers in Uganda the values of good records management. The association should adopt a higher public profile approach and persuade managers in the public and private sectors, and the general public, of the benefits of good records management. A proactive approach is vital in this regard. Further to that, ULIA needs to refocus on its activities to bring the few records and archives managers in the country on board. Records and archives management activities like workshops, seminars should be urgently created by ULIA. The traditional focus on the library issues alone will not help in the development of RAM in Uganda. Finally, EASLIS needs to lobby and develop a graduate curriculum for records and archives management. This will help educate the human resources necessary for policy formulation in the field of records and archives management.

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