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**ACCESS TO DIGITISED ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS IN NATIONAL HERITAGE
AND CULTURAL STUDIES CENTRE AND INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF
AFRICAN MUSIC**



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DECLARATION

I, Kakumba Barbra, declare that this dissertation is my own work and all the sources used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference. I further declare that this work has never been submitted in any other institution for award of any qualification.

Researcher's signature



Date: 15 April 2022

Supervisor's signature



Date: 15 April 2022

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Co-supervisor's signature



Date. 15 April 2022

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my father Christopher Kagoro, my mother Zinzi Kagoro, and to the Almighty God. May the name of the Lord be glorified all the time.



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ABSTRACT

The study investigated access to digitised archival collections in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. This study is significant because it sought to generate insights on adaptability of technology in archives and library operations, and accessibility thereof. This is important for monitoring the accessibility of digitised archival collections at institutions to improve their operations and maximize the global visibility. This study adopted qualitative research methodology. The researcher followed a rigorous methodological path that began with a thorough literature review and the careful and thoughtful posing of research questions and objectives. A purposive sample was chosen from National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) and International library of African Music (ILAM) (staff members) and interviewed through face-to-face interviews. The collected data was analysed thematically. The study established that, the type of materials digitised at NAHECS and ILAM are bound books, fragile papers, photographic prints, slides, audio-visual materials, artefacts and documents such as personal letters of early travellers, missionary's records, traders writing personal file and political parties documents. Secondly, the study established that end users of digitised materials are researchers, students, archivist, librarians, international and local community, composers, musicians, and historians. It also emerged that awareness programmes used to increase public knowledge about access to digitised content in the two study sites include conferences, social media, and television advertisements. However, there are challenges faced in providing access to digitised materials at NAHECS and ILAM. Some of these challenges include lack of funding, unavailability of resources, lack of awareness, and information insecurity. These challenges have made access to digitised archival materials difficult. Based on these findings, it is recommended that

archives facilities should be well resourced and archivists be continually trained on access to digitised archival materials.

Keywords: Access, digitisation, digitised archival collections, Eastern Cape, National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre, International Library of African Music, South Africa.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CODESRIA	: Council for the Development of Social Science Research
DISA	: Digital Innovation South Africa
ESARBICA	: East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives.
ICA	: International Council on Archives
ICSU	: International Council of Scientific Unions
IFLA	: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
ILAM	: International Library of African Music
INASP	: International Network for Advancing science and Policy
NAHECS	: National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre
NRF	: National Research Foundation
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, research problem, research questions, research aim, research objectives and significance of the study. This chapter also includes a brief description of the methodology adopted in this study, and outline of the study.

1.2 Background

Archives are defined as the documentary by-products of human activity retained for their long term value (International Council of Archives, 2016). These come in a wide range of formats including written, photographic, moving image, sound, digital and analogue among others. Therefore, archives play a critical role in society by means of preservation of culture and heritage. This enables future successive generations to get to know what the previous generations valued most through preserved archival material. In essence, archive material is a conversation with posterity. According to Sibhidla-Saphetha (2013: 1), Sir Seretse Khama, the Botswana iconic leader, provided a profound insight in the clarion call in 1970 as he acclaimed:

‘It should now be our intention to try to retrieve what we can of our past. We should write our own history books to prove that we did have a past, and that it was a past that was just as worth writing and learning about as any other. We must do this for the simple reason that a nation without a past is a lost nation, and a people without a past is a people without a soul.’

The assertion by Sir Seretse Khama reinforces the importance of archives to the society and appreciating their past. There is an African proverb that says, “Until the lion has his or her own storyteller, the hunter will always have the best part of the story”. Thus, archives ensure that the correct information is passed from one generation to the other (Sibhidla-Saphetha (2013).

The reverse is also true, without archives, societies will not be able to identify, appraise, preserve and make available documentary materials of long term value to the public. Likewise, it will also be difficult to ensure the accountability of government and other institutions without preserving records and making them available to citizenry for lessons to be learnt. In addition, records makes it possible to preserve unique or collectible documents for institutional memory or culture.



As with the storage of these old records, the need for preservation, restoration and conservation is of great importance in allowing those future generations to reap the enormous benefits of the archives. To achieve this goal, many institutions have embarked on digitilisation programmes as an endeavour to ensure that they are not lost and easy access to the wider community. Consequently, digitisation will not only allow for the preservation but also aid accessibility efficiency as the world is evolving at an astounding rate. However, digitalisation is not an end in itself, but the issue is how the digitalised archives are accessed. Against this background, this study seeks to investigate access to digitised archival collections in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

It is without doubt that for years many libraries, museums and archival institutions in the world have been dominated by materials recorded in 'analogue' formats. However, there are challenges to analogue materials such as storage, media deterioration, theft and losses (Anderson, 2013; Harvey and Mahard, 2020; Ejiroghene, 2020). As a result, archival institutions have embarked on the selective digitisation of archival collection.

The concept digitisation refer to the process by which analogue content is converted into a binary code to be readable by a computer (Kolsver, 2014). Therefore, access to digitised material requires structures or systems supported by information communication technology (ICT). The development of computers, internet and other information communication technologies make it possible to access digitised archival materials more widely, and protect the analogue original records and materials (Donovan, 2015). Consequently, this has led to different institutions and governments to establish policies and legislations to guide transmission, accessibility and usage of digitised materials (Anderson, 2013).

In developed countries, digitisation of information in archival institutions is not new. For example, countries such as the United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US) tend to use online platforms with digitised archival collections (Smith, 2014). With respect to technological advancement and innovation, digitisation of archival collection has received tremendous boost and transformation. Consequently, developed countries have worked together to develop cross-country comparable metrics in areas such as cloud computing and big data analytics, among others (Hu, Guan, Zhu, Shao, Liu, Du and Bao, 2020). Archives are increasingly investing in the digitisation of their manuscript collection and digitisation of materials, books and manuscripts now form part of library archival collections (Muehlberger, Seaward, Terras, Oliveira,

Bosch, Bryan, and Zagoris, 2019). According to Smith (2014), this move started in the December of 2004 with the Google Print Library, which offered a platform for digitised print collection materials from five major University libraries. These include, Harvard University, Stanford University, and University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the University of Oxford and the New York Public Library. This laid the foundation for other organisations to digitise their archival collections. However, in most instances, the distinguishing feature in the levels of digitalisation pertains to the existence of resources and technological advancement (Queiroz, Pereira, Telles and Machado, 2019). This is particularly true for developed countries.

On the contrary, digitisation of archival materials in developing countries has over the years been mostly associated with academic institutions. These institutions are known for producing documents such as dissertations and theses (Anderson, 2013). The information stored or generated is conserved for the future use. This has seen more stakeholders getting involved in the development of policies and guidelines for effective information management (Drijfhout and Ledwaba, 2011). Digitisation of information materials is a subject that has attracted interest and much discussion from information professionals across all sectors such as libraries, archives and record centres. Consequently, developing countries have to adopt new technologies for effective management of information.

In Africa, digitisation is still in its nascent stage (Money, 2021). However, there are many digital libraries that have been built in the content focusing on both full-text and metadata or databases. Many collections require digitisation because they are in danger of deterioration, theft and loss. It is regretted that most digitisation projects on the continent usually originate from outside Africa (Thebe, 2005). Therefore, Africa

should prioritise digitisation of the continent's resources in the present knowledge-based economy, where nations are assessed in relation to their information power.

Legg-Jack (2021). cautions that organizational and management problems are critical factors that could affect departments in handling digitisation projects. For instance, several challenges namely, inadequate funding, lack of access to ICT infrastructure affects access to digital skills acquisition. In his study of 15 universities in Nigeria, Olatokun (2008) found that digitisation projects were rarely reported because of lack of awareness. A study by Ezema and Ugwu (2013) revealed that only 37.5 percent out of the eight university libraries in the South Eastern Nigeria have such projects. Ekoja and Gbaje (2012) study on digital preservation activities at the National Library of Nigeria and the National Archives of Nigeria revealed that most files existed in PDF format and readily accessible. However, in recent times, universities in Nigeria have embarked on integration of technologies in their operations for improvement, especially with respect to digitisation of libraries (Omotayo and Haliru, 2020).



According to Amollo (2011), digitisation in libraries increases longevity of information materials. To this end, many libraries digitise in order to preserve old manuscripts research projects, photos and images, maps, sound recordings, government official gazettes and other historical records (Fabunmi et al, 2006).

Although there are some digitisation programmes going on in Africa, these are likely to be hindered by internet access and absence of legislation on digital preservation and copyright (Myovella, Karacuka and Haucap, 2021). Some of the digital libraries built by African institutions especially in Uganda have been supported financially or with the necessary human capacity through strategic partnerships with other institutions. This has resulted in considerable use and growth of e-journals in Africa

(Buwule and Mutula, 2019). In 1992, the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) was set up to facilitate access to digital scientific literature and participated in various library automation projects (INASP) (UNESCO, IFLA and ICA, 2002). Numerous International bodies such as UNESCO and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) have worked with Pan-African institutions such as the Council for the Development of Social Science Research (CODESRIA) and the Association of African Universities, to help digitise journals for wider access and preservation (DISA, 2003). Most African digital initiatives involve collaborations and partnerships of various stakeholders. For example, the Digital Imaging Project of South Africa (DISA) is a collaborative venture among South African librarians, archivists, and scholars (Amollo, 2011).

In South Africa, there have been on-going programmes on digitisation and access to digitised materials such as artefacts, art, liberation documents, and music records (Cornelissen, 2018). However, this is not the case in other African countries. The National Research Foundation (NRF) (2010) asserted that “South Africa is following the digitisation trend set by developed countries” (Mabe, 2017: 8). Accordingly, Drijfhout and Ledwaba (2011) noted that the Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA) was established in 1997 to facilitate the implementation of digital technologies in libraries. Since then, DISA has provided digitisation expertise, training, and support in South Africa and Southern Africa at large (Drijfhout and Ledwaba 2011). The aim was to enhance access to South African content. However, issues such as poor internet infrastructure, high cost of data, and technological illiteracy hinder some people in South Africa from participating in digitised archival activities (Anderson, 2013).

This shows that access to digitised collections remains a challenge in the country. Because of technological advancement, analogue materials are being digitised to facilitate preservation and access to users. The availability of portals and for example, the Aluka portal focusing on African collection has encouraged the need to digitise (National Research Foundation, 2016). In the South African context, a national portal would make a unique contribution, provide, and manage the conventional 'one-stop' access to a multiplicity of linked South African collections (Drijfhout and Ledwaba, 2011).

In general, the process of digitisation and accessing digitised archival materials remain a challenge but the causal factors have not been properly explained in the literature. For instance, technological issues in developing countries serves us an obstacle for participating in the digital global community affairs in many ways (Asogwa, 2011). In addition, the digitisation and access to digitised archival materials faces many challenges. For instance, library automation requires enormous funding due to frequent hardware and software upgrades, and increasing cost of subscription to electronic databases. Further, 'computer phobia', inadequate technology infrastructures, technological obsolescence, and language barrier are among the many challenges towards digitisation programmes in Africa (Alegbeleye, 2009). Therefore, it is against this background that this study investigates the access to digital archival materials in Eastern Cape South Africa.

1.3 National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS)

The National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) was established in 1981 to replace the former Xhosa Literature Centre, attached to the former Faculty of Arts at University of Fort Hare. The objective of the centre was to accumulate, document

and preserve oral and written literary materials pertinent to the *isiXhosa* Language, with the purpose of making it accessible to various researchers and the public (Dewah and Feni-Fete, 2014). The centre was first housed in Henderson Hall, one of the University's earlier buildings. The De Beer Centenary Art Gallery, part of NAHECS was opened in 1989 on the Alice campus for Artwork, Artefacts and guest exhibitions (Maaba, 2010). These are currently exhibited in the gallery facilitating greater public access to the heritage collections.

In 1991, the Centre name changed to the Centre for Cultural Studies (CCS) (Dewah and Feni-Fete, 2014). The focus was on indigenous knowledge and understanding of material, and human resources pertinent to heritage and culture in South Africa. This Centre served as a collection, preservation, exposition, enrichment and advancement of material evidence (Maaba, 2010). In 1998, the council approved a second name change to the current National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS). This was commissioned by Prof SME Bengu at the main campus of University of Fort Hare (Dewah and Feni-Fete, 2014). Consequently, the Centre was renovated between 2009 and 2010 to improve storage, security facilities and provide two classrooms for teaching and seminars. Thus, NAHECS became a broad-based heritage centre that focuses on archival, museum, academic and heritage transformation, as well as a developing research unit (Garaba and Mahlasela, 2018). In general, these improvements were geared towards enhancing access to archival collection (i.e., digitised materials).

1.2.1 National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) collections

The collections are divided into two main areas, namely museum and fine art, and archival collections. The collections overlap in several areas due to common subject

coverage. In 1998, the Centre's significant museum collections were unanimously declared a national cultural treasure by the Parliament (Garaba and Mahlasela, 2018). Through critical evaluation of its collections, the Centre seeks to encourage scholarship and debate in the areas of history, cultural identity, national heritage and cultural policy. These objectives have assisted NAHECS to develop into a significant player in the transformation of the South African heritage and cultural landscape.

1.4 International Library of African Music (ILAM)

The International Library of African Music is located in Makhanda (Grahamstown) at Rhode University, in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. This organization is dedicated to the preservation and study of African music. Accordingly, ILAM coordinates its ethnomusicology programme at Rhodes University offering undergraduate and post-graduate degrees. The main focus of programme is training performance of African music.



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It's founder, Hugh Tracey (1903-1977) was born in England and immigrated to South Africa after the First World War to work on his brother's tobacco farm, in what was then called Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Inspired by the music of the local farm workers, he followed in the tradition of the European folklorists and began to record African music from the 1930s (Tracey, in Lucia, 2005). Over the years, Tracey developed ambitious projects for documenting and researching traditional African music in sub-Saharan Africa, and what started out as a private research initiative developed into the African Music Research Unit in 1947, the African Music Society in 1948 (Tracy, 2013). Finally, the establishment of the International Library of African Music in 1954 was in Roodepoort, outside Johannesburg (Lobley, 2011).

Initially, Hugh Tracey's field recording tours and the release of some of his recorded material was made possible through financial backing from the Gallo Record Company, and later support came from the mining industry (Tracey, 1973). Since its official establishment, ILAM has served as the headquarters of the African Music Society and is responsible for editing and issuing the annual journal *African Music*, (the only journal dedicated completely too African music). The collection has grown to include donations from ethnomusicologists such as John Blacking, Andrew Tracey, Dave Dargie and Diane Thram (Tracy, 2013).

Hugh Tracey conducted several recording tours during his lifetime, spanning over four decades, in central, eastern and southern parts of Africa, building up a collection, which includes over 25 000 field recordings, various instruments (most of them still playable), photographs and documents of the music, as well as a library of books relating to African music. This material makes ILAM the largest single archive of sub-Saharan African music in the world. From his field recordings, Hugh Tracey published two major collections; (i) the sound of Africa series, consisting of 218 LPs, and (ii); the music of Africa series, consisting of 25 LPs. He also published several books, and delivered international as well as national seminars and talks. After Hugh Tracey's death in 1977, ILAM was moved to Rhodes University in Graham's town and Andrew Tracey took over from his father as Director in 1978. He stayed in this position until 2005 when he retired and Diane Thram became the Director.

This move to a parent institution was necessitated due to the increasing difficulties of raising funds for ILAM to function under the Apartheid government. Over time, funds were raised and Tracey comments "Once I had found the funding for a new purpose-built building in 1990, ILAM's future at Rhodes and in South Africa seemed a little more secure" (Lobley, 2011). The building included a studio, lecture venue, offices, library,

a temperature and humidity-controlled storeroom and an outside performance amphitheatre. ILAM's focus turned more towards teaching, archival, and study of its work.

In 2006, Professor Diane Thram, who lectured Ethnomusicology at Rhodes University, was appointed director of ILAM on the retirement of Professor Andrew Tracey. In the same year, the Rhodes University Music Librarian, Fiona Still-Drewett, was requested by the University authorities to assess the library (Still-Drewett, 2011). The report by Still-Drewett found that the ILAM collection was significant because many of the items are unique, rare, have great historical value, and are important for research and education. The report also found the collection needed to be preserved, correctly housed, and a database of holdings created. Digitisation of the sound recordings required completion, while it was recommended that the photographic collection, film collection, and some documents should be digitised (Still-Drewett, 2011).

ILAM has endured physical relocation a number of times and there has also been a high turnover, with mostly non-library, qualified staff working at the library. Both the high turnover and the staff quality have been detrimental to the collections. It was also found that there was an impasse with regard to staffing of the library, backlogs of queries and processing of materials, little control for access and use of the materials, slow progress with the addition and updating of database records, and ad hoc control of temperature and humidity in the special storeroom since 2002 (Tracy, 2013).

It was also noted that ILAM in general was understaffed and needed additional staff if the collections were to be adequately taken care of and to operate at maximum educational and research potential (Still-Drewett, 2011). An urgent investigation was recommended to decide on which database best suited ILAM's needs. Thus, there

was much for the new director to contend with, in terms of decisions needing to be taken around the management of the ILAM collections. ILAM began digitising sound materials as early as 1999 under Digitisation Project (ILAM.DIG), funded by Norwegian government. In 2001, the Smithsonian Institute in return for material for the Smithsonian Global Sound website funded the project.

In 2007, work began with the cataloguing and digitising of songs from sub-Saharan Africa found on the recordings produced by Hugh Tracey from his field recordings. A detailed metadata file and a compressed 30-second sound clip are provided for each song. Funding was received from the South African National Research Foundation (NRF) for this ILAM-SAMAP (South Africa Music Archive Project⁸) cataloguing and digitising project. A dedicated team of four, comprising a sound engineer and assistant, a resident ethnomusicologist, and a cataloguing librarian, along with eight part-time student helpers receiving NRF student assistantships, did the work. Project management was done collaboratively between the director of SAMAP/DISA (Digital Imaging South Africa), the director of ILAM, and with hands-on assistance from senior staff of Library Services at Rhodes University. Many valuable lessons were learnt through the project and due to hard work and overall good project management, the project was successfully delivered with a total of 4,200 digitised items with metadata, and internet access to a primary source of African musical heritage (Tracy, 2013).

In 2008, the Rand Merchant Bank Expressions Fund awarded funding to support a 24-month project aimed at completing the cataloguing and digitising Hugh Tracey's original field recordings. Work on this project commenced and was not without problems. Elijah Madiba, the Sound Engineer, explained that the time required to catalogue and digitise the collection was considerable because of the recordings' fragile condition, the difficulty in re-spooling them, and the frequent need to stop and

mend or splice the magnetic tape. ILAM only has one workstation in which to carry out this meticulous work, which also slows the process. More recently ILAM was awarded a grant from the Mellon Foundation of R1.9 million (\$250 000) to fund a three years' project.

The project began in May 2008 and was aimed at accomplishing three main goals, which are:

- (i) to catalogue and archive ILAM's print holdings, including books, journals, and ephemera such as Hugh Tracey's field-trip diaries, correspondence, lecture notes and radio show scripts;
- (ii) to index, catalogue and digitise the Andrew Tracey collection of field recordings of various types of mbira music; and
- (ii) to index, catalogue and digitise the Dave Dargie collection of field recordings of Xhosa and Zulu vocal music and other various types of music from South Africa and Namibia.

The digital sound files, along with metadata captured for each item, will be transferred to the ILAM server where access from the ILAM On-line Sound Archive will be possible. The grant also enabled the hiring of a librarian/archivist and library assistant who will be responsible for processing the print holdings. Data is stored on the Rhodes University Library Millennium server and accessed via a link from the ILAM website.

1.5 Problem Statement

The digitisation of archival collection is increasingly being adopted in the developing world owing to the many benefits such as enabling wider access. For example, in South Africa there are many initiatives such as the Digital Innovation South Africa

(DISA) towards digitisation, The Digital Economy **Initiative** for **Africa** (DE4A) and the E-governance **initiatives** among others. Apart from safer and more sustainable preservation, the digitisation of archives is mainly to increase and widen access, in that, there is no restrictions to those unable to visit the physical location, thus saving time and travel costs (Salminen and Hossain, 2018).

Very few studies have captured comprehensively the issue of access to digitised archival collections. Many studies on digitalisation particularly the study by Netshakhuma, (2018) focused on capacity building through digitisation, while the study by Anderson and Hart (2016) was centred on the challenges in digitising liberation archives. Likewise, the study by VanSnick and Ntanos (2018) was on digitisation as a preservation measure. There is shortage of literature on the issues of access of digitised archival collections despite the importance of access in this digital world that is also characterised by a digital divide.

However, the issue of access is still a major challenge for many institutions in South Africa (Smith, 2014) This is the same for many institutions in developing world particularly the rural areas where the digital divide is more pronounced. This has led to many difficulties in accessing the digitalised collections (Salminen and Hossain, 2018). Consequently, many people are being excluded from the digitisation process due to their inability to access or use digital technology (Mandel, 2021). Of recent, there have been tremendous efforts to digitise archival collections in South Africa, but evidence on the extent and level of access to these collections by users is lacking. This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the access to digitised archival collections in Eastern Cape Province focusing on NAHECS and ILAM. These institutions were chosen because they have digitised collections that can be accessed online.

1.6 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to investigate access to digitised archival collection in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.

1.6.1 Objectives of the study

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To establish the types of materials digitised in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To determine the end users of the digitised materials in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To identify the programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To identify challenges faced in providing access to digitised materials in NAHECS and ILAM.



1.6.2 Research questions

- What types of material are digitised in NAHECS and ILAM?
- Who are the users of the digitised archival materials in NAHECS and ILAM?
- What programmes exist in NAHECS and ILAM to facilitate access to digitised archival collections?
- To what extent do the programmes in place facilitate access to digitised archival collections in NAHECS and ILAM?
- What are the challenges faced in providing access to digitised archival collection in NAHECS and ILAM?

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is important and timely as it offers new insights about management of digital records in the current global digital age. The need to easy access to information by

different segments of the population is topical issue in the modern digital era. The knowledge generated from this study could be helpful in providing direction in terms of strategies needed in improving access to digital archives at both institutions.

It is also hoped that the study could serve as a catalyst in the modification and formulation of policies to enhance access to digital archives at both institutions. Furthermore, the study serves as a baseline for future research. This study provides much needed information about the subject matter, as little is known in the South Africa context. It will be important to students, other cultural repositories and to the government.

1.8 An Overview of Research Methodology

This study adopted qualitative research methodology in order to get indepth information from the perspective of participants themselves. Interviews consisting of five (5) participants were conducted in each area making ten (10) participants for both NAHECS and ILAM. Smith et al. (2012), opined that an ideal interview should consist of six to twelve participants. This enhance proper management and enable the participant to express their views unlike having a large number thereby lacking control.

The researcher made use of purposive sampling method for both NAHECS and ILAM. Qualitative research approach is relevant for this study because it addresses the objectives to investigate access to digitised archival collections (Creswell, 2014). This method is usually used when dealing with several types of inquiry to help in understanding and explaining the meaning of social phenomena (Berg, 2004).

Thematic analysis is an approach of working with all the collected data for categorizing, segmenting and relating to aspects of the database prior to making

conclusions (Creswell, 2014; Flick 2015). A detailed discussion of methodology is presented in in chapter 3 of this dissertation.

1.9 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to National Heritage and Culture Studies centre (NAHECS) at the University of Fort Hare and International Library African Music (ILAM) at Rhodes University in Graham's town in the Eastern Cape Province. Due to the study's particular focus on the selected institutions, the findings from the study may not be generalized to other institutions. However, it is believed that some insights and lessons will be gained from the study to the benefit of other archival institutions as far as providing access to digitised archival collections is concerned.



1.10 Definition of Terms

Digitisation— In the view of Reiger (2008) digitisation refers to the process by which analogue content is converted into a binary code to be readable by a computer.

Access – This usually refers to the right to use or acquire something (Cheng et al, 2012).

Digitised archival collection – these are the archival material that have gone a process of transformation. The original document, image and sound is replaced. Sometimes the original documents gets destroyed or kept after having digitised depending on the legal requirements. Information such as sound and motion once captured even if it disappears the digital format continues to exist and it is transformed but that's not that much about digitisation in the strictest sense (Asogwa, 2011).

1.11 Outline of the Study

This dissertation is divided into six chapters as outlined below:

Chapter One: Introduction and background

This chapter presents the background of the study, research problem, research questions, research aim, research objectives and significance of the study. This chapter also includes a brief description of the methodology, and outline of the study.

Chapter Two: Literature review and theoretical framework

This chapter focuses on reviewing literature related to access to digitised archival collection in South Africa. It also outlines the theoretical framework, which support the analysis and interpretation of findings.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

The chapter covers research methodology, covering aspects such as research design, population, sample and sampling procedures/techniques, data collection methods, reliability and validity, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four: Data analysis and presentation of the findings

This chapter presents the analysis and presentation of the findings. The themes emerging from different objectives are presented.

Chapter Five: Discussion of the findings

Further interpretation of themes while comparing with previous literature is done in this chapter. Generally, the discussions on access to digitised archival collection in National Heritage cultural and study Centre and International Library of African Music are presented.

Chapter Six: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The final chapter addresses the conclusions and recommendations to the research according to the findings of this study.

1.12 Chapter Summary

Chapter one has laid the foundation for the study. The research problem, research question were introduced in this chapter. In addition, justification for undertaking the research and definitions of key terms as they pertain to this study have also been presented. Finally, the chapter presents an outline of the whole study.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the literature, theoretical framework and challenges in accessing digitised archival collections. Information for this chapter was gathered from academic databases, theses and dissertations, books and published articles from accredited journals (Leedy and Ormrod, 2010). Special consideration was given to the studies and theories that focus on access to digitised archival collections in both developed and developing countries. This contrast offers a wealth of information about the trends in accessing digitised archival collections and the challenges encountered thereof. Therefore, the gaps existing in the current body of knowledge are highlighted with a keen focus on access to digitised archival collections.



2.2 Theoretical Framework

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The study utilised the records continuum theory that was created by Frank Upward and his colleagues from Monash University in the 1990s as a response to the evolving discussions about the challenges of managing digital records and archives (Upward, 2005).

2.2.1 Records continuum theory

The study focuses on access to digitised collections, hence the need to use the records continuum theory. Yusof and Chell (2000) recommended that the *records life cycle model*, be replaced by the *records continuum model*, in order to cater for electronic records management. Furthermore, Ngoepe (2008) states that with the massive shift in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the 1980s and 1990s, there was proliferation of electronic records leading to new archival and records

management practices. This has resulted in debates that have challenged the relevancy of the life cycle model in managing records, which later culminated to the records continuum theory.

Wamukoya (2000) added that if records are to meet the requirements for accountability and good governance, their management must cover the whole extent of their existence that is from creation to disposition. For many years, the life cycle model served this purpose quite well until some archivists pointed out its major weakness. They disagreed with the assumption on which the life cycle concept was based on, that record entities went through a series of separate and distinct stages, with each stage ending with disposition (Ngoepe, 2008). They, therefore, sought to correct what they considered a misrepresentation.


Atherton, in the mid-1980s, proposed in an article in *Archivaria* to replace the lifecycle concept with the continuum model. The records continuum model focuses on the management of records as a continuous process. It sees the management of records in terms of the organization process or the functions and activities of the organization, which records documents (Wamukoya, 2000). In other words, the continuum model addresses the issue of the type of records that need to be captured to provide evidence of a particular function of activity, the systems and procedures needed to ensure that records are captured and maintained. It determines, how long the records should be kept to meet business needs and to fulfil other requirements, how they should be stored, and who should have access to them (Wamukoya, 2000).

Likewise, the records continuum model was found suitable for this study because of its holistic approach as it broadens the interpretation of records and records keeping systems presented by the lifecycle model (Flynn, 2001). In addition, as pointed out by Flynn (2001), it strengthens the bond between records and archives management,

through inter-relating the transactional axis, the records keeping axis and the collective memory axis.

The goal of the records continuum model is to guarantee reliability, authenticity and completeness of records. Duranti and Preston (2008) argue that the records continuum framework provides a common understanding, consistent standards and unified best practice criteria. They also described the record continuum model as “an integrated record keeping framework that facilitates provenance, underpins accountability and provide continuous accessibility of archives for future use.

As is clearly enunciated by Atherton (1985-86), Millar (1997), An (2001), Upward (2001), Shepherd and Yeo (2003) and others, the continuum model has many distinct attributes which makes it stand out from the lifecycle model and some of these include:

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- The logo of the University of Fort Hare is a circular emblem. It features a yellow sun with rays at the top, a blue shield in the center containing a white open book, and a yellow banner at the bottom with the text 'UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE' in blue. Below the emblem, the text 'University of Fort Hare' is written in a large, blue, serif font, and 'Together in Excellence' is written in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font.
- i. All stages of the records are interrelated, forming a continuum in which both records managers and archivists are involved;
 - ii. The lifecycle stages, which the records supposedly undergo are in fact a series of recurring activities. Thus, the continuum model unifies rather than separates various records keeping processes under both records and archives management;
 - iii. The concept of a “record” is inclusive of records of continuing value (archives). The continuum therefore stresses the use of records and/or archives for transactional, evidentiary and historical purposes (memory), and in so doing harmonizes approaches to records keeping, whether records are kept for a split second or a millennium;
 - iv. The continuum creates a seamless records keeping regime that embraces the multiple systems and families of records that serve the entire spectrum of

documentary needs, that is, business, regulatory, cultural, historical and even educational.

Because of these specific benefits, the continuum model was found appropriate for this study and hence its adoption.

Yusof and Chell (2000) are in agreement with Atherton (1985) , in that the current generation has embraced digital development as result of the increased electronic records and proliferation of Information, Communication Technologies (ICTs). More so, the shortcomings of the records life cycle model has resulted in the new model, (i.e., the records continuum model). Scholars such as Kemoni (2008), noted that records management field have adopted the records continuum as an alternative to the records life cycle because of the many advantages it has.

The records continuum was relevant to the present study because the model is applicable in the management of electronic records. Likewise, the aim of the study was to investigate access to digitised archival collection in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province. Building the research upon such a multimedia embracing model was very fitting for the study because it enabled current issues in the field of information science to be addressed. Huvila et al (2014) observed that the continuum model is widely accepted for managing records and archives in electronic form since it is a continuous process. The applicability of the continuum model in the management of records and archives, paper, and electronic records contributed to the model's adoption as a theoretical framework for this study.

Furthermore, building the study upon the records continuum model was very appropriate because combining the efforts of an archivist and a records manager in the management of both records and archives ensures that records are created at the

right time, containing the correct information and in the appropriate formats of electronic (Kemoni 2008). In addition, Kemoni (2008) and Huvila et al (2014) confirmed that the records continuum model presents a better opportunity for developing a sound records management programme online.”

2.3 Access to Archives

Access is defined as the authority/right of a researcher to obtain information from or to do research in archival materials in the custody of an archive (Baumann, 1986). Access and the cost of access to the digitised artefacts is also an area of contestation (Padilla, 2021). Proponents of digitisation argue that anything that increases access to artefacts is a good thing, pointing out that non-digital artefacts are only accessible to people who can afford to travel to the physical location where the artefacts are kept. However, there is illusory argument that digital artefacts are just as inaccessible to the poor (Cheng et al, 2012).

People who are well resourced and have access to technology may indeed have better access to digitised artefacts than they do to physical ones, but this group is a minority, especially in Africa. The people who are subjects of films, photographs and interviews in liberation archives and who perhaps deserve access are often those who do not have such access because they cannot afford the technology needed. In many ways, the digitisation process perpetuates the inequalities of access that have always been a problem for archivists (Harris, 2002). This is not to say that digitisation is a bad thing, by any means, it provides access to more people than had access before. This means that original artefacts can be better preserved, since they are not being physically handled by archive patrons, and there is a backup copy if an original artefact is stolen or damaged.

Nevertheless, we should not think that it is a neutral and value-free and accessible process. A further issue relating to access is whether it is acceptable to charge for access to digital artefacts and if so, how much (Pickover, 1998). Some archives have charged subscription fees for access to digital archives; others charge every time the artefacts are accessed. And as mentioned earlier, digitisation vendors have in the past hosted the digital archives and charged for usage, with the archive getting a percentage of the income generated. Again, ownership has been effectively handed over to the vendor in this case. Moreover, such practices grant access to the rich, while limiting access to the poor. If digitised artefacts become commodities, then it will benefit the rich most (Pickover, 1998).

2.4 Principles of Access to Archives

The principles of access to archives are very important as they provide guidelines, conditions and framework to enable archival collection accessibility. These principles highlight the conditions under which both the institutions and individuals should treat archival materials and its access thereof. Accordingly, these principles guide archivists on how to measure their institutional practices against the external benchmarks and thereafter strengthen theirs where applicable.

2.4.1. The public has the right of access to archives

Both public and private entities should open their archives to the greatest extent possible. Access to the archives of government is essential for an informed society (International Council on Archives, 2012). Democracy, accountability, good governance and civic engagement require a legal guarantee that individuals will have access to the archives of public bodies established by national, self-governing territories and local governments, intergovernmental institutions, any organization and legal or natural person performing public functions and operating with public funds.

Archivists working in private institutions and managing the institution's archives encourage their institutions to provide public access to its archives, especially if the holdings help to protect rights or benefit public interests. Archivists stress that opening institutional archives helps maintain institutional transparency and credibility (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.4.2. Creating awareness of existing materials and how to access them

Institutions holding archives should ensure that the public knows the existence of the archives, including the existence of closed materials, and disclose the existence of restrictions that affect access to the archives. Users must be able to locate the archival institution that holds material they want. Archivists provide basic information about institution and the archives it holds without charge (ICA, 2012). Institution holding archives must inform the public of the general rules for use of the holdings in accordance with the institution's legal mandates, policies and regulations (International Council on Archives, 2012). They ensure that descriptions of their archives are current, accurate and comply with international descriptive standards in order to facilitate access. Archivists should share draft descriptions of archives with users if final versions are lacking, where this will not compromise the security of the archives or any necessary restrictions on access (Cornelissen, 2018).

2.4.3. Institutions holding archives adopt a pro-active approach to access

Archivists have a professional responsibility to promote access to archives (International Council on Archives, 2012). They must communicate information about archives through various means such as internet and web-based publications, printed materials, public programs, commercial media and educational and outreach activities. They must be continually alert to changing technologies of communication

and use those that are available and practical to promote the knowledge of archives must (Anderson and Hart, 2016).

2.4.4. Institutions holding archives ensure that restrictions on access are clear

The clarity focus on stated duration and based on pertinent legislation, acknowledge, the right of privacy and respect of ownership of private materials. Archivists need to provide the widest possible access to archives, but they recognize and accept the need for some restrictions (International Council on Archives, 2012). In addition, institutional rules need to be published so that the restrictions and the reasons for them are clear to members of the public (International Council on Archives, 2012). Archivists must seek to limit the scope of restrictions to those imposed by law or to identified instances where a specific harm to a legitimate private or public interest temporarily outweighs the benefit of disclosure at the time International Council on Archives, 2012).



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2.4.5. Archives are made available on equal and fair terms

Archivists provide users with just, fair and timely access to archives without discrimination (International Council on Archives, 2012). Many different categories of persons use archives, and access rules may differentiate between categories of users (for example, the general public, adoptees seeking information on birth parents, medical researchers seeking statistical information from hospital records, victims of human rights violations). The access rules apply equally to all persons within each category without discrimination. When a closed item is reviewed and access to it is granted to a member of the general public, the item is available to all other members of the public under the same terms and conditions (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.4.6. Archival evidence material access by enforcement agencies under international law (Human right)

The Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights through Action to Combat Impunity (2005) of the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights declares that victims of serious crimes under international law have a right to know the truth about the violations (International Council on Archives, 2012). The principles emphasize the vital role that access to archives plays in learning the truth, holding persons accountable for human right violations, claiming compensation, and defending against charges of human rights violations. The principles state that each person is entitled to know whether his or her name appears in State archives and, if it does, to challenge the validity of the information by submitting to the archival institution a statement that will be made available by the archivists whenever the file containing the name is requested for research use (International Council on Archives, 2012).



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2.4.7. Users have the right to appeal a denial of access

Each archival institution has a clear policy and procedure for appeal of initial denials of access. When a request for access to archives is denied, the reasons for the denial are stated clearly in writing and conveyed to the applicant as soon as possible (International Council on Archives, 2012). Users denied access are informed of their right to appeal, the procedure to submit an appeal and the time limits, if any. For public archives, several levels of appeal may exist, such as a first internal review and a second appeal to an independent and impartial authority established by law. For non-public archives, the appeal process may be internal, but it should follow the same general approach. Archivists who participate in the initial denial provide the reviewing

authority with information relevant to the case but do not take part in the decision-making on the appeal (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.4.8. Institutions holding archives ensure that operational constraints do not prevent access to archives

The equal right to access archival records is not simply equal treatment but also includes the equal right to benefit from the archives (International Council on Archives, 2012). Archivists understand the needs of both existing and potential researchers and use this understanding to develop policies and services that meet those needs and minimize operational constraints on access. In particular, they assist those who are disabled, illiterate or disadvantaged and would otherwise have significant difficulties in using archives (International Council on Archives, 2012).

Partial release of archives is a means to provide access when the entire file or item cannot be released. If an archival item contains sensitive information in a few sentences or a limited number of pages, that information is withheld and the remainder of the item released for public access. To the greatest extent practicable, archivists do not refuse to redact archives because of the labour required to make redactions; however, if redaction makes the requested item or file misleading or unintelligible, archivists do not redact and the material remains closed (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.4.9. Archivists have access to all closed archives and perform necessary archival work on them

Archivists have access to all closed archives in their custody in order to analyse, preserve, arrange and describe them in order that their existence and the reasons for their restriction are known (International Council on Archives, 2012). This archival work

helps prevent the archives from being destroyed or forgotten advertently or inadvertently and helps assure the integrity of the archives. Preservation and description of closed archives promotes public confidence in the archival institution and in the archives profession, for it enables archivists to assist the public in tracing the existence and general nature of closed materials and learning when and how they will be available for access (International Council on Archives, 2012). If the closed archives have national security classifications or other restrictions that require special clearances, archivists comply with the requisite clearance procedures to gain access (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.4.10. Archivists participate in the decision-making process on access

Archivists help their institutions establish access policies and procedures and review archives for possible release under existing access laws, guidelines and best practices (International Council on Archives, 2012). Archivists work with lawyers and other partners in deciding on the basic framework and interpretation of restrictions, which the archivists then implement. Archivists know the archives, the access restrictions, the needs and requirements of the stakeholders and what information is already in the public domain on the subject to which the archives relate; archivists apply that knowledge when making access decisions. Archivists help the institution achieve informed decisions, and consistent reasonable outcomes. Archivists monitor restrictions, reviewing archives and removing restrictions that are no longer applicable (International Council on Archives, 2012).

2.5 Digital Archives from Creation to Access

Digital archives has various stages. For instance, it starts with the creation of records in digital form in keeping system, followed by the transfer of records of enduring value and their processing, preservation, and description in the archival management

system, and continues until records are made available for use in the archival public access system (Asogwa, 2011; Hawkins, 2021). The process from creation to access is generally understood, but specific practices in each step may vary from case-to-case. Understanding how records in digital form are created, transferred, processed, preserved, described, and access is helpful in identification and interpretation of original order in digital archives (Siller, 2012).

2.5.1 Access to technology

Ngoepe (2008) argues that universal access to Information and Communications Technology (ICT) would bring about a global community of interaction, commerce, and learning resulting in higher standards of living and improved social welfare. However, the existence of a 'digital divide' could affect individual access especially in the developing countries. This explains the current rate of adoption and adaption to technological innovations. Accordingly, inequality inform access and ability to use the existing technology (Gunkel, 2013). This scenario results into the first order and second order digital divides respectively. To this end, the National e-Skills Plan of Action -NeSPA (2012) calls for nations to ensure that their populations have e-competencies (i.e. e-skilled and digitally literate - e-literate citizens). In the current, era, this requirement is indispensable to ensure the countries' relevance and global competitiveness. In the South African context, e-competencies are required for personal and educational space, working environments, community interactions and active participation in government processes (Ngoepe, 2008).

As per Gunkel (2013) the significance of access to ICT as a methods for improvement was perceived as far back as 1980 with the dispatching of a report by UNESCO that distinguished the requirement for equitable allocation of resources in the area of communication. A number of stakeholders worldwide had committed large resources

to provide access to ICT to underserved communities. They developed places or spaces where community members could have access to computers, and specifically to networked computers. The places are called multi-purpose centres or telecentres or public access centres. Because of the ability to give necessary access to information, these public access centres, such as telecentres, have been hailed as the solution to development problems around the world.

Public access centres comprise of cybercafés, libraries and telecentres, or multipurpose centres. Public access centres have been established worldwide to serve disadvantaged communities, and many countries have deployed a plethora of models in a bid to address digital divide issues. The Census 2011 indicates that the majority of South Africans do not have access to the internet (StatsSA, 2012). Important findings from the recently released New Wave Report (2016) provide a clear rationale for an expanded public access centre programme. The findings in this report indicate that for most of those without access at home or work internet cafés, and (to a lesser extent) schools and colleges, are often important point of access that may address some of these limitations of the mobile internet and enable users to widen the range of online services that they use online.

Another report from the University of Washington Technology and Social Change Group (2016) found that public access venues play a critical role in extending the benefits of ICTs to large sections of the population, despite the expansion of mobile telephone access. The report showed that “*public access enables change in personal, social, economic, and other realms of life, by providing the technological and human tools (basic or advanced) that open up the information society to individuals*”. In the context of new literacies, digital technology is an indispensable tool. Literacy and access is therefore being defined by access to digital technology. It is for this reason

that it is important for schools, community centres, and institutions that cater to the youth take the charge to work to bridge the digital divide.

2.5.2 Access to digitised archives and the digital divide

The term digital divide probably has caused more confusion than clarification. According to Gunkel (2013), it is a deeply ambiguous term in the sharp dichotomy. Van Dijk (2015) has warned against a number of pitfalls of this metaphor for a number of reasons and discussed here. First, the metaphor suggests a simple divide between two clearly divided groups with a yawning gap between them. Secondly, it suggests that the gap is difficult to bridge. A third misunderstanding might be the impression that digital divide is about absolute inequalities, which is between those included and those excluded. In reality, most inequalities of the access to digital technology observed are more of a relative kind. A final wrong connotation might be the suggestion that the digital divide is a static condition while in fact the gaps observed are continually shifting. Both Gunkel (2013) and van Dijk (2015) have emphasized that the term echoes some kind of technological determinism. It is often suggested that the origins of the inequalities referred to lie in the specific problems of getting physical access to digital technology and that achieving such access for all would solve particular problems in the economy and society. It has also been established that the digital divide in terms of access to archives can be overcome by increasing affordability, empowering users and improving the relevance of online content among other solutions.

Consequently, digital repositories accessibility and their collections is based on information technology infrastructure stability. On this note, Van Dijk (2015) argues that many people especially in the third world have not benefited from the existing digital information services. Also to some extent, in developed countries small libraries

and repositories with limited resources have embarked on long-term digitisation projects (Nissen, 2015). “On the issues of the digital divide and digital skills the most important categorical distinctions are employers and (un)employed, management and executives, people with high and low levels of education, males and females, the old and the young, parents and children, whites and blacks, citizens and migrants. At the macro level of countries, we can observe the categorical inequality of developed and developing countries, sometimes indicated as countries from the North and countries from the South of the globe (Gunkel, 2013). In every case, the first of these pairs is the dominant category in almost every part of the world, the white-black distinction excluded. With two exceptions (the aged and parents), this also goes for digital access and skills, as we would see in the remainder of this chapter. A first instance of the insight offered by the relational view is an explanation of the differential appropriation of technology. Access to new technological means is a part of this. The dominant category is the first to adopt the new technology (Correa, 2017). It uses this advantage to increase power in its relationship with the subordinate category. Here, a long process of continual reinforcement starts in which the girls never learn to operate the devices and the boys improve. These progresses into adulthood, where males are able to appropriate the great majority of technical and strategically important jobs and, in practice, keep females out of these jobs, whether they are conscious of this fact or not (Gunkel, 2013). This kind of explanation will unearth more of the actual mechanisms creating gender inequality than will an explanation in terms of individual attributes (females being less technical or less motivated, etc.).

A second advantage of the relational view of inequality is the capacity to make better distinctions between types of inequality. Individualistic notions of inequality produce an endless number of differences that can be observed between individuals, with no

particular priority among them (Gunkel, 2013). Instead, distinctions have to be made between different types and attention has to be called to the structural aspects of society who refer to the relatively permanent and systemic nature of the differentiation called inequality.

2.5.3 Access to digitised collections

The digitisation of materials of different nature into electronic format has afforded a broader audience to access information than the traditional analogue. Accordingly, Elson (2008) notes that digitisation enables greater access to all collection types and non-traditional audiences (lifelong learners). Therefore, information could be accessed in an unanticipated or broad-ranging research interests (i.e. local history or genealogical research), as a case for the National Archives and Records Administration accessibility (Elson, 2016).

The existence of the right technological tools and well-designed user friendly interface offers possibilities to search, browse and compare materials for the users (Correa, 2017) thus improving digitised collections accessibility. This therefore, offers accessibility to previously inaccessible content on glass plate negatives, or oversized or fragile materials (Ferguson, 2009). In addition, information can be fused or integrated with, and linked to, other materials to offer an enriched archived materials, for instance, at the University of Virginia's Institute for Advanced Technology, Blake and Rossetti Archives (Hughes, 2004). On the other hand, the collaboration between the National Gallery of the Spoken Word and Michigan State University have also created a spoken word collections fully searchable online database spanning the 20th century, which is the first large-scale repository of its kind (Seadle, 2012).

As such, users can zoom in on manuscripts of choice and interest and explore the linkages between different materials. In general, digital collections exist in an interactive format (audio-visual) and non-interactive but accessible online to the wider audience. However, digital information accessibility has been hampered (Correa, 2017). In the current era, digital collections should be embraced due to its enormous potential for changing of information usage in research and bolstering innovation for global transformation.

2.5.4 Online access in archives

One of the important missions for archivists in the developing world is to provide a platform for electronic records to be accessed online. In the 21st century, known as the Information Age, rapid and continuous access to information is a minimum requirement (Menne-Haritz, 2017). Many people even in Africa access basic services online through e-government strategies. Thus, archives should also try to keep up with the rate of digitalization in the continent and in the world at large. At this point, online access becomes essential for archival organizations. The concept of access describes a professional strategy that is not dependent on the personal and individual empathy of the archivist for the contents or his understanding of the users' questions. It is a strategy that is neutral towards the content, but passionate concerning openness and availability of information potentials, and thus strictly user-oriented (Menne-Haritz, 2017). Providing access to the information acquired and preserved by an institution is central to the delivery of an archival program. It is only when records are used that archives can best demonstrate their usefulness to society. The aim of researcher access services, consequently, should be to lower the intellectual and psychological barriers to archives so that as many individuals as possible can read, touch, learn from, and enjoy those documents that illuminate past experience. It is not enough to

know that there may be pertinent or interesting information in archives. Users must be able to retrieve and consult that information, particularly in an era when information has become a valued commodity (Blais, 2015).

All the information processing and communication tools of desktop technology make it possible to produce what were previously analogue records, as well as new kinds of records (Menne-Haritz, 2017). Perhaps, this is because some, at least, of these newer forms of electronic records are narrative or visual, and thus familiar record types, they have come under the archival spotlight, becoming a focus for archivists and traditional communities of archival users (O'Neill, 2017). Access is a process that should be planned very carefully because of the special characteristics of archival material. Every country should present their access principles and should act according to these principles. Automated access principles should be taken account for an effective online access process. Especially the ones about the right to access to archival material.



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2.5.5 Legal access

Abioye (2009) identified the historical transformation of archival accessibility. He declared that, in the past, access to archives was restricted to the creators and their legitimate successors. The focus has since shifted with the gradual liberalization of access. In the past, for example, public records were preserved in strict secrecy and under close protection. Such recorded information materials were kept in locked rooms, sacks, boxes, crates, shrines and even the treasury, such that, public access was not practically emphasized. However, shortly before the end of the eighteenth century, the French revolution launched the modern era in the history of archives particularly in the areas of legislation, preservation and public access through the French Archival Act of 1794. Tosh (2013) opines that nowhere, however, historians

have been granted complete freedom of access to public records. If historians were allowed to inspect files as soon as they had ceased to be current use, they would be reading material that was only a few years old.” This can be true for any country including South Africa.

In Britain the ‘closed period’ laid down for public records varied considerably according to the department of origin until it was standardised at fifty years in 1958 (Tosh, 2013). Nine years later, after a vigorous campaign by historians, this period was reduced to thirty years. France followed suit in 1970, but in some countries, for example Italy, fifty years is still the rule. Access is also related to whether or not users have permission or authority to use archives. Records created and maintained for personal or internal use may include private or confidential information. Archivists are legally and ethically bound to ensure equitable access to records that are in their care. Maintaining fair use, however, is a problem because archivists have to deal with such issues as privacy, confidentiality, copyright, preservation, and freedom of information. In view of this, the principles of access to the archives adopted by the ICA in August 2012 (ICA 2012) were referred to. The ICA (2012:6) states that:

“Archives are preserved for use by present and future generations. An access service links archives to the public; it provides information for users about the institution and its holdings; it influences whether the public will trust the custodians of the archives and the services they provide”.

The principles outline a framework that different archives can use to benchmark their own practises with regard to facilitating access to their holdings. Baumann (1986) agrees that more than ever archivists are obligated to balance access to records on the one hand against protection of individual rights and interests on the other. Ellis (1993) states that in some cases the framework for providing access to the archives

holdings is embodied in specific archives regulations. For some government archives, the decision to release information must be referred to the department or authority currently responsible for the function involved. Similarly Baumann (1986) states that according to the “Archivist’s Code,” issued in 1955 by the Archivist of the United States, the archivist is to promote “access to records to the fullest extent consistent with the public interest,” always observing proper restrictions on the use of records and working for the increase and diffusion of knowledge.

Wasike (2016) explains that freedom of information is about making administration responsive to the needs of individual citizens, making government more accountable to the people it serves, and opening up new possibilities for democratic participation. This is enshrined in the constitution of the republic. Likewise, South Africa passed the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA), Number 2 of 2000. This Act guarantees the citizens the right of access to vast quantities of government held information (Harris, 2000). In a democratic society, access to information is a right, not a privilege. However, archivists must strive to silence the potential conflict between the right of access and the right of privacy. Consequently, Baumann (1986) stresses that it is more important than ever for archivists and records managers to ensure a climate in which public access to state government records is manageable, fair, equal, and not susceptible to unwarranted restrictions and limitations.

2.5.6 The influence of electronic record on access to the archival material

Electronic records present unique and bigger opportunities for archivists to make their institutions known and subsequently boost the access level of the archives (Nimer and Daines, 2008). Digital archives refer to the electronic devices and systems that create, store and process data. They include social media, online applications, multimedia, cloud computing, interoperable systems and mobile devices (Jimerson, 2003). The

focus of this study was, however, particularly on access to digital archival material. Technologies offer opportunities to archivists who wish to increase the levels of access and use of the material in their respective institutions. Nimer and Daines (2008) noted that archivists are exploring how technologies can be used to better meet their clients' needs. Similarly, Jimerson (2003) indicated that the internet offers an excellent means by which an archival institution can provide information about its products, services, repositories and collections.

However, Evans (2007) feared that the promise hold by the internet to enhance the public awareness and use of the archives might never be realised because of the large volumes of unprocessed stacks of records that characterise many archival repositories. Given the many benefits that can be derived from using the social media platforms to increase the access levels, the current study deemed that it's important to investigate access to digitised archival material in the National Heritage and Cultural Centre studies and International library of African Music in the Eastern Cape , South Africa. Chaterera (2015a) revealed that, although archivist in South Africa demonstrated an understanding of the benefits of electronic records and the utilisation of these technologies in South Africa, State museums and archives is still in its infancy. The invisibility of archives has often been attributed to their failure to take advantage of the many benefits and possibilities presented by information communication technologies (Bradley 2005; Saurombe and Ngulube, 2016b).

The need for archival institutions to make use of the new technologies like internet and social media platforms need not be over emphasised. In his work about making access easier, Ferriero (2011) recalled with distaste how people used to elbow their way through the crowds to view historic documents and spend hours in the archives' reading rooms searching through boxes of old documents. Ferriero (2011)

underscored the need by archival institutions to tap into the new technologies in providing access to their holdings. Ferriero (2011) argued that the social media space and the digital technologies have made the archives' mission of providing access to its holdings more efficient, effective, easier and even fun. The social media space presents a plethora of opportunities for the archives' to boost their access levels. For instance, Facebook and Twitter are social media platforms that allow users to share photographs of their interest from the national archival holdings. Such a facility does not only enhance the access level but also seeks to improve the quality of the archival collection as users will have an open platform to air their views regarding an archival collection.

A study conducted in Kenya by Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at (2003) revealed that the access level at an archival institution could be affected by the non-utilization of the digital technologies. Similar findings were reported by Ayoo and Otike (2000) who revealed the underutilization of the digital technologies in national archival institutions as a major barrier to access of archives. The difficulties in identifying the suitable hardware and software, the inadequacy of the needed resources to purchase the hardware and software and the absence of archivists with the requisite skills and knowledge in the use of computer technology are some of the chief reasons for the non-utilization of digital technologies in developing countries (Kemoni, Wamukoya and Kiplang'at, 2003).

The proliferation in the use of the information communication technologies does not imply that archivists are to delve into the digital space without exercising due diligence. As Currall and Moss (2008) stated, archivists are to interrogate the extent to which ICT represents an epistemological shift for it can be simply an extension of existing practices in a new order. The standpoint of the current research is that regardless of

whether ICTs are presenting an epistemological shift or simply presenting an extension of existing practices, the use of ICTs by archivists cannot be avoided, hence the need for studies like this. The continued growth of digital technologies exerts pressure on archivists to embrace the digital technologies lest they become irrelevant, boring and dated places (Matongo, Marwa and Wamukoya, 2013). The internet offers new and exciting ways of presenting archival materials to the public. Computers together with other devices such as mobile phones, iPads and tablets have become an indispensable means of daily communication amongst the population, which archival institutions regard as their existing and potential clientele. Information communication technologies have generated the easiest way of accessing archival materials (Haritz, 2001).

Adopting the new technologies in making the archives available to the people is one of the ways that can be pursued to increase the levels of accessing archives. In that respect, Murambiwa and Ngulube (2011) indicated that technologies have the potential to increase the number of users several times over as people may request for archival documents from wherever they would be if they know of their existence. Similarly, Chaterera (2015a) emphasised that the use of technologies in public information centres has the potential of dramatically improving access, use and user satisfaction. The need to adopt the new technologies is imminent and inevitable. Many governments around the world are generating vast quantities of information using digital technologies. Mnjama (2008) highlighted that the procedures through that members of the public can access electronic records are yet to be developed. In South Africa technological infrastructure has been developed to allow users to access online content although the digital divide still exists. Similarly, Kilasi, Maseko and Abankwah (2011) noted that archivists in Swaziland and Tanzania are not exploiting information

technologies to meet user needs yet users require services at different hours and online services have a better chance to satisfy such needs.

The use of technologies therefore provides broad access to people who cannot easily visit the National Archives due to geographical restrictions. Supporting the adoption of the digital technologies with some reservations are Usherwood, Wilson and Bryson (2005) who observed that the electronic media could offer a level of immediate access to information but it can be at the expense of accuracy. Quick web searches are replacing deep archival research and most archival materials are not online mainly because of the perceived reluctance of archivists to embrace the digital technologies (Hicks, 2005). Archivists need to reposition themselves by way of adopting the use of technologies if they want to make their materials more accessible and remain relevant to the society (Saurombe, 2016). It is essential for national archival institutions to use technologies as they have the potential to address new audiences and build new constituencies.



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For instance, the National Archives of Singapore created a2o as a one stop portal for users to access documentary heritage information dating back to the 17th century (Beasley and Kail, 2009). The name 'a2o' is meant to be an echo of water, an essential element for life. The portal presents access to the cultural heritage collection in the form of photographs, maps and plans, oral history audio files and other audio-visual recordings in multiple ways and several databases are offered that allow users to search through the online archives. The site is a wonderful way for the National Archives of Singapore to open Singapore's cultural repository to a new generation of Singaporeans, while providing current researchers with an easier way to explore their holdings.

Many archives in the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region are working towards automating some of the information about their collections and the finding aids in order to make them available online (Murambiwa and Ngulube, 2011). En-route to coming up with a way of accessing digital archives, this study gathers evidence on how far NAHECS and ILAM has gone in automating information about their collections and the finding aids so as to make them available online. It should be acknowledged, however, that Garaba and Ngulube (2010) have already observed that countries that have attempted the move experienced massive challenges with critics arguing that such developments are prone to information imperialism. When used in innovative ways, new technologies permit archivists to better fulfil their archival obligations. The creative use of the social media space and other technologies provides archivists with a firm foundation to offer better reference services, hence increasing the probability of retaining the current clientele while attracting new potential users (Nimer and Daines, 2008).



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The emergency of technologies has brought inevitable changes that archivists have to embrace and use to their own advantage for archival institutions to claim and maintain their relevance within the wider society. In today's information superhighway, people have become used to a prompt access to information through the Web sites search engines such as Yahoo!, Google, Surfmax, Bing, Ask, Webcrawler, Infospace and Dogpile amongst others. Considering the number of search engines that can be used by people to promptly access information, archivists can only remain truly relevant and abreast of the users' needs by responding to the call of the day and start considering supplying information and other services online (Nimer and Daines, 2008). The increased growth of digital technologies presents archivists with an opportunity to

broaden and deepen their public service and community ties while reducing the wear and tear on the original documents (Netshakhuma, 2018).

In addition, Nimer and Daines (2008) emphasised that it is important to allow users to interact virtually with finding aids and archival digital content. This is not to say, though, that archives should entirely go virtual as digital access deprives the user of the exciting tactile experience of how archival repositories look and feel. Contrary to a paper copy, a screen image cannot reproduce a document's smell, peculiarities of the material and details such as light pencil markings or a document's size or texture may be obscured (Lyons, 2002). When a document is selected for inclusion on a website, there is an inevitable danger of distorting the context in which the document was created and maintained. In view of such arguments, the current research took the position that the archives must employ the digital technologies as complementary tools not as a replacement to physical access.



Apart from technologies, archivists can also make use of the media, national radio and television broadcasting services to communicate their services to the public as this potentially leads to an increased level of access to the archives (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2011; Jimerson, 2003; Riehle, 2008). Similarly, Onyancha and Ngoepe (2011) encourage the use of media by archivists to increase the public awareness of the archives.

2.6 National Heritage and Cultural studies Centre (NAHECS) and International Library of African Music (ILAM) as drivers for improved access to digital archival material.

National archival institutions are in custody of rich informational materials that have a potential to transform the socio-economic and political development of a country. It

therefore becomes a cause for concern if the level of archives utilisation is low (Ngulube, 2006). To this effect, public programming emerges as a critical archival function performed by archivists in an endeavour to enhance the visibility and public image of an archival institution (Gregor, 2001). Public programming strategies are synonymous with outreach programmes. They are both promotional activities that are meant to increase the visibility of an archival institution and public image (Jimerson, 2003) through educating people about the existence, services, and documentary resources of archival institutions (Bance, 2012).

Archival institutions risk becoming meaningless and irrelevant to the society if the information materials in their custody are not accessible and used (Saurombe and Ngulube, 2016b). As such, it is imperative for archivists to equip themselves with skills to retain existing archives users while attracting new clientele. In order to increase the consumption of their products and services, archival institutions should engage in programmes and activities that would make their collections known to the public (Mason, 2011). The need for national archival institutions to increase their visibility and accessibility is not a newly conceived notion. Kamatula (2011), Ngoepe and Ngulube (2011), Onyancha, Mokwatlo and Mnkeni-Saurombe (2013) and Saurombe and Ngulube (2016b) reiterated the need by national archival institutions to improve on their visibility, public image and accessibility.

National archival institutions are obliged to make their products and services visible and accessible vis-a-vis the government's constituency (Blais and Enns, 1990). As indicated in the third objective of the current study, the researcher sought to examine programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM hence, increase their visibility and redress the many misconceptions that people might have about the archives. The reason for this research is to access of online or digitised

archives that reaches everywhere in the world. Outreach programmes provide that a unique opportunity to improve the awareness and access of archival holdings (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2011). Similarly, Kamatula (2011) indicated that public programming are important means for increasing the utilization of archival materials.

Consequently, the archivists are reaching out to the same people all the time at the expense of attracting new users. Amongst the major means of expanding usage of public records and archives is to hold exhibitions. The International Library of African Music (ILAM) presents special exhibitions every year introducing its holdings (Ngulube, 2016b). The bulk of these exhibitions are available online and provided excellent opportunity to highlight the significance of public records and its own functions, hence promoting access and use of its holdings. Given the potential role that can be played by public programming in making the people aware of the archives' services and products, this research considered it important to examine programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM.



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The need for NAHECS and ILAM to be visible in the public domain was a key issue under investigation by the current research. The access levels can be increased only if the people who are supposed to use the archival material are aware of where to find the archives, when and how to find the archives. As Bacon (2014) questioned, the door may be open but can people find it and, if they find it, will they understand what it is and what they might be interested in? The series of questions posed by Bacon (2014) reflect the need by archival institutions to improve in making their products and services familiar to the larger community of existing and potential archives users.

Programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections among other activities have the potential to aid archivists in taking archives to the people and drawing them to the physical and virtual habitat of the archives. It is disappointing to note, though,

that archivists across the world tend to concentrate more on acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and description at the expense of raising awareness about the documentary heritage in their custody (Saurombe and Ngulube, 2016b). Archival institutions are challenged, therefore, to engage in ways that make them visible, relevant and meaningful to members of the public.

2.7 Importance of Digital Access to Archival Materials

Digital technology offers distinctive advantages to institutions with impressive collections of scholarly resources. Information content can be delivered directly to the reader without human intervention (Arkorful and Abaidoo, 2015). Readers can retrieve information content in digital form remotely, although such delivery may tax the capabilities of even the most sophisticated projection equipment and networks. Digital image quality is extraordinary and is improving constantly (Petrelli and Auld, 2008). It is now possible to represent almost any type of traditional research material with such visual quality that reference to the original materials is unnecessary for most, if not all, purposes.

The power of full-text searching and sophisticated, cross-collection indexing affords readers the opportunity to make new uses of traditional research resources (Arkorful and Abaidoo, 2015). Newly developed system interfaces (the look and feel of the computer screen) combined with new ways to deliver manageable portions of large image data files promise to revolutionize the ways in which research materials are used for teaching and learning. It is no wonder that there is a nearly overwhelming need for digitisation (Petrelli and Auld, 2008).

2.8. Challenges of Accessing Digitised Archival Collections

According to Lindstrom (2019) the concept of access to digitised archival material as a challenge in the following words:

Access as an archival term means the authority to obtain information from or to perform research in archival materials. While the purpose of an archives is to preserve and make available historical materials, access policy serves as a major brake to full and free availability. Archivists are committed to the principle that everything in their holdings will eventually be available for reference use, but archivists cling equally tenaciously to the idea that a balance must be struck between the public's right to know and the need for confidentiality (Reiger, 2010).

The management of archival material is at the centre of archival practice. Archival material has evidential and informational value in particular, as well as managerial, financial, legal and historical values. As a result, archival material consists of unique items that should be kept continuously or for a long time (Lindström, 2019). At this point, it is strategically important to determine the potential disadvantages of processes directly related to archival material, in particular access. It is also important to make improvements and changes according to the potential challenges of processes. One of the most important aims for almost every archive today is to digitise their material and provide online access to users. Because online access has a great deal of advantages, like increasing usage of archival material, increasing provision of user services, reducing the workload of archivist, increasing reputational prestige, economy of money and economy of time (Lindstrom, 2019). On the other hand, it is very important to determine the potential challenges of this advantageous process and take precautions.

Online access has become an essential function for archives. Users expect to be able to reach material online without having to come to the archives. Nowadays archives provide online access service via their institutional web sites and/or with smart phone applications (Asogwa, 2011). Thus, they can serve more users and also increase their reputational prestige. However, in some ways online access can be a challenge for archives.

For instance, it is expensive to access digitised archival material online because of the data and Wi-Fi that are required hence internet is costly for users. Online access is a comprehensive process with digitisation and system setup, and as a result, organizations must invest serious amounts of money in this process (Rieger, 2010).

In addition, online access results in archives being erased from its origin (Asogwa, 2011). As stated before, online access does away with the requirement of going to archives for the material. This causes archives to be erased from the memory. In addition to the second challenge, by not visiting the archives and not examining the original material, the awareness of archives by national archives users, in particular, could be reduced.

Accordingly, a stable information technology determines the rate of access to digital repositories and their collections. This was seen many developing countries not able to attain digitisation information service and associated benefits (Van Dijk, 2015). Also, smaller libraries and repositories in developed countries are grappling with long term digitisation projects due to limited resources (Keakopa, 2008).

In addition to these, online access poses a threat for the future of the reference archivist because using online access, users can reach materials without going to the archives and people may end up losing jobs since there is no one coming to visit or use the physical documents (Van Dijk, 2015).

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the literature on access to digitised archival collections. Special consideration was given to the studies and theories that sought to explain access to digitised archival collections. Information is an invaluable resource for institutions, and individuals, if used in a more efficient, properly organized and permanently preserved way. Therefore, the African goal of digitisation initiatives is informed by the need to sustain its resources, which are regarded as institutional assets, long-term preservation and continued access to the digitised materials. Literature discussed in this chapter shows that efforts have been made to track the progress made in the digitalisation of archives, including setting the standards for accessing them. However, there is still dearth of literature that interrogates the issue of access to online archival collections especially from a South African perspective.



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CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology and procedures that were utilised in addressing the research objectives and research questions stated in this study. Malhotre (2004) states that, research methodology encompasses the procedures that are necessary for the gathering required information needed for the decision making. These include research sites, research design, population and sampling technique, research instrument, research procedure (methods of data collection), analysis method and ethical consideration. These aspects of methodology are discussed in detail in the subsequent sections.

3.2 Research Paradigm



According to Ryan (2018) a paradigm is a set of theories and related assumptions shared amongst an association of researchers. According to Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2011), the two most renowned research paradigms are positivism and interpretivism. The criteria of selecting the paradigm to use for a specific study are usually associated with the choice of the approach and design for a specific study. The interpretivist paradigm was used as the philosophy underpinning this study. Interpretivism can be traced back to the work of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Wilhem Dilthey (1833-1911) and Max Weber (1864-1920), whose arguments were based on the premise that research should be aimed at understanding of humans' unique lived experiences in their context. Humans are in a process of continuously interpreting, creating, giving meaning, justifying and rationalising their daily actions (Babbie and Mouton, 2012).

Unlike the positivist paradigm, the interpretivist research paradigm recognises that the relationship between the researcher and the participants is interactive (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The researcher must be subjective, not objective. This means that the research cannot be value-free, because the researcher will be dealing with people who are affected by the research. As far as the interpretivist paradigm is concerned, findings have to be negotiated and agreed by the researcher and the participants (Scotland, 2012; Aliyu et al., 2014; Antwi and Hamza, 2016). The relationship between the researcher and the researched should be characterised by reflexivity. Reflexivity is concerned with the empathetic neutrality of the researcher when conducting research. According to Scotland (2012), reflexivity is needed to avoid obvious or conscious bias on the part of the researcher, and it also encourages the researcher to be neutral in the collection, analysis and interpretation of the data.



3.1.1 Epistemology: Interpretivism

An epistemology is a comprehensive belief system and the underlying philosophy and assumptions that guide research and practice in the field (Villiers, 2005; Willis, 2007; Phothongsunan, 2010). There are three major epistemological beliefs followed in scientific research, namely positivism, critical theory and interpretivism. The current researcher's epistemological orientation was largely influenced by the nature of the research problem, the theoretical lens adopted in the study and the degree of uncertainty surrounding the phenomenon under study as advised by Rowlands (2005). Interpretivism is concerned with the understanding of human behaviour from the perspectives of the people involved (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). Therefore, the study assumes that the views of the participants must be taken as "facts" (Bai, Morgan, Scott & Cohen, 2016). Interpretivists work with participants as they make sense, draw meaning from, and create their realities in order to understand other

points of view, and to interpret these experiences in the context of the researcher's experience (Curry, 2020).

The current study found interpretivism to be the most appropriate as it seeks to come up with new interpretations and underlying meanings paying attention to the ontological assumption of multiple realities, which are time and context dependent (Villiers, 2005; Leitch, Hill, and Harrison, 2010) Interpretivism epistemology is naturalistic as it is done in a natural setting and not in a laboratory (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

Interpretive researchers do not seek answers for their studies in rigid ways (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). This helped the researcher to understand the sentiments of the general populace, archives users and the information management practitioners on issues relating to access to and use of the nation's documentary heritage held at the National Heritage and Cultural Study Centre and International Library of African Music. Interpretivism emerged a suitable epistemological belief for this study considering the complexity and differences found in the behaviour, concerns, perceptions and expectations of users and potential users of the archives. In that regard, this research was operationalised using the qualitative methodology. Unlike positivism that seeks to test hypotheses, this research used the interpretive paradigm where research questions focused on understanding the issues related to access to digitised archival collection in National Heritage and Cultural Study Centre and International Library of African Music that would help archivists to improve the access levels of the archival holdings.

3.3 Research Approach

A research approach is defined as a way of finding out knowledge (Babbie and Mouton, 2010). It can also be defined as the way in which research is conducted (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). There are three main types of research approach. These are qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods research. The selection of the most appropriate approach for a study depends on the research questions, and the paradigm guiding the research (Flick, 2015), specifically the two areas of epistemology and ontology. This study is guided by the interpretivism paradigm and therefore, the qualitative research approach was appropriate for this study, because the researcher aims at understanding the world of the participants through their understanding and interpretation of their own reality. The qualitative research approach provides a unique approach to research in which emphasis is on the individuals interpreting their own social world (Bryman, 2012). This makes it preferable in a study of this nature. The qualitative approach uses highly unstructured instruments for example, in-depth interviews, which will give richer answers to the researcher's questions concerning access to digitised archival collection.

The study uses qualitative methodology as it is important in exploring and describing a new area where little is known, and also, as noted above, understanding people's beliefs from their own perspectives (Antwi and Hamza, 2016). There is little that is known about the issue of access to digital archival collections and ILAM or NAHECS. Thus, the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to understand the socially constructed meanings through getting closer to the participants and interacting with them in their natural context. According to Bryman and Bell (2014), qualitative researchers are more concerned with subjectivity whereby they gain access to the natural setting of the participants so as to gain an insider's experience. This will enable

the researcher to experience the subjective dimensions of the phenomenon under study.

The other unique characteristic of the qualitative research approach is that it is unstructured and flexible as compared to the quantitative approach. Its aim is to explore diversity in participants' views on the phenomenon being investigated rather than merely quantifying responses (Kumar, 2014). Qualitative research does not seek to generalise the findings beyond the context in which the study has been made. It instead seeks to understand the behaviour, experiences and beliefs in a particular context (Bryman, 2012; Kumar, 2014). In this study context, the qualitative approach was used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations about access to digitised archival materials at the selected institutions. Finally, the qualitative approach was used because of its capacity to emphasise the voices of the participants. Thus, the approach enables the voices of the participants to be included in the data presentation through the use of quotations which capture the exact words of the participants (Hossain, 2011).

3.4 Justification for using Qualitative Approach

In qualitative research, data are descriptive, in the form of interview notes, observation records, and documents; and data are analysed inductively. The study emphasizes on a holistic approach, and final outcomes (Crescentini and Mainardi, 2009). The sources of data are real-world situations, natural, non-manipulated settings. The researcher is immersed in the details specific to the settings. Qualitative researchers have to use key principles of research design, such as, linking the research questions to the methodological approaches, considering issues of analysis and data collection as integrated, and being clear about the purposes of the research (Severson, 2018).

This method therefore suits this research as it helps to discover the feelings, values, attitudes on access to digitised archival collections in NAHECS and ILAM. Another reason for choosing and using qualitative approach is because qualitative research is typically used to answer questions about the complex nature of phenomena, often with the purpose of describing and understanding the phenomena from the participants' point of view (Masiloane, 2008). In addition, Marshall and Rossman (2014), observed that qualitative research also helps researchers to decode, describe, analyse and interpret data. It is also a way of learning and knowing about different experiences from the perspective of individuals involved the study.

3.5 Research Design

A research design can be defined as the map of how a study is going to be conducted in order to meet the objectives (Luck and Ruin, 2009). It shows the procedures to be used to collect and analyse data, to select the participants, and how information is going to be analysed. According to Kumar (2011), a research design is a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions.

This study adopted the qualitative survey research design as advocated by Braun and Clarke (2013). This design prioritises qualitative research values alongside qualitative techniques among others (Wolf et al., 2016; Terry and Braun, 2017). As such, qualitative survey technique was adopted to harness the potential of qualitative data from in-depth interviews to offer new understandings on access to archival digitised materials at NAHECS and ILAM.

Qualitative surveys consist of a series of open-ended questions (Vannette and Krosnick, 2018) which offered an opportunity to the researcher to design questions pertinent to access to archival digitised materials. The questions were presented in a

flexible but standard order to all participants (Braun et al., 2017b). Therefore, qualitative surveys affords the leverage of producing the rich and complex accounts of the type of sense-making typically of interest based on participants' subjective experiences, narratives, practices and discourses (Braun and Clarke, 2013). To this end, qualitative survey data captured what was important to participants, and access to digital archive materials (Frith, 2000), which is an acclaimed qualitative research merit.

Qualitative surveys are compatible with research embedded in broadly qualitative research values or paradigms (Grant and Giddings, 2002), and that qualitative survey datasets can provide richness and depth, when viewed in their entirety, even if individual responses might themselves be brief.

In addition, qualitative surveys often ask very few questions (Barrett, 2007; Frith and Gleeson, 2008; Clarke, 2019). Survey research is used to gather the opinions, beliefs and feelings of selected groups of individuals, often chosen for demographic sampling (Check and Schutt, 2012). Surveys focuses on existed experience, and seek detailed responses, however a smaller number of questions seems to work best (Opperman et al., 2014). Longer qualitative surveys remain rare and seem to work better when focused on perceptions and practices.

According to Dooley (2003), Owens (2002) and Glasgow (2005), qualitative survey research design has the ability to provide current conditions existing within particular records management system. This helped the researcher to explore the archival collections at both ILAM and NAHECS. The choice of this research design was largely determined by the nature of the study, whose overall aim was to investigate access to digitised archival collections. As such, the design was deemed appropriate in the study

as it enabled the investigator to understand issues of access to digitised archival at NAHECS and ILAM.

Further, Owens (2002) and Glasgow (2005) explained that surveys are concerned with collecting data directly from people about occurrences, incidences of events, instances in varying circumstances and situations. De Vaus (2001) noted that surveys are descriptive in nature for they seek to make sense of the situation being studied from a descriptive point of view.

3.6 Population

A population in methodological context is that aggregation of elements from which the sample is actually selected (Babbie, 2013). Powers (2000) defines population as a set of entities for which all the measurements of interest to the research are presented. Moreover, population refers to a large group of cases from which a researcher draws a sample (Neuman, 2014). The entities may be people, such as all clients comprising a particular workers caseload, or things like research documents. To this end, NAHECS and ILAM staff members constituted the study population.

In order to solicit information on a specific topic of interest, it is important to identify the population of the study from which a sample will be drawn (Babbie, 2016). Cooper and Schindler (2006), refer to a population as any group that is the subject of research interest. Gupta and Gupta (2011) define population as the total number of items or units in any field of research.

3.7 Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the process of selecting units, for example, people and organizations from a population of interest, so that the results can be generalized back to the population from which the sample is chosen (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010). In addition, it may be difficult to group together a sample that is representative of the larger population. For this reason, purposive sampling was the preferred type of sampling for this study.

According to Castillo (2009), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method where subjects are selected on the basis of whether they can provide the required information. Thus, in this study the staff members working with digitised archival collections at both NAHECS and ILAM have the expert knowledge necessary to address this study's research questions. The sample comprised of 10 participants (5 participants from NAHECS and 5 from ILAM). From ILAM, the participants comprised of the Director, manager, two senior data capturers and an assistant data capturer. At NAHECS, the participants included the director, senior archivist, two Archivist and an assistant archivist. According to Jacob and Furgerson (2012) a qualitative research a sample size between 10 to 15 participants is considered appropriate as long as they provide sufficient information to address the objectives of the study.

3.8 Data collection methods

There are various methods of data collection (Hawkins, 2018). Notably, the inclusion of multiple data collection in a research project is likely to increase the trustworthiness or rigor of the study (Mouton and Marais, 1988; Gaikwad, 2017). In addition to that, the use of various methods to collect the data is highly regarded, because the events or facts of the case study have been supported by more than single evidence (Yin,

2003). In order to fulfil the objective of the study, unstructured interviews were used to collect data.

3.8.1 Interviews

Interviews are one of the key research tools in interpretive research (Phothongsunan, 2010), and the most widely used method in qualitative research (Edwards and Holland, 2013). The reason why interviews have gained popularity in scientific studies is that the method allows for more thoughtful and accurate responses and it also possesses an interactive power that makes it effective to deal with complex issues (Singleton and Straits, 2010).

Interviews can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Cresswell, 2006). The structured interview is associated with positivist studies, mostly used in survey approaches and it is aligned to the quantitative approach. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews constitute the area occupied by qualitative researchers, with the interviews characterised by increasing levels of flexibility and lack of structure (Edwards and Holland, 2013). Lack of structure does not however imply lack of focus. The current study uses the semi-structured interview technique. When conducting the interviews, the researcher would be guided by the research topic, problem and themes, but following a fluid and flexible structure. Using semi-structured interviews, the researcher identified the aspects and areas that needed to be addressed but remained open and receptive to unexpected information from the interviewee(s).

The interview can be simply described as a form of consultation where the researcher seeks to know more of an issue as opinionated by the individual being asked. In research, this form of consultation is motivated by a reputable purpose. As such, an interview can be comprehended as an interactive process where a person asks

questions to seek particular information. From a scholarly point of view, Sewell (n.d) defines interviews in qualitative research as attempts to understand the world from the subject's point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world before scientific explanations. As appreciated by other scholars, the qualitative interview is central to data collection (Gill et al., 2008). However, the most important component is that for the information obtained to be more authentic, the researcher has to create a good connection with the source. Interviewers are specialized people who act professionally to seek relevant information from participants to validate their research hypotheses (Edwards and Holland, 2013).

3.8.1.1 Unstructured interviews

Based on the current understanding, no interview can be qualified as truly unstructured. However, certain interviews are disjointed in their nature of implementation that they qualify the tag name (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006: Jamshed, 2014). This form of interview has its roots in the ethnographic tradition of anthropology (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). In studying certain aspects of pressing social issues, researchers have to become part of what they are studying. Doing so enables them to observe, point out the lead subjects and informally ask them questions while they take notes. This form of interviews needs to be conceptualized as the narrative interview (Stuckey, 2013; Muylaert et al, 2014).

Significantly, unstructured interviews are controlled conversations that bend towards the interests of the researcher. Further, there are different subtypes of the unstructured interviews (Jamshed, 2014). One of them is the non-directive interview, where the researcher has no pre-planned questions. According to Stuckey (2013), focused interview is where the researcher knows the subject and manipulates him/her towards a relevant topic of interest. Informal interviews cover the better part of unstructured

interviews. It is, therefore, significant to acknowledge that regardless their irregular structure, unstructured interviews are still a significant qualitative data collection tool.

Advantages of interviews

Just like any qualitative data collection mechanism, interviews exhibit their superiority and weakness. However, their comprehensive use in qualitative studies is because the strengths outweigh the weaknesses.

From a general perspective, interviews have numerous advantages that conform to the nature of a qualitative research paradigm. One of the pertinent aspects emphasized on by Sewell is that interviews provide the participants with the much-needed flexibility of explaining issues based on how well they know them (Brubaker and Thomas, 2008). To the qualitative researcher, this is significant as the central issue in qualitative research is to justify the occurrence of a particular phenomenon.

Significantly, interviews, mainly semi-structured and unstructured allow the researcher to interject where necessary and ensure that the subject understands the topic or question under scrutiny. In addition to this, interviewers get to use their interpersonal skills to explore on significant issues raised by the participant, aspects that are central to comprehensive data collection. However, the general analytical approach preferred by Sewell, this discussion also glances at the specific approach preferred by Opdenakker (2006). The scholar deduces the strengths of qualitative interview based on the techniques used, which include face-to-face, telephone, messenger and e-mail interviews.

Face-to-face interview is advantageous based on the amount of data that can be collected (Opdenakker, 2006). In general interview, time is a major factor, which is well

accounted for when the face-to-face mode is applied. The researcher has the time to get comfortable and articulate issues vividly with the subject. Besides the aspect of quantity, the quality of data collected is also high. With the possibility of sticking to visual aids, the participant is much likely to understand the question and yield appropriate responses, compared to telephone or mail interviews. Face-to-face interviews is also perfect for groups (Tod, 2015). The advantages of telephone interview include a wide geographical coverage, easy to contact inaccessible individuals, superior for contacting people in closed sites or war tone areas, and relevant in dealing with sensitive issues where personal contact is not required (Opdenakker, 2006). Messenger chats and e-mail alike save on time and cost of interviews.

Disadvantages of interviews



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The disadvantages of qualitative interviews are also linked to each technique used. The downsides of face-to-face interviews include being costly and requiring a long time to complete (Doyle, 2005). In face-to-face interaction, the research needs to travel or pay for the participants' fare to the interview sites. Significantly, interviewees also need to be trained, all aspects that amount to costliness and much time was taken (Tod, 2015).

Consequently, face-to-face interviews are physically limited to a single geographical region while they put the interviewee on the spot as they require immediate responses. Analysts also indicate that is easy to introduce interviewer bias (Doyle, 2005). The downsides of telephone interview include short interviews due to limed resources, and like other technological platforms, mainly mail and messenger, physical aids cannot be used for further justification (Opdenakker, 2006). Significantly, it is hard for the

researcher to identify the physical or emotional state of the participant. Questions were open-ended and fairly specific in their focus and intent and this allowed for free flowing engagement, which enabled the researcher to richly tap onto participants' perceptions, feelings, attitude and meanings. The copy of the interview guide is attached in the appendix section.

3.9 Trustworthiness or Rigor

Trustworthiness or rigor of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot and Beck, 2014). Trustworthiness and rigour are concerned with the accuracy, credibility as well as dependability issues in qualitative research (Leung, 2015). Accordingly, this was fundamental to ensure that the research findings are credible and accurate among others. Therefore, the researcher adopted already tested protocols and procedures necessary for this study. This was critical to further ensure that the study is considered worthwhile by the readers (Amankwaa, 2016). Accordingly, the study adopted Guba and Lincoln (1994) trustworthiness classification criteria, which includes credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability, and authenticity.

Credibility

Credibility of the study is the most important principle of trustworthiness and thus gives confidence in the study findings (Polit and Beck, 2014). To ensure that the results of this research are credible, the researcher focused on gathering primary information from employees working in these institutions and explored peer reviewed secondary data. In addition, the techniques used to establish credibility in this study included prolonged engagement with participants, member-checking, and reflective journaling. Furthermore, verified and already tested data analysis methods were used, and

interpretations and conclusions were shared with participants to allow them to clarify certain issues of concern, correct errors and to provide additional information (i.e., data validation).

Dependability

Dependability refers to the stability of the data over time and over the conditions of the study (Polit and Beck, 2014). To ensure that the findings of this research are dependable, data was sourced from employees at these two institutions and analysed using already tested and published methods by other authors. In addition, the researcher reported each process in detail to enable other researchers to repeat the enquiry and achieve similar results. Therefore, the results could be replicated.

Confirmability



Confirmability is the neutrality or the degree findings are consistent, and could be repeated. This is analogous to objectivity in quantitative research (Polit and Beck, 2014). The researcher ensured confirmability by maintaining an audit trail throughout the study in the form of detailed notes of all the decisions and analysis. In addition, the researcher conducted member-checking with study participants. The researcher used this methods to ensure that there was no bias during the study.

Transferability

The researcher ensured that the study can be transferred to other contexts. This was done by means of providing a rich, detailed description of the context, location, and people studied, and by being transparent about analysis and trustworthiness. It is important that the researchers need to provide a vivid picture that would inform and resonant with readers (Amankwaa, 2016).

Authenticity

Authenticity is the extent to which researchers fairly and completely show a range of different realities and realistically convey participants' lives (Polit and Beck, 2014). The researcher was mindful of the fact that the conduct of the research must be genuine and credible and that the research is worthwhile and contributes to the field. To this end, authenticity was ensured in this study by means of selection of appropriate people for the study sample and provision of a rich, detailed description of the study context.

3.10 Data Analysis

According to De Vos et al (2011), data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the gathered data. This is the process of making meaning out of the data collected during the interviews. The data are analysed through the use of thematic coding. The researcher went through the responses closely and repeatedly for an in-depth understanding. The researcher categorised the data according to themes and analyzed them in order to derive meaning from the data. Thematic analysis is applicable in this study as it enables the researcher to acquire in-depth information from the responses given. A summary of the data analysis process is provided in the table below

Table 1: Summary of the six phase thematic analysis process

Phase	Process
1.Becoming familiar with the data	This is where the researcher immersed herself in the data by reading and re-reading the data in search for meanings and patterns.

2. Generating initial codes	Initial codes from the data were generated.
3. Searching for themes	Coded data was sorted into potential themes and all the coded data extracts within each identified theme was collated.
4. Reviewing themes	A set of potential themes were developed and reviewed for refinement.
5. Defining and naming themes	The themes were defined to determine meaning. The aspect of data which each theme captures was then identified.
6. Producing report	Final analysis was conducted and a report written.

Source: Braun and Clarke (2006).

3.11 Ethical Considerations

According to Neuman (2014), ethics define what is or what is not legitimate to do during a research process. Research ethics help to prevent abuses and assist investigators in understanding their responsibilities as ethical scholars. The researcher obtained an ethical clearance letter (FEN011SKAK01) from the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC). The researcher adhered and observed

the following ethical issues: informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, avoidance of harm, and voluntary participation.

3.11.1 Informed consent

Informed consent entails giving as much information as possible about research to participants so that they make well-informed decisions. The purpose is to conduct research openly and without deception (Silverman, 2013). The participants in this research were given information regarding all the aspects of the study and upon understanding the information they signed the consent forms as a sign of accepting to be part of this study. Informed consent is important because it shows that the participants understand the purpose of the study and agree to participate in the study without being forced.



3.11.2 Confidentiality

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Confidentiality is an ethical principle that protects the participants by making sure that their information is not disclosed. Confidentiality is important because it safeguards some of the private information that the participants will share. Therefore, it requires that the researcher takes steps to ensure research data and its sources remain confidential unless participants have given consent for their disclosure (Silverman, 2013). Data collected from the research should be 'always kept under secure conditions. In this study, confidentiality was guarded through destroying the recordings, that is, all the information that was provided by the participants after analysing the data. Confidentiality was also discussed with the participants before undertaking the study.

3.10.3 Anonymity

Anonymity is the ethical principle that participants' profiles remain undisclosed. This means that the participants' identity is protected from disclosure and remains unknown (Neuman, 2011). To protect the identity of the participants, the participants were assigned numbers to make sure that they remain anonymous. Their names were not be used at all to ensure that anybody who reads the results will not know or identify the research participants.

3.11.4 Avoidance of Harm

Social science research should be done in a way that minimizes emotional harm to individuals (Silverman, 2013). The researcher avoided any sort of harm to the participants by stopping the interview whenever the participants do not feel comfortable to carry on.



3.11.5 Voluntary participation

Neuman (2011) states that the researcher must not coerce anyone into participating. If people are forced to participate, their participation will no longer be voluntary and hence renders the research unethical (Mugenda, 2011). The researcher ensured that participation in this research was voluntary by signing of consent forms.

3.12 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study was restricted to NAHECS at the University of Fort Hare and ILAM at Rhodes University in Graham's town in the Eastern Cape Province. While the findings from the study are not generalizable to other institutions, it generates some general lessons to be learned by other institutions as far as digitising archival collections is concerned.

3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology that was used to investigate the access to digitised archival collections in two institutions. The chapter provided an overview of the research approach and design, methods of data collections and analysis. The next chapter focuses on the data analysis and presentation of findings.



CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses and presents the data collected through interviews. The presentation and analysis of data are important as the raw data collected must be translated into meaningful information. Monette, Sullivan and De Jong (2011) state that data analysis unlocks the information hidden in the raw data and transforms it into something useful and meaningful. This is because during data analysis, empirical reality and ideas are confirmed.

In view of this, the analysis of the data in this study was done in line with the research objectives to ensure that all the issues and questions raised in the study were addressed adequately. Mouton (2009) points out that the research purpose gives a broad indication of what researchers wish to achieve in their research. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate access to digitised archival collection in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province. In achieving this aim, the following objectives were formulated:

- To establish the type of materials digitised in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To determine the end users of the digitised materials in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To examine programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM.
- To identify challenges faced in providing access to digitised materials in NAHECS and ILAM.

Accordingly, primary data were gathered by means of interviews. The analysis was done after the responses from the participants had been processed and categorised.

The findings are presented in two sections, that is, the demographic information of the participants and the presentation of themes and sub-themes. In presenting the findings of this research, the researcher used pseudo names to conform to the ethical requirements of participants confidentiality and anonymity. For ILAM participants, the researcher used (A, B, C, D, E) and for NAHECS researcher used (F, G, H, I, J). The findings pertaining to the type of digitised materials at ILAM and NAHECS are presented under different themes. The themes also relate to the programmes that are in place to facilitate access to digitised material as well as the challenges that hinder access to the digitised archival collections.

4.2 Demographic Information of Participants

The table below shows the demographic details of the participants of the study in terms of job title, institution, experience, and level of education.



Table 4.2: Demographic information of participants

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Job Title	Institution	Level of Study	Years of Experience
Director	ILAM	PhD	3
Manager	ILAM	Masters	17
Senior Data capturer	ILAM	Honours	3
Senior data capturer	ILAM	Bachelors	1
Assistant data capturer	ILAM	Matric	9
Director	NAHECS	PhD	25

Senior Archivist	NAHECS	PhD	27
Archivist	NAHECS	Masters	5
Archivist	NAHECS	Masters	11
Assistant Archivist	NAHECS	Honours	25

4.2.1 Education

It is pertinent to consider fundamental aspects of the interviewees, such as educational level. The findings reveal that, of the ten participants three had doctorates; and three had masters degrees; two had honours degree; one had bachelor's degrees; and one had matriculated. The level of education as an aspect of the participants is very important as it speaks to the quality and depth of information one is likely to gather from the participants. This indicates that both NAHECS and ILAM had employed qualified staff who are knowledgeable in the field since most of them are highly educated.



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4.2.2 Job title

From the table 4.2 above, it is observed that the two institutions almost have the same job titles (organogram), which include directors and data capturers. However, ILAM has a manager while NAHECS have four archivist (i.e., senior Archivist, two archivist and assistant archivist. The job responsibilities for the aforementioned personnel are highlighted below;

The Directors from both institutions are the accounting officers responsible for overall management, for instance, source funding, reviews, develops new strategic plans and potential programs on how to improve accessibility of archival collections. In addition, these directors provide and manage a system for the acquisition, preservation, arrangement, and accessibility of archival collections. On the other hand, the manager at ILAM oversees the routine management of electronic and paper-based information,

identifying the most appropriate records management resources as well as develop filing systems and updates the director accordingly. The four archivists at NAHECS (i.e., one senior Archivist, two Archivists and one assistant archivist) are responsible for accessioning , cataloguing, preserving, managing and marketing valuable collections of historical information as well advises and guides researchers on how to access and use archival materials. The three data capturers from ILAM are responsible for maintaining the database by entering new and update computer entry by compiling, sorting and scanning through to identify relevant information that can be accessed online by users.

4.2.3 Years of experience.

According to the findings, it was reported that most of the participant from both institutions are highly experienced due to the number of years each participant had in the field. However, it was reported that the two directors from both institutions (one had three and other one had twenty five years of experience, one manager had seventeen years, one senior archivist had twenty seven years of experience, two archivist (i.e., one had five and other one had eleven years of experience) while an assistant archivist had twenty five years of experience, two senior data capturers (i.e., one had three and other one had one year of experience) and assistant data capturer had nine years of experience.


4.3 Types of Materials Digitised at NAHECS and ILAM

One of the issues that the study sought to investigate was the type of materials that have been digitised at NAHECS and ILAM. These institutions house a number of collections from artefacts, art, liberation documents, and music records. The study established that a bulk of ANC archival collection housed at NAHECS has been digitised. Some large-scale undertakings have been tackled such as the freedom

struggles collection by the Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA). On otherhand, the ILAM has a collection of ethno-music recordings at Rhodes University. In addition, participant A from ILAM highlighted that,

“Since 2011 we have digitised a large number of archival content boxes as well as museum objects, posters, banners and among others.”

The study established that at NAHECS for example, different collections were digitised by different workflows that ran concurrently. This shows the commitment and priority given to the digitisation projects. Some of the digitised materials include bound manuscripts, fragile manuscripts, paper-based materials, photographic prints amongst many other range of collections. This was supported by participant F from NAHECS who said,



“we had many teams on the ground one to digitise bound books, fragile manuscripts, another to digitise paper-based materials, another to digitise photographic prints, and the final one to digitise slides and negatives”.

With respect to the digitisation of these materials, the study established that the process of digitisation of these archival collections was done through Multichoice sponsorship and with the help of Africa Media Online. This was revealed by participant B who highlighted that,

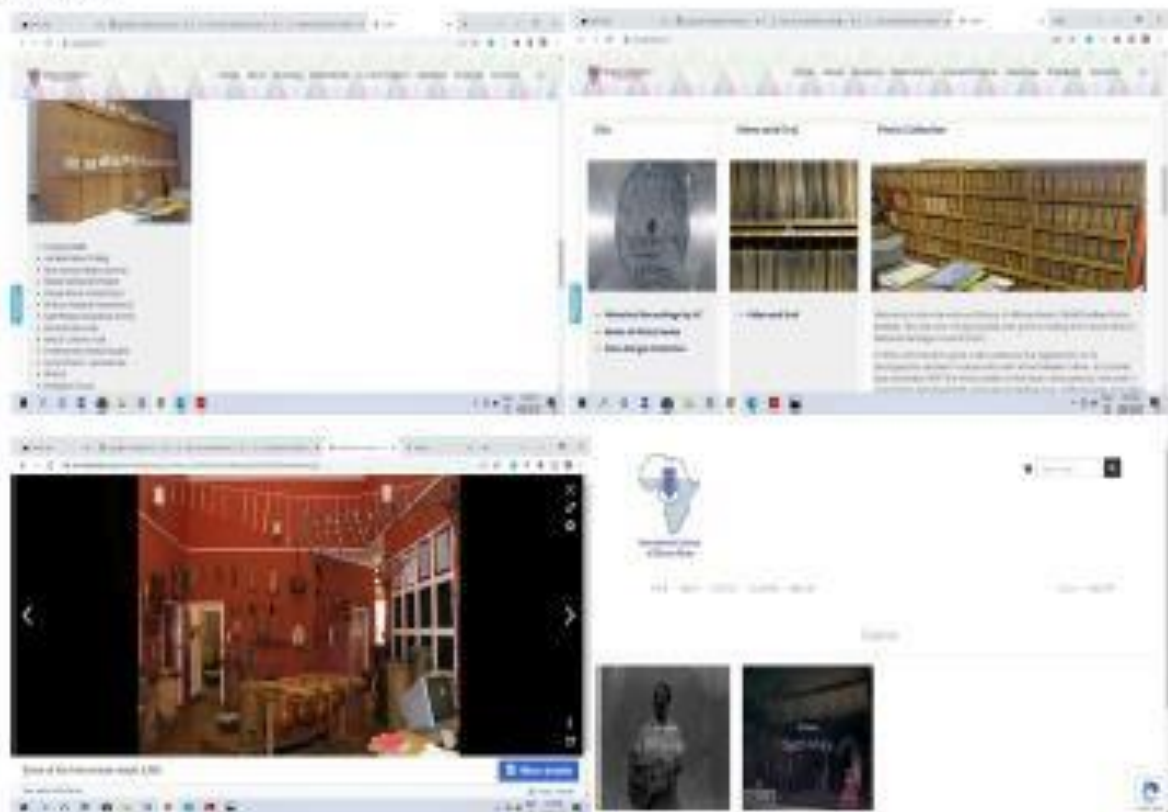
“Toward this end, the ANC approached Multichoice, and together they also engaged Africa Media Online as a South African company specialising in the digitisation of historic archives who agreed to take on the digitisation of the rare manuscripts and photographic collections and to provide the archival digital repository system that would host and provide access to the digitised archives.”

The study established that Africa Media Online introduced Multichoice to ILAM who then became responsible for the digitisation of the NAHECS audio material and Doxa Productions to take on the digitisation of the video archival collections. To this end, total of 11,000 and approximately 2 million copies of materials have been digitised and accessible online (Figure 4.3.1, below) at ILAM and NAHECS respectively. It is important to note that participant B at ILAM revealed that,

“thousands of manuscript pages and photographic images as well as audio and video content of the Africa National Congress (ANC) in archive had been digitised and placed on MEMAT archival digital repository system of Africa Media Online that had been loaded on servers and some of them were left not digitised.



A : ILAM



B: NEHACS



Figure 4.3.1. Typical online archival digitised collection at ILAM and NAHECS (screenshots)

The study established that after the digitisation process was completed, another process was initiated aimed at creating the systems that would make the archives accessible to the public. It was then that the ANC Archives website were created(www.ancarchive.org.za). The study established that as much as many archival collections have been digitised, the digitisation process itself remains an ongoing and continuous process. Participants G remarked that,

“While much has been accomplished to date, it is just the beginning of the work that needs to be done on the archive and that work continues.”

It also emerged that most of the digitised material currently do not have associated information captured that would make the digital files findable. Africa Media Online has created some solutions for this problem but ultimately this work of capturing the related information, known as metadata, will need to be carried out.

Music records is one of the digitised materials for both institutions. However, ILAM is said to be a home to the greatest repositories of African music. For easy accessibility and preservation, most of this music is now available to users online on the institution's website. Participant H said,

“this institution is devoted to the study of music and oral arts in Africa, it preserves thousands of historical recordings and also supports contemporary fieldwork.

The same can be said of NAHECS where a lot of struggle songs that were kept at NAHECS have been digitised and can now be accessed online in ANC Archives website. The study found that the types of materials managed in the digital repository are audio, footage (video and film), historical documents and images, artworks and publications or books that have been housed in the selected institutions. Most of the

music relates to the struggle songs as well as other traditional music that is peculiar to the culture and traditions of South African tribes.

4.3.1 Users of digitised materials

The study also sought to identify the users of digitised materials as well as how the archival needs of these users are determined. It emerged from NAHECS that the users of digitised materials are researchers, students, archivists, librarians, international and local people. All the participants from ILAM reported that the users of digitised materials are researchers, especially from international and local communities such as composers, musicians, and artists among others. Participant B from ILAM said that, “ in 2020 and 2021 a total of number of 18973 and 19994 online archival collections were accessed by users world widely’.

However, the archival information needs of these users are determined through the emails that the user sends to the service provider to gain access directly to material in the digital repository. In addition, both institutions have a portal where users sign in their details and needs for login purposes to access digitised materials. Prior to building a digital archive for clients, the institutions under study reported that they engaged in the client’s needs assessment to understand their different needs.

The participants from both institutions thus ILAM and NAHECS said that the archival information needed is determined is by what user wants since materials are labelled when digitising for easier identification when looking for material. It was said that the researchers know what they want and are guided by showing them more on what is new or they didn’t know about its availability.

4.5 Programmes to Facilitate Access to Digitised Materials at NAHECS and ILAM

Digitisation alone is not enough measure to ensure the access of archive materials by the public. The institutions have to embark on a deliberate move to make sure that they facilitate access to information and materials. It is on this basis that the study sought to explore the programmes and measures that are in place at both ILAM and NAHECS to facilitate access to the digitised archival collections. The following are some of the measures established by the study.

4.5.1 Social media

The study established that social media platforms represents most of the marketing tools that are being used by NAHECS and ILAM to make sure that the public is made aware of their collections and services. There are a number of advantages associated with social media. For instance, social media is used by many people and it becomes easier to reach a bigger audience. Participant E said,

“social media facilitates two-way communication between institutions and users, giving users an opportunity to interact with content and representing an avenue that promotes audience engagement with collections”.

Moreover, the study found out that using social media helps in providing users with an additional point of contact with the organization. Users and the organisations have the chance to engage in conversations on social media that can help to answer the questions that users might have as well as providing additional information about the digitised collections. In essence, this can help to stimulate interest among users. This is reflected in the following statement that was raised by participant J,

“Sharing content through social media allows cultural institutions to expand current audiences of user groups, in addition to attracting entirely new groups of users.”

Participant H added that,

“these institutions curate virtual exhibitions and collections by publishing images, captions, and stories through social media. This provides online public access to collection materials, as well as opportunities for user engagement with the institution”.

However, as much as social media is important in providing users with an additional point of contact with the organization, it emerged that some of the social media platforms of these centres are not as active as one would have anticipated them to be.

It is for this reason that participant F highlighted that,

“Both NAHECS and ILAM must actively maintain a social media presence providing institutions with a platform for communicating with audience as an authority on issues that emerge in relation to collection materials and the cultural sector.”

4.5.1.1 Facebook

The study established that Facebook was one of the social media platforms being used by both NAHECS and ILAM. Some of the digitised materials are posted on Facebook including events and other programs that might be hosted by these institutions. Although these NAHECS and ILAM have facebook pages of their own, they rely much on facebook pages of their host institutions that is university of Fort Hare and Rhodes University respectively. Participant D said,

“the good thing is that collections like video and audios that can be accessed and used directly online. Beyond that, Facebook allows our people to interact with images of some of the archival collections in our possession, which can help to stimulate an interest to visit our centre”.

ILAM, for example was found to have a Facebook page that has lot of their collections. And these has stimulated interest among users about their music collections and events. This is evidenced by the comments that people make on Facebook in response to their post. However, the study found that the Facebook pages of both ILAM and NAHECS have been dormant in recent times despite the impact that these can make in facilitating access to digitised materials.

4.5.2 Scholarly conferences and publications

The study established that one of the ways that is being used by the selected institutions in making sure that their archival collections are accessed is by means of conferences and scholarly publications. This is said to be based on the fact that some digital collections have a particular topical focus of interest to certain groups of researchers and scholars. Under these circumstances, the best way to reach such groups is through their conferences and journals. In this regard, participant B highlighted that,

“As with making faculty partnerships, it’s always a good idea to try to engage scholars and researchers in development, whenever possible. Seek their input about collection development, about what they think we do to what we have in our collection that we haven’t digitised what they think we should do.”

The interviews revealed that this is not necessarily an opportunity to take advantage of their expertise but to give them a sense of ownership of the collection, which will

make it more likely to continue to use the collection in research and sharing it with their colleagues.

4.5.3 Seeking partnerships with teaching faculties

The findings indicated that, it is now more important to justify the value of digitisation by framing digitisation work in terms of institutional mission and goals. However, it is true that preservation of archival collections is reason enough to justify digitisation. To this end, digitisation is done so to support teaching and research. Against this backdrop, it emerged that one of the ways to make this digitised material available to the target audience is by means of seeking partnerships with faculties. In line with this, one participant I said,

“What happens is that despite our best efforts, faculties and staff may not be aware of our digital collections. So, we reach out to relevant departments and volunteer to give a brief presentation during their meetings.”



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What emerged from the interviews is that, it is always important to engage with the related faculties and departments always so that active partnerships can be forged. It is also a way to make sure that students and researchers who are usually the immediate users of some of the archival collections are given knowledge of what is available at NAHECS and ILAM.

4.6 Challenges Faced in Providing Access to Digitised Materials in NAHECS and ILAM

The study established that there are a number of challenges that are affecting access to digitised archival collection in the two selected institutions. These challenges are discussed in detail in this section. These challenges may hamper the full benefits of

digitisation being realised. Thus, they must be addressed so that the digitalised archival collections can be easily accessed.

4.6.1 Low internet connectivity

The study established that low internet connectivity affects the way people access digitised materials online. In many rural and urban communities alike, bandwidth is generally low as it is in the rest of the developing world. This affects the rate of data transfer and access speed for digital archival material. The participants acknowledged the fact that in South Africa, broadband capacity has improved systematically in recent times. However, the effect has not been felt by everyone in the country. Thus, it emerged that due to poor internet connectivity especially in rural areas some people who should be benefiting from the digitisation of archival collections are not.

Participant H from ILAM indicated that,



“E-resources require high bandwidth to be accessed effectively and because of the low connection speed witnessed in most libraries, users tend to grow impatient as it takes a long time to download information.”

The issue of poor internet connectivity also affects users who want to download large files online. Commenting on this issue another participant C said,

“Firstly, video/footage files are difficult to grant access to, particularly when they are not simply a small clip of a couple of minutes but a large video of an hour or so. In addition, the files are so large, they often cannot be delivered via the internet and need to be outputted in the Africa Media Online office and then delivered on a flash disk via courier.”

This was said to be greatly compromising access to digitised archival collections in NAHECS and ILAM. Therefore, the study established that without installing high

bandwidth fibre optic cable system, institutions like NAHECS and ILAM will continue to operate below the necessary broadband threshold for effective service delivery.

4.6.2 Low levels of ICT literacy/e-resource use among users

The study established that there are a few people outside the host institutions of NAHECS and ILAM who utilize online archival material. This low usage was attributed to the low levels of literacy relating to ICT, which could be as a result of the rural geographical location of these two institutions. Participant B from ILAM further remarked that,

“Whereas full exploitation of digital resources and services call for detailed knowledge of ICT tools and information searching skills, most of our internal and external customers only have basic ICT literacy skills that scarcely extend beyond Microsoft Office applications.”

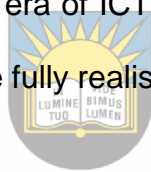
Moreover, the challenge might arise in terms of reading and grasping the instructions and the terms and conditions of usage. The full utilization of NAHECS and ILAM's digitised archival collections entails massive investments staff development and information awareness campaigns and workshops targeting potential users of digitised archival information housed in institutions under study. However, the institutions that houses NAHECS and ILAM are both facing glaring challenges that relates to the investments in staff development initiatives that aim to improve their ICT literacy. This will help these institutions to be ready for digital service delivery environment as well as enable the staff members of these institutions to be able to educate their clientele base in e-resource usage.

4.6.3 Frequent power cuts

The study established that one of the challenges that are affecting access to digitised archival material is the issue of power cuts. South Africa is at a time when power cuts are becoming the order of the day. Load-shedding and unreliable power supplies have affected many business operations in the country. Power cuts is coupled with the high tariffs hence the participant D from ILAM reported that,

“.... such tariffs make power very expensive and information technologies require power for them to function, and therefore with the frequent power cuts, e-dependent users remain frustrated”.

Therefore, as much as the digitisation of NAHECS and ILAM archival collections can be welcomed as a noble cause in era of ICT, with the continued power cuts, the full benefits of e-resources may not be fully realised.



4.6.4 Lack of funding

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The study revealed that one of the challenges that affect access to digitised archival collections is the issue of funding. For instance, the digitisation of NAHECS started almost ten years ago, and the recurring challenge has been the lack of funds. The study established that there were inadequate funds to purchase the needed digitisation equipment. Participant F from NAHECS said that,

“... even the only equipment we have at our disposal needs to be continuously updated and repaired when necessary, but obviously it goes back to the issue of the availability of funding.”

More so, funding was said to be limited in terms of maintaining information security in a digital environment. The electronic information is prone to many threats such as

viruses, hackers and masquerades, among others. Thus, to guard against such demand, extra investments in ICT technology and ICT personnel is necessary hence funding is needed to ensure that all the staff are acquainted developments of the digitisation era of online access. Commenting on the issue of funding, another participant added the following:

“We cannot afford to train staff at the moment and they need to be trained in order for them to update their skills and be ready for the new developments that we have embarked on”.

It was discovered that most of the digitisation projects usually use donor funds, earmarked for a specific purpose. For instance, the digitalisation at NAHECS was sponsored by Multichoice. Consequently, many other collections without sponsorship are left not digitised due to budget constraints at these institutions.

The study established that funding is needed to continue training staff members so that they acquire some skills that can help them to utilize the digitised equipment and just to enhance how they operate in a digitised environment. Moreover, funding affects how they can market their services to clients and potential users of their digitised archival collections.

4.6.5 Lack of skilled personnel

The study found that another challenge affecting both NAHECS and ILAM was the shortage of ICT personnel. By its very nature, the digitisation process requires the use of information technology equipment, for example computers, servers, scanners, databank, etc, which in essence require certain levels of expertise, computer literacy and experts in ICT. The study established that people working in these centres are not

trained on how to use or access digitised material that are available online or websites. It also emerged that as much as there is competent personnel in these institutions, they are not enough to fully service their clientele base.

It also emerged that some of the staff employed in these institutions have been trained in Archives and Records Management, but with limited knowledge of computer systems and processes that digitisation of archival collections might require. Some of the complex computer processes involved in the management of the digitised collections are said to be handled by the ICT staff of host institutions, which are as well understaffed.

4.6.6 Limited support from management

The findings of this study reveal that management itself is a constraint to the full digitisation of the archival collections. This was made clear in the process of interactions with the participants. Some of the issues that were cited relating to management are

“lack of proper planning and determination to digitise the collection due to lack of understanding of the real concept of digitisation.”

At NAHECS for example, a lot of collections are not digitised which is likely to be the most under-reported category of collections. Although in their databases, the standards are reasonably well managed, with the pioneering teams being sensitive to domain-specific requirements hence there is a need for management to put in effort in order for all documents to be digitised and accessed online. However, participant G at NAHECS reported that there are plans in place to ensure that all the materials are digitised.

The management of these institutions claimed that they have plans to fully digitise the existing collections. However, the study found out that the management at these institutions lack the will and a streamlined approach, which affects the digitisation project. In relation to this, participant A pointed out that,

“as much as funding is the major problem, there is a belief that management itself is also a problem, because funds are made available for other projects but not when it comes to digitisation projects, as they claim there are no funds. If management can try to take the issues of digitisation more seriously, it will ensure that these projects are funded.”

It also emerged that some government officials do not fully understand the importance of NAHECS and ILAM and the collections that these institutions hold and as such funds are not readily made available for the institutions to facilitate projects such as the digitisation of the archival collections.



4.6.7 Lack of awareness of the digitisation policy

By the time the interviews for this study were taking place, there were staff members at both NAHECS and ILAM who were not aware of the digitisation policies guiding the whole digitisation processes and systems. This is a serious challenge because if the staff members are not conversant with their own digitisation policies, then compliance will be achieved. In addition, they will not meet the needs and interests of the clients and users of the digitised archival collections without infringing on issues of copyrights and information security. To this end, participant G remarked that,

“...it is therefore difficult on the part of these staff members to be fully aware of the type and nature of records that must be selected for digitisation and the order in which they will be selected.”

The management of these institutions highlighted that they are in the process to ensure that all their staff members become aware of the policies in place and familiarise with them so that they can best advance the mission and vision of the institutions under study.

4.6.8 Information security

One of the major challenges linked to the issue of access to digitised materials is information security. Ravi and Kumar (2004) described information security as the means and method of protecting data from unauthorized access, theft, alteration or deletion, and ensuring ability to access data whenever required. It requires additional technological specialism and brings more responsibilities for archivists. Hence, the study found that online access poses a threat for the future of the reference archivist because of using online access, which open for everyone. The study established that maintaining information security in a digital environment is one of the toughest challenges facing both NAHECS and ILAM. The main issues that concerns the institutions under study pertains to unauthorised access to these archival collections. Participant J argued that,

‘.. in an electronic environment, information is prone to many threats such as viruses, hackers and masquerades, among others.”

This a serious challenge considering the fact that average employees of NAHECS and ILAM are less empowered to confront these growing challenges, hence affecting access to digitised archival material.

4.6.9 Poor Information Technology infrastructure

The study established that lack of proper ICT infrastructure affects the process and the project of digitisation. Participant C highlighted that,

“Access to digital repositories and their collections is dependent upon a stable information technology infrastructure. Hence, many of those who could most benefit from digitised archival collections are not able to do so due to poor ICT infrastructure”.

The issue of ICT infrastructure is a serious concern especially in rural and urban areas alike. Moreover, institutions such as University of Fort Hare that houses NAHECS, are considered historically disadvantaged, and are still lagging behind in terms of the advancement of ICT infrastructure despite committed efforts at improving ICT standards. All these ICT issues compromise access to digitised archival collections.

4.6.10 Copyright management

One of the challenges that has been affecting the digitisation of archival collections including access thereof, has been the issue of copyright management. Copyright was identified by many participants as the most frustrating hindrance to digital repository development. The vision for digitisation projects is to create easier access to a wide variety of materials which is often in conflict with the duties of archives entrusted with care and management. This may present privacy rights or other security issues related to access. Participant H argued that,

“digital age is posing a big challenge for libraries and archives, and the challenge is to protect intellectual property rights in a networked world.”

The other issue about copyrights include copying, and printing of copyrighted material without permission, and the use of library networks to access such information. All

these issues can have serious repercussions to the digitisation of archival materials and access thereof. In line with this finding, a participant reported that,

“in the digital age, it has become difficult to protect intellectual property rights, because of the lack of understanding among users that copying of a stream of bits without necessarily reducing the availability of that stream to other users can potentially be considered as a breach of intellectual property rights.”

The participants reported that the use of computers has enabled organizations to create database that handles huge amounts of data online, which have made easier access of information at anytime and anywhere. This has raised concerns that if the information is not properly managed, it may be available too easily, hence resulting in lack of protection for the citizen's rights and leaving the live at risk.

It was established that efforts to formulate digital archives will be delayed or frustrated in the absence of a common, responsible framework of rights, permissions, and restrictions that acknowledges the mutual needs of rights-holders and users of digitised archival materials. In support of this finding participant F said that,

“staff need to understand the copyright status of each document so they can inform people about how the digital information can be used.”

The study established that it is important to develop common grounds for enforcing the law. More so, the participants argued that it is important to educate the users of digitised archival materials and information professionals about the significance of moral and ethical behaviour.

4.6.11 Preservation

The study established preservation was one of the challenges towards access to the digitised archival collections. The study revealed that digitised materials are very

fragile and as such their availability is dependent on technologies that are fast changing. Hence for the fear of technological obsolescence and other factors, both NAHECS and ILAM have to maintain records in both paper and digital formats.

The interview from the participants indicated that hard drives and servers have the possibility of crashing or burning down or malfunctioning, which may be hard to recover. Therefore, archivists need to constantly backup and if archivists are paranoid that the backup would disappear then one should backup the initial backup. This is said to be tantamount to double work. More so, technical obsolescence in the digital age is synonymous with the deterioration of paper in the paper age. Participant D argued that,

“In the pre-digital era, archives had to worry about climate control and the deacidification of books, but the preservation of digital information will mean constantly coming up with new technical solutions.”

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4.6.12 Technological ripples and obsolescence

From the interviews, it was revealed that technological standards keep on changing from time-to-time. As a result, forward migration must be a constant consideration in the storage of archival materials and collections. Migration was said to be the process of transferring unstable digital objects to other more stable formats, programming languages or operating systems. Migration was said to be important as it allows one to retrieve and to display digital objects that are facing the threat of being extinct.

However, migration is not flawless. In essence, when transferring digital files, “the new platform may not be able to capture the full integrity of the original object”, remarked participant E. In addition, participant I stated that,

“.. there are countless resources.... that are essentially useless because the technology required to access the source is obsolete and in addition to obsolescence, there are rising costs that result from continually replacing the older technologies.”

Therefore, technological ripples and obsolescence greatly affects access to digitised archival collections.

4.6.13 Cost of data

The study established that accessing digitised material is expensive especially for some users. To access material online, one has to buy data in order to access the information which is costly depending on the type of file that user want. Notably, the rate of acceptance to digitisation or new technology is slow in Africa compared to European countries. Participant E argued that,

“Data is very expensive these days and the cost of accessing huge files becomes very expensive as they require a lot of data. This is a challenge especially for users in rural areas and unemployed people.”

The increasing cost of subscription to electronic databases is expensive which makes it hard for users to access all the information due to affordability of electronic database.

4.7 Chapter summary

The chapter focused on the presentation of the findings. Themes on the type of archival collections, the users of such collections, the benefits of digitisation of archival collections and the challenges have been presented. The next chapter focuses on further analysis, interpretation and discussion of research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents discussion of findings that were presented in the previous chapter. Discussing the findings is an essential research activity that enables both the researcher and the reader(s) to understand the issue(s) that were under spotlight in the research (Creswell, 2014). In so doing, the study makes use of existing literature regarding access to digitised archival collection drawing meanings and interconnections between the findings and literature.

The aim of the study was to investigate access to digitised archival collection in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. To achieve this aim three research objectives were formulated, and the discussion of findings is in line with these objectives. The discussion focuses on the following research themes:

- the types of digitised archival collections
- programmatic interventions that are in place to facilitate access to digitised collections.
- Challenges faced by the institutions understudy in ensuring access to their digitised collections.

5.2 Types of Digitised Archival Collections

The study established that NAHECS and ILAM house a number of collections such as artefacts, art, liberation documents, and music among others. The majority of these archival collections have been digitised. The study revealed that a number of archives especially Africa National congress (ANC) archival collections have been digitised especially at NAHECS. In relation to the ILAM, a collection of ethno-music recordings was found to have been digitised. Accordingly, ILAM is one of the greatest repositories

of African music. The same can be said of NAHECS where a lot of struggle songs that were kept at NAHECS has been digitised and can now be accessed online at ANC archives public website. The study found that the types of materials managed in the digital repository are from audio, footage (video and film), documents and images, artwork and publications or books that have been housed in the selected institutions.

From the study it can be deduced that most of the material was digitised as some of these old materials have since deteriorated as a result of both environmental and biological dangers and become fragile, brittle and discoloured. According to Namande (2012), this situation highlights the need for long-term availability of such resources. Moreover, what is important about the archival collections at NAHECS and ILAM is that they preserve the archives relating to the anti- apartheid struggle in South Africa and they reflect the histories of the African National Congress (ANC), the Pan-African Congress (PAC) and the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) (Maaba 2013). In essence the digitisation of these archives forms part of many attempts to preserve the cultural heritage, whether in the form of paper documents, audio-visual or physical artefacts.

Digitisation of archival collections has made it easier for scholars and artists to access archival materials such as liberation and musical collections at NAHECS and ILAM respectively. In fact, digitisation has allowed for multiple asynchronous usages, meaning that access to large parts of an archival resource is now more feasible. This resonates with Mapulanga (2013) observation that many people are now benefiting from existing digital information services owing to the digital revolution at NAHECS and ILAM. This means even students, the youth in general and those coming from poor backgrounds can now be able to access the collections easily although there are still some challenges such as cost of data and low internet connectivity. This resonates

with the sentiments raised by Elson (2008) that the digitisation of materials of different nature into electronic format has afforded a broader and more globalised audience to access information.

In essence, the digitisation of archival collections has improved accessibility to these collections as they are now available online. This is also in line with Dewah and Feni-Fete (2014) who stated that the digitisation of South Africa's arts, culture and heritage was done to ensure access to South African materials of high socio-political interest to the broader audience and for sustained periods of time.

Linked to accessibility is the issue of preservation, which is actually one of the problems addressed by the digitisation of archival collections at the institutions under study. To this end, the collections in NAHECS and ILAM have been made accessible for future generations in their digitised format. It is also important to note that having digitised collections will and is becoming important for future generations in this globalised world. Thus, as people are moving further and further away from their traditions and homelands, digitisation of institutions like NAHECS and ILAM has provided access and connectedness of people in the diaspora of the descendent communities and most importantly, their culture and heritage. For instance, between 2020 and 2021 (i.e., 18973 and 19994 respectively) ILAM recorded an increment of 1021 online visitors.

Access to ILAM archival collections can thus be seen as a platform for oral and visual mediums and allows for the sharing of stories and showing the linkages between material culture, stories, and traditional practices (Masakazi, 2009). Thus, access to digitised collections gives the communities the power to place their material culture

into the context of their everyday lives, ceremonies, memories and beliefs to show how people can relate to it (Dewah and Feni-Fete, 2014).

From the study, it is possible to deduce that digitisations not an end in itself. To ensure improved access, it is important that some basic conditions be fulfilled (Hughes, 2004). It is not very cheap to make digital information easily available, easy to retrieve, and easy to understand, considering the digital divide in South Africa. For this reason, it is important that there should be programmes and policies that should be in place to facilitate this access.

5.3 Programmatic Interventions and Access to Digitised Collections

The study established that the institutions under study embarked on a number of programmes in an effort to facilitate access to their products and services. Hence, it is important to analyse and interpret what these programmes mean in terms of access to digitised collections (Frieslaar, 2015). The findings of the study pointed out that represent most of the marketing tools that are being used by NAHECS and ILAM to make sure that the public is made aware of the collections available online. These programmatic interventions at NAHECS and ILAM are welcome as necessary interventions that institutions holding archives must do to advertise their archives and other services they offer. This is very important for users to locate the archival institution that holds material they want. Thus, the provision of information about institution and the archives it holds is key (ICA, 2012).

However, the programs and methods that have been adopted so far appear not to be rooted in the lived realities of the majority of the public. However, these have not been very successful in terms of ensuring improved access (Frieslaar, 2015). Most of the people especially the youths and those in black Townships do not afford data for

internet connectivity and the capacity to attend the academic conferences. Hence, the programmatic interventions adopted by NAHECS and ILAM seems to have an elitist orientation which leaves the majority of the potential users outside the reach of these programmes.

It is important to note that most of their programmes are informed by a policy framework. However, not all employees in these two institutions are in aware of these policies which could affect their operationalization especially in light of access to digitised collections. Ngulube, Mathipa and Gumbo (2015) had made it clear that institutions that give the public access to any part of their archives, should publish an access policy and make it known to the public. The fact that there was lack of awareness of such a policy, it implies that much still needs to be done at the policy level to ensure the success of the programmes that are aimed to facilitate access to online archival collections.



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As much as the programmes that have been adopted by NAHECS and ILAM are noble in terms of facilitating access to online collections, their effectiveness is hampered by a lack of a pro-active approach to access. Participants from both institutions acknowledged their professional responsibility to promote access to and communicate about their archival collections. To this end, there is need for these institutions to use various platforms such as internet and web-based publications, printed materials (journals), public programs (i.e., seminars) commercial media, and educational and outreach activities in a proactive manner in line with International Council on Archives (2012). However, such efforts must at all times be informed by the lived experiences of the potential users of archival collections.

To this end, a participatory approach might be noble in terms of informing the design of these programmes. Participation is very important to ensure that such technological advancements and investments have the buy-in of the consumers and the relevant stakeholders from the onset. A participatory approach or a people-centred approach will also imply that these identifiable factors that compromise accessibility can be minimised.

From the findings, it can be deduced that these institutions have not embarked on a full-fledged campaign to market their online collections. Obviously, one of the issues raised pertains to the issue of funding. This exposes how archival institutions are underfunded to an extent that they struggle to balance operational costs of sustaining digitisation and the marketing aspect that facilitate access. Hughes (2004) had highlighted the importance of institutional issues such as grants and funding in the process of digitisation.



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It is a principle that institutions holding archives ensure that operational constraints do not prevent access to archives. However, in reality operational costs can impact or constrain issues of access as noted from the findings of this study. Access itself is a broad and complex phenomenon that involves marketing, awareness raising amongst other things (Millar, 2017). This all requires funding. Thus, stakeholders must put their hands together to ensure that the digitisation process is well funded from creation to access. This implies the coordinated efforts from the governments, civil society organizations and academics. This is important in terms of ensuring the equal right to access archival records and the equal right to benefit from the archives (International Council on Archives, 2012; Millar, 2017).

One of the major issues that must be noted in relation to the programmatic interventions is that social media platforms represents most of the marketing tools that are being used by NAHECS and ILAM to make sure that the public is aware of the collections and services that have been digitised. However, considering the digital divide, the effectiveness of these kind of interventions are compromised. Hence, it is important for these institutions to consider this digital divide as well as the social and economic context of their consumers in determining the form or type of programmes to facilitate access.

In summing up, the challenges and weaknesses of the programmatic interventions implies that there is need to focus on bridging programmes, which are more dynamic in order to make any difference in narrowing the digital divide. Mossberger et al (2003) made the observation that these programmes must the patterns of unequal access to information technology based on income, race, ethnicity, gender, age and geographical challenges.



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5.4 Access Challenges and Digitised Archival Collections

The core of this study pertains to access to digitised online collections. The study unearthed many challenges that hinders this access. Therefore, it is important to locate these challenges in terms of the digital divide that has presented an ongoing challenge for the archival institutions under study and the rest of the developing world. The digitisation of the archival collections by NAHECS and ILAM focuses on access, thus consumers without an online presence can easily be left behind without anyone paying enough attention to those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder.

By nature, for digitisation to have tangible benefits on the consumers of archival collections, there is need to have a look at the factors that influence access to digital

services beyond a narrow focus on technological aspects of the process. These factors include places where people who are consumers of the products live, how much money they have, and how educated they are in terms of digital literacy. This is very important to note because digital illiteracy is of serious concern as many people, even those who live in urban and affluent areas, are digitally illiterate to be in a position to exploit the dividends offered by the digital revolution (Pickover, 2009). This can often be a result of their age or a reluctance to embrace change.

Whatever the reasons, bridging the digital divide has clear advantages in terms of improving access to online collections.

It is also clear from the findings of the study that the digital divide exists, but the real question is how to overcome these barriers. Both NAHECS and ILAM cannot afford to ignore many of their customers who are 'off the grid'. Thus, as these archival institutions embark on the digitisation of their collections, the main task at hand is how to bridge the gap between "those who can use technology and those who do not."

Pickover (2009) had brought attention to the fact that efforts to address the digital divide must move from narrow focus on technical issues and engages the larger questions which frame digitisation projects in terms of national policies and processes, cultural and political identities as well as geographical, social and economic realities, which are important factors influencing access issues.

The findings of the study reveal that as much as there is need for programmes to make people aware of the digitised collections, equally there is need to focus on bringing more people online. This is important in opening up opportunities for individuals and businesses so they can be in a position to exploit the benefits of digitisation. The onus of this does not rest solely on the archival institutions in question, government should

also be on board as the main actor in bringing ICTs to the people as part of fourth industrial revolution movement.

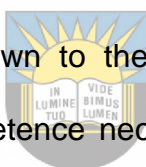
This study does not in any way downplay the efforts that have been made in the adoption and distribution of digital tools and media in the country. However, study based on the findings acknowledges the challenges in terms of digitisation and digital media development in South Africa as in many African countries, which have affected access to digitised collections. For instance, it is true that on the issues of access to digitised collections and affordability remains a challenge in many rural areas and Townships in South Africa. The findings of the study are a clear indication that not many people, institutions and communities have benefited from the dividends of digitisation as the rural poor are becoming the victims of the digital divide.

The digital divide prevents societies from harnessing the full benefits of digitisation. This is a wakeup call for strong leadership at the national and local levels, to ensure more coordinated efforts among government departments, local authorities and actors on the ground to lessen the gap.

Challenges such as the lack of access to network connections, to devices and to software and applications are part of the broader challenge of the digital divide. Chinyamu (2007) pointed out that in emerging economies, especially in rural or remote areas, more than four billion people still remain unconnected to the internet. In addition, there are gaps in high-speed internet access that have important effects on media access such as streaming video. Therefore, bridging the digital divide requires providing adequate infrastructure and services both in the poorest countries and poorest areas. Even in areas where internet infrastructure is available the challenge is not about availability; instead, it is about affordability, due to the higher costs of

acquiring necessary devices and services. Therefore, bridging the digital divide requires making the internet accessible for the poorest people.

More importantly, the lack of digital skills that was unearthed by this study implies that internet users in poor communities cannot create added value even when they have access to the internet, ICT devices and applications. Cullen (2001) points out that although conditions to ensure physical access to the internet are essential, they are not sufficient alone to achieve the 'full benefits' of digital technology. The essential lesson that can be drawn from this challenge is that, without proper education and skill training, the potential benefits of digital technology cannot be fully realised. Therefore, digital literacy is key to enable citizens to use the internet and foster a deeper integration of digital technologies into their broader access to online collections. Stronger attention should be drawn to the necessary conditions to develop the knowledge and the shared competence necessary to enable the general public to access the digitised collections.



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Furthermore, the findings of this study especially the challenges reveal important policy gaps and how they impact on the overall success of the digitisation program to ensure improved access. Obviously, these gaps have serious implications on the policy directions of both NAHECS and ILAM in moving forward. Barata (2004) gives an interesting case study in the United Kingdom (UK), of Archives in the Digital Age which can be consolidated and used within the context of these institutions under study. In the case study, she mentions that lack of planning can destroy the chances of having a successful electronic record or a digital archive. What this imply is that for NAHECS and ILAM to record improved accessibility of their products by the wider community, it must have a good policy framework.

From the findings of the study, it is clear that there was no policy clarity that pertains to the entire digitisation process, from creation to access. According to Chinyamu (2007), policy on digitisation and institutional repositories has to be clearly dawn and spelt out. The unavailability of the policies is not only a case for these institutions under study, but a reality for the majority of the African institutions involved in digitisation and building of institutional repositories.

Lack of such policies has affected the level of commitment in terms of institutional financing, staff capacity building, skilled man power, equipment and the general preservation issues (Gbaje and Zakari, 2013).

From the findings, it is clear that significant upgrades have been made to digitise archival collections. However, considering the digital divide between the institutions that house both NAHECS and ILAM and their communities, it seems there were not enough efforts that have been made to ensure that what the institutions are offering are best accessed by the end users. Thus, moving forward it is important to be in a position to balance what an archive hopes to achieve and the reality of the situation in which it operates in. According to Barata (2004), without a clear policy that situates digitisation processes within the socio-economic context of the intended consumers, the true benefits of digitisation, especially access would not be realised.

According to Pickover (2009) there is need for serious engagement among various partnerships on digitisation agenda. This still speaks to NAHECS and ILAM as the collaborations were found to be weak and at times non-existent. Thus, moving forward, what is important is stakeholder consultations and collaborations to ensure that all the barriers that hinder the public to access online collections are addressed. Currently, as established by this study, there is no clear stakeholder consultation, and alignment

of policies and programmes, at local, regional or national level. Thus, it is important for these stakeholders to come together to develop good and stable digitisation policies.

From the study, it can also be deduced that digitisation policies should not have a narrow focus on just converting analogue material to digital, but also focus on the broader digitisation process. To this end, it is vital for the policy-makers to make a progressive shift towards a new model that includes the purpose of the digitisation projects anchored on the issues of accessibility to the digitised works of an archive. This is important in terms of addressing the issues raised by Pickover (2009) that many developing countries are facing various challenges stemming from the demand of access to digitised resources. Against this background, it is plausible to conclude that access is one of the unresolved questions of digitisation revolution. However, the absence and lack of awareness on policy frameworks to guide local and national institutions in the process of digitisation leaves gaps in how the process should be handled and conducted, thereby affecting and compromising accessibility of digitised collections.

The major question one can ask based on the findings of this study is, how stakeholders should or the archival institutions construct a policy that incorporates every voice of the digitisation process. Sabbagh, Friedrich, El-Darwiche, Singh and Ganediwalla (2012) is of the view that, as much as it is important to really put emphasis on the issues around access, it is equally important to look at the usage of technology in the digitisation process so that no one is left behind in this technological revolution.

It should also be noted that one of the issues that has been at the centre of the access is the issue of copyrights and ownership. From the findings of this study, one could

deduce that there are issues of ethical significance (i.e., copyright and privacy) that must be addressed before embarking on the digitisation of heritage materials. This is part of an acceptable global foundation (Britz and Lor, 2004), which would provide a guideline on how to control the process of digitisation in line with the respect of human rights especially information rights. The core principle must be to respect the freedom and property of people and recognizing equality for all.

Policy-makers need to focus on five important imperatives, which are pivotal for countries. The first imperative is to elevate digitisation on the national agenda. This entails the national policy and governments providing the platform for progressive developed to occur (Sabbagh et al, 2012). The second imperative is to evolve sector governance. This entails clarity on ownership and digitisation, and to have segregated regulatory and policy roles (Sabbagh et al, 2012).

The third imperative is to adopt an ecosystem philosophy that addresses the convergence of technologies, media and communications to have a strategy that addresses all the local ecosystems such as the general and descendent community voices (Sabbagh et al, 2012). The fourth imperative is to enable sustainable competition that enables both innovation, and adoption stimulates to technology (Sabbagh et al, 2012). The final imperative is to stimulate demand. There is need for a solid investment in digitisation and to ensure the public has access through stable internet services (Sabbagh et al, 2012).

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an analysis and interpretations of the findings of the study. Insights were provided on digitisation at NAHECS and ILAM and what it means to access the digitised collections. Part of the interpretations made alluded to the fact

that indeed digitisation is a progressive approach in terms of easing accessibility of archival collections. This chapter focused on the programmatic interventions that have been made by the institutions under study to ensure improved access. The challenges posed by the digital divide were also highlighted and discussed. An emphasis of the implications for lack of institutional policy on digitisation was made. The next chapter provides a summary of the research, conclusions, and recommendations.



CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on making summary, conclusions, and recommendations based on the findings. Therefore, the chapter shows how the aim, and objectives of the study were achieved. This study was guided by the following research questions:

- What types of material are digitised in NAHECS and ILAM?
- Who are the users of the digitised material in NAHECS and ILAM?
- To what extent do the programmes in place facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM?
- What are the challenges faced in providing access to digitised archival collection in NAHECS and ILAM?

6.2 Summary of the Findings



In this section, the summary of the findings is presented, based on the objectives of the study.

6.2.1 To establish the types of materials digitised in NAHECS and ILAM.

The study identified that NAHECS and ILAM houses a number of collections from artefacts, art, liberation documents, and music records. NAHECS was found to be housing a number of archives especially ANC archival collections many of which have been digitised. The same can be said for the ILAM with a number of ethno-music recordings collections already digitised.

6.2.2 To determine the end users of the digitised materials in NAHECS and ILAM.

The study found that the users of digitised materials at both centres were international and local people including researchers, students, archivists, librarians, composers, musicians and artists among others.

6.2.3 To examine programmes in place to facilitate access to digitised collections in NAHECS and ILAM.

Digitisation alone is not enough in terms of having the digitised materials accessible to the public. It is on this basis that the study sought to understand the programmes and measures the institutions embarked on to facilitate access to the digitised archival collections. The study established that massive social media campaigns (i.e., through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) have been conducted as well as workshops and conferences in an attempt to improve and to increase access to digitised materials.

6.2.4 To identify challenges faced at NAHECS and ILAM in providing access to digitised materials.



The study established a number of challenges that are affecting access to digitised archival collection in the two selected institutions. These challenges include low internet connectivity, lack funding, lack of access to network connections, lack of devices, software, and applications, and lack of awareness of digitised products. In addition, digital divide remains also a challenge. In general, these challenges imply that the full benefits of digitisation cannot be realised without deliberate plan to address them from an institutional, regional, and national and globe levels.

6.3 Conclusion

This study aimed at investigating access to digitised materials in two selected institutions in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Consequently, this study

concludes that indeed there is access to digitised archival collections by a variety of users. However, there are a range of difficulties affecting users' access to digitised material at both NAHECS and ILAM. It is against this background that the following recommendations are made to ensure that digitised archival collections are more accessible to the users.

6.4 Recommendations

Based on the identified challenges on access to digitised archival collections at both NAHECS and ILAM, this study proposes a number of recommendations to ensure that full benefits of access to digitisation can be realised.

- In addressing the lack and/or poor internet infrastructure challenge, the study recommends that there should be massive investment in building internet infrastructure in order to improve accessibility to the digitised archival collections at both institutions. In addition, wide internet coverage is also needed to enable both NAHECS and ILAM digitised materials to be accessed either by rural or urban potential users. This calls for all stakeholders including the government and private sector to come into collaboration to initiate measures to enhance the coverage in far-flung areas so that people could gain uninterrupted access to these online collections.
- In order to get the full value from investment in broadband infrastructure and to increase the traffic in terms accessing these online services, communities, especially rural communities need to understand the usefulness of digital archival collections and actively use them. This calls for extensive investment in raising awareness of the potential benefits and most importantly the significance of the archival collections in both NAHECS and ILAM.

- The study also recommends the need for massive investment in digital skills and literacy programmes to improve access and usability of the digitised collections. Consequently, there would be an increase in the level of knowledge and competence in operating digital tools. This would further increase awareness on security, privacy, and usage requirements as stipulated in both institutions user access protocols.
- The study recommends that lower data rates should target rural areas where accessibility, and generally low level of income prove difficult in online services. This will also enable people to access social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram where these institutions market their products.
- The study also recommends that due to digitisation being an expensive endeavour, both NAHECS and ILAM should form partnerships with different stakeholders to ensure there is improved access to their online services. For example, these institutions need to engage and lobby the government and private sector such as Multichoice for digitisation projects. Further, the Liberation Movements whose collections have been digitised can raise funds and awareness about their collections. Proactively, the governments and other stakeholders must design and implement effective ICT system to reduce the digital gap.
- The study recommends development and enhancement of human resources. There is need for more staff in both institutions to ensure management of electronic and analogue collections. This is very important because these organizations were found to be lacking skilled staff to manage and maintain

electronic archival processes. Efforts should also be made to upgrade the skillset of those who are currently employed in these institutions.

- The study recommends more funding to cater for budgets towards digitisation of archival collections. This is because the budget allocations for both institutions were found to be inadequate. This has severe implications on operational such as infrastructure, as well as renovations, maintenance, equipment for archives and records services and ultimate quality of service provided. Therefore, there is urgent need for increased funding to enable these institutions to operate optimally. In addition, both institutions should embark on aggressive funding proposal writing and submission to generate additional funds for different digitisation projects.
- The study recommends for stakeholders' good will. In order to address most of the challenges that affects access to online collections including investment in infrastructure and funding, good will is very important. For instance, the success of digitisation policy is anchored on the good will of stakeholders.
- The study recommends that there is a need for monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to be established at these institutions to ensure whether the digitisation programme is reaping the intended benefits or not. This is because monitoring and evaluation is important in ensuring high levels of accountability in budgeting, planning, or efficiency of programs. Monitoring and evaluation, enhances transparency and accountability, which ultimately can lead to addressing access challenges identified in this study.
- The study recommends that there should be other forms of power supply on standby such as solar and generator especially at a time when South Africa is experiencing a challenge of power cuts. Furthermore, load-shedding or

unreliable power supplies could affect computers, which may lead to loss of some archival collections or inaccessibility online.

- On further research, the study recommends new studies on digital divide and its implications on the uptake of digital services with regard access. The other area of interest is the efficacy of policy framework in ensuring the success of the digitisation agenda on access.



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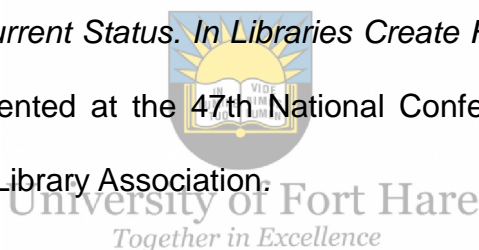
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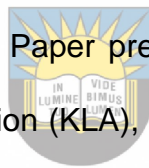
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Appendices

Appendix 1: Informed Consent Letter

Dear Participant,

My name is Kakumba Barbra, a postgraduate student in the Department of Library and Information Science at the University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus. I am conducting a research study in the fulfilment of a Master's degree. My study title is Access to digitised archival collections at National Heritage and Cultural Studies Centre (NAHECS) and International Library of African Music (ILAM) in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa.



I hereby request your participation in this study by answering the listed interview questions. Please be aware that your participation is voluntary, and that you can withdraw at any stage of the interview. Confidentiality will be observed at all times as a result your name will not be recorded.

Kind regards



Kakumba Barbra

Email address: 201313018@ufh.ac.za

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Section A: Demographic Background

1.1 What is your highest qualification?

.....

1.2 Job title

.....

1.3 Years of experience in the position

.....

1.4 Please briefly indicate your job responsibilities.

.....

.....

.....



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Section B: Types of Digitised Materials

2. Do you have a digital archive in your facility?

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2. If yes, who manages the digital archive?

.....

3. What type of materials are managed in the digital repository?

.....

.....

.....

Section C: Users

3.1. Please describe the users of digitised materials.

.....

.....

3.2. How are the archival information needs of these users determined?

.....

.....

.....

3.3. How are the users made aware of the available digital materials?

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.....

.....



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Section D: Access

4. Does the archive facility have a policy on accessing digital archives?

.....

5. If yes, to what extent does it facilitate access to digitised materials?

.....

.....

.....

5. If no, what guidelines inform the provision of access?

.....

.....

.....

6. Is the digital access service provided directly or indirectly by the facility?

.....

.....

7. Based on the answer above, how does the mode of access influence users' access to digitised archival materials?

.....

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.....



8. Are there permission controls guiding access to digitised materials?

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9. What programmes are in place to facilitate access to digitised materials?

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10. To what extent do these programmes facilitate access?

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.....

Section E: Challenges

11. What challenges do you encounter in providing access to digitised materials?

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.....

.....

12. How can the challenges be overcome?

.....

.....



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13. Do you have any additional comments on access to digital archival materials?

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU

Appendix 3: Ethical Clearance Certificate



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ETHICS CLEARANCE **REC-270710-028-RA Level 01**

Project Number:	FEN011SKAK01
Project title:	Access to digitized archival collection in National Heritage and Cultural studies centre and International Library of African Music.
Qualification:	Masters in Library and Information Science
Principal Researcher:	Barbra Kakumba
Supervisor:	Mrs V. Feni-Fete
Co-supervisor:	Mr S. Ndwandwe

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby grant ethics approval for FEN011SKAK01. This approval is valid for 12 months from the date of approval. Renewal of approval must be applied for BEFORE termination of this approval period. Renewal is subject to receipt of a satisfactory progress report. The approval covers the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). The research may commence as from the 22/06/19, using the reference number indicated above.

Note that should any other instruments be required or amendments become necessary, these require separate authorisation.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material changes in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document;

- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research.

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this approval if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected;
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented;
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require;
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to.
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

Your compliance with DoH 2015 guidelines and other regulatory instruments and with UREC ethics requirements as contained in the UREC terms of reference and standard operating procedures, is implied.

The UREC wishes you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola
Acting UREC-Chairperson
 22 August 2019

Appendix 4: Turnitin Report

ACCESS TO DIGITIZED ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS IN TWO SELECTED INSTITUTIONS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

ORIGINALITY REPORT

16%

SIMILARITY INDEX

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