

Research collaboration in archives and records management field across and beyond universities in Africa: an informetric analysis

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Road map

- Introduction
- Why this study?
- Research purpose and objectives
- Scope and research methodology
- Results
- Conclusion and recommendations

Introduction

- The need for research in archives and records management cannot be over-emphasised particularly in this era of technological developments.
- Research can help to empower archivists and records managers in tackling the challenges of governance in electronic environment, as well as formulating research agendas to address grand societal challenges such as lack of accountability, high level of litigation rate, bad audit results, and lack of or poor service delivery emanating from breakdown in records systems (Katuu 2009, Ngoepe 2012)
- Records management systems in the public sector are in a state of disarray in many African countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Swaziland to mention just few (Nengomash 2013).
- Research and training in archives and records management have been given little attention in many sub-Saharan African countries education (Onyancha, Ngoepe and Maluleka 2012).

Why bother?

- The problem of lack research is compounded by the fact that “among the LIS schools in sub-Saharan Africa, few have laid emphasis on the provision of courses/programmes in ARM, and more particularly at the undergraduate level” (Onyancha & Minishi-Majanja 2009)
- Department of Arts and Culture (2010) in South Africa revealed that only nine universities in South Africa offer archives and records management as ancillary courses within the schools of LIS at a diploma or certificate level
- The same is true in all African universities except perhaps in Kenya where archives and records management boasts of its own department within the School of Information Science and Uganda
- There is a shortage of fully trained archivists and records managers in most African countries thereby necessitating some countries sending archivists overseas to study archives and records management to abroad for studies
- It is hoped that this study will stimulate interest for research collaboration in ARM and thus increase research output in this field in Africa. This in turn will help to formulate research agenda to address grand societal challenges and sustain ARM profession in Africa to be on par with the rest of the world.

Different levels of collaboration and distinction between *inter* and *intra* forms (Katz and Martin 1997; Ocholla 2013)

Collaboration is a “process where two or more individuals or organisations deal collectively with issues that they cannot solve individually” (Ocholla 2008)

Level	Intra	Inter
Individual	-	Between individuals
Group	Between individuals in the same research group	Between departments (in the same department)
Department	Between individuals or groups in the same department	Between departments (in the same institution)
Institution	Between individuals or departments in the same institution	Between institutions
Sector	Between institutions in the same sector	Between institutions in different sectors
Nation different countries	Between institutions in the same country	Between institutions in

Purpose and objectives

- The general purpose of the study was to examine the nature, trend and type of collaboration in ARM research in Africa by identifying individuals, institutions and countries collaborating in ARM research in the region. The specific objectives were to:
 - examine the trends and patterns of collaboration in ARM research in Africa,
 - identify the top collaborating authors, institutions and countries in Africa,
 - identify the number of single-authored articles versus multiple authored articles, and
 - identify journals with most collaboration articles.

Scope, limitations and research methodology

- Quantitative study conducted through informetrics method
 - Informetrics – a quantitative analysis of patterns that show up not only in publications but in many aspects of life, as long as the pattern deals with information.
- The study covered 15 LIS journals indexed in AJOL database covering articles from 1990 until 2013. The search query covered the topics 'Archives' OR 'Records' as subject terms.
- Access to the AJOL database was a challenge due to 9 dollar access fee per article
- A total of 312 ARM articles indexed in AJOL database from 1990-2013 were obtained.
- Data were captured in spreadsheets prepared using Microsoft Excel software before being exported to the UCINET and NetDraw visual network analysis software.



Results and discussion

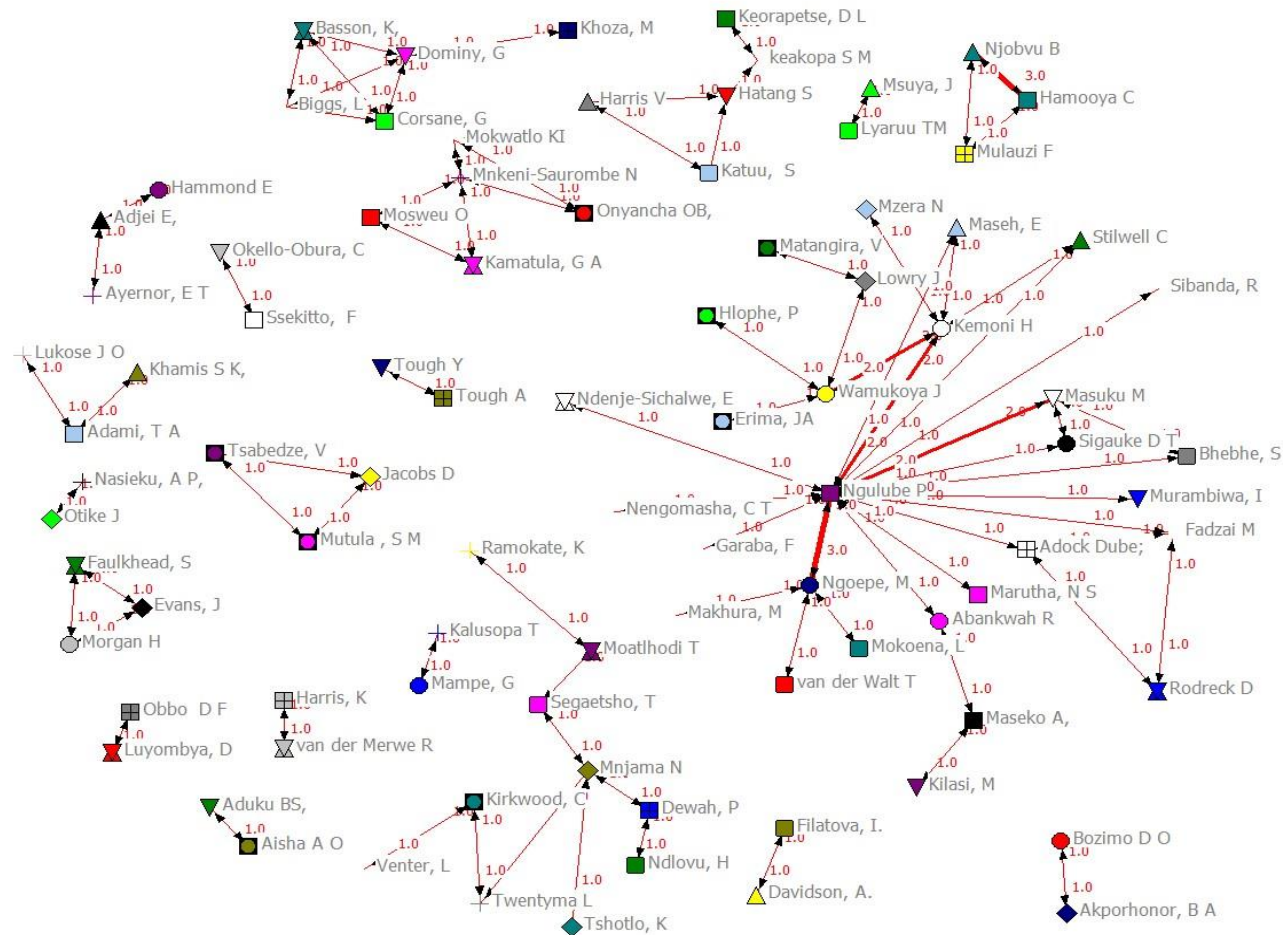
Trends of single and multi-authored articles

It is distressing to note that only one out of 37 articles was co-authored between 1990 and 1994. This implies that research skills were not transferred to novice researchers through collaboration.

Year	Total Number of Articles	Number of Authors	Single Authored Articles	Multi-Authored Articles
1990-1994	37	38	36	1
1995-1999	69	74	64	5
2000-2004	78	82	74	4
2005-2009	55	69	43	12
2010-2013	73	123	37	36
Total	312	386	254	58

The number of collaborations increased to five between 1995 and 1999, but decreased to four between 2000 and 2004. It started to rise between 2005 and 2009 with 12 co-authored publications out of 43. Between 2010 and 2013, the number of collaboration increased to almost 50% with 36 out of 73 articles having been co-authored.

Collaborating authors



Authors with most collaboration

No	Author	Co-authored papers
1	Ngulube, P	15
2	Kemoni, H	6
3	Ngoepe, M	5
4	Wamukoya, J	5
5	Hamooya, C	3
6	Njobvu, B	3
7	Mnjama, N	3
8	Abankwah, R	2
9	Adjei, E	2
10	Bhebehe, S	2
11	Dewah, P	2
12	Dominy, G	2
13	Keakopa, M	2
14	Khamis, SK	2
15	Kirkwood, C	2
16	Lowry, J	2
17	Masuku, M	2
18	Mnkeni-Saurombe, N	2
19	Mokwatlo, KI	2
20	Onyancha, OB	2

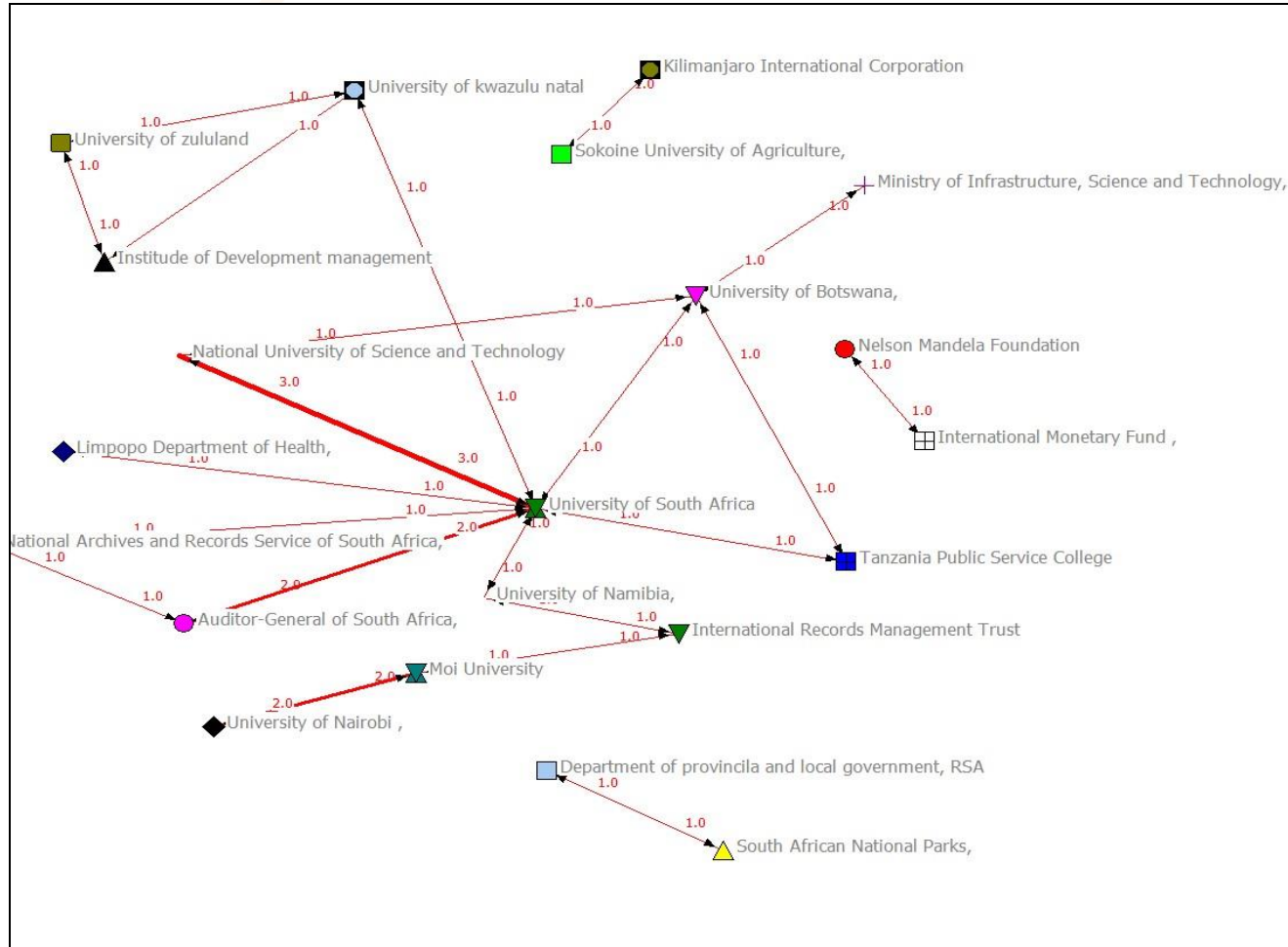
There were a total of 89 collaborating authors out of 385. Topping the list of the most collaborating authors was Ngulube, P who collaborated in 15 articles, followed by Kemoni, H (6), Ngoepe, M (5), Wamukoya, J (5) and Hamooya, C (3) to mention just the top five.

Institutions behind research collaboration in ARM research in Africa

No.	Institutions	Number of collaborations
1	University of South Africa	12
2	National University of Science and Technology, Zimbabwe	4
3	University of Botswana	4
4	Auditor-General of South Africa	3
5	Moi University	3
6	National Archives and Records Services of South Africa	2
7	International Records Management Trust	2
8	University of Nairobi	2
9	University of Namibia	2
10	Tanzania Public Service College	2
11	Department of Provincial and Local Government, SA	1
12	Institute of Development Management	1
13	International Monetary Fund	1
14	Kilimanjaro International Corporation	1
15	Limpopo Department of Health	1
16	Ministry of Infrastructure, Science and Technology	1
17	Nelson Mandela Foundation	1
18	Sokoine University of Agriculture	1
19	University of KwaZulu-Natal	1
20	University of Zululand	1

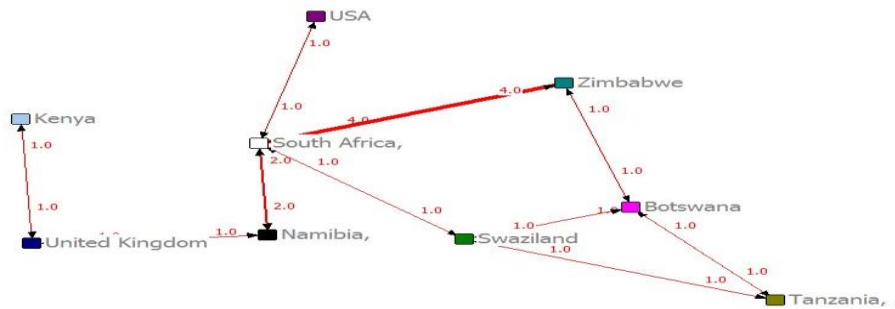
A total number of 21 institutions contributed to research collaboration in ARM in Africa during the period under study. Leading these institutions was Unisa with 12 collaborations followed by the National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe (4) and the University of Botswana (4). Apart from institutions of higher learning, organisations such as AGSA(3), IRMT(2) and NARS featured among the top 10 collaborating institutions.

Institutions behind research collaboration in ARM research in Africa



University of South Africa, University of Nairobi, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Botswana, Moi University, the National University of Science and Technology, University of Zululand, as well as the Tanzania Public Service College are in the centre of participation when it comes to collaboration within ARM research in Africa. There was evidence of strong collaboration links between the University of South Africa and the National University of Science and Technology.

Collaborating countries



Researchers from nine countries collaborated with each other in the area of ARM research. SA had the most collaboration links from the data set of this study. There were collaboration links between SA and countries such as Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Namibia and the US. SA showed stronger collaboration links with Zimbabwe and a total of four collaborations were recorded among the two countries. There were also collaboration links between the UK and African countries such as Kenya and Namibia.

Top collaborating journals

Name of a Journal	Number of articles	Co-authored articles
Journal of the South African Society of Archives	150	17
ESARBICA Journal	106	32
African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science	24	3
Innovation	19	2
Ghana Library Journal	4	2
Lagos Journal of Library and Information Science	3	0
Information Manager	2	1
University of Der es Salaam Library Journal	1	0
Samaru Journal of info Science	1	0
Nigerian Libraries	1	0
Information Technology	1	1
International Journal of Pedagogy, Policy and ICT in Education	0	0
Journal of Librarianship and Information Science in Africa	0	0
Nigerian School Library Journals	0	0
Revue d'Information Scientifique et t\Technique	0	0
Total	312	58

Topping the list was the Journal of the South African Society of Archivists (previously SA Archives Journal) with 150 articles (17 co-authored), followed by ESARBICA Journal (106) with the most co-authored articles (32), African Journal of Library, Archives and Information Science (24) and Innovation (19).

Conclusions

- As expected, institutions of higher learning were the most active in ARM research, **Where are the practising archivists and records managers?**
- ARM sub-discipline is less researched in Africa.
 - Possible reasons: (1) few ARM researchers, (2) Few mainstream journals, (3) few institutions offer ARM education and training – e.g. In SA out of 23 Universities, 10 offer LIS education and training, of which only 3 offer ARM education and training
- In the case where the practitioners contributed, it was mainly between the student and supervisor.
- It appears that social and physical proximity are some of the factors contributing to research collaboration in ARM in Africa as most of the collaborated works were by authors from the same institution.
- South Africa is the leading producer of research in ARM. This can be attributed to the resources that the country has as compared to other African states, e.g. all the mainstream ARM journals are produced in SA
- The top universities that produced more collaborating work such as the University of South Africa, National University of Science and Technology in Zimbabwe, University of Botswana and Moi University all offer courses in archives and records management.

Recommendations

- More collaborative projects between novice and established researchers in the view of nurturing and mentoring novice researchers to be self-sustainable in producing scholarly literature.
- Students may be given the opportunity to conduct research on a smaller scale through a directed research project or a directed study involving in-depth investigation of a specific issue or problem.
- Academic institutions should form partnership with records offices and archives.
 - This would results in 1) the production of **new knowledge**, 2) the achievement of **action-oriented research outcomes**, 3) the **education** of all participants, 4) results that are **relevant to the local setting**, 5) appropriate research and development **methodology**, and 6) and the **empowerment of the archives**.
- Failure to nurture novice researchers to be able to produce high scholarly work independently would lead to African countries to continue to be consumers of knowledge rather than producers.
- It is through research collaboration that experienced researchers can transfer skills to budding researchers.
- ARM practitioners and scholars should find ways of getting into discussions with other fields and express what is offered by the field.
- Editors for LIS journals indexed in Ajol should consider open access for the journals

End: Food for Thought

- We are just wondering a loud: How many of the papers that have been presented here will be published in mainstream and peer-reviewed journals? How many of these deal with ARM?
- **YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS OURS**



Thank you

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