

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

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**EXAMINING RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCESSES IN
SUPPORT OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE UNIVERSITY FOR
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GHANA**

KALEO SANWINE

2020



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SUPPORT OF SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE UNIVERSITY FOR
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GHANA**

BY

**KALEO SANWINE (Bachelor of Management Studies)
UDS/MSA/0234/16**

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



**THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND
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FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN SOCIAL ADMINISTRATION**

APRIL, 2020

DECLARATION

STUDENT

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work besides, citing from authorities whom I have duly acknowledged, no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere:

Candidate's Signature:

Date:

Name: KALEO SANWINE

SUPERVISOR'S

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University for Development Studies.

Supervisor's Signature:

Date:

Name: DR. AGBLEY K. GIDEON



University's records such as administrative records, students' records, personnel records, and among others are very crucial and contribute to the effective administration of a university. This study examined how records management practices and processes support service delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana. The Hybrid Records Life Cycle Model and Service Quality Gap Model were employed for the study. Cross-sectional design and mixed method approach (quantitative & qualitative) were employed. Simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select respondents. Questionnaire, interview, and observation guides were the main instruments used to collect data from a sample size of 164. This consists of teaching staff (HoDs), and non-teaching staff (senior members & senior staff). The study revealed the types and nature of records created/received and managed in the Institution, which included administrative records, students' records, personnel records, historical records, and among others. The study also showed that a good number of the practices and processes evaluated were found ineffective. For example, security, safety and confidentiality of records, staff capacity building (training) and disaster management practice. Also, processes such as usage and maintenance of records, retention and disposal of records as well as filing and retrieving of records were found ineffective. This is an indication that, respondents agreed that the practices and processes which were found to be ineffective could not enhance service delivery in the Institution. Respondents also cited lack of records management policy, lack of functional records and archives management units, ineffective records management systems, inadequate records management infrastructure, lack of regular training as challenges hindering the effective management of records in the Institution. The study therefore recommends that, the management and records staff should be committed to effective records management. Thus, funds should be devoted for the integration of the records management systems. Also, effective records management practices and processes should be observed that is, regular training should be organised for staff. Supervision of records staff should be intensified. Further, management should come out with an inadequate records management policy, which contains acceptable practices and processes so as to support dependable and accurate services, deliver prompt and timely services as well as inspire trust and confidence in the provision of services. In conclusion, records as important resources should be harnessed through effective records management practices and efficient processes for the enhancement of services.

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I dedicate this work to my wife, Helen Dapilah and our lovely children; Emelia Songnumah Sanwine, and Doreen Songsumah Sanwine and the entire family of Bayor for their encouragement and support.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|--|
| AS | Australia Standard |
| CCTV | Closed Circuit Television |
| CESPAM | Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management |
| CUETA | Connecticut Uniform Electronic Transactions Act |
| EDMS | Electronic Document Management System |
| EDRMS | Electronic Document Records Management System |
| EOCO | Economic and Organised Crime Office |
| ER | Electronic Records |
| ERKS | Electronic Records Keeping Systems |
| ERM | Electronic Records Management |
| ERME | Electronic Records Management Environment |
| ERMS | Electronic Records Management System |
| ESARBICA | Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives |
| EU | European Union |
| GHS | Ghana Health Service |
| GMA | Ghana Maritime Authority |
| HGRS | Hong Kong Records Service |
| HND | Higher National Diploma |
| HoD | Heads of Department |
| HRLCM | Hybrid Records Life Cycle Model |
| ICA | International Council of Archives |
| IRMT | International Records Management Trust |
| ISG | Information Solutions Group |
| ISO | International Organisation for Standardisation |
| ITS | Information Technology Services |
| LCC | Life Cycle Concept |
| MCU | Multi-Campus Universities |
| MFARI | Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana |
| MIS | Management Information System |





| | |
|--------|--|
| MMDA | Municipal and Metropolitan District Assemblies |
| MoH | Ministry of Health |
| NAA | National Archives of Australia |
| NAC | National Archives of Canada |
| NAG | National Archives of Ghana |
| NARSSA | National Council and Records Service of South Africa |
| NECCC | National Electronic Commerce Coordinating Council |
| PNDC | Provisional National Defense Council |
| PRAAA | Public Records and Archives Administration Act |
| PRAAD | Public Records and Archives Administration Department |
| PRISM | Professional Records and Information Services Management |
| RCM | Records Continuum Model |
| RFIT | Radio-Frequency Identification Technology |
| RIM | Records and Information Management |
| RLCM | Records Life Cycle Model |
| RM | Records Management |
| RMR | Records Management Risks |
| RMS | Records Management System |
| RMU | Records Management Unit |
| SSA | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| UDS | University for Development Studies |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| USA | United States of America |
| WB | World Bank |

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Information is at the centre of everything the university does i.e. its strategic planning, decision making, research and development, teaching and learning, service delivery among other things and hence, the knowledge and transmission of information is basic to the university's mission and vision (University of Wisconsin Madison, 2015). So, university records that contain information on students, staff, administration, and among other things are very crucial and contribute to the effective administration of the university. Therefore, proper records management is critical for the survival and efficient operation of the daily transactions of the university (Swan, Cunningham & Robertson, 2002). Thomassen (2001) indicated that records are a crucial entity in the daily conduct of business in any organisation. This is because, without records, no assessment can be made of whether individuals, private or public organisations have carried out the actions and transactions they are appointed to execute, or whether they ensured that these transactions meet the criteria of efficiency, legitimacy, or the principles of good governance.

For good governance, governments collect, disseminate, and utilise a larger volume of records than any other organisation. These records are important for the public and are used to hold governments accountable for the services they provide (Tafor, 2003 and Ngulube & Tafor 2006) emphasising the importance of records management. Government departments must, therefore, maintain effective records management systems. In supporting the above, Currall & Moss (2008) argued that the government must provide for the permanent keeping of its records since it needs to account to its people for its



administrative actions. Effective management of records enables the government to comply with issues of transparency. Again, governments will be able to prove its administrative process through the records they preserved. Tafor (2003) emphasises this in his citation from the International Council of Archives [ICA] (1997) that records provide evidence of human activities and transactions by protecting the rights of the general public and government. For instance, proper maintenance of records and the provision of information empower citizens to exercise their civil rights and also, question or criticize government actions and hold government officials accountable. Besides, the provision of accurate, reliable, and verifiable information helps them to detect and prevent corruption or other fraudulent dealings that undermine the effective and efficient service delivery by public servants (Wamukoya, 2000).

Records and the evidence they contain are the instruments by which organisations promote a climate of trust and demonstrate an overall commitment to achieving their goals (World Bank [WB], Information Solutions Group [ISG] & International Records Management Trust [IRMT], 2000). Hence, records as an important resource for organisations should be harnessed through effective records management [RM] practices and efficient processes spelled out by an adequate RM policy (policies, standards, guidelines, procedures, and so on).

Therefore, proper RM is the basis for accountability, transparency, democracy, poverty eradication, elimination of corruption, efficient use of public resources, decision making, and the provision of services (Mutula & Wamukoya, 2009). According to Chinyemba & Ngulube (2005), proper RM involves establishing systematic controls at every stage of the record's life cycle, by established principles and accepted models of RM. This ensures that

records with their collective knowledge are captured in the records management systems so that the information they contain is accessible when needed and can be shared in the organisation (Nengomasha & Mchombu, 2008).

Consequently, records management occupies a strategic position in the effective and efficient management of higher institutions of learning. Records keeping is central in the administration of higher institutions of learning because it documents the planning and implementation of an appropriate course of services allowing proper monitoring of work. As indicated by the University of Adelaide (2015), there are many reasons why records should be effectively kept by higher institutions of learning such as the universities. For instance, as a publicly funded institution operating in a heavily regulated and highly competitive environment, a university is expected to be compliant and accountable to an increasing number of external agencies and bodies, and the general public. Also, as part of government accountability, university records are one of its major assets that have value beyond its immediate environment. Akor and Udensi (2013) indicated that records represent the tangible product of the work of staff and others.

Therefore, recreating them in the event of a total loss would cost millions of dollars. Hence, the loss of the university's records, or even a part of them, could destroy the evidence of students' achievements, staff entitlements, and jeopardise the university's rights and interests. Besides, the National Archives of Australia [NAA] (2002) indicates that academic records of students must endure and remain trustworthy for a long time, and sometimes permanently.





However, achieving this is a challenge among higher institutions of learning like the universities because, they are highly decentralised organisations which house many autonomous individuals and departments that carry out the core functions of the institution (University of Adelaide, 2004). Besides, RM has become one of the most difficult tasks associated with educational service delivery. This, according to Shurville, Browne, and Whitaker (2008) is due to a lack of accurate, reliable, and trustworthy records in fulfilling evidential requirements as a result of poor RM. Attwood & Gill (2008) observed that many heads of academic institutions complained of lack of funds and material resources, inadequate qualified personnel coupled with lack of space as a result of the increasing students' population.

Iwhiwhu (2005) however believes that RM must be guided by some level of confidentiality, proper maintenance, security, and preservation of the content and context. Ibiam (2004) noted that many years of neglect of proper RM has done great damage to the educational sector. Okwilagwe and Njoku (2002) indicated that the poor management of records in Africa is due to factors such as lack of infrastructure, untrained personnel, and the absence of management information system (MIS) based policy not excluding Ghana and for that matter, University for Development Studies [UDS]. For instance, in the view of Seniwoliba et al. (2016), the records staff who maintain the registry system in UDS were ignorant of their duties and the filing cabinets which contain the paper evidence of the Institution were found to be inadequate. The question, therefore is, how do records management practices and processes support service delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana?

1.2 Problem Statement

Globally, organisations spend an average of 4 weeks in a year searching for or waiting on misfiled, mislabeled and lost information (Amo, 2016). Many of these organisations typically misfile 2% to 7% of their paper and electronic records [ER]. Specifically, paper records users waste up to 2 hours in a day looking for misplaced documents whilst electronic records users spend 7.5% of their time on electronic systems searching for files (Professional Records and Information Services Management [PRISM], 2004). This situation occurs because, at any given time, between 3% and 5% of organisations' files are lost or misplaced. According to PRISM, 90% of records once filed by the institution are hardly or never referred to again or immediately.

However, institutions such as the university prime objective is to impart knowledge (teaching and/or training), research, consultancy services, and deliver administrative services to improve quality of life (Afful-Broni, 2004) and this cannot be possible without proper RM. Yet, this is hampered by the continuous neglect of proper RM leading to weak institutional memory, delay in service provision, poor decision making among others (Musembi, 2004 & Kemoni, 2008).

According to Seniwoliba, Mahama, and Abilla, (2017) records are not regarded as an important resource that influences the effectiveness of the University for Development Studies. This is due to the absence of a legislative instrument (RM policy) to regulate the management of records. The writers noted that ignorance has engulfed staff involved in record management to the extent that records are moved from one office to the other without due cognizance to the maintenance and confidentiality culture which is likely to



affect the performance and reputation of the University and ultimately on service delivery. This, therefore, called for the proper management of records in UDS.

Besides, more could be achieved if the needed support is given to proper records management. Thus, service delivery particularly, administrative services can get better if the needed investment is made and attention given to effective records management. This implies that the lack of proper records management is likely to have negative consequences on the services provided by the University. Hence, examining records management practices and processes in support of service delivery in the University for Development Studies is relevant and timely.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main research question

How do records management practices and processes support service delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana?

1.3.2 Sub-research questions

The specific questions are;

1. What are the types and nature of records managed in UDS?
2. What are the records management practices and processes in UDS?
3. What records management policies and frameworks exist in UDS; and
4. How do existing records management practices and processes affect service delivery in UDS?



1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 Main research objective

To examine how records management practices and processes support service delivery in the University for Development Studies (UDS), Ghana.

1.4.2 Sub-research objectives

The specific research objectives are:

1. To examine the types and nature of records managed in UDS;
2. To evaluate the records management practices and processes in UDS;
3. To assess records management policies and frameworks that exist in UDS; and
4. To evaluate how existing records management practices and processes affect service delivery in UDS.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Records management is a challenge for many organisations across the world today. Hence, both public and private organisations battle with the huge numbers of paper and electronic records that are generated daily from their business activities. This study would, therefore, contribute to addressing the issue of poor RM in the following ways leading to the effective administration of the Institution in terms of administrative services, decisions, and so forth;

First of all, the study examined the types and nature of records in the Institution and adduced some evidence regarding current records managed by the University. Hence, the evidence from the study, therefore, provides the basis for developing mechanisms towards building staff capacity for the proper management of records in the Institution.



Secondly, the work provides a framework for the proper management of records in tertiary institutions in Ghana with emphases on UDS as a way of supporting service delivery for the achievement of its mandate. Thus, the study revealed the perceived and actual effectiveness of RM practices and processes in the Institution and how this supports service delivery. This, therefore, makes the study a significant guide to RM in the University for Development Studies.

Thirdly, this work further adds to the awareness creation among tertiary institutions on the need for proper RM and as an encouragement for them to adopt best practices and follow appropriate processes in managing records as a way of supporting service delivery, and decision making.

Finally, the findings of the research would serve as background literature for future researchers to consult for further expansion of knowledge in the area of RM. Thus, the research would serve as a guide to future researchers particularly, in the university environment.



1.6 Scope of the Study

Geographically, the study covered the four satellite campuses of the UDS thus, Tamale, Nyankpala, Navrongo, and Wa. It examined how records management practices and processes support service delivery in UDS. Specifically, to examine the types and nature of records managed in UDS; to evaluate the records management practices and processes in UDS; to assess records management policy in UDS and other frameworks, and to evaluate how existing records management practices and processes affect service delivery in UDS.

The study was also limited to some selected faculties registries and departments of the Institution. It was further limited to administrative records, staff records, and students' records kept and managed by these registries and departments. Because, universities are highly decentralised in which many autonomous individuals and departments carry out the core functions and hence, the types of records created and managed by them varied and so, it was not possible covering all faculties, departments, centres, sections, and units as well as the types of records created or received and managed by the Institution.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study was organised into five major chapters. The first chapter deals with the general introduction and is labeled as Chapter One. This chapter comprises the background of the study, problem statement, research questions and objectives, significance, scope, and organisation. Chapter Two covers the literature review of the study. This chapter provides detailed literature on the theoretical perspective; definition of concepts, the relevance of records and RM, nature of service provision and core mandate of a university, and challenges of RM, practices, and processes of RM as well as an empirical framework. Chapter Three presents the methodology of the study. This chapter discusses the methods employed in the study. These include the research approach, research design, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, methods of data analysis, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, limitations and delimitations, and chapter conclusion. Chapter Four covers the results and discussions. Under this chapter, the data are presented, analysed, and discussed in accordance with the stipulated objectives. Here, the objectives are answered. Chapter Five constitutes the summary, conclusions, and



recommendations. Thus, the summary and conclusions of the study are drawn, and recommendations made on the findings obtained from the field.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature is reviewed to show diverse opinions, views, agreements, disagreements, and trends of thoughts on a research topic that is correctly acknowledged in the text. Therefore, this part of the study reviews literature that relates to the study and is relevant to the topic and helps address the objectives. The review is in various sections thus, introduction, the definition of key concepts, theoretical and conceptual framework, conceptual review, empirical review, and implication of literature to the study.

2.2 Definition of Concepts

2.2.1 Record

A record refers to any recorded information or document produced/received as a result of the business conducted or completion of an activity in any office or department and this includes its content, context, and structure which is considered sufficient to produce evidence of business transacted or activity carried out regardless of form or medium.

2.2.2 Administrative records

Administrative records refer to records that support the administration of an institution that is created, captured, received, used or maintained in any format or medium by the staff of the institution in the course of duties or activities undertaken on behalf of the institution, and this includes paper and electronic records (Dalhousie University, 2016).



2.2.3 Personnel records

Staff are among an organisation's most important, and usually most expensive, assets. Like any other asset, staff are a resource that must be deployed to maximum advantage. The proper management of personnel records can make a significant contribution to this objective by ensuring that information is available to take decisions and to protect the rights both of the state and individuals. A personnel records system should run effectively whether it is in a purely paper-based environment or the emerging electronic environment. (International Records Management Trust, 1999).

2.2.4 Students records

Also, students' records are the records that contain the students' details and these are created starting from admission till the time they complete or even beyond. This could also take any format.

2.2.5 Service delivery

Service delivery is seen as a general term for every activity carried out to provide quick, accessible, reliable, and satisfactory services in responding to and resolving a community or citizens of a country problem (Mdluli, 2008). Simply put, service delivery is the designing and provision of services to individuals, organisations or groups, and to the general public in a country or state. For instance, staff promotion, staff study leave, teaching and learning, and so on. According to Murungaru (2003), services are provided or supported by government institutions such as educational, health, and other social services to the people and such services are mostly paid for by the government. Hence, public institutions exist for these reasons:

- i. to deliver services to the citizens;



- ii. to provide social services and infrastructure;
- iii. to translate government policies and programmes into activities, (to achieve development goals); and
- iv. to create an enabling environment that is conducive to individual and the private sector.

2.3 Theoretical and Conceptual framework

This section of the literature review takes a look at two models and a framework underpinning the study. The two models reviewed are; hybrid records life cycle model and service quality gaps model. A conceptual framework has also been presented and discussed to help put the work in its right perspective.

2.3.1 Hybrid records life cycle model [HRLCM]

The evolution of RM models from Records Life Cycle Model to the Records Continuum Model led to the creation of the Hybrid/Modified Records Life Cycle Model. HRLCM combines the pre-natal phase of the Records Continuum Model [RCM] and that of the conceptual stages of the Records Life Cycle Model [RLCM] (Chachage & Ngulube, 2006). It is argued that the model

explains RM operations better because, it combines the stages of the two models in the management of both paper-based and electronic records.

However, the core concept in RM is the record's life cycle. This is recognised by many RM textbooks and widely accepted by professionals in the discipline. As an important concept, 'the life cycle' provides the greatest potential for the effective management of recorded information especially, where records are in paper format.

As indicated by Shepherd and Yeo (2003) that, Theodore R. Schellenberg in the United States of America [USA] started RM with the Life Cycle Concept [LCC] in 1934, which became a base for



modern day RM. This model is designed to guide the effective and efficient management of physical records at that time. The LCC consists of three phases which include creation, maintenance & use, and disposition. In the American perspective, the life cycle of a record begins when it is first created, maintained, and actively used by the creator(s). As record continues to be kept for some period of infrequent use in off-site records centres, and/or when selected as archives and transferred to an archival institution, or destroy when they lose their continuing value (Yusof & Chell, 2000). The life concept reflects the opinion that all records, irrespective of form and purpose, pass through certain well-defined phases (Newton, 1989). Gill (1993) also observed that, the concept shows a movement of records in logical steps from the creation, through its use, storage, and retention in active files, to its transfer to inactive files for storage, and to its final disposal. The life concept is likened to the creation-to-destruction analogous of a biological birth-to-death of an organism. Thus, the biological organism is born (created), lives (uses) and dies (disposes) or (archives) particularly, records with continuing value. The LCC is therefore a helpful way of looking at the record's progressive stages.

As noted by Heywood (1992), the traditional paper-based life concept controls the systematic management of recorded information. The concept focuses prominently on the container of the information or the medium that carries the information. Experts however indicated that, the LCC was not suitable for technology generated records especially, with the advent of Information Communication Technology [ICT] (Yusof & Chell, 2000).

Hence, a new model emerged thus, the Records Continuum Model [RCM] which guides the management of electronic records. The Australia Standard [AS 3490] (1996) cited in Flynn (2001) defines the RCM... as a consistent and coherent regime of management process from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of records keeping systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives. The continuum model advocates for a RM process

where both record managers and archivists are involved in the ongoing management of recorded information.

Electronic records are not tangible objects as opposed to paper records and according to Kemoni (2008), the continuum model is widely accepted for managing records and archives both in paper and electronic format. The Australian Society of Archivists (2010) noted in the model that, it's the content of the record that is of interest and no longer the medium as in the case of physical records. As these records are technology dependent, the content is prone to transformation and conversion. Whilst the LCC works best for physical records, the continuum concept works well for the electronic records. This is emphasised by An (2003) that, the continuum concept is more ideal for paperless records than the physical records.

However, the models discussed above, suggest some similarities and differences between the RCM and LCC in that, the former covers creation, preservation, and exploitation of records as archives. The statement that the RCM is a 'consistent and coherent' management regime contrasts with a salient feature of the life cycle model thus, the movement of records and transfer of responsibility for instance, active use in the office of the creator(s), through to the semi-active use and inactive storage in a records centre and archival appraisal and selection, to destruction or permanent preservation in archives. Significantly, the assertion that a management regime based on the RCM covers the design of recordkeeping systems and thus, controls what might be termed the pre-natal phase in the life of a record, while the life cycle is typically described as beginning at 'birth' or creation. The RCM is then seen as an emerging overview of records and archives management. McKemmish (2001); Upward, (2009) cited in Proscovia, (2013) alluded that, the RCM gives more understanding to archives and RM responsibility by providing a framework. McKemmish (2001) noted that, the RCM model considers records as in the process of becoming, which can be recalled for further processing. Upward (2000) indicates that the evidentiary, transactional, and contextual



nature of records are emphasised better by this model. Whilst Mckemmish (1997) notes that, the LCC and RCM are clearly outlined where the continuum concept is in a continuous state thus, no separate parts are discernible showing a continuous series of elements passing into each other. While the life model outlines clearly the definable stages in records keeping, and creates a sharp distinction between current and historical records keeping the RCM attempts bringing archivists and records managers together by integrating the records keeping and archival process, Atherton (1985) observes that, the strict adherence to the LCC principles could undermine the cooperation and coordination of archivists and records managers.

Hence, the evolution of RM models from RLCM to that of RCM led to the creation of the Hybrid/Modified Records Life Cycle Model [HRLCM] which combines the pre-natal phase of the RCM and that of the conceptual stages of RLCM (Chachage & Ngulube, 2006). The HRLCM is considered as a blend of the two models. In the design stage of this model, archivists and records managers appraise records and decide which records can better support the functions of the organisation. Hence, the collaboration between records professionals in the system design enables the creation of the right records that contain the right information in the right formats. They also

arrange the records to facilitate their use and systematically dispose of records which lose their continuing value. Management therefore need to consider the pre-natal phase of the RCM critically and that of the conceptual stages of the RLCM in the management of their records especially, where both records (paper & electronic) are created and managed (Yusof & Chell, 2002). Figure 2.1 below depicts the various stages of the HRLCM. In the case of UDS, issues of records management are not clear as which records management models is employed in its records management.

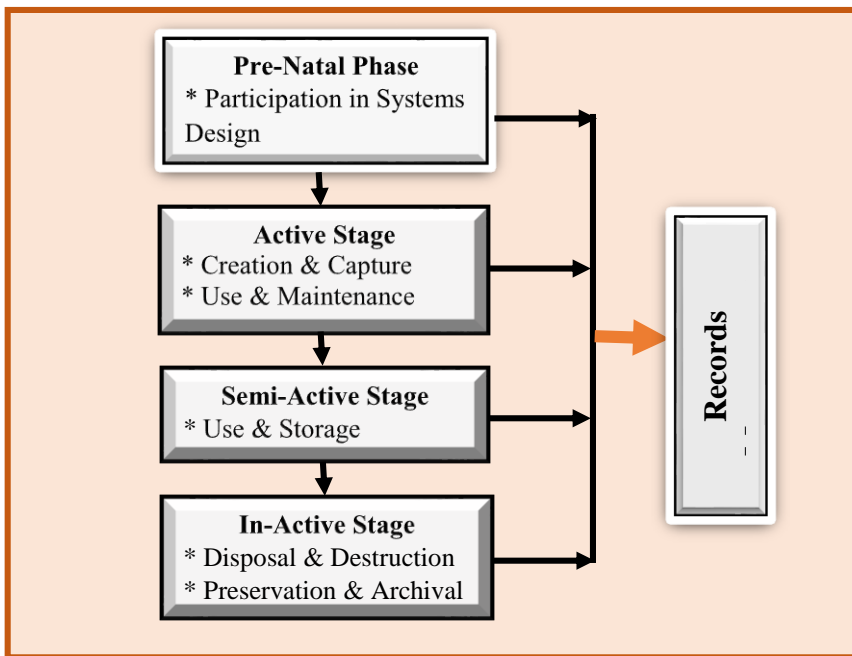


Figure 2.1: Hybrid Records Life Cycle Model

Source: Adapted from Amo, 2016

2.3.2 Relevance of the Hybrid Records Life Cycle Model to the study

The pre-natal phase requires participatory approach thus, professionals (records managers, archivists, records staff), system designers, and management of UDS must collaborate in the design process of the records systems. As noted by Myburgh (2005) that, all stakeholders need to be involved in the design of the records system. This is because, the involvement of all stakeholders is important and leaving them out in the process implies that some records would disappear from the sub-systems because many system designers are not good in records and archives management (Chachage & Ngulube, 2006).

The active stage considers records capturing/creation, usage and maintenance. The activities of UDS involve the creation, usage, and maintenance of records so as to support service delivery, decision making and among other things in the interest of its clients. Iwhiwhu (2005) noted that once a record is created in the organisation system, it could be classified as administrative or academic and current or non-current depending on the type of information it contains. Hence,



the Institution's records may be created and classified based on dates, numbers, subject, geographic, alphabetic, alpha-numerical and index is created based on these filing classification. This is to ensure easy retrieval and security of records and also to cut off delay in providing services in the Institution.

Northwest Territories (2012) indicated that some records in their semi-active stage are barely used on daily basis. Records in this stage are less frequently used and get to the in-active stage. The filing systems in this stage should enable records to be stored in an easily accessible, conducive and in a good room temperature pending their destruction according to the Institution's retention and disposal policy. Unfortunately, findings revealed that the Institution lacks retention and disposal schedules. Also, issue of proper storage is linked to privacy, security issues, access controls and unauthorised destruction of records.

In the in-active stage, records are considered to have finished their active life and not needed for immediate use in the current system of the Institution. At the in-active stage, records are considered less valuable to the Institution and a greater number of the records must be destroyed and a smaller number kept in the archival centres (Northwest Territories, 2012). It is therefore important for the

Institution to have RM policy that spells out how records should be disposed of and it must be made known to all staff so that confidential information is not leaked to unauthorised users or carry about ignorantly in the Institution as noted by Seniwoliba et al. (2016). Because some state laws require that records be made accessible to the public for a certain number of years before they are disposed of (Tucker, 2012).

The HRLCM is a modified model of the two models mentioned above for the proper management of records in every institution and not excluding UDS. Because, the model combines the phases of the two models so as to draw the strength of the two models for the proper management



of records. Besides, the model is flexibility and acceptability for the management of both records (paper-based and electronic records). Hence, this study uses the model as its underpinning model since the Institution creates both physical and non-physical records in its current records management systems.

2.3.3 Service Quality Gaps Model (The Model Gap)

The Model Gap is the difference between what customers expect and what management perceives. If expectations exceed performance, perceived quality is less than satisfactory and customer dissatisfaction sets in (Parasuraman et al., 1985 and Lewis & Mitchell, 1990). Parasuraman however identifies four specific gaps which resulted in the fifth gap (Zeithaml & Bitner, 2001). These gaps are discussed in turn:

➤ **Knowledge gap (1)**

Organisations must do well to identify the expectations of clients because, when clients' expectations are not well identified, the expectation of clients is likely to reduce. Knowledge gap is the difference between management's perception and customers' expectation. According to Abuki (2014), clients expect some kind of service which they used as a yardstick to measure perceived service and performance. Hence, management should forecast on expectations when designing services. The knowledge gap depends on upward communication thus, from customers to top management which goes through a number of layers of management. Therefore, the size of an organisation, the extent of marketing research helps to ascertain customers' expectations.

➤ **Design gap (2)**

Design gap looks at how well service design specifications suit management's perception and customer expectations. Hence, the extent of management's belief on the important of service quality, possibility, and the availability of resources for the improvement of services. However, the lack of management commitment to service quality, degree of goal setting, degree of



standardisation, and the perception of feasibility all affect services (Kasper et al. 2006). This therefore calls for the involvement of all parties as indicated in the first stage of the HRLCM above. Wieslaw (2009) thought goals setting and standardising a delivery process could help management succeed in this gap.

➤ **Performance gap (3)**

This gap considers variation in service design and service delivery. The function comprises several variables in service delivery since individuals or units perform the service, the quality may be affected by such factors as skill level, type of training received, degree of role agreeability or conflict, and job fit. The service recovery efforts together with the extent of responsibility and empowerment also affect the size of this gap. Gronroos (2007) suggests measures to overcome this gap which includes introducing effective internal marketing, changing the supervisory system, organising training for employees and recruiting the right staff.

➤ **Communications gap (4)**

Communications is the fourth gap in the model which shows the difference between what is promised to customers either directly or indirectly and what is being delivered. However, when there is disruption of what is communicated and what is delivered, customers tend not to be satisfied with services. In avoiding the challenges of this gap, an organisation should pay attention to advertising campaigns planning, they must be accurate and realistic.

➤ **Gap five (5)**

The gap five is the total accumulation of variation in gaps 1 through 4. Parasuraman et al. (1985) identifies ten (10) factors which includes; tangible, reliability, responsiveness, courtesy, credibility, security, accessibility, communication and understanding the customer. These factors are further collapsed into five (5) dimensions as discussed below:

➤ **Reliability;** reliability is the ability to perform the services promised dependably and accurately. Thus, doing what one promised to do. Hence, organisation's ability to deliver



its promises is the most vital factor and is perceived by customers in delivering quality service.

- **Responsiveness**; organisation willingness to help customers and provide them prompt service is considered being responsible. An organisation is therefore judged base on the amount of time spent and the attention given to a customer complaint, requests, questions, and problems. Hence, attending to these issues quickly is rated higher on this dimension.
- **Assurance**; another dimension of service quality is assurance which is seen as the employees' knowledge and courtesy as well as the ability of an organisation's employees to inspire trust and confidence.
- **Empathy**; empathy is assuming the position of another person who is in a particular situation. Thus, individualised attention an organisation provides its customers.
- **Tangibles**; tangibles are the physical appearance of the facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication materials like records. The above-mentioned dimensions rely heavily on the personnel and the communication materials in support of effective service delivery. Hence, serving as a hub through which everything revolves in an organisation. These tangibles should therefore be given the needed attention if organisations want to support effective service delivery.



2.3.4 Relevance of the Gap Model to the study

This study aims at examining RM practices and processes in support of service delivery in UDS, Ghana. UDS aims of becoming a world class pro-poor scholarship cannot be possible if records are poorly managed and since poor RM is characterised by ineffective service delivery. This beautiful vision cannot be achieved without effective RM practices and processes. Marutha (2011) indicated that, proper RM ensures that records are accessible, and available for use. Thus, records

should be easily accessed and retrieved to making informed decisions, solving problems, preventing litigations, providing services and among other things.

Hence, the gap model underscores the dimensions used in measuring service quality which include reliability (provision of dependable and accurate services). Also, responsiveness which looks at (promptness, timeliness, and attention) given to service delivery. Further, assurance considers (competence, courtesy, credibility, and security of services) that is, the knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence. Empathy also considers the position of the customer (understanding the customer). Finally, tangibles which includes (appearance of the physical facilities, equipment, personnel) that is, the knowledge, capacity, skills and awareness level of staff, and the communication materials like records. These factors are clear way of evaluating services in UDS.

2.3.5 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is the researcher's understanding of how the particular variables in his/her study connect with each other. Thus, it identifies the variables required in the research investigation. It is the researcher's "map" in pursuing the investigation (Regoniel, 2015). The reasoning is, it is to assist the researcher organise her/his thoughts, and explains relationship among interconnected concepts.



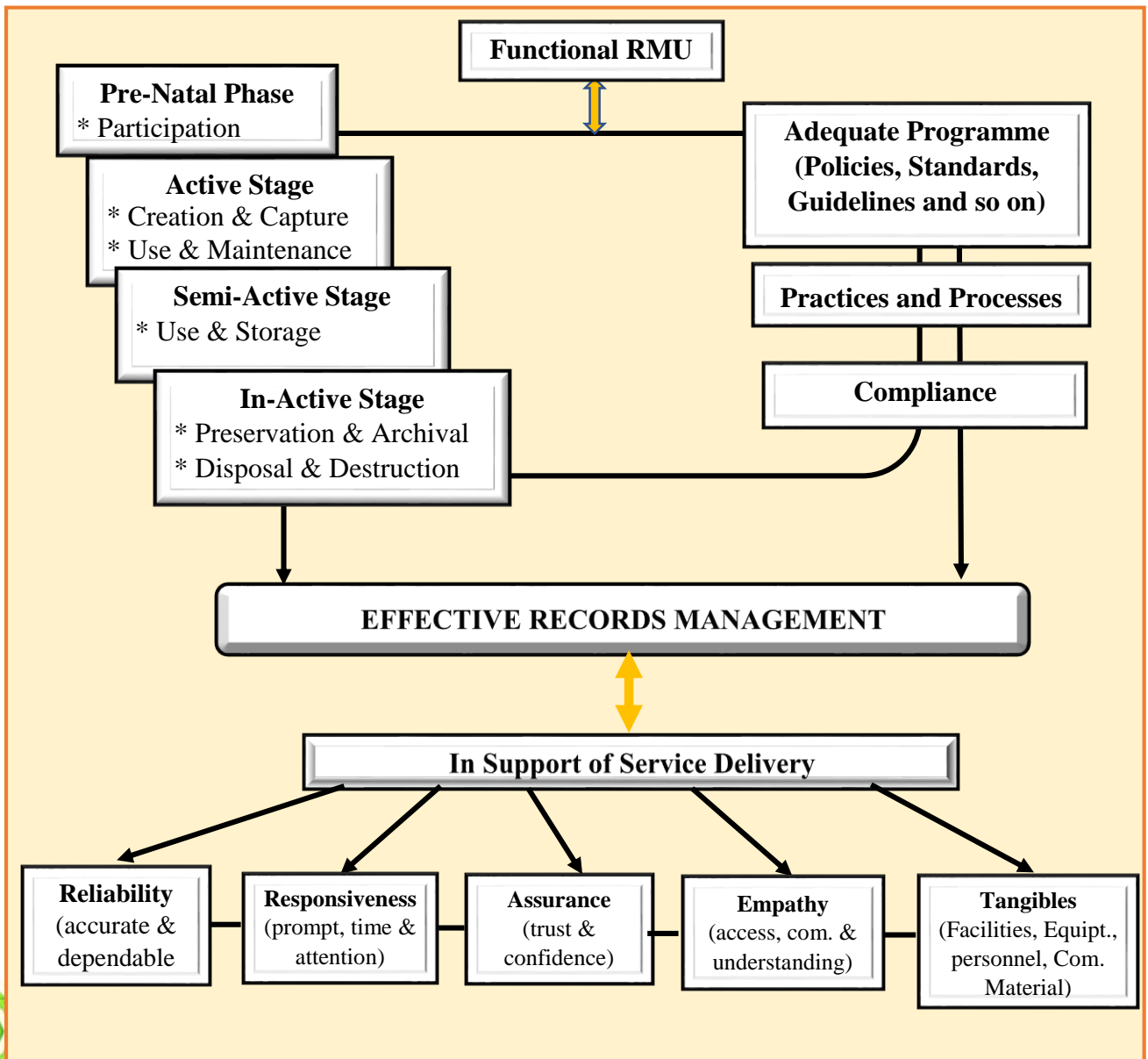


Figure 2.2: Conceptual Frame Work

Source: Author's Construct, 2018

The frame displays how effective RM can be achieved and how it intends supporting service delivery. The stages of RM begin from the pre-natal stage of the records continuum model through to the stages of the records life cycle concept thus, the active, semi-active and end at the in-active stage. For an institution to manage its records effectively, it should have a functional records management unit. This unit should design and implement an adequate RM policy such as RM policy document, guidelines, standards, procedures and so on in the organisation. The policy must

spell out acceptable practices and processes of RM in the organisation. However, the RM units should ensure that staff comply with the practices and processes spelt out in the policy and perhaps other important frameworks. All concern should participate – starting from top management to records staff, system designers, and so on – for the proper management of records that would support enhance service delivery in the organisation.

However, effective service delivery is measured using dimensions from the gap model which includes; reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. These variables are put together as a conceptual framework in Figure 2.2 above and which are further discussed below.

a. Records management unit

There should be an organised RM unit in place to ensure that RM policy is developed and implemented by the unit across the organisation. The unit should organise regular training for records staff in order to bridge the knowledge gap of RM and also ensure that awareness is created among staff of the importance of records creation and maintenance. Further, the unit should oversee the effective management of records and their related activities in the organisation. Thus, monitor, and evaluate the performance of the records system for review and sustenance.



b. Pre-natal stage

➤ **Participating in the systems design**

According to Shepherd & Yeo (2003), participating in the system design calls for the involvement of all stakeholders thus, records professionals (records managers, archivists, records staff), management, and corporate system designers to come together to design the records systems. This stage is referred to by Flynn (2001) as the pre-natal phase. Research conducted by Myburgh (2005) observes that, the involvement of all stakeholders in designing the systems can improve RM in organisations. NECCC (2004) concurs that, engaging all the parties in the design of records systems is crucial. Because, this will ensure that records are identified and the methods used to

capture records which provide evidence of an activity. For instance, records manager can help articulate what systems and rules that are needed to ensure that records are captured and maintained, how long the records should be kept to meet business and other requirements, how they should be stored, and who should have access to them. Kemoni et al. (2007), Myburgh (2005), and Shepherd & Yeo (2003) all emphasizing the need to collaborate thus, records professionals and information systems experts in this stage so as to create the right records that contain the right information in the right formats and how these records should be organised to facilitate their use.

Besides, the RLCM and RCM employed by Chachage & Ngulube (2006) into some companies in the Iringa region in Tanzania discovered that, leaving stakeholders out in the systems design process means leaving out some records from the sub-systems. Because, corporate system designers lack the knowledge in the field of records and archives management. Also, Lyytinen & Ngwenyama (1992) observe that, the adoption and practices of effective RM require a concerted effort of all parties, hence, the system designers and users of records must collaborate.

Dearstyne (2002), however believes that, collaboration alone cannot provide the required solution and hence, calls for an adequate RM programme to be instituted and this should take into accounts

organisational culture because, what takes place in an organisation is likely to impact on the implementation, practices, and processes of recordkeeping and the records systems. This therefore calls for the re-assignment of responsibility between the organisation and the RM programmes. Also, NECCC (2004) notes that, systems are often designed with no recordkeeping requirements and valuable records that protect the rights of the people as well as historical events of an organisation can easily be lost. Hence, the lack of incorporation of recordkeeping requirements cause records that should be destroyed to be kept longer than required resulting in weak decision making leading to poor service delivery.



c. Active stage

➤ Records creation and capturing

According to Yusof & Chell (1999), records creation and capturing involves developing consistent rules to ensure that records have integrity and are accessible as well as deciding on the systems to log and track records, and procedures for registering, classifying and indexing. IRMT (2009) said the deliberate actions that results in the storage of a record in a recordkeeping system, especially, in the computer environment includes registration and classification of record and the addition of metadata about the record. And for certain business activities, these actions may be designed into the electronic systems so that the capture of records into the recordkeeping systems takes place when records are created. HRS (2011) calls for all records regardless of format and technological environment in which records are collected, created, be captured into and maintained in an identifiable and proper recordkeeping system. The purpose of capturing a record into a proper recordkeeping system is to establish a relationship between the record, creator, and business context that originated it as well as its link to other records. These records should be complete i.e., contain the content, structure, and contextual information necessary to document an official activity or transaction as evidence of a business.

NAC (2003) opines that, the most important part of the creation and capturing of records is by recognising records as the main source of information that is generated. This is to empower employees to assess the value and role of the information contained at the point of creation within a recognized framework, so as to facilitate the organisation's activities and policies. Iwhiwhu (2005) thought once a record is created in a university system, it could be classified as administrative or academic and current or non-current depending on the type of information it carries. Mrwebi (2000) submits that, records created should be guided by records retention standards and complies with the organisation regulations to avoid duplication of information.

According to Tucker (2012), records are created automatically by the ERMS in organisations that use it whilst, paper-based records are created manually by individuals.

HRS (2011), however calls for organisations to draw up guidelines for their staff on records capture. For example, the guide should aim at the type records that should be created and kept thus, inward and outward communication (letters, memoranda, e-mails, forms) with external persons and bodies which is directly related to the functions and activities of the organisation; minutes and other records of meetings, consultations and deliberations pertinent to the decision-making process, formulation of policies and procedures or transactions of business; and major oral decisions and commitments. Azameti & Adjei (2013), thought improper capturing of data can render the entire record unauthentic and unacceptable when relevant questions are posed. In summation, the adequacy of RM in any business environment should cater for; proof of originality, proof of compliance of data capturing, and proof of retention or disposal.

➤ **Records use and maintenance**

NAC (2003) considers records usage as when records are actively accessed and shared by all employees of an organisation. This means that, there is easy and timely access to information, and it must be accurate for the intended purpose. Also, IRMT (2009), notes that, maintenance in a records and archives environment is the daily care of records and archives, particularly current and semi-current records housed in records offices or records centres, in order to protect those records from environmental hazards or other physical dangers. Regardless of the format, records need to be managed and maintained properly in order that they are kept current and secure, and should not be disposed of haphazardly or kept longer than required. It is prudent on the part of tertiary institutions to establish policy guidelines regarding the classification of documents into records and security concerns as all these form part of records maintenance. This could be made possible by establishing security measures and access controls to prevent unauthorised access into the system.



Mensah and Adams (2014), conducted a research into both private and public hospitals in Ghana and noted that, an effective management of hospitals' records are critical factors in providing capacity for hospitals' efficiency, information security and confidentiality, quality of care and decision making and universities may not be an exception.

Also, Wamukoya (2000), conducted a comparative study into the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) disclosed that, many African countries create and maintain records in paper formats. This revelation was due to the fact that most records professionals were accustomed to working with paper records so much that they perceived the act of keeping records in the context of a paper-based environment. The IRMT (2005), in its survey revealed that, there have been a decline over the last decades in the management of records in developing countries in SSA, which has had detrimental effects on efficiency, accountability, security, confidentiality, service delivery and decision making in many organisations. Also, Tale & Alefaio (2011), noted that, in SSA, RM was not given the needed attention and support just like their developed counterparts. They further thought that, the need to have a sound system was yet to be realised by the affected countries. Hence, RM practices, processes, as well as compliance to legal and policy guidelines, risk management were not given the needed attention by organisations, and interestingly, Seniwoliba et al., (2016), claimed that, staff engage in RM are ignorant of their duties because, they carried records about without observing the basic tenets of good RM.

d. Semi-active stage

➤ Use and storage

Records storage should facilitate user access and ensure that they are protected from unauthorised access, use, disclosure, removal or pilfering, deterioration, loss or destruction. Organisations should have policy guidelines on their records storage and confidential or classified records must



be given the needed protection. In the case of paper-based records, institutions should note that paper deteriorate faster in a very poor environment especially, high temperature and humidity condition. Also, mold could grow on paper which can be harmful to human health.

HRS (2011), however prescribes some good RM practices for paper-based records. Thus, paper records should be kept in a clean and dry environment for example, keeping records on the bear floor or close to a window that rain can easily enter should be avoided and hence, store in proper facilities such as filing cabinets and filing racks instead of stacking them on the ground/floor; regular check-up must be conducted on the records after the occurrence of events such as rainstorm to ensure that they are not damaged; and paper-based records which have long-term value are recommended to be kept in a favorable temperature and relative humidity.

Also, for ER, the storage media should be considered seriously. The storage system, environment and handling procedures should be based on good RM and other activities for instance, volume and growth rate of records, records security needs, retrieval requirements and preservation needs. In caring for ER, the following practices are recommended as international RM best practices in storing ER in an ERKS. Thus, hardware and software of the ERKS should be installed at a proper

location, that is, the server room should meet industry standards and other related requirements, digital media such as optical disc and ER should be kept in a safe environment with suitable climate control under regular monitoring, a programme should be set up to monitor and refresh the digital media regularly, for example, transferring the records to a new optical disc, also the life span of the media to ensure the accessibility and usability of records over time, a programme should be set up to back up records and the associated metadata regularly to prevent their loss or damage, migration of records, the associated metadata and audit trails should be conducted through successive hardware/software upgrades to retain the content, context, and structure of records for their preservation and access over time, the storage requirements and arrangements should be



regularly reviewed to meet RM and business needs, and proper documentation should be maintained on the storage arrangements.

e. In-active stage

➤ **Disposal and destruction**

In every organisation, preservation and disposal of recorded information are critical concerns that must be governed by formalised policies and procedures rather than the discretion of individual employees. The policy should determine how long records need to be kept to satisfy all requirements. Also, develop effective procedures for implementing retention guidance that defines the responsibilities of RM as a business discipline (Saffady, 2016). Adelaide University (2004) sees records disposal as a process whereby organisation through its records manager destroys or erases ephemeral records or transfers records without continuing value to an archival centre for permanent preservation. The purpose of disposal or destruction is to permanently remove records from active use, with no possibility of reconstructing the information (Nye, 2010). IRMT (2009) thought disposal/destruction of records could be done through incineration, pulping, shredding, deletion or in another method, so that it is impossible to reconstruct the records. Chimyenba and Ngulube (2005), said a records retention programme provides a timetable and consistent procedures for maintaining the organisation's records, moving the records to inactive storage when appropriate and destroying records when they are no longer valuable to the organisation. Saffady (2016), indicated that, records in the inactive phase of the information life cycle principal goal is economical storage. The author thought records storage is a costly venture and remains one of the organisation's operating costs. Therefore, attention should be given to RM early enough in order to reduce cost.

However, the issue of inappropriate records destruction in South Africa informed the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa [NARSSA] (2006) stated that, organisations should



determine the length of time for retaining records before disposal. Dhabi (2009) called on records officers to set the period for keeping different types of records, based on different records values or use such as administrative, legal, research, and financial values. Yet, the systematic disposal of universities records that have been maintained for the prescribed retention period is the overall responsibility of concern to tertiary institutions. University records that is scheduled for destruction must be placed in a secure location to guard against unauthorised access till destruction takes place.

The IRMT (2003a) identified lack of records retention and disposition policies as one of the challenges faces by many African countries especially, in the ESARBICA region. This was evident in a study by Balasu (2009), that no public sector organisation in Ghana applies records retention and disposition schedules in managing their records. The author further expatiates that, the absence of records retention and disposition schedule is a serious weakness in the governments' disposition infrastructure. A later argument was that, once records are no longer needed by their creating agencies, archivists must make a final decision on them; that is, whether records merit continued maintenance and preservation in archives or destroyed or disposed of (Marshall, 2006). Consequently, the delay in authorizing the disposal of records may result in unnecessary

accumulation of records (Mnjama, 2006). However, information should be maintained in a manner that serves the need of the organisation and any information that are no longer needed should be efficiently disposed of (Atuloma, 2011).

➤ **Archival and preservation**

In a records and archives environment, the act of protecting records against damage or deterioration is the passive protection of archival material in which the item is not subject to any physical or chemical treatment (IRMT, 2009). Preserving records effectively means that, records must be stored in a safe and secure location and display under appropriate preservation conditions (Kasetsart University Archives, 2010). A study by Ngulube (2003), stated that, records and



archives help to establish communication between the past and future generations. The author further maintained that, without records and archives, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for records users to learn from past successes or failures and also, limits the society's ability to act based on sound information. This means that, one cannot fully explain the ever changing present and inform the future with certainty without records and archives.

Cox (2000), indicates that, no coherent system of records and archives management existed in USA. He said this was a major barrier to the successful protection of the nation's documentary heritage and the scheme between records officers and other information professionals. Dikopoulou & Mihiotis (2010), indicated in a study conducted into the European Union [EU] framework of the Information Society which revealed that, a lot of public organisations opted to preserve parts of their archives by digitisation. Also, Ngulube and Tafor (2006), captures that, the overwhelming challenge of archivists and records managers in SSA is a long-term preservation and management of electronic records especially, converting paper records to ER form by means of microfilming, scanning or in other technological means.

In Ghana, Akussah (2002) noted that, the inadequacies of awareness creation in preserving records among staff and users of public records in the registries of Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in the country was non-existence. This was attributed to inadequate professional training of staff and the lack of preservation education in the form of seminars and workshops. This was not different from subsequent surveys conducted by Adams (2010) & Mensah (2011) as in Amo (2016) into MMDA's and public hospitals respectively. In their surveys, they found out that most common equipment used in preserving public sector records were steel cabinets and wooden shelves and this equipment were however inadequate. As a result, records are found on any available ground/floors space posing danger to records and their confidentiality is in doubt in organisations in Africa not excluding the UDS.



2.4 Conceptual Review

2.4.1 Concept of records

The concept “record” needs to be fully explored. A record is defined either in terms of the physical tangible format - it appears, or in terms of the information it contains. It must be noted that records differ in format or size, and have different contents. The term record comes from the Latin word “recordari”, which means to recall, or to remember, or bring back to mind, and this is exactly what records do (Pember & Cowan, 2010). Cox (2001) explains that, records are the extension of human memory, purposefully created to record information, document transactions, communicate thoughts, substantiate claims, advance explanations, offer justifications as well as providing lasting evidence of events.

Records can therefore be defined as documented information, in any form, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity. Again, Langemo (1995) considers record as the memory of an organisation, raw material for decision making and which is the basis for legal defensibility (University of Education, Winneba, 2000). Kallus (1991) also defines records as written or oral

evidence that is collected and kept for use. The most commonly used records are forms, correspondence, reports and books which are written, printed or typed on paper. Oral records are human voice on tape, video and also stored on cassettes or on other magnetic media. In support of Kallus’s (1991) definition, Quible (1996) defined records as informational documents such as forms, letters, memoranda, reports, and manuals used in carrying out various functions.

Hence, record is described as an information captured for re-use at a later stage as evidence of an activity or action undertaken, and a basis on which future decisions are made or services provided (Penn et al., 1994). As noted by Mbiti (1978 as in Seniwoliba, et al., 2017), higher education records comprise all the books and files or other documents containing information relating to what



goes on in that institution, who is in the institution as well as what type of property the institution owns. Records are important and it is difficult to imagine life of an institution without them particularly, in the running of UDS.

2.4.2 Records management

According to Australian Society of Archivists (2010), RM is a discipline and organisational function which involves managing records to meet operational business needs, accountability requirements, and community expectations. Also, Kemoni (2007) & Manyambula (2007) view RM as a subdivision of information management which entails the management of all information in an enterprise and the management of people, hardware, software, and systems that provide the information. However, Blake (2005) thought that, instituting proper RM comes with a number of benefits such as supporting efficient joint work and information exchange, facilitating evidence-based policy, making and supporting the administration of data protection principles, and effective implementation of Freedom of Information and other legislation. Kemoni (2008) further outlines some benefits of an effective RM which include; supporting accountability, making reliable information available, and sharing of extraction and summarisation.



2.4.3 RM and service provision in the university system

The link between effective RM and improved service delivery is undisputable. Hence, RM is an integral part of any public sector reform programme which improves the effectiveness and efficiency of public service (Kemoni, 2008 cited in Abuki, 2014). The opening of universities, or the emerging of multi-campus universities such as UDS, and the introduction of new programmes poses some challenges and difficulties to the documentation and management, decision making as well as service delivery (Gregory, 2004). Universities, particularly faculties, and schools should identify and maintain records series that provide evidence of some core activities such as teaching,

learning, research, consultancy, decision making, service delivery among others (Chimyenba & Ngulube, 2005). However, the centralised nature of Multi-Campus Universities [MCUs] and their quest for standardisation, quality and uniformity do not allow campuses to provide important administrative services to their clients (Freeman, 1998; Goussal & Lezcano, 2003). For example, the central campus is responsible for the issuances of certificates, introductory letters, attestation letters, transcripts, and deferment letters to all students. It also issues and approves staff leaves, promotion, transfers, allowances, scholarships or sponsorships, introductory letters among others. Hence, MCUs have some basic challenges in providing and delivering equivalent and quality standard services to these clients on the various campuses.

Besides, people on the other campuses face challenges in traveling to the main campus for essential administrative services and sometimes authentication of a document. Often times, subsidiaries campuses have to give confirmation before a person can obtain the services which sometimes result in delay resulting in frustrations, and sometimes duplication of efforts. However, Armstrong (2016) thought it is necessary for an organisation to understand its customer service systems and procedures employed. Kift (2004) notes how MCUs are seriously challenged and constrained in providing effective academic services. Ngoepe (2004) cited in Seniwoliba et al. (2016) said sound RM is the foundation any higher educational institution needs to support services in order to fulfill its obligation of accountability and protecting its rights.

2.4.4 Relevance of RM in the university system

Information is at the centre of everything a university does. Thus, for its strategic planning, decision making, research and development, teaching and learning, service delivery leading to the achievement of its mandate. The knowledge and transmission of information is basic to a university's mission and vision (University of Wisconsin Madison, 2015). According to Daily

Graphic (2017), record is the blood that runs through the veins of every successful organisation. For an organisation to succeed, it must preserve and protect its records. Seniwoliba et al. (2016) indicate that, records play a crucial role in higher education management. This starts from its establishment to the stages of development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, accreditation and re-accreditation of its programmes. Essentially, information ensures the survival of an institution like the university. Therefore, this recorded information deserves to be managed like other resources. Hence, RM must be given attention like other administrative functions. The importance of good RM in the university system leads to the followings;

a. Improvement of efficiency in a university's operation

According to the University of Glasgow (2006), sound RM expedites an effective and efficient running of a university by ensuring that records are stored as evidence of the decision made, services provided, and its day-to-day operations. This means that good RM promotes quality decisions, ensures smooth operations, and support effective service delivery. This is based on full, accurate and up to date information, having the rationale for and impacting decisions and services which ensures that they are traced, scrutinised, and justified as required. How university employees, staff, and faculties manage their records can directly affect the ability to make decisions, services, compete, comply with regulations, and recover from disaster. Hence, a university records are an important information asset. Durosaro (2002) agrees with the assertion that, recordkeeping helps in the effective planning, and administration of a university. Thus, it helps in the planning and implementation of appropriate course of actions, which allows proper monitoring of activities.

b. Sustenance of a reliable institutional memory

University of Texas State (2009) indicates that, RM programme ensures sound RM practices that support business activities, assist in the capture and maintenance of corporate memory. According to University of Adelaide (2015) & HRS (2011), a university must maintain a reliable institutional memory which serves as evidence of its activity, and as a meaningful collation of its educational and research outcomes which contributes to the academia and the wider community as a whole. For example, increase in part-time and the doubling of contract staff means that universities will rely more on its records or documents as evidence, and information about their activities.

c. Facilitation of the achievement of its mandate

In sustaining sound business practice and support for its mandate, an organisation will have to create, gather, and, maintain operational and historical records of its activities (University of California, 2012 as in Nwaomah, 2015). The core business of a university are teaching and learning, conducting of research, and carrying out consultancy and community services. Carrying out its business activities produce records which provide evidence that a university is fulfilling its statutory obligations and meeting legitimate societal expectations. Hence, if such records are not properly managed, then valuable evidence would be lost forever or extra time, and money is spent in keeping them.

d. Standardisation of RM practices and processes

Universities are decentralised organisations in which many autonomous individuals and units discharge their core functions (Phiri, 2016) and without standardised processes, RM practices will likely differ from departments, campuses, and faculties within a single institution. Effective RM ensures that individual and units employ similar recordkeeping practices and processes across the

institution. This therefore calls for the need for a standardised and coordinated university-wide RMS.

e. Enhancement of trust

According to National Records of Scotland (2012), good RM help builds trust. This is the case in this modern era in which people many seems to be losing trust in the public sector because of the perceived corrupt practices. Sound recordkeeping could regain this trust by the producing evidence either to support the alleged corruption or otherwise, and also ensures that there is effective service delivery, transparency and accountability. Trust is indispensable to a university and when RM fails then, trust is likely to fail.

f. Compliance with important legislative requirements

In the United Kingdom (UK), public sector organisations saw effective RM to be a key to them because, it enables them to comply with new freedom of information and environmental information regulation (The Stationary Office, 2000, 2004 as in Julie, Sue and Susan, 2007).

Chinyemba & Ngulube (2005) rightly disclose that, good RM practices, and process are expected

across universities in order to comply with relevant legislative requirements. For instance, the passage of access to information laws makes RM in a university of great significance. These laws give the public the right of access, upon request to records held by a university. Complying with the requirements of the legislation means that, universities must put in place a comprehensive RM policy that outlines all the important records. A university will likely be embarrassed if requested information is not located because of poor RM.



g. Respond to audit culture

Audit is no longer the preserve of financial accounting. It is now entrenched in the form of academic monitoring. The external demand for transparency, accountability, and efficiency in universities is the basis of an audit culture phenomenon in the academia (Strathern, 2000). Though staff are not always comfortable with this new form of efficiency, however, it is essential in the world of governance, audit, risk management, and service delivery. Hence, effective RM is critical in conducting an effective audit. This is so because, an audit exercise reviews actions through examining documents that authorised the actions and their details are recorded. If these documents are not effectively managed, an audit view will be unreliable because, reasons given may not be founded upon trustworthy of information gathered (Phiri, 2016).

h. Establishment of transparency and accountability

According to Simon Fraser University (2007), RM does not only allow institutions to function daily but fulfill their legal, and financial commitments since up-to-date and accurate records of transactions is available, accessible and serves as a reference point. This demonstrates that allocations received by an institution from central government, students' fees, and others stakeholders is well spent. Altbach (2006) says, the demands by government and other external authorities to know exactly how academic institutions spend their funds and to provide documentation for academic programmes is wake up call to institute an effective RM. Therefore, universities transparency and accountability of their activities is underpinned in good recordkeeping. Universities that ignore proper RM are at risk of losing funding from stakeholders. In the absence of audited reports, which to some extent rely on sound recordkeeping, stakeholders may not be convinced by explanations that are not based on evidence (Phiri, 2016). Institutions use records to back their claims of accountability, when the need arises. They do this to show that they have met their mandate (Shepherd, 2006).

i. Improvement of competitiveness among universities

Universities which are able to manage their recorded information well can use all available information resources for competitive advantage (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005). For instance, university records that have enduring value can be used as marketing and promotional tools if the content demonstrate high moments of the university. On the contrary, the net effect of ineffective recordkeeping is a reduction in a university efficiency and inflation of its operation cost (Phiri, 2016).

Similarly, universities always strive to advance in the league tables and world rankings and achieving this requires universities to produce evidence of performance. The evidence can only be trustworthy if it comes from records that are properly managed. Besides, universities rankings across the globe today depend on how well universities manage their recorded information to support this course.

j. Support of its fiduciary duty

According to Phiri (2016), a university has a fiduciary duty to keep its students' records and other critical records. For instance, they have an obligation to manage students' records which can have an indefinite use as a proof that a student has matriculated or graduated. Also, documents such as condition of service, scheme of service, decrees, charters, and acts have to be preserved and accessed as major source of information for institutional governance. Furthermore, records created as a result of a university accreditation must be kept as a source of critical evidence.

k. Combat corruption

RM and corruption are closely linked because, poor RM is a good ground for corruption to thrive on (Auditor General of Western Australia, cited in Phiri, 2016). For example, carrying out an

effective audit and ensuring that procurement procedures are adhered to is difficult. But where reliable and authentic records are either not created or maintained from lost or alteration the audit and procurement procedures become a fertile ground for corruption. Poor recordkeeping produces unreliable audit opinion. This is the case because the audit opinion would be based on untrustworthy information. Hence, effective RM fights corruption. Universities that have poor RM are at risk of encouraging a culture of impunity (Phiri, 2016). According to Addo (2010), improper RM could lead to poor accounting of funds allocated to an institution.

In conclusion, proper RM underpins institutions effectiveness, efficiency, and good governance. Hence, proper RM sets the basis for accountability, protection of citizen rights and entitlements, anti-corruption strategies, poverty reduction and effective management of resources.

2.4.5 Challenges of records management

However, the challenges of RM are widespread in many organisations because, accurate, authentic and reliable records that provide information to people are often created but not properly managed (WB, ISG & IRMT, 2000). The reason being that records are not properly catered for and organised resulting in poor retrieval. Also, the rapid expansion of and demand for higher education over the past decades, where students' enrolments are increasing in most universities or colleges, polytechnics, necessitates the establishment of new universities, expanding old ones and opening of new branches, faculties, schools as well as, campuses. Gregory (2004) opined that the opening of these universities, or colleges poses some challenges and difficulties regarding the management of records leading to poor service delivery in many universities today. Iwhiwhu (2005) noted that, many tertiary institutions operate their records without any guidelines or principles. Thus, no RM policies; no documented procedures among other things. Addo (2010) also indicates that the challenges confronting educational institutions across Ghana are numerous. He observed



inadequate funds, increase of students' population coupled with ineffective RM all leading to poor accounting of funds allocated to these institutions.

Duose (2006) however noted that, organisations that manage their records rightly could make issues appear clearer and be able to appreciate good governance, good democracy as well as effective laws if records are maintained properly.

2.4.6 The Nature/Characteristics of records management systems

Early RMS were not as primitive as one thinks. There were specialised file rooms – similar to today's records centres – indexing and shelving systems, and records preservation and destruction (PRISM, 2000). Hence, Horsman (2001) defines RMS as the whole of the procedures, methods, knowledge, means and documents with which an organisation gives form to its recordkeeping function. A recordkeeping system, as a tool is used in managing information resources. It is either a manual or automated system which have the necessary functionality that enables it to carry out and support the various RM processes like registration, indexing, tracking, organisation and classification of records to facilitate their retrieval, distribution, use, disposal or preservation (HRS, 2011).

A system either electronic or paper holds records and contains the key metadata elements that may be recommended by a professional (Auditor-General Report of Australian Public Service, 2012). As indicated by Makhura (2005), managing both electronic and paper records play a significant role and should be captured as soon as they are created. ISO 15489-1 (2001) stated that, the format and media of records is irrelevant for the purposes of RM from the perspective that records must be identified and managed, regardless of their form. WB, ISG & IRMT (2000) however observed that, the public sector of Ghana records keeping systems are weak and some at the verge of collapsing and barely function properly. They further noted that, the failure for many organisations

to create and maintain effective record system is because, some people deliberately want to conceal some financial malpractices and other irregularities in the organisation.

However, senior officials rely upon these systems to provide controls on access, track the movement of records through the organisation, as well provide reliable and authentic records. Further to this, officials sometimes consider these records to serve as evidence of transactions. However, senior officials count on these records to prevent abuse, misuse, non-compliance with financial instructions, and regulations.


Hong Records Service [HRS] (2011), said the purpose of a RMS is to manage records throughout their life cycle i.e. from the creation/receipt of a record, through its useful life to its final disposal. An & Hongyan (2004) reiterated that, for a RMS to serve its purpose and be effective, it should comply with ISO (2001, 15489-1) characteristics such as reliability, integrity, compliance, comprehensiveness and be systematic.

- a. **Reliability:** It should be capable of continuous and regular operation in accordance with established guidelines and procedures;
- b. **Integrity:** Access and security measures should be in place to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal of records;
- c. **Compliance:** It should comply with all requirements arising from the legal and regulatory environment and business, and expectations in which the organisation operates;
- d. **Comprehensiveness:** It should be able to manage records in any formats captured from different activities and transactions of the organisation; and
- e. **Systematic:** It should be able to capture, maintain and manage records systematically (HRS, 2011). Hence, RMS is considered as an important device which is used to manage records in the way that meets the operational needs of an organisation.



However, RMS must be designed and implemented according to the appropriate standards, and rules to ensure its integrity, authenticity, accuracy and usability of records. It is further emphasised that, effective RMS is crucial for quality decision making and perhaps for the support of services (Dikopoulou & Mihiotis, 2012). These systems use to manage records need to be able to preserve the information integrity which includes the quality control procedures to ensure the completeness and trustworthiness of it and as well controls accessibility and security. Interestingly, some of these systems lack sufficient controls to ensure the authenticity, integrity, trustworthiness and completeness of the records they contain. For instance, delay in filing information can result in records alteration or in the worst situation deletion which will end up having an impact on the integrity, and authenticity of the records. Many educational institutions in Ghana not excluding UDS do not give priority to their RMS as a key mechanism in achieving the desired goals (Tanko, 2009 & Acheampong, 2012). According to Dikopoulou and Mihiotis (2012), for organisations to design and implement RMS that meets a particular need, it must be understandable and acceptable to all.

➤ **Paper-Based (Manual)**



Non-electronic records are physical records (paper) that can be touched, take up physical space and which can easily be destroyed if the necessary precautions are not put place. Managing paper records involves different capabilities and may draw on a variety of RMS expertise. For instance, vital records may need to be stored in a disaster-resistant safe or vault to protect against fire, flood, earthquakes and conflict. A case study conducted by IRMT (2009) reveals that, paper systems are neglected by many public sectors in Ghana.

Felix Nyarko Among reported in the Daily Graphic (2017) that, Ghana still stores about 98 per cent of its paper-based records with no back-ups despite technological advancement. Hence, in the event of any disaster, nothing will be left to rely on as evidence. The same paper indicates that,

successive governments did little in providing the needed support for memory institutions like PRAAD with the requisite resources to effectively preserve records of the nation. In support of the above, the paper further indicates that, parts of Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) was gutted down by fire destroying its paper-based records dated back to 2002 and unfortunately the Authority did not have back-ups.

However, for records to meet a particular condition, records should be created and captured as close as possible in time to the event or transaction to which they relate. For instance, minutes written hours or days rather than weeks or months after a meeting. Secondly, the systems in which records are managed should be documented and operated. Further, records should be converted from one format or medium to another. Hence, best practice guidelines and processes should be followed to make the conversion; and where originals are unavailable, copies must be appropriately authenticated (McLeod & Hare, 2006).

➤ **Electronic-based records**

The Connecticut Uniform Electronic Transactions Act 1999 [CUETA] defines an Electronic Record [ER] as a record created, generated, sent, communicated, received or stored by electronic means, including, but not limited to, facsimiles, e-mails, telexes, internet messaging and mobile messages. Electronic messages sent or received in the conduct of public business are public records. Electronic RMS [ERMS] commonly provide specialised security and auditing functionality tailored to the needs of records managers. However, ER often referred to as digital records are those records that are generated with and used by information technology devices and this can be stored in other storage media and hence, should be protected from damage.

IRMT (2008) indicated that, an ER or process is managed with the aid of computers and software – implemented in order to manage different kinds of records in an organisation. ERMS may also operate as Electronic Document Management System [EDMS]. However, the Auditor-General



Report of the Australian Public Service (2012), thought that systems which hold records must either have RM functionality appropriate to the value of the records they hold or facility to capture records into an Electronic Document RMS [EDRMS]. According to Zawiyah and Chell (2002), the management of ER cannot be ignored as the advent of technology is increasingly impacting on many aspects of administrative activities. Hence, managing records in this field requires specialist knowledge.

It is noted that, managing ER come with a lot of challenges. The biggest being the ability of records managers to anticipate future developments in technology. Records managers are therefore called to put in place the necessary hardware, software, storage media and documentation techniques to preserve these records. The Australian Public Service (2012) reported that ER stored in poor environmental conditions can be subject to loss and destruction. Also, a slight change in humidity and temperature can disturb the magnetic properties of disks and tapes thus leading to the loss of some or all of the records. Further, power shortages, power surges, or in situations where the power is shut off suddenly can also lead to a sudden loss of electronically recorded information, particularly, if there are no back-up facilities in place. In addition, the WB, ISG and IRMT (2000)

observed that the media upon which electronic records are stored is fragile compared to others such as paper and microfilm. For instance, digital audiotapes are only reliable as storage medium for five years, while the computer diskette is only about ten years and even optical disks are considered to be usable for only about thirty years before degradation of the media begins to have an impact on the records. And the latest storage medium the pen-drive has proven to be effective in the storage of data it can sometimes be disappointing. The needed care and attention must be given to these storage media in order not to lose valuable data stored in them. For the storage of ER, the selection of storage media (e.g. optical disc and tape), storage system, storage environment and handling procedures should be based on RM and business considerations and this should also be

based on the volume and growth rate of records, records security needs, retrieval requirements and preservation needs. According to HRS (2011), the increasing use of electronic exchanges for official transactions, an organisation may have to develop an ERKS to assist in managing both non-electronic and electronic records in an integrated and consistent manner.

2.4.7 Good records management and service delivery

Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) pointed out that the proper management of records involves establishing systematic controls at every stage of the record's life cycle, in accordance with established principles and accepted models of RM. Also, proper RM in an organisation would ensure that records with their collective knowledge captured in a record keeping system so that the information they contain can be readily available and accessible when needed and can be shared in the organisation (Nengomasha & Mchombu, 2008). Abuki (2014) noted that good RM is when all staff are aware of the existence of an institutional policy/guidelines for managing all forms of records and the management of corporate data on electronic devices, storing data on removable storage devices, records are captured into official records keeping systems, when all classified records are stored securely and protected from unauthorised access, alteration, deletion or loss in the systems, records in both paper and electronic systems are disposed of properly, all records keeping requirements for high risk business processes are identified and documented, all business systems that create and keep records have to be identified and all business systems that keep records of high risk business processes have to be assessed for records keeping functionality, when all staff create and keep full and accurate records as well as when all staff easily find records when in need of them among others.



2.4.8 Educational services and records management practices

Many government institutions in the educational system create and use their records during their regular daily work of providing services to people. The major reason for sound records keeping and improving on it in this sector is to ensure improved service delivery to staff, students, and the general public. According to Australian Public Service (2012), RM practices and processes of an organisation should result in the creation and management of complete and accurate records of its activities and decisions. This supports an organisation in the conduct of its business activities and in meeting legal and other RM requirements, including providing evidence of business conducted. Also, Hase and Galt (2011) said good RM practices are essential to organisational effectiveness. Besides, the Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) calls for public offices, institutions, and individuals who create and maintain public records to follow good records keeping practices and hence, some practices to be considered in this study are discussed in turn.

➤ **Security and access controls**

Proper RM involves setting up of physical and intellectual control over records that go into the RMS. You do this by registering each record as it enters the system. And also ensuring its location and where they can be easily found by ways of classification schemes. Further keeping them into files which are properly titled and indexing the information contain in the records. These records are normally used in the office by several people which could be taken out of the office for use elsewhere. This therefore requires that these records are tracked to know their where about particularly, when they will be away for a long time in order to prevent their lost (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005). Atherton (1985) believes that, the efficient access to information depends upon effective RM. According to the Australian Public Service (2012), RMS use in managing records should ensure the integrity of information, including the quality control procedures to make them complete and trustworthy as well as controlling the system over access and security.

Security measures in many institutions like higher institutions of learning follow traditional norms. For instance, locking cabinets, employing the services of security personnel, using of burgle proof on doors and windows, closed circuit television (CCTV), alarm systems, fire warnings and protection systems are normally used for the physical security of records. For electronic [ER], firewalls, passwords, encryption, security copies and access rights are some of the measures used in securing the integrity, accuracy, and trustworthiness of the ER. University facilities, students, staff and administrative records are kept in a secure location that is locked when not in use to safeguard against loss, tampering, or use by unauthorised persons. University staff should take the needed steps to protect the confidentiality and security of records against misuse and loss as well as unauthorised access and modification. Therefore, access rights should be mandated by management regarding who should access confidential and non-confidential records (Professional Practice Group, 2008 as in Amo, 2016 and Dikopoulou & Mihiotis, 2010).

➤ **Disaster management practice**

Assessing records management risks [RMR] and needs is a vital step to develop a suitable and effective RM approach. In assessing records management risks and needs, the organisation initial consideration is the range of legislative, policy and other requirements on RM. Also, the size of the organisation, business and use of technology, and significance of the records. The analysis, identification, and documentation of RMR and needs must anchor the development of a suitable RM frameworks, systems, and the type of services (Australian Public Service, 2012). A disaster management plan is a formal written plan, which seeks to identify potential accidents as well as their consequences and describes how these accidents and consequences could be handled either on site or off site (Ministry of Health [MoH] & Ghana Health Service [GHS], 2010). Hence, a disaster recovery plan is a written and approved course of action to take after a disaster occurs spelling how an organisation will restore critical business functions and reclaim damaged records.

Disaster management is an essential part of any RM programme. Disaster management shows that organisations are ready to respond to emergencies.

According to Ngulube (2007), in spite of the fact that disaster preparedness plans allow organisations to plan and make decisions about emergency response and recovery, many archival institutions in South Africa never had adequate plans for emergencies and this wouldn't be different from Ghana. For instance, a study conducted by Akussah (2002) into government registries in Ghana indicates that, many government registries were never aware of any disaster preparedness. Ngulube (2003) however indicates that, an organisation well prepared for a disaster is able to efficiently and quickly respond to emergencies that might be dangerous to the people and property. Besides, records are protected against theft, deliberate and unauthorised damage or destruction.

➤ **Record keeping capacity (Training)**

A competent RM professional makes sure the institution RM activities are discharged efficiently. This therefore calls for the needed training to be given so as to equip staff with the needed skills and competences as well as ensuring that the necessary recordkeeping infrastructure are provided and also making staff aware of the importance maintaining an effective records system. This will bring about staff compliance that could support service delivery (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005 and Johare, 2006). The required knowledge should cover records and archival functions. The scope of professional knowledge could cover history, records and cultural memory, ethics and value of the profession whilst scope for contextual knowledge covers administrative history, professional elements of law, social, cultural, legal and financial and information system and management of digital records. The scope of these functions, must cover the management of active and in-active records by classifying, scheduling their retention, and protecting them. It should also cover the appraisal and archival process like accessing, arranging and describing the records (Katuu, 2009 cited in Abuki, 2014).

However, many public institutions do not prioritise their staff training on proper RM as well as lack of guidelines and RM infrastructure. According to Sinclair (2002), institutions fail to ensure that staff complied with legal and institutional requirements for effective RM. Again, in Sub-Saharan Africa, many countries were found not to be capable of managing digital records professionally. This could serve as a permanent challenge as long as staff remain incapacitated (Ngulube, 2007).

Besides, records are dynamic thus, never static and being dynamic, records require management (Hoke, 2011). RM evolves daily and its implication on the skills and knowledge of records staff must be enhanced. Improving the capacity of staff must be an ongoing activity. McLeod & Hare (2005) as in Phiri (2016) indicated that, an organisation's records keeping capacity should be considered from the angle of its structures, process, resources (both human & materials) and rules of working together to effectively manage the recorded information. This embraces the notion of recordkeeping infrastructure which elements included systems and technologies, policies, standards, tools and practices, as well as skilled and competent human resources. This calls for institutions to employ the right people, resources, policies, and process to have a basic level of recordkeeping capacity. Dearstyne (2002) believes that, RM requires that both the records systems

designers and the creators be given some level of training as well as upgrading the skills of records professionals in the course of their work. Centre of Specialisation in Public Administration and Management [CESPAM] (2005) however notes that, staff entrusted with the management of records are ill-equipped thus, they lack the requisite knowledge as well as the technical know-how in order to manage records effectively and preserve them to ensure their availability and accessibility in institutions like the universities. IRMT (2004) adds that, many officials of public service lack the knowledge and skills regarding the nature and types of recordkeeping system used, why they exist, why they should be managed, and the responsibilities of staff towards RM over



time. A survey conducted on public sector organisations in the Eastern and Southern Africa by Wamukoya and Mutula (2005b) and Nkebukwa (2016), on capacity building requirements reveals the lack of knowledge and skills of staff in RM in Sub-Saharan Africa which called for awareness creation, education, and training as well as professional development of staff and this must be done continually.

Ngulube and Tafor (2006) surveys some African countries which shows many staff lack the skills in effective RM resulting in poor management of physical records. Iwhiwhu (2005) also observes that, many offices of Nigerians universities suffer from technological phobia, especially, among the old folks. He further expatiated that, records managers, archivists and librarians are the most technophobia, when it comes to using equipment like computers. The problem may result from the generational gap between the old folks and technology who might see these gargets as a threat to their work. Kalusopa (2011) calls for institutions to develop their staff capacity in the area of RM if they want to maintain an effective and efficient records system.

In Ghana, studies conducted by Azemti and Adjei (2013) observed that, many staff are found wanting when it comes to ERM in tertiary institutions in Ghana. Akussah (2003), admitted that, many organisations records units in Ghana lacked professionalisms as a result of poor knowledge, skills as well as shortage of skilled personnel. This indicates that, requisite knowledge and skills are necessary and required by staff to effectively provide the needed services through sound RM. Also, Seniwoliba et al. (2016) thought that for an effective and efficient RM to be felt among tertiary institutions in Ghana, a RM awareness must be created among staff. Mensah (2011) therefore calls for recruiting staff with the requisite capacity to manage the records design, creation, storage, and disposition stages.

➤ **Legal and regulatory frameworks**

Best practice in RM means organisations should provide sufficient evidence regarding their compliance with the regulatory environment of their RM activities. Usually, they are in the form of statutes, standards, codes of conduct, and ethics. Hence, the nature of the organisation and sector determine the regulatory elements (ISO 15489–1: Section 5). ISO 15489-1 (2001) therefore the framework of ISO caters for all organisations in their RM irrespective of the medium or form employed. Laws and regulations could be universal; some could vary in respect of the business sector. As rightly observed by Smallwood (2013) highly regulated industries like the banks, energy, and pharmaceuticals have the greatest need to implement RM programmes due to compliance and reporting requirements. This trend however changed because of the increased in rules and regulation as well as changes in legal and statutes.

Some of these laws and regulations may be directly related to RM, whilst others may not. If an institution is registered to comply with such frameworks, the institution is liable to them. An implicit requirement for RM can be derived from legislation that deals with them. For example, access to public information, data protection, and audit, all of which have legal implications for managing records. Organisations will therefore have to institute an effective RMS to be able to execute these frameworks successfully (Phiri, 2016). According to Australian Public Service

(2012) indicated that, meeting regulatory frameworks requirements of RM is a prove of genuiness, accuracy, and trustworthiness, that is, complete, unaltered and secured from unauthorised access, alteration and deletion which is considered findable and readable as well as relevant to other records. McLeod and Hare (2006) claimed that, the legal and regulatory demands in RM for complying with the regulatory frames is considered critical in any RM programme. Nengomasha (2009) noted the significant roles played by the frameworks in RM. Citing relevant legislations like records and archives laws, freedom of information and data protection laws as experiences

from other countries which used them to safeguard malpractices in the area of RM. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) employed the Life Cycle and Records Continuum Models to survey some companies in the Iringa region in Tanzania revealed that, organisations need keep records as they generate them in their routine activities so as to comply with the legal requirements and also protect the rights of stakeholders. Marobella, (2005) thought conformity only concerns with information integrity, privacy, and records retention. However, compliance with legislation therefore has an effect on how records are created/or captured, transmitted, used, stored, indexed, retrieved, controlled, retained, and preserved.

Inadequate legal and regulatory frames is seen as a challenge confronting developing countries as they move towards RM particularly, ER. For instance, Barata, et al. (2001) cited inadequate legal and institutional framework facing Namibia's RM. Further, a research by Gibbons and Shenton (2003) revealed that, in spite of the regulatory framework that existed, RM practices of the UK Parliament was not conforming to them. However, the non-compliance with frames can result in disorganisation, missing, stolen, destruction, and unauthorised access to documents. McLeod & Hare (2006) noted that, the adherence to legal and regulatory framework strengthens RM practices in an organisation.

According to Akussah (2005), the Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (PRAAD) enacted in (1997) created a unified framework within the public sector where records are holistically managed from creation to disposition. This new legal dispensation (Act 535, 1997) where its predecessor (Public Archives Ordinance of 1955) clearly charges the Director of ensuring the management and keeping of current records; accepting custody of semi-current records; as well as arranging for the transfer of records of permanent value to the Archives. However, the mere existence of the framework may not necessarily deliver good recordkeeping if the implementation is poor because, this is important as its existence. This is rightly supported by Ngulube & Tafor

(2006) that, the existence of progressive and comprehensive framework will not yield any positive results in recordkeeping unless the needed resources are made available for its implementation. Therefore, principal officers, vested with the responsibilities should put together a functional RM unit and task it to design an adequate policy. This must be supported with needed resources for its successful implementation.

➤ **Records management policy**


This part discusses literature about records management governance practice in terms of policies, procedures, guidelines, standards and so on as part of the objectives of this study. The intention was to explore availability, understanding and appropriate implementation of the policy. As an accepted practice, many organisations activities or functions, records management needs policy that should be implemented as a guide in terms of formal organisational records management principles, best practices and procedures, records classification, disaster recovery or management (Ngoepe, 2014; Sinha & Shenoy, 2013; Ndenje-Sichalwe, Ngulube, & Stilwell, 2011 as in Marutha, 2016). Policies and guidelines foster a good understanding of an organisation's RM responsibilities, facilitate consistent application of good practices, and sound processes throughout the organisation (Australian Public Service [APS], 2012). A RM policy is a cornerstone of effective RM in an organisation thus, it demonstrates to employees and stakeholders how RM is important to the organisation. It also provides a statement of intent that underpins a RM programme. Further, it serves as a mandate for the activities of the records manager, as well as providing a framework for supporting documents such as procedures, business rules, disposal schedules among others (National Archives Information Policy Team, 2010).

Also, Mensah and Adams (2014) conducted a study in both private and public hospitals in Ghana noted that, the existence of RM policies provides the mandate and overall authority for the creation, use and preservation of records, and are vital to the effective management of records in all



organisations. According to the APS (2012), an important part of every organisation approach to RM is by developing relevant policies, guidelines, and standards. Policies and guidance direct staff and ensure their consistent application. Ngulube & Tafor (2006) further called for the adoption of RM standards and integrating it and ensures that records are consistently managed for the required periods of time. Kemoni (2007) and Tagbotor et al. (2015) note that without a policy, it's difficult to establish efficient RMS that promote effective service delivery and quality decision making. However, Dikopoulou & Mihiotis (2012) said many organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa never had written and approved policies for their RM. Nonetheless, formulating RM policy within a particular department may be challenging. Kennedy and Schauder (1998) supported this assertion that integrating records and policies that involve several functional areas of an organisation can be significantly more complicated task. Also, Asogwa (2012) thought many African countries still lack the understanding of modern and international standards for records management.

However, RM standards serve as a guide for effective functioning of RMS within an organisation. This is due to the fact that standards provide information on “who, what, when, where and how” the RMS operate. Kemoni et al., (2007) said the absence of RM procedures and standards



negatively affect records creation, use, maintenance, and disposal/or preservation in an organisation. Findings of Seniwoliba et al., (2016) supported the assertion that, the absence of a legislative instrument results in the ignorance of many records staff engaged in recordkeeping and management. Iwhiwhu (2005), indicates that many educational institutions failed woefully in instituting RM policy to guide the creation, processing, preservation, retrieval, and disposal of records to support effective services. Azameti & Adjei (2013) however thought that, RMS address data security challenges better and also enhance the credibility and sustainability of records which leads to adopting several institutional RM policies. Such policies lead to the adoption of innovative processes in RM.

University of Texas State (2009) said RM programme ensures sound recordkeeping practices which support business activities, also helps capture and maintain corporate memory. To ensure quality service are provided to the people, organisations need to put good RM programme in place. The programme should spell out best practiced standards, or benchmarks are set for staff. The programme should be implemented by top management and ensure that every employee in charge of records, creating records or using records is aware. Hence, tertiary institutions should therefore make a conscious effort to improve upon their RMS to enable them make better decisions and improve their services.

➤ **Compliance with other frameworks and policy documents**

Compliance is concerned with ensuring that an organisation's practices and processes comply with external and internal requirements. According to Saffady (2016), these requirements may include laws, regulations, and industry-specific guidelines that specify retention and security requirements for recorded information, and with the organisation's internal policies and directives for creation, storage, distribution, retention, disposition, and protection of information assets. However, Tagbotor et al. (2015) indicated that the non-adherence and non-compliance to regulatory frameworks is a leading cause of poor RM particularly, in Africa.



2.4.9 Educational services and processes of records management

➤ **Records creation and capture**

According to Norris (2003), many records management programmes in managing existing records well are inadequate. Besides, RM is not often effective during the time that records are created or captured. This can lead to redundant records, lack of clearly identified official copies, and insufficient records for audits or litigation. An adequate RM programme is one that ensures that all records created are the ones needed and records not essential are not captured. Effective records creation entails ensuring that records are sufficient for audits, unneeded records and copies are

reduced, records are available for litigation, public records management standards, laws and procedures such as the Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, Cap 19 and ISO 15489 and other professional standards are used in records creation.

➤ **Registration of records**

Registration is the process of recording standard information about, and assigning a unique identifier to, a document or record (IRMT, 2009). A record is registered when it is captured into the recordkeeping system, providing evidence that it has been created or captured. In a paper-based system, a record captured into a file is registered through entering such contextual information as the type of record (for example memo), date of record, and name of originator(s)/addressee(s) of the record on the file (HRS, 2011). According to Kennedy and Schauder (1998), the purpose of registration is to provide proof that a record has been created or capture in a recordkeeping system. This process ensures that the document or record is authentic and reliable. Hence, registration of both paper and paperless records should be taken seriously as is the first process to go through anytime a record is created or received into the system.

➤ **Classification and indexing of records**

Classification is the full representation of the business of an organisation, which systematically identifies and documents the organisation's activities and records according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules. While, indexing in a records and archives environment is the process of establishing the terms to describe and provide access to records and archives (IRMT, 2009). According to University of Wisconsin Madison (2015), classification is used in RM to create file plans, filing systems, and retention schedules. A filing system is the systematic indexing and arranging of records based on established procedures. Most filing systems are arranged alphabetically, chronologically, numerically, or alpha-numerically for paper filing system. Recordkeeping classifications are to ensure easy retrieval and security of records especially, administrative records and if you like students' records in order to cut off delay in

service provision (Tucker, 2012). The WB, ISG & IRMT (2000), thought once records are created by the institution have been identified and, if necessary, restructured, the next step is to place them into logical groupings by introducing a classification system. Classification puts records into categories, based on the functions and activities the records represent, so that decisions about an institution, storage, transfer, and disposal may be made on a category-wide basis, not file by file or item by item. Hence, four main classification systems are identified and used for the arrangement of series of files within institutions.

However, they are not mutually exclusive, and may be used at different levels within the same system. They include;

- a. Function or activity, reflecting the work of the institution
- b. Hierarchical, reflecting administrative structures
- c. Keyword or theme, reflecting functions or activities within a hierarchy
- d. Alphabetical.

Amongst many developing countries, every available space such as corridors, basements, filing cabinets and shelves are crammed with files which are considered inactive (Xolile, 2012). The WB, ISG and IRMT (2000) rightly noted that, many classification systems across developing countries such as Ghana are at a verge of collapsing and the systems are unsatisfactory to manage the creation, use and storage of records. This therefore have serious consequences for senior officials who depend on these records to define and implement policies thereby compromising public service delivery. The IRMT (2002) and Mnjama (2004), confirmed the above findings by stating that, many developing countries records keeping is in a poor state.

➤ **Records accessibility and retrieval**

Access rights are of limited value if information cannot be found when requested or cannot be relied upon as authoritative. Good records and information management benefits those requesting it because, it provides some assurance that information provided will be complete and reliable. It benefits those holding the requested information because, it enables them to locate and retrieve it easily thereby facilitating quality decision and improved services (IRMT, 2008). Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), further indicated that, an institution's records are only useful if they are accessible to the members of the institution who need to use them. Thus, it is necessary to make sure that they are readily retrievable when required.

Australian Public Service (2012), discloses that, a RM solution should support access to the organisation's records through easy search and retrieval. In a paper file environment, access, search and retrieval is limited to the file level, dependent on strong and consistent titling conventions, and generally aided through an understanding of which business areas might have responsibility for particular records. In an Electronic Records Management Environment [ERME], an EDRMS can be configured to support search and retrieval based on a range of factors, including

file or document titles, staff responsible for file or document creation/registration, timing of creation or registration, or the electronic format of the document or file. In some cases, these systems can also be configured to support searching the content of documents, notes or comments associated with the documents.

➤ **Tracking/Tracing of records movements**

Tracking records and archives is the process of documenting the movements and uses of records so that their whereabouts are known at all times (IRMT, 2009). According to HRS (2011), a recordkeeping system tracking the movement and use of records is required to - identify outstanding action required; enable retrieval of records; prevent loss or missing of records; monitor

usage for recordkeeping system maintenance and security (e.g. growth of records, disposal of records); and identify the operational origin of individual records where the recordkeeping systems have been amalgamated or migrated. Tracking the record while it is away from the normal storage area is referred to as circulation. This is often handled by simple written recording procedures. However, many modern records environments use a computerized system involving bar code scanners, or radio-frequency identification technology (RFIT) to track the movement of records. Also, periodic auditing can be used to identify unauthorised movement of records.

An organisation should decide the type of information that needs to be maintained to facilitate tracking of records, and to adopt means to track the whereabouts and movement of records. To support tracking of records in a paper-based recordkeeping system, an organisation should - prepare and maintain an accurate inventory of records which covers such information as file title, file reference number, date opened, date closed and storage location (e.g. room/floor); and track the whereabouts and movement of records by adopting file movement card/register or appropriate electronic means (e.g. a bar-coding system). Also, in minimising the risk of losing records during bulk relocation of files, it is necessary for an organisation to make appropriate arrangements to

ensure that the relocation process is properly supervised and conducted.

➤ **Retention and disposal of records**

The National Electronic Commerce Coordinating Council [NECCC] (2004) indicated that disposition is the final stage in any records lifecycle, and proper disposition is an important part of any RM programme. While Kennedy & Schauder (1998), opined that, a records disposal is a process closely linked to the implementation of records appraisal decisions. This includes; deletion, or destruction of records from a RMS. Hence, records disposal may be considered as the migration of records from one RMS to another or transfer of custody of ownership of records. A sound RMS should be capable of assisting in making and implementing decision on records retention and



disposal. IRMT (2011) observes that, some records of an organisation or administrative unit need to identify and specify records that should be kept permanently as archives and records which should be destroyed after a certain period. Hence, the retention and disposal schedule authorises for the transfer of records from offices to records centres, destruction of obsolete records, and preservation of archival materials. According to NECCC (2004), all records an institution creates should be described on a records retention and disposal schedule. The schedule establishes the length of time records should be retained by an institution. For records with enduring value, usually identified as permanent in records retention schedules, disposition may involve transfer to an archival facility. Most of the records an institution produces will be destroyed, or deleted in the case of ER, at the end of their life cycle institutions need to make sure that they have written policies in place that outline the procedures to properly dispose of records, and hence records destruction must be made part of the normal course of business. However, disposal of records does not always mean destruction. Thus, records destruction must occur on a regular basis following the records retention schedules, not randomly or done on an ad hoc basis.

The WB, ISG & IRMT (2000), however observed that, many organisations are reluctant in destroying their records, when they even lose their value due to lack of rules and guidelines directing them as what should be kept and for how long. Management are there reluctant to authorise the destruction of the records which affect the retrieval of semi-records from the system. The HRS (2011) calls on organisations to establish records retention and disposal schedules for their records to ensure systematic planning and orderly implementation of records disposal after records have been kept for the required period. Organisations need to review approved records retention and disposal schedules regularly, for a least once in every five years, for amendments.

Though the processes described above are presented as if in a sequence, it should be noted that in some records keeping systems particularly, electronic recordkeeping system, some of the processes

could take place simultaneously (e.g. records capture, registration and classification are often carried out as an integrated series of actions) or in a different order (for instance, access control & tracking is implemented for records whole life) (HRS, 2001). However, before examining the requirements of each RM process, an institution should first determine the documents to be captured as records into the records system and how long to retain them.

2.5 Empirical Studies

There are a number of studies that have been conducted by various researchers on RM in service delivery. One of such studies by Abuki (2014) on RM practices at the county government with specific references to county headquarters and how records management enhances service delivery. The study was a case study and quantitative in nature and it used questionnaires and interview schedules as instruments of collecting data. The study sample included 5 records managers, 12 top management officials, 28 action officers, 36 clerical officers and 19 registry staff. Questionnaires were the key data collection tools used but they were supplemented by interviews. Key findings included; lack of RM programme, lack of adequately trained RM staff, lack of records centre and archive for semi-current and non-current records. The county also lacked a disaster management programme particularly, for its vital records, the equipment and storage facilities were found inadequate, there was lack of awareness on the importance of records and RM among non-records management staff, and the county also lacked innovative ways (ICT) of managing and improving RM. The study recommended the need to implement records management policies, standards, guidelines and procedures. The automation of its records management functions and implement records management awareness programmes for non-records management staff. It should also implement a disaster management programme and provide training programmes for records staff.



However, the study did not consider issues regarding records management processes. Another issue that is missioned in this study is consideration of records management and archive management units in his study. Besides, study failed to outline the practices that were investigated.

Amo (2016) also studied the role of RM practices in improving decision making in public hospitals: The case of Ashanti Bekwai Municipal Hospital. The study employed a mixed method approach where an exploratory survey was used. A cluster sampling technique was used to classify the whole hospital into 16 units (clusters). The researcher purposively selected 160 health workers and a records manager to participate in the study. A semi-structured questionnaire, interview guide and direct observation were employed to elicit information from 160 health workers and the records manager. Key findings of study included; the hospital has a RM programme, a disaster management plan, security and access control measures and an ERMS to manage patients' records and to keep reports on morbidity and mortality. The study further reveals that records officers were always engaged in the design of RMS of the hospital. Furthermore, RM in the hospital was found to improve decision making. However, the hospital was plagued with challenges such as inadequate storage location (filing space), misfiling, missing, and damaged records, poor staff knowledge, lack of RM training programme, inadequate infrastructure among others.

However, cluster sampling technique could better partner simple random sampling technique rather purposive. Besides, purposive sampling could be used probable to select the key informants. Recognition was not also given to records management processes in the study.

Finally, Nti-Bonsu (2017) studied RM practices at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Ghana. The study analysed RM practices at the MFARI, Ghana and their impact on MFARI's mandate of developing and maintaining Ghana's diplomatic relations as well as the identification of the challenges faced by the Ministry in managing records of Ghana's international



affairs. The study concluded that the practice of good RM facilitates decision making in the conduct of international relation. The study found that serious gaps persist in the RMS at the MFARI. Using Records Life Cycle Model, the study concluded that MFARI lacks good RM practices which serves a major constraint on the attainment of the Ministry's mandate; as is evidenced by delays in retrieval of key documents or provision of information needed by management to make urgent decisions. The study recommends the adoption of International Standards for RM at MFARI.

In his study, Nti-Bonsu, failed to outline the records management practices that were considered for the study so that same could be measure at different study area in order to compare results. Besides, he did not give consideration to records management processes in his study since records management practices alone cannot do it all without efficient processes in the management of records.

2.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter gave an overview of related literature in records management. It covered the definition of concepts. It discusses the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. Also, the relevance of the theoretical and conceptual framework is considered. Besides, some concepts pertinent to the study were reviewed. Again, it gives an overview of what has already been researched in the field of records management and the findings from other researchers and scholars in the field were empirically reviewed. The chapter was rounded up with the chapter summary.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the methodology of the study. A methodology refers to the theoretical analysis of the methods appropriate to a field of study or to the body of methods and principles particular to a branch of knowledge (Berg Bruce, 2009). In this perspective, the methodology for the study includes the research approach and design, study population, sample and sampling techniques, sources, methods of data collection, data analysis and presentation, reliability and validity, ethical considerations and profile of the study area. According to Dordah (2012), for any task or problem to be achieved, there are procedures in achieving it, but the researcher's choice may depend on factors such as; efficiency, cost, reliability, validity and convenience. Suggesting that, an appropriate methodology is necessary for any research to achieve its objectives.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in the University for Development Studies (UDS) which is Ghana's first public University in the north. The UDS was established in May, 1992 by the Government of Ghana (PNDC Law 279) to blend the academic world with that of the community in order to provide constructive interaction between the two for the total development of Northern Ghana, in particular, and the country as a whole.

As indicated by Effah (1998), UDS is borne out of the new thinking in higher education which emphasises the need for universities to play a more active role in addressing problems of the society, particularly in the rural areas.

The University by its mandate and constituency has a pro-poor focus. This is reflected in its methodology of teaching, research, and outreach services. The specific emphasis on practically-



oriented, research, and field-based training which is aimed at contributing towards poverty reduction in order to accelerate national development.

With five (5) schools, nine (9) faculties, and three (3) institutes and a centre, the University operates a multi campus system (MCS). These campuses are spread across the three (3) Regions of the North. Namely: Tamale (Central Administration) and Nyankpala campuses located in the Northern Region, Navrongo Campus situated in the Upper East Region, and the Wa Campus located in the Upper West Region (UDS, 2018).

UDS runs both graduate and undergraduate programmes in the various campuses. The University also runs community outreach activities and research programmes geared towards creating an enabling environment for sustainable community development and economic growth. This is a combination of the academic and community-based field practical work known as the Third Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP) (UDS, 2018). Amidst these activities, records are created/received and should be managed properly to support service delivery and improve decision making in the Institution.

3.3 Research Design and Approach



A research design can be explained as the framework for planning a research and for finding answers to the research. It is the glue that holds the research project together. It tells the researcher and readers how all the elements in the research fit together (Agyapong & Adam, 2019). There are different types of research designs such as experimental, descriptive, cross-sectional design, case study, and among others. Each design would usually be adopted based on the research objectives. The study therefore employed the single cross-sectional design because, data was collected and analysed at one point in time. The purpose of it was not to explore any change but rather, focus on studying and drawing inferences from existing differences. As noted by Betensky et al. (2003),

cross-sectional designs have three distinctive characteristics. Thus, no time dimension, reliance on existing differences rather than change following intervention, and groups are selected based on existing differences rather random allocation.

In the case of the research approaches, the major approaches as is explicit in literature are the quantitative and qualitative. There is however a third approach known as the mixed method approach which is the hybrid of the two approaches. The mixed method approach is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches that is, the qualitative and quantitative approach are used together concurrently. The qualitative method involved the use of qualitative research approaches, in which qualitative data was collected using key informant interviews. The associated data were then presented and analysed verbally or non-numerically, through narrations, explanations and quotations. The quantitative method also involved the use of quantitative approaches. Here, quantitative data were obtained from respondents using questionnaires. Data were presented by descriptive statistical methods such as frequency distribution, tables and graphs, as well as the use of percentages and means to interpret and analyse the data.

Considering the merits of using the mixed method approach and also taking into accounts the research objectives, both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed. The mixed method therefore created an avenue for the researcher to make use of the strengths of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

3.4 Study Population

One of the challenges of any type of research is the definition of the population from which the respondents are selected (Zikmund, 2003). Therefore, the population of the study refers to the entire set of relevant units that fit into a certain specification (Oteng-Abayie, 2011). The study population in this case constituted the non-teaching staff (Senior Staff) who are made up of



Administrative Assistants, Senior Administrative Assistants, Principal Administrative Assistants as well as Chief Administrative Assistants. In addition, the non-teaching staff (Senior Members) who consisted Junior Assistant Registrars, Assistant Registrars, Senior Assistant Registrars, and Deputy Registrars. Whilst the teaching staff (Senior Members) included Lecturers and Senior Lecturers who headed the various departments in the Institution across the four campuses.

The first group of respondents (senior staff) were involved in the creation/receive and capture of records and were directly involved in the management of records in the registries, departments of faculties and schools. The second categories of respondents (senior members) were targeted because, they create/capture and use records in their respective offices and could contribute effectively to the debate. It is therefore believed that, they would have good understanding on the subject under investigation and hence, were in a better position to provide the needed information that would help answer the research objections.

3.5 Sample Size Determination

Sample size refers to the selected number of people/population/units/cases to be surveyed (Puopiel, 2014). In order to determine the requisite number of the participants to complete the questionnaire and to have a representative sample and also avoid bias, a mathematical formula proposed by Miller and Brewer (2003) was used to determine sample size. Hence,

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(\alpha)^2}$$
 where n = required sample size, 1 = constant, N = population, α = margin of error.

Using a 90% confidence level (i.e. margin of error of 0.1%) to arrive at a total sample of 236 for the four campuses.

In this regard, non-teaching staff (senior members) of the Tamale campus total population was 37 based on a staff details obtained from the UDS 19th Congregation Facts, Statistics and List of



Graduands (2018) and this figure represented the sampling frame for the Tamale Campus. By applying the Miller and Brewer;

$$n = \frac{37}{1+37(0.1)^2}$$

$$n = 27.007$$

$$n = 27.007 \approx 27$$

Using the above formula, a sample size for the remaining units were then calculated to sum up as shown in Table 3.1 below showing the sample size distribution and category of respondents of each campus. In total, 341 was obtained as the sampling frame for the four campuses. However, given time and resource constraints, this figure was scaled down using the above formula to determine the sample size as stated above. By the application of this method, the actual sample size for the four campuses was 228 for the questionnaire administration, while 8 key informants were selected for the interview session. This consisted of a Deputy Registrar, a Head of Training and Development who were purposively selected from the Central Administration, Tamale Campus whilst six Faculty Officers were selected from the other three campuses. See Table 3.1 below for more details.



Table 3.1: Sample size distribution

| Campus/Category of Respondents | Population | Sample |
|--|------------|------------|
| <i>Tamale Campus</i> | | |
| Non-teaching Staff (Senior Members) | 37 | 27 |
| Teaching Staff (HoDs - Senior Members) | 31 | 24 |
| Non-Teaching Staff (Senior Staff) | 116 | 54 |
| Total | 184 | 105 |
| <i>Navrongo Campus</i> | | |
| Non-teaching Staff (Senior Members) | 4 | 4 |
| Teaching Staff (HoDs - Senior Members) | 8 | 7 |
| Non-Teaching Staff (Senior Staff) | 25 | 20 |
| Total | 37 | 31 |
| <i>Wa Campus</i> | | |
| Non-teaching Staff (Senior Members) | 4 | 4 |

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| Teaching Staff (HoDs - Senior Members) | 14 | 12 |
| Non-Teaching Staff (Senior Staff) | 39 | 28 |
| Total | 57 | 44 |
| Nyankpala Campus | | |
| Non-teaching Staff (Senior Members) | 3 | 3 |
| Teaching Staff (HoDs - Senior Members) | 19 | 16 |
| Non-Teaching Staff (Senior Staff) | 41 | 29 |
| Total | 63 | 48 |
| Sub-Total | 341 | 228 |
| Key Informants (Deputy Registrar, Head of Training & Development, 6 Faculty Officers) | | 8 |
| Grand Total | 341 | 236 |

Source: UDS, 2018

3.6 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Saunders et al. (2009) noted that, sampling refers to identifying a group of units from a target population as representative of the whole population. Data is collected from these sample units and it is assumed that results and conclusions drawn from this data is representative of the whole population. As such, sample is identified because the researcher is unable to collect data from the entire population of the study.



From this understanding, sampling techniques would provide the researcher a wide range of techniques that enable the researcher to reduce the amount of data needed. Besides, a number of sampling units would be drawn from a population and examined in detail by the researcher (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In that sense, the researcher carried the sampling for this study for a number of reasons: (i) It is done because it would not be possible to study the entire population, (ii) Budget constraints prevent the researcher from surveying the entire population since this is less costly to administer than a census, and (iii) Time constraints prevent the researcher from surveying the entire population because, is less time-consuming than a census. Sampling therefore saves time, when

one is facing tight deadlines and it is more manageable as few cases are involved (Oteng-Abayie, 2011).

Following this perspective, sampling techniques are broadly categorised into two groups namely: probability (simple random sampling) and non-probability sampling (purposive sampling). According to Saunders *et al.* (2009) probability sampling is when each case/individual is given an equal and non-zero chance of being selected whilst non-probability sampling technique does not give equal chance to a case/individual to be selected.

In the case of the UDS, four campuses were covered in the study. The simple random sampling technique was employed to select the departments on each campus. Since teaching staff (HODs) occupied these departments, this category of staff could easily be located in these departments. The departments were therefore targeted in order to reach the individual occupying these offices. Microsoft Excel programme was used to randomly select the respondents. The names of departments on each campus were first inputted into the software and numbers given to them at the left-hand side. Then these numbers were highlighted which represented the departments to the right and ran by the software to randomly select the departments. The questionnaires were then given to those selected departments heads for completion. The simple random sampling was further used to select non-teaching staff (senior members & senior staff) after their details were obtained from each campus. This was to give all the members the chance of being selected. In view of this, a sample size of 228 for the University was divided proportionally among the four campuses because, the staff strength is the same across the campus for the questionnaire administration.

Purposive sampling technique was also used to select the key informants for an in-depth interview namely: six Faculty Officers, one Deputy Registrar, and a Head of Training and Development.



This technique was applied by selecting two Faculty Officers from the oldest faculties on each campus. The reasoning is that, these faculties that have existed for the past 10 years and above would have generated a lot of records and probable would have had some challenges in managing them vis-à-vis the services they provide. Though this sampling technique might not ensure representativeness of the sample selected, it was considered appropriate for this study because respondents were selected for a purpose. As Oteng-Abayie (2011) explained that, one used a purposive sampling technique to select respondents who have adequate knowledge on the subject under investigation and can provide adequate information to address critical issues.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments

In view of the nature of the research questions posed by the study, a combination of mixed questionnaire, semi-structured interview, and direct observation techniques were used to gather the required data for the study, while questionnaire, interview and observation guides were the main instruments employed to collect the data as discussed in turn;

3.7.1 Questionnaire



Questionnaire contains a set of questions often meant for respondents to respond base on the objectives of the study. Questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data for the survey.

Babie (2005) explained that a questionnaire is a document containing questions and other types of items such as statements designed to solicit information on specific issues, themes, problems or opinions to be investigated. Questionnaires may be open-ended or closed questions (Agyempong & Adam, 2015). The study adopted both the open-ended and closed types of questions to solicit information from the participants. Thus, questionnaires were administered to the staff of the Institution. The choice of the questionnaire was informed by the research objectives. Also, this

approach was used because it enables the researcher to overcome issues of interview bias, reduced stress, saved time for the researcher considering the sample size that was involved.

3.7.2 Interviews

Interview can be explained as a face to face interaction between the researcher and the respondents. Specifically, key informant interview was conducted on some staff of the Institution who were deemed to have adequate knowledge of the subject under investigation (Babie, 2005). Key informant interviews often demand interviewing a selected group of people of individuals who are deemed to have rich information, ideas, and insights on a particular subject (Kumar, 1989). In this study, an interview guide which contained questions on the topic was used to obtain data from the key informants mentioned above.

3.7.3 Observations

Observation was made in some offices and main registries on such issues as: security, safety, and confidentiality of records; equipment used; retention and disposal of records; storage facilities and storage location; registration registers (received & Dispatched); filing indexes; state of records; tools used in tracking the movement of records among other important issues worth observing. This was to afford the researcher the opportunity to appreciate how records were created, used, maintained, and disposed of and how this could support service delivery in the University. This was done to help draw valid conclusions in support of the face-to-face interviews and the data obtained from the questionnaires.

3.8 Sources of Data

The study made extensive use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary and secondary data helped answer the research questions and measure the objectives. These are further discussed below.

3.8.1 Primary data

Any time there is lack of already existing data, information must be gathered. Veal (2006) argued that primary data are new data specifically collected in a current research project. The primary data for this study was obtained from both teaching and non-teaching staff of UDS across the four campuses. Also, due to the limitations of secondary data which is normally associated with every research, primary data was collected directly from respondents to complement the secondary data. Primary data therefore was collected on the specific research objectives as this was done through carefully designed questionnaire, interview schedule, and observation guide.

3.8.2 Secondary data

“Secondary data are data that have been collected for some other purpose” (Saunders et al., 2009:256). Secondary data for this study was gathered from available published journal articles and reports with relevance to the study. Also, both published and unpublished thesis, books on records management, human resource management, and among others were consulted for information. Further, some frameworks both international and local such as the International Organisation for Standardisation, ISO 15489 (2001), the Public Records and Archives Administration Act 535, (1997), and the Public Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) were consulted for more information on proper management of records. Secondary materials were further obtained from the UDS 19th Congregation Facts, Statistics and List of Graduands (2018) for staff statistics, names of departments, and among other things.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected in any scientific research will be meaningless if it is not analysed and interpreted to make the results meaningful. In the view of Creswell (2009), data analysis involves collecting open-ended data, based on asking general questions and developing an analysis from the information supplied by participants. In the writer's view, the process of data analysis involves, preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, presenting the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data. For the purpose of this study, qualitative data was sorted and analysed based on the various themes, concepts, patterns and categories as the objectives of the study suggested.

In order to analyse and present the quantitative data empirically, data were first edited, coded and categorised to detect errors of incorrect answers as well as missing data. The data were then analysed using the numerical data obtained from the survey. This was effectively achieved using descriptive statistics with the aid of Microsoft Excel Programme.

3.10 Validity and Reliability

Reliability refers to the “consistency” or “repeatability” of one's measures but validity is the degree to which the measurement process measures the variable it claims to measure (Agyapong & Adam, 2019). Kiama (2014) is of the view that if the questionnaire can actually test what it is intended for, it refers to validity, whereas, reliability measures the relevance. Consequently, the questionnaires were pretested to ensure validity and reliability. In order to achieve this, ten (15) questionnaires were administered to people outside the study population.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

In order to win the confidence and trust of respondents, they were made to understand the purpose of the research and the reasons why they are vital to the achievement of the research objectives.



Research participants were given the opportunity to voluntarily participate or opt out of the research. They were assured of confidentiality of any personal information that they may willingly or involuntarily give out. The questionnaire and interview guide were designed with a cover letter explaining the aims and objectives of the study to respondents. It further assured them of their confidentiality and anonymity (see Creswell, 2009). Respondents were duly informed and their permission sought before questionnaires were given to them and this done during break hour so as not to infer with their work and also permission was obtained before their voices were recorded during interviews. This was to give the participants the confidence to give information without fear. Further, anonymity of respondents was considered by omitting names of respondents and their exact locations from verbatim quotations in the results. Moreover, in order to avoid any form of plagiarism, the researcher duly acknowledged all information taken from other sources with in-text and out-text references.

3.12 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Limitations are inevitable in every research. One major limitation faced by the researcher was the difficulties in getting to respondents to respond to the questionnaires. This was due to the fact that; respondents were either busy in their offices or outside the office. It was quite difficult getting their attention to respond to the questionnaires. In some instances, some respondents were not just willing to complete the questionnaires for reasons best known to them.

In overcoming these challenges, the researcher made a number of follow up just to get to them and those who were not willing to respond to the questionnaires were replaced with people who were willing and ready to answer the questions.

Another limitation that cannot be ignored is the time constraint. The time limit given for the submission of the final draft of this work coupled with family issues of the researcher was also a



key limitation in carrying out this work. Finance was also a serious constraint on the researcher since the research required the use of some financial resources to be able to go to the four campuses to secure the necessary information. This included travelling cost, internet services and printing of questionnaires. However, the researcher still management to get time and finances to able to conduct the research.

Besides, because of the highly decentralised nature of universities where many autonomous individuals and departments carry out the core functions and also, considering the types of records created and managed by the various units. It was not possible covering all the units and the types of records created due to the limited time period and the financial commitment involved and hence, the study was limited to some selected registries and departments and the type of records stated in the scope of the study above. These and many other obstacles limited the research in one way or the other. In spite of the limitations above, the study was successfully carried out and there is no doubt about the credibility of the research.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data gathered from the field. Key issues emerging from the results are discussed. The results and discussions are presented in subsections based on the objectives of the study. These sections include: demographic characteristics of respondents; types and nature of records created/received and managed; records management practices and processes; records management policies and frameworks; existing records management practices and processes in support of service delivery; challenges associated with records management and ways of overcoming the challenges in the Institution. Finally, the discussions of the results and the summary of the chapter.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 shows respondents' demographic profile. Classification of respondents by sex revealed that majority of the senior staff (59.2%) are males while 40.8% are females. Also, senior members (teaching & non-teaching staff) males are 84.8% while 15.2% are females. This is in tandem with the 19th Congregation report of the Institution, which projected males to be the majority.

The results also showed that a good number of the senior staff (37.8%) were within the age group of 35-39years while nearly half of the senior members (48.5%) were within the age group of 40-44years. These statistics implies that the future of the Institution in terms of human resource is brighter since the economically active are involved in the administrative and academic activities of the Institution. Work output is anticipated to be high. However,



the results further showed that only a few of the senior staff (2.0%) and senior members (1.5%) were within the age group of 60years and above. See Table 4.1 below for more details.

Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

| Variables | Characteristics | Staff | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Senior Staff (%) N = 164 | Senior Members (%) N = 164 |
| Gender | Male | 58(59.2) | 56(84.8) |
| | Female | 40(40.8) | 10(15.2) |
| Age | 25–29 | 5(5.1) | 0(0.0) |
| | 30–34 | 32(32.7) | 0(0.0) |
| | 35–39 | 37(37.8) | 3(4.5) |
| | 40–44 | 11(11.2) | 32(48.5) |
| | 45–49 | 6(6.1) | 24(36.4) |
| | 50–59 | 5(5.1) | 6(9.1) |
| | ≥60 | 2(2.0) | 1(1.5) |
| Educational Level | Diploma/HND | 20(20.4) | 0(0.0) |
| | First Degree | 67(68.4) | 0(0.0) |
| | Masters | 11(11.2) | 40(60.6) |
| | PhD | 0(0.0) | 26(39.4) |
| Years of Engagement | <1 year | 5(5.1) | 0(0.0) |
| | 1–5 years | 9(9.2) | 0(0.0) |
| | 6–10 years | 45(45.9) | 32(48.5) |
| | 11–15 years | 10(10.2) | 23(34.8) |
| | 16–20 years | 21(21.4) | 11(16.7) |
| | 21+ years | 8(8.2) | 0(0.0) |
| Designation/Rank | Administrative Assistant | 16(16.3) | - |
| | Senior Administrative Assistant | 42(42.9) | - |
| | Principal Administrative Assistant | 33(33.7) | - |
| | Chief Administrative Assistant | 7(7.1) | - |
| | | | |
| Section Worked | Main Registry | 34(34.7) | - |
| | Department | 42(42.9) | - |
| | Unit | 16(16.3) | - |
| | Other(s) | 6(6.1) | - |

Source: Field Survey, 2018



Classification of respondents based on their educational level revealed that majority of the senior staff (68.4%) were First Degree holders while 20.4% were holding either Diploma or Higher National Diploma (HND). Also, 11.2% of the senior staff were Master's degree holders. The results further showed that majority of the senior members (60.6%) (teaching & non-teaching staff) were Master's Degree holders while 39.4% hold Ph.D.

Statistics in Table 4.1 showed the experience level of respondents in the Institution. The findings revealed that only 5.1% of the respondents served less than a year in the Institution. While a sizeable number of the senior staff (45.9%) work in the Institution for the past 6-10years and this is enough and relevant in understanding the subject under investigation. Also, 48.5% of the senior members served between 6-10years while 16.7% of senior members had offered 16-20years of dedicated service with the Institution. This suggests that the experience level of respondents with regards to records and their management and hence, were in a better position to answer the research questions.

The study also investigates the place of work of respondents and their designations where the results revealed that a sizeable number of the senior staff (42.9%) work in departments. Only 6.1% work in other places. Besides, a good number of the senior staff (42.9%) attained the rank of senior administrative assistant and only 7.1% were chief administrative assistants. This implies that majority of the senior staff are in the middle management position and hence, would not have problem instituting and following best practices, processes, and guidelines as far as proper records management is concerned.



4.3 Types and Nature of Records Created/Received and Managed

Given the multi-campus nature of the Institution, the study examined the types and nature of records created/received and managed in some selected registries and departments of faculties and schools across the four campuses of the Institution. The results are first summarised in Table 4.2 below and followed by the discussions. Hence, the results showed a number of records created/received and managed in the Institution. The discussions however covered three top created/received records as revealed by the results in the Table below. This included: administrative records (23.2%), students' records (15.2%) and personnel records (18.9%). These records are discussed in turn:

- (a) **Administrative Records:** The data analysis revealed that these records pertain to the origin, development, activities, and accomplishments of the Institution, which generally fall into two categories: *policy* and *operational records*.

Consequently, results showed that policy records relate to the Institution plans, methods, techniques, or rules which the Institution has adopted to carry out its responsibilities and functions. These records are further categorised into three thus, Institutional, governing and reporting records. They are presented below:

- **Institutional Records:** They include budgets and budget planning records, fiscal records, institutional and functional charts and among others. The nature of these records are for planning and forecasting.
- **Governing Records:** which include manuals, directives, orders, and interpretations issued from management, correspondence files of principal officers, regulations, circulars, instructions, memoranda or regular issuances that establish a course of



action, and staff studies or special reports relating to methods of workloads and performances. These records are for governing of the Institution as the title suggested.

- **Reporting Records:** These types of records include annual reports, periodic progress or summary reports, special reports or accomplishment, transcripts of hearings, minutes of meetings and conferences, as well as institutional histories. These types of records sought to inform concerned staff of periodic happenings and action taken or yet to be taken in the Institution.

On the other hand, operational records are used for the implementation of administrative policies, procedures, and daily operations of the Institution. Therefore, the operational value is the usefulness of a record in the conduct of the Institution's business which include the mandates, procedural records, or records that give direction. Such records most of the time required an action to be taken or a respond.

Findings from Table 4.2 revealed that many of the records created or received were generated from principal officers of the Institution such as the Office of the Registrar while the rest were from other senior officials of the Institution and other institutions across the breadth and length of the country and beyond. These records as revealed, were meant to inform, educate, direct and many of the time required an action as recounted by a key informant:

“Many of the records created/received and managed in the Institution are administrative in nature and many of them originate from the Registrar's Office and other Senior Officials of the Institution. These records are meant



to pass on information or demand an action to be taken”. Faculty Officer,
October, 2018.

Further findings revealed that many of the administrative records are general in nature and hence, they are usually copied to registries, departments and other units of the Institution. These records are kept and managed at registries and departments.

Table 4.2: Types of records created/received and managed

| Types of Records | Frequency | (%) |
|---------------------------|-----------|------|
| Administrative records | 38 | 23.2 |
| Personnel records | 25 | 15.2 |
| Students records | 31 | 18.9 |
| Accounting/Fiscal records | 16 | 9.8 |
| Electronic records | 14 | 8.5 |
| Research/Academic records | 19 | 11.6 |
| Legal records | 9 | 5.5 |
| Historical records | 12 | 7.3 |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

(b) Students Records: As indicated in Table 4.2 above, students’ records are one types of records that are created/received and managed in the Institution. Such records include: students’ registration forms, admission letters, introductory letters, transcripts, results, withdrawal letters, scholarships, awards and so on. The results also showed that such records are kept and managed by the Academic and Students Affairs Unit/Human Resource Department and some of these records could also be found in registries and departments where students pursue their programmes.

Findings also revealed that files are normally created for students and these files are either kept in shelves or cabinets in the departments. Observation however showed that many of the storage devices were full to capacity with records. Besides, some storage places in



many of the offices visited were found to be congested and not properly organised. As a result, some records could not find space in the storage. Hence, records were either put in boxes or tied together with ropes and kept in any available space. This problem resonated in almost all the offices the researcher visited. It was also revealed that retrieving records from such places was difficult and sometimes records in the system are not able to trace.

This is what a respondent had to say:

“Records Management in the Institution is not quite impressive. It appears that nobody has time for the records that are created/received in the Institution. The situation is very bad in some offices. Records are kept in any available space which can easily be accessed by anybody”. Campus Officer, October, 2018.

Finding revealed that Management Information System (MIS) is employed by the Institution to manage students’ data electronically and each faculty and department can have access to information of their students. Findings however showed that, the system still has some challenges such as difficulty in accessing students data at times, students find it difficult in registering, irregularities regarding students’ details and among others. Respondents also complained of difficulty in registering students, errors of students’ data, student information is temporal in the system. Meanwhile, students’ data are supposed to be stored in the systems for some time and sometimes permanently and should not be taken off from the system simple because a student has completed. As indicated by the National Archives of Australia (2002) that, the academic records of students must endure and remain trustworthy for a long time, and sometimes permanently.



(c) **Personnel Records:** Every organisation employs staff and creates personnel records. The proper management of these records make significant contribution towards the achievement of the objectives of the organisation. Analysis of the findings revealed that personnel records such as personnel action forms, supplemental personnel action forms, vacation, sick leave & personal leave notices, sick leave reports, staff benefit forms, performance appraisals, education assistance programme, questionnaire and authorisations, training/development participation materials, letters related to job performance or other similar correspondence, personnel data form, personal information review sheet, job application, résumé, disciplinary materials, updates, tenure recommendations and correspondence regarding award or denial of tenure/promotion, assessment reports, progress reports and evaluations, leave of absence and so on. These documents are personal in nature that is, they concern the employees rather the institution. These records are created/received and managed at the Human Resource Department and sometimes the sector in which personnel belong to in the Institution.



Also, it was revealed that registries and departments keep and manage staff records they receive from the Human Resource Department. These records are normally used by the department or registries within the campus or beyond. It was further revealed that staff records kept by registries and departments were inadequate. Respondents complained that the HRD does not usually give all records that they need to have in order to build a complete records system for staff in the departments or registries. They indicated that it is not sometimes easy looking for a particular document of a staff particularly at the campus, faculty or department levels. Further interrogation however revealed that some records of

staff must be maintained by the Human Resource Department only and must not be given to other department except on require for a special purpose. This is what a respondent recounted:

“Though we keep and manage staff records at the various registries and departments, however, there are instances you want a particular record of a staff and you are not able to get it. Because, what we received or get is what we also managed at the registries and departments. Here is the case, we are far away from Central Administration in such a way that we can easily get some information of staff for a particular department when the need arises. For instance, there are many occasions where staff details are requested by the Central Administration, Tamale. So, if we do not keep staff records at the faculty or department level, we will find it difficult in providing the information”. Faculty Officer, October, 2018.

Observation further revealed that records staff were doing their bit in the management of the records in registries and departments. What was worth noting in this finding was that, everybody does what he/she knows best. However, a staff best cannot be the best for the Institution. For instance, it was observed that there was not uniformity in the management of records in registries and departments in which the study was conducted except one faculty in Nyankpala where they have a uniform filing index for all departments within the faculty which was used by all departments and units with that faculty.



A key informant had this to say:

“Records management in the Institution is quite good but, there is still more room for improvement. For example, in my faculty we use a uniform file index for all departments and units. And so, when you move any of the staff to any of the department or unit within the faculty, he/she is comfortable.”

Faculty Officer, October, 2018.



Analysis of the results further showed that any of the above mentioned records could be physical or electronic. Electronic records are normally stored in computers while backup devices such as hard disk drives, pen drives and among other things are used to store records and kept by offices who generated them. Further findings however revealed that many of the offices visited did not employ any specialised programme to manage records. This resonated in almost all the campuses with the exception of the Tamale Campus. The reason being that, some units in the Tamale Campus used other software programmes in managing both records. For instance, the Directorate of Information and Communication Technology used the cloud data storage system to store digital records. The Directorate created a centralised data storage point, where data can be readily available and/or accessible for administrative purposes. Hence, backups of all official records are stored in the cloud. However, data revealed that the information stored in the cloud can only be accessed by authorised users. Also, one of such department that used a specialised programme in managing records was the Human Resource Department (HRD).

This is what a key informant had to say in connection with using a customised records management programme:

“We do not use any specialised records management programme acquired purposively to manage records apart from the Microsoft Office programmes that are used in the creation and storage of records in the office. Hence, electronic records are poorly organised and managed in the office. As a result, we sometimes find it difficult in searching for records”.

Faculty Officer, October, 2018.

4.3.1 Should records be managed like other resources?

In trying to understand the views of respondents on whether records should be managed like other resources in the Institution. The results revealed that majority of the respondents (68.8%) strongly agreed that records should be managed like other resources. This was followed by 28.1% of the respondents who agreed with the statement. Only a handful of the respondents (3.1%) disagreed while no body strongly disagreed with the assertion. See Figure 4.1 below for more details.



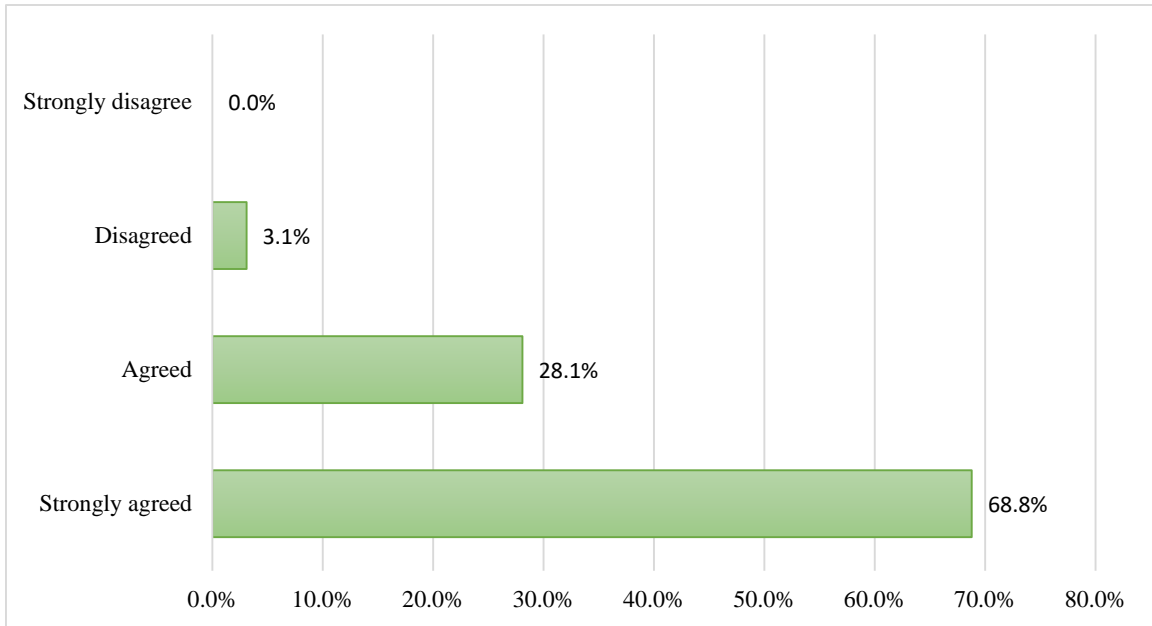


Figure 4.1: Should records be managed like other resources?

Source: Field Survey, 2018

A Key informant had this to say:

“Proper records management enables an organisation to achieve its goals. Besides, records serve as the lifeblood of every organisation and hence, serve as the memory of the organisation since, human memory cannot be trusted and rely on all the time.” Head of Department, October, 2018.



4.3.2 Responsibility of staff towards records management

The researcher wanted to know who was responsible for the management of records in the Institution. When the question was posed, almost all the respondents indicated that records management was part of their responsibility. They said records management was considered part of their responsibility as staff who create or receive and use records in their daily transactions in the Institution.

4.3.3 Role of senior members and senior staff in records management

The above question on staff responsibility towards RM led to another question thus, the role of staff in records management. The following themes were presented by senior staff thematically in Table 4.3 below: create and capture records; register and control records (receive and dispatch); classify and index records; maintain and retrieve records.

Also, senior members (teaching and non-teaching staff) indicated that they create and capture records, use records and supervise records staff. This were also presented thematically in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Role of senior members and senior staff in records management

| Staff | Role in records management |
|---|---|
| Administrative Staff (Senior Staff) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create and capture records ▪ Registration and control of records (received & dispatched) ▪ Classification and indexing of records ▪ Maintenance and retrieval of records |
| Senior Members (Teaching & Non-teaching) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Create and capture of records ▪ Usage of records ▪ Supervise records staff |

Source: Field Data, 2018

From Table 4.3 above, the analysis of the results revealed that the role played by senior staff in RM included: create/receive and capture records; register and control records (receive and dispatch); classify and index records; maintain and retrieve records which are discussed in turn:

Create/receive and capture records: Results revealed that both senior staff and senior members create and capture records in the offices by the use of computers, scanners, and



among others. This covered administrative records, academic records, students' records, staff records, financial records and so on. The analysis of the results also showed that these records were either in the form of hardcopy or softcopy and stored in filing equipment such as cabinets, shelves and the softcopies were kept in computers, pen drives, hard disk drives and so on as backups.

Registration (receive and dispatch) and control of records: On the part of senior staff, findings showed that they register correspondences that come into the filing system or dispatch records that leave the filing system. Observation, however, showed that this process in some offices was not that effective because, a number of errors were spotted with regards to the registration of hard copies records in registries and departments. For example, the registration registers in some registries and departments were found to contain errors such as wrong numbering of records, double registration of records among others. Also, there was no prove of registration of electronic records in the electronic system particularly, registries and departments where the study was conducted.

Classification and indexing of records: Again, senior staff indicated that they classified records with the aid of filing index. Thus, records are normally classified into subject, geographical, numerical, alpha-numerical, and among other things so as to facilitate easy filing and retrieving. Findings also revealed that these records are normally initialised with some special designed codes to facilitate the filing and retrieval process in the filing system. Observation however showed that there were inadequacies, duplications, among others contained by many of the filing indexes used in registries and departments. This some respondents said it makes filing and retrieving of records difficult. The dominant classification system used in many of the offices is alpha-numeric.



Maintenance and retrieval of records: The analysis of results revealed that respondents (administrative staff) maintained, stored and retrieved records in the record keeping systems (manually and electronically). Also, respondents indicated that records that are created or received are normally used, kept and managed in the record keeping systems. Findings further revealed that respondents maintained and retrieved records from the systems anytime they are required.

Usage of records: The results showed that both senior members and senior staff indicated that they used records in taking decisions, providing services and among other things. It was also revealed that records are normally used for the running of the day-to-day activities of the Institution. This was evidenced in the narration of a key informant:

“Many of the things we do here that is, in making decision, providing services among others records are used in this regard. In fact, I can say records are used in the daily transactions of the Institution. Hence, without records absolutely nothing can take place because, records are needed to transact the business – either serving as reference or carry the directives and actions that are needed.” Senior Assistant Registrar, October, 2018.

Supervision of records staff: Senior members indicated that they supervised the management of records and its related activities in registries, departments, units, sections in the Institution. Observation revealed that those who managed the records in the registries, departments, units, sections and so on were the administrative staff, which included: junior and senior staff. This category of staff were found in the registries, departments, units and are people who normally carried out the day-to-day activities of the

Institution. The analysis further revealed that most supervision of records staff was done by senior members (administrative). Respondents however, indicated that supervision of records staff was not that effective. Further interrogation revealed that many of the senior members (administrative) who serve as supervisors do not take keen interest in what records staff do in the filing system.

This is what a respondent had to say:

“Many of us are hardly visited by our supervisors and what we do in the filing system whether it is effective or not our supervisors do not know. Hence, I can say supervision on records management in the Institution is not effective.” Chief Administrative Assistant, October, 2018.

4.3.4 Methods of retrieving, length of time in retrieving and retrieval challenges

As shown in Table 4.4, the methods of retrieving records, time spent in retrieving records and challenges involved in retrieving records from the storage site. These issues are presented according to the following themes: methods of retrieval – filing indexes, haphazard guesses, drawer labels and automated retrieval systems; retrieval time – 1-5 minutes, 6-10 minutes, 10 minutes and above, it can sometimes take the whole day or more and sometimes not found; retrieval challenges – misfiling, missing files, damage files, mislabeling and duplicating of records that is, for hardcopies.



Table 4.4: Summary of the methods of retrieval, length of retrieval and challenges involved

| Variables | Themes |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Methods of Retrieval | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Filing indexes ▪ Drawer labels ▪ Automated retrieval system ▪ Haphazard guesses |
| Retrieval Time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1-5 minutes ▪ 6 -10 minutes ▪ 10+ minutes ▪ It can sometimes take a day or more ▪ It is sometimes not found |
| Retrieval Challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Misfiling ▪ Missing files ▪ Damage of records ▪ Mislabeled ▪ Duplicating of records |

Source: Field Data, 2018

From the above Table, the results showed the methods by which records staff retrieved records from the storage system as discussed in turn:

Analysis of the results showed that respondents used filing index as a tool in retrieving records from the storage system. Respondents however indicated that many of the filing indexes are normally used were found to be inadequate and contain duplications indexes. Also, results showed that respondents retrieved records by using drawers' labels. That is, each drawer of a cabinet is labelled in such way that one can use it as a guide to search for records. Results further revealed that respondents used automated ways of retrieving records from the storage system. That is, details of the records received/created are first entered into a specialised designed software and when retrieving the records staff first go into the electronic system to search for the details of the records before they go to retrieve



the hardcopy. As indicated earlier, this particular software is only used at the Human Resource Department and the main registry in Tamale. In addition, analysis of the results indicated that some respondents do not apply any of the three methods of retrieving records. But what they simply do is to haphazardly guess exactly where they think a particular file is kept. Accordingly, they will do this till they finally found it in the system or not. The results suggest that filing and retrieving is somewhat cumbersome because, a filing index serves as point to records but when the filing index has a lot of inadequacies there is bounce to be a problem.

From the Table above, results also indicated that the time spent by records staff in retrieving a record(s) from the storage system are discussed in turn:

Findings revealed that, respondents spend 1-5 minutes of their time looking for a document(s) from the storage system when requested. This means that records that are retrieved between 1-5 minutes is within the acceptable range and records staff who retrieve records within this range suggest that the records system is better. Also, others indicated spending between 6-10 minutes looking for a document. Results further suggested that respondents could spend 10 and above minutes in the system searching for records. Others indicated that they could spend a day or more looking for a document while findings suggested that respondents do not find records in the system sometimes. Retrieving records beyond 5 minutes is an indicative that the records system has a problem and could cause delays which is counterproductive. This is a wake call for management to take a second look at records management in the Institution.



From Table 4.4 above, findings revealed some challenges encountered by records staff in retrieving records from the storage system. This is discussed in turn:

Analysis of the results showed that records staff do encounter challenges such as misfiling in the storage system. Thus, records are kept in files that they are not supposed to be filed. As revealed, respondents indicated that they sometimes find other files kept in folders that they are not supposed to be stored. Findings also revealed that, sometimes records are not found in the storage system probable as a result of misfiling or records are taken off from the system. Findings further pointed to the fact that some records got damage in the system because of poor storage condition. Observation however showed that the condition of some of the records is appalling due to lack of conducive storage location. Respondents said mislabeling of records was one of the challenges they faced in the storage system. This means that the labels in the filing system is different from what is contained in the filing index. Lastly, records staff thought duplication of records was rampant in the storage system. What this means is that, results showed that records staff could find duplicate copies of records more than one in the system and sometimes the filing index contains duplicates of file labels all pointing to one folder. This suggests that filing and retrieving of records from the system in many registries and department were not likely to be effective. It is not surprising that respondents indicated that records are sometimes not found in the system or better still, it could take them a day or more to search for records. Management will need to invest in records management so as put the management of records in the Institution in a proper perspective.



4.3.5 Records keeping systems

Every organisation should decide on a record keeping system that suits its particular needs, circumstances and resources (availability of space or computers). The system should be functional, accurate, reliable and user-friendly. Figure 4.2 reports the results of the analysis on the records keeping systems in the Institution where a greater number of the respondents (73.2%) revealed that a chunk of the records are managed manually. This was followed by 23.8% of the respondents who indicated that records are managed both manually and electronically. Only 3.0% of the respondents revealed that records are managed electronically. However, many of the respondents are not aware that the Microsoft Office package could be a powerful tool for the management of electronic records. It is therefore not surprising that majority settled on paper-based record keeping system as the only system used in the Institution. These findings are reflective of earlier finding which suggested that only few offices on the Tamale Campus used specialised records management programmes to records. Figure 4.2 below contains further details.



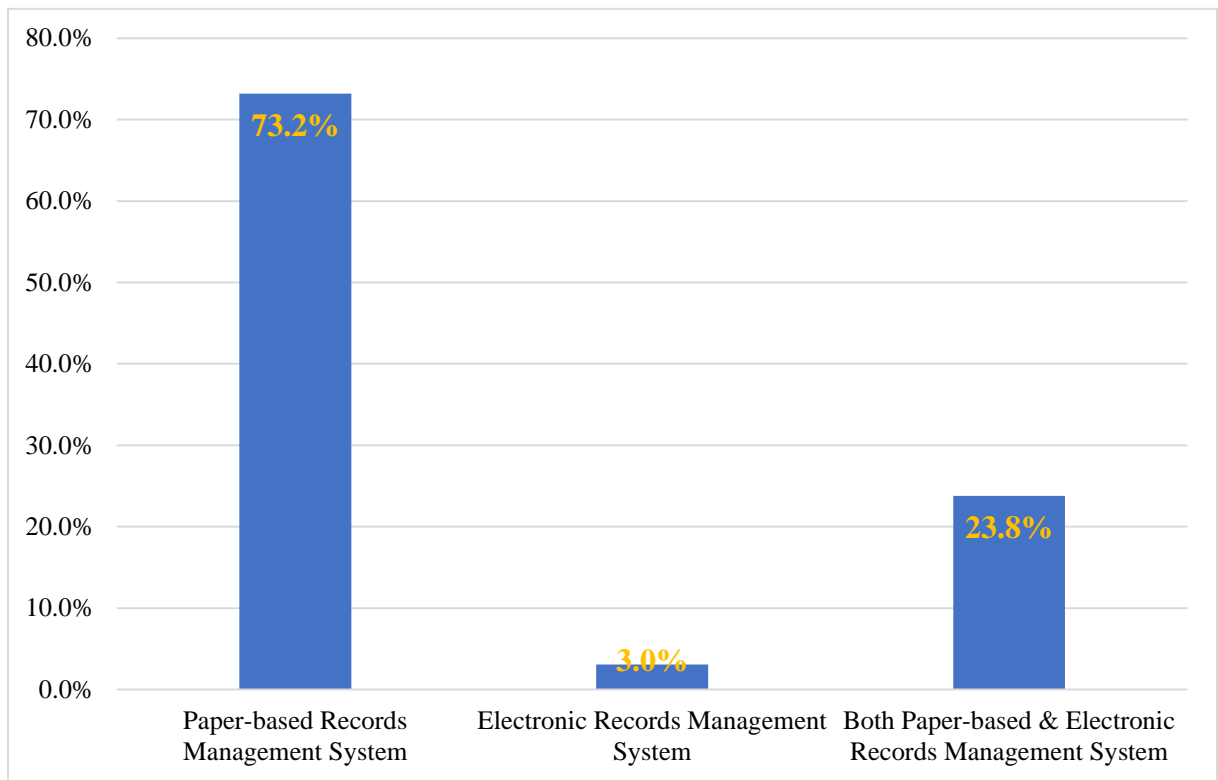


Figure 4.2: Records keeping systems

Source: Field Survey, 2018

4.4 Records Management Practices and Processes

This section analyses the records management practices and processes in the Institution.

This starts with the survey data and thereafter, corroborating with the qualitative data. The survey data is presented and analysed through a 5-point Likert scale; very effective, effective, neutral, ineffective and very ineffective with assigned values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. These values are added and divided by 5 which is the total scale to obtain a discriminating mean value or cut-off point of 3.0. Therefore, any item among the composite items that scores a weighted mean of 3.0 or above are considered effective or a strong factor while items with weighted mean less than 3.0 are considered ineffective or weak factors. Hence, frequency counts, percentages (%) and mean (\bar{X}) were used to analyse the



data. The Table below therefore presents the analysis of the survey data on the practices and processes of records management in the Institution.

Table 4.5: Records management practices and processes

| Variables | Characteristics | Very Effective (%=100) N=164 | Effective (%=100) N=164 | Neutral (%=100) N=164 | Ineffective (%=100) N=164 | Very Ineffective (%=100) N=164 | Mean (\bar{X}) |
|-----------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Practices | Security, safety, and confidentiality | 16(9.8) | 29(17.7) | 44(26.8) | 55(33.5) | 20(12.2) | 2.6 |
| | Staff capacity building (training) | 12(7.8) | 16(9.8) | 43(26.2) | 58(35.4) | 35(21.3) | 2.7 |
| | Disaster management practice | 22(13.4) | 31(18.9) | 27(16.5) | 52(31.7) | 32(19.5) | 2.8 |
| Process | Creation and capture of records | 22(13.4) | 36(22.0) | 51(31.1) | 32(19.5) | 24(14.6) | 3.1 |
| | Filing and retrieving | 15(9.1) | 20(12.2) | 22(13.4) | 58(35.4) | 49(29.9) | 2.4 |
| | Usage and maintenance | 20(12.2) | 30(18.3) | 41(25.0) | 49(29.9) | 24(14.6) | 2.9 |
| | Retention and disposal | 11(6.7) | 17(10.4) | 24(14.6) | 68(41.5) | 44(26.8) | 2.3 |

N=160. Scale: Very effective=5, Effective=4, Neutral=3, Ineffective=2, Very ineffective=1 and a Cut-off point of $\bar{X} = 3.0$

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Proper records management practices and processes should result in the creation and management of a complete and accurate records in the records keeping system of an organisation's business activities, decision making, as well as its service delivery. From the Table above, the results revealed that practices such as security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$) fell below the cut-off point or strong factor level. This



suggests that the practices evaluated in the Institution, respondents agreed that they were ineffective.

In evaluating the processes, results revealed that only creation and capture of records ($\bar{X} = 3.1$) hit the strong factor level. The implication is that with the exception of that one process, the other items (processes) were considered ineffective by respondents. This includes: usage and maintenance of records ($\bar{X} = 2.9$), retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) and filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$), which is an agreement that the processes were ineffective. This implies that these processes may not be strong to support proper records management in the Institution. However, what is worth noticing is the mean value of retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) as well as filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$). Thus, amongst the composite items in the Table 4.5 above, the retention and disposal of records as well as filing and retrieving of records mean values are the weakest factors. This suggests that the processes of retention and disposal and filing and retrieving of records in the Institution could be considered the worse processes as far as proper records management was concerned.

Further interrogation however revealed that the Institution lacks retention and disposal schedules to serve as a guide in retaining and disposing records. Also, results further suggested that many registries and department lacked adequate filing indexes for the effective filing and retrieving of records from the storage system.

The qualitative results corroborate with the survey findings where a key informant had this to say in connection with the records management practices and processes in the Institution:



“Though some records management practices and processes are ineffective, I cannot conclude that everything is bad, at least the Institution still provides its basic functions as a higher institution of learning. However, records management could be made better if the needed investment is made in records management.” Campus Officer, October, 2018.

4.4.1 Lost of records in the Institution

The researcher wanted to find out whether as a result of the ineffective records management practices and processes staff experience or hear of lost of records in the Institution and how often. The results revealed that a sizeable number of the respondents (47.9%) said from time to time while 15.2% of the respondents said a lot of times every day. Only 4.2% of the respondents said they rarely experienced or heard of lost of records in the Institution, while 24.8% of the respondents said most days and frequently. Further 7.9% of the respondents said they never heard of lost records in the Institution. This suggests that the frequent lost of records in the Institution could be engineered by the ineffective records management practices and processes. It can be concluded that the practices and processes have a link with mission of records in the Institution. Management therefore need to act to prevent further lost of records. Figure 4.3 below shows more details.



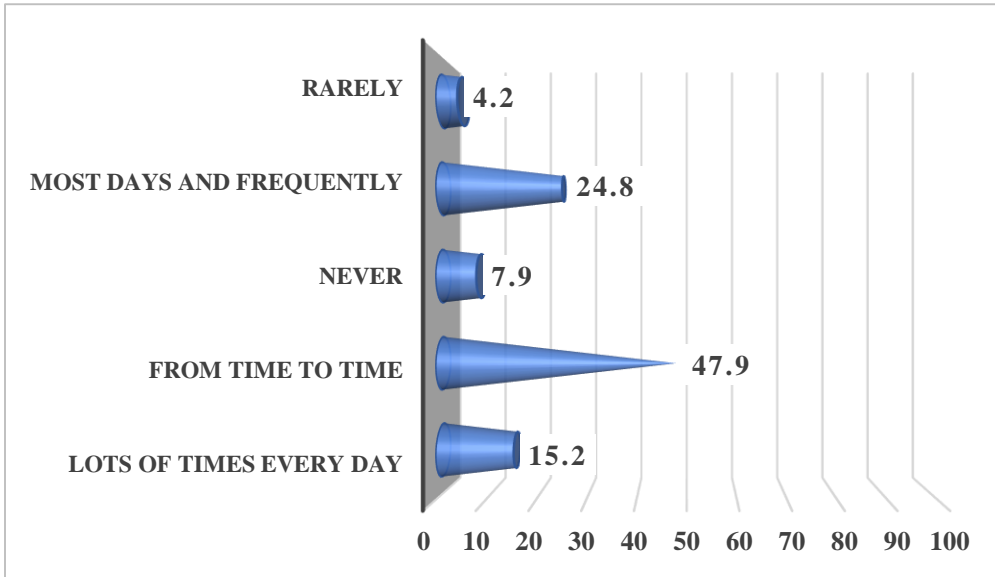


Figure 4.3: Frequency of records lost/misplaced

Source: Field Survey, 2018

4.4.2 Have you or a colleague ever suffered the consequences of losing a records(s)?

The researcher wanted to know whether respondents ever suffered or a colleague of the consequences of a lost document(s) in the Institution. The results revealed that about 57.9% of the respondents said 'YES' to the assertion while 42.1% of the respondents indicated 'NO'. Further probed suggested that some respondents or a colleague ever lost his/her document(s) in the Institution. Considering the percentage of respondents who agreed that they lost documents before suggest that lost of records in the Institution is quite worrying and management need to take a second look at records management. See Figure 4.4 below for more details.

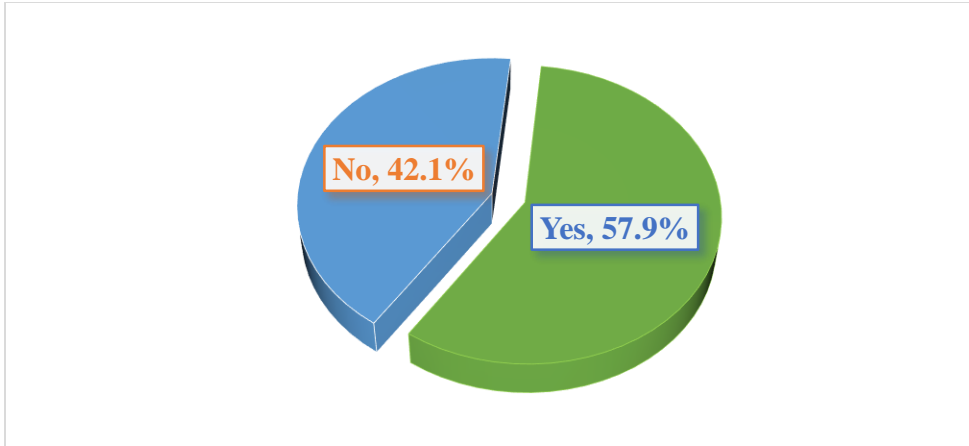


Figure 4.4: Lost of records in the Institution

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The qualitative data support the above survey data as recounted by a respondent:

“A staff was given a good number of queries and when Management wanted to meet and decide on the case, how the information got to the staff that management was to meet on the case nobody knew. The queries in the staff file disappeared from the staff file and when management met and requested for the file to take a decision on the issue the queries could not be found in the file. Interestingly, the one who removed the queries from the said staff file could not be found and as a result, management could not take any concrete action against the staff and the issue just died of like that.” Chief Administrative Assistant, October, 2018.

4.4.3 Storage devices used and number of times electronic records are backed up

The study examined the storage devices used for both paper and electronic records created or received and managed in the Institution. The results are first summarised in Table 4.6 and presented in details thematically.



Table 4.6: Summary of storage devices used and number of times records are backed up

| Variables | Themes |
|---|---|
| Back-up Devices (Storage Media) for electronic records | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Compact Disk ▪ Magnetic Tape ▪ Hard Drives ▪ Pen Drives |
| Storage devices for Paper records | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steel Cabinets ▪ Wooden Shelves ▪ Boxes ▪ Drawers ▪ Cupboards |
| Numbers of times electronic records are backed up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Daily ▪ Weekly ▪ Monthly ▪ Quarterly ▪ Yearly ▪ Not at All |

Source: Field Data, 2018

From Table 4.6 above, the results depicts the backed-up devices used for electronic records, which are discussed in turn:

Findings revealed that compact disk was used in the Institution to store information particularly, students' theses, dissertations, project work, and among other things.

Magnetic tape was another device used. The results showed that respondents used magnetic tape in backing up data in the Institutions. Findings also revealed that respondents used hard disk drives to back up data. Analysis further suggested that respondents backed up data using pen drives. Observation revealed that pen drives were the most used device in the Institution perhaps because of its portability nature. This is what a key informant had to say in connection with the backed up devices:

“Many of my staff use pen drives to store and back up data. This is because, the pen drive can easily be carried either by hanging or keep in a pocket



and one can use it anywhere. I encourage them to back up all electronic/digital records in the office.” Senior Assistant Registrar, October, 2018.

Also, respondents were asked the number of times they backed up electronic records as indicated in the Table above. The results revealed the number of times staff backed up electronic/digital records, which are discussed in turn:

The results showed that respondents backed up their records daily while the findings revealed that some staff backed up their records weekly. Analysis of the results further showed that some respondents backed up their electronic records monthly. Besides, results revealed that some respondents backed up their data quarterly and yearly. Interestingly, findings revealed that some records staff do not back up their records at all perhaps because the Directorate of ICT stores all official data in the cloud storage.

Also, from the Table above, the results revealed the devices used to store paper records in the Institution as discussed in turn:

The analysis of the results showed that steel cabinet was one of the devices used by respondents in storing paper-based records in the Institution. However, observation showed that a good number of the steel cabinets were not in good conditions. It was further revealed that steel cabinets were the most used storage devices in the Institution. However, many of the registries and departments visited revealed that majority of the cabinets were old and had their locks broken. Again, respondents indicated that the steel cabinets were not enough to store the paper records due to the increasing number of staff, students and the numbers of records created or received daily. Respondents said they also



used wooden shelves, cupboards, drawers, boxes to store records in the office. However, it was revealed that these devices were used as improvised devices. This resonates across all campuses as illustrated by a key informant:

“The wooden shelves, boxes, drawers and among other things used in the office are not the required storage devices. These were however used in the interim because, it is not advisable to leave records on the floor.”

Deputy Registrar, October, 2018.

4.5 Records management policies and frameworks

A records management policy is seen as a cornerstone to every effective RM in an organisation that is, it is a demonstration to employees and stakeholders that RM is important to the organisation. Also, it provides a statement of intent that underpins a RM programme. Further, it serves as a mandate for the activities of the records manager, as well as providing a framework for supporting documents like procedures, business rules, and disposal schedules and among other things (National Archives Information Policy Team, 2010).

In investigating the existence of records management policy in the Institution, results revealed that the Institution did not have one for its records management. This implies that the Institution as it stands now, manages its records without a policy.

Further investigation showed that the Institution did not even have a general guide for its records management for records staff to use. Observation further revealed that records staff relied on their individual initiative in the management of records and not based on any guide. This suggests that the Institution was not far from encountering challenges with its



records management as noted by Mwangi (2017) that the lack of records management guidelines act as a challenge to proper records management in many organisations.

This is what a respondent had to say:

“We manage records based on our understanding because, the Institution lacks a policy document on records and not even a guideline or a manual on records management. As it stands now, we rely on our own initiatives and as a result, some of us lost interest in the records management. Thus, we do not feel motivated at all.” Principal Administrative Assistant, October, 2018.

4.5.1 Position of the Institution on the violation of security and confidentiality of records

The researcher wanted to appreciate the position of the Institution when there is unauthorised access to records or failure to comply with security issues. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents (52.0%) said staff who illegally access records are queried.

This was followed closely by 46.0% of the respondents who said they were not sure of what happens to staff who illegally access or refused to comply with security issues in the Institution. Only a handful of respondents (2.0%) indicated staff who access records illegally or failed to comply with security issues of records are demoted while none settled on internal fines as action against staff who violate issues of illegal access and security of records in the Institution. Staff are in doubt regarding action against unauthorised access to records in the Institution because, of the lack of a guide to spell out do's and don'ts of records management. This should therefore serve as a wakeup call for management to put



together an acceptable guide or policy document on records management. Figure 4.5 below contains further details.

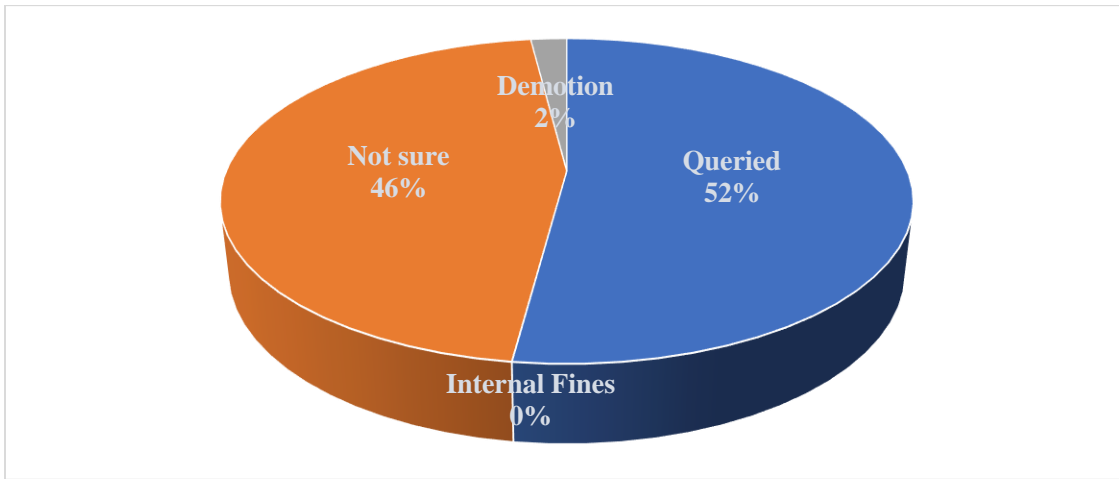


Figure 4.5: Action taken against staff who illegally access records or failed to comply with security issues of records

Source: Field Data, 2018

4.5.2 Awareness of respondents on some records management frameworks

This section analyses the level of staff awareness on some records management frameworks used at both the national and international levels for the proper management of records. This section starts with the survey data and corroborates with the qualitative data. The survey data is presented and analysed through a 2-point Likert scale thus, awareness and unawareness as shown in Table 4.7 and discussed in turn:

Table 4.7: Level of awareness of respondents on some RM frameworks

| Frameworks | Aware | | Not Aware | | Total |
|--|--------------|------|--------------|------|----------|
| | <i>Freq.</i> | % | <i>Freq.</i> | % | |
| International Organisation for Standardisation, 15489 (2001) | 56 | 34.1 | 108 | 65.9 | 164(100) |
| Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) | 59 | 36.0 | 105 | 64.0 | 164(100) |
| Public Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) | 49 | 29.9 | 115 | 70.1 | 164(100) |

Source: Field Data, 2018

The results in Table 4.7 above shows that Public Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) reported much lower awareness among respondents than both Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) and International Organisation for Standardisation, 15489 (2002), where the percentages of responds are 36.0% and 34.1% respectively. The findings revealed that unawareness among respondents were 70.1% and 64.0% for Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) and Public Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) respectively. The data suggest that respondents' level of awareness on the national records management frameworks were low. This is an indicative that, awareness among respondents on major national and international frameworks was lower. Management therefore need to act to increase the level of awareness of records staff on some major frameworks on records management so that they can appreciate records management better.

4.6 Records management in support of services offered

Effective service delivery involves good records management practices and processes in every organisation (Ngoepe, 2008 & Pemberton, 1991). Hence, effective service delivery



in this study was measured using the gap model dimensions which include: reliability (providing dependable & accurate services), responsiveness (providing prompt & timely services). Also, assurance (inspire trust & confidence in service provision). In addition, empathy (understanding the customer) and tangibles (physical facilities, equipment, personnel & communication materials which refer to the records).

Kemoni (2008) indicates that there is a link between proper records management and effective service delivery. Hence, findings from Figure 4.6 revealed that majority of the respondents (96.7%) agreed that records influence service delivery in the Institution. They however added that, records that are effectively managed is likely to have positive impact on services whilst poorly managed records could have negative consequences on services. Meanwhile, only a handful of the respondents (3.3%) disagreed that records management has no bearing with service delivery in the Institution. This is shown in Figure 4.6 below.

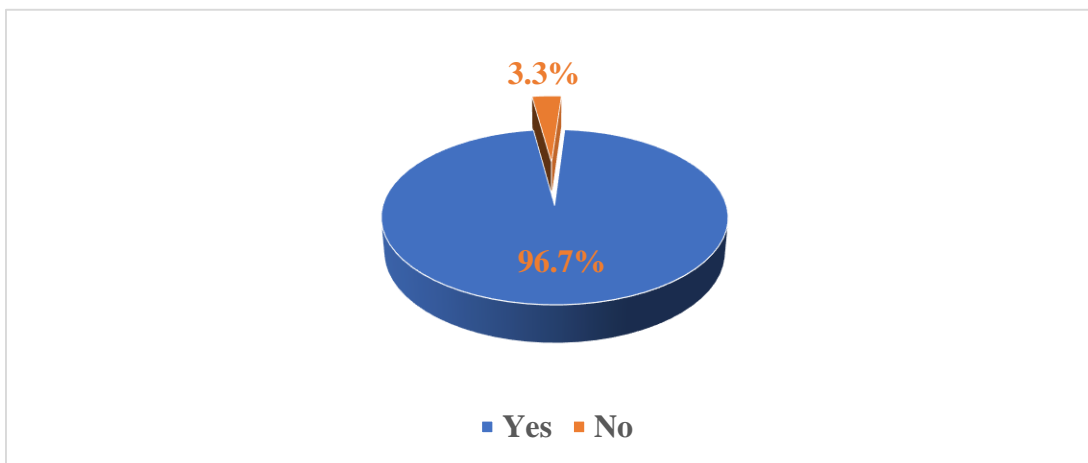


Figure 4.6: Records management practices and processes in support of services

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From Table 4.6 above, the results suggested that practices such as security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster



management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$) were not effective. This is because, the mean values of the composite items fell below the discriminating mean which of $\bar{X} = 3.0$ in Table 4.6 above. This is an indicative that the practices evaluated are considered ineffective by respondents. The implication is that practices like lack of regular training could affect the performance of records staff in the management of records in the Institution. This will in turn affect the promptness and timeliness of delivery service in the Institution. Findings also showed that security, safety and confidentiality was ineffective, which means that, the records system is not likely to inspire trust and confidence in services that are provided. Because, records that are not secured and safe in the storage system can easily get lost and when they are required to provide the needed services they may not be found and hence, services will either delay or come to a standstill.

This is what a respondent had to say in connection with the insecurity and safety of records in the Institution:

“I wanted to embark on further studies and I wrote to management for approval. I never got any feedback and I followed up with the second letter and I never had any responds to that one too. I started the programme and finished and I then wrote to inform management and also to ask for upgrading only for me to be given a query by management indicating that I did not seek approval before pursuing the programme. This implies that the letters that were sent got lost in the records system. I was asked by management to produce an approval letter else; I was not going to be upgraded.” Principal Administrative Assistant, October, 2018.



From the Table 4.6, analysis further revealed that process of creation and capture of records ($\bar{X} = 3.1$) was the only one that hit the bench mark, which means that with the exception of that one, the rest of the processes were considered ineffective in the Institution by respondents. This includes: usage and maintenance of records ($\bar{X} = 2.9$), filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$) as well as retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$). This suggests that the processes cannot support proper records management in the Institution. The implication is that staff may not be able to provide dependable and accurate services to clients. Because, ineffective processes like filing and retrieving of records can lead to lost of documents and difficulty of searching for records leading delay. Also, lack of maintenance of records after used cause disorganisation in the filing system which to misfiling, mislabeling, misplacement and among others which is a disaster to service provision.

4.6.1 Current RM practices and processes in support of services offered

The researcher want to further confirm findings in Table 4.6 above by asking the question whether the current practices and processes of records management affect service delivery in the Institution. It was evidenced that majority of the respondents with a percentage of 54.7% agreed that current practices and processes do not support effective service delivery. This finding is similar to Wamukoya & Mutula (2006) who noted that, the weaknesses in institutions records management contributes to the lowering of the general standard of services offered. See evidence in Figure 4.7 below.

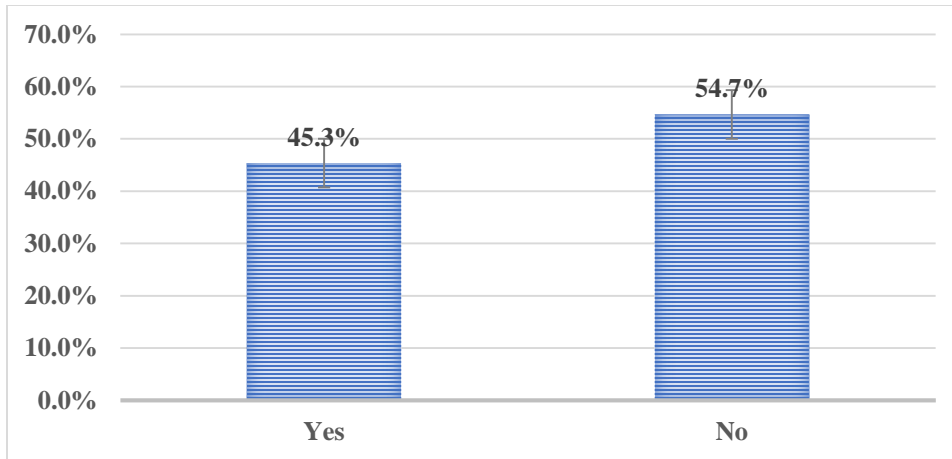


Figure 4.7: Current practices and processes of RM on services

Source: Field Survey, 2018

A key informant had this to say on current records management practices and processes on service delivery:

“The records management system is not effective and cannot be relied upon for effective service delivery in the Institution. The reason being that, nobody takes interest in records management in the Institution and hence, the records are not given the needed support. Records are kept in any available space in offices.” Senior Assistant Registrar, October, 2018.

4.6.2 Level of satisfaction with the services provided when a records staff exited from office

Majority of the respondents (40.0%) indicated that they were dissatisfied with the services that are provided. Further interrogation revealed that services are affected in the office any time a staff exited from an office. This suggests that the right information is not easily accessed to immediately continue service provision. The implication is that there is bound to be delay in service provision, difficulty to access services as well as lack of commitment



of the personnel and most of the times clients bear the brand of poor records management.

Figure 4.8 contains further details.

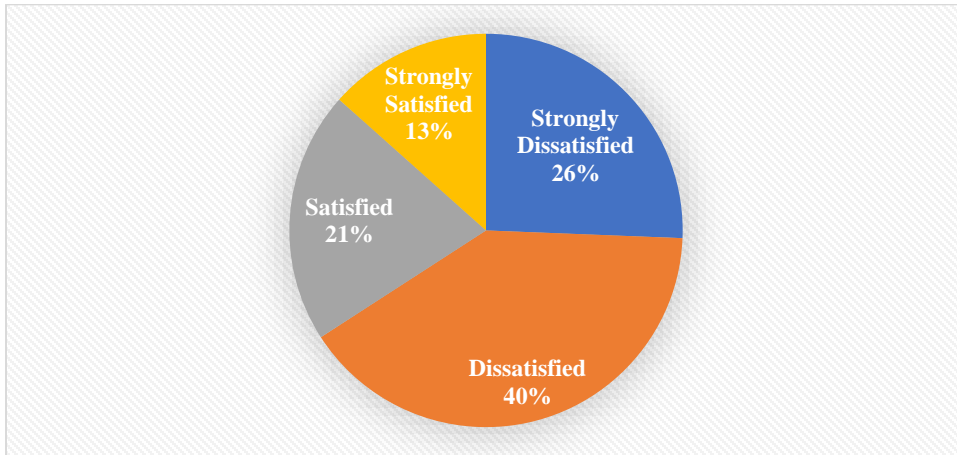


Figure 4.8: Degree of satisfaction of services offered

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This is what a key informant had to say in support of the above:

When I took over as Head of Department, there was nothing to rely on like organised records because, RM in the office was poor. Reference letters are written for students without referring to their files for more information. I asked the Department Administrator to put things in order though is not easy to reconstruct the filing system that has existed for some time now. Besides, I am currently using my own laptop to process documents meaning when I exit office, I will definitely leave with all the records in it and anybody that will take over from me will have to start from the scratch. Not even a drive for backing up records.” Head of Department, October, 2018.



4.6.3 Challenges associated with records management

On the question whether there are challenges associated with RM in the Institution, the results revealed that majority of the respondents (88.9%) agreed that there are challenges associated with records management in the Institution. A handful of the respondents (11.1%) said there are no challenges with records management in the Institution as shown in Figure 4.9 below.

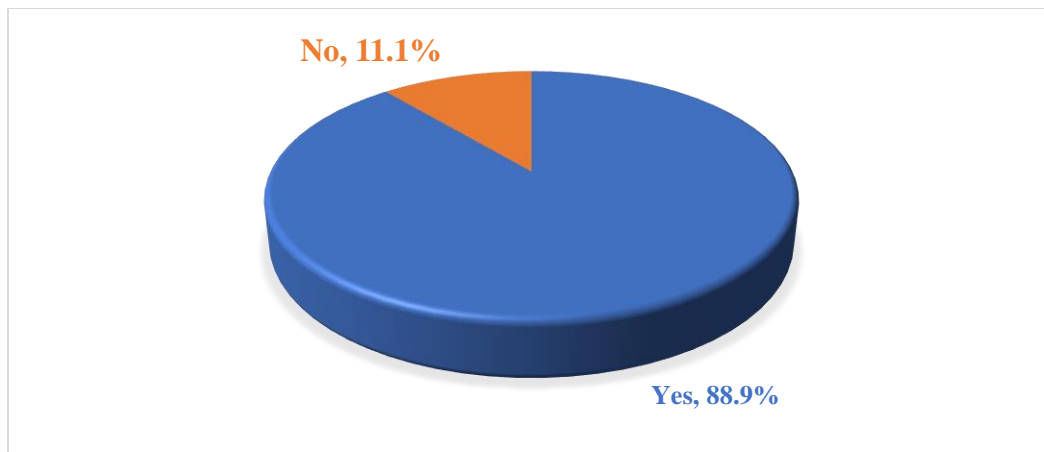


Figure 4.9: Responses to challenges associated with records management

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The respondents agreed that there were challenges associated with the records management in the Institution. Prominent amongst the challenges mentioned include: lack of commitment from management and records staff (10.5%) which was ranked number one in the list, lack of regular training (10.3%) ranked number two in the list. Findings also revealed that ineffective records management practices and processes was a challenge (10.0%) which was ranked number three in the list and among others.

Further interrogation showed that the challenges identified could be traced to the lack of commitment from management and records staff to proper records management in the Institution. This is because, senior officials in the Institution failed to devote the needed



funds for the proper management of records. They also failed to put up a functional records management unit in the Institution to coordinate records management and its related activities. Also, management failed come out a policy document to govern the effective management of records in the Institution. Table 4.8 below contains more details.

Table 4.8: Challenges associated with records management

| Challenges | Freq. | % | Rank |
|--|--------------|----------|-----------------------|
| Lack of effective records management systems | 53 | 7.9 | 8 th |
| Lack of organisational RM policy (policies, guidelines, standards, procedures etc.) | 56 | 9.9 | 4 th |
| Lack of commitment from management and records staff | 70 | 10.5 | 1st |
| Ineffective records management practices and processes | 67 | 10.0 | 3rd |
| Lack of regular training | 69 | 10.3 | 2nd |
| Lack of experienced records staff | 52 | 7.8 | 9 th |
| Inadequate infrastructure for managing all form of records | 62 | 9.3 | 6 th |
| Lack of general staff awareness on the importance of records | 48 | 7.2 | 10 th |
| Lack of effective supervision of records staff | 63 | 9.4 | 5 th |
| Lack of motivation of records staff to maintain effective records management systems | 66 | 8.4 | 7 th |
| Lack of functional records management and archives units | 63 | 9.4 | 5 th |

Source: Field Survey, 2018

4.6.4 Ways of improving upon records management challenges

Respondents suggested ways of improving upon the records management challenges in the Institution. The suggestions made ranges from commitment of staff 73(10.9%) to the employment of experienced and qualified people 45(6.7%) to beefier the staff strength to help manage records properly. Table 4.9 reveals more details.



Table 4.9: Ways of improving upon records management challenges

| Improving upon the challenges | Freq. | % | Rank |
|---|-------|------|------------------|
| All parties should be involved in the design and implementation of the records management systems (RMS); | 56 | 8.4 | 7 th |
| Commitment from staffs very key; | 73 | 10.9 | 1 st |
| Institute effective RM practices and processes spelt out by a policy document; | 64 | 9.6 | 4 th |
| Organise regular training for records staff; | 53 | 7.9 | 9 th |
| Employ experienced and qualified people in the area of RM; | 45 | 6.7 | 10 th |
| Provide adequate infrastructure for managing all forms of records; | 62 | 9.3 | 5 th |
| Sensitise and create general staff awareness on the need to manage records effectively; | 55 | 8.2 | 8 th |
| Supervision must be intensified on records staff; | 65 | 9.7 | 3 rd |
| Records staff should be motivated to maintain effective RMS; | 64 | 9.6 | 4 th |
| Establish functional records management and archives units to design and implement an adequate organisational RM policy to govern effective RM; | 61 | 9.1 | 6 th |
| Management should devote enough funds to RM. | 71 | 10.6 | 2 nd |

Source: Field Survey, 2018



4.7 Discussions

What do the above findings mean for the main question: how do records management practices and processes support service delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana? The answers to this question are based on the principle that proper records management must be supported by effective records management practices and processes which are spelt out by a policy document or framework (see Figure 2.1 above). This must be backed by the allocation of resources, organise regular training and intensify supervision

so as to establish proper records management system to support service delivery. Therefore, it calls for the inclusion of all stakeholders for establishment of a robust records management system in the Institution as in the view of Chachage and Ngulube (2006) who state that, the involvement of all parties in the records management system is very critical for establishing sound records system any organisation.

In investigating the types and nature of records created/received and managed in the Institution, findings revealed the following as types of records created/received and managed in the Institution. This includes; administrative, personnel, students, accounting, electronic, research/academic, legal and historical records. The discussions however covered the three most created/received records in the Institution, which are; administrative, personnel and students' records.

Hence, the findings revealed that administrative records in the Institution are generally categorised into policy and operational records. Policy records as revealed by the findings relate to the Institution plans, methods, techniques, or rules adopted by the Institution to carry out its responsibilities and functions. Results also showed that policy records are categorised into institutional, governing and reporting records.

Hence, institutional records include budgets and budget planning records, fiscal records, institutional and functional charts and among other things. The nature of these records are for planning purposes.

Also, governing records are manuals, directives, orders, and interpretations issued from senior management level, correspondence from principal officers, regulations, circulars, instructions, memoranda or regular issuances that establish a course of action, and staff



studies or special reports relating to methods of workloads and performances. These records are for governing and giving of orders and most of the time they require an action.

Reporting records include annual reports, periodic progress or summary reports, special reports or accomplishment, transcripts of hearings, minutes of meetings and conferences, and institutional histories. These records as findings revealed are meant to pass on periodic information on management and other boards in the Institution.

The results on the other hand revealed that, operational records are used for the implementation of administrative policies, procedures and are used for the daily operations of the Institution. The results also showed that administrative records are meant to inform, educate, direct and sometimes require an action to be taken. Results however revealed that administrative records could be in any format or medium. The finding is similar to Dalhousie University (2016) policy. The results further showed that administrative records are general and the number one most created/received records in the Institution. They are administrative in nature. Thus, they are used for the daily administration of the Institution and are usually copied to every sector of the Institution. Hence, this type of records is managed by these sectors.

The findings also revealed another type of records created/received and managed in the Institution is the students' records. This type of records includes: students registration forms, admission letters, introductory letters and so on. The results further revealed that, this type of records is kept and managed by the Academic Department/Human Resource Department, registries of faculties and departments where students pursue various programmes. Data analysis showed that files are normally created for students in the





departments and these flat files are either kept in shelves or cabinets. Observation however showed that storage devices in many registries and departments were full to capacity with students' records and as a result, some records could not find space in the storage system. This compelled records staff to either put records in boxes or tied the flat files together with ropes and kept in any available space in the offices. Observation revealed that some storage places were congested with records in the storage system. Consequently, respondents indicated that retrieving records from the storage system was difficult and this therefore delays the length of time in searching for records. Data analysis further revealed that the issue of inadequate storage places and congestion recurred in almost all the registries and departments where the researcher visited. This is an indication that the Institution's records have grown enormously for the past two decades. This therefore calls for an innovative way to be introduced for the proper management of records in the Institution and it must be done across all campuses.

The results further revealed another type of records called the personnel records. This type of records includes: staff particulars forms, appointment letters, promotion letters, and among others. These records are created/received and managed at the Human Resource Department of the Institution. Data also revealed that staff records are kept and managed by registries and departments. Respondents however indicated that personnel records at the registries and departments were inadequate as compared to what is kept and managed at the Human Resource Department of the Institution. Observation revealed that records staff are doing their best in terms of records management in the registries and departments. Again, findings revealed that many registries and departments where the study took place did not use any form of customised programme in managing both records (paper and



electronic). This resonated in almost all the campuses with the exception of the Tamale Campus. Data showed that a number of departments, units and sections in the Campus automated their records management functions. For instance, findings showed that Directorate of Information and Communication Technology used the cloud data storage system to store all digital records. The Directorate stores all official records as backups in the cloud system. That is, a centralised data storage point is created, where data is stored and are only made available and/or accessible for administrative purposes. Findings however revealed that information stored in the cloud can only be accessed by authorised users especially, senior officials of the Institution. One other department which automated its records management functions is the Human Resource Department (HRD). Findings further indicated that the HRD automated the records functions such that even in searching for paper records one will have to first cross-check in the electronic system to be sure that the records exist in the system before they are searched for in the cabinets. The above findings showed that few departments automate their records functions. This suggests that more need to be done in the Institution in terms integrating the records management functions to cover the entire Institution for the proper management of records for the enhancement of services.

With regards to respondents' responsibility towards records management in the Institution, almost all the respondents agreed that records management was part of their responsibility. According to them, records management is considered part of their responsibility as staff who create or receive and use records in the daily transactions of the Institution. Respondents indicated that their responsibilities towards records include: creation/receival and capture of records, registration (receive and dispatch) and control of records,

classification and indexing of records, maintenance and retrieval of records, supervision of records staff and usage of records. For instance, the respondents (senior members) indicated that they used records in decision making, service provision and among other things. Findings also showed that these records are normally used for the running of the Institution. This was evidenced in the narration of a key informant:

“Many of the things we do here thus, in making decision, providing services and among others records are normally used in this regard. In fact, I can say records are used in all transactions of the Institution.” Assistant Registrar, October, 2018.

Senior members (faculty officers) also indicated that they supervise records staff in the Institution. Respondents however indicated that, supervision of records staff was not effective indicating that faculty officers who serve as supervisors show no interest what records staff do in the records system. Data also revealed that those who manage the records in the Institution are the administrative staff. They also carry out the daily transactions of the Institution.

The results further showed that a greater number of respondents (73.2%) said chunk of the records are managed manually. This was followed by 23.8% of the respondents who said records are managed by manually and electronically means. Only 3.0% of the respondents revealed that records are managed electronically. Suggesting that in this era of ICT, institutions still manage a large portion of their records manually, which does not augur well for the University. This is therefore a wakeup call for management to in ICT in order



to integrate the records management systems for the effective and efficient management of records in the Institution.

Evaluation of the records management practices in the Institution revealed that practices such as security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$) fell below the bench mark of $\bar{X} = 3.0$. This suggests that all the practices evaluated in the Institution, respondents agreed that they were ineffective. This is a wakeup call on management to come up guidelines or policy which will spell out acceptable practices for the proper management of records in the Institution.

On the other hand, data analysis revealed that only process like creation and capture of records ($\bar{X} = 3.1$) hit the bench mark. Hence, apart from that one, the rest of the processes have their mean values below the cut-off point of $\bar{X} = 3.0$, which include: usage and maintenance of records ($\bar{X} = 2.9$), retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) as well as filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$). Respondents therefore agreed that the processes evaluated proven not to be effective in the Institution. What is however worth noticing is the mean value of retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) as well as filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$). Interestingly, amongst the composite items in Table 4.6 above, retention and disposal of records as well as filing and retrieving of records mean values were seen as the weakest factors. This implies that the processes of retention and disposal as well as filing and retrieving of records in the Institution could be considered the worse processes as far as proper records management is concerned. Observation further revealed that records management practices and processes were not uniformly practised and



followed particularly, in faculty registries and departments where the study was conducted. However, findings suggested that only one faculty in Nyankpala was found to be using a uniform filing index the whole faculty that is, departments, units, the registry and so on.

Further interrogation revealed that the Institution lacks retention and disposal schedules to guide the retention and disposal process. Results further showed that many registries and department lacked adequate and effective filing indexes for proper indexing, filing and retrieving of records from the storage system.

Respondents said they heard of lost of documents in the Institution from time to time (47.9%), while 15.2% of the respondents said a lot of times every day. Only 4.2% of the respondents said they rarely experienced or heard of lost of records in the Institution. Also, 24.8% of the respondents said most days and frequently while 7.9% of the respondents said they never heard of lost records in the Institution. This suggests that the frequent lost of records in the Institution could be engineered by the ineffective records management practices and processes in the Institution which need to be looked at.

Findings further revealed that compact disk was used by respondents to store information particularly, students' theses, dissertations, project work, and among other things. Also, respondents used magnetic tape in backing up data in the as well as hard disk drives. Analysis of data further revealed that data were backed using pen drives. Observation however showed that pen drives were the most used device in the Institution perhaps because of its portability nature.

In addition, the results showed data was backed daily while findings also revealed that some staff backed up their records weekly. Analysis of the data further indicated that some



respondents backed up their electronic records monthly. Again, results showed that some respondents backed up their data quarterly and yearly. Interestingly, it was revealed that some records staff do not back up their records at all perhaps because they felt the Directorate of ICT stores all digital records in the cloud storage. Every unit, section, department and registry needs to store and manage its own records because any unforeseen circumstance could occur and relying solely on the Directorate of ICT might not be prudent.

The results also revealed that steel cabinet was one of the devices used by respondents in storing paper-based records in all sectors of the Institution. Observation revealed that steel cabinets were the most used storage devices in the Institution. It was also observed that a good number of the steel cabinets were not in a good condition. For instance, many of the registries and departments visited revealed that majority of the cabinets were old and their locks were broken and hence, could not be locked to protect records from unauthorised access. Again, results showed that the steel cabinets were not enough to store the paper records due to the increasing numbers of records created or received daily. Results further revealed that respondents used wooden shelves, cupboards, drawers, boxes to store records in the offices. However, it was revealed that these devices were used as improvised devices.

In trying to understand whether respondents ever suffered or a colleague ever complained about his/her lost record(s) in the Institution. Results revealed that about 57.9% of the respondents indicated 'YES' while 42.1% of them indicated 'NO'. Further probed suggested that some respondents ever lost or a colleague ever lost his/her record(s) in the



Institution. Suggesting that, misplacement of records in the Institution is quite worrying and management should take a second look at its records management.

Further interrogation showed that the Institution lacked records management policy for its records management. This implies that the Institution as it stands now, manages its records without a policy or guidelines. Observation however revealed that records staff were relying on their individual initiative in managing records in the Institution. This is an indicative that the Institution was not going to be exonerated improper records management challenges. As noted by Mwangi (2017), that the lack of records management guidelines act as a challenge to proper records management in organisations that lacked it.

On the position of staff who illegally accessed records or failed to comply with issues of security and privacy of records. The results showed that majority (52.0%) said staff who illegally access records were queried, which was followed closely by 46.0% of the respondents who said they were not sure of the punishment given to staff who illegally access or failed to comply with issues of security and privacy of records. Only a handful of the respondents (2.0%) said staff who access records illegally or failed to comply with issues of security and privacy of records are demoted while none selected internal fines as an action against staff on the assertion. Further interrogation revealed that none of the punishments has never been meted against any staff in the Institution though some staff have either illegally accessed or failed to comply with security and privacy issues.

The results in Table 4.8 above shows that Public Data Protection Act, 843, (2012) reported much lower awareness among respondents than either Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) or International Organisation for Standardisation, 15489



(2002), where the percentages of responds are 36.0% and 34.1% respectively. The findings also revealed that unawareness among respondents was 70.1% and 64.0% for Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) and Public Data Protection Act, 843, (2012) respectively. This is an indicative that, awareness among respondents on major national and international frameworks on records management was lower. Hence, management will have to do more for records staff to abreast with some of the known records management frameworks to enable records staff better appreciate the importance of records.

Kemoni (2008) noted that there is a link between proper records management and service delivery. Effective service delivery in this study is measured using the gap model dimensions: reliability (providing dependable & accurate services), responsiveness (providing prompt & timely services). Also, assurance (inspire trust & confidence in service provision). In addition, empathy (understanding the customer) and finally, tangibles (which refers to the physical facilities, equipment, personnel & the communication materials like the records).

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents (96.7%) agreed that records influence service delivery in the Institution. They however added that, records that are effectively managed would have positive impact on services whilst poorly managed records were likely to affect services negatively. Only a handful of the respondents (3.3%) disagreed that records management has no bearing with service delivery in the Institution. It presupposes that effective services provision cannot thrive in improper records management practices and processes.



From Table 4.6 above, results showed that practices like security, safety and confidentiality of records had a mean of $\bar{X} = 2.6$, staff capacity building (training) with a mean of $\bar{X} = 2.7$ and disaster management practice also had a mean of $\bar{X} = 2.8$. This implies that the mean values of the above composite items fell below the discriminating mean of $\bar{X} = 3.0$. This suggests that the above practices as agreed by respondents were ineffectively practised and they have tendency of affecting services negatively in the Institution. Thus, service delivery might turn not to be prompt and timely when there is issues with records that needed to provide the service. Findings also showed that security, safety and confidentiality was considered ineffective. This show that it may not be able to inspire trust and confidence in the records system which could affect the services that are provided. When records are not secured and safe in the system, they can easily disappear from the storage system and when they are required to provide services it might not be traced. This means that services will come to a standstill or delay.

Also, in trying to understand the views of respondents on whether records should be managed like other resources in the Institution. Majority of the respondents (68.8%) agreed strongly that records should be managed like other resources. This was followed by 28.1% of the respondents who agreed with the issue raised. This shows how some respondents attached importance to records in the Institution. This implies that the Institution cannot function effectively without records. As indicated by the Daily Graphic (2017) that, records are the blood that runs through the veins of every organisation and University for Development Studies may not be an exception. Management should therefore back this by devoting enough funds for proper management of records in the Institution.

Majority of the respondents (88.9%) agreed the records management in the Institution was challenged. Some of the key challenges outlined include: lack of commitment of staff, lack of regular training, ineffective records management practices and processes, lack of motivation of records staff to maintain effective records management system, lack of effective supervision of records staff, lack of functional records and archives management units, inadequate infrastructure for managing all form of records, lack of policy document/guidelines/framework for effective management of records, inadequate experienced records staff, lack of general staff awareness on effective records management and among other things.

However, some suggestions were made with regards to how records management could be improved to support service delivery in the Institution. They are; commitment from staff (management & records staff), devotion of enough funds for the effective management of records, supervision should be intensified, a policy document containing acceptable practices and processes, records staff should be motivated in every form, provide adequate infrastructure, establish functional records and archives management units, all parties should be engaged in the design and implementation of the records management system, sensitise and create general staff awareness on the need to effectively manage records, organise regular training for both old and newly recruited staff, experienced and qualified people should be recruited in the area of records and archives management to bring their knowledge and experiences to bear on the records management so as to enhance service delivery in the Institution.



4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the findings in attempt to answer the research question posed in chapter one. The discussions of the findings in this chapter provide a contribution to knowledge by providing a rigorous analysis of the current state of records management with regards to service delivery in the Institution. It also revealed the myriad of factors that are associated with proper records management. Finally, the analysis presented the basis for drawing relevant conclusions and making recommendations for the purposes of promoting proper records management in order to enhance service delivery in the Institution. However, next chapter looks at the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the major findings.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of the research findings. It also presents the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings presented in chapter four.

5.2 Summary

Through the analysis, the following were the key findings of the study. First, the study revealed the following as types of records created/received and managed in the Institution, which included; administrative records, personnel records, students' records, accounting/fiscal records, electronic records, research/academic records, legal records, and historical records. It was established that administrative records were the most created/received records in the Institution. These records were categorised into policy and operational records where policy records were categorised into institutional, governing and reporting records. Administrative records were considered as general records and administrative in nature and were found in places where the study was conducted.

Also, students' records were the second most created/received and managed in the Institution. This type of records was kept and managed by the Academic and Students Affairs Unit/Human Resource Department, registries and departments of faculties/schools where students were pursuing various programmes.

It was also revealed that files were created for the records mentioned above in the faculties/schools, departments, units and these files were either kept in shelves or cabinets. However, these storage devices were found to be inadequate and therefore affected the



effective management of records in the Institution. The study established that the storage devices were filled with records and some records could not find space in the storage system. This compelled records staff to put records in boxes and some were tied together with ropes and kept in any available space in the offices. As a result, some storage places were congested and retrieving records from the storage system was time consuming and caused delays in searching for a record(s). This issue resonated in many of the offices visited by the researcher.

Furthermore, personnel records were third most created/received and managed records in the Institution. These records were kept and managed by the Human Resource Department, registries and departments of faculties/schools in the Institution. The study established that many registries and departments were not using any form of customised programme in managing these records. However, the Directorate of Information and Communication Technology and the Human Resource Department (HRD) of the Tamale Campus were offices found to use some customised programmes to manage their records and some records management functions were automated.

For instance, the study revealed that 73.2% of the respondents said chunk of their records were managed manually and this was followed by 23.8% of the respondents who revealed that records were managed both manually and electronically. Only 3.0% of the respondents said records were managed electronically. This is a confirmation of the above finding and further goes to reaffirm the weaknesses of records management in the Institution.

The second objective was to evaluate the records management practices and processes in the Institution. In evaluating the records management practices in the Institution, a mean



of $\bar{X} = 3.0$ was used as a bench mark to evaluate the practices in Table 4.6 above. From the Table, the study established that practices like security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$) were found to fall below the bench mark. This shows that respondents agreed that the practices were weak or ineffective.

The study also revealed that creation and capture of records ($\bar{X} = 3.1$) was the only effective process among the record management processes because, it was above the bench mark. With the exception of that one, the rest were found to be weak or ineffective. This included; usage and maintenance of records ($\bar{X} = 2.9$), retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) as well as filing and retrieving of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$). However, further interrogation revealed that the Institution lacked retention and disposal schedules to guide the retention and disposal process of the records management. The results further showed that many registries and departments lacked adequate and effective filing indexes for the proper indexing, filing and retrieving of records from the storage system.

The third objective was to assess the records management policies and frameworks that exist in UDS. The study established that the Institution lacked records management policy for the effective management of records. It was also revealed that the Institution did not have a framework or guide for its records management. Observation however revealed that records staff relied on their individual initiative in managing records in the Institution instead of using a guide. This also adds another layer to the ineffective management of records in the Institution.



The fourth objective of this research was to evaluate how existing records management practices and processes support service delivery in the Institution. The study established that about 96.7% of the respondents agreed that records influenced service delivery in the Institution. Respondents however indicated that records that were effectively managed was likely to have positive impact on services whilst poorly managed records were likely to affect services negatively. Only a handful (3.3%) of the respondents disagreed that records management has no bearing on service delivery in the Institution.

Hence, effective service delivery was measured using the gap model dimensions, which considered issues of reliability (providing dependable and accurate services), responsiveness (providing prompt & timely services), assurance (inspire trust & confidence in service provision), and tangibles which included; physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials such as records of the Institution.

In evaluating the records management practices in Table 4.6 above, it was established that a good number of the practices were considered to be ineffective. For instance, issues of security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$). The study established that the mean values of these practices were below the discriminating mean of $\bar{X} = 3.0$, which is an indication that the practices were weak and affected service delivery negatively in the Institution. That is, service delivery was not that prompt and timely. Also, the records were not that secured, and safe and their confidentiality leave much to be desired. Hence, respondents thought this could not inspire trust and confidence in services provision. Because, when records are not secured and safe they could easily get missed from the storage system and when required to provide services, they might not be found. This means



that there is bound to be delayed in service provision. Also, the lack of training of records staff were not likely to provide dependable and accurate services to clients. Further, disaster management practice was considered weak which implies that communication materials like records could easily be destroyed in the event of a disaster. In addition, the lack of records management policy as well as the retention and disposal schedules culminated into the ineffective management of records. This, respondents said affected the effective delivery of service in the Institution.

The followings impediments were established as challenges affecting the effective management of records in the Institution which included; lack of commitment from management and records staff, lack of regular training, ineffective records management practices and processes, and among others. However, further interrogation showed that many of the challenges identified could be traced down to the lack of commitment from management and records staff. Because, the failure of management to invest in records management led to all the challenges identified as well as the failure of management to put up functional records management unit in the Institution to coordinate and oversee the effective management of records and its related activities also contributed to the challenges. Also, the general lack of awareness of records staff on the importance of records management added another layer to the challenges.

Finally, respondents suggested ways of improving on the above challenges. The suggestions ranged from commitment of staff to the employment of experienced and qualified people in the area of records and archives management for the effective management of records in the Institution.



5.3 Conclusions

From the study, it can be concluded that the Institution created/received and managed different types of records which included; administrative records, personnel records, students' records, accounting/fiscal records, electronic records, research/academic records, legal records and historical records. From the study, it can also be concluded that administrative records were categorised into policy and operational records where policy records were further categorised into institutional, governing and reporting records. The study can further be concluded that administrative records are general nature and administrative in nature and the most created/received records (23.9%) in the Institution. These records were kept and managed by all sectors of the Institution.

The study can also be concluded that chunk of the Institution's records were managed manually (73.2%) and only 3.0% of the records were managed electronically. Suggesting that in the era of ICT, the Institution was still managing a large portion of its records manually which is not good for the image of the Institution as a tertiary institution.

The second objective was to evaluate the records management practices and processes in the Institution. In evaluating the practices, the study concluded that many of the practices were ineffective. For instance, security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$); staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$), disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$). The statistics showed that the above practices fell below the cut-off point of $\bar{X} = 3.0$.

It can also be concluded that the processes evaluated the results revealed that a good number of them were found to be ineffective. This includes; usage and maintenance of records ($\bar{X} = 2.9$), retention and disposal of records ($\bar{X} = 2.3$) as well as filing and retrieving



of records ($\bar{X} = 2.4$) and hence, were not in the position to support effective records management so as to enhance service delivery in the Institution. The study however concluded that creation and capture of records was the only effective process.

The third objective was to assess the records management policies and frameworks that exist in UDS. It can be concluded that the Institution lacked records management policy as well as retention and disposal schedules. The study also concluded that records staff relied on their own initiatives in managing records instead of using a guide or policy.

Finally, the last objective of the study was to evaluate how existing records management practices and processes affect service delivery in the Institution. The study concluded that 96.7% of the respondents agreed that records influenced service delivery in the Institution while a handful (3.3%) of the respondents disagreed that records has no bearing on service delivery in the Institution. It can also be concluded that many of the practices evaluated security, safety and confidentiality of records ($\bar{X} = 2.6$), staff capacity building (training) ($\bar{X} = 2.7$) and disaster management practice ($\bar{X} = 2.8$) were found to be ineffective.

Because, the results showed that the practices evaluated fell below the cut-off of $\bar{X} = 3.0$ (see Table 4.6 above). The study further concluded that the practices were ineffective and affected service delivery in the Institution. Thus, service delivery was not prompt and timely. Findings showed that security, safety and confidentiality was considered a weak factor and could not inspire trust and confidence in the records system. This affected service delivery negatively. Thus, records that are not secured and safe could easily get missed from the storage system and may not be found for prompt and timely service provision.



The study further concluded that there were challenges associated with records management in the Institution. This includes: lack of commitment from management and records staff, lack of regular training, ineffective RM practices and processes, and among other things. The study further concluded that all the challenges could be linked to the lack of commitment from management and records staff to institute proper records management in the Institution. Because, the failure of management to devote the needed funds for the proper management of records and the failure of management to set up a functional unit to coordinate the records management and the lack of a policy document for the proper management of records led the Institution into these challenges.

Respondents however suggested ways of improving on the challenges. Their suggestions ranged from commitment of staff to the employment of experienced and qualified people for the proper management of records in the Institution (see Table 4.9 above).

5.4 Recommendations

The study has revealed both the current situation and the potential of records management in the Institution. With significant inputs from the study's participants, the researcher has recommended the following measures for the effective management of records in support of service delivery in the Institution.

To properly manage all types of records created/received in the Institution, the study recommended that management should commit themselves to the effective management of records by devoting the need funds to records management. Thus, specialised programme on records management should be acquired for the integration of the records management

systems and the automation of the records management functions. For instance, consideration should be given to the paperless system.

Also, records staff should be motivated by current records management challenges and must see them as an opportunity to excel that is, they must cooperate with management to establish an effective records management system.

To improve on the records management practices and processes, the study recommended the involvement of all parties for the development and implementation of a comprehensive records management policy for the effective management of records in the Institution. For the meantime, management should come out with guidelines to guide records management in the Institution instead of individual relying on their initiatives to manage records. Also, retention and disposal schedules should be designed to guide the proper retention and disposal of records to avoid congestion in the storage system. Thus, the guide should spell out the type of records to be kept in the system that is, only critical records should be kept.

Also, records staff should be given regular training to enhance their capacity in the effective management of records so as to support service delivery in the Institution. Thus, to enable the staff provide prompt and timely services and also to inspire trust and confidence in the services they provide as well as ensuring the confidentiality and safety of records as a way of preventing records lost in the Institution.

Management should establish a functional records management unit in the Institution. The records management unit should be tasked with the responsibility of overseeing and coordinating records management and its related activities in the Institution. That is,



supervision should be intensified for the proper management of records in order to enhance service delivery in the Institution.



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APPENDICES

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FACULTY OF INTEGRATED
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND
HISTORICAL STUDIES WA CAMPUS

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Senior Staff

Introduction:

I am conducting a research on the topic “Examining Records Management Practices and Processes in Support of Service Delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana” as part of the academic requirements for the award of an MPhil Social Administration, you have been selected as part of the respondents to respond to the survey questionnaire. Your participation for the studies is optional. However, your participation will be highly appreciated to enable me acquire full understanding of the role of RM practices and processes in relation to service delivery in UDS.

You are assured that all responses provided will remain confidential. Also, your identity will remain anonymous. Only the final results will be made public through the academic report. Thank you for your time and expertise.

Please choose an option(s) that best describes the question/statement by placing a **tick (✓)** in the bracket and also fill the appropriate spaces provided.

Section A: Socio-Demographic Characteristics;

| No | Variables | Characteristics | Tick (✓) |
|----|-------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. | Sex | Male | (0) |
| | | Female | (1) |
| 2. | Age | ≥ 19 | (0) |
| | | 20 – 24 | (1) |
| | | 25 – 29 | (2) |
| | | 30 – 34 | (3) |
| | | 35 – 39 | (4) |
| | | 40 – 44 | (5) |
| | | 45 – 49 | (6) |
| | | 50 – 54 | (7) |
| | | 55 – 59 | (8) |
| | | ≥60 | (9) |
| 3. | Educational level | SSSCE/A-level/Vocational/Technical | (0) |
| | | Diploma/HND | (1) |
| | | Degree | (2) |



| | | | |
|----|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----|
| | | Masters | (3) |
| | | PhD | (4) |
| | | | |
| 4. | Marital status | Single | (0) |
| | | Married | (1) |
| | | Divorced | (2) |
| | | Widowed | (3) |
| | | | |
| 5. | Designation/title | Senior Typist | (0) |
| | | Senior Clerk | (1) |
| | | Administrative Assistant | (2) |
| | | Senior Administrative Assistant | (3) |
| | | Principal Administrative Assistant | (4) |
| | | Chief Administrative Assistant | (5) |
| | | Other(s) specify:..... | (6) |
| | | | |
| 6. | Section work | Main Registry | (0) |
| | | Department | (1) |
| | | Unit | (2) |
| | | Other(s) specify:..... | (3) |
| | | | |
| 7. | Length of Work | <1 | (0) |
| | | 1 – 5 | (1) |
| | | 6 – 10 | (2) |
| | | 11 – 15 | (3) |
| | | 16 – 20 | (4) |
| | | 21+ | (5) |



Section B: Types and nature of records managed:

8. Please, indicate the types of records that are created/received and managed in the office? Please **tick** (✓) all that are applied.
- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Personnel Records [] | Administrative Records [] |
| Accounting/Fiscal Records [] | Students Records [] |
| Research/Academic records [] | Electronic records [] |
| Historical records [] | Legal records [] |
- Other(s) specify:
9. List the three (3) most created/received records in the office?
10. What is the nature of the records listed in (9) above?
.....
11. (a) Records deserve to be managed like other resources in the Institution?
Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Strongly Disagreed [] Disagreed []

(b) Please explain your answer in 11(a) above:

12. (i) Do you consider records management as part of your responsibility?
Yes [] No []

(ii) What role do you play in the management of records in the Institution?
.....

13. (i) How do you retrieve records/files in the office? Please **tick (✓)** all that are applied. By file indexes [] By haphazard guesses [] By Drawer labels []
By automated retrieval system [] Other(s) specify:

(ii) In your own estimation, how much time does it take to retrieve a record/file upon request? Please **tick (✓)** all that are applied. 1 - 5 minutes []
6 - 10 minutes [] 10+ minutes []
It can sometimes take a day or more [] It is sometimes not found []

(iii) What challenges do you face in an attempt to retrieve a record/file from the records system when requested? Please **tick (✓)** all that are applied.
Misfiling [] Missing file [] Damage of records []
Mislabeling [] Duplicating of records [] Other(s)

14. (i) Indicate the form of records management format(s) employed to manage records in the office/department? Kindly **tick (✓)** the required option.

| Formats of RMS | Tick (✓) |
|---|----------|
| Paper-based records management (manual) system | |
| Electronic-based records management | |
| Both paper-based and electronic records management system | |
| Other(s) specify: | |

15. (a) Do you use any specialised software programme in the office to manage records?.....

(b) Kindly mention it if “Yes”.

Section C: Records management practices and processes:

For the following statements of the records management practices and processes, please tick (✓) the box that matches your view most closely.

| Variables | Characteristics | Effective | Very Effective | Average | Ineffective | Very Ineffective |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------|-------------|------------------|
| 16. Practices | Security, safety, and confidentiality | | | | | |



| | | | | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | Staff capacity building (training) | | | | | |
| | Disaster management practice | | | | | |
| 17. Processes | Creation and capture of records | | | | | |
| | Filing and retrieving | | | | | |
| | Usage and maintenance | | | | | |
| | Retention and disposal | | | | | |

18. i) Have you ever suffered or heard a colleague complained about a lost record(s) in the office? Yes [] No []

ii) How often do you experience or hear of lost/misplacement of records in the Institution? Lots of times every day [] From time to time []
Never [] Most days and frequently [] Rarely []

19. List the storage devices used in storing physical records/documents?
.....
.....
.....

20. i) Which storage media do you normal use in backing electronic records?
Compact Disk [] Magnetic Tape [] Hard Drives Pen Drives []

ii) How often do you back-up electronic records in the office?
Daily [] Weekly [] Monthly [] Quarterly []
Yearly [] Not Regularly [] Not at all []

Section D: Records management policies and frameworks:

21. (i) List any records management policy or guideline that exist in the Institution.
.....
.....
(ii) How are records staff managing records in the Institution?

22. What is the position of the Institution when a staff violates issues regarding illegal access, security, and privacy of records? Demotion [] Fines [] Query []
Other(s) specify:



23. Please are you aware of the existence of the following legislative frameworks?
Please **tick** (✓) the right option.

| Frameworks | Aware | Not Aware |
|--|-------|-----------|
| International Organisation for Standardisation, 15489 (2001) | | |
| Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) | | |
| Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) | | |

Section E: Records management practices and processes in support of service delivery:

24. i) In general, do current practices and processes of records management mentioned above support service delivery in the Institution? Yes [] No []
- ii) Please explain your answer?
25. Indicate your level of satisfaction with service provision when a records staff exited from the office? Satisfied [] Strongly Satisfied []
Dissatisfied [] Strongly Dissatisfied []
26. In your own view, do you think there are challenges with records management in UDS? Yes [] No []
27. What are the challenges associated records management in the Institution?
.....
.....
28. What can be done to improve upon the records management in order to support service delivery in the Institution?



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Appendix II: Questionnaire for Heads of Departments

Introduction:

I am conducting a research on the topic “*Examining Records Management Practices and Processes in Support of Service Delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana*” as part of the academic requirements for the award of an MPhil Social Administration, you have been selected as part of the respondents to respond to the survey questionnaire. Your participation for the research is optional. However, your participation will be highly appreciated to enable me acquire full understanding of the RM practices and processes in relation to service delivery in UDS.

You are assured that all responses provided will remain confidential. Also, your identity will remain anonymous. Only the final results will be made public through the academic report. Thank you for your time and expertise.

Please choose an option(s) that best describes the question/statement by placing a **tick (✓)** in the bracket and also fill the appropriate spaces provided.

Section A: Socio-Demographic Characteristics;

| No | Variables | Characteristics | Tick (✓) |
|----|-------------------|-----------------|----------|
| 1. | Sex | Male | (0) |
| | | Female | (2) |
| 2. | Age | ≥ 19 | (0) |
| | | 20 – 24 | (1) |
| | | 25 – 29 | (2) |
| | | 30 – 34 | (3) |
| | | 35 – 39 | (4) |
| | | 40 – 44 | (5) |
| | | 45 – 49 | (6) |
| | | 50 – 54 | (7) |
| | | 55 – 59 | (8) |
| | ≥60 | (9) | |
| 3. | Educational level | Masters | (0) |
| | | PhD | (1) |
| 4. | Marital status | Single | (0) |



| | | | |
|----|---------------|----------|-----|
| | | Married | (1) |
| | | Divorced | (2) |
| | | Widowed | (3) |
| | | | |
| 5. | Years engaged | <1 | (0) |
| | | 1 – 5 | (1) |
| | | 6 – 10 | (2) |
| | | 11 – 15 | (3) |
| | | 16 – 20 | (4) |
| | | 21+ | (5) |

Section B: Types and nature of records managed:

6. Please, indicate the types of records that are created/received and managed in the office? Please **tick** (✓) all that are applied.
- Administrative Records []
 Personnel Records []
 Accounting/Fiscal Records []
 Research/Academic records []
 Historical records []
 Students Records []
 Electronic records []
 Legal records []
 Other(s) specify:
7. List the three (3) most created/received records in the office?
8. What is the nature of the records listed in question (7) above?

9. (a) Do records deserve to be managed like other resources in the Institution?
 Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Strongly Disagreed [] Disagreed []
- (b) Please explain your answer in question 9(a) above:
10. (i) Do you consider records management as part of your responsibility?
 Yes [] No []
- (ii) What role do you play in the management of records in the Institution?

11. (i) How do you retrieve records/files in the office? Please **tick** (✓) all that are applied. By file indexes [] By haphazard guesses [] By Drawer labels []
 By automated retrieval system [] Other(s) specify:
- (ii) In your own estimation, how much time does it take to retrieve a record/file upon request? Please **tick** (✓) all that are applied.
 1 - 5 minutes []
 6 - 10 minutes [] 10+ minutes []
 It can sometimes take a day or more [] It is sometimes not found []



(iii) What challenges do records staff face in an attempt to retrieve a record/file from the records system when requested? Please **tick** (✓) all that are applied.
 Misfiling [] Missing file [] Damage of records []
 Mislabeling [] Duplicating of records []
 Other(s) specify:

12. (i) Indicate the form of records management format(s) employed to manage records in the office/department? Kindly **tick** (✓) the required option.

| Formats of RMS | Tick (✓) |
|---|----------|
| Paper-based records management (manual) system | |
| Electronic-based records management | |
| Both paper-based and electronic records management system | |
| Other(s) specify: | |

13. (a) Do department use any specialised software programme to manage records?.....
 (b) Kindly mention it if “Yes” in 13(a).

Section C: Records management practices and processes:

For the following statements of the records management practices and processes, please tick (✓) the box that matches your view most closely.

| Variables | Characteristics | Effective | Very Effective | Average | Ineffective | Very Ineffective |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|---------|-------------|------------------|
| 14. Practices | Security, safety, and confidentiality | | | | | |
| | Staff capacity building (training) | | | | | |
| | Disaster management practice | | | | | |
| 15. Processes | Creation and capture of records | | | | | |
| | Filing and retrieving | | | | | |
| | Usage and maintenance | | | | | |
| | Retention and disposal | | | | | |



16. i) Have you ever suffered or heard a colleague complained about a lost record(s) in the office? Yes [] No []

ii) How often do you experience or hear of lost/misplacement of records in the Institution? Lots of times every day [] From time to time []
Never [] Most days and frequently [] Rarely []

17. List the storage devices used in storing physical records/documents?
.....
.....
.....

18. i) Which storage media do you normal use in backing electronic records?
Compact Disk [] Magnetic Tape [] Hard Drives Pen Drives []
ii) How often do you back-up electronic records in the office?
Daily [] Weekly [] Monthly [] Quarterly []
Yearly [] Not Regularly [] Not at all []

Section D: Records management policies and frameworks:

19. (i) List any records management policy or guideline that exist in the Institution.
.....
.....

(ii) How are records staff managing records in the Institution?
.....
.....

20. What is the position of the Institution when a staff violates issues regarding illegal access, security, and privacy of records? Demotion [] Fines [] Query []
Other(s) specify:

21. Please are you aware of the existence of the following legislative frameworks?
Please **tick** (✓) the right option.

| Frameworks | Aware | Not Aware |
|--|-------|-----------|
| International Organisation for Standardisation, 15489 (2001) | | |
| Public Records and Archives Administration Act, 535 (1997) | | |
| Data Protection Act, 843 (2012) | | |

Section E: Records management practices and processes in support of service delivery:

22. i) In general, do current practices and processes of records management mentioned above support service delivery in the Institution? Yes [] No []

ii) Please explain your answer?



23. Indicate your level of satisfaction with service provision when a records staff exited from the office? Satisfied [] Strongly Satisfied []
Dissatisfied [] Strongly Dissatisfied []
24. In your own view, do you think there are challenges with records management in UDS? Yes [] No []
25. What are the challenges associated records management in the Institution?
.....
.....
26. What can be done to improve upon the records management in order to support service delivery in the Institution?
-
.....

THANK YOU!



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Appendix III: Interview Guide for Key Informants

Introduction:

I am conducting a research on the topic “Examining Records Management Practices and Processes in Support of Service Delivery in the University for Development Studies, Ghana” as part of the academic requirements for the award of an MPhil. Social Administration, you have been selected as part of the respondents to respond to some questions.

Position of respondent.....

Section A: Types and nature of records managed:

1. Please, list the types of records that are created/received and managed in the Institution.
2. List the three (3) most created/received records in the office?
3. i) What is the nature of the records listed in question (2) above?
- ii) What is your impression with the records management in the Institution?
4. i) Do records deserve to be managed like other resources in the Institution? Strongly Agreed [] Agreed [] Strongly Disagreed [] Disagreed []
- ii) Please explain your answer in question 4(a) above:
5. i) Do you consider records management as part of your responsibility?
- ii) If ‘yes’, what role do you play in the management of records in the Institution?

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.....

6. i) In your own estimation, how much time does it take records staff to retrieve a record/file upon request?

ii) What challenges do records staff face in an attempt to retrieve a record/file from the records system when requested?

.....

7. Indicate the form of records management system(s) employed to manage records in the office/department?

.....

8. i) Do the Institution use any specialised/customised software programme to its manage records?.....

ii) Kindly mention it if “Yes” in question 8(i).

.....

Section B: Records management practices and processes:

9. What is your opinion/view on the practices and processes of records management in the Institution?

.....

10. i) Have you ever suffered or heard a colleague complained about a lost record(s) in the office?

ii) How often do you experience or hear of lost/misplacement of records in the Institution?.....

11. List the storage devices used in storing physical records/documents in the Institution and why do they use them?

.....

12. i) Mention the storage media use in backing the electronic records.

.....



ii) Why do you prefer the storage device mentioned in question 12(i) to the rest in backing the records?

iii) How often do you back-up electronic records in the office?.....

Section C: Records management policies and frameworks:

13. i) List any records management policy or guideline that is used as a guide in the Institution.

ii) How are records staff managing records in the Institution?

14. What is the position of the Institution when a staff violates issues regarding illegal access, security, and privacy of records?

Section D: Records management practices and processes in support of service delivery:

15. i) In general, do current practices and processes of records management support service delivery in the Institution?.....

ii) Please explain your answer?

16. i) Indicate your level of satisfaction with service provision when a records staff exited from the office?

ii) Please explain your answer?

17. In your own view, do you think there are challenges with records management in UDS?

18. What are the challenges associated records management in the Institution?

19. What can be done to improve upon the records management in order to support service delivery in the Institution?

THANK YOU!

