

Archivists' skills and knowledge of public programming: a perspective from the National Archives of ESARBICA

Mrs N. Mnkeni-Saurombe

Prof. P. Ngulube

Department of Information Science

University of South Africa

The road map

- **Introduction**
- **Statement of the problem**
- **Objectives of the study**
- **Methodology**
- **Findings**
- **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Introduction

- **Public programming is a function that is of importance to archival institutions across the world because it encourages more people and organisations to access archival records and make use of the information for various reasons such as decision making or knowing their cultural heritage (Harris 1993).**

Introduction contd.

- **Archives are records of enduring value. Archives are a documentary heritage that include culture, historical and other factors (Kamatula, Mnkeni-Saurombe & Mosweu 2013).**
- **Though use of the archives resources is described by Harris (1993) as the main goal of archivists, Bance (2012: ii) asserts that public programming activities such as, marketing, advocacy and outreach that encourage and promote the use of archives have not always been a priority**

Some reasons that could have led to the neglect of promoting archives

- **Lack of knowledge on users and use (including potential users) and matching them to relevant services;**
- **Archivists being more 'material centred' rather than 'client centred';**
- **Lack of funding;**
- **The exclusion of public programming or outreach initiatives in strategic plans of the institution;**
- **Non-existent outreach or public programming and lobbying skills that are required to lead such initiatives.**

(Blais and Enns 1991; Ericson 1991; Cox 1993; Dearstyne 1987; Grabowski 1992; Cook 1991 and Bradley 2005)

ESARBICA

- **ESARBICA stands for the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives,**
- **The twelve active member states of ESARBICA are: Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zanzibar.**
- **This organisation originated in Kenya in 1969, and it serves as the regional branch of the International Council on Archives (ICA)**

(ESARBICA 2011; Garaba 2010)

Statement of the problem

Public programming and outreach are regarded as important tools for communicating archives to the citizens and organisations within ESARBICA.

Nonetheless, these tools are not fully utilised by public archives of the ESARBICA region to make people aware of their products and services to the people they serve.

Little is known about how public archives of the ESARBICA region carry out public programming activities (Ngulube and Tafor 2006; Ngoepe and Ngulube 2011; Kamatula 2011 and Njobvu, Hamooya and Mwila 2012).

Objectives of the study

- **To evaluate ESARBICA archivists level of skills and knowledge with regard to public programming.**
- **To find out what training is available for archivists in the ESARBICA region on public programming, marketing of archives or outreach.**

(This paper is part of a wider doctoral research study)

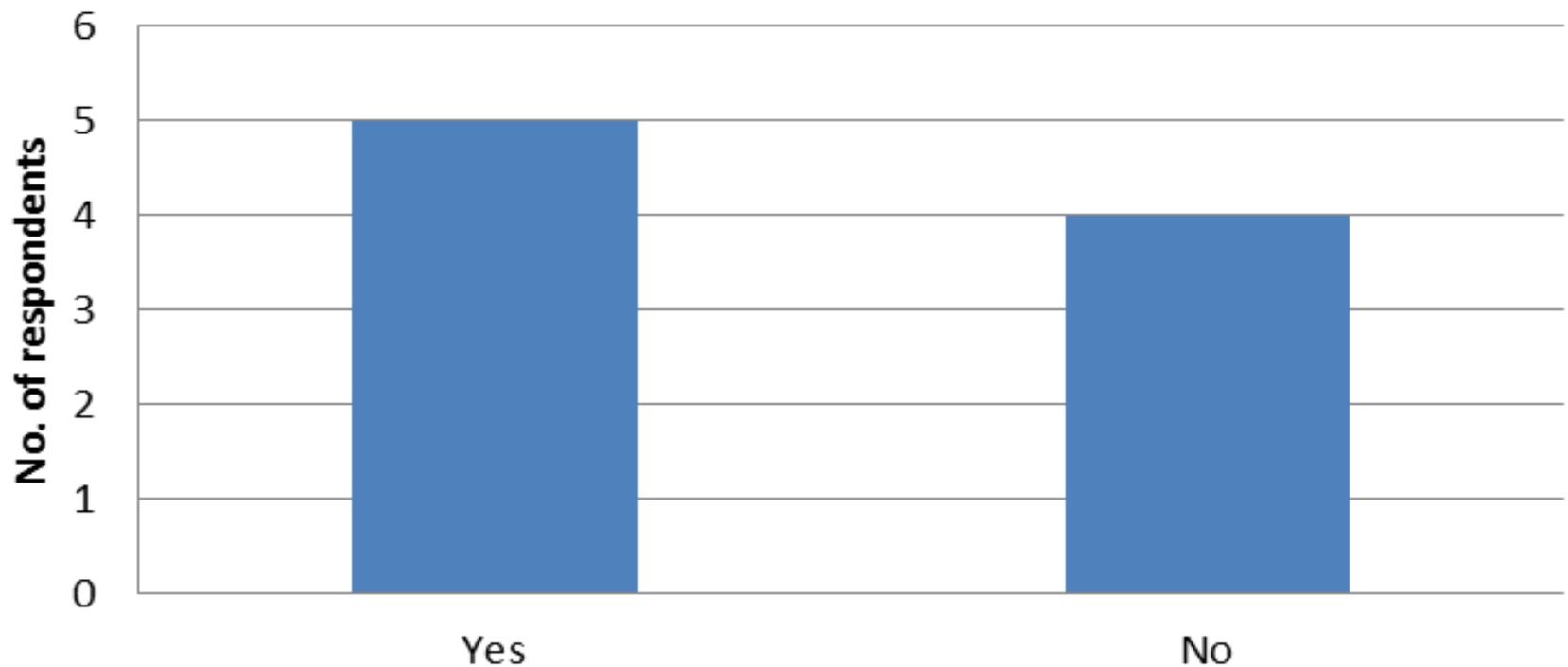
Methodology

- **Quantitative study - survey approach to collect data from the National Archives of ESARBICA.**
- **Self-administered Questionnaire - 12 National Directors, Semi-structured Interviews - 12 Archivists and 3 ESARBICA Board members.**
- **Content analysis – Websites of institutions in ESARBICA offering archives and records management training and education.**
- **The responses from the questionnaire, interviews and website content were analysed, compared and presented graphically and in themes.**
- **Response rate: Questionnaires- 9 [69.2%];
Interviews- 8 [67%]**

Findings

National Archives Directors' opinions on whether archivists have relevant skills to do public programmes

N=9



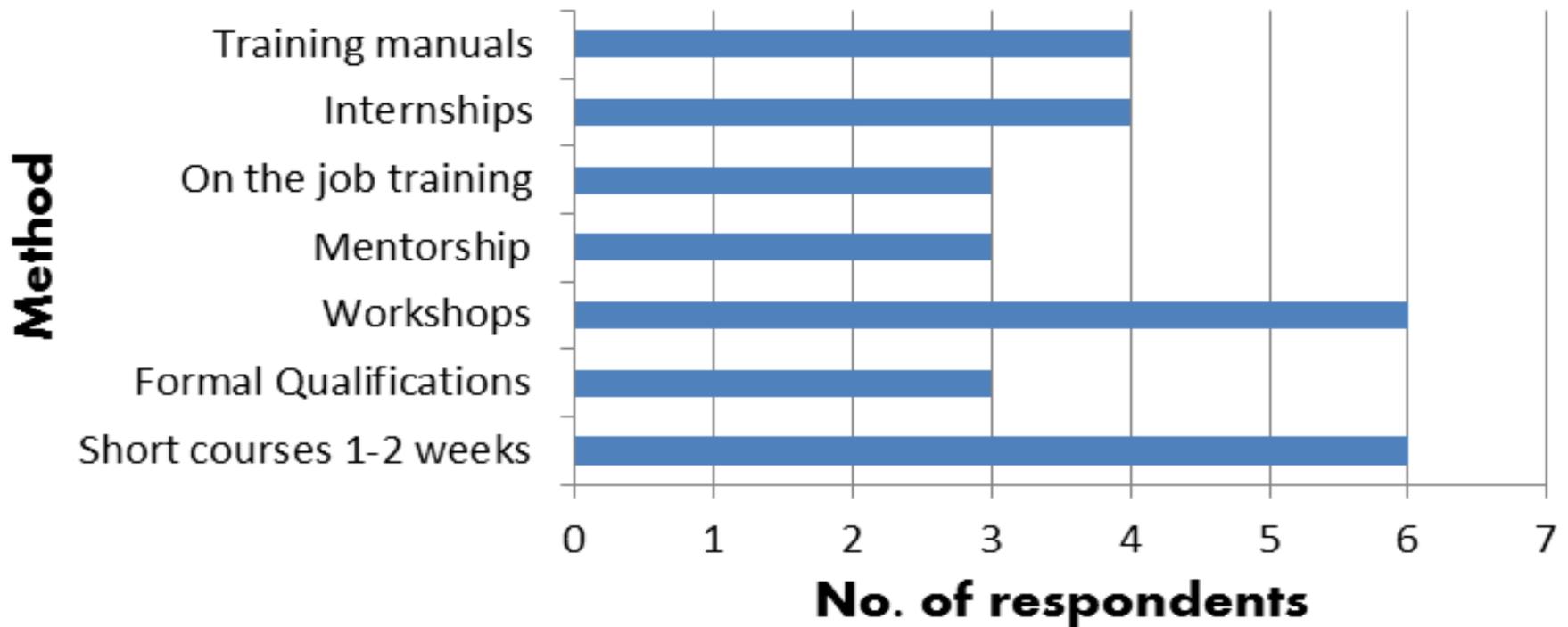
Areas and levels of training required:

		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
1	Mounting archival exhibitions	3 (33%)	2 (22%)	2 (22%)
2	Public speaking	2 (22%)	3 (33%)	2 (22%)
3	Writing promotional material	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	4 (44%)
4	Developing usable websites	1 (11%)	4 (44%)	3 (33%)
5	Analysing use of websites	2 (22%)	5 (55%)	3 (33%)
6	Use of social media to promote archives	1 (11%)	6 (66%)	1 (11%)
7	Advocacy	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	2 (22%)
8	Using economic impact assessments to show value of the archives	1 (11%)	3 (33%)	2 (22%)
9	Fundraising	4 (44%)	0	2(22%)
10	Public relations	4 (44%)	2 (22%)	0
11	Conducting guided tours	5 (55%)	1 (11%)	1 (11%)
12	Communicating archives to kids	4 (44%)	2 (22%)	0

National Archivists' opinions:

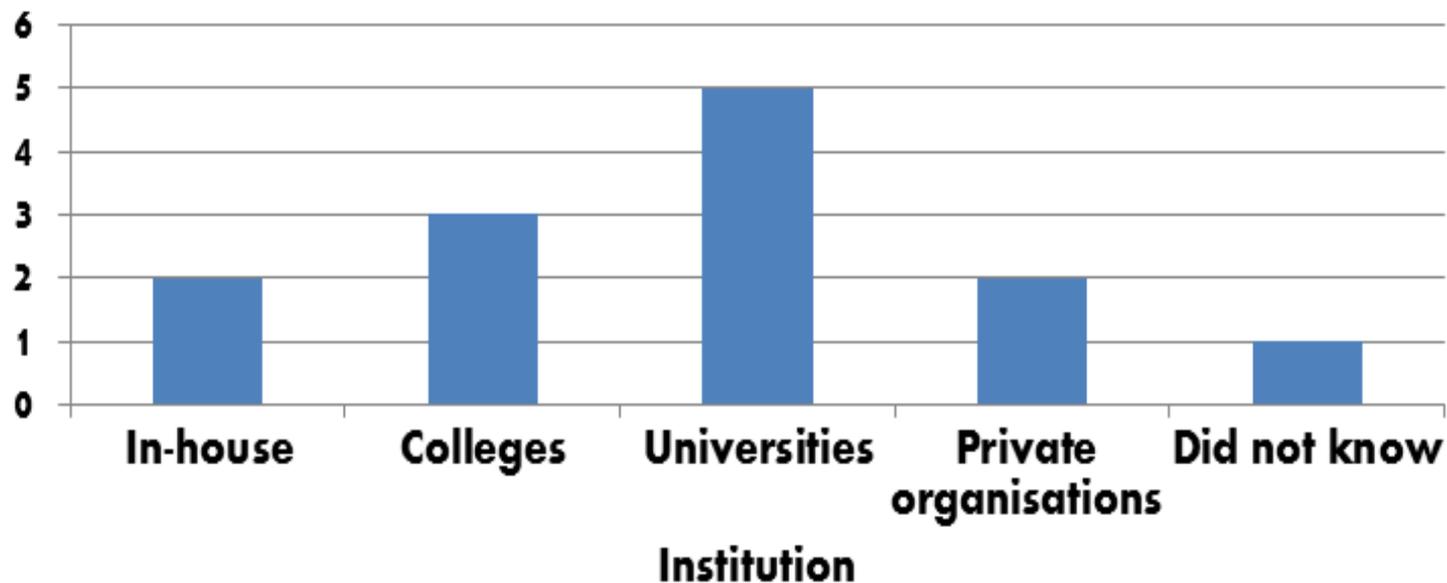
Best methods to equip archivists with public programming skills

N=9



National Archivists' response

Institutions that offer training in public programming to the National Archives of ESARBICA



Education and training in ESARBICA

- **25 Universities, Colleges and Institutions that offer Archives and Records management training in the ESARBICA Region (Online & National Directors).**
- **Nine (9) outline modules offered:**
 - Moi University, University of Botswana, Kenyatta University, Uganda institute of information and Communication Technology, Makerere University, Mzuzu University, National University of Science and Technology, University of Fort Hare and the University of South Africa**
- **None mentioned any modules on public programming/marketing/outreach etc.**

Archivists 'perspectives

- **Relevant skills: Yes, however archivists are not given the opportunity to conduct public programmes.**
 - *“ Only the Ministry’s Public Relations Officer has the mandate to market the archives”.*
 - *“If you put me in front of an exhibition to talk about the archives, I can talk ... no chances are there”.*
 - **High staff turnover prevents qualified staff from implementing public programmes.**
 - **Inadequate facilities – “ We have no space”.**

Archivists' perspectives

Available training on public programming:

- **Six (6) out of the eight (8) interviewees were unaware of any available training on public programming within or outside their countries.**
- **Two (2) mentioned that it was taught as a unit as part of a module for a postgraduate programme at a particular University.**
- **These findings contradict the response of the National Directors with 7 (78%) stating that archivists were aware of available training.**

Perceptions of ESARBICA Board Members

- Archivists in the region have the necessary skills on public programming, however in the past decade the main focus has been preservation, conservation and aligning National Archives with records management administration, transparency and accountability.
 - *“ Very few archives have public galleries to host the public...we should learn from colleagues in the museums.”*
- ESARBICA has not done any pre-conference workshop on public programming.

Four paradigms of the archival changing environment (Cook 2013)

Paradigm	Period	Focus	Role of archivists
1 st -Evidence	1798-1930s	This paradigm was centred on keeping records as evidence. They kept everything Therefore focusing on <u>arrangement</u> and <u>description</u> .	The professional impartial custodian of the records who guards records as a juridical legacy.
2 nd - Memory	1930 - 1970s	The volume of information increased after two world wars and the Great Depression. Therefore the concept of keeping all records was no longer viable. <u>Appraisal</u> became a defining characteristic of this paradigm. Selection of records was memory-focused.	Archivists became active selectors of what should be kept for posterity.
3 rd - Identity	1980s →	Archivists are increasingly recognised as professionals during this paradigm. As a result of archives being acknowledged as a <u>societal resource</u> . Records help societies to shape their identities.	Archivists as mediators. Leading society to find its identity through shared memories grounded in evidence.
4 th – Community participatory archiving	On the horizon (not fully formed)	The proliferation of ICTs has led to everyone keeping records. Calling for archival institutions to <u>empower society</u> with relevant skills on how to participate in the act of record keeping for posterity and sharing records.	Archivists move a step forward from encouraging societal engagement to becoming community facilitators.

Core curriculum for archivists?

- **National Archival societies or associations set core curriculum, i.e The Society of American Archivists (SAA), Australian Society of Archivists (ASA), European Archival Education Framework. Institutions in these countries adhere to these set standards .**
- **Core concepts- (i) manage archives, (ii) communicate archives and (iii) run an archival service.**
- **No core curriculum identified in the ESARBICA region, this is an understudied area (Katuu 2013).**
- **Archival education needs to adapt to the changing information landscape (Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at 2003; Mnjama 2005; Katuu 2009; Okello-Obura 2009; Katuu 2013).**

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Expertise in public programming is available to a certain extent in the ESARBICA region.
- Public programming is NOT a priority in the ESARBICA region.

Recommendations:

- SASA and ESARBICA should persuade National Archives to prioritise public programming.
- Public programming should become a prominent feature in archival curricula across ESARBICA.
- Relevant training on promoting archives is required for archivists to adapt to the changing archival landscape.

The End

THANK YOU

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