

# Challenges Facing Archivists in Archival Institutions: A Qualitative Study of Archivists in National Archives Kaduna State, Nigeria.

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**ABSTRACT:** The aim of this study is to find out the challenges facing Archivists in Kaduna state Nigeria and also to propose reasonable strategies for combating the challenges. In order to achieve these unique objectives, the researcher adopted qualitative research methodology and interviewed ten(10) Archivists in National Archives Kaduna State, Nigeria. Findings of this study revealed that lack of motivation, poor funding, lack of ICT skills, tribalism and corruption were the challenges facing Archivists in National Archives Kaduna State. Finally, the researcher proposed some recommendations for practical intervention.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Archivists, Archival Institutions, Qualitative case study, Thematic analysis.

## What is known?

Scholars have discussed the concept of records and archives, types of records and archival resources, management of records and archival resources, and the roles of ICT's in management of records and archival resources.

## What is Unknown?

In this study, the researcher confirmed that at the time of conducting this study there is no one single empirical study that identified and discussed the challenges facing archivists in Kaduna state Nigeria and also proposed reasonable strategies for combating the challenges.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indeed, management of archival records are more important than generating the archival resources. Archival records/resources can be described as the collections of printed and electronic documents or records which were selected for permanent preservation because of their value as evidence or as a source for historical or other research (Vincent and Oludipe, 2013). In order to protect and manage archival treasures

properly and effectively each and every government of a particular country established a unique institute that would provide such services. For example, National Archives and Record Administration were established in U.S.A., National Archives of United Kingdom. While, National Archives of United Arab Emirates was established and also National Archives of Scotland was also established respectably. Developing countries were not left behind especially Nigeria. That is why Nigerian government established National Archives in the capital city Abuja and other part of the country like Kaduna state. Even though these institutes were established, based on the preliminary investigation accomplished by the researcher she found out that archivists in National Archives Kaduna state, Nigeria encounter a lot of challenges which were never being documented or reported before. Therefore, there is a critical need to have an empirical study that would find out the truth behind the reality of the challenges facing archivists in this case study.

## Objectives of the study

This study was set up to archive the following objectives:

1. To identify the challenges facing archivists in National Archives Kaduna state Nigeria
2. To propose reasonable strategies for combating challenges facing archivists in Kaduna state Nigeria

## II. METHOD

In order to collect relevant data for this study, qualitative case study approach was adopted and design semi-structured interview for cancer participants. Qualitative case study is an excellent approach for clear understanding of individuals' inner-pains and real-life experiences (Cohen D. and Crabtree B., 2006).

### III. PROCEDURE

Relevant data for this study was collected through face to face interview with Archivists in National Archives Kaduna state Nigeria. Initially, before the commencement of the interview the researchers seek the participants’ consent and explained to them in details about the study aims and objectives. The interview was conducted at various participants’ choice of locations within Kaduna metropolis. Questions were asked about the challenges they face with regards to cancer complications and the sources of information they consulted in order to overcome the challenges.

### IV. ANALYSIS

All data collected in this study was analyzed based on thematic analysis phases. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytical method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns, themes, phrases and key words in minimally organized and describable data in rich and detail. (Braun V. & Clarke V., 2006).

**Phase 1:** The entire voice recorded interview was transcribed into written document while later, the researchers carefully read and re-read the data more than five times with the help of highlighter pen in order to search for themes or phrases which directly answered the research questions.

**Phase 2:** Open codes (themes or phrases which directly answered the research questions) were identified from the participants narratives.

**Phase 3:** Open codes were condensed together and formed sub-categories.

**Phase 4:** Sub- categories based on a particular research question were grouped together (related sub-categories) and formed several themes.

#### Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research refer to a designated policy protecting the reputation of participants under investigation. For the purpose of this study, the researchers explained the study purpose, objectives and the whole research process to the participants before obtaining their consent to participate. Moreover, the researchers assured the participants that should anyone of them wants to discontinue during the course of the research he/she will be free to do so. Confidentiality and anonymity was censured by protecting the privacy of the research participants for not exposing their names at any stage in this research.

### V. RESULTS

The raw data collected and analyzed from the interview conducted with Archivists in National Archives Kaduna state Nigeria with regards to the

challenges they are facing and which source of information they consult in order to overcome the challenge emerged the following themes as described below.

**Table 1.1 Challenges Facing Archivists in National Archives Kaduna State, Nigeria**

Investigation	Themes
What challenges are facing archivists in National Archives Kaduna State Nigeria?	Lack of motivation
	Poor Funding
	Lack of ICT Skills
	Tribalism
	Corruption

The above table represents the voices of archivists in National Archives Kaduna State Nigeria about the challenges they encounter in their place of work and the following themes emerged: (i) Lack of motivation (ii) Poor Funding (iii) Lack of ICT Skills (iv) Tribalism (v) Corruption.

#### Lack of motivation

Lack of motivation has been reported as one of the challenges facing Archivists in National Archive Kaduna State. The theme comprises a lot of claim from the archivists’ perspectives. Over (10/10) of the participants made this complains. For example of the participants stated that:

“Well!, you see we have so many challenges but the one that worry me most is that we lack motivation both from the top management level up to the archival users. Sometimes I will come to the office from 8:30am – 4:00pm and leave the office without serving even one single user. Even if I do something out of ordinary I don’t receive any recommendation letter. So that discouraged seriously”.

Another archivist with different version of lack of motivation stated that:

“Ah, my major concern is nothing rather than the little concern government shows towards our profession.Common!Look at my office. No AC, no recycle bin, the computer is not even working. So how do you expect me to bring out my best in this kind of unpleasant environment?”

#### Poor Funding

One of the findings of this study indicated that there is a serious poor funding in National Archive Kaduna. About (8/10) participants reported poor funding as a challenge in this study. For instant one of the archivists stated that:

“Another challenge that we are facing in this institute is that we have limited funding to

support out daily routines. We need money to buy insecticides to protect our records from insect or even rat poison against mouse.”

Another archivist with similar complaint stated that: “Yes! Money is another issue. Because without money we can’t even buy fuel or gas to power our generator and you can see even in the afternoon there are units in this archive that you can’t see a document except you use touch light with your mobile phone.”

### Lack of ICT Skills

Another issue raised by archivists in National Archive Kaduna was challenge of ICT skills. Over (5/10) participants made this confession. For example one of the participants stated that:

“We have new technology in our archive that will assist us in transforming the paper documents into electronic documents. But, to be sincere with you, very few of us have an idea of how to operate that machine.”

Another archivist with different version of challenge of ICT skills stated that:

“Well, am not going to lie to you I don’t have the expected skills to operate computer. I taught there will be a workshop that will teach us. But up to now the government has little concern about our profession in Nigeria.”

### Tribalism

Tribalism has been reported as one of the challenges facing archivists in National Archive Kaduna State. The theme comprises a lot of claim from the archivists’ perspectives. About (6/10) participants reported this theme. For example one of the participants stated that:

“Truly speaking we can’t move further in this organization if we think that if one may think that his colleague is Hausa, Yoruba or Igbo he did something wrong in the organization and his tribal member is the head of their unit he may not want to punish him and if someone did the same crime he would be punished. This is what is happening here my brother (The interviewer). Sometime you may even observe that a particular head of unit give little recommendation for promotion exercise to non-member tribal employee. This is really a disturbing issue here.”

Another archivist with different version of tribalism as a challenge stated that:

“Ah, another thing that is annoying me in this organization is nothing rather than how you will see some people group themselves because they are from the same tribe and when you have problem with anyone of them you became an

enemy to all of them. So how do you think we can perform our job here effectively if we have this kind of a problem?”

### Corruption

This study found out that corruption is one of the major challenge facing archivists in National Archive Kaduna State. Corruption as a theme in this study comprises a lot of complaints about corruption activities. Over (9/10) participants reported this incident. For example one of the participants stated that:

“To be frank with you [The Interviewer] sometime we do blame government for not doing their part but believe me government send money to us but the top managers of this institute pocket the money for their personal gain.”

Another participant also claimed that:

“You know, you can’t mention any problem in Nigeria without including corruption as a top priority. Even though this government is trying to eradicate it in the country there are a lot of corruption activities in Nigeria. You see in this institute I know a friend that gave bribe of ₦100,000 (\$290) just to be allowed for study leave. So I don’t know if my time comes and I want to go back to school to further my education how much is going to cost me before I will be given permission.”

## VI. DATE DISCUSSION

This section of the study discusses the finding as described below:

- (1) The findings of this study revealed that one of the challenges facing archivists in National Archive Kaduna state, Nigeria is lack of motivation. This is not surprising because even Loomard (2018) reported that unmotivated employee care less about the image or progress of his/her organization which is a great danger to the organizational facilities and business.
- (2) Another finding of this study indicated that archivists in this case study have challenge of poor funding and this is really a disturbing issue especially in a rich country like Nigeria. This implies that without appropriate fund at the archival disposal many archival services may not be rendered to users.
- (3) Lack of ICT skills was found in this study among the types of challenges facing archivists in this case study. Indeed this is really a challenge especially in 21<sup>st</sup> century where ICT skill is much needed. This implies that there must be a low job performance in National archives Kaduna state, Nigeria. This finding is supported by Katie (2018) who claimed that

inadequately trained employees are likely to experience poor job performance and increase levels of work-related stress.

- (4) Another problem reported by archivist in National Archive Kaduna state Nigeria is the issue of tribalism in the institution. Tribalism is a serious problem not only in Nigeria but, in Africa as a whole. Tribalism is the root of corruption and violence in many organizations in Africa. Asmussen et al (2009) claimed that tribalism is the engineer force for un-safety working environment that accommodates extreme dislike and rivalry among employees.
- (5) Finally, corruption was also mentioned by archivist in this case study as one of their challenges in the institution. This is because there are instances from the data collected that indicates serious corruptions allegation activities in the institution. Lamarco (2018) reported that corruption activities in a particular organization are the major key for misallocation of human resources development and opportunities.

## VII. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

This study concludes that archivists in National Archives Kaduna state Nigeria experienced so many challenges in their institution. Those challenges can be traced from the narratives of archivists in this case study such as complains about lack of motivation from top managers, poor finding to purchase gas or fuel to power up generators, lack of ICT skills to operates new technologies in the institution, act of tribalism among employees and finally give and take bribe before employees wishes come true.

Therefore, the researcher made the following recommendations for practical intervention:

- (1) Top managers of National Archives Kaduna should be organizing award ceremonies in the organization. This can serve an avenue of motivating archivists in the institution. Moreover, the management should provide adequate equipments and made it available in the institution.
- (2) Top managers of National Archival Kaduna should identify other alternative sources of fund in the institution such as seeking for grants, donation or even renting some hall for ceremonial activities in the institution.
- (3) Top managers of National Archival Kaduna should be frequently organizing in-service training programs on ICT skills literacy.
- (4) Top managers of National Archival Kaduna in collaboration with federal government should

be organizing sensitization seminars in the institution aimed at the eradicating tribalism cases in the institution.

- (5) Federal government through anti-corruption agency in the country should send a desk officer to National Archival Kaduna to serve as corruption surveillance personal in the institution.

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