

Chapter 2

Records and Archives Management Education and Training Opportunities in Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this chapter is to contextualize the records and archives management (RAM) education and training opportunities in Bangladesh with a view to identify the opportunities and challenges ahead in this endeavour. Some public and private universities and National University affiliated colleges and institutions are providing RAM education and National Library, National Archives, National Museum of Bangladesh, etc. are providing RAM training opportunities hands on practice in Bangladesh. The author discusses the current curriculum of different academia and need for RAM education and training opportunities as a subset of information management, with an acknowledged impact on the systematic and efficient management of Bangladeshi institutions. The author shows how the focus of RAM have shifted over the recent past from the archival management of unwanted documents, to the management of electronic systems, giving records managers an equal standing with other professionals in the field of information management or knowledge management. The result reveals that training opportunities on RAM have increased the professionals' development in Bangladesh. The author feels this chapter may encourage more such research on RAM system in Bangladesh and beyond.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the process by which the intellect is trained and it is the cultivation of intellectual powers. Education is a social process by which a society and a nation impart and transmit knowledge on life and society. Education is not static but dynamic and it evolves with changing needs, hopes and aspirations of the individuals and the society (Munshi, 2008). A society is gradually transformed by modernization

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and a balanced emphasis is given on liberal as well as special education. One very important branch of specialized education is professional education, which prepares a particular human being for a specific profession/ job. Katuu (2015) proposed that the strengthening of graduate level education as well as participation in global research to mitigate against risks in the quality of RAM education and training.

The rapid proliferation of information has triggered a heavy demand on the organizer and disseminator of knowledge, universally known as librarians and/or information professionals or record keepers or archivists. Libraries or records and archives are important social institutions. No community is considered complete without a library or records and archival institution (Rahman, Khatun and Islam, 2008). Therefore, the diverse and changing needs of each society reflect on the current trends in library education and training (Chisita, 2009; Ahmed, 1981). The spread of democracy, the extension of education, the intensification of research activities and the rapid increase in the production of recorded knowledge, have led to expansion of libraries and the development of their services. The communication of ideas is one of the most significant achievements in the cultural development of the human race. The library or record and archival institution is one of the many means of human communication (Johnson, 1973) and is an important centre for disseminating knowledge. Education and training for records and archives management (RAM) professionals has taken a new direction in the face of far-reaching developments sparked off by the trend towards globalization (Tsabedze and Ngoepe, 2020).

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualize the records and archives management (RAM) education and training opportunities in Bangladesh with a view to identify the opportunities and challenges ahead in this endeavour. It will specifically look at the short term in-service RAM education provision as well as professional accredited long-term programs offered in the country.

EMERGENCE OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES IN BANGLADESH

The history of archives in the Indo-Bangladesh Sub-Continent is an old one. Even in the days of the Muslim Sultans and Emperors official records were preserved in a central place. These were known as *Mohafezkhanas* (Archives) (Banglapedia, 2014). In Bangladesh, records and archives is a center of official documents which use to receive, preserve and disseminate for its legitimate successors. After the partition of India in 1947, the National Archives of Pakistan was established in Karachi in 1951. The National Archives of Bangladesh (BNA) was established in 1973 at Dhaka under the Directorate of Archives and Libraries. The Government has promulgated a National Archives Ordinance in 1983 in order to provide for the establishment of National Archives and for the collection, preservation, maintenance and administration of permanent records and archives of the Government. Dr. K.M. Karim was the first director of the National Archives of Bangladesh during its establishment in 1972. His administration was particularly commended for the recovery and reorganization of the records in the different districts in Bangladesh. However, with the enactment of the Public Archives Ordinance in 1983, provision was made for the position of a Director who shall be appointed by the Government on such terms and conditions as the Government may determine. Now the National Archives is under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Bangladesh. Every day, millions of documents are created in the public sector. The National Archives and the National Library in Bangladesh have inherited and collected a vast amount of documents, records and books within a short span of 30 years. The total collection of documents and records in the national archives is about 80,000 (eighty thousands) volumes. Most of these have been collected from Bangladesh Secretariat Record Rooms and various districts of the country. Thousands of district

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