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REFORMS AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY IN UGANDA: IMPLICATIONS FOR INFORMATION SCIENCE WITH A FOCUS ON RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

The global reforms are a reality today. This has not spared education sector and specifically higher education institutions (HEIs). In order to stay afloat, relevant and operate efficiently within the ever dwindling support from governments, universities and colleges are making significant reforms. One of the reforms is the transformation into colleges. The question is: how are these reforms impacting on the operation and training of different professional programmes, especially Information Science and Records Management in the digital era? This article using literature/document analysis and experience of the author explores the reforms in Makerere University with a focus on information science, records and archives management (ISRAM) Education and Training. It highlights the genesis, the strengths of the reforms, weaknesses and makes recommendations that are expected to generate discussions among the LIS professionals.

Keywords

East African School of Library and Information Science, Higher education-Uganda, higher education reforms, Makerere University, library and information science education, records management training

Introduction

Knowledge is the driving force in the rapidly changing globalised economy and society (Rani 2002). Quantity and quality of highly specialized human resources are key factors in determining competencies in the global market. It is generally recognized that the quality of higher education positively contributes to a country's competitiveness and development (Becker 1993; Kremer 1993; Motwani & Kumar 1997; Hedin, Barnes & Chen 2005). The reason is that higher education helps create human capital through life-long learning (Hanushek & Kimko 2000; Deem, Mok & Lucas 2008). Higher education thus helps to sustain the development of a country's socio-economic transformation. Despite the high rated value of Higher Education, not all African countries have the capacity to sustain even one Research University or a comprehensive university (Aina 2009; Jayaram n. d).

The emergence of knowledge as driving factor results in both challenges and opportunities that higher institutions of learning need to recognized and exploit. Rani (2002) notes that developing and transition countries are challenged in a highly competitive world economy because their higher education systems are not adequately developed for the creation and use of knowledge. Converting the challenges into opportunities depend on the rapidity at which they adapt to the changing environment. Uganda is no exception of this global phenomenon. With the dramatic transformation of the framework for higher education globally, higher education institutions have been created and have transformed the educational sector in Uganda. There are currently 5 public universities, 24 private universities and two degree awarding public non-university

institutions in Uganda. One of the premier universities in Uganda is Makerere University. Established in 1922 as a humble technical school, Makerere University is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Africa. Makerere University has 34,000 registered students as of March 2011. This excludes students registered in Makerere University Business Schools, Katigondo National Major Seminary, Gaba Seminary and Alukurum. Makerere University like most universities is governed by laws and regulations. The Governing body of the Makerere University is the University Council whose powers are entrenched in the Universities and other Tertiary Institutions Act. Makerere University is operating in a resource constrained environment where the environment of modernization and interdisciplinary demands that the university rationalizes its processes in order to achieve efficiency by avoiding rigidities, decentralizing and devolving powers to the lower units. The merging of faculties into a collegiate system was viewed as a way forward.

Problem statement

The effect of globalization on higher education has not spared Makerere University. In an effort to transform its operational systems and activities, reforms were initiated at Makerere and were under discussions for 15 years. They were first articulated into an institutional strategic direction by the Strategic Plan of 2000/01-2006/07 and were later re-conducted into the current plan of 2008/09-2018/19. Cognizant of the advantages of colleges, the University Council in 2008, advised faculties, schools and institutes to voluntarily form colleges or be compelled to do so. The East African School of Library and Information Science (EASLIS), the school responsible for teaching of information science, records and archives management has merged with the former Faculty of Computing and Informatics Technology to form the College of Computing and Information Sciences. The question therefore, is: Is this the right merger? This article explores this.

Objectives

- To document and assess the college merger process for the education of information science, records and archives management professionals at Makerere University.
- To analyse the merger and highlight the benefits and weaknesses.
- To propose ways of strengthening the merger for the good of the education and training of information science, records and archives management (ISRAM).

Methodology

The study was based on an integrative literature review. According to Torraco (2005), most integrative literature reviews are intended to address two kinds of topics—mature topics or new, emerging topics. As a topic matures and the size of its literature grows, there is a corresponding growth and development in the knowledge base of the topic. An integrative literature review of a mature topic addresses the need for a critique of, and the potential reconceptualization of, the expanding and more diversified knowledge base of the topic as it continues to develop (Torraco 2005). This topic being mature and with possible new dimension, integrative literature review was found to be the most appropriate for the study.

The merger: which way for information science, records and archives management education in the digital era?

The field of Information Science is constantly changing. Therefore, information scientists are required to regularly review—and if necessary—redefine its fundamental building blocks (Zins 2007). As the information technologies and user profiles are changing day-today and growing at

a tremendous speed, the knowledge society is becoming more complex, dynamic, competitive and dependent on technological changes and information explosion (Thamaraiselvi 2009). The need for e-information and e-records services to the users are also growing and becoming very essential. The emergence of e-governance, e-business, e-service delivery etc. is now well pronounced in all sectors. The impact of web based e-learning and teaching environment has influenced every facet of library and information services in libraries, records centers, registries and providing new opportunities and challenges to the library professional for involvement in the knowledge based society including electronic and multimedia publishing, Internet based-information services, global networking, web based digital resources, digital migration etc.(Thamaraiselvi 2009). Many arguments (Dragulanescu 1999; Zins 2004; Zins 2007) have been put across for the epistemological perspective of Information Science and these have a bearing on the most appropriate knowledge domain for information science, records and archives management training to merge with in a collegiate system.

How do information scientists structure the field of Information Science? The literature provides thousands of knowledge maps; but not all of them are comprehensive and systematic. In fact, most of them are partial, incomplete, and inconsistent (Zins 2007). An analysis of many departments and schools for information science, records and archives management shows that information science, records and archives management (ISRAM) education is based in different places as indicated in Table 1.

An observation of Table 1 which were selected to bring out the various affiliation of ISRAM education and training, shows that ISRAM is in different schools/colleges. The question therefore is: which affiliation or merger is the most appropriate for ISRAM education in the digital era? The work of archivists, librarians, and records managers is changing at a fundamental level. The world has changed significantly. Although no single event clearly dates the beginning of the digital era, several mark its rise. The development of Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) in the 1940s was a seminal moment (Scott 1999).

Table 1: Schools/Faculties offering ISRAM education and their location within Colleges

Departments/Schools	Programmes Offered	College/School Affiliation	University
Department of Library and Information Science	Certificate in Library and Information Science Diploma in Library and Information Science Diploma in Records and Archives administration Bachelor of Library and Information Science	College/School/ Faculty Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	University Kabale University-Uganda
East African School of Library and Information Science	Diploma in Library and Information Studies Diploma in Records and Archives Management Bachelor of Records and Archives Management Bachelor of Library and Information Science MSc. in Information Science Ph.D in Information Science	College of Computing and Information Sciences,	Makerere University-Uganda
Unit of the programme of Library and Information Science	Bachelor of Library and Information Science	Faculty of Education	Uganda Christrian University, Mulono- Uganda
Department of Information Science	Diploma in Information Science Diploma in Information Services for children and youth Bachelor of Information Science (BInf) Honours Bachelor Of Arts Honours In Information Science Honours Bachelor of Information Science Honours Bachelor of Arts in Archival Science Master's degrees and doctoral studies M Inf (Master of Information Science)	School of Arts-College of Humanities	UNISA

Departments/Schools	Programmes Offered	College/School Affiliation	University
	MA (Information Science) D Litt et Phil		
Department of Information Science	Baccalaureus Informationis Scientiae [BIS] (i) with specialisation in Information Science (ii) with specialisation in Multimedia (iii) with specialisation in Multimedia (Four-year programme) (iv) with specialisation in Publishing (b) Baccalaureus Informationis Scientiae Honores [BISHons] (i) with specialisation in Information Science (ii) with specialisation in Multimedia (iii) with specialisation in Publishing (c) Magister Informationis Scientiae (Research) [MIS] (i) with specialisation in Library Science (ii) with specialisation in Information Science (iii) with specialisation in Multimedia (iv) with specialisation in Publishing (d) Masters in Information Technology [M.IT] (Research & Coursework) (e) Doctor Philosophiae [DPhil] (i) with specialisation in Library Science (ii) with specialisation in Information Science (f) Philosophiae Doctor [PhD] (i) with specialisation in Publishing	School of Information Technology, Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology	University of Pretoria

The introduction of the personal computer in the 1980s made computing accessible to many people. The web, which was made public in 1991, has made digital information management seemingly ubiquitous (Finnish Technology Award Foundation 2004). Tsakonas and Papatheodorou (2006) note that digital libraries, e-journal platforms, portals, e-prints and other web-based information systems provide services supporting users to perform intense work tasks that require complex interaction activities. An important challenge is for individual information managers and the profession collectively to adapt to technological changes by acquiring sufficient knowledge to be able to use computers (Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya 2011).

There is now a preponderance of computers in all areas of life, including in the conduct of transactions of all kinds, meaning more and more records and information are being created and maintained digitally. As argued by Ocholla (2008), LIS schools are largely funded by the government through their affiliate institutions, such as universities. Because of rapid technological changes in the information environment, resource support has become fundamental in the growth and sustainability of LIS schools. Increasingly, LIS education and training is becoming highly dependent on modern computer hardware and software, efficient internet access and connectivity, computer literacy and highly skilled information technology (IT) staff, and well equipped computer laboratories (Ocholla 2008).

The challenge of adapting to technological change provides the opportunity to handle information more effectively in every respect: creation, storage, retrieval and dissemination. Recent reports (Ocholla 2003; Minishi-Majanja & Ocholla 2004), focusing on information and communication technologies in LIS education in Africa, recognized increasing investment on ICT for LIS education in the region for teaching and learning, research and for academic management and decision making. But in Uganda, there is still a lot to be done to match the increasing enrolments. Technology infrastructure in LIS schools in Uganda is poor with limited computers, lack of good maintenance and slow internet access (Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya 2011).

With the pressure being exerted by the employers for ISRAM professionals to have adequate knowledge and skills in the relevant areas of ICTs, the merger with ICTs related fields would be preferred. ISRAM professionals need skills in keys areas such as: digitization, library automation, systems analysis and design, electronic records management, electronic publishing, web technology development and applications, digital editing, application of technologies in data analysis among others. These areas do not only require strong ICTs infrastructure but ICT competent human resources. These requirements cannot be easily got in Arts based fields. In order to build synergies, ICTs related fields are more viable for merger with ISRAM. It is against this line of argument that the East African School of Library and Information Science (EASLIS), the main educator and trainer found it appropriate to merge with School of Computing and Informatics Technology. The Department of Information Science at the University of Pretoria has started a Masters in Information Technology in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology comes to mind. ISRAM educators may need to rethink this alignment of the profession. Should we go with Arts and Social Science approach, or technology approach, and merge with ICTs fields so us to build synergies for ISRAM education in the digital era?

EASLIS walk to the College of Computing and Information Sciences

It should be noted that while primary education is fundamental to the nation, higher education determines its economic and technological progress in the globalised era. It is against this background that reforms in higher education should be taken seriously to improve on the human resources competencies. As the process of globalization is technology-driven, and knowledge-driven, the very success of economic reform policies critically depends upon the competence of human capital. The Uganda Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act, Section 29 provides a framework for the formation of constituent colleges of public universities. The framework includes guidelines comprising the establishment of constituent colleges by the National Council for Higher Education, appointment of management and staff, other aspects related to the transformation into a constituent college. In order to facilitate the restructuring and devolution process at Makerere University, guidelines were formulated and approved on the organisational, academic, administrative and financial aspects of devolution of powers to future colleges.

The transition to a restructured and decentralised college model involved phased planning, approval and implementation of the formation of individual colleges by grouping existing units. In line with the need to strongly build on the EASLIS competencies in especially to manage the technological driven world, there was need to join efforts with a closely related discipline like Computing and Information Technology. This need led to comprehensive consultative meetings with the then Faculty of Computing and Informatics Technology and the Department of Mass Communication. In its proposal for discussion, EASLIS proposed a structure as indicated in Figure 1.

Unfortunately, as the discussions went on the Department of Mass Communication was prevented from joining the College with EASLIS and FCIT by its former Faculty of Arts. This resulted into the changing of the name of the College to College of Computing and Information Sciences without Mass Communication. The proposal of three Departments at EASLIS as in Figure 1 also met resistance with the University College Restructuring Committee. The Committee's argument was that EASLIS had few staff (21) and students (approximately 900) and could not have departments. It took the Director, Dr. Okello-Obura to convenience the Committee to approve at least two departments, namely: Department of Library and Information Sciences (Combining the former Department of Information Science and

Department of Library Science) and Department of Records and Archives Management. The discussions culminated into the University Council approving as in Figure 2.

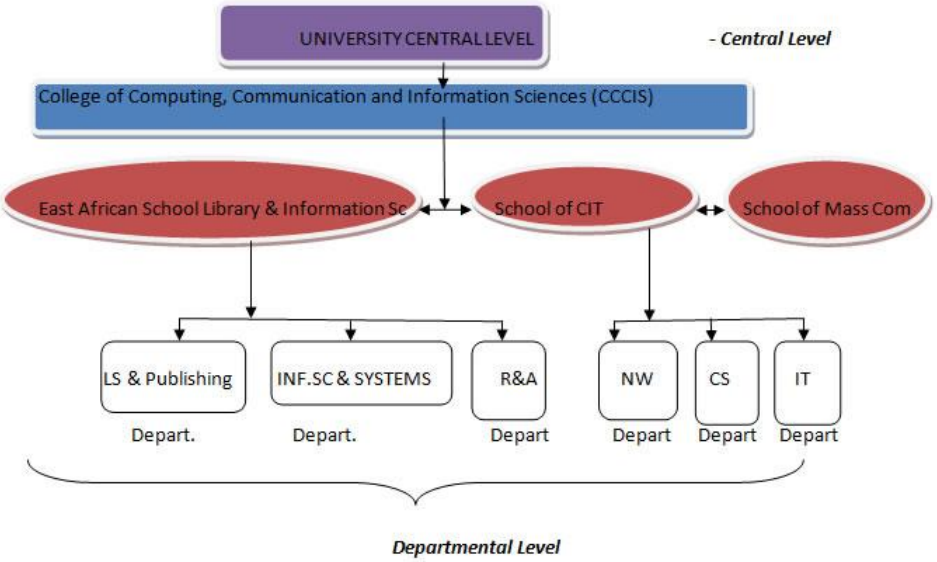

Figure 1: Proposed merger (structure) – academic

N.B. Schools to be headed by Deans
LS = Library Science, INF. Sc. = Information Science, R & A = Records and Archives Management, NW= Networks, CS= Computer Science, IT = Computer Science

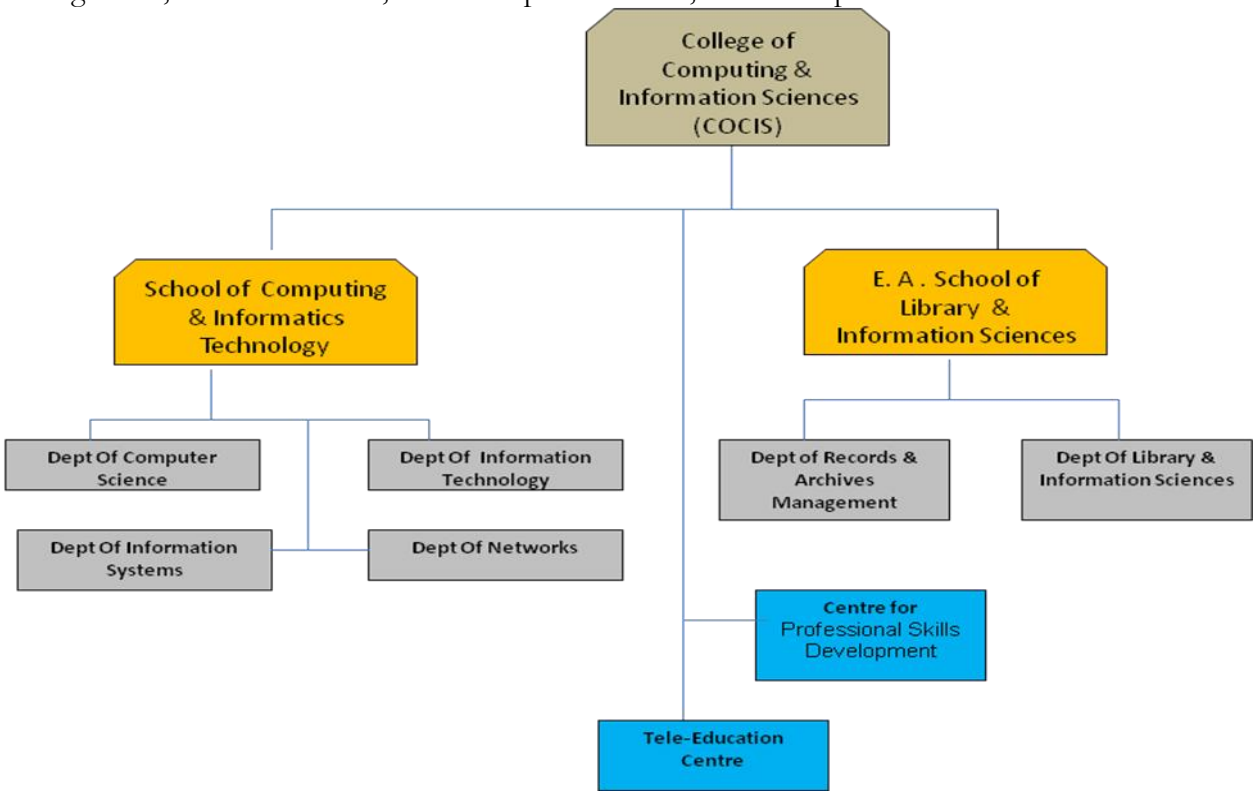

Figure 2: Academic Structure of the College of Computing and Information Science

The College structure

In July 2006, the University Council ratified the Makerere University Constituent College Statute 2006. The College structure comprises of College, School, Department, plus Institute and

Centers where necessary. According to the Makerere University Statute for Constituent Colleges (2006), Institute means a research oriented unit offering training at graduate level or of a specialist nature at the status of a Department while a Research Centre means a research oriented unit set up to address a specific problem requiring a multidisciplinary approach.

Leadership of the College

One of the greatest management thinkers of our time, Peter Drucker defines leadership as: the lifting of people's vision to a higher sight, the raising of their performance to a higher standard, the building of their personality beyond its normal limitations" (Drucker 1985). Leadership is the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people you lead to achieve the goals of the organisation and take it to greater heights (Turyasingura 2010). A leader charts the direction and inspires others to follow. As the Afghan proverbs and saying goes, "*If you think you are leading and no one is following you, then you are merely taking a walk".* Leadership is one of the most significant items on the agendas of all organisations -private, public, NGO, Universities etc. Effective leadership is needed to steer organisations to overcome challenges they face in this dynamic environment. Success or failure of any organisation can be arguably attributed to the leadership of that organisation (Turyasingura 2010). The leadership of the College consists of The Principal, the Deputy Principal, College Secretary, College Registrar, College Bursar, College Human Resource Manager, College Librarian and College Dean of Students for out campus constituent college.

Leadership of the School

Unlike in the past where the school/faculty was headed by a Dean/Director and assisted by Deputy Dean, the school is now being headed by the Dean and assisted by Heads of Department/Chairs of Department.

Key operational changes and impact to Information Science, Records and Archives education and training

In the past, Schools/Faculties had a Finance and Planning Committee and Appointment and Promotion Committee that would make important decision that are binding regarding the management and development of the school. With current reforms, these committees now do not exist at School level with the powers they had and all matters requiring actions from such committees are finally decided at the College level. This is a legal matter and little can be done to change it. It is prudent to add that although this is the situation, EASLIS as a school still makes financial decision, planning and appointment although the approval and final decision is vested with the College. This in essence has reduced the powers of the Schools and EASLIS is not an exception.

Changed roles of Deans

Before the current reforms, the roles of the Deans included among others: maintenance of an up to date inventory of all equipment and assets, movable and immovable of the school, liaising with the Estates Department for the cleanliness and security of the equipment and other items in the school and Chairing Finance and Planning and Appointment and Promotion Committees. The roles of the Deans were both academic and administrative unlike now in the collegiate system where there are expected to be purely academic. The question therefore that arises is: Do LIS professionals prefer having a purely Academic Dean or Administrative and Academic Dean?

This is debatable. Can we see better professional planning and development of LIS training if Deans of LIS schools are purely academic?

Reporting structure

There is a remarkable difference in the reporting structure before reforms and after reforms as seen in Figure 3.

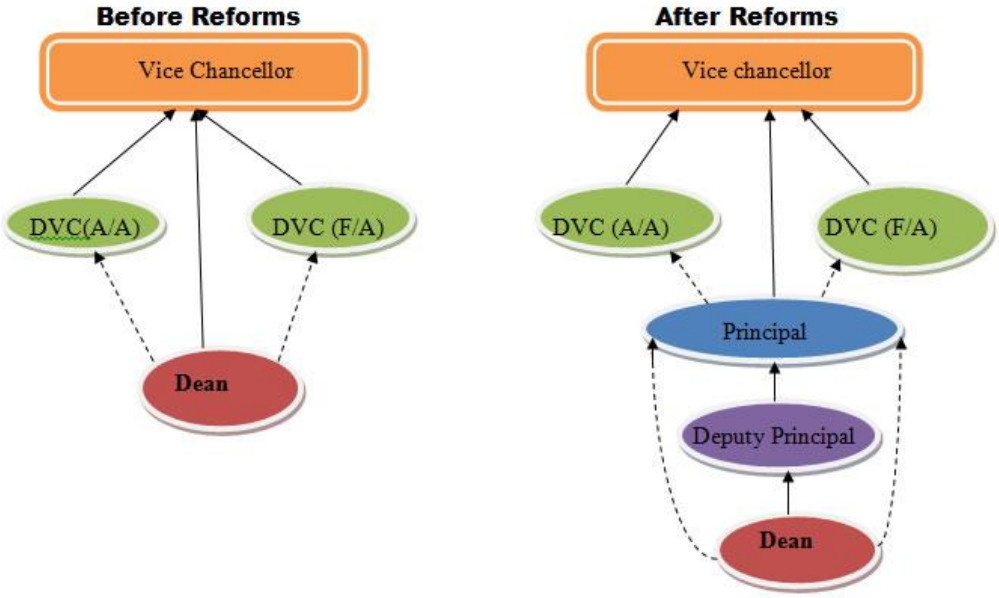

Figure 3: Reporting structure before and after the reforms

Key
DVC (A/A)- Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic Affairs
DVC (F/A) – Deputy Vice Chancellor – Finance and Administration
→ Official Reporting Line
- - - - - - - - - - - - → Reporting line on some of the issues that do not require the Vice Chancellor directly before reforms or the Deputy Principal directly for the case of after reforms

A study of the two diagrams show that Deans used to report directly to the Vice Chancellor but now reports to the Deputy Principal who is in-charge of academic matters in the College. This in my view reduces that lobbying strength of the Dean on matters outside academics. The Deans should have reported directly to the Principal since in the true sense the Deans do not only handle academic matters and after all the Principal is the Chief Administrative, Academic and Financial Officer of a College and is responsible to senate and the University Council for promoting and maintaining academic excellence, efficiency and good order of the College.

Management of research processes

Makerere University is not simply a national university, it is a truly international university, with students coming from all over the globe and with partnerships sealed with many leading world class universities. This calls for efficient ways of managing issues concerning not only teaching, administration but also research. This is one of the strengths of the reforms. The management of the students' research processes has been made easy by decentralizing most of the activities to the Colleges. The current Directorate of Research and Graduate Training used to handle the appointments of supervisors, examiners and all submissions issues of dissertations. This could delay the process and make graduate students delay as well to graduate. This has been reverted to

Colleges and the schools continue to play their roles as was before. The details are as in the Table 2.

Table 2: Management of the research process during the collegiate system

Section	Roles
Directorate of Research and Graduate Training	**Graduate Training Division** • Admission • Advertise graduate admissions • Receive Application forms • Enter bio-data • Disburse application forms to Colleges • Open files for students • Process Admission letters • Send admission letters to Colleges for disbursement **EXAMINATION** • Receive students' final Thesis • Receive graduation lists for final checking for graduation • Custodian of all graduate student files, data base and examination results • Ensuring quality and uniformity in academic programmes, examination processes and the entire graduate training processes • Formulating guidelines for Thesis/Dissertation examination • Monitoring implementation of university policies and regulations concerning graduate training • Processing and issuance of letter of award **RESEARCH GRANTS UNIT** i) Source and coordinate research funding (Both Central and College function) • Coordinate writing of university research grant proposals • Coordinate implementation of activities • Monitor activities • Write and submit reports • Maintain a database of research grants • Maintain a database of applicants, awardees and outputs for the whole ii) Competitive research grants awards (Central activity) • Advertise for applications • Receive applications • Screen applications • Peer review proposals • Select based on standard criteria • Award successful applicants • Sign contracts with awardees • Monitoring both technical and financial activities **b) TRAINING/SKILLS ENHANCEMENT IN RESEARCH MANAGEMENT** Call/Advertise for applications • Receive applications • Screen applications • Select participants • Evaluate the training • Present a report c) **DATABASE (BOTH AT THE CENTER AND AT THE COLLEGE** • Maintain database of applicants and grantees • Database of research grants 2.0 **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY** • Identification of IP • Protection of IP • Business development • Commercialization **3.0 PUBLICATIONS**

Section	Roles

	• Receive applications to publish manuscripts/papers
	• Screen applications for conformity with requirements
	• For publications of books
	• present applications for publishing books to the Board
	• Peer review of manuscripts
	• Awards to successful applicants
	• Signing contract
	  o Identify marketing channels for the books
	  o Handle royalties arising from the sales
	4.0 TRAVEL TO CONFERENCES
	• Advertise availability of travel funds (for projects e.g. Carnegie)
	• Receive applications for travel
	• Screen applications for conformity
	• Select applicants
	• Award travel grants
	• Receive a report from grantee
	• Receive Accountability

Colleges	**ADMISSION** • Consider applications • Recommend prospective students to the Board of Research and Graduate Training **Registration** • Registration of first years • Registration of continuing students • Registration of withdrawals/ Extension • Registration of Retakes • Send copies of registration forms to the Directorate to put on student file **EXAMINATION** • Nominate supervisors (School Level) and appoint supervisors (Academic Board) • Nominate and appoint Internal and External examiners • Send the minutes and details of supervisors, examiners to the students' file at the Directorate • Receive students' progress reports • Identify and appoint Doctoral Committee members • Receive student books for examination • Send the Thesis for Examination • Receive Reports from Examiners • Organize viva voce/Public defense • Send minutes of viva voce, examiners' reports to the Directorate • Process payment for supervisors, internal and external examiners • Receive, and send the final cleared, endorsed copy of the thesis to the Directorate • The College Academic Board considers and approves results, sends copies of results to the Directorate • Clear students for graduation • Send graduation lists to the Directorate for final approval **The Grants unit in the Colleges** • Coordinate writing of college research grant proposals • Coordinate implementation of activities • Monitor research activities • Write and submit reports • Maintain a database of grants and outputs for the college • Advise innovators to contact IP unit at the center • Assist the IP unit in organizing sensitization meetings/workshops in IP • Liaise with the DR&GT on matters relating to Research Grants and IP

Section	Roles
THE BOARD OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE TRAINING	**Functions** • Discusses new academic programmes on behalf of Senate • Presents the programmes to Senate for approval • Handles appeals for graduate students • Approving Research Grants • Assess applications and admit students who meet admission requirements on behalf of Senate. • Develop generic guidelines for graduate training

A critical observation of the management of the research process indicates that there is no need for the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training to exist. What could be done is to create a Unit under the Academic Registrar Department to coordinate activities and policies of research and graduate training within the University. This Unit would report to Senate through Academic Registrar. A Committee of Senate, the Research and Graduate Training Committee with representatives from each College would help in ensuring that this unit functions as per the University vision and mission regarding research and graduate training.

Curriculum development

The curriculum developments processes before and after the reforms are as shown in Figure 4.

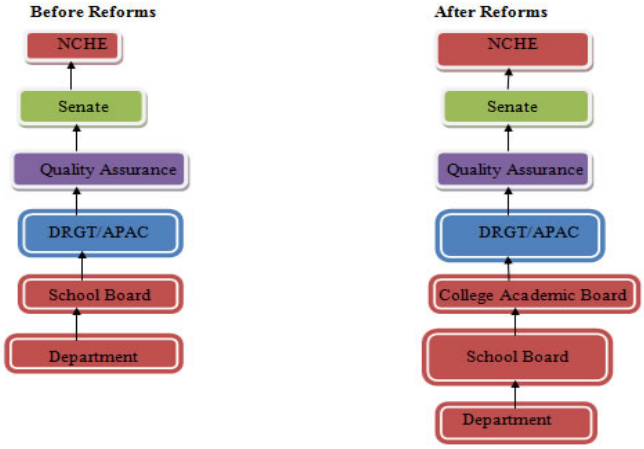

Figure 4: The curriculum development before and after reforms

Key
NCHE- National Council of Higher Education, DRGT –Directorate of Research and Graduate Training, APAC- Academic Policy and Appeals Committee

Figures 3 and 4 shows that 'after reforms' another layer of bureaucracy was added. With the collegiate system, programme development processes have become longer and need to be revisited. One fundamental component in the process is the involvement of Quality Assurance. Quality assurance plays a significant contribution in enforcing quality and coherence in the programmes operations. Phusavat *et al.*, (2012) supports this by asserting that "quality assurance and university classification are viewed as a cornerstone in reforming public universities"

Financial management reforms

Before reforms, EASLIS had it account and the Director/Dean was the accounting officer. That is no longer the case after reforms. Although this is viewed as a weakness of the reform by some few people for LIS Education and Training in Uganda and Makerere University in particular, the author sees it as strength. The Director/Dean of EASLIS had added a 'fourth role" of the University that is "the financial management". This could take a lot of time of the Director/Dean. Instead of planning for the professional development of LIS education, a lot of time was spent on ensuring that the books of accounts balance (Okello-Obura & Kigongo-Bukenya 2008).

Notable benefits of the collegiate system to ISRAM in Makerere University

- ISRAM ICT training infrastructure was not strong enough before the collegiate system. With the collegiate system and in particular merging with Faculty of Computing and Information Technology, the ICTs infrastructure which is very important for LIS training today has been improved. From computer ratio to student of 42:1 down to 2: 1 is a remarkable improvement in the ISRAM training in Makerere University.
- Due to the improvement in the staff capacity, EASLIS is in the advanced stages to launch three postgraduate programmes, viz: MSc in Records and Archives Management, Msc in Agricultural Information and Communication Management and Msc in Publishing Studies. This has been boosted by the merger in which more staff are now available to handle ICTs based courses.
- The need to manage records properly has been realized by the University. The University is in the process of creating substantial positions for records management officers in all the Colleges just like for librarians. This development will create more opportunities for EASLIS graduates.
- Due to the improvement/expansion of infrastructure as a result of collegiate system, more applicants are now being considered for EASLIS programmes. From a population of approximately 800 students to now about 1000.

However, one of the biggest challenges is attitude change among staff. Many staff need to realize that with the collegiate system, many processes and procedures have changed. A cross-section of staff in both schools still wants the practices in former schools maintained. Although this is possible, to some extent not all practices or processes can be maintained. There is need for an audit of processes or practices from both schools and viable, efficient and cost effective ones adopted. More refresher courses on change management will also contribute significantly to change the few mind-sets. Higher education should be agent of change. Jayaram (n. d) alludes to this when he notes that "it is indeed ironic that higher education, which is expected to function as an agency of change, should itself be resistant to it". People within higher education institutions need to embrace change for higher education to transform to address the needs of the stakeholders.

Conclusion and recommendations

Intellectual self-determination as argued by Aina (2009) refers to:

> the relatively autonomous and self-conscious capacities to meaningfully assess one's situation, take positions determined by one's interests and their relevance in particular situations, and to be sufficiently confident about the decisions so as to mobilize and deploy the necessary resources to achieve desired outcomes.

Years of colonization, inept and corrupt postcolonial leadership, and different types of collective servitude—and more recently, economic adjustment programmes that were neither internally debated nor owned by the citizens—have contributed to undermining higher education in Africa. Although reforms in Makerere University had donor support, Makerere University had the liberty to determine its future. As Yates (1989) notes, information takes many forms and is used for many interrelated purposes. "A variety of forces influence this complex system. In some ways, the roots of the current information ecosystem lie in the Industrial Revolution and the rise of systematic management" (Yates 1989) a point ISRAM educator cannot afford to take it lightly. Though there might be some challenges in the implementation of the reforms in Makerere University, the collective effort is prudent in the development of the college. EASLIS staff cannot at anytime ignore the continuous reforms that will emerge from the College since every staff member contributed in the formation of the COCIS.

It is therefore recommended as follows:

- EASLIS should continue to exploit the potentials in the College and strengthen the education and training for the LIS professional needs that continue to be dynamic every now and then.
- An aggressive action towards change of attitude is required. Continuous refresher workshops on change management, customer care and entrepreneurship could help to make staff more vibrant and brace change.
- A critical analysis of the reporting structure indicates that there is too much bureaucracy in the reporting levels after reforms. This partly because of lack of full devolution of power to the College by the Center especially in terms of finances and recruitment. Power should be devolved in real terms to the Colleges such that more decisions are made at the college with only "monitoring" eye from the center to ensure conformity to the overall University policies.
- To strengthen research, the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training should be removed from the structure and a unit within the Academic Registrar created to handle all policy issues regarding research and graduate training in the University. Colleges should be empowered with authority to manage research and graduate training at schools. This will fasten activities executions and avoid duplications.
- Before the Collegiate system, programmes development processes were shorter. With the Collegiate system, the processes have become longer. I recommend that the programme development should now be from: Department to School Board to College Academic Board and finally to the Research and Graduate Training Committee of the Senate for Postgraduate programmes and Academic Policy and Appeals Committee of Senate for undergraduate programmes. These committees should be strengthened and should have representatives from all colleges and a representative from Quality Assurance. These committees should make decisions on behalf of senate and their decisions communicated to Senate for noting purpose. The current practices where programmes discussed and scrutinized by these committees and Quality Assurance Directorate and then again sent to senate is cumbersome and time/resources wasting.

ISRAM field is multidisciplinary in nature, with a multitude of research areas, as well as theoretical and epistemological orientations. Despite the orientations, one fundamental issue is the most appropriate orientation. Should it be Art based? Technology based? Or what? I want to echo what Pearce-Moses (2006) noted that information professionals, including archivists, have been actively engaged in designing and implementing technology in their personal and professional lives and thus are aware of the crucial issues facing the profession. However, despite the fact that most information professionals now recognize the importance of working with digital materials, many are unsure what to do, creating a big challenge in the profession. If

information professionals expect libraries and records programmes to be a dynamic, thriving part of the information ecosystem, they must understand their environment. One of the most important things to understand is how technology has transformed the information ecosystem. If telegraphy formed much of the modern recordkeeping systems in the nineteenth century, the Internet has certainly changed the context of publications and records. Information is now widely available, and access continues to expand through the Internet, PDAs, and mobile phones (Yates 1989). Not only is information ubiquitous, the quantity of information continues to grow exponentially, and the speed of information transfer continues to accelerate (Yates 1989).

To help answer the question: What are the skills that information professionals must have to work with e-books, electronic records, and other digital materials today? As reforms penetrate Higher education, which direction should ISRAM take to merge with other fields? This article s gave the perspective of the reforms in Makerere University with special reference to ISRAM education and the question of which field to merge with in the current reforms in higher education and echo what Magara and Matovu (n. d) noted that notwithstanding the developments in information society in LIS, merging EASLIS, Mass Communication and Faculty of Computing and Information Technology to form a College of Information, Computing and Communication Sciences would be the best option. Nevertheless, the merger without Mass Communication can be bridged with the introduction of related courses in communication and mass media by EASLIS. More studies could however be made in the situation where ISRAM has merged with none ICTs related fields.

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