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Educational programs as an interactive tool for public engagement by public archives repositories in South Africa

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article was to investigate whether public archives in South Africa's educational programs serve as an interactive tool for public engagement. The study adopted a quantitative research approach involving all 10 public archival institutions in South Africa. Data was collected using survey questionnaires, analysis of the legislation on archives, and the national Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) and relevant provincial departments' annual reports from the 2012–13 to 2014–15 financial years according to the relevant themes of the study. In South Africa, public archival institutions fall under and report to the DAC. The purpose of data triangulation was to collect as much, and as diverse, data as possible to help generate the best possible insight. The study revealed that the public archives' educational activities were not effectively designed and implemented to bring potential users to archives. The study recommends that public archives engage with educators and curriculum developers to support the South African Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS). This will enable archivists and public archival institutions to identify and incorporate developmental and topically relevant archival material into CAPS for use by educators and learners in a classroom environment.

KEYWORDS

Archive; educational program; public archive repositories; public engagement; access to archive; South Africa

Introduction

One of the mandates of public archive repositories in South Africa is to encourage participation and interaction among all people regarding the use of archival materials, with a focus on previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs) and youth. In terms of section 5(1)(c) of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act, 'the national archivist shall with special emphasis on activities designed to reach out to less privileged sectors of society, make known information concerning records by means such as publications, exhibitions and the lending of records'. Their mandate positions the archives to play an important role in redress, transformation and knowledge production. Despite this legislated authority, however, archives in South Africa remain largely the domain of a select group with power, privileges and social status.¹ This elitism means that the strategies adopted by archive repositories in South Africa have played a large role in their failure to promote inclusive public participation.

For several years, people involved in the archival profession held the role of the archivist to be that of a historian and records manager. Little attention was given to the archivist as an educator.² Educational programs are designed to educate individuals and give them further skills or knowledge to be applied in their employment or profession. In the context of archives management, these programs can increase public awareness of the archivist profession and use of archival material, as many archives are neither as well understood nor as heavily used as they could be.³ Archive management's professional education and training activities include designing curricula for archival studies, lecturing in the field, placements to practically train students of archival studies, providing practical training to archivists and records managers from other African countries, and providing expertise in the field of electronic recordkeeping and advising on information technology legislation.⁴ Katuu identified further categories of educational programs including pre-appointment education, on-the-job introductory education and training, post-appointment continuous education, graduate-level advanced education, raising awareness for non-records personnel and short course training for skills development.⁵ In light of these further categories, one can only suggest that archivists and archival institutions have at their disposal ample educational activities to choose from. However, it is important for public archives to select educational activities directly geared towards fostering authentic public participation for all those individuals whom the archives' mandate requires to assist.

This article begins by providing context with an overview of public archive repositories in South Africa. It then presents the purpose and specific objectives of the study. The literature review follows, with a summary and critical evaluation of scholarly articles and any other sources used in relation to the research problem. The specific procedures or techniques used to process and analyse information about the phenomenon being studied are presented next, to allow the reader to critically evaluate the study's overall validity and reliability. Finally, the findings of the study based upon the methodology applied are reported, followed by suggested courses of action in line with the objective of the study. Inferences are also drawn from the findings. The following section presents the context for public archives development in South Africa.

An overview of archive repositories in South Africa

The historical development of South Africa is commonly known for the economic, political, social and other forms of dominance of some groups or nations by one group. Public archive repositories cannot claim to be irreproachable and upstanding as the selection, preservation, access and use of archival materials in their custody represented the interests of the dominant community while neglecting the interests of the other communities. This section provides the context that necessitates the development of an educational program geared towards the promotion of inclusive participation for all communities to access and use archival resources for sustainable development.

Archive repositories in South Africa were centrally regulated by colonial mechanisms dating back to the Dutch East India Company (1652–1795), the first British occupation (1795–1803), the Batavian Republic (1803–06), the second British rule (1806–1909) and the Union of South Africa (1910).⁶ During that time, extensive public and non-public records were generated and kept by missionaries and scholars.⁷ It was not until the Public Archives Act No. 6 of 1922 that public archives were formalised as a function in

the Ministry of Interior under the control of the chief archivist.⁸ The National Party promulgated the Archives Act No. 22 of 1953 to strengthen the separation and segregation of non-white South Africans from the minority white population. This was achieved by retaining the centralised colonial structure that extended the powers of the chief archivist to managing and disposing of public records.⁹ Until 1994, when black people who had been forcibly removed into designated homelands by the Bantu Authorities Act of 1951 merged into the new democratic South Africa, access to archives was exclusively for whites. The system completely failed to listen to the voices of PDIs. In this study, PDIs refer to South African citizens who, owing to apartheid, had no voting rights in the national elections prior to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1983, or the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1993 (the interim Constitution), and/or who are women and/or who have a disability.¹⁰

The first democratically elected government came to power in 1994 and adopted the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, which guarantees and provides an equal and democratic right to access of information for every citizen.¹¹ The regulation of public archive repositories was established by schedule 5 of this Constitution, which changed the South African archival landscape from a centralised service to 10 individual institutions. These were the National Archives and Records Services of South Africa (NARSSA), and nine provincial archives and records management services positioned in the provincial departments of Sport, Arts and Culture.¹² In other words, nationally, the National Archives of South Africa Act No. 43 of 1996 sounded the death knell for archival legislation shaped by the apartheid system and marked the beginning of a new phase of managing public archives. In terms of section 7(4)(a) of the Legal Deposit Act 54 of 1997, the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NFVSA) is an official publications depository that serves as a centre for promoting public awareness and access to archives of national heritage material held by government and other institutions. The NFVSA is one of the centres of the NARSSA. Each province should have also promulgated its own Act on archives and records services, as well as established and maintained its own archival infrastructure.¹³ Of the nine provinces, only North West does not have its own Act on archives and records services.¹⁴

The majority of the public are still not fully aware of their rights and do not know how to exercise them to their own advantage.¹⁵ In that regard, the need to use the country's resources to address the huge inequalities and imbalances inherited from apartheid becomes a necessity.¹⁶ The involvement of public archival institutions in public engagement becomes necessary to ensure that the PDIs are empowered and treated as equals by the archives services and other relevant organisations.¹⁷ A result of this empowerment is that the public becomes knowledgeable, understands the importance of archives to society and develops interests in using archival resources for their own survival, growth and development. The following section presents the purpose of this study and its specific objectives.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether educational programs serve as an interactive tool for public engagement. The specific objectives were to:

- (1) establish whether public archive repositories were involved in educational activities;
- (2) find out whether public archive repositories in South Africa recognised the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services.

Literature review

The extant and current literature on the educational programs provides context for the researcher's work. This section presents a summary and critical evaluation of scholarly articles and any other sources consulted regarding the educational programs for archives and records management, school communities and the public. The educational program for archives and records management and school communities focuses on professional users, scholars, students, educators and curriculum developers, whereas the educational program for the public includes genealogists and adult users.

Educational program for archives and records management

Archives management deals with the general administration of a program to appraise, acquire, arrange and describe, preserve, authenticate and provide access to the archival materials. The NARSSA considers archives management professional education and training an important aspect of public engagement activities.¹⁸ Professional education can be referred to as the process of giving or receiving systematic instruction that is at the root of the profession and engages in developing students, especially at school or university, whereas training could be a process of learning practical skills for a particular job or profession.¹⁹ Most educational and archival institutions provide courses and workshops that focus on practical training rather than professional education in the field of archives management.

The Society of American Archivists offers a variety of courses and seminars that are all task specific as they instruct practising archivists on new or improved ways of performing certain everyday jobs, such as preserving or arranging photographs, working with technical programming language such as encoded archival description and creating online exhibits. In sub-Saharan Africa, recent research shows that there are over 30 educational programs in tertiary institutions that generally address training rather than education. However, focusing on training alone without professional education is not considered good for the development of the archivist profession. In an attempt to address such shortcomings, archivists have thrown their support behind more specialised professional education through Masters of Archival Studies programs that emphasise the issues associated with theory, evolution, legal context and practice of archives, especially appraisal, description and electronic records.²⁰ Knowledge of archival theory or principles, practice and procedures is considered an element of archival intelligence, a higher level of archival literacy. Archival intelligence creates an environment in which the search for primary sources is conducted, and is underlined by researchers' understanding of the use of language in archives; internalisation of archival rules; and the researcher's awareness and evaluation of his/her own knowledge and the knowledge of the archivist.²¹ Thus, it becomes imperative for archivists to get involved in professional education that focuses on archival theory

and practice, and the institution, and not on practical training alone. At the University of Illinois, for example, archivists conducted a course instruction session in the University archives' student life and culture archival program providing a brief description of the archives' purpose and founding, and an overview of the type of archival materials held by the archives.²² If professional education is not offered, it has the potential to have a negative impact on the growth of a profession that is still not well understood in society.²³

The recent developments in the use of archival resources in schools have some useful lessons for archivists.²⁴

Educational program for school community

Extending access to archives for school communities has a number of distinct advantages. Encouraging students to use its records can improve the diversity of a repository's user base and create broader access to archives and the materials in their care.²⁵ It is important to recognise that meeting the needs of educators and students who might not otherwise have access to archive services does not necessarily require a big budget and other resources. As has been argued by Chute, small activities such as removing the dust from a box before the archivist gives it to the user could go a long way toward moving educators and learners to a general awareness of what archivists do, and the valuable historical details that archival material could provide them.²⁶

The development of teaching kits with partners, student-centred environment- or inquiry-based learning and the use of online historical documents provide archives and archivists with an opportunity to promote their archival holdings and archival services. In this manner, resource allocators are more likely to have a good reason to fund the archival program and increase its relevance.

Developing teaching kits with partners

Collaboration between archivists and educators is one of the most important educational strategies to promote the importance and use of archives.²⁷ Working together is necessary because no single institution today can expect to supply all the necessary expertise for any given project.²⁸ The development of archives teaching units could be one of the areas in which educators and archives can work together.²⁹

A teaching unit or archival kit would place at teachers' disposal interesting and challenging archival material to cover the curriculum for gifted or enriched students.³⁰ Teaching units may include collections of facsimiles, reproductions or transcripts from a variety of sources. While sources would most often be print, they could also include maps, pictures, advertisements, photographs, cartoons, paintings, drawings, sound recordings and recorded interviews, speeches, posters, private letters, government documents and previously published literature based on documents, and newspaper analysis.³¹ These would all be on a specific topic, often of a social or economic rather than a political nature. The archive material is essentially of two varieties. One consists of a collection of source material, usually with an explanatory comment but with no pedagogical advice for the educator. The other consists of a much more tightly organised set of material accompanied by suggestions for classroom use, questions and activities for students, and an array of pedagogical advice. To be of maximum value for most teachers, archival materials should be designed in terms of the latter.

This will ensure that archival kits do not remain on classroom racks without being consulted and used by students to complete their assignments or any relevant projects.

In 1994, the National Archives of Canada mounted a major exhibition on Canada's prime minister, with exhibit material complemented by other archival documents and worked into a permanent educational kit. The educational kit was the result of an ad hoc partnership between the National Archives, the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa and the Ottawa Board of Education. The use of concrete resources and inclusive interactive strategies helped to reduce the inherent abstraction of history, making the kit accessible to younger students and to those of lesser ability, as well as those of unusually high ability.³² Similarly, in South Africa the NARSSA designed an archive educational kit geared toward senior high school students.³³

In addition, the South African History Archives (SAHA) developed a series of booklets for Grade 12 learners and teachers to support the practical implementation of a source-based study of South African history from 1976–94. SAHA also published the *SAHA Exhibitions in the Classroom – Guides for Educators*, based on a series of SAHA exhibition kits available for loan to heritage, educational and community organisations interested in hosting commemorative events and celebrations. One of the guides includes *The Future is Ours*, which acknowledges the significant contribution of the youth in the struggle against the oppressive apartheid state and for their own freedom of South Africa. Despite all these endeavours, not much else has happened in South Africa to produce prominent programs for professional education and training. This demonstrates a failure on the part of public archives to recognise the importance of young people as archive users, and the significant contribution archives can make to the educational life of all people who live in a country.³⁴

Student-centred environment or inquiry-based learning

Across the disciplines, curricular and subject standards are beginning to emphasise the process of learning and evaluating information over mastering the content of a given subject area. This is considered an inquiry-based learning, student-centred approach to teaching, with activity-based methods aimed at drawing out meaning from students' experience. The model of inquiry/inquiry-based learning using primary sources empowers students to develop a deep understanding of academic context and approach primary sources with a scepticism that demonstrates the acquisition of critical thinking skills, which are essential for lifelong learning. As a result, students gain a new appreciation of archives.³⁵ This can also be linked to archival literacy, which is the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to effectively and efficiently find, interpret, analyse and use archives, manuscripts and other types of unique, unpublished primary sources.³⁶ However, a literature review on archival literacy for history students lamentably lacked archival literacy standards for the history profession, which leaves the history professor without a best-practice guide to archival research skills that should be incorporated into the curriculum.

Archivists can and should play an active role in addressing this need by communicating the archival literacy competencies that they can impart to students, either in formal instruction sessions or as part of informal outreach and orientation activities. However, few opportunities exist for archivists to receive formal training in pedagogical methods within the archives profession. It therefore becomes necessary for the archival

professional associations to work with other like-minded associations to provide convenient and affordable training, designed for archivists, in educational theory and effective teaching methods.³⁷

Various nations have embraced or recognised the importance of critical thinking skills by incorporating these into the education curriculum. In Canada, for example, the new history mandated by virtually all ministries of education privileges higher-order thinking skills, document analysis and an understanding of historical process rather than content.³⁸ Similarly, in South Africa, the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) encourages an active and critical approach to learning, rather than mechanical repetition and uncritical learning of given truths in South African schools.³⁹ Whereas the Canadian ministries of education associate high-order thinking skills to the use of archival material, there is no such indication in the South African context.⁴⁰ In December 2015, for example, a Ministerial Task Team (MTT) was established after the learners were perceived to lack knowledge of the country's history and the role of history in instilling a love of the country.⁴¹ However, the MTT was officially introduced to stakeholders such as educators, and representatives of trade and teachers' unions without participation by, and representatives from, the archives and records management profession. This undermines Doris Malkmus' call for archivists to collaborate with educators to offer more effective educational experiences using archival materials, especially for history students.⁴² Nonetheless, the MTT was assigned interesting responsibilities, recorded as follows:

- To advise on the feasibility of making history compulsory in the further education and training phase.
- To advise on where history should be in the curriculum.
- To review the content and pedagogy of the history curriculum with a view to strengthening history in the curriculum.
- To investigate the implications (for teaching, classrooms and textbooks, among others) of making history compulsory.⁴³

Use of online historical documents to increase access to archives

Digitisation and networked online access technologies provide new tools for archivists to increase access and use, and reduce time spent finding relevant historical resources that were previously hidden away in archives. It further increases the importance of students' ability to evaluate the materials they find, assess the reliability of a source, interpret a finding aid and place a source in context, since an archivist may not be available for real-time assistance.⁴⁴ By seizing this opportunity to share their archival resources online with students and educators, archivists have a chance to make a real impact on classroom instruction.⁴⁵

The recent publication of the declassified historical documents related to US–Soviet relations on the Internet, for instance, has given teachers and students greater access to archive materials about the Cuban Missile Crisis, which is necessary for a high-quality inquiry. Furthermore, the American Social History Project/Centre for Media and Learning at the City University of New York, and the Centre for History and New Media at George Mason University developed the History Matters website to meet a range of pedagogical, professional and classroom needs.⁴⁶ Designed for high school and

college teachers and students of United States of America history survey courses, this site serves as a gateway to web resources and offers unique teaching materials, first-person primary documents and guides to analysing historical evidence.⁴⁷

In November 2017, the embassy of France in South Africa, the French National Audiovisual Institute (INA) and the South African Department of Arts and Culture celebrated UNESCO's World Day for Audiovisual Heritage in Pretoria. Following the French–South Africa Seasons (held in 2012 and 2013), France and South Africa established a partnership to restore and digitise so-called dictabelts (an analog audio-recording medium commercially introduced by the American Dictaphone Company in 1974) that included recordings of the Rivonia Trial in the early 1960s. These pieces of world heritage were published online and are now available to the public.⁴⁸ However, it appears that the online publication of such digital recordings is not designed to help students and teachers to effectively use them in a teaching and learning environment.

In contrast, the South African History Online (SAHO) in partnership with the Department of Basic Education developed an online classroom resource, the only free downloadable resource of its kind in South Africa, which provides the entire national history curriculum covering all topics from Grade 4 to Grade 12. In June 2000, Omar Badsha founded SAHO as a non-partisan people's history project concerned with the presentation of a critical, open access and democratic history of South Africa.⁴⁹ With several other archival resources available, online it becomes increasingly difficult for archivists, especially those in the public sector, to point to local archival materials as having value.⁵⁰ In that regard, a responsibility of public archives to be innovative and develop attractive online archival resources with lesson plans effectively engages educators and learners in pursuit of the curriculum requirements.⁵¹ If not, as a result of the low statistical use of archival resources, public archives will continue to receive a minimal budget that makes it impossible to accomplish all it set out to achieve.

Educational program for the public

Educating users and the general public about the value and potential use of archives is one of the components of public engagement.⁵² The general public can be educated about the value and potential use of archival holdings, allowing the archival unit to claim some measure of financial support in return.⁵³ In that regard, the public gets a broad view of different services that archival institutions have to offer and the archive can explain in detail the number and variety of ways to explore archival resources, depending on users' information needs.⁵⁴ This provides archivists with an opportunity to create instructional programs for adults that clearly demonstrate how to conduct historical interpretation as a reasonable way to improve the quality of access to digital archives.⁵⁵

In 1972, Dominion Archivist WI Smith called for the total utilisation of archives, which he described as the use of archival materials by and for the benefit of the greatest possible number of persons.⁵⁶ In Canada, with sustained concerns over the influence of American culture on Canadians and cultural commercialisation, archival institutions have been under spasmodic or occasional pressure to make their holdings more accessible to the public.⁵⁷ In South Africa, the implementation of an educational program is necessary to increase public awareness about archives by

organising field-related seminars, workshops and training programs.⁵⁸ While every citizen of South Africa and researchers, including genealogical researchers from outside the borders of the country, are more than welcome to visit the reading room of the National Archives Repository to research any topic relating to the history of South Africa,⁵⁹ it is important to make the public aware of the availability of these archival services for their use.

However, archivists do not normally perceive the education of the public to be part of their job.⁶⁰ This is evident as most educational programs in archives are narrowly geared towards, or have established links with, teachers and students, neglecting the importance of adult users.⁶¹ By not engaging in educational work, either with the public at large or with schools, archives deny themselves the possibility of building and benefitting from the support of a knowledgeable and sympathetic public. If public institutions do not build constituencies larger than those of the academic researcher, sponsors and prospective funders could easily question their relevance and continued existence.⁶² From the literature review, this researcher gleaned the following:

- Professional education and training are tools for public engagement.
- A teaching kit rather than a learning pack is most appropriate to improve usage by both educators and learners.
- A student-centred environment or inquiry-based learning provides archives and archivists an opportunity to provide authentic primary sources for use by teachers and students.
- Online history documents increase access to information by both teachers and students to meet curriculum requirements.
- It is important to provide students in archives and records management with professional education and training.
- The public needs to be always considered and should not be sacrificed when archivists pay attention to school programs. The following section discusses methodology applied in collecting information in this study.

Research methodology

It is important for a researcher to select an appropriate approach and procedures to describe, explain and predict phenomena of interest during a research process. This section presents the specific approach and procedures applied to process and analyse information about the topic of the study. This study therefore follows the quantitative research approach to investigate whether public archives in South Africa's educational programs serve as an interactive tool for public engagement. The researcher confined the study to the NARSSA, including the NFVSA, and all nine provincial archives (Eastern Cape, Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North West and Western Cape). Archivists working in public programming sections of the identified public archive institutions were purposely sampled to ensure that the best information was gathered to achieve the objectives of this study. The archivists provided their contact details to the researcher during the public programming workshop hosted by the University of South Africa in Mpumalanga (Sabi River Sun in Nelspruit) from 29 to 30 September 2016. An average of two

archivists working in the public programming section of their respective institutions represented each archive's repository.

The result regarding the number of employees in public archive repositories and the number of those who work in the public programming section are indicated in [Table 1](#). Most respondents were archivists, except one respondent who indicated his/her position as an assistant manager: repository. Whereas the study sought to reveal the number of archivists working in public programming in terms of resources, their position at the public archives was not the focus of this study. Overall, 245 employees are in public archive repositories and 52 work in the public programming sections. The result shows that the resources of the archive systems in South Africa are inadequate to execute their mandate both in terms of level and capacity. For example, the Mpumalanga Provincial Archives has a staff complement of only three archivists (including the head of the archives) to service the entire province, while the Free State Provincial Archives has only 12 of the original 22 staff members.⁶³ In contrast, a study conducted in 2015 reported that the total number of employees was 219, with 11 employees having left archives repositories in the 2014–15 financial year.⁶⁴ This study therefore shows an increase of 26 employees from the 2014–15 to the 2015–16 financial year.

Data was collected using standard questionnaires and content analysis of the annual reports of public archive repositories and legislation governing archives to collect as much and as diverse data as possible.

The standard questionnaire was sent via email to the selected 25 staff (100%) working in the public programming section within the public archive repositories identified above. The researcher sent prospective respondents three reminders to return the completed questionnaire at weekly intervals. Only 15 (60%) of the selected staff responded, while 10 (40%) did not respond to the survey, as indicated in [Table 2](#). The small sample size is considered a limitation of the study, and makes it more difficult to extrapolate the results beyond the context of this research.

In addition, the questionnaire (see [Appendix 1](#)) lacks follow-up questions to extract a better understanding of the effectiveness of the programs, such as: were the educational activities that involved public archive repositories effective? If not, what factors could be considered as hampering the effectiveness of the program? What possible solutions could be found for the challenges identified, to improve the effectiveness of the

Table 1. Employees in the institution and in public programming section (Word format).

Name of the public archives institution	Number of employees in the institution	Number of employees in public programming section
National Archives	74	5
Eastern Cape	15	2
Free State	11	5
Gauteng	2	2
Limpopo	15	15
KwaZulu-Natal	52	9
Mpumalanga	No response	No response
Northern Cape	4	4
North-West	13	4
Western Cape	42	2
National Film, Video and Sound Archives	17	4
Total	245	52

Table 2. Respondents and non-respondents to the survey (Word format).

Public repository	Sample	Respondents	Non-respondents
National Archives	2	2	0
Eastern Cape	3	1	2
Free State	2	1	1
Gauteng	3	2	1
Limpopo	4	2	2
KwaZulu-Natal	4	3	1
Mpumalanga	1	0	1
Northern Cape	2	1	1
North-West	1	1	0
Western Cape	1	1	0
National Film, Video and Sound Archives	2	1	1
Total	25 (100%)	15 (60%)	10 (40%)

program? By triangulating the data, however, the study sought to generate the best possible insight into the phenomenon of interest and the general comment space on the questionnaire provided respondents with an opportunity to capture their thoughts on the topic.

The following section presents the findings of the study, with the help of tables and text to make data clear and easy to understand.

Findings and discussions

Scholars or professionals who are experts in their field often publish research findings. This section reports on the findings of the study and is organised in themes that emanate from the survey questions. The findings are based on the methodology applied to collect information.

The public archive repositories' involvement in the educational activities

The survey sought to establish the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed that the public archive repositories are involved in educational activities. The results are summarised in Table 3. Thirteen respondents (86.7%) strongly agreed that the public archives repositories were involved in providing placements for the practical training of students for archival studies and in advising on legislation that pertains to information technology. On the other hand, two respondents (13.3%) disagreed with these statements.

Table 3. The public archives repositories' involvement in the educational activities.

Activities	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
Designing of curricula for archival studies	53.3%	20%	26.7%
Lecturing in the field of archives	53.3%	26.7%	20%
Providing placements for practical training for students of archival studies	86.7%	0%	13.3%
Providing practical training for archivists and records managers from African countries	60%	20%	20%
Providing expertise in the field of electronic recordkeeping	53.3%	20%	26.7%
Advice on legislation pertaining to information technology	86.7%	0%	13.3%
Other, please, specify	7%	0%	0%

Furthermore, nine respondents (60%) strongly agreed and three (20%) agreed that the public archive repositories were involved in providing practical training to archivists and records managers from African countries. Eight (53.3%) strongly agreed and three (20%) agreed on providing expertise in the field of electronic recordkeeping. In contrast, three respondents (20%) disagreed that the public archive repositories were involved in providing practical training for archivists and records managers from African countries and four (26.7%) disagreed on providing expertise in the field of electronic recordkeeping.

Eight respondents (53.3%) strongly agreed that the public archive repositories were involved in designing curricula for archival studies and lecturing in the field of archives. In addition, three respondents (20%) agreed that the public archive repositories were involved in designing curricula for archival studies and four (26.7%) agreed on lecturing in the field of archives. On the other hand, four respondents (26.7%) disagreed that public archive repositories were involved in designing curricula for archival studies and three (20%) disagreed on lecturing in the field of archives. Finally, one respondent strongly agreed that public archive repositories were involved in other activities not mentioned above. However, the respondent failed to indicate the other educational activities that public archives are involved in.

The key finding was that the majority of public archive repositories were involved in providing placements for the practical training of archival studies students, providing advice on legislation that pertains to information technology and providing practical training to archivists and records managers from African countries. This is an important finding that the public archives could use as a reference point to capacitate students and develop interest in making archival material available to the largest number of people possible. For example, the national Department of Arts and Culture's annual report shows that the department trained Nkangala High School learners in oral history methodologies from 6 September to 13 October 2014.⁶⁵ However, based on the lack of a working relationship between archivists and educators, one wonders whether educators and curriculum developers were involved in the development of the oral history methodology, so that it addresses pertinent issues of existing or future history curriculum requirements. If not, its relevance remains questionable, the use of such methodology is limited and it suggests that support from the leadership of the education system cannot be guaranteed.

Furthermore, a systematic evaluation of the legislation reviewed each document for evidence that education and training was directly stipulated. Key findings are that all existing legislation governing archives and records management in South Africa stipulates that the national archivist, provincial archivist, archivist or the head of services 'may' provide training in archival techniques, the management of records, and professional and technical support to aid archival activities and the archival community. It is necessary to indicate that the South African Constitution of 1996 gives provinces authoritative responsibility to promulgate their own archives and records services legislation which is consistent and concomitant with the national legislation. In addition, it was observed that the powers and duties assigned the national archivist, head of services, provincial archivist and archivists to provide training in archival techniques are not mandatory. Being optional makes these responsibilities less imperative. However, a legal framework is provided for those archivists aspiring to ensure that education and training become effective as an interactive tool for public engagement. The Legal Deposit Act 54 of 1997 does not provide guidance on this matter.

Recognition of the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services

The survey sought to establish whether public archive repositories recognise the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services. Twelve respondents (80%) indicated that public archive repositories recognise the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services, compared with two (13.3%) who said no and one (6.7%) who was not sure. Similarly, another study recommended a need for more training opportunities to be organised by the East and Southern Africa regional branch of the International Council on Archives or the National Archives, which could lead to the implementation of more public engagement projects.⁶⁶

The results show that several respondents considered professional education and training essential to improving their public engagement. This is important for public archive repositories in many ways, including curriculum development, and especially for history teachers and learners. However, public archive educational activities are not designed and implemented in a manner that effectively brings potential users to archives. This is despite the existing archives legislation providing a framework to develop educational programs, even though they are not mandatory.

The following section discusses critical suggestions regarding the best course of action for public archival institutions to improve the effectiveness of their educational programs.

Recommendations

This section presents recommendations for the effectiveness of public archival educational programs. As presented earlier in this document, public archive educational activities are not designed and implemented in a manner that effectively brings potential users to archives. One of the reasons may be that archivists do not strategically engage with educators, curriculum developers and other relevant stakeholders in their endeavours. This was evident in the earlier discussion on the MTT, where we found that archivists were not involved in the MTT investigating the re-introduction of history into the curriculum.

In addition, archivists may not be making valuable archival materials available online for public use. This was also evident in the literature review, as non-governmental organisations such as SAHA are far ahead in making archival materials available online in consultation with relevant authorities and partners. Perhaps another factor that students are not provided with is an opportunity to engage with archivists, with the ultimate goal of making them aware of the alternatives to textbooks. This would encourage them to consult archival material and archival services to complete their projects or assignments. In light of these possibilities, the study makes the following recommendations:

- (1) Archivists and public archival institutions should engage educators and curriculum developers meaningfully to support CAPS. This will enable archivists and public archival institutions to identify and incorporate developmental and topically relevant archival material into CAPS for use by educators and learners in a classroom environment. Archivists should create a niche for making access to

archive materials available to almost 12 million learners and students, especially in history and social science. An Education Statistics in South Africa 2013 report revealed that 12,883,888 learners and students in the basic education system in South Africa in 2013 attended 30,027 ordinary public and ordinary independent schools, and were served by 447,149 educators.⁶⁷ Furthermore, archival materials are relevant and necessary for critical thinking and an inquiry-based teaching approach, which CAPS strives to inculcate in students in South Africa. Finally, the MTT recommended a complete overhaul of CAPS and developed strategic objectives with activities, deliverables and time frames that provided archivists and archival institutions with an opportunity to participate meaningfully in transforming the educational system of the country, especially regarding the history curriculum. If not, the educational program will remain ineffective and, in the long run, threaten the very existence of the public archives.

- (2) Public archives should create online archival collections for educators and learners. This considers one of the recommendations of the MTT, which was to explore the use of interactive digital media in teaching history and in teacher development or training.⁶⁸ Public archives could collaborate with established online classrooms by non-governmental organisations such as the SAHO history classroom, SAHA in the classroom and SAHA *Exhibitions in the Classroom – Guides for Educators*, to make their valuable resources available online. Alternatively, if they want to remain relevant, public archives may develop and make available, together with relevant stakeholders, online resources that are unique and of far greater value to educators and students than those non-governmental organisations are currently offering. Perhaps developing lessons plans and school activities together with educators on the digitised Rivonia Trial audio recordings could be a good start. As Matthew Lyons, cited in Senturk, noted:

Providing schools with digital access to archival materials can strengthen both student learning and archival practice. It can help students learn to approach history actively, creatively, and critically, and it can help archival institutions broaden and deepen their public service and community ties.⁶⁹

- (3) Public archives should, working with relevant stakeholders, develop teaching kits/units with lessons plans and students' activities, based on the best-attended exhibitions or using other effective selection criteria for that purpose. Important primary sources need to be identified so that teachers and learners can use them regularly to improve their critical thinking skills. Archivists are best placed to know the content of the archival materials, whereas educators can determine the archival materials that could help students, support course objectives and are appropriate for the students' skill level.⁷⁰
- (4) Public archives provide school learners with an opportunity to participate in competitions to win prizes. The winners could be announced during the annual Archives Week, celebrated in line with the International Council on Archives' decision at its 39 International Conference of the Round Table on Archives (CITRA). The aim of the event is to popularise the profession and engage communities on the importance of archives in the preservation of societal

memory. South Africa celebrates Archives Week during the second week of May annually to promote the importance of good recordkeeping practices and allows members of the public access to archive buildings, where they witness archival functions and services.⁷¹

The target schools could be from an Education District office (they play a pivotal role in South Africa by ensuring that all learners have access to education of progressively high quality) or schools located within the constituency of the legislator leading the Committee on Arts and Culture in Parliament. As a result, the legislators, as resource allocators, could be convinced to fund the archival program. For example, public archives may reproduce the selected archival material for compliance with relevant legislation such as the Copyright Act. The copies may be made available to various schools in a selected Education District office, accompanied by questions that students would need to answer as part of the competition. Questions could include ‘What did you find of interest in the copies of archival materials made available to your school?’ and ‘Which archival institution sponsors the competition?’ The prize may include a scientific calculator or anything that could be of interest to students at an affordable price. Ultimately, announce the winner/s at the annual Archives Week event. This exercise could provide learners with an opportunity to engage publicly on the importance of archives and the value archives provide to a society. It may also encourage students to become curious about using alternative material to textbooks to complete their assignments or school work.

- (5) Public archives should work jointly with the Department of Higher Education or an institution of higher learning in South Africa to develop the curriculum for archives and records management students, even though currently few institutions of higher learning provide learning and teaching on the subject. The collaboration between archivists and educators is one of the most important strategies to promote the importance and use of archives. Schellnack-Kelly calls for public archives to collaborate with the educational sector to ensure that collections are more broadly used.⁷² Osborne, cited in Senturk, suggests collaboration in which archive staff could be represented on appropriate curriculum committees, among other areas of collaboration.⁷³

Conclusion

This study examined whether the educational programs of public archival institutions are used as an interactive tool to engage people outside the archival institution. This was achieved by establishing whether public archive repositories in South Africa were involved in educational activities and recognise the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services. Based on the study, public archive repositories in South Africa recognise the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and archival services. Such educational activities include providing advice on legislation that pertains to information technology and providing placements for practical training to students of archival studies, to name just a few. Almost all legislation on archives include a provision for training in archival

techniques and the management of records, as well as professional and technical support in aid of archival activities and the archival community.

Generally, public archive educational activities are not designed and implemented in a manner that effectively brings potential users to archives. For example, in the 2012–13 financial year, a paltry 661 people out of a population of 54 million South Africans had accessed and used archives.⁷⁴ Budget could be one of the reasons public archives are unable to develop and implement educational programs that encourage authentic, inclusive participation in accessing and using archival materials. As the national archivist of South Africa, Ms Dingayo reported to the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Arts and Culture that the budget was one of the challenges of the archives. The budget was minimal and the archives could not attain all it set out to achieve. Another factor was that legislation was passed without proper costing.⁷⁵

Aside from this study, further research is needed to fully explore the challenges and prospects of the educational programs that the public archive repositories in South Africa are involved in. In addition, public archives need to revise and redefine their educational activities if they want to be known by a large number of people. As Grabowski argued, ‘Only when a large number of users join the small number of keepers and their historical allies in saying that archives, history, and heritage are important, will the funders respond in a manner that befits the work we do.’⁷⁶

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Appendix 1. Standardised questionnaire on educational program

General Information

1. What is your current position in the organisation?

(Please mark only one choice).

-
- National Archivist
 - Provincial archivist
 - Archivist
 - Information and Communication Technology
 - Other, please specify:
-

2. What is the name of the institution?*(Please mark only one choice).*

National archives of South Africa
 Eastern Cape provincial archives
 Free State provincial archives
 Gauteng provincial archives
 Kwazulu-Natal provincial archives
 Limpopo provincial archives
 Mpumalanga provincial archives
 Northern Cape provincial archives
 North-West provincial archives
 Western Cape provincial archives
 National Film, Video and Sound Archives
 Other, please specify:

3. How many are you within the organisation?

4. How many people are working in outreach/public programming/marketing section?

Educational programme**5. Does the public archives repository recognise the importance of education and training in promoting their archival holdings and services?***(Please mark only one choice).*

Yes
 No
 Not Sure

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the public archives repository is involved in the following activities?*(Please mark 1 = Strongly agree or 2 = Agree or 3 = Disagree or 4 = Strongly Disagree next to each activity listed below)*

Description	1	2	3	4
Designing of curricula for archival studies				
Lecturing in the field of archives				
Providing placements for practical training for students of archival studies				
Providing practical training for archivists and records managers from African countries				
Providing expertise in the field of electronic keeping				
Advice on legislation pertaining to information technology				
Other, please, specify				

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that organisation's ability to attract foreign students or facilitate exchanges is the most powerful tool for public engagement?

(Please mark only one choice).

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

General comments: