
Policies and strategies that govern the management of audio-visual materials in Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives

Ruth M. Abankwah (PhD)
University of Botswana (Department of Library and Information Studies), Gaborone,
Botswana
ruth.abankwah@mopipi.ub.bw

Abstract

This paper reports the results of an empirical study on the management of audio-visual materials in the member states of the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA). The paper examines the extent to which national archives in ESARBICA apply archival policies and strategies to the management of audio-visual (AV) materials. The main objectives of the study were to: i) identify policies which archival institutions in ESARBICA used to manage AV materials; and ii) identify strategies which archival institutions in ESARBICA apply to the management of AV materials. The study employed a survey design. Nine countries (South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland) in the region were covered. Data was gathered mainly through literature review supplemented by interviews and observation checklists. The findings revealed that while some national archives adhered to established standards and practices, others did not. It was evident that disposal and digitisation policies were lacking. Since most national archives were financially constrained, the management of AV materials did not seem to be a priority in their budgets. This in turn impacted on the preservation of AV materials.

Keywords: Audio-visual materials, archives, archival principles, archival practices

1 Introduction

The level of preservation is upheld by the policies and strategies that archival and media organisations put in place. Failure to adhere established standards in the management of audio-visual materials should be a cause for concern to AV archivists in the region. Ham (1981) stated that the work of an archivist is determined by the way society records, uses, stores, and disposes of information. He further asserted that the effectiveness of archivists in the post-custodial era would be determined by their ability to change their past behaviour, by coming up with strategies to cope with opportunities and the problems created by the new information revolution. This paper examines policies and strategies that National Archives have instituted to manage AV materials. It takes a critical look at the traditional records life-cycle and other models for managing records and archives. The paper also examines the applicability of archival functions to the management of AV materials. These include appraisal and selection, acquisition, accessioning, arrangement and description, preservation and access.

2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework was mainly guided by the record life-cycle. This model states that records must be managed from creation to disposal, irrespective of format. However, there

are a number of models that may be used to manage records throughout their life-cycle, irrespective of format. The models include Records and Archives Management as parallel systems, where records and archives are managed as parallel systems (Cook 1990:37), the Reference Model of the Record-Keeping System which has been criticized for having a narrow view to records management (Buckland 2003; Horsman 2003), hence the suggestion that it should be replaced with a holistic 'record-keeping system. Other models include the records continuum model which is a theoretical basis for the management of records in their electronic and non-electronic format (An 2001; Flynn 2001; McKemmish 2003) and the integrated records management model which portrays a matrix relationship between the records life-cycle and the continuum model (Roper & Millar 1999). This model was recommended to Public Archival Institutions in an attempt to improve the management of records and archives (Roper & Millar 1999). The proponents of this model argue that records management and archives administration constitute good records and archives management, which are prerequisites to a good public service system (Roper & Millar 1999). They realized a continuing need for records managers and archivists to apply established records and archives management principles and techniques to records. The next section discusses the archivists' perspective of the records life-cycle.

2.1 Background to the records life-cycle

The records life-cycle was developed in the 1930s in North America by Schellenberg, to control the creation of public records (Penn, Pennix & Coulson 1994). Since its inception, there have been various models portraying the records life-cycle concept (Shepherd & Yeo 2003). While some models such as the records continuum, illustrate a linear progression of activities with no demarcation in the stages of a record, the records life-cycle portrays the life span of a record in three stages: current, semi-current and non-current. Mullon (2005), who viewed the records life-cycle from a business perspective, realised the need to design correct processes to control records throughout their life-cycle and hence reduce operational costs.

Other disciplines adapted the records life-cycle concept to their needs. For instance, the information life-cycle is used in the information management and technology disciplines (Shepherd & Yeo 2003:7). The major argument of the critics of the records life-cycle is that it does not meet contemporary needs (An 2001; McKemmish 2003). While the proponents of the records life-cycle postulate that records go through a static progression of stages from birth to death, its opponents argue that some records have continuing value. For such records, the final stage of destruction never occurs (An 2001; Horsman 2003; McKemmish 2003; Upward 2000; Shepherd & Yeo 2003). This is because "electronic records rely on logical rather than physical structure, and the tasks associated with the physical storage of paper are largely irrelevant to their management" (Shepherd & Yeo 2003). Moreover, some critics of the records life-cycle argue that it puts an artificial barrier between records management and archivists' responsibilities. This explains why other models such as the records continuum were developed. This paper argues that while models for managing electronic records can be applied to AV materials, the traditional practices of managing records through the records life-cycle are still applicable to AV materials.

Koch (1997) likened the records life-cycle phases to the functions of AV records. According to Koch (1997:33), the functions of AV records include collection, creation, classification, dissemination, preservation and conservation. Koch (1997:33) further noted other archival functions which apply to AV records such as acquisition, selection, accessioning and storage are added at a later stage. Kula (2008) supported Mullon (2005),

Mutiti (1999), and Parker (1999) when he advised records creators to adhere to the records functions in order to achieve an orderly transfer of moving images to archives. Kula (2008) stipulated that:

all production elements (negatives, prints, videotapes, etc), and related documentation, should be identified, designated, and scheduled so that the disposition of the elements can be controlled at every stage of the production/diffusion process.

The above observation fulfils a major records management tenet. Indeed, “archivists should participate in decisions about how records are stored before they come to the archives” (Harrison 1997:93). This requirement involves setting standards which must be adhered to before records are transferred to the archives. It is therefore important to determine if archival institutions in ESARBICA meet the above requirements in as far as AV materials are concerned. Mnjama (1996) pointed out that national archival institutions in Africa concentrated on managing the last phase of the cycle, to the detriment of the other phases. He urged national archival institutions in Africa to play a more active role in managing all phases of the life-cycle. This would require, among other things, devising procedures for handling records in other media including “...films, photographs, slides, magnetic tapes and computer-generated records” (Mnjama 1996:27). However, Mutiti (1999) observed that while some institutions in ESARBICA were in control of the full life-cycle of records, others were not in control. It is therefore important to determine the extent to which archival institutions in the region apply the records life-cycle principles to the management of AV materials.

2.2 The archivist’s perspective of the records life-cycle

From the archivist’s perspective, the active stage of the records life-cycle should comprise the activities of production or acquisition, organisation, maintenance, use and selection. The semi-active stage includes activities of transfer, identification and organisation, consultation and selection (Guercio 2001). The final stage of redundancy deals with selection, arrangement, description and permanent preservation of archival historical documents. It can therefore be seen that there is an overlap between the life-cycle stages since some archival functions cut across all the stages of the records life-cycle. These functions include organisation/arrangement, selection, description and use. Nonetheless, it is important to examine how the records life-cycle is applied to AV materials in the region.

3 Methodology

The main source of data was literature review supplemented through interviews and observations. The research instruments were pre-tested on experts in the area of archives and records management, as well as people who managed various formats of records and archives. The study purposively selected nine countries in southern Africa: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Swaziland. Lesotho was mentioned in passing. The target group included Directors of National Archives in the region, archivists and other people who manage AV materials. Interviews and observations were conducted in national archives of the selected countries. Media organizations in each of the selected countries were also visited.

4 Literature review and research results

The literature reviewed covers archival functions, policies and strategies and their applicability to AV materials.

4.1 Application of archival functions to AV materials in selected archival institutions in ESARBICA

The functions of managing archival information are central to the management of AV materials. These functions are appraisal and selection, acquisition, accessioning, arrangement and description, preservation and access (Cook 1986:37; Cox 1992; Leary 1988:105; Schellenberg 1984). They are discussed in the sections that follow.

4.1.1 Appraisal and selection

Appraisal precedes selection. It is one of the most important duties of an archivist (Forde 1990). Appraisal is an intellectual decision to determine the value of records based on the current, administrative, legal and fiscal use, evidential, informational, research value or intrinsic value (Harrison 1997; Ward, 1990). Appraisal is done to preserve some of the archival materials or reject some. However, Mnjama (2005:465) reported that “of all the archival materials available in the region, perhaps the most neglected archival resource is audio-visual collections...” Cook (1980), Cox (1992) and Mwangi (1996) realised a need to set guidelines for appraising AV materials. Thus, Cook (1980), Cox (1992) and Roper and Miller (1999a), argued that machine-readable records should be appraised in their early stages before they disappear. Cox (1992:50) felt that the appraisal function is so crucial that any archival institution lacking a systematic approach to records appraisal would not have a strong archival programme. Leary (1988) observed that each type of AV materials requires a different set of appraisal criteria. She set guidelines which center on specific appraisal standards and principles, age, and subject content (Leary 1988:109).

The International Association of Sound and Audio Visual Archives (IASA), the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) and International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT) play an overarching role in the management of audio and sound archives. The above bodies provide guidelines for selection and appraisal of AV materials (IASA, Technical Guidelines, 2005; FIAT IFTA Programme and Production Commission 2004; Ward 1990:19-21). However, empirical studies have shown that many of the national archives in the region do not adhere to the above guidelines (Abankwah 2008; Maseko 2010). Madanha (1996) argued that successful appraisal should cover the whole life-span of a record, from creation to disposition. This means that everybody involved in the care of records must be involved in the appraisal process. Cook (1980) argued that machine-readable records should be appraised in the same way conventional records are appraised. However, Cook (1980) considered appraisal to be a difficult task, particularly in regard to machine-readable records. This is partly attributed to the fact that the traditional classification of records by their primary values and secondary values does not easily apply to AV materials (Frambourt 1986). However, the author observed that age renders radio recordings and television programmes obsolete. This results in a loss of image characteristics when some films on cellulose nitrate base are transferred onto more recent film or video.

Nonetheless, Leary (1988:106) pointed out that appraisal of audio-visual materials required a determination of:

the point at which technology and other factors accelerated production levels sufficiently to require archivists to make selections from the quantities of materials available. That dividing line will differ from country to country and medium to medium (Leary 1988:106).

Leary (1988) opined that the archival value of spoken recordings such as a prepared speech diminishes if a printed version is also preserved. Indeed, the spread of inexpensive video recordings diminishes the value of spoken word recordings. Therefore, Leary (1988) stressed that it is important for audio-visual archivists to identify all elements of the audio-visual records such as negatives, prints and related documents, as part of the scheduling process. Mnjama (2005) conceded that BNARS was still lagging behind in the appraisal of non-current records. This situation could apply to the appraisal of AV materials.

Mwango (1996) observed a similar situation in the case of the National Archives of Tanzania. In the case of the National Archives of Zambia, Hamooya (2003) reported that assessing the information value of films and sound recordings was a challenge, because of the complexity of the information content. Hamooya (2003) stated that it was not clear what criteria were used to select films for preservation, in the period before 1990s. However, later on, programmes were selected on the basis of:

their information value related to significant political, cultural, education, sporting and economic events...greater emphasis is placed on the value of the production for research purposes, as opposed to its value as a future program production (Hamooya 2003).

The above observation shows that archival institutions in ESARBICA follow different approaches in the selection of materials, For instance, in South Africa; appraisal is done when the materials are still in the custody of the creating agency (Harris 1996). The situation is different in other countries such as Botswana, Zimbabwe and Swaziland where appraisal is done at the national archives (Madanha 1996; Mnjama 2005).

Abankwah (2008) concluded that national archivists in the region did not appraise AV materials properly. This therefore explains why Leary (1988) earlier advised archivists to set guidelines for appraising AV materials. These include specific appraisal standards and principles, age, subject content (subject content of AV materials to future researchers should be ascertained), uniqueness (their ability to document the mundane, trivial and everyday texture of life), quality (good technical quality covering clear focus, audible sound and proper exposure) and quantity. After archival materials are appraised, they are acquired by the concerned archival institution.

4.1.2 Acquisition

According to Schwrtlich and Reed (1993) acquisition is a “process by which archives add to their holdings by accepting material as a donation, transfer, purchase or loan”. It should therefore be perceived as the first step in the records life-cycle from the archivist’s perspective. However, Matangira (2003) observed that the focus of many national archives in the region was on paper documentation. She revealed that archival institutions in the region had no deliberate acquisition policy for AV materials. The author observed that “in most cases, these audio-visual materials found their way to the Archives through donation or someone deciding to dump them at the Archives after facing space problems” (Matangira 2003:45). This was the case at the National Archives of Zimbabwe.

In the case of South Africa, the South African Archival Act mandates the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA) to collect AV materials (National Archives and Records Service of South Africa, Act No 43 of 1996). NFVSA obtains AV materials from offices that fall under the National Archive Act of South Africa. It also accepts donations from private organisations. However, although NFVSA is the legal deposit for audio-visual

material, the broadcast material was never part of that arrangement and it was never specified. The Legal Deposit Committee is currently reviewing the situation (SABC 2011).

The situation at the Botswana National Archives and Records Services (BNARS) was different. Abankwah (2008) discovered that the national archive had an agreement with the Broadcasting and Information Department to deposit copies of AV materials, but the latter retained copyright. The bulk of AV materials still remain with the creators and only a small percentage has been passed to BNARS for security purposes only. Hamooya (2003) wrote that, after the 1980s, the National Archives of Zambia discontinued the acquisition of magnetic sound recording tapes (except for audio cassettes), due to lack of equipment. It can therefore be seen that the absence of acquisition policies impacts negatively on AV collections in the region. Since good preservation practices demand that archival materials are properly acquired, arranged and described, for ease of retrieval it is important that the archival function of accessioning is discussed.

4.1.3 The need to adhere to provenance in accessioning AV materials

Roper and Millar (1999b) defined accessioning as a continuous process of transferring records to the physical custody and legal control of an archival institution. This process is proof that the records have been transferred to the archival institution. It involves a systematic documentation of essential information about the new archival consignments. It requires archivists to uphold the principle of provenance in the context of AV materials (Klaue 1997). The author stressed that AV materials “must be handled in the form in which they were produced, films should be conserved as films not as videocassettes, records as records not sound cassettes” (Klaue 1997). Weir (1988:131) stressed the need for computer services to “accession, preserve, and provide reference service on machine-readable records”. The tools used to accession AV materials include accession registers and series description. Abankwah (2008) discovered that to a large extent, national archives in the region used accession registers to document information on AV materials. This information included; acknowledgement date, information content, records quality and acquisition file number. To a lesser extent, the information contained in the accessions registers included; donor/previous custodian, location of material, description of material, originating office and date of arrival. What was missing from the accession registers of all the national archives was information about the compilers (Abankwah 2008). To a large extent, information contained in series description of the national archives included dates and subjects. To some extent, series description contained information on size and type of material arrangement (Abankwah 2008). After archival materials have been received in an archive, they are appraised using a separate AV register. This was the practice in the three countries that the above researcher visited; Botswana, South Africa and Namibia.

4.1.4 Arrangement and description

The organisation of AV materials requires that they are arranged and clearly described for ease of retrieval. Proper arrangement and description are prerequisites to access and use of AV resources (Kepley 1998). Brunton and Robinson (1993) defined arrangement as “the process of physically organising records in accordance with the accepted archival principles of provenance and original order”. In a paper presented at a FIAT/IFA workshop, Hamooya (2003) argued that “the arrangement of sound recordings has its own complexities. The reel-to-reel tapes carry so many different programmes that describing them have to be done meticulously”.

Abankwah (2008) discovered that national archives in EASRBICA used both provenance and original order to arrange AV materials. According to Hamooya (2003), the archival principal of provenance was easier to determine, as the National Archives of Zambia dealt with only three media organisations. Most of the national archives used registers and inventories to describe the AV materials while a few used index cards, guides and books. Only one national archive used a computerized system (Abankwah 2008:214). In a study of Radio Botswana Music library, Setshwane (2005) discovered that although phonographic recordings were assigned numerical numbers sequentially, they were so tightly shelved that the paper box casing made a grinding in the process of retrieval (Setshwane 2005). Nonetheless, the author noted that magnetic recordings were appropriately stored vertically, albeit with some misfiling. Compact discs were also assigned numbers before they were placed on wooden shelves (Setshwane 2005). The system was effective, as it was automated (Setshwane 2005). However, Abankwah's (2008) study which followed Setshwane's (2005) revealed that the phonographic recordings were kept horizontally on the floor of the Music Section, in the New Multimedia Complex building. This means that the phonographic recordings in the above organization could be wearing out, due to pressure caused by the discs on the top. However, Abankwah (2008) concluded that some national archives and media organizations in ESARBICA applied appropriate archival principles in the arrangement and description of the AV collections.

In the case of Tanzania, Derges (1992) discovered that the AV materials at the Film Institute were largely unidentified, due to improper cataloguing. Even the manual systems did not reflect data fields such as pre-defined rights, copyright, number of showings, photo rights, territory rights, re-use rights and footage rights. In Swaziland, Maseko (2010) observed that although Swaziland Television Authority (STVA) videotapes are systematically arranged according to subject titles, "some of the videotapes are stacked up in card-board boxes without any meaningful arrangement" (Maseko 2010:79). This practice makes the retrieval process slow and cumbersome. Nonetheless, the author maintained that there is a "certain loose level of provenance and original order at STVA" (Maseko 2010:79).

From the literature, it is clear that the management of AV materials ought to be guided by international standards. For instance, ISO 15489-1:2001 requires organizations to ensure that records management systems meet quality assurance standards by providing timely and efficient access and retrieval to all formats of records. This is said to be the best way organizations can meet accountability requirements (International Standards Organization 15489:1 2001).

Since data fields are governed by international standards such as IASA, Dublin Core and MARC (Malden 2005), Abankwah (2008) sought to discover whether national archives and media organizations applied intellectual control standards to AV materials. Findings revealed that only one national archive used MAD, one national archive used IASA rules and only one media organization used WINISIS (UNESCO program). Abankwah (2008) concluded that most of the national archives in the region did not apply the recommended IASA cataloguing standards (which incorporate ISAD (G) general rules) or the latest technology to their AV collections. This resulted in problems of cataloguing television series, popular music recordings, films and videos. If such problems are not addressed, national archives and media organisations in the region will not be able to share information about their collections with other institutions, locally and internationally. Worse still, the information cannot easily be shared if it is not properly arranged.

4.1.5 Preservation and access

Since Feather and Eden (1997) asserted that preservation supports access, it can be concluded that preservation and access to archival resources is the core business of an archival institution (Ngulube 2002). Although Ngulube (2002) argued that fundamental preservation principles apply to all formats of archival materials there were some cases where national archives permitted access to original or master copies because they could not afford multiple copies (Matangira 2003). A case in question is National Archive of Zambia where it was reported that, “16mm and 35mm films are only accessible to users if there is a reference copy...” (Hamooya 2003). The author further explained that access was hampered by a lack of play back equipment. Sharing similar sentiments, Matangira (2003) explained that access to AV materials was denied because the materials were not catalogued, there was no viewing or listening equipment and lack of resources to change to new formats due to obsolescence. Hamooya (2003) further noted that although the National Archives of Zambia preserved copies of films in air conditioned repositories, some of the old television programs were not deposited in the National Archives of Zambia.

In Setshwane’s (2005) study, revealed that AV materials were not lent to external users, except university students or researchers, who were required to obtain permission from the Director of Broadcasting Services. In such cases, AV materials were accessed within the premises of Radio Botswana. Radio Botswana staff were allowed to borrow AV materials from the library. Setshwane (2005) stated that copies were not made for borrowers, but they were allowed to listen to the recordings at the Radio Botswana studios. Abankwah (2008) observed that the librarian at the Radio Botswana library did not inspect AV materials when the users returned them. The situation that prevailed at the South African Broadcasting Service (SABC) and the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) of Namibia was similar to that of the Radio Botswana Music Library (Abankwah 2008).

In view of the various challenges which archival institutions in the region faced, Abbott (1999) and Matangira (2003) concluded that obsolescence of hardware and software were a challenge to the long-term preservation and access to AV materials. For instance, Setshwane (2005) reported that most of the sound recordings at the Radio Botswana Music library were deteriorating. Nonetheless, Mutiti (2001) reported that South Africa was the only country in the region with a strategy in place to ensure that no electronic records were destroyed or erased without authority from the National Archivist. This explains why Abankwah (2008:251) later noted that most national archives in ESARBICA did not have a preservation policy

4.2 The legal framework under which AV archives are managed.

Klaue (1997) stressed that a legal framework gives AV archives a mandate to function, regardless of whether or not an archive is “integrated into a state archive or exists as an independent institution...” Therefore, Mnjama (1996) states that the success of a total records management programme largely depends on a carefully constructed and flexible records management law. Archival legislation “provides the legal framework under which national archives operate” (Mnjama 2005). These views are supported by ISO 15489-1:2001 which requires organizations to operate in a regulatory environment.

Kofler (2004) revealed that the organisation of audio-visual archives varies from country to country and from institution to institution. Table 1 shows the legislative framework that governs AV materials in various ESARBICA countries.

Table 1: Legislative framework for AV materials in selected ESARBICA countries

Country	Legislative framework
Botswana	Legal deposit - An agreement signed on 7 November 2002 allowing Botswana National Archives and Records Services to acquire any programmes through VHS format from BTV (BNARS 2002). Copyright legislation – covers economic rights and moral rights (<i>Botswana Government Gazette</i> 2000)
Kenya	Legal deposit of all producers’ work – (Public Archives and Documentation Service, Act 1966 of Kenya). Restricted access to all formats of records – (Public Archives and Documentation Service, Act 1966 of Kenya) Disclosure of information restricted for certain purposes (National Archives of Kenya, 2006).
Namibia	Legal deposit - The Namibia Archives Act requires producers to deposit copies with the National Archives (<i>Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia</i> 2000) Copyright Act of Namibia -(<i>Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia</i> 2000) National Archives of Namibia Act – gives the Head of the National Archives authority to duplicate photographs, microfilm or any format (<i>Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia</i> 2000).
South Africa	Copyright Act - advocates separate copyright protection for cinematographic film (No 98 of 1978) National Archives and Records Services of South Africa Act (No 43 of 1996)
Tanzania	Legal deposit – National Archives of Tanzania enforces legal deposit through Tanzania Television Services (Matangira 2003)
Zambia	Legal deposit – The National Archives Act requires film producers to deposit copies with the National Archives of Zambia (Matangira 2003).

4.2.1 Application of Archival Acts to AV materials in ESARBICA

Matangira (2003) reported that national archives’ Acts acknowledge a need to preserve archives in any media or format. For instance, the National Archives of Zimbabwe’s (NAZ) Act of 1986 states that the mandate of NAZ is to “acquire, preserve and provide public access to Zimbabwean documentation in whatever format, in an efficient and economic manner” (Department of National Archives 2007). Similarly, the National Archives of Tanzania Act seeks to ensure proper administration and better management of public records and archives throughout their life-cycle (‘public records’ refer to recorded information, regardless of form

or medium) (The United Republic of Tanzania No 6 of 1979). However, some Acts such as the Malawi National Archives do not specify a mandate to preserve records in all formats (Malawi National Archives 2007). In most countries, National Broadcasting stations operate under different Legislation which also stipulate the duration for the retention of all broadcast materials. For instance, Chavula (1988) observed that, although there were similarities in archival legislation of various East African countries, they differed in interpretation. Similarly, Kenya Public Archives Act of 1965 referred to public archives as public records and others that were housed and preserved in the national archives (National Archives of Kenya 2006). In Lesotho, the National Archives Act of 1967 referred to public archives as any documents (which would include AV materials) received or created in a government office and dealt with according to the provisions of the Act (Chavula 1988). This would exclude records or documents that are created or managed by parastatal and private organisations.

In Malawi and Zambia, the National Archives Acts referred to “all such public and judicial records and all such records as classified and conserved in the National Archives as public records” (Chavula 1988). However, the mission statement of the National Archives of Malawi states that the archive is mandated to provide custody and preservation services for all documentary heritage “irrespective of media” (National Archives of Malawi 2006). This implies that the National Archival Act of Malawi adequately covers AV materials. Nonetheless, a recent study reveals that Swaziland Television Authority (STVA) does not comply with the legal deposit requirement (Maseko 2010). This is despite the fact that STVA of 1983 empowers this body to regulate television and broadcasting services in the country. These problems are not peculiar to ESARBICA region as a recent study reveals that intellectual property issues remain major challenge heritage institutions world-wide (Evans & Laurence 2011). The authors argue that these challenges cut across “all stages of the information management cycle, from the creation of digitized materials or selection and acquisition of externally created materials, to the provision of access and long-term management of digital assets” (Evans & Laurence 2011:159).

4.2.2 Policies that govern archival institutions in ESARBICA

Abankwah (2008) noted that archival policies that apply to AV materials related to appraisal, acquisition, retention, disposal, legal deposit, digitization, preservation and access as reflected in Figure 1.

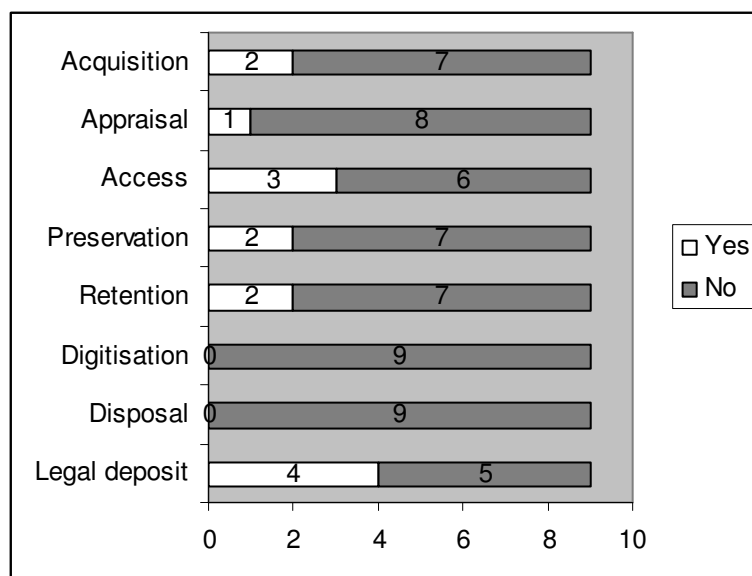


Figure 1: Policies that govern the management of AV materials in national archives (n=9)

It can be seen from Figure 1 that very few archival institutions in the region apply archival policies to AV materials. For instance, out of the two institutions that applied an acquisition policy to their collections, none of them had a written policy. It therefore appears that AV materials are acquired haphazardly (Abankwah 2008). While in some instances acquisition depended on creators' format, in some instances it depended on the format that suits a particular media. There are instances where AV materials had no specific criteria used to acquire AV materials. The worst scenario was with disposal and digitisation where policies were nonexistent. Only one national archive had an appraisal policy while only two out of nine archival institutions had preservation and retention policies (Abankwah 2008:200). Maseko (2010) held similar views in the case of STVA.

4.3 Strategies that govern AV materials in the region

Various other strategies which govern the management of AV materials in the region include budget and funding, types of buildings, conditions of the storage areas, structural placement of archival institutions.

4.3.1 Budget and funding

Harrison (1997/98:147) pointed out that that “the budget allocations for national archives do not compare favourably with other government ministries and departments”. For instance, the budget for the National Archives of Malawi was only US\$ 4 000 per annum compared to over US\$ 3 million for South Africa. Ngulube's (2003) study revealed, that even among archival repositories in South Africa, “resources allocated for archival programmes showed a great disparity and varied from province to province” (Ngulube 2003:244). He noted that a small fraction (one-third) “of the surveyed archival institutions had a specific vote for preservation activities and preservation expenditure as a percentage of the repository's total budget was reported to be between one and four percent”. Ngulube (2002) concluded that lack of care due to inadequate financial resources was one of the causes of deteriorating archival materials in most archival institutions in Africa. Abankwah (2008) later discovered

that most national archives received funding from their respective governments, which was augmented with very little support from international organisations.

It is worth mentioning that the fragile nature of AV materials requires that they are maintained in specialized equipment. Davidson and Lukow (1997) note that different types of AV materials require specific playback equipment and controlled environments as they are more sensitive to environmental factors. Unfortunately, AV archivists in developing countries are not well equipped with support equipment. They "...lack the necessary equipment, let alone competent staff, to handle these traditional media" (Lekaukau 1989:35). For instance, Abankwah (2008) observed that none of the national Archives in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa had equipment to monitor environmental conditions in storage areas. Observations in four media organizations showed that the only environmental monitoring equipment they had were air conditioners. This could be reflection of low budget allocation to the management of AV materials in various repositories. It is therefore important to allocate an adequate budget to the preservation of AV materials instead of according them a low priority at appears to the case in many countries in the region.

4.3.2 Types of archival buildings and their structural placement

Preservation is considered to be a prerequisite in guiding architects and archivists to plan archival buildings (Buchmann 1999). Abankwah (2008) discovered that the largest number of buildings was multipurpose and most of the national archives (seven out of nine) had AV units. In Ngulube's (2003) study, four out of seven buildings were purpose-built, while three repositories were converted. Abankwah (2008) reports that in Botswana, there is a purpose built building at BNARS, Media Complex at the Information and Broadcasting Services Department is equipped with modern facilities for AV materials, and recently, a new records centre has been opened in Gaborone. Mnjama (2005) earlier reported that the Zambia National Archives had extended its building. On the other hand, Mwangwera (2003) reported that the National Archives of Malawi had not had its own purpose-built building since its inception in 1947. The above author reported that the National Archives of Malawi was occupying a building that was once used as a government office and later as an old Post Office. Consequently, the National Archives of Malawi experienced harsh conditions in the preservation of AV materials, due to a lack of suitable accommodation.

In the case of South Africa, Ngulube (2003) discovered that four South African archives had purpose-built buildings, while three archival institutions had converted buildings. Kemoni (1996) made similar observations, when he wrote that a number of archival institutions in the ESARBICA operated in converted buildings. Abankwah (2008) maintained that some of the national archival buildings in the region are converted, as in the case of NFVSA in South Africa. From the author's personal observations, she concluded that converted buildings are appropriate for storing AV materials, provided there is an AV unit which has proper climatic conditions for storing AV materials. Abankwah (2008) further noted the holdings building at that the NFVSA of South Africa, provided suitable conditions for the storage of AV materials (albeit with exceptions where the vinegar syndrome was detected) whereas as the office side of the same organisation did not provide proper storage conditions for AV materials. However, in the case of Botswana, the renovated archival building provides functional air conditioners that were lacking in the old building.

Mnjama (2005) revealed great variations between the placements of national archives within government ministries in ESARBICA. Similarly, Kenosi (1999) earlier noted that the placement of BNARS under the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs (regarded as a Cultural

Ministry in Botswana), gave BNARS “the much needed power and influence” (Kenosi 1999:121). Hence, BNARS received a healthier budget from the concerned department and enhanced its profile (Kenosi 1999). Although Kenosi (1999) asserted that National Archives, which fall under a government ministry such as the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs/Culture, have access to a healthy budget, Abankwah (2008) did not find a similar situation with BNARS, in-as-far as AV materials were concerned. The researcher found no special section for keeping AV materials at BNARS. The AV materials were kept in a room with text materials. However, it is worth noting that BNARS is currently under the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture. It is yet to be established whether the restructuring has changed anything in terms of resource allocations. NFVSA of South Africa, which falls under the Ministry of Arts and Culture, had the best-established AV archive in the region (Matangira 2003).

Nonetheless, not all national archives that are well-placed enjoy financial benefits, as in the case of the Zimbabwe National Archives (Matangira 2003) and the National Archives of Malawi (Mnjama 2005). This situation could be explained by the fact that “the budget allocations for national archives do not compare favourably with other government ministries and departments” (Mazikana 1997/98). In the case of Zimbabwe, one would believe that the current political and economic situation has aggravated the financial situation, which, in turn, makes it difficult to channel adequate funds to the NAZ. Conversely, there are instances, such as in South Africa, where a substantial amount of money was allocated to the national archives (Mazikana 1997/98). The same benefits accrued to the NFVSA of South Africa.

The National Archives of Swaziland, which was first placed under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy and then under the Ministry of Tourism, Communication and Environment, experienced problems that that could be attributed to funding (Dlamini 1999; Ngulube & Tafor 2006). Dlamini (1999) and Ngulube and Tafor (2006) discovered that the National Archives of Swaziland did not have facilities to keep AV materials. Maseko’s (2011) recent study confirmed that Swaziland National Archives facilities are poorly either designed or over crowded. They lack basic AV equipment such as shelving and air conditioning. Ngulube (1999) made similar observations in the case of the Zimbabwe National Archives. Through interviews, Abankwah (2007) discovered that the National Archives of Namibia that was structurally placed under the Ministry of Education also had inadequate funding for the management of AV materials.

5 Conclusion and recommendations

The study revealed that national archives in the region were not managing AV materials effectively, due to failure to apply appropriate policies, inability to effectively apply the traditional records life-cycle to the management of AV materials, inability to explore other models to effectively manage digital AV materials, inadequate or lack of play back equipment, insufficient budget allocation to the management of AV material, and a weak legislative framework to support management and preservation of AV materials. Consequently, most of the archival institutions did not effectively guide creating offices in ways of managing AV materials for posterity.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be seen that national archives in the region are not managing and preserving AV materials effectively in line with established archival principles and practices. It also appears that inadequate budget allocation to the management of AV materials hampers their management.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this paper recommends that archival institutions and media organizations should:

- Adhere to established procedures for managing different types of AV and sound materials.
- Apply the traditional records cycle to the management of AV materials in analogue format, while at the same time acknowledging and applying electronic records life-cycle models to digital materials.
- The legal deposit policies should be enforced by national archival institutions.
- Enforce intellectual property laws.
- Archival institutions should allocate a reasonable resources to the management of AV materials
- Update archival Acts to reflect recent developments in the management of AV materials.

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