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# Can a University Library Manage an Archives and a Records Centre? Weighing possibilities and impossibilities at Mzuzu University, Malawi.

by

Gift Alfred Dube<sup>1</sup>

[Giftdube1969@yahoo.com](mailto:Giftdube1969@yahoo.com)

Winner D. Chawinga<sup>2</sup>

[winnchawinga@gmail.com](mailto:winnchawinga@gmail.com)

Allan J. Kanyundo<sup>3</sup>

[ajkanyundo@yahoo.com](mailto:ajkanyundo@yahoo.com)

Hamis Lack Abdullah<sup>4</sup>

[hamislack@gmail.com](mailto:hamislack@gmail.com)

Mzuzu University, Malawi

## Abstract

Historically, the terms archives and record centres have been associated with keeping and preserving historical records. The roles of these institutions have always been different from those of libraries, be academic, public and school libraries. Much as archive, record centres, and libraries deal with information, the scope and functions are different. The major function of archives and record centre are to keep and preserve historical record for future use, and access to these records is commonly restrictive. Traditionally, libraries' major functions are developing collection in response to the needs of users, and allow access to this information for free to a defined population of users or entire public. Libraries keep

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<sup>1</sup>Gift Alfred Dube is the Children's and Outreach Services Librarian work and part-time lecturer in the Department Library and Information Science at Mzuzu University. He holds a Master's degree in Library Science and Information services from University of Central Missouri, USA.

<sup>2</sup>Winner D. Chawinga is a lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science at Mzuzu University in Malawi with a five year teaching experience at university level. He holds a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from the University of the Western Cape - South Africa. He is an established researcher having researched and published widely in the fields of Library and Information Science, Open and Distance Learning and Technology Pedagogy. His research output has been published in highly recognized regional and international journals. He has presented many papers at both, regional and international level.

<sup>3</sup>Allan J. Kanyundo is the Technical Services Librarian and part-time Lecturer in Library and Information Science at Mzuzu University. He holds a Bachelor of Library and Information Science. He is currently conducting research towards his Master of Library and Information Science at the same institution.

<sup>4</sup>Hamis Lack Abdullah is Senior Library Assistant responsible for reference and information service and part-time lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science. He has a Bachelors degree in Library and Information Science and a Certificate in Project Management. He is currently researching in Library and Information Science.

information that is current and relevant to ensure that users are appraised with new and current information trends for effective decision making. Despite the differences in scope and function between archives, record centres and libraries, there is no doubt that their roles intersect or overlap. It is against this background that this paper wants to find out if libraries can work as an archive and record centres. This study adopted a case study research design that targeted Archives in Mzuzu, library staff and the personnel working in the Registry (where a sizable amount of records are officially kept) at Mzuzu University. Data was collected through review of literature, use of questionnaires and interview. The study findings reveal that most activities that are done at Mzuzu University library are also done in archives and record centres. Secondly, Mzuzu University Library staff possess most skills and knowledge that archivists and managers have. However, Mzuzu University library lack environmental conditions to assume the role of archive and record centre. The study therefore concludes that despite similarity of activities and skills, Mzuzu University library should acquire necessary environmental conditions for archives and record centre in order to work as archives and record centres.

**Key Words: Archive, record centre, library, Archivist, record manager, librarian**

### **Conceptual Information**

Records Centres are transitory or semi-current records storage facilities that are responsible for the management of semi-current records until their final disposal. Archives, on the other hand, are organizations that are responsible for the care and control of archival materials (Society for American Archivists, 2016). Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (2017) defines libraries as collections of information sources and other resources, made available or accessible to a defined community for reference or borrowing. There are, however, some prominent differences that exist amongst these institutions. Records centres and archives manage information in the form of records while libraries manage all types of information for user access. Archives and records centres manage records in closed access stacks organized in a particular classification for easy identification and access (Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, Rodriguez-Bravo, 2016) and are accessed on special request (Marciniak, 2015); they may be searched online by using finding aids (Goss, 2013). Libraries, on the other hand, organize materials in open stacks on shelves organized using a bibliographic classification system for easy access (Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, Rodriguez-Bravo, 2016; Ribeiro, 2014). Materials in libraries are searched using an Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). Archives, record centres, and libraries use technology as a modern way of digital information preservation (Asongwa and Ezema, 2012; Schroeder, 2013; Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016; Thompson, Robertson, & Greenberg, 2014).

The functions of archives and libraries have, however, been similar: they all support lifelong learning, they manage information, they all collect and preserve community heritage, and they protect and make access to materials for research (Novia, 2012; Society for American Archivists, 2016). In their efforts to make their information products retrievable, archives and libraries use classification systems (Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, Rodriguez-Bravo, 2016; Ribeiro, 2014). Both librarians and archivists require research, knowledge organization, information technology and interpersonal skills to deliver their services effectively

(American Library Association, 2017). It is against this background that this paper investigates whether a university library can work as an archive and record centre.

### **Contextual Information**

Mzuzu University generates various forms of records, which include students' records, personnel records, administrative records, assessment records, projects records, financial records, communication records, and procurement records. The library produces accession records, circulation records, shelf-list/inventory records, and catalogue records. Some of these records are in print form while some are in electronic form. Apart from these current records, the University houses several old records that date back to 1999 when the University was established. The University does not have a central records office where all institutional records are kept and an archive where old records are preserved for future use. Each department is in custody of its own historic and new records, managed by secretaries and heads of department.

Mzuzu University registry and library are the only places where some records involving the whole institution are kept. The registry has a record office where students' records on admission and assessment, staff personnel information, policies of the university, and external communication files are kept under one records manager with staff who have on-the-job training. The library keeps records of reading materials, users, and equipment that it uses to perform its duties. Its records are generated by trained staff in Library and Information Science.

### **Statement of the Problem**

However, records management in the whole campus is poor. The absence of archives and records centre experts at Mzuzu University has left Mzuzu University experiencing poor management of semi-current and non-current records, which has affected some of the operations of the university. Registry clerks are only given on-the-job training and attend short courses in order to manage the registry. In other departments, records are managed by departmental secretaries and heads with no record keeping expertise. Many times staff and students have complained that their records are missing or lost. There is no record tracking system and no appraisal, retention, and ultimate disposal system. It is not uncommon to learn that most of the records go missing or are impossible to retrieve. The absence of a formal archives and records centre has left old records piling in office hallways with no system of retrieval. The university has failed at this time to make effective decisions or defend cases in court because of lack of evidence from records. However, the library has created a systematic record management system using modern technologies and staff expertise to effectively manage its collection for access and retrieval by users. With trained staff, the library easily traces information about the resources it has and those who use it.

The presence of Mzuzu University Library personnel who can perform similar records and archives management activities may help fix the challenges. Thompson, Robertson, and Greenberg (2014) assert that "historically librarians and archivists have organized and managed large collections of materials in both physical and digital formats" (p.

845).Therefore this research study intends to find out if Mzuzu University library can work as a records and archives centre at Mzuzu University.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to identify the opportunities and challenges of Mzuzu University library acting as a records and archives centre at Mzuzu University.

### **Research Questions**

This study answers the following questions:

1. What common activities are performed by Archives and Records Centres?
2. What are the activities that Mzuzu University Library performs that are also performed by Archives and Records Centres?
3. What skills and capabilities does Mzuzu University staff possess to perform activities that are performed by Records Centres and Archives?
4. What challenges would Mzuzu University Library face if it assumes responsibilities of managing Records and Archives Centre?

### **Significance of the study**

This study will advise information practitioners on how libraries, record centres, and archives can work together in generating, sharing, and preserving information. The findings of this study present how libraries undertake the roles of records and archives centres in the keeping, disseminating, and preserving information in Malawi and the world over. In particular, this study will help Mzuzu University administrators to consider the available resources—both the expertise of library staff and the storage capabilities of the library—to solve its records management problems. Lastly, the study will identify shortfalls in the library sector that need to be addressed in order to make them function as archives and records centres.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study only involved people who directly work in records generation, sharing, keeping, and preservation in the archive centre in Mzuzu, the records office Mzuzu University, and Mzuzu University Library.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Activities Performed by Archives and Record Centres**

#### **Information Identification and Organization**

Records management “refers to a set of activities required for systematically controlling the creation, distribution, use, maintenance, and disposition of recorded information maintained as evidence of business activities and transactions “(Ottolenghi, Swift, Owens and Crandall, 2016, p. 23). Archives and records centres identify and acquire information that needs to be kept or preserved. The process of creating archives and records begins with

identification of information that needs to be acquired (Asogwa and Ezema, 2012; Saurombe & Ngulube, 2016). Once information is identified, it is appraised to determine its importance and context (Niu, 2012). When archives and records centres acquire information, it is classified in categories that ease access and retrieval. Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, and Rodriguez-Bravo (2016) assert that classification of information helps in the systematic organization of knowledge and information for easy access. Archives use archival classification systems that apply principles that provide uniqueness and hierarchy of records. The system includes developing and implementing a filing plan for archived items in the collection.

### **Information Preservation**

“Preserved records and archives provide continuity and evidence of legal and administrative transactions and obligations and act as a source of information through which decisions are made; plans developed control exercised; policies pursued”(Owen & Mnjama, 2014, p. 137). Archives and records are important in every society and need to be preserved for continuity (Garaba, 2016). In modern archives and records centres, information preservation is in digital form (Asongwa and Ezema, 2012; Schroeder, 2013).

### **Information access**

The major function of records and archives is to make available information and historical records in their possession and make the public aware of their holdings (collection) (Garaba, 2016). Saurombe and Ngulube (2016) agree that archives worldwide combine roles of record keeping and information access points. With modern technologies archives and libraries collaborate to make collections in archives public and accessible by users (Marcum, 2014). Archive materials are uploaded on the internet for access by public (Marciniak, 2015). At the University for Creative Art in the UK, archivist and librarians collaborate to raise awareness of arte facts from the archive and bring them to students for use along with resources housed on open shelves (Martin- Bowtell & Taylor, 2014). Archivists have adopted an online archive information finding aid called Encoded Archival Description (EAD) to facilitate access to information about archives (Goss, 2013).

## **Activities Performed by both Libraries and Archives and Record Centres**

### **Information Identification and Organization**

In order to build its collection, libraries identify information based on the needs of users. This information is then classified and presented in forms that can easily be used. Librarians use their expertise in knowledge management, data management, and technology to organize information in ways that allow it to be easily accessed (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). They use bibliographic classification to organize physical and abstract materials into groups that can easily be accessed (Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, Rodriguez-Bravo, 2016).

### **Information Preservation**

Preserving library collections allows resources from the past to be used in the future (Owen & Mnjama, 2014). Modern libraries use digitalization as means of preserving information and data. Asogwa and Ezema (2012) assert that through digitization and reformatting librarians are able to retain materials. Universities in Nigeria use D-Space software to

develop digital institutional repositories (Kari & Baro, 2016). Academic librarians have been engaged in curation of research data (Thompson, Robertson & Greenberg, 2014). Johns Hopkins University library curates data for reuse and preservation (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016).

### **Information Access**

The core function of the library in society is to find, organize, and make information accessible to users (Marciniak, 2015). Librarians share information with users through the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), online databases, and institutional repositories (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). Librarians collaborate with professionals in other institutions to facilitate access to information in different forms. Using technologies, information professionals in libraries, archives, and museums work together to create joint catalogues that can be accessed by users in different forms (Zaid& Abioye, 2010).

### **Challenges Faced by Librarians who Work in Archives and Record Centres**

#### **Human Resources**

Libraries lack human resources with required skills and attitudes to perform activities of archives and records centres. These include common skills related to data description, methods of cataloguing, resource registration, and vocabulary (Marcum, 2014). In addition, librarians and archivists tend to have different skill levels and education from librarians. Librarians study library and information science while most archivists study history (Novia, 2012). Preservation is not the centre of library science curriculum, and in many African countries, few librarians study computer science to develop skills to carry out digital preservation (Asogwa & Ezema, 2012). Further, working in archives and record centres requires patience as one deals with fragile materials (Schroeder, 2013).

#### **Skills and Knowledge**

Most librarians lack skills in preservation management, electronic record preservation, and technical infrastructure such as technological tool (Owen & Mnjama, 2014). Thompson, Robertson, and Greenberg (2014) state that a well-trained workforce is vital for a successful curation and digitalization process. Librarians working in archival settings need to develop security and access procedure skills to enable them work with users. They need skills to deal with copyright issues when changing archives to digital formats (Martin-Bowtell & Taylor,2014). The Association of Canadian Archivists (2014) outlined some of the skills and knowledge archivists and records managers need to have. Among them, they assert that archivists and records managers should have well-developed skills related to speaking, writing effectively; organizing people and resources; creating records and records plan; evaluating the value of records for permanent preservation or destruction; understanding essential characteristics of records and archives in print and electronic forms; planning and evaluating records and archives systems; helping users access records and archives in print and electronic forms; preserving and conserving information in print and electronic forms; and a good attitude when dealing with fragile records and archives.

## **Environment for Archive Preservation**

Archives and records require space, a carefully-controlled environment for long-term preservation and access, media devices and software that facilitate digitalization and access of archival materials, and motivated personnel to handle archival preservation projects (Asogwa and Ezema, 2012; Martin-Bowtell & Taylor, 2014). The Society of American Archivist (2017) have recommended that archives should be in a fire-resistant or fire-proof building, and the archives should be equipped with an appropriate heat/fire detection and suppression system. They have suggested that the room should maintain constant temperature and humidity conditions. The temperature ranges should be 16-21°C with a relative humidity of 40-50%. Furthermore, they recommend that there should be a security system to protect the archives. All windows and fluorescent lighting should have ultra-violet filter screens. In addition, they say archives should be away from environmental or structural hazards such as leaky pipes or wet basements. They have also indicated that archives should be adequately wired for computer and communication services.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This was a case study that adopted both qualitative and quantitative design approaches. Case studies, according to Stake (1995), investigate particularities and complexities of a single case in order to understand its activity within important circumstances. This method is appropriate for this study because its purpose is to investigate whether Mzuzu University Library can act as a records and archives centre within the same library structure and with the same personnel. This study is of value to others at institutions similar to Mzuzu University.

### **Data Collection**

A questionnaire was used to collect data from six participants: from record manager in the University Registrar's office, an information archivist, and library staff at Mzuzu University library. Interview guide was used in follow up interview. In addition, literature review was used to find information on activities that are done by archives and record centres.

### **Sampling Technique**

This study used a non-probability purposive sampling technique to select the research participants. Picardi & Masick (2014) describe the purposive sample as when the researcher selects participants who have relevant knowledge to the study. In this study eight (7) participants who are involved in record generation, sharing, and preservation were selected: one records manager, one archivist, five library staff: These library staff represent five sections of the library that are involved in activities that are related to archives and record centres.

### **Ethical considerations**

Permission to carry out research was sought from the Director of Research at Mzuzu University and participants. When consent was granted, respondents were given questionnaires. The information that was provided was treated with confidentiality to make sure that all respondents remained anonymous.



## Dissemination of Findings

Result of the study will be shared with Mzuzu University Management. In addition, it will be presented in a public lecture at Mzuzu University and an electronic copy will put into the library digital repository so that people can access it. Lastly, this study will be presented at XXIV ESABRICA conference that will be held in Lilongwe Malawi in August 2017.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

This study sought to answer the following questions

- What common activities are performed by Archives and Records Centres?
- What are the activities that Mzuzu University Library performs that are also performed by Archives and Records Centres?
- What knowledge and skills do Mzuzu University library staff possess to perform activities that are performed by Records Centres and Archives?
- What challenges would Mzuzu University Library face if it assumes responsibilities of managing Records and Archives Centre?

### What common activities are performed by Archives and Records Centres?

Using a questionnaire, data were collected from an archivist and records manager. Table 1 shows the activities the archivist and records manager ticked that they both perform. Basically what they do is similar except for consultancy and training of records officer, promoting resources and services and conducting user education.

**Table 1. Common activities performed in archives and records centres.**

Activities	Archives	Record Centres
Selecting of information resources	*	*
Acquiring information resources	*	*
Describing and classifying materials using classification schemes/plan	*	*
Preserving and conserving materials	*	*
Shelving /filing materials in a particular classification order	*	*
Data entry into database	*	*
Materials retrieval for access	*	*
Promotion of resources and services	*	
Conducting user education	*	
Receive information/records/books	*	*
Appraise information to determine context, structure, importance	*	*
Record creation, organization and description by means of metadata including classifying records using record plan/scheme	*	*
Recommending records into public archives	*	*
Consultancy and training of record officers	*	

### What are the activities that Mzuzu University Library performs that are also performed by Archives and Records Centres?

Using a questionnaire, data were collected from library staff, an archivist, and a records manager. Table 2 shows activities performed by library staff, archivists and records managers. From this table, it can be seen that what library staff, the archivist and the records manager perform are basically the same, except for offering consultancy services by archives and promotion of resources and services and conducting users education which are not done by record managers.

**Table 2. Activities Performed by library staff, archivist and record manager.**

Activities	Library staff	Archivist	Record Manager
Selecting and acquiring of information resources	*	*	*
Describing and classifying materials using classification schemes/plan	*	*	*
Preserving and conserving materials	*	*	*
Shelving /filing materials in a particular classification order	*	*	*
Materials retrieval for access	*	*	*
Promotion of resources and services	*	*	
Conducting user education	*	*	
Receive information/records/books	*	*	*
Appraise information to determine context, structure, importance	*	*	*
Record creation, organization and description by means of metadata including classifying records using record plan/scheme	*	*	*
Data entry into databases	*	*	*
Digitizing print resource	*	*	*
Consultancy and training record managers		*	

### What skills and knowledge do Mzuzu University staff possess to perform activities that are performed by Records Centres and Archives?

Using a questionnaire, data were collected on skills and knowledge that Mzuzu University staff possess to perform the activities of archive and record centres. Table 3 shows skills and knowledge currently possessed by library staff at Mzuzu University that can enable them to undertake duties required in an archives or records centre. It is noted in table 3 that library staff lack qualification in archive and record management.

**Table 3. Skills and knowledge possessed by Mzuzu University Library Staff to perform activities performed by records and archives centres. Marks skills are those library staff have to either work in archives or record centres**

<b>Skills and Knowledge</b>	<b>Library staff</b>	<b>Archivist</b>	<b>Record Manager</b>
Qualifications: Library and Information Science	*		
Qualification: Archives and Records Management		*	*
Speaking and writing effectively	*	*	*
organise people and resources to meet user needs	*	*	*
Creating, organising, describing records using a classification scheme	*	*	*
Evaluating information resources (determine usefulness, weeding, purchasing etc.)	*	*	*
Knowing resources in both electronic and print formats	*	*	*
Knowing integrated information management software applications e.g. Koha, library solutions	*	*	*
Helping users to access information materials in print and electronic form	*	*	*
Preserving and conserving of materials	*	*	*
Attitude and patience to deal difficult users	*	*	*
Conversant with digitization software and optical character recognition software e.g. D- space, Adobe, abbey fine reader	*	*	
Photocopying and graphic designing , scanning	*	*	
Use of archives modern templates on archives and web management		*	
Attitude and patience to deal with fragile records and archives	*	*	*
Web designing	*	*	

**What challenges would Mzuzu University library face if it assumes responsibilities of managing Records and Archives Centre?**

Through a questionnaire and interview, data were collected on challenges that Mzuzu University Library staff face if the Library assumes the activities of the archive and records centre. Table 4 lists what Mzuzu University Library has and does not have for it to assume an additional responsibility of working as a university archives and records centre. The marked conditions are the ones the library has while the unmarked conditions are the ones absent for Mzuzu University Library to take on the responsibility of an archives and records centre for the university.

**Table 4. Challenges Mzuzu University Library would face if it assumes the role of an archives and records centre**

<b>Conditions/Materials for Archives/Record Centre</b>	<b>Available at Mzuzu University</b>	<b>Not Available at Mzuzu University</b>
Fire resistant building with heat/fire detection system		*
Special rooms with temperature ranges from 16-21°C.		*
Security system		*
Windows with fluorescent lighting and appropriate ultra-violet light filter screens.		*
Rooms to be away from leaky pipes or wet basements	*	
Wire the archives for computer and communication services		*
Computers, word processors, printers, photocopiers, scanners etc.	*	
Folders, documents cases, boxes for long-term preservation	*	
Standard office supplies	*	
Data storage facilities to accommodate curated and digitized materials	*	
Digital and video cameras	*	

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **What are common activities that are performed by Archives and Record Centres?**

Findings from the literature review and the survey of archive and record centre personnel reveal that all activities presented in Table 1 performed by archivists are also performed by records centres, except for consultancy and training for records managers and conducting user education. A follow up interview on why record centre staff do not conduct user education revealed that record centres keep records that may not be for public access and require special permission to be accessed as governed by law.

### **What are the activities that Mzuzu University library performs that are also performed by archives and record centres?**

Data from Table 2 shows that activities performed by library staff are also performed by archive and record centre staff except for conducting user education and promotion of resources and services which are only done by library archive staff as shown below

The findings of this study agree with Thompson, Robertson, and Greenberg (2014) that librarians and archivists have both been involved in organizing, managing, and preserving information in physical and digital forms. However, the literature revealed that librarians and archivists may use different vocabulary for the same activity. For example, shelving can

be used in the library while filing may be used in archive and records centres (Ottolenghi, Swift, Owens and Crandall, 2016); evaluation is common used in the library while appraising is commonly used in archives and record centres (Niu, 2012); and classification may be used in the library while plan or framework is used in the archive and record centre (Ribeiro, 2014). A follow up interview with staff from library, archive and record centre confirmed that these professionals use different vocabulary for similar activities.

### **What Skills and Knowledge does Mzuzu University staff possess to perform activities of archives and Record Centres?**

Table 3 shows that library staff have most of the skills need to perform activities of an archivist and record manager except for being conversant with digitization software and optical character recognition software e.g. D- space, Adobe, abbey fine reader, photocopying and graphic designing, scanning and web designing which only archivist and library staff have as presented in table 5.

Table 5 shoeing Skills and Knowledge That Mzuzu University Staff Possess to do Activities of Archives and record Manager.

<b>Skills and Knowledge</b>	<b>Library staff</b>	<b>Archivist</b>	<b>Record Manager</b>
Speaking and writing effectively	*	*	*
organise people and resources to meet user needs	*	*	*
Creating, organising, describing records using a classification scheme	*	*	*
Evaluating information resources (determine usefulness, weeding, purchasing etc.)	*	*	*
Knowing resources in both electronic and print formats	*	*	*
Knowing integrated information management software applications e.g. Koha, library solutions	*	*	*
Helping users to access information materials in print and electronic form	*	*	*
Preserving and conserving of materials	*	*	*
Attitude and patience to deal difficult users	*	*	*
Conversant with digitization software and optical character recognition software e.g. D- space, Adobe, abbey fine reader	*	*	
Photocopying and graphic designing , scanning	*	*	
Attitude and patience to deal with fragile records and archives	*	*	*
Web designing	*	*	

The findings above are in line with what Kim, Warga, and Moen (2013) observe, that the set of skills used in the library is very similar to that used in archives and record centres. However, the literature indicates that although skills and knowledge may be similar, library staff and archive and record centre staff deal with different tools and modes of operation.

For example, library staff use bibliographic classification schemes while archivists and records centre staff use archival systems with different approaches (Da Graca Simoes, De Freitas, Rodriguez-Bravo, 2016); library staff use an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) as the means of helping users find information in the library from remote places (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016) while archivists and records centre staff use Encoded Archival Description (EAD) to facilitate archival information access online (Goss, 2013); library staff organize resources for open access by users while archives and record centre staff manage closed services--information is accessed upon special permission and request (Marciniak, 2015). The use of different tools for the same kinds of activities was confirmed in the follow up interview of library and archival staff; archivist was aware of the OPAC and library staff were not aware of EAD.

In addition, the study reveals that although library staff and archive and records centre staff have similar skills, they may not fully perform archival activities because these are different professions with specialised training. From table 3 it is noted that library staff study library and information science while archival and records centre staff study archival management. Asongwa & Ezema (2012) confirms that library staff may lack skills, competencies, and attitudes needed to preserve physical and digital materials because preservation is not at the centre of the library science curriculum. The Association of Canadian Archivists (2014) adds archival and records center staff need to understand the characteristics of records.

### **What Challenges would Mzuzu University library face if it assumes responsibilities of archive and record managers?**

Although Mzuzu University Library staff possess many of the skills expected of archivists and records managers, the university must consider several items which are lacking. Based on the findings in Table 4, Mzuzu University would have a challenge in providing a fire-resistant building with a heat/fire detection system and also special rooms with humidity control and temperature ranges from 16-20° C, a security system, and windows with fluorescent lighting and appropriate ultra-violet light filter screens. These are also recommendations from the American Archivist Association (American Archivist Association, 2017).

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **Can Mzuzu University library work as a records and archives centre at Mzuzu University?**

Based on the findings, the author concludes that it is possible for Mzuzu University Library to also function as an archive and records centre because of the similarity of activities and staff skills that are common to both the Archives and Records Centre and Mzuzu University Library staff. Activities common to both include the following: acquire information from different sources, evaluate it, classify it, preserves it, and make it accessible to users, among others. Skills and knowledge common to both include the following: information classification, preservation, and making information accessible to users, among others. In addition, the study reveals that Mzuzu University Library meets most of the environmental conditions required for a records and archives centre, including possessing equipment for preserving materials and information storage facilities; however, it does not have special rooms with recommended environmental and security features.

Although library staff perform many of the same activities and possess similar knowledge and skills, taking on the responsibility for Archives and Records Centre will require that the

library staff receive training in archives and records management. The study reveals that libraries and archives use different tools, vocabulary, and modes of presenting information. Further, librarians may need special skills in preserving physical information materials apart from digital materials. The study, therefore, recommends Mzuzu University consider the following in order for the Library to perform the activities of the Archives and Records Centre:

- (a) Train specific library staff in archival and records management so that they understanding the characteristics of records and the use of specific tools for archives and records processes.
- (b) Identify or build a special room with the recommended temperature, humidity, and fire security system.
- (c) Collaborate with records and archive centres in order to create, keep, preserve, and make records accessible by users.

In summary Mzuzu University Library has the potential to perform the activities of records and archive centres. However, to be successful, librarians need specialized training, and the library needs a specialized room for storage of archival records.

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