Recordkeeping Competencies and Skills: Implications for Service Delivery in Tanzanian Public Universities

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Abstract
Identifying whether records professionals have adequate knowledge and skills in recordkeeping practices is essential. This paper investigates the impact of recordkeeping competencies and skills in delivering service in Tanzanian public universities. The study adopted Mixed Methods Research (MMR) to guide the researchers in gathering data from the study population. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected concurrently and the analysis was done separately, although the data were integrated at the interpretation stage. Therefore, the study employed a convergent parallel MMR design. The study targeted a population of 105. A census sampling technique was used since the study population was relatively small. The overall findings revealed low statistics on recordkeeping training attendance by participants. The study recommends that since many recordkeeping practitioners do not have adequate knowledge and skills on recordkeeping matters concerning digital recordkeeping, training, particularly practical training on digital recordkeeping, is recommended by this study.

Keywords: Recordkeeping Skills, Recordkeeping Competencies, Service Delivery, Public Universities.

Introduction

Recordkeeping is a major feature of any institution's corporate governance and is significant to its transparency and accountability(Nengomasha, 2018; Ngoepe, 2012). Institutions cannot operate without records because they provide the foundation for sound decision-making. Without records, it would be impossible to hold institutions accountable. An institution's records help identify what has been done and how it was done (Ngoepe, 2014; Ngoepe, 2012). Similarly, Osebe et al. (2018) and New Era Live (2019) added that there can be no informed decisions, justice, or accountability without records. Good recordkeeping helps to protect the organisation by providing proof of the actions taken when evidence is needed (Pacific Regional Branch International Council on Archives, 2017). Therefore, proper management of records enables institutions to make informed decisions, promoting service delivery.

Poor recordkeeping in an institution is a bad indicator of financial integrity and poor accountability (Keakopa, 2018). Ngoepe (2012) added that proper recordkeeping enhances information availability and retrievability, which are needed for auditing purposes. There is a need for the availability of information, which is essential, mainly in corruption cases. Institutions must maintain records for sustainability as well as to reduce risks associated with poor recordkeeping (Ngoepe,

2014). Public institutions have obligations to account to the public, particularly in using public resources such as finances; therefore, proper recordkeeping in public institutions is important for ensuring financial management accountability (Keakopa, 2018). Adu (2014), in his study conducted at the University of Education, Winneba-Kumasi and Mampong campuses in Ghana, found out that most of the university's staff lacked proper training on recordkeeping laws elements, such as records retention, appraisal, and records as well as maintaining access to information.

Katuu (2015) noted that although various institutions offer recordkeeping programmes in Africa, their impact on quality is questionable. The concern about the quality of education in recordkeeping programmes in African universities is based on the low numbers of qualified recordkeeping staff (Katuu, 2015). Nengomasha (2013) noted that despite remarkable efforts to train recordkeeping professionals, there are still problems. Proper recordkeeping hinges on trained records officers with the required recordkeeping skills and knowledge to maintain records throughout their lifecycle. While it is a requirement for recordkeeping that the records officer achieves a certain level of expertise in recordkeeping, it is generally accepted that education plays an important role in updating knowledge and skills, and it is an important feature in the lifelong development of skills and expertise (Kemoni, 2010). Furthermore, Mosweu and Rakemane (2020) indicated that funding-related impediments highlight that records officers do not have the needed education in recordkeeping that allows them to perform to their best ability in maintaining records. Notably, recordkeeping professionals in ESARBICA (Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives) lack information technology-related skills and capabilities such as digital curation, digital preservation, audio-visual and digital archiving, and digitization (Garaba, 2015).

Many records professionals are not knowledgeable about digital records' storage, security, retrieval, and dissemination. Similarly, Chigariro and Khumalo (2018) indicated that most records professionals in the ESARBICA region lack ICT skills in managing digital records. Among the challenges is the lack of knowledge among records officers and government authorities on digital recordkeeping issues such as data security (Chigariro and Khumalo, 2018). As a general rule, most of the records for which public institutions such as universities are responsible

are public, which means that the public needs and future researchers' needs should be considered when making decisions that influence recordkeeping. So, the protection of potentially sensitive records is essential. This is why, in his study, Daneshmandnia (2019) emphasised that higher education institutions should manage their records in such a way as to enable user access as well as make sure that the records are secured from unauthorized access or protected from destruction.

Research Problem

Like in other African countries, recordkeeping in Tanzania is at a crossroads. The prevalence of poor recordkeeping practices in African universities brings doubts as to how university top management and administrators have been making informed decisions (Abdulrahman, 2015; Coetzer, 2012). There is a necessity to create awareness of the benefits of recordkeeping in institutions (Garaba, 2018). Records officers should have the required skills to perform their functions optimally. Today's world is dynamic, and individuals must move with the change because for public servants to cope, they must be well equipped with modern techniques that can only be obtained through training. Most records staff have little or no recordkeeping training. To make matters worse, in some organisations, the office attendants and messengers are promoted to records posts Kamatula (2013) and Kemoni (2010); Luyombya (2010) noted that a lack of training opportunities for records specialists in developing countries is still a common thing in many developing countries. Skills and training are essential elements of modern recordkeeping. Records professionals need appropriate training to obtain new skills and knowledge. Public universities must ensure that their records officers have the required skills to manage their records. Leaving recordkeeping activities in the hands of ill-trained individuals does not augur well for institutional accountability and good business operations. Therefore, universities need to establish a strong foundation for proper recordkeeping and raise awareness among staff on the responsibilities of recordkeeping. This has not been the case in most higher education institutions in Africa (Abdulrahman, 2015; Adu, 2014; Coetzer, 2012; Garaba, 2018; Khumalo and Chigariro, 2017; Netshakhuma, 2020; Phiri, 2016). Evidence abounds of cases of neglect of recordkeeping in universities and other organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa as the aforementioned authors attest. This is a worldwide trend

but can be seen as direr in organisations in Africa than in developed countries (Phiri, 2016). It is, therefore, significant to provide on-the-job staff training for staff who participate in recordkeeping activities, from creation to destruction or preservation.

Research Purpose and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the role of recordkeeping skills in managing records in Tanzanian public universities in public service provision. The specific research objectives were to:

- Establish the level of recordkeeping skills of the recordkeeping staff in the Tanzanian public universities; and
- Assess the challenges facing recordkeeping staff in managing records in the Tanzanian public universities.

The research questions were:

- What is the recordkeeping staff's recordkeeping skills level in the Tanzanian public universities?
- What challenges are the recordkeeping staff facing in managing records in the Tanzanian public universities?

Literature Review

Several studies have been done on recordkeeping in universities outside and inside Africa. The following are some of the research studies: Schina and Wells (2002), Basil Iwhiwhu (2005), Kaczmarek (2006), Egwunyenga (2009), Külcü (2009), Zach and Peri (2010), Coetzer (2012), Erima and Wamukoya (2012), Muhenda and Lwanga (2012), Abuzawayda et al. (2013), Eze Asogwa (2013), Matangira et al. (2026), Mwangangi Mwikali (2013), Akor and Udensi (2013), Abdulrahman (2015), Nwaomah (2015), Moseti (2016), Mukred et al. (2016), Musembe (2016), Phiri (2016), Toner (2016), Khumalo and Chigariro (2017), Nyathi and Dewah (2017), Seniwoliba et al. (2017), Mohammed et al. (2018), Pereira (2018), Mukred et al. (2019), Nakato (2019), Poolsatitiwat (2019), Netshakhuma (2019a), Netshakhuma (2019b), Ameyaw and Frempong-Kore (2020), Giba-Fosu (2020), Netshakhuma (2020)>, Tsvuura and Ngulube (2020), Kiprono and Gichuhi (2021), Netshakhuma (2021) and Erima (2022). All the findings of the above-cited studies revolve around issues that hinder the proper management of university records, such as unskilled records professionals.

The increased production of e-records has raised the need to employ recordkeeping personnel with recordkeeping skills in digital environments (Svärd, 2014). Most recordkeeping specialists are not professionally trained. Instead, they are employed with secondary leaving certificates (Eze Asogwa, 2013). In support, Egwunyenga (2009) indicated that African recordkeeping professionals lack the essential skills for maintaining records and archives in universities. What is challenging in most of the African offices, particularly the older employees, is technophobia. Due to a lack of skills in ICTs, many records professionals are very conservative and have a phobia of computers. This could be due to the generation gap between the new and old records professionals, which leads senior employees to see information technologies as a threat to their status as recordkeeping specialists. Staff members should have the knowledge and skills to maintain records to ensure the university recordkeeping systems are working properly (Phiri, 2016).

In the Kenyan context, research studies carried out by Erima and Wamukoya (2012), Mwangangi Mwikali (2013), Moseti (2016), Musembe (2016) and Kiprono and Gichuhi (2021) showed that lack of staff training contributed to the state of management of records in the universities. These results are confirmed by the research study of Basil Iwhiwhu (2005) conducted in Nigeria. Basil Iwhiwhu (2005) noted that most universities in Nigeria have failed to manage records because the offices in charge of recordkeeping have ill-trained people. Akotia and Balasu (2017) noted that specific skills and broad knowledge are required for recordkeeping. Consequently, in an organisation that prioritises recordkeeping, there should be an ongoing training programme to provide its staff with adequate skills and knowledge (Rotich et al., 2017). Most records staff have little or no recordkeeping training. Records centres are sometimes perceived as dumping places for non-performing employees. To make matters worse, in some organisations, the office attendants and messengers are promoted to records posts Kamatula (2013) and Kemoni (2010); Luyombya (2010) noted that a lack of training opportunities for records specialists in developing countries is still a common thing in many developing countries.

Proper recordkeeping could assist universities in maintaining their records, efficiently fulfilling their objective, safeguarding them from litigation, maintaining their corporate memory, and enhancing

good governance. All institutions, such as public universities, produce records to support and provide evidence of their business transactions. Therefore, sound records management has become a topical issue in Tanzania and globally. Bakare et al. (2016) concur that records document the decisions and activities of institutions as well, as they serve as points of reference against which they can measure their future actions and decisions. Without records, there can be no accountability or justice.

Previous studies (Asogwa, 2012; Basil Iwhiwhu, 2005; Egwunyenga, 2009; Erima, 2022; Phiri, 2016) indicate that the management of records in most African universities is poor and has, arguably, caused serious impediments in providing services. There seems to be no improvement in managing university records in many African universities. For instance, a survey conducted eighteen years ago by Basil Iwhiwhu (2005) established poor recordkeeping in Nigerian universities because recordkeeping staff were ill-trained. Just over seven years later, Asogwa (2012) reported that the management of records in six selected Nigerian universities was characterised by a lack of skills by recordkeeping professionals.

Making decisions in a university is a managerial activity and regularly needs records. Effective and efficient administration of any institution, such as a university, depends on solid recordkeeping practices that ensure that proper records are available when needed. As universities carry out their activities, they create numerous records. Thus, records should be maintained as fully essential as other administrative operations since records are at the core of governmental functions. It is a fact that proper management of records is evidence of a well-managed institution. Public universities are lawfully bound to maintain and preserve records of their activities and proceedings like any other organisation. Examples of records that institutions such as universities create or receive are correspondence, payroll, accounting documents, minutes of meetings, personal files, students' registration, students' admissions, lists of courses offered, and examination records, to mention a few. These records will lack integrity when they are poorly maintained. Availability is attained when an institution protects and maintains its records to ensure efficient, timely, and accurate retrieval. Thus, recordkeeping should be prioritised and considered as essential as other institutional resources, such as finance, materials, and staff. Therefore, encouraging

effective recordkeeping as an institutional and societal benefit is not an activity to be taken for granted. Improper recordkeeping can drain financial resources, which will invariably affect service delivery. Perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to say that poor recordkeeping practices are common in most public organisations. Chaterera (2016) indicated that poor recordkeeping in most African countries has made it impossible to hold individuals accountable for their deeds. When accountability is lacking, good governance will not prevail, so effective service delivery will not be attained (Chaterera, 2016).

Research Methodology

The study adopted Mixed Methods Research (MMR) to guide the researchers in gathering data. A quantitative priority, with the qualitative method playing a subordinate role, was also employed in this study. The study employed face-to-face structured interviews to solicit data on the issues of the management of records in Tanzanian public universities. The interview session involved the head of the department of recordkeeping and the director of the human resource office from the Tanzanian public universities. The interviews were held in the offices of the head of the recordkeeping department and the offices of the director of human resources. To ensure confidentiality, no personal details of the participants beyond the researcher's name and contact number were provided on the participant's information sheet. The study used NVivo software version 11, content and thematic analysis to analyse qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions in the questionnaire and the structured interview, while Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used to carry out a descriptive analysis. Qualitative and quantitative data were gathered concurrently, and the analysis was done separately. Later on, the data collected was mixed at the interpretation stage. Therefore, the study employed a convergent parallel MMR design. The targeted study population was 105. The study population comprised recordkeeping officers and senior university officials. Senior university officials were targeted as they would provide information on policy-related issues about recordkeeping. In this study, the heads of the recordkeeping sections and the director of the human resource office were considered senior officials. The study population was drawn from eight (8) Tanzanian public universities, namely Ardhi University (ARU), Mbeya University of

Science and Technology (MUST), Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU), Mzumbe University (MU), Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (NMAIST), the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) (Tanzania Commission for Universities, 2016). The issue of anonymity may become problematic when you conduct research with several participants in a specific setting (Flick, 2010). Readers should not be able to identify which organisation or people were involved in the research study. For this reason, a researcher should encrypt specific details such as names, addresses, and organisation names to protect identities (Flick, 2010). Therefore, in this study, to protect the identity of the respondents, the names of universities have been letter-coded for confidentiality and anonymity. One of the major aspects of protecting individuals participating in research is assuring participants that their personal information will be protected (Anderson, 2019). This includes protecting participants' privacy, keeping information confidential, and/or allowing the participant to remain anonymous. A letter of consent addressing the confidentiality issues of the respondents was availed to them. The study used a census sampling technique, which included all members of the population because the study's population was considered small.

Research Findings

Out of 89 copies of the questionnaire distributed to recordkeeping staff, 79 were returned, which produced a response rate of 88.8%. For the interview schedule, out of the sixteen targeted senior officials, 12 participated in the interviews, resulting in a 75.0% response rate. The acceptable response rate for a research study should not be less than 60% (Bryman, 2012). It can, therefore, be concluded that the response rate for the current study was acceptable.

Level of Professional Training in Recordkeeping

Records personnel are the custodians of records created by their institutions; therefore, they must have the right qualifications and competencies to maintain records. Lack of recordkeeping staff and appropriate recordkeeping training is one factor that hinders proper recordkeeping practices (Akotia and Balasu, 2017). Therefore, the study sought to find out from respondents their level of professional training in

recordkeeping. The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents, 48(62.0%), cited a diploma as the level of professional training in recordkeeping, 21(26.6%) said a certificate, while nine (11.4%) cited an undergraduate degree and postgraduate as the level of professional training in recordkeeping.

Follow-up interviews with participants concerning training in recordkeeping yielded the following feedback:

Participant in University A: Training opportunities for records staff are not regular. This is because we do not have training needs assessment programmes for records staff.

Participant in University C: Staff training is not done often since insufficient funds are allocated.

Participant in University E: We are struggling to ensure staff attend training, workshops, conferences, and in-house training. For example, last year, we provided an opportunity for two staff members to attend various conferences regarding records management and other training organized with the Tanzania record management colleges.

Participant in University G: Training for our recordkeeping staff does not occur often enough. Therefore, we need support from our top management.

It is a requirement for recordkeeping that the records officer achieves a certain level of expertise in recordkeeping. It is generally accepted that education plays an essential role in updating knowledge and skills and it is an important feature in the lifelong development of skills and expertise (Mosweu and Rakemane, 2020). When asked if they did consider themselves sufficiently skilled in maintaining records, 38(48.1%) recorded a 'yes' response, while 41(51.9%) cited a 'no' response. This means that over half of respondents consider themselves not sufficiently skilled in maintaining records. The findings are depicted in Figure 1.
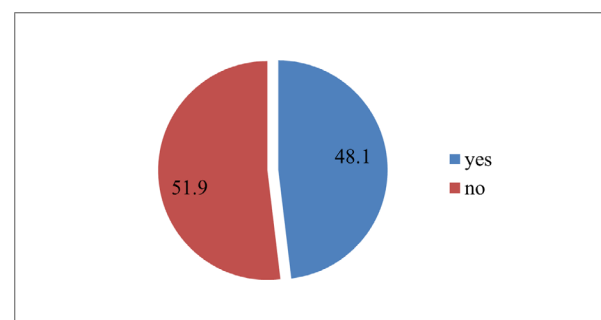

Figure 1: Respondents' Skills and Competencies in Recordkeeping (N=79).

The 38(48.1%) respondents who considered themselves sufficiently skilled in maintaining records were asked to indicate how often their universities trained them. Ten (26.3%) of the respondents cited every two years, while 7(18.4.2%) recorded more than once a year. Seven (18.4%) indicated that every three years and the rest stated that they didn't know.

Records officers should have the required skills to perform their functions optimally. Specific skills and broad knowledge are required to carry out recordkeeping. Consequently, in an organisation that prioritises recordkeeping, there should be an ongoing training programme to provide its staff with adequate skills and knowledge (Rotich et al., 2017). When asked if their universities organise training programmes and courses on recordkeeping for records staff, Figure 2 shows that twenty-four (30.4%) cited a 'yes' response while 55(69.6%) said 'no.'
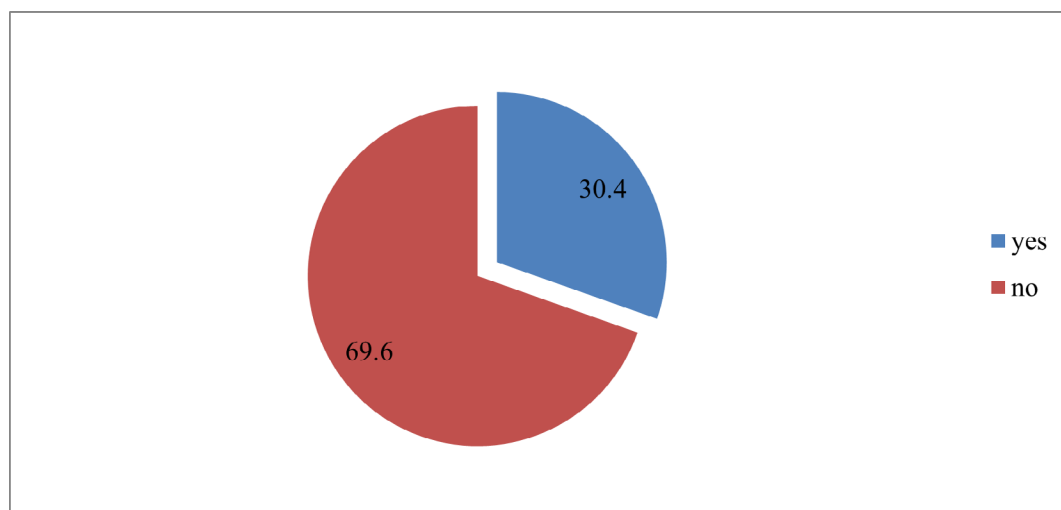

Figure 2: Training Programmes and Courses on Recordkeeping (N=79).

Further, respondents were asked if they had attended any recordkeeping courses their universities ran in the last five years. Despite the majority not being sufficiently skilled in maintaining records, Figure 3 shows that 65(82.3%) said they did not attend any course run by their universities, while the rest recorded a 'yes' response.
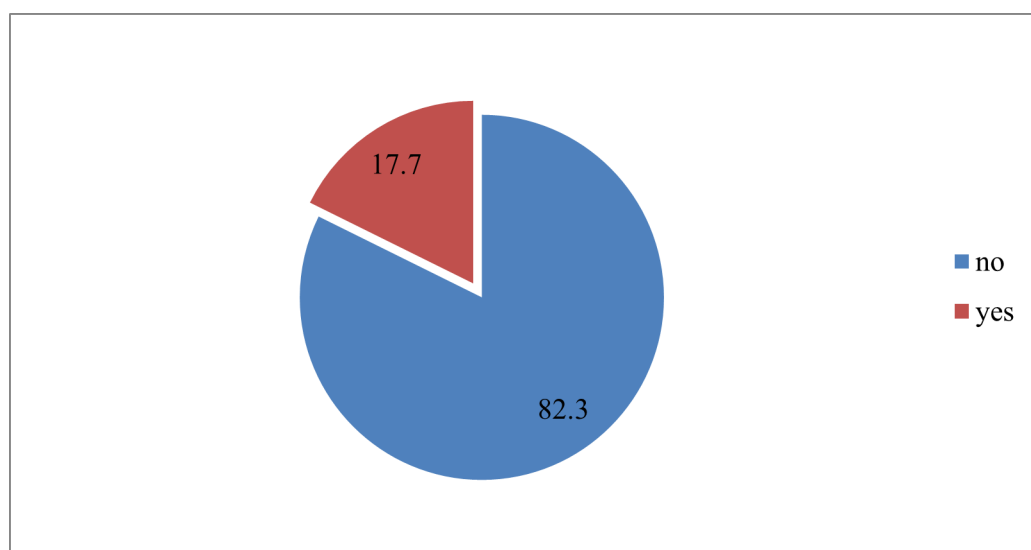

Figure 3: Course Attendance by Recordkeeping Staff (N=79).

Regarding recordkeeping training needs, respondents were asked to indicate the areas they thought needed the greatest additional training. Multiple responses are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Training Needs on Recordkeeping (N=79).

Training Needs	Frequency	Percentage
Training of paper records throughout their lifecycle	22	27.8
Management of digital records throughout their lifecycle	51	64.6
Computer skills	39	49.4
Computer application in recordkeeping	35	44.3

The results show that the most cited training need was the management of digital records in their entire continuum51(64.6%), while the least cited training need was the management of paper records throughout their lifecycle, accounting for 22(27.8%).

During interviews with participants, participants were asked if their university had training needs assessment programmes for recordkeeping staff. Some of the participants had this to say:

Participant in University A: No, but staff must indicate their yearly training needs on Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) forms.

Participant in University C: No, but it's in progress.

Challenges Facing Recordkeeping Staff in Managing Records

Several studies have indicated that recordkeeping faces several challenges: inadequate funds, lack of expertise, and lack of supportive legislation, standards, and policy guidelines (Kamatula, 2018; Mosweu and Rakemane, 2020; Ngoepe and Masegonyana Keakopa, 2011). These findings have been found to affect recordkeeping practices globally, not only in a single part of the world. One of the critical issues in managing records is for top management to support proper recordkeeping. Respondents were asked if top management supports recordkeeping activities in their universities, and the majority of the respondents, 53(67.1%), reported that the top management supports recordkeeping activities in their universities. When asked if they experienced any issues in providing services to records users, the majority of respondents, 61(77.2%), reported that they faced challenges in providing services/access to records to users. The 61(77.2%) respondents were further asked to select the problems faced in providing services/access to records from a list of choices provided. Providing Services/Access to Records. Their multiple responses are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Problems Faced in Providing Services/Access to Records (N=61).

Problem Faced	Frequency	Percentage
Shortage of records staff	51	83.6
Lack of adequate staff training	49	80.3
Shortage of filing space	44	72.1
Inadequate management support	44	72.1
Lack of adequate facilities and equipment	41	67.2
Lack of properly implemented recordkeeping policy	37	60.7
Poor working conditions	36	59.1
Misfiling and missing files	35	57.4
Security issues	34	55.7
Presence of weak legal instruments to guide recordkeeping practices	32	52.5

Table 2 shows that the most cited challenge was the shortage of records staff, with a score of 51(83.6%). The next most cited challenge was the lack of adequate staff training, with a score of 49(80.3%). The presence of weak legal instruments to guide recordkeeping practices, with a score of 32(52.5%), was the least cited challenge.

Discussion of Results

Effective recordkeeping depends upon the staff receiving training and education in managing records. Lack of appropriate recordkeeping training for recordkeeping staff is one factor that hinders proper recordkeeping practices (Akotia and Balasu, 2017).

Knowledge and skills are essential in recordkeeping as they affect how records are maintained. Therefore, it is necessary to identify whether recordkeeping professionals have adequate knowledge and skills. Following this, ESARBICA has taken a move to prepare a strategic plan to aid in resolving the identified challenge in the recordkeeping sectors in member states. A strategic plan for the ESARBICA region (2018-2021) was developed to provide the region with a strategic direction in recordkeeping and implement resolutions that have been passed over the years during ESARBICA (2018) conferences). Among the resolutions adopted by the ESARBICA was that there should be staff visits and exchange of information. This was considered a significant benefit to recordkeeping professionals because it was believed that it would provide platforms for the exchange of ideas and the acquisition of new skills (Mnjama, 2007). New skills gained from staff exchange programmes will eliminate issues grappling ESARBICA member countries, including lack of archival legislation, inefficient management of digital records and ineffective professional training for records officers as mentioned by Nengomasha (2018).

Various institutions offer recordkeeping training at different levels in Africa. Some of these institutions include the University of Botswana, the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies, Bagamoyo, Zimbabwe Open University, Makerere University in Uganda, Kenyatta University and the University of Zambia, just to mention a few (Nengomasha, 2013). Although this may be seen as an indication of the recognition on the importance of management of records, the impact on quality education is questionable (Katuu, 2015). This is evident from the low numbers of qualified recordkeeping staff (Katuu, 2015; Wamukoya, 2022). This is why the government of Tanzania has put in place measures to control this situation, making it a rule that the Tanzania Commission for Universities should approve all the programmes and courses offered by Tanzanian universities.

Failure to manage records has, in many ways, become a stumbling block to providing services to citizens (Wamukoya, 2022). Participants were asked to indicate their highest level of educational qualification. The majority of participants, 54(59.3%), have diploma qualifications, 13(14.3%) have a certificate qualification, and 10(11.0%) have an undergraduate degree qualification as their highest education level. The findings from both qualitative and quantitative findings indicate that the participants in the selected public universities have formal records and archives management qualifications. This could have positive implications for the recordkeeping practices in the public universities. These findings contradict Phiri's (2016) study, which established that the education level of the records officer in the Malawi universities was very low. Recordkeeping staff with relevant recordkeeping skills and knowledge are the source for successful future implementation of sound recordkeeping practices. Due to the shortage of skilled and experienced staff in the recordkeeping profession, training institutions should strengthen experimental learning (Nengomasha, 2013). The pressure should be on ensuring that the training institutions' curriculums meet the industry's requirements.

The increase in the number of digital records in public offices needs records staff to be equipped with new recordkeeping skills that can promote records creation, capture, maintenance, and use in digital environments (Svärd, 2014). Such new recordkeeping skills include information technology-related skills such as digital preservation and digitisation. Knowledge and skills in digital records and related systems, including metadata identification in digital records procedures for digital records storage, distribution, and disposition, are a pre-requisite for recordkeeping staff. Marutha (2011) emphasises the significance of having well-capacitated recordkeeping staff who will establish the necessary records and archives management infrastructure. Poor digital systems infrastructure and incompetent recordkeeping staff are challenges facing digital recordkeeping (Kamatula, 2013). Therefore, training is one of the essential elements of modern recordkeeping.

Considering the importance of skilled recordkeeping officers, in this study, participants were asked to indicate if they considered themselves sufficiently capable of maintaining records. Both qualitative and quantitative findings revealed that 51.9% of the respondents must be adequately skilled in recordkeeping. This finding concurred with the view of Egwunyenga (2009), who noted that African recordkeeping professionals need to gain the essential skills for maintaining records and archives in universities. This is in line with what was recommended in Mohammed, Tetteh and Ahmed's (2018) study that measures should be put in place to provide on-the-job training in the management of records for records staff as it was established that

most of the records staff do not have knowledge in the management of records.

Similarly, Nakato's (2019) study established that among the challenges facing Islamic University in Uganda was the limited skilled personnel. Consequently, the study recommended that there was a need for the recruitment of professional and skilled personnel with the required qualifications. The success of any integrated recordkeeping program hinges on the professional capacity and status of the recordkeeping staff in managing records (Mampe and Kalusopa, 2012). Lack of recordkeeping training places records professionals throughout many parts of Africa in a difficult situation. In this regard, Akotia and Balasu (2017) noted that specific skills and broad knowledge are required to carry out recordkeeping. The lack of these skills in recordkeeping could impede recordkeeping in the universities as records are subject to change/modification, deletion, and unsafe dissemination, leading to improper decision-making and jeopardizing office operations. This may eventually cause a loss of intellectual and physical control over the generated records.

On the other hand, 48.1% of the respondents who cited that they considered themselves sufficiently skilled in maintaining records were asked to indicate how often their universities trained them. The quantitative findings show that ten (26.3%) of the respondents cited every two years, while 7(18.4.2%) recorded more than once a year. Seven (18.4%) indicated every three years and the rest stated they did not know. These low statistics on recordkeeping training attendance by participants were probably due to a need for more budgets allocated for training and educating recordkeeping staff in the universities. This is because the qualitative findings of this study showed that the universities were experiencing difficulties in recordkeeping activities due to the budget allocated for recordkeeping functions, which was not enough. The quantitative findings of this study also showed that among the problems encountered due to the current state of registry funding in the universities was the inability to educate and train records staff. This means that in the eight universities, continuous training for recordkeeping professionals was a low-priority area for the top management. Training should be a continuous process for recordkeeping staff. This is because the development of information technology and the extensive use of digital devices to perform business operations has led to an exponential growth of digitally-created records. In other words, recordkeeping can be defined as a profession that is constantly changing (Mulauzi, 2019). With technology; nothing remains the same; much has to be learned along the way, including new approaches to knowledge, new skills, and undertaking courses or learning with new technologies (Ndenje-Sichalwe, 2010). Therefore, recordkeeping staff need continuous training to obtain new skills and knowledge (Dikopoulou and Mihiotis, 2010). The training should comprise informal and formal approaches, such as on-the-job training. Therefore, providing on-the-job staff training in recordkeeping activities is significant.

Regardless of the quantitative findings showing that 48.1% of the participants considered themselves sufficiently skilled in recordkeeping, this study established that the staff had various training needs. The most cited training need was the management of digital records throughout their lifecycle, accounting for 51(64.6%) of the respondents and the least was the management of paper records throughout their lifecycle, accounting for 22(27.8%) (see Table 1). The findings of this study are consistent with those of Luyombya (2010), who noted that records personnel needed more technical skills to maintain digital recordkeeping systems. Garaba (2015) rightfully said that recordkeeping professionals in ESARBICA lack information technology-related skills and capabilities such as digital curation, digital preservation, audio-visual and digital archiving, and digitisation. The study's findings by Amo (2016) also revealed that those entrusted with recordkeeping are not equipped with the essential skills and knowledge to ensure that records are maintained and preserved in a condition that will make them accessible in institutions. Management support through providing funds for training forums such as seminars, workshops, conferences, and other relevant programmes for recordkeeping staff is an option to be considered by the eight public universities. Therefore, training staff to manage records will allow them to possess skills that will help them carry out their duties properly.

The study sought to establish whether the eight universities received support from their top management in ensuring that recordkeeping was done properly. Most respondents, 53(67.1%), reported that the top management supported recordkeeping activities in their universities. During interviews with participants, the participants also reported the top management's support for recordkeeping. Although the top management

supported recordkeeping activities, as earlier reported, the current study's findings identified the need for adequate recordkeeping training as one of the challenges faced by recordkeeping professionals in managing records in public universities. The findings of this study showed that continuous training for recordkeeping professionals was a low-priority area for the top management in the universities. The lack of enough funds dedicated to recordkeeping activities limits training opportunities for recordkeeping staff (Mosweu and Rakemane, 2020). Top management should support the management of records in the institutions by providing enough budget and facilities (Kamatula, 2013). In this regard, Tanzanian public universities can explore top management support through funding for training forums such as conferences, workshops, and seminars. The lack of recordkeeping training leads to the inability of recordkeeping professionals to play an active role in designing and implementing digital recordkeeping systems. Skills and training are essential elements of modern recordkeeping.

Further, the present study's quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that a lack of properly implemented recordkeeping policy was a challenge in managing university records. Even though some Southern African countries have a records policy framework (Marutha, 2019), the problems still lie in implementing a records policy framework to ensure that recordkeeping is appropriately done. This issue of policy framework has also been reported by Ngoepe and Masegonyana Keakopa (2011) and Eze Asogwa (2013). Therefore, one of the important issues in recordkeeping is for the top management to guarantee the existence and implementation of a recordkeeping policy framework for proper recordkeeping. The readiness of top management to support the implementation of recordkeeping policies is an important enabler of effective recordkeeping.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Lack of recordkeeping training for recordkeeping staff was one of the factors that hindered proper recordkeeping practices. Further, the study revealed that more recordkeeping staff should be employed to improve the recordkeeping state. The findings further revealed that most respondents have diploma qualifications as their highest education level. The results concluded that top management in public universities needed to prioritise recordkeeping by providing recordkeeping staff with awareness training regarding recordkeeping. Skills and training are essential elements of modern recordkeeping. Records professionals in the present study lacked appropriate training to obtain new skills and knowledge.

Identifying whether records professionals have adequate knowledge and skills in recordkeeping practices was essential. The study discovered the existence of few skilled and knowledgeable recordkeeping staff as compared to the number of registry staff. Skills and training are crucial elements of modern recordkeeping. Recordkeeping personnel need appropriate training to obtain new skills and knowledge (Dikopoulou and Mihiotis, 2010). Managing digital records requires recordkeeping practitioners to possess sufficient recordkeeping skills that can promote managing records in digital environments. Since many recordkeeping practitioners do not have adequate knowledge and skills on recordkeeping matters concerning digital recordkeeping, training, particularly practical training on digital recordkeeping, is recommended by this study. Top management should prioritise capacity building for recordkeeping staff. Preferably, recordkeeping practitioners should undergo continuous professional development programmes to enhance their recordkeeping skills and knowledge. Rotich et al. (2017) advised that an institution that prioritises recordkeeping should have a continuous staff training program. Adequate knowledge and skills in recordkeeping practices are prerequisites to implementing proper recordkeeping in an institution. Moreover, awareness programmes may be carried out at least once a year by records managers and archivists to inform and educate fellow staff about the management of records and archives and digital recordkeeping processes in universities.

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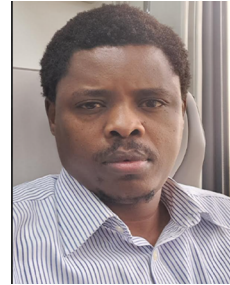
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