



**UNIVERSITY OF
MPUMALANGA**

**The University of Witwatersrand and
the University of Venda: Comparative
study on the appraisal of records
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Introduction

- There are 26 public universities in SA divided as previously historical advantages and disadvantages universities because of the segregated by the Bantu Education Act of 1953.
- SA Universities are managed in terms of the Higher Education (Act No. 101 of 1997). Section 41 of the Act, makes provision for the management of records as a key enabler for decision making and delineation of responsibilities.
- Universities were grouped in the following categories i.e. historically white English medium universities, historically black universities, and. the historically Afrikaans-medium universities

Historical background of the University of Witwatersrand and the University of Venda



- The **University of Witwatersrand** was established in 1922. The university was established to service the previous advantages white communities. Wits university has established the central records centre unit. The university made an effort to solve the challenge by establishing the Records centres and appointing an archivist/ records manager to manage all institutional memories. The records Management division was established in 2006
- University of Witwatersrand has a population of 38353
- It has 33 schools

- **University of Venda** was established in 1982. The university is one of the former historical black disadvantaged universities. The Records and Archives management unit was established in 2015.
- University has a student population of 11 000.
- University of Venda was established through the Bantustan Higher Education Act of 1959 which discriminated black South Africa to study at the white institution such as the University of Witwatersrand.
- It has 8 schools

- Categorization of South African universities (as black, whites and colored) was influenced by the apartheid or segregation system introduced by the National Party political organisation of South Africa

Appraisal of records



- Both the University of Witwatersrand and the University of Venda are public institutions regulated by the government regulations.
- The National Archives and Records Management Service Act 43 of 1996 , The Public Finance Management Act PFMA (Act of 1999), Higher Education Act of 1997 and The Promotion of Access to Information Act of 2000 are the legislative framework for appraisal of South African universities records .
- Macro- appraisal theory was adopted by the National Archives of South Africa to appraise all government records.

Research Approach



- This study is based on the qualitative research technique. The research approach is a multiple case study.
- University of the Witwatersrand represented the previous advantages university previous severed for white students while the University of Venda represented previous disadvantages black students university caters for previous disadvantages university
- Interviews was conducted with both universities archivists and Records Manager

Problem Statement



- The appraisal of both the University of Witwatersrand and the University of Venda is not based on strategy and theory. Appraisal was conducted on ad hoc basis.
- the appraisal approach was based on the Western theory of Macro-appraisal.
- It seems that western countries appraisal theories failed to consider the aspect of African cultural and situational influence
- the SA universities are not yet systematic appraise the records which means most of their historical, cultural and scientific records are not appraised.
- Lack of space and decongestion of records created a challenge to appraise records.
- The non- appraisal of records at the University of Witwatersrand and the University of Venda necessitated preliminary study to confirm the feasibility of conducting this comparative study

Records and Archives practices in South Africa universities



- To both universities, there is no separation of the records and archives management division
- Both Managers are responsible for both records and archives management programme.
- There are decongestion of records in the universities as records appraisal was not conducted because of the lack of department to coordinate appraisal of records.
- Records and archives were not regarded as an assets in South Africa
- Most of the records created by the universities are still paper based even though there are 5% of records which are created in the electronic environment.
- Records and Archives practices in South Africa are based on western or European theories such as principles of Provenance and Principles of Original Order.

FINDINGS



- Lack of file plan. A file plan is viewed as a scheme of control based on an analysis of the business functions and activities of a university.
- lack the process of developing a records control schedule to enable the university to control and manage all university records and prevent unauthorised removal and destruction of records.
- SA universities archivists and records managers lack skills required of managing the records throughout the entire life cycle
- lack of professional association body that promote archives management program networks in SA universities. South Africa Associations of Archivists was revisited to promote archives profession in South Africa.
- universities operate in the buildings which are not designed to preserve archival materials (Non- purpose building archives
- most universities lack strategies to migrate records from paper based environment to electronic records environment
- Most of the records with historical, cultural and scientific significance were not identified as there was lack of systematic appraisal of universities records

FINDING



- Lack of the required expertise to manage new technologies and time to perform the work was reported as the issue in some of the major organisation in Southern Africa
- Less disposal authority issued by the National Archives of South Africa to the South African universities because of none systematic appraisal of records.
- Appraisal of records at the universities was not prioritize, this means that there is no enough budget allocated to the functions of appraisal and disposal of records.

Recommendation



- Universities are to develop the appraisal framework theory to appraisal records informed by South Africa value such efforts create the new ideas that will transform systems and nations.
- University are to continue to examine their policies because of changing legislation and development of technology because most of the policies developed in South Africa has an impact on the appraisal of records.
- Universities are to build purpose build archives to store and preserve archival materials because most of the records at South Africa universities are still store in paper based system.
- Universities are to develop a monitoring mechanism to ensure appraisal of records according to the university retention schedule

Recommendation



- Partnerships between South Africa universities and the National Archives of South Africa to train universities archivists and records managers on appraisal of records
- Universities are to recruit adequate number of staff to implement systematic appraisal of records at universities.
- Instead of leaving records appraisal to records managers and archivists, the universities are to adopt the team approach to appraise all type of records created by universities.
- Universities are to continue to invest on skills development and training especially on the appraisal of records
- Universities file plan with associated retention schedule and disposal of records required to be reviewed and updated to ensure that records with historical and cultural value are preserved and documented.
- The universities are to embark on a records appraisal and disposal project to gain control of terminated universities records

Recommendation



- The adoption of the digital environment at the South Africa universities requires Archives and records management division is to cooperate with the information technology department on disposal of records This because appraisal of electronic records is to be determined during the creation stage of records

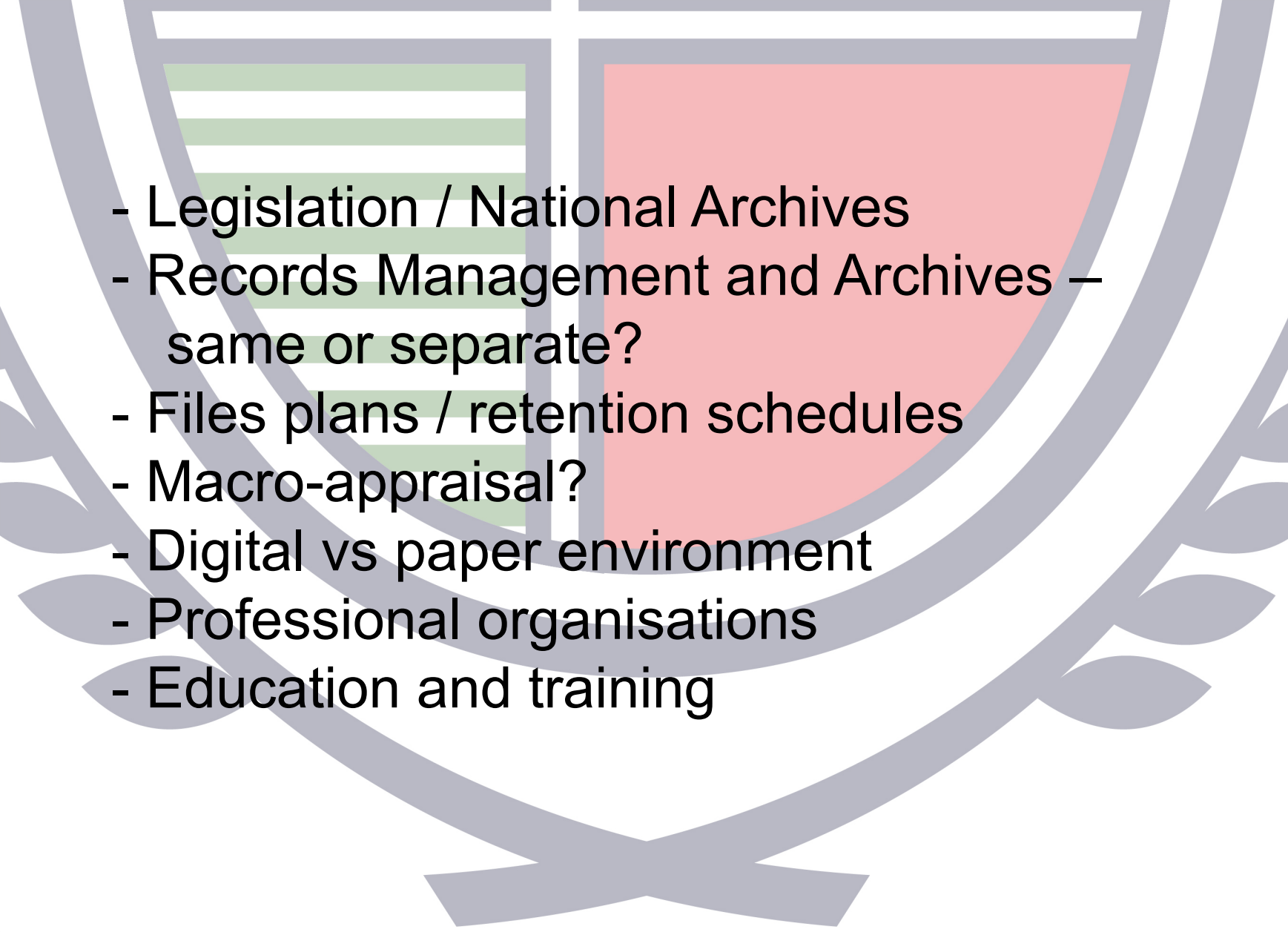
Conclusion



- The fact that records and archives programmes of both universities are established after 2002, there are backlog of records which need to be appraised to identify records with historical, cultural and scientific significance.
- provide a new understanding of archival appraisal practice. It is hoped that the study will encourage universities to embark on a project to dispose records according to archives and records management practices.

A stylized shield emblem is centered on a white background. The shield is divided into two vertical sections: the left section features horizontal green stripes, and the right section is a solid red color. The shield is framed by a thick, grey laurel wreath that curves around its base and sides. The text "THANK YOU" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font across the center of the shield.

THANK YOU

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- Legislation / National Archives
 - Records Management and Archives – same or separate?
 - Files plans / retention schedules
 - Macro-appraisal?
 - Digital vs paper environment
 - Professional organisations
 - Education and training