
Assessing the extent to which the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa has fulfilled its mandate of taking the archives to the people

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Abstract

The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARS) is sustained by public funds so that the records of enduring value of the nation can be preserved, made accessible and promoted to enhance their use by members of the public. Archives serve no purpose unless they are used. Outreach programmes are one of the ways of providing a unique opportunity to improve the public image of the archives repository, as well as to promote the awareness and use of archival holdings. This article assessed the extent to which NARS has taken the archives to the people. A survey using a purposive sample was conducted in 2009 and concluded that there was a need to promote NARS public image and the use of archival holdings through robust outreach programmes.

Introduction: putting things into perspective

One of the major challenges faced by archival institutions in South Africa is making archival resources available to all sections of the South African society.

In South Africa, most people have never made direct use of national archives' facilities (Harris 2000; Ngulube 2009). Only a small percentage of the population is aware that archives are open to the public (Harris 1997: 13). One of the frustrations and challenges facing archival institutions in the world is that many people who could benefit from using archival holdings do not even know that these repositories have the type of information they seek (Pugh 1992). Scholars such as Harris (2000) and Mason (2009) point out that historically, archival institutions have been considered places where old documents, photos and genealogical records are preserved for posterity. As a result, these institutions do not enjoy prominence in the public arena (Mason 2009). Also, for the most part, archival institutions are not the first place that comes to mind when there is a need to find out information, and that is the intrinsic dilemma of operating such institutions. According to Cowan (2003: 161) and Ramos and Ortega (2006: 5) it would seem that national archival institutions do not enjoy prominence in the public arena because of:

- social invisibility in that most national archival institutions are situated in hard to access areas or out of sight places. Therefore, people are vaguely aware of their existence;
- misunderstanding of the purpose of archives among lay people who feel that archives are just big rooms full of old stuff that will gather dust. Indeed, most people confuse archives with museums, libraries or worse, they think of archives as old buildings full of ancient dusty boxes; and
- archives being too often under-resourced.

Public programming holds the promise for archives to become visible and exploited by society. Yet, archival institutions have ignored public programming and advocacy. The need for public programming becomes very critical if one considers the fact that in 1996 over 90% of the users of archival services in South Africa were white genealogists (Callinicos and Odendaal 1996: 42). In another study on access and outreach activities at the archives in the KwaZulu-Natal Province, Koopman (2002) concluded that access to archives was still limited to a few researchers. Archivists in the post-custodial era should widen their horizons and look beyond their gardens, as Ericson (1991) would put it, so that they have a full picture of the social and historical environment in which they operate (Ham cited in Ericson 1991: 115) and facilitate the utilisation and promotion of archives in the custody of their institutions. Ericson (1991: 120) argued that:

it is important for these institutions to keep their focus on the records they are preserving and the impact they have (or may

have) on the lives of people who would benefit from using them.

If people do not know what archivists are, or what they do, it is simply because archivists have not touched their lives in any meaningful way. Craig (1991: 137) and Ericson (1991: 120) argued that as long as archivists stay in reading rooms of archival institutions where they work and avoid touching the lives of those whom they would serve, then all of their well-intentioned efforts to improve their image, and all their programmes to explain what they do and why it is important will fall on deaf ears.

For the purpose of this article, the term ‘archives’ refers to records in the custody of the national archives repository as defined in the National Archives of South Africa Act of 1996, as amended. Archival legislation in South Africa is very clear on promoting archives (South Africa 1996). Section 5(1)(c) of the National Archives of South Africa Act of 1996, as amended, specifically addresses the issue of making archives visible to all people. There is a need for archival institutions to take the archives to the people because as Cook (1997: 15) puts it:

archives are not a private playground where professional staff can indulge their interest in history or their desire to shape the past by rubbing shoulders only with prominent historians: it is a sacred public trust of society’s memories that must be widely shared.

Such sentiments have in part led to a paradigm shift in the management of archives as archivists are increasingly viewing themselves as ‘record-givers’ rather than ‘record-keepers’ (ten Cate 1989: 28). There is a growing realisation that archives serve no purpose unless they are used. “Use, in other words, is the goal of all archival endeavours” (Harris 2000: 24). Put differently:

it should be appreciated that information, no matter how well organised and indexed, does not realise its value until it is used. There is a strong feeling that greater attention needs to be given to marketing because it addresses the demand side of any type of information system and leads to user awareness and the need to utilise (Ngulube 1999: 19).

There is a consensus amongst researchers such as Craig (1991), Finch (1994), Hackman (2011), Jimerson (2003) and Pugh (1992) that for national archival institutions to increase the use of their facilities and make them known, they

must develop programmes and services which inform the public about their holdings and reference procedures. Failure to promote the use of archives, will lead to archival institutions being viewed by members of the public as merely the “graveyard of government records which lacks reputation” (Jimerson 2003: 13). It is, therefore, necessary for archival institutions to create an active outreach programme to overcome such misunderstandings that archival institutions are “government graveyards” for burying the records that will later gather dust. Thus, archivists must actively seek out potential users, and advocate and communicate the importance of archival institutions to the public at large (Riehle 2008). By promoting the archives, the position of archival institutions in the public domain may be strengthened. As a result, archivists would be less vulnerable when demonstrating the value added by their contribution to society, reviewing their own programmes and budgets, or exploring ideas to improve programmes and services (Grimard 1999: 69).

In view of the above, this article seeks to assess how far NARS has fulfilled its mandate of taking the archives to the people. There is no doubt whatsoever that the public perception of national archival institutions directly reflects the image that archivists deliberately or unknowingly project (Blais and Enns 1991: 103). The question of image is closely tied to securing the resources for the development of archival programmes. Therefore, the way in which the public and resource allocators view archival institutions can have a profound effect on the future of these institutions.

Public programming and an archival institution

According to Ericson (1991: 120) one of the ways of enhancing the image of an archival institution is through robust public programming. Gregor (2001) argued that prior to 1900 most national archival institutions were pre-occupied with the task of amassing documents and facilitating their arrangements and description. However, making records available to the researchers and encouraging potential users to consult archives was not a primary concern. The dawning of the 20th century brought with it an expansion of what archivists consider their functional responsibilities to include public programming (Ericson 1991: 121). Grimard (1999: 69) argued that it is only in the early 1990s that archivists have begun to consider “the realm of the user as an important area of archival enquiry”. This according to Grimard (1999: 69) was done through the introduction of public programming by national archival institutions.

Public programming involves those activities that result in direct interaction with the public to guarantee the participation and support necessary to achieve an archival repository's mission and fulfil its mandate (Blais and Enns 1991: 103). In this context, public programming has four components:

- it supports the activities of the institution by creating an image of archives, promoting awareness and appreciation of archives, ensuring the education of users and the general public about the value and potential use of archives, and enabling use of the archival record (Ericson 1991: 121).

The nature and scope of a public programme in an archival institution are determined by the mandate of the institution. Above all, archivists have the responsibility of serving the people who sponsor their activities. Blais and Enns (1991: 103) argue that this service, however, should be more than merely passive; that is, responding to requests for the use of archival records. Whether small or large, archival institutions can promote the activities of their sponsors and increase appreciation for the work these organisations perform; thereby helping them to achieve their goals.

Public archives are faced with the greatest challenge in providing public programmes. As government repositories, they must ensure visibility and accessibility. While it may be acceptable for a private repository that “use...is determined either by membership or freedom of information legislation”, public archives cannot be discriminating or selective in delivering public programmes. “Rather, public institutions must ensure, indeed encourage, equal access to facilities and services, whoever the client may be (Blais and Enns 1991: 103).

Researchers such as Craig (1991: 137), Jimerson (2003: 13) and Pugh (1992) suggest that it is important to know more about users. However, a more important aspect of the user question concerns those who do not use archives, and especially those who have a direct need for them. User studies are important, but as with keeping up with technology, they can also be a substitute for more direct action. If indeed, archival institutions play a public role in modern society, we must consider the perceptions people have of these institutions and of the people who work in them. Furthermore, it follows that archivists individually must reassess their public programming skills and reconsider the image they may unconsciously project. The impact that an individual archivist can have on the image of the archival institution for which he or she works should not be ignored.

Problem statement

In South Africa, the National Archives and Records Service Act (Act No. 43 of 1996) underscores the fact that NARS should focus its public programming endeavours around activities designed to reach out to less privileged sectors of society and youth. In terms of section 5(1)(c) of the Act, “the National Archivist shall with special emphasis on activities designed to reach out to the less privileged sectors of society, make known information concerning records by means such as publications, exhibitions and lending of records”. It is crucial to get young people and rural communities interested in the sources of their past by making it apparent to them.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the archival professionals in South Africa are gradually accepting public programming as part and parcel of sound archival management (Ngulube 2009: 209). There is a growing realisation that outreach and public programming remain some of the major ways of promoting and encouraging the use of archival services by users. In spite of this burgeoning interest in image-building and outreach programmes in South Africa, there has been very little systematic research on the implementation of such programmes. Insight gained from such a study may be useful for archivists, archival science teachers and scholars who may want to conduct further research in the area of public programming. In addition to that, the study may be used as a barometer for the progressive realisation of development priorities in public programming. It can also be an objective tool to assess the outreach programmes of NARS.

In order to explore the problem statement discussed above, the following research questions were investigated:

- To what extent has NARS taken the archives to the people?
- Does NARS conduct user studies to determine the needs of the users?
- To what extent is NARS exploiting some information and communication tools such as cellular phones and social networks to serve users?
- To what extent is the public aware of the existence of NARS?
- What is the public’s view about NARS?

Research methods

In order to investigate the above research questions, the study used both secondary and primary data. The paradigm that mainly influenced this study was qualitative. An extensive literature review was undertaken which helped in framing questions for the primary data collection. Data were collected through face-to-face and telephonic interviews conducted with purposively selected

informants. The study was limited to the city of Pretoria situated in the centre of Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. A convenience sample of 120 students was interviewed on the campus of three universities (40 students from each university), namely: University of South Africa, University of Pretoria and Tshwane University of Technology. The students were either from the Faculties of Social Sciences or Humanities. The students were deliberately targeted because there is a perception that young South Africans are important audiences that NARS has neglected in the past (Harris 2000: 26). Furthermore, more often than not, archives are underappreciated and most young people are unaware of their existence (Römer-Kenepa 2003: 105).

Additionally, 100 people from disadvantaged communities were purposively selected and interviewed at the two major commuter taxi ranks in Bosman and Prinsloo streets in Pretoria. Interviews with members of the public were conducted mainly in the Sotho language and later transcribed and translated into English. Even though this type of non probability sampling (convenience sample) does not allow representativeness, the sample was easily accessible and organised. There is no pretence of empirical objectivity in the sample, although an attempt was made to obtain a general view of NARS by the public using purposively selected informants. Two telephonic interviews were also conducted with the Head of the Outreach Programme to determine how NARS attempted to take archives to the people.

The data from the interviews were content analysed. The first step in content analysis entailed the construction of categories. The categories were examined using one of content analysis' basic methods, namely, thematic analysis. The analysis involved quantifying and tallying the presence of a concept. Thus, after identifying the categories, the data was coded. Some of the data was presented in narrative form and some was analysed using SPSS® and the results graphically presented.

Empirical findings and discussion

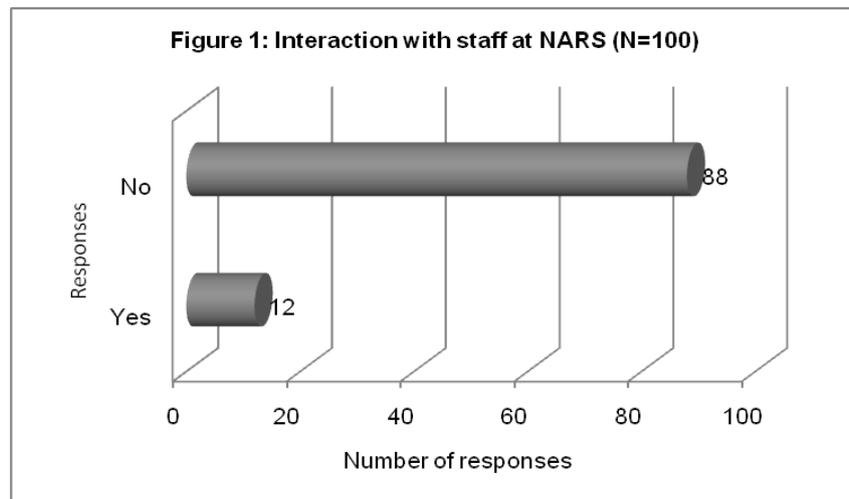
The purpose of this section is twofold, that is, to present the data that was collected and to present the findings of the study. Findings are presented according to the themes raised by the research questions of the study. The results emanated from the respondents and reflect the questionnaire, interview and document review. The findings were reported in a sequence that answered the research questions rather than the order in which responses were given.

Extent to which NARS has taken the archives to the people

“An archive needs to find effective ways to educate its public about the mission of the archives and why it is important (Hackman 2011: 16). The ways that archives may use to reach out to create awareness and interest include behind-the-scenes tours, presentations by archives staff, lectures and panels by researchers and authors, fairs, movie series, receptions to mark important archival events, press releases, press previews, press conferences, exhibits, interactive kiosks, social media (for example Facebook), handouts and mailings. All or some of these strategies may be used to take the archives to the people. The research was interested in finding out the extent to which archives had been taken to the people.

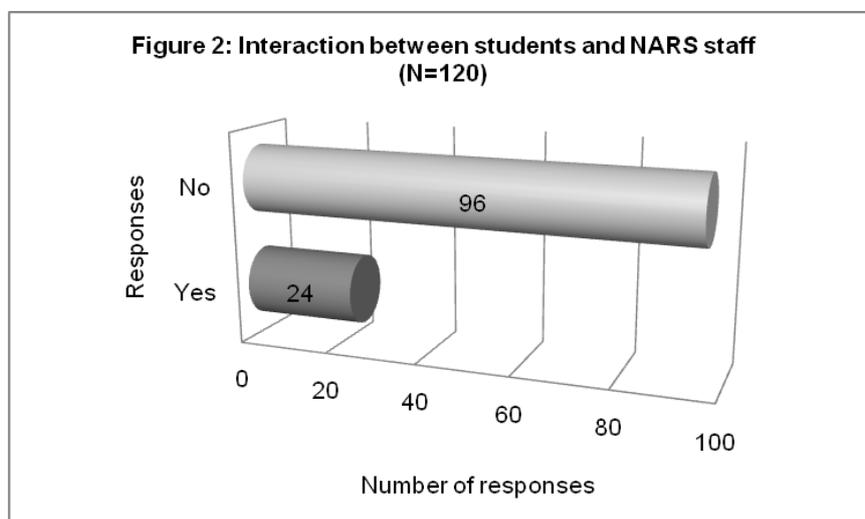
The results of the two interviews with the Head of Public Programming at NARS indicated that NARS had a draft strategy on public programming but it is yet to be finalised and implemented. It appears that NARS has sustained a considerable public programming endeavour despite the fact that it lacks adequate resources to realise this objective. The methods used by NARS for public programming include, amongst others, internal and external exhibitions, periodic tours to rural and urban areas to explain and promote NARS services, holding of archives week where schools are invited to visit NARS, partnerships with other organisations such as the South African Broadcasting Authority (SABC) and visits to villages (rural communities). These are some of the strategies they have been employing since 2003. NARS also targets public holidays such as Heritage Day to exhibit its unique collection to the public. Previously disadvantaged communities are targeted in NARS outreach programmes and four staff members are involved in outreach programmes (two at the head office and two at the National Film, Video and Sound Archives). As of 2009, there were three vacant positions in the public programming section at NARS.

As indicated in Figure 1, only 12% of the participants had interacted with staff members of NARS. The interactions occurred at the exhibition at the Pretoria Show and during the visit to the repository to consult the archival holdings.



Ninety two percent of the participants indicated that they had never visited NARS. When asked if they would consider visiting NARS, most participants indicated that only if they could benefit from their visit would they do so. Only 8% indicated that they had visited the national archives repository to consult land claim records and death registers. They indicated that they visited NARS only during that period. The situation whereby people rarely visit archives may change if NARS makes the public aware of the fact that archives contain information and are a great national resource which documents the history and identity of communities nationwide, and that they also protect the interests of individuals, organisations, and society in general.

As indicated in Figure 2, only 24% of the participants had interacted with staff members of NARS. Interaction happened mainly through NARS open day, an exhibition at the Pretoria Show, visits to the repository for research purposes and accessing NARS website.



Participants were asked to indicate or state how often they visited NARS. Only one respondent indicated that he had visited NARS once a week during the time he was studying for his Masters in History at the University of Pretoria. When asked whether he had deposited a copy of his dissertation with NARS as stipulated by the regulations governing the use of its archives, he indicated that he was unaware that he was supposed to do so. Five participants indicated that they had visited NARS at least once a year for their studies. The rest had not visited NARS.

It appeared from the interviews that in the past, NARS only used to be reactive with regard to public exhibitions, but currently exhibitions are planned in advance, that is, plans as to how many exhibitions would be held are made at the beginning of the year. Budget allocations are also made at that point.

It is evident from the interviews that some of the challenges faced by NARS with regard to public programming include amongst others, the following: lack of buy-in from top management; accessibility of the archives repository by the public; language barriers (most archives are in English and Afrikaans) and illiteracy amongst members of the public. When exhibiting the archival holdings in provinces, NARS also involves the provincial archives.

Conducting user studies to determine the needs of the users

Archivists should not assume that they understand the needs of their users. There is a need to conduct user studies to determine their needs and the effectiveness of whatever advocacy programmes the archive may be rolling out. It was evident from the telephonic interviews with the Head of Public Programming at NARS that the institution did not have any measures in place to assess the implementation of its public programming. The interviews also revealed that public programming was not based on knowledge of the users. User studies are key to understanding the information needs of the users that the archival professionals serve. In another study, Ngulube (1999: 22) discovered that out of the 11 surveyed archival institutions in east and southern Africa two (18%) carried out user studies more than once a year, two carried them out once a year, three (27%) did it irregularly and four never carried them out. The lack of user studies in archival institutions is not only confined to South Africa.

However, making our archives into archives of the people, by the people, for the people is only possible when we know our people, listen to our people, and serve our people (Ketelaar 1992: 15).

Thus, outreach activities should be built on “learning more about users, enhancing image, promoting public awareness of archives...” (Ericson 1991: 120). In that regard, archivists should develop outreach plans based on well-known user needs in order to effectively relate to the public. Archivists can learn more about the users through user studies. Having learned their needs, it may be easy to develop an effective target message.

Extent to which NARS exploits some information and communication tools to serve users

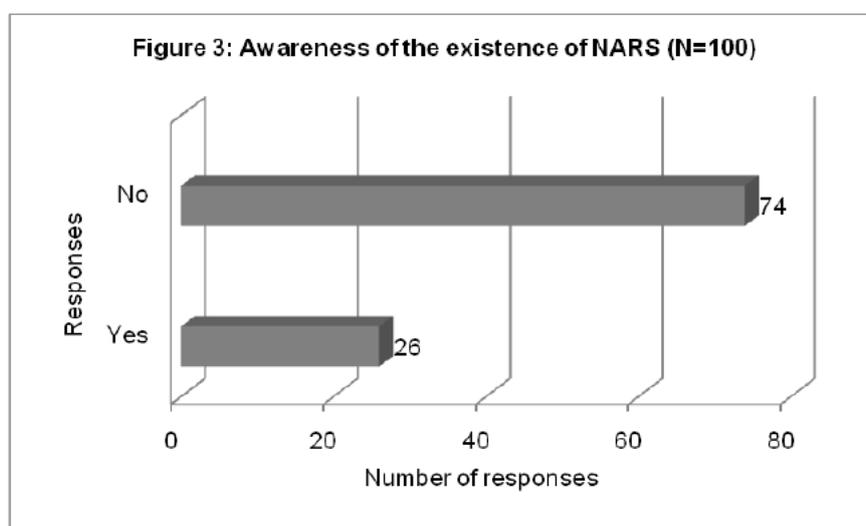
Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have significantly changed how archives interface with the public. Some archives are using Web 2.0 or social media tools to build an “understanding about the archives’ mission and activities, create and expand on communities of supporters, broaden the audience for archives, and dispel common stereotypes” (Theimer 2011: 337). It was of interest for this study to find out the extent to which NARS had exploited opportunities offered by ICTs to build a greater understanding of its role and activities in the promotion of access to, and preservation of South Africa’s national cultural heritage. Data revealed that NARS did not adequately utilise ICTs to market the archives. For instance, it does not use cellular phone technology or social networking tools such as Facebook, blogs, podcasts, wikis, YouTube and Twitter to reach-out to people, especially the youth (the so called digital natives) who use ICT tools in their daily lives.

However, NARS website at www.national.archives.gov.za is utilised to take the archives to the remote users. This is done through the web-enabled National Automated Archival Retrieval System (NAAIRS). It contains information about the collection, provides instructions on how to begin research, allows the collection to be searched and facilitates e-mail enquiries from remote users. NAAIRS contains only information about archival material and not the actual texts of the documents. Therefore, having identified relevant material, a user would usually arrange a visit to NARS to consult the documents. It would seem that the process of making archives available online is highly unlikely to happen any time soon, considering that NARS has over seven million archived documents, most of which contain hundreds of pages each. It would be totally unrealistic to digitise the whole collection and to make it accessible online through the Internet. Moreover, technological limitations and financial constraints have thus far been factors preventing the National Archives from embarking on a major document conversion programme using digital imaging.

Perhaps digitising highly used items may go a long way in promoting archives and making them available electronically to remote users.

Awareness of the existence of NARS

The public are likely to exploit the resources held by archives if they understand their purpose, and are aware of their activities and collections. As shown in Figure 3, 74% of the members of the general public are unaware of the existence of NARS indicating that it was the first time they had heard about such an institution, as compared to 26% who are aware.



Some of the participants who were aware of NARS indicated that they became so through:

- NARS exhibition at the Pretoria Show;
- newspaper articles regarding NARS;
- referral by other government departments such as Home Affairs and Land Affairs;
- passing there on the way to work almost every day;
- meeting somebody who was working for the archives;
- television news (Mandela's archive and the honouring of Miriam Makheba); and
- working in government registries.

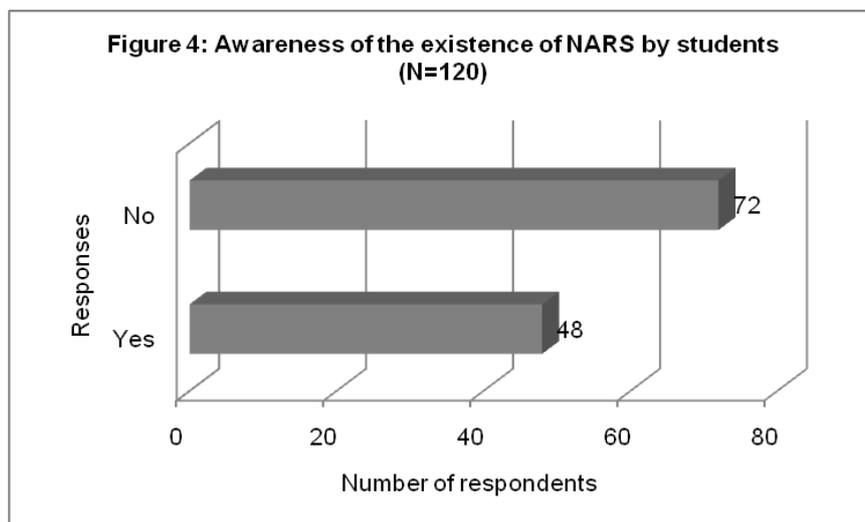
It was interesting to note that the majority of the participants who were aware of the existence of NARS understood the archives to be primarily an institution for keeping old apartheid government records. Some thought that NARS:

- preserved old records;
- kept maps and photos;

- was something like a library which kept old books; and
- kept government records.

On the other hand, Figure 4 shows that 72% of the participants from the student population were unaware of the existence of NARS, as compared to 48% who were aware. Those who were aware indicated that they became aware through the NARS exhibition at the Pretoria Show, at the University of Pretoria Library (when they market the university archives), through reading articles in academic journals, newspapers and television. Five students cited the article that appeared in the *City Press* of 1 March 2009, regarding the records of the famous Rivonia Trial that were transferred to NARS by the Oppenheimer family. In that article, NARS also advertised its opening hours to the public.

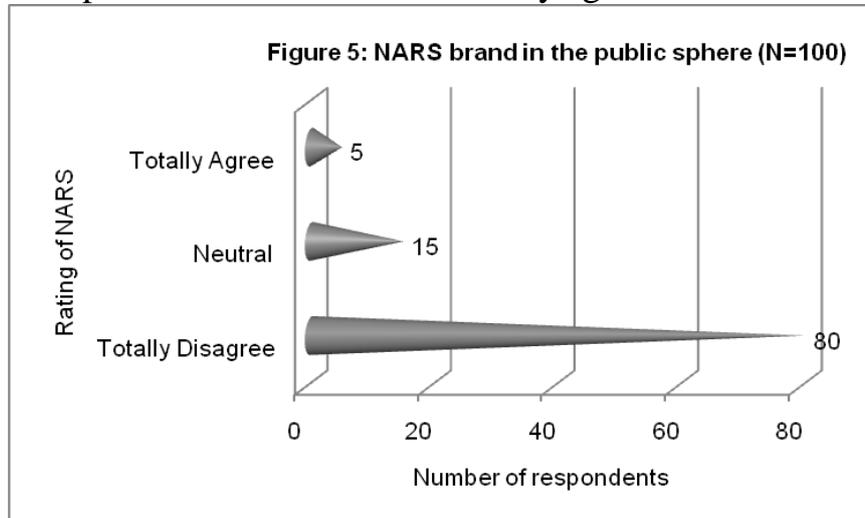
When asked to explain the mandate or objectives of NARS, 35 of the participants who were aware of NARS existence indicated that NARS preserves old apartheid records. Seven indicated that NARS has a similar mission as the library. However, six indicated that NARS preserved important government records for public consumption. When asked to take a guess about what NARS mandate might be only 18 participants indicated that it has to do with archiving important information. It transpired that their guess was mainly based on their knowledge of the meaning of the term archiving as applied in the context of computers.



The public's view about NARS

Having ready a general brand for archives is a major prerequisite for effective public programming. Branding comes first. Participants were asked to indicate if NARS had a well-established brand in the public sphere. As indicated in

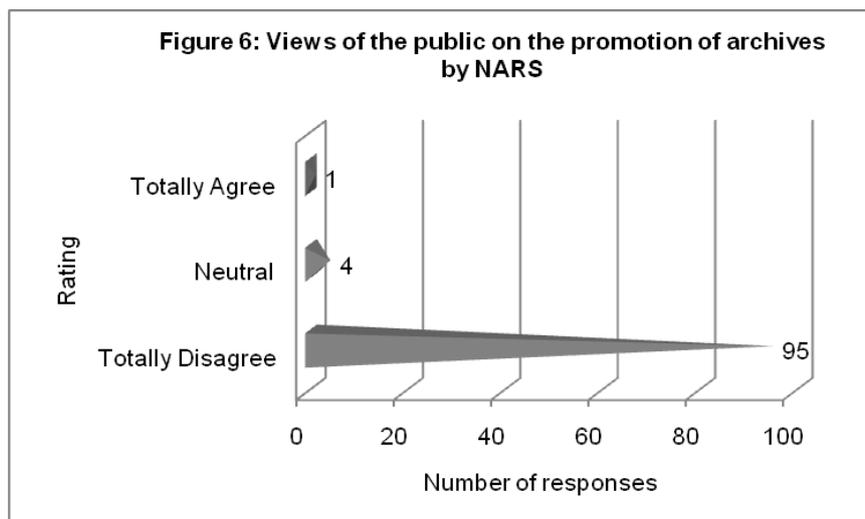
Figure 5, 80% of the participants totally disagreed that NARS had established its brand as compared to 20% who either totally agreed or were neutral.



Branding is becoming increasingly important because one's brand is one's public face (Brown 2010: 28). Branding affects an organisation's reputation, which is what people think about an organisation and what they say about it both in public and private. What people say about the organisation can be controlled by giving the right messages and cues. The image of an organisation partly depends on branding. NARS can use public programming to promote its image and become an established brand in the field of information provision. The branding exercise should take into consideration the interdependence of institution brands and branded products because:

every institution or corporation has two assets on which success and survival are based – its Brand (upper case 'B' – representing the image, reputation of the corporation or institution, including its financial assets, performance and people) and its 'brand' (lower case 'b' – the products or services it sells or provides). The interrelationship between these two assets...must not be reduced, with one taking precedence over the other (Harris 1998: 22).

Figure 6 shows that 95% of the participants totally disagreed that NARS was promoting its services effectively. However, only 1% of the participants thought NARS was promoting itself and 4% were neutral in their assessment.



The participants were asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with the statements listed in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, all the participants indicated that NARS was not visible in the public sphere and the members of the public were unaware of the mandate of NARS let alone its existence. The participants also indicated that NARS coverage in the media was poor. In addition, NARS was not communicating well or effectively through the media.

Table 1: NARS visibility in the public sphere

Statement	Totally agree	Totally disagree	Neutral
NARS is visible in the public sphere	0	100	0
The public is aware of NARS existence and mandate	0	100	0
NARS is involved in corporate social investment in the communities	0	100	0
NARS is well covered in the media	0	100	0
NARS communicates well through the media	0	100	0
NARS utilises its website to market its services	1	97	2
NARS educates the public through exhibitions	5	90	1

On the other hand, the views and perceptions of the students are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: NARS visibility in the public sphere through the eyes of the students

Statement	Totally agree	Totally disagree	Neutral
NARS is visible in the public sphere	10	103	7
The public is aware of NARS existence and mandate	8	105	7
NARS is involved in corporate social investment in the communities	4	104	12
NARS is known just like the national library	8	103	9
NARS is well covered in the media	6	109	5
NARS communicates well through the media	7	107	6
NARS utilises its website to market its services	1	97	2
NARS educates the public through exhibitions	5	90	1

When asked to provide any additional information, one of the students said:

I think you must think beyond this survey which is a once off event. My proposal which is based on my observation on the ground is that you should go all out to create awareness about the importance of records and archives in society. A [sic] dedicated funding must be set aside to roll out this initiative. People should realise that governance is not cheap and does not come cheap. It is now high time that institutions which are assigned with this function broaden their horizon and start acting in the manner the constitution compels them to do. It is through these efforts and through working in an integrated manner for seamless service delivery that we shall witness remarkable progress not only in so far as archives is concerned but across the spectrum.

Therefore, there is a need to promote NARS public image and the use of archival holdings through robust outreach programmes. Only by knowing what resources they can access and how they can be helped by NARS can the public develop an interest in archives.

Conclusion and recommendations

Flowing from the above empirical findings, this article concludes that outreach programmes at NARS have not been evaluated to assess their effectiveness. Studies will be needed to assess the impact of public programming activities of NARS. The surveyed students and the general public know a little about NARS. That may affect the reputation index of NARS as to how the public view the organisation. There is a need for NARS to promote the archives and their services in the public's opinion. Through archival promotion, the public may be

helped to understand the nature and content of archival work. This may in turn be useful for realising greater support for NARS.

The public programming strategies must promote an image of NARS as a dynamic and vibrant organisation worthy of support and able to fulfil the current and future information and cultural needs of both their sponsors and the general public. Firstly, NARS may employ some of the advocacy strategies alluded to in this article. Secondly, a greater understanding of users and use would inform and focus all public programming activities and could be the core of a new, more synergetic relationship between the archival functions of acquisition, appraisal, selection, arrangement and description on one hand and public programming on the other.

The findings of the study revealed that NARS did not communicate effectively through the media. NARS should focus on improving and strengthening media liaison, since the media is one of the key channels that may keep the South African public informed about NARS role and contribution to development. In this regard, NARS should invite the media to cover the activities of NARS at every opportunity. Alternatively, NARS can also request space in national newspapers to publish special columns about the archives. NARS should also consider forming a partnership with the SABC radio to expand archival public programming. Stories about the archives can be written and broadcast on all the SABC radio stations. NARS should consider producing documentaries and comic books focusing on archives. That way, NARS could be able to reach the majority of listeners, even in rural communities where people only worry about basic services such as water and electricity provision.

In addition to the exhibits, NARS should also consider providing lecturers and speakers on archival issues (especially about the community and research resources at the archives), participating in archives meetings and conferences, making archival resources readily available, sponsoring walking tours, workshops and web walk, and providing meeting space free of charge to selected members of the public. To serve the remote users, NARS should consider high demand digitisation. In this regard, archival holdings that are consulted very often such as death notices can be digitised. Popular archival groups such as the Rivonia trial records can also be digitised. NARS can also create virtual exhibitions on its website. This way, members of the public could be able to see what NARS holdings look like and may in turn visit the repository to access the records.

Nowadays many organisations are using the Short Message Service (SMS) and social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter to market their products to potential clients. NARS can also take advantage of these technologies to take the archives to the people. Some of these tools have been employed by the United States National Archives and Records Administration with success. Lastly, it is very clear from the angle and methodology that was taken by the current research that more significant research still needs to be done.

The overview given in this article has obvious limitations. One being the limited sample size and sample selection. Similar studies to assess the perception of NARS image and public programmes should be done covering a larger and representative sample, including other stakeholders such as governmental bodies and archives' professional associations in order to find out if the results would replicate the findings of this study.

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