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An assessment of human resource capabilities in supporting digital records preservation: a case of RAMD and RITA, Tanzania

Digital records preservation

1

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Abstract

Purpose – Human resource capability is an important factor in determining institutional capacities in digital records preservation. This study aims to assess human resource capabilities in supporting digital records preservation in Tanzania, with special reference to the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD) and Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency (RITA).

Design/methodology/approach – This study employed a descriptive case study design with multiple cases to generate insights into the topic under inquiry. Simple random and purposive sampling methods were used to select study respondents. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and documentary review. Qualitative data collected were subjected to content analysis, whereas quantitative data were analysed using international business machine-corporation-statistical packages and service solution.

Findings – RAMD and RITA have minimal human resource capabilities, as they contend with a shortage of qualified staff and technical personnel for digital records preservation. The shortage of funds, lack of management commitment to preserving digital records, lack of staff awareness on digital records preservation and inadequate participation of records practitioners in digital records preservation emerged as pressing challenges the two agencies contended with.

Practical implications – This study's recommendations include finding alternative sources of funding, employing digital records specialists and provision of training on digital records preservation. Furthermore, this study proposes a framework that institutions can use in assessing human resource capabilities for digital records preservation.

Originality/value – This study contributes new knowledge and insights on the role of human resource capabilities in supporting digital records preservation in a resource-poor country.

Keywords Human resource capabilities, Digital records preservation, Minimal capabilities, Optimal capabilities, RAMD, RITA

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The increase in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in public institutions' service provision inevitably generates large volumes of digital records with long-term value, thus deserving preservation. However, the value and continued existence of digital records depend on institutional capabilities to preserve their authenticity and reliability (Digital Preservation Coalition, 2015). Institutions around the globe are confronted



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