

La gestión documental en función de la preservación del patrimonio

Document management in terms of heritage preservation

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Resumen

El artículo que se presenta aborda el tema del rescate del patrimonio documental de la Universidad de Guantánamo. Tiene como objetivo la identificación y localización de la producción científica derivada del desarrollo de investigaciones de docentes y estudiantes para implementar acciones de salvaguarda del patrimonio de la citada institución. Los métodos teóricos utilizados fueron el método de análisis síntesis, de análisis histórico lógico y el análisis documental que permitieron la consulta de fuentes primarias que sirvieron de referente teórico a la investigación. Los principales resultados obtenidos muestran las potencialidades de la biblioteca universitaria para el cumplimiento de los objetivos trazados, y la necesidad de diseñar acciones para el trabajo con el patrimonio universitario. Se resalta el papel que desempeñan las bibliotecas en la conservación del conocimiento para las futuras generaciones.

Palabras clave: Patrimonio documental; Conservación; Sistema de archivos; Herencia; Legado; Tradiciones.

Summary

The article presented here deals with the rescue of the documentary heritage of the University of Guantánamo. Its objective is to identify and locate the scientific production derived from the development of research by teachers and students to implement actions to safeguard the patrimony of the mentioned institution. The theoretical methods used were the method of synthesis analysis, historical-logical analysis and documentary analysis, which allowed the consultation of primary sources that served as theoretical reference to the research. The main results obtained show the potentialities of the university library for the fulfillment of the objectives outlined, and the need to design actions for the work with the university patrimony. The role of libraries in the preservation of knowledge for future generations is highlighted.

Keywords: Documentary heritage; Conservation; Archival system; Heritage; Legacy; Traditions.

Introduction

A nation is defined and identified by its heritage, legacy and traditions that shape feelings and ideals, on which the unity of its members is based, integrating its origin, destiny and identity. The genius of a nation is to build and develop the future while preserving the past; to reconcile economic, cultural and spiritual development in a sustainable manner. In this sense, heritage makes an invaluable contribution, hence, the importance of its legal protection, conservation and restoration in the archives.

The state of conservation in Cuban archives, a country with a tropical climate, is directly associated with climatological and ecological factors, as well as chemical, physical, physical-mechanical and biological factors that act permanently and as a whole, and affect the conditions of permanence and durability of documents.

It is necessary to emphasize then, that the word archive comes from the Latin Archivum, and this one from the Greek Archeión that means principle, origin. To speak of the origin of archives is to speak of the history of man and the appearance of the first written testimonies that would lay the foundations of what today are archives.

Mesa (2012), who states that,

The origin of the funds dates back to the reign of Philip V, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when an entire administrative structure was organized to eliminate the privileges and privileges and unify the system of domination both in the peninsula and in the colonies. In the colonial world, this took the form of judicial, administrative and political institutions, and the creation - in important towns and cities - of entities such as Government Holdings and the Mortgage Registry,, with the consequent subordination of the local authorities represented in the Cabildos. (p.153)

In this sense, the archive of the University of Guantánamo is configured as a unique service, integrated by the different archives that constitute the stages of the life cycle of the documentary heritage. They conserve the documents produced in the development of the functions and activities, providing a specialized service in their management, conservation and dissemination, for administrative, teaching and research purposes.

The activities and functions of the University of Guantánamo's archives are framed within the general legal regime on archives and documents of the Ministry of Higher Education (MES) and the specific regulations of each university.

When talking about the archives at the University of Guantánamo, it is also important to refer to the founding and relationship with the University's Documentation Center, which preserves and stores the documents.

Since the founding of the University's Documentation Center, it has worked together with the institution's archive. Both are dedicated to the conservation and restoration of documents, with a view to protecting the University's documentary heritage.

The Documentary Heritage is the set of documents generated or gathered in the exercise of the activity of natural or legal persons, which due to its economic, political, social, scientific, technical, legal, cultural, political, historical or defense value, requires to be preserved permanently.

The preservation of heritage is a fundamental part, since documents are evidence of past and present events. The study of heritage facilitates the understanding of historical events through research.

In this sense, this work addresses aspects to identify and locate researchers who publish books or research results, as well as the identification of the areas of vulnerability that the library presents for the preservation of heritage funds, all this in order to socialize and promote the University's funds.

Development

Materials and methods:

The present research is aimed at making a first approach to the documentary patrimony of the University of Guantánamo, due to the fact that the subject has been little studied. In this sense, the methodology used responds to an exploratory research that, without making an exhaustive and complete use of the available sources of information, allows achieving a certain degree of familiarity with the mentioned process in the investigated context. However, it was supported by scientific research methods such as the method of logical historical analysis, which allowed synthesizing the concepts and categories through the study of the temporal evolution of documentary heritage and

university heritage at global, regional, national and local levels, and establishing the transformations of the documentary heritage of the University of Guantánamo in the environment that surrounds it.

On the other hand, the analysis and synthesis method was taken into account to analyze, by parts, the issues related to the process of diagnosis of the documentary heritage of the University of Guantánamo and the cataloguing of its collection.

The induction and deduction method was used to develop logical reasoning that allowed reaching general conclusions from particular premises linked to documentary management.

Empirical methods:

Observation, allowed determining and corroborating the state of conservation and deterioration of two documents that are treasured.

Documentary analysis, allowed, from the exhaustive review of the sources found for the study of the topic, the location of the theoretical and conceptual referents, as well as the use of it for the interpretation of the information found.

All of them guided the present research and offer guidelines for future approaches to the subject.

When characterizing the library of the University of Guantánamo, inserting it in the context of the documentary heritage of the Cuban nation, it can be seen how it does not escape the archival problems of the world and of our country, being immersed in a complex process of harmonization between the administrative and management archives, promoting a whole culture of documentary and archival management in the center, which leads us to a correct treatment of the documentation, which today is part of the University Documentary Heritage.

Documentary heritage is a significant and concrete part of the collective memory of the peoples of the world. It represents an important part of the cultural heritage and is constituted by all those recorded manifestations that account for the evolution of thought, discoveries and achievements of society. It is the legacy of the past to the present and future world community.

Documentary heritage comprises a wide range of inscribed textual and non-textual records; images (still); sound, audiovisual and virtual records that can be preserved, reproducible and transferable, which through their study and dissemination contribute to the knowledge of a society, a time or a given process and to create links between the past and the present.

Each document or documentary group, whether a collection or fonds, has an informative content and a support, which are intrinsic heritage values that must be known, preserved and transmitted. This and other topics are discussed in depth in the text Guidelines for the Safeguarding of Documentary Heritage prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

At the University of Guantánamo, the heritage is made up of all non-conventional documents (doctoral theses, master's theses, diploma works, manuscripts, research works), and on the other hand, books written by authors of the center, journals, among others.

The preservation of these is a fundamental part, since documents are evidence of past and present events. The study of archives facilitates the understanding of historical events through research.

On the other hand, the characteristic that the preservation of documents must have is to maintain their integrity in three senses: physical integrity, which is the materiality of the document; intellectual integrity, which is the content; and intentional integrity, which is the intention and purpose of the document.

The forms and methods of document preservation are carried out through reproduction techniques: photocopying, microfilming and, finally, digitization, which makes it possible to make copies very quickly while preserving a good image quality.

All this is carried out in compliance with the current legislation on archives, which has been oriented in the country to that effect, finding along the way challenges to be solved in the development of the entrusted mission due to the necessary and growing development of the Information Sciences.

In the university, the archive is configured as a unique service, integrated by the different archives that constitute the stages of the life cycle of the documentary heritage. They conserve the documents produced in the development of the functions and activities, providing a specialized service in their management, conservation and dissemination, for administrative, teaching and research purposes.

The activities and functions of the university archives must be framed within the general legal regime on archives and documents of the MES and the specific regulations of each university.

For the archival activity, the university will have management archives, central archives, as established and specified in the provisions of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA), which are expressed through the General Directorate of Archives and will be characterized by:

- Management Archives: they exist due to the presence of an organic unit that produces documents, where they are created and preserved until they are useful and consulted, they are used in the day-to-day management of management and for timely decision making. As a general rule, and with some exceptions, it may not keep documents that are more than five years old.
- Central Archives: they coordinate and control the operation of the various management archives and gather the documents transferred by them once their processing has been completed and when consultation is not constant. The fundamental mission of the central archive is the study and appraisal of the documentary series, which as a whole make up the collection of the

producing institution or organization. Under current regulations, they hold documents for a period of up to 25 years. They correspond to the second stage of life of the documents, are the fundamental axis of control of the whole system and are responsible for the application of the procedural rules.

There must be a link between the library and the archive, with the same objective of conservation and restoration of documents.

The term conservation, in the field of archives and libraries, refers to all those measures aimed at adequately protecting documents, in order to prolong their use in optimal conditions for as long as possible.

The preservation of archives and libraries is a fundamental part, since documents are evidence of past and present events. The study of archives facilitates the understanding of historical events through research.

The bibliographic and documentary collection, both physical and digital, deteriorates at an accelerated rate due to a series of factors. Documentary material is a highly vulnerable asset, exposed to a number of different types of threats. Preventive conservation is the only way to protect documentary material and, therefore, the importance of archives in the conservation and preservation of documentation should be emphasized.

Deterioration factors of documentary material in the library

1. Environmental factors: humidity, temperature, light and dust.
2. Biological factors: microorganisms, insects and vertebrates.
3. Human-induced factors
4. Catastrophic or accidental factors

In this type of building, there are frequent problems of humidity, obsolete electrical installations, etc., the exterior of the building will also influence conservation, since a contaminated or degraded environment will make preventive conservation measures difficult. We must also talk about the use and manipulation of the collections, since this is not always done in a responsible and careful manner; and finally, there are the violent acts or thefts for economic gain or for the satisfaction of collectors.

Through observation, which made it possible to diagnose storage conditions and the different methods used, these deficiencies were detected, and actions were proposed to improve the quality of conservation of documents and better document management.

In daily practice, within universities, the Management or Office Archives, together with the library of the University of Guantánamo, preserve information that can be of value for both teachers and students in the research they carry out.

The documents are valid if they are used and can last in that archives, then they go to the Central Archive, where their use is less frequent by researchers (professors, students, and others). In the Central Archive, the documents transferred by the Management Archives are received, organized and stored for a period of up to 25 years, and it is here that the University Archive is created, which preserves the documents of any date or material support, produced in the development of the functions and provides a specialized service in the management, preservation and dissemination of the same, for administrative, teaching and research purposes. In this way, the process provides information to all types of people, both legal and natural, when requested.

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For the definition of the main problems of Conservation of the University's Documentary Heritage, those with the greatest impact have been taken into account, among which are the following:

- Poor knowledge of the principles and methods of contemporary archival science.

- The available human resources are not fully employed in document and archives management.
- Lack of repositories that meet the necessary conditions for the preservation of documents.
- Loss of the integrity of the documentary heritage.

Poor knowledge of the resolutions and regulations for the preventive conservation of paper documents and special supports, such as Resolution 201 of 2020, General guidelines for the conservation of documentary sources of the Republic of Cuba.

The human resource is the fundamental element for competitive advantage and therefore, it is an essential component for any type of institution. This common element is the differentiator that makes competitiveness exist, since it must be demonstrated, measured and compared.

Human resources play an important role in document management:

- Increases motivation and job and personal satisfaction.
- Facilitates learning and information exchange.
- Develops the potential and talent of its members.
- Increases employee participation levels within the company.

The documents must be kept temporarily or permanently, according to the established terms, so once the term expires, they must be transferred to the corresponding archives, as regulated in Decree Law 265 of 2000, taking into account the security and preservation measures.

The documents are archived without the minimum conservation conditions, which may be affected by environmental factors such as temperature, relative humidity, light, attack of biological agents (biodeterioration), mainly fungi, insects and mites, and damage by atmospheric pollutants (air), from particles such as dust, etc.

On the other hand, the lack of metal shelves, larger premises, adequate furniture to develop the activities and functions related to the archival activity and the proper conservation of documents as established by Resolution 41/09 of 2021, Guidelines for the conservation of documentary sources.

Heritage, in its essence, is a non-renewable resource, therefore it is urgent to generate effective policies, viable economic mechanisms and the necessary social and political commitment for the knowledge, protection, conservation and management of it, which, as it is known, is important because it is significant, transcendent, representative, and unique and identifies.

Results achieved at the University of Guantánamo for the protection and conservation of the Documentary Heritage

In the archives of the University of Guantánamo, the Center's documentary heritage is being rescued, together with the University Library, with digital and printed books whose authors are professors of the institution.

To illustrate in greater detail, in quantitative terms, Table 1 shows part of the inventory of documents currently in the library.

Table 1 Documents taken as a sample of the preliminary inventory

Tipo de documento	Cantidad	Vía Adquisición
Libros	14401	Compra
Tesis impresas	4776	Postgrado
Tesis digitales	3000	Postgrado

Source: Own elaboration

Once the problems were identified, an action plan was drawn up to eradicate the deficiencies detected. This tool delimits not only the actions to be carried out, but also those responsible and the dates for compliance.

The plan covers issues related to work planning and organization, human resources management and training, collection development, physical layout, storage and handling of documents, the state of the infrastructure and technological equipment, and user education.

The implementation of the planned actions, both in the short and long term, implies the safeguarding of valuable information, as well as the improvement of the library services provided by the institution in support of teaching, assistance and research.

Main actions

- Development of a comprehensive plan of annual activities that includes seminars, training and workshops for archive and library managers.
- Preparation of the procedures manual for the operation of the institutional library system.
- Elaboration of the disaster reduction plan for the Documentary Heritage based on the provisions of Resolution 201 of 2020.
- Systematic follow-up, with the establishment of a specific deadline to achieve its effectiveness.

- Evaluation, assessment and control, which makes it possible to identify whether or not progress is being made.

The proposed actions will be aimed at resisting threats as much as possible and quickly mitigating weaknesses, with the purpose of favoring the conservation and preservation of the documentary collection of the University of Guantánamo Library, and contributing to the quality of library services. The implementation of the planned actions, both in the short and long term, would imply the safeguarding of valuable information, as well as the improvement of the library services provided by the institution in support of teaching, assistance and research.

Once the actions have been implemented, the highest university authorities are paying attention to the university heritage, in accordance with the most recent regulations endorsed by the Council of State, especially to the documentary heritage as stated in the Official Gazette, and the training of those responsible for them and the improvement of the infrastructures that contribute to its safeguarding are being increased.

There is a qualified personnel in the information sciences in charge of the activity and the will to conserve and preserve the documentary fund on the part of the information personnel and the institutional support.

These actions have strengthened the process of preserving the documentary collections and work is underway to digitize them in their entirety. Some institutional and environmental risks have been identified that need to be mitigated to ensure the complete sustainability of the results.

The evidence allows determining that the results achieved have contributed to the fact that today the University has a Documentary Heritage, even though it is necessary to continue recovering and digitizing some of them.

The results obtained show the potential of the university library for the fulfillment of the objectives set.

Conclusions

Libraries, with the introduction of technologies, continue to be a source of recreation, information and knowledge of a whole country and nation, becoming a historical record of national identity, where a whole documentary heritage is found that accompanies the reader in the acquisition of knowledge. The

Alvis García, María de los Á. Pérez, Haydee Cachimaille: La gestión documental en función de la preservación

role of university libraries in the rescue and dissemination of identity and heritage is an essential link in the conservation of the historical memory of humanity, and of the university itself, it implies a recognition of the social and community historical memory, where the present is found, a past that includes from the origins of a country to the current development, its conservation and dissemination, allows new generations to know it and recognize it as their own. The preservation of documentary memory is a fact that necessarily corresponds to libraries and librarians, who must be prepared to assume this task and redesign their services, as the cultural and educational agents that they are.

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