RECORDS MANAGEMENT AT THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SERVICE:
CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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DECLARATION

I Namukisa Joan hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work arrived at through reading, citing, quoting and referring to other scholar's literature and has never been submitted to any institution of higher learning for any academic award.

Signed: ........................................ Date: 10/05/2018

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APPROVAL

This research report entitled records management at the Ministry of Public Service Challenges and Prospects has been done my supervision and has been submitted to the East African School of Library and Information Science for examination with approval as the candidate’s supervisor.

Signature: ..................................  Date: 10/8/2018

Dr. Sarah Kaddu
Supervisor
DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to Almighty God who has been my guide and blessed me with knowledge and wisdom, to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Emmy and Sarah Kibirige who have been my super horses for providing me with a peaceful and calm environment, the time, financial support, love and for believing in me.

May the almighty God bless you!!
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ABBREVIATIONS

MOPS : Ministry of Public Service

CP : Confidential Personnel

PS : Permanent Secretary

LGs : Local Governments

MDAs : Ministries, Departments and Agencies

NARA : National Archives and Records Administration
ABSTRACT

The study examined how records are managed at the Ministry of Public Service in particular while focusing on challenges and prospects.

The objectives of the study were to: identify the types of records managed and maintained at the ministry; to examine how these different types of records are managed at the Ministry of Public Service; to establish the services offered by the Ministry of Public Service; to identify the challenges faced during record management at the Ministry of Public Service and to propose strategies to overcome challenges faced in records management.

The researcher used qualitative research methodologies to collect and analyze data from nine (9) respondents these included; the principle records officer, records officers, assistant records officers and internees. Interview guide, observation guide and structured questionnaires guide were used as data collection instruments as discussed in chapter three of the study.

The findings showed that paper records are mainly manually managed at the ministry especially personnel records which contain details for all government employees. The researcher also found out that challenges such as biological agents like rodents, insects, mould, abuse and mishandling of records were the major challenges that were faced during record management at the ministry as discussed in chapter four.

The study concluded that for the ministry to achieve its objectives as the organization, the identified strategies to overcome the challenges faced in record management should be majorly practiced in the record centers especially in the registry, for example fumigation to be done in the registry, making security copies of valuable materials, foods and drinks should be prohibited in the record centers more so in the registry.

The study recommended the ministry to consider the following practices hence overcoming the identified challenges faced in record management and these included; Fumigation practices, Installation of security software like antivirus, spy ware, firewall, in order to avoid viruses, Install fire and water alarms throughout the registry and make sure they are always operational as discussed in chapter four.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Background to the study

The University of Manchester (2010) concurs that a record is any piece of recorded information that is produced, received or kept as part of its business processes and which provides evidence of a specific activity. Despite the value of information to sound administration, records in many developing countries are characterized by poor organization, inefficient filing, poor storage and irregular disposition (Bakkabulindi and Muhenda, 2008). This chapter features are the background of the study, statement of the problem, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions and definition of key terms.

The ISO 15489 standards on records management (2001) defines records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. The definition contextualizes records management within the records life cycle concept and emphasizes the evidential nature of records. Records are vital tools for continuous functioning of any organization in its day to day transactions. Records in organizations are created, received, used, maintained and disposed. The Ministries are responsible for the development of human resource policies and regulations, structures and system, ensuring that they are implemented and adhered to by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Governments (LGs). There are different ways of managing records at the ministries throughout their lifecycle these include:

- Identifying records, according to Melesco (2002), if an item is presented as legal record, it needs to be authenticated. In extreme cases, items may be subjected to a micro scope-ray, radiocarbon bastion or chemical analysis. This level of authentication is rare but requires that special care to be taken in the creation and retention of the records of the organization.

- Filing of records, According to Melsoco (2002), filing means keeping documents in a safe place and being able to find them easily and quickly. Documents that are cared for will not easily tear, get lost or dirty. Filing system is the central record keeping system for an organization. It helps you to be organized, systematic, efficient and transparent.
It helps all people who should be able to access information to do it easily. Filing, according to Arora (1980) filing is the core of records management, it is rightly said that the keystone of office organization is the maintenance of comprehensive, simple and efficient filing system. Denyer defines filing as the process of arranging and storing records so that they can be located when required.

- Destruction of records, here the insinuator machine is used to burn all the documents into ashes; it uses both fuel (diesel) and electricity. Appraising of records, this is the process of determining how long the record needs to be kept. Through appraising the student identified records that have to be kept permanently and records that need to be destroyed, it helps in creating space for accession.

According to Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) proper records management involves establishing systematic controls at every stage of the record’s life cycle in accordance with established principles and accepted models of records management. This therefore means that practicing proper records management leads to good management.

National Archives of Scotland (2005) states that information is every organization most basic and essential asset and recorded information requires effective management. It further states that records management ensures information can be accessed easily, can be destroyed routinely when no longer needed and enables organizations not only to function on a day to day basis, but also fulfill legal and financial requirements.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the independent Federal agency that helps preserve our nation's history by overseeing the management of all Federal records. The National Archives and Records Administration Act of 1984 amended the records management statutes to divide records management oversight responsibilities between the National Archives and Records Administration and the General Services Administration (GSA). Under the Act, NARA is responsible for adequacy of documentation and records disposition (44 U.S.C. 2904(a)), and GSA is responsible for economy and efficiency in records management (44 U.S.C. 2904(b)). Federal agency records management programs must comply with regulations promulgated by both NARA.
1.2 Background to Ministry of Public Service

Ministry of Public Service was first established as an establishment branch under chief secretary’s officers in 1st September 1955 to enable public officers make use of their capabilities in order realize efficient and effective service delivery. The name of ministry was changed to the name of ministry of public service in 1967. Ministry of public service is a bureaucratic government entity in the central government. The ministry is managed in line with legal frame work, polices, strategies and regulations. For example the public service act and the Uganda public service standing orders, 2010.

Ministry of Public Service has got approximately 300 employees, this include administrators, human resource officers, Lowry and Goetsch (2001) records officers, procurement officers, auditors, planners, policy analysts, (The ministerial policy statement for Ministry of Public Service 2016/2017)

At the Ministry of Public Service records are currently managed through the following ways;

File census, this is the process of moving to different departments/offices in the organization tracing for all files from the central registry. Shelve reading; this is activity helps in identifying all the misplaced and missing files on the shelves in the registry.

File indexing, this the process of creating a file in the master register, on the index card and in to the computer database. Here the index card is used for backup in case one fails to trace the file from the database.

Retrieving and routing of files; this is process of picking files from the shelves taking them to the officer for action. Here a person retrieving is required to use a location card to indicate the date, the title of the file and the office to which the file is being routed in. when the file is taken to the needed office he/she has to sign against it.

Recording of incoming mail in the incoming mail register at the one stork center, here I recorded the subject of the mail; the date of creation of the mail, the receiving date and the author of the mail and stamping the received mail then after all mail are taken to the permanent secretary where she signs against. (The ministerial policy statement for Ministry of Public Service 2016/2017)
Strategic objectives

While implementing the above mandate, the ministry and the commission are guided by the following three board objectives:

- To strengthen Human Capital Planning, Development and Management.
- To sustain Efficiency and Effectiveness of public service delivery structures systems and practices/processes.
- To enhance performance management and accountability of public service delivery. (Public Service Website, 2018)

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Ministry of Public Service houses different information materials which include pensioners’ files, minute’s records, appointment letters, application letters a monger others. However these information materials seem to be exposed to security threats as a result of challenges such as miss shelving and miss filling of documents which leads to loss of relevant materials. There seem to be other challenges that the study wishes to establish, these include vandalism, theft, fire or flood. Damage caused by breaches such as computer viruses and computer hacking is becoming increasingly common and sophisticated. There is a lot of time spent on transferring files from one office to another, retrieving of records which delay decision making, hence affecting service delivery. This is a result of new increased opened personal files of new employees in government institutions and the existence of fewer workers to manage the records. The study is aimed at records management at the Ministry of Public Service; challenges and prospects.

1.4 Aim of the study

The aim of the study was to examine how records are managed at the Ministry of Public Service with the particular emphasis on challenges and prospects in record management.

1.5 Objectives of the study

i. To identify the types of records managed and maintained at the ministry.
ii. To examine how these different types of records are managed at the ministry of public service
iii. To establish the services offered by the Ministry of Public Service.
iv. To establish the challenges faced during the management of records at the ministry.

v. To propose strategies to overcome the challenges faced in management of records at the ministry.

1.6 Research questions

Basing on the aims and objectives of the study, many issues may come up in challenges faced and solutions to the mentioned challenges of records security these include;

i. What are the types of records generated at the Ministry of Public Service?

ii. How are records managed at the Ministry of Public Service?

iii. What are the services offered by the Ministry?

iv. What are the challenges faced during record management at the Ministry?

v. What are the strategies to overcome the identified challenges faced in record management at the ministry?

1.7 Content Scope of the study

The research study specifically is carried out with a case study on the record security challenges and solutions to such challenges at the Ministry of Public Service. The study focused on the challenges encountered of records keeping at the ministry with a view of suggesting solutions to problems affecting record keeping.

1.8 Significance of the study

The value of the study contributed to the effective management of records in the organization and the findings of the study will be useful in the following ways;

i. The findings would assist the organization to develop an action plan of improve the management of records.

ii. The research would enable the users of these records to understand the importance of proper handling of records at the Ministry.

iii. This research would be used as a reference for the people who were interested in researching about the challenges faced at the ministry and prospects to the faced challenges in management of records.
iv. The study would improve the management of records at the ministry by identifying the solutions to problems faced in record management and the guide on how to implement the record security measures.

v. The research would provide relevant literature to other research on challenges that records managers face in the preserving of records hence coming up with solutions to the mentioned challenges which improved on the activities performed at the Ministry

1.9 Definition of Operational Terms

Challenges: Something needing great mental or physical effort in order to be done successful or the situation of facing this kind of effort defined by the American Heritage Dictionary (1980)

Prospects: Defined as possibility of something, something you expect to happen, chances of success. (Otuama S.2010)

Records: This is the information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by organization or a person. (Abioye, 2007)

Records management: ISO 15489 (2001) defines as a field of management responsible for the efficient and systemic control of the creation, receipts, maintenance, use and disposition of records including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and business activities and transactions in the forms of record.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature review is a systematic explicit and reproducible method for identifying evaluating and interpreting an existing body of recorded work that was produced by researchers, scholars. (Baxter, Hughes and Tight, 2001) Literature reviews are secondary sources, and do not report new or original experimental work, most often associated with academic oriented literature such as reviews found in academic journals. The review of literature in this chapter has been guided by the research objectives and themes related to this study. Finally, a research gap is given.

2.2 Overview of Records Management

Records management is defines as a field of management responsible for the efficient and systemic control of the creation, receipts, maintenance, use and disposition of records including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and business activities and transactions in the forms of record.( ISO 15489 (2001)

It is so “simple” as managing the records of your organization throughout their lifecycle, from the time they are created to their eventual disposal. This includes identifying, classifying, storing, securing, retrieving, tracking and destroying or permanently preserving records. A record is something that represents proof of existence. It’s evidence that a particular event took place, regardless of the medium, format or characteristics. It is either created or received by an organization in pursuance of or in compliance with legal obligations, or in the transaction of business. Records can be either tangible objects, such as paper documents like birth certificates, citizen cards, and x-rays, or digital information, such as electronic documents, databases, website content, and email. The efficient practice of Records Management should involve several activities. Check what you have to do:

1. Planning the information needs of the organization.
2. Identifying information requiring capture.
3. Creating, approving and enforcing policies and practices regarding records, including their organization and disposal.
4. Developing a records storage plan, this includes the short and long-term housing of physical records and digital information.

5. Identifying, classifying and storing records.

6. Coordinating access to records internally and outside of the organization, balancing the requirements of business confidentiality, data privacy, and public access.

7. Identification and maintenance of records for a specified retention period – according to organizational policies, statutory requirements, and other regulations this may involve either their destruction or permanent preservation in an archive.

8. Designing, implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records (Records Management Solution).


Stephens (1993) further said, if it is to be effective, a record management program must apply appropriate controls to records during each of the five major stages of the life cycle of information. The creation stage, the distribution and use stage, the storage and maintenance stage, the retention and disposition stage.

The active stage, records at this stage are consulted often stored close at hand, expensive and stored in the registry here the users are the creators of the organization receiving it.

The semi-active stage, this is the second stage of the life cycle of a record and these records are not usually consulted as often as in the active stage. Here records are only used when necessity arises and can be stored remotely.

The inactive stage, this is when records are old and are no longer needed by the Ministry for its work but can be consulted by historical or legal value and need to be kept.

2.2.1 The records life cycle

The life cycle model is based on the concept that a record has life. It is born that is created, it lives that is used and maintained and it dies that is disposed off Zawiyah (2000).records Life cycle includes the following:
**Records creation**

According to (Zawiyah and Robert 2000), they say that traditionally organizational staff created records manually using pen and ink or a type writer. In modern world counties most records are created using digital technology by interaction with a computer program. Records can also originate when communications are received from outside organization by letter, fax, email or other message system.

**Distribution**

According to (Zawiyah and Robert 2000), distribution is the managing the information once its created or received whether its internal or external. It occurs when records are sent to someone for which they were intended or were copied. Records are distributed when photocopied, copied, attached to an email, hand delivered by inter-office or regular mail, etc. after records are distributed they are used.

**Use**

According to (Zawiyah and Robert 2000) the electronic records management system must maximize the usability of the system for the end user. This is the main if not the only way that user buy in can be maintained. User by in is essential if the organization is going to create an effective corporate system. In the context of accesses consider how far you will allow the user to access metadata for example how far u will permit the creation of new folders.

**Maintenance**

Maintenance is when records are not used on a day to day basis and is stored in the records center. Even though they are not used on a day to a day basis, they will be kept due to legal or financial records until their retention period is up. The maintenance phase includes filing, transfers and retrievals. The information may be retrieved during this period to use as a resource for references. When information is removed from files, it is tracked to ensure it is returned for others to access it. Once the information has no more value or the retention period is up, it is to be destroyed. Zawiyah and Robert (2000)
Disposition

According to Reese (2010), records disposition is a critical element of records management. The records disposition program enables agencies to records that are no longer need so only those active records needed for current business, are maintained in costly office space. According to (Donovan, 2009), states that disposal schedule is the key element of records appraisal process; the schedule covers series or collection of records for which a retention period can be determined for whole series.

2.2.2 Records Management Practices

There are different ways of managing records throughout their lifecycle these include;

A. Filing of records

According to Melsoco (2002) filing means keeping documents in a safe place and being able to find them easily and quickly. Documents that are cared for will not easily tear, get lost or dirty.

Filing, according to Arora (1980) filing is the core of records management, it is rightly said that the keystone of office organization is the maintenance of comprehensive, simple and efficient filing system.

Filing system

According to Arora (1980) filing cannot be treated as unimportant function of the office, perhaps it is the most important Araro explains five filing system these include and they were practiced at the ministry of public service,

1) Alphabetic filing system.

Records are frequently organized alphabetically according to the name of a person or title category of the document. Setting up a basis alphabetic system requires some type of file cabinet, file folders and labels. Labels can be printed from a computer database or word processing system. If file drawers are used, each drawer should be identified with a label indicating the range of its contents. Folders labels should be attached to the folder tads so they align when folders are placed in file. After paper records have been screened and documented they are filed in an alphabetic system according to the following,
System entry, in this step the record is examined to determine the name under which it is to be filed, the name is indexed according to the filing rules and the indexed name is noted on the indexed file.

System storage, in this step the record is alphabetized with others to be stored and then placed in the appropriate file container in the system.

Storage documentation, the final step is to document the fact that a group of records has been entered into the system and be stored.

2) Subject filing systems

It is often convenient to organize records according to topic or subject. For example some records refer to products, processes, formulas and other matters without containing the name of a person or organization. Sometimes records are grouped according to topic even if they do contain names of individuals.

3) Geographical filing systems

Some types of business file records are filed according to their geographic locations. For example a sales business with definite geographic sales areas might organize certain records geographically by sale territory.

4) Chronological filing system

This is order by date. Documents to be acted on at a later date are often filed temporarily in a chronological file, where they are arranged in order according to the date they are to be acted on, for example if a meeting must be attended on the afternoon of June 30th, annotation of the meeting and perhaps a copy of the meeting agenda are filed under June 30th records.

The user checks the file early day to see if something has been filed under that day’s date. A chronological file helps in removing numerous unorganized papers from the desk until they are needed for action. This type of file also acts as a daily reminder that a certain report is done; the other names of a chronological file are tickler file and follow up file.

Filing methods

Saleemi (2000) defined filing methods as the way how file covers or binders are kept in the filing cabinets. These main filing methods include:
i. Vertical filing, this is the keeping of files within the drawers, racks or in shelves when they are standing up right north to south. The titles are normally placed at the top edge of the files which are normally visible.

ii. Horizontal filing, this is when the files are kept within the drawer’s racks or in the shelves when one is on top of another east and west.

iii. Suspension filing, this method of filing is used by organizations with large number of files. The files stand in vertical position, but in order to prevent them from falling off from the filing cabinets, two metal bars are fixed on the sides of filing cabinet drawer. The method has the advantage of keeping the file up right and tidy and are easy to locate because of the paper slips showing the title of the file.

iv. Lateral filing, this is where the files are stored on a shelf or in pockets suspended side by side from frames. The method saves space because of the great height, the space is fully utilized and files are easily identified.

B. Classification of records

According to Arora (1980), before considering the various filing methods, it would be proper to consider classification. Classification can be defined as the process of selecting headings under which documents are grouped or classified on the basis of common characteristics before filing takes place. Major object of classification is to enable the managers to select any one paper from among all the papers stored in the office without loss of time and at least cost.

Methods of classification

According to Arora(1980), there are five methods of classification these include;

Alphabetical classification, it is based on the occurrence of the letters in the alphabet as it is done for the dictionary. If several names occur having the same first letter, the arrangement takes into account the subsequent letters also for example A, Ab, Ac, or B, Bb, Bc

Numerical classification, in this method of classification, each folder or record is given a number, and the files are placed in strict numerical order for example health records may be assigned number 23

Subject classification, this is the process where records are selected according to their subject titles for example local government records, private records among others.
However Read and Ginn (2010) say that we classify records in three basic ways namely:

i. By the type of use. Classification according to records use includes, transaction documents, these are documents of a firm’s day to day operations. These documents consist primarily of business form for example the invoices, contracts, purchases and sales orders among others. Reference documents contain information needed to carry on the operations of the firm over long period of time.

ii. Classification by place of use, this refers to external and internal records. We create an external record for use outside the organization. The larger group of records classified by their place of use is that of internal records examples are communication between the firm and its employees for example payrolls records, bulletins

iii. Classification by value of the record to the firm. Manager determines the value of the record to the firm. Each record maintained by a firm falls into one of the four categories, there include

Vital records: these must be kept permanently because they are needed for continuing the operations of the firm and usually not replaceable.

Important records: These assist in performing the firms business operations and if destroyed are replaceable only at great cost

Useful records: These are helpful in conducting business operations. If destroyed be replaced at slight cost.

Nonessential records usually destroyed after use. For examples announcements

C. Indexing of records

Saleemi (2000:85) defines an index as a device for finding the position of a document or file in a system quickly and easily. In filing, index helps the location of any letter, record, files among others thus it provides quick references.

According to Saleemi (2000), there are six types of index and they include the following,

Page index: This is when the contents of a particular folder or cabinet are summarized on a piece of paper together with their positions and placed at either the front or back of the folder.
Loose card indexes: This is a small card showing the names of all correspondents and the files where their information is filed. The cards are kept together and whenever a file or document is required, references are first made to the cards which guides where it is located.

Visible card index: The cards are filed together with the documents and overlap so that on-line of entry on each card projects and is visible thus forming a one line index.

Strip indexes: it is the method of recording information on a strip of paper for quick reference. The strips are bound together on top of the other with a portion of each one being visible. It is quick method to file and locate information.

Vertical card index: here the cards stand upright in cabinet drawer boxes. The name and other identifying features are exposed to view. The cards are sub divided into sections using letters of alphabet with projecting guide cards.

Punched card index: a series of holes is punched in the edge of each card. Each hole represents an item of information such as department, age, sex and many others. To obtain cards bearing the same information the operator uses a steel needle which is passed through the position on the card recording the information and those cards which have been slotted in the position far away from the rest of the cards.

D. Records Disposition

According to Reese (2010), records disposition is a critical element of records management.

The records disposition program enables agencies to records that are no longer need so only those active records needed for current business, are maintained in costly office space. Under records

2.2.3 Benefits of records management in an organization

According to Northwest Territories, (2003) he states that records enable and support an agency's work to fulfill its mission. Every organization, including Federal agencies, must address well-defined objectives that add value, either by achieving the organization's goals or by reducing costs. Since records contain information, a valuable resource, it is essential to take a systematic approach to the management of records and the more benefits include;
• Contributes to the smooth operation of your agency's programs by making the information needed for decision making and operations readily available
• Helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner
• Facilitates effective performance of activities throughout an agency
• Protects the rights of the agency, its employees, and its customers
• Provides continuity in the event of a disaster
• Protects records from inappropriate and unauthorized access
• Meets statutory and regulatory requirements including archival, audit, and oversight activities
• Provides protection and support in litigation
• Allows quicker retrieval of documents and information from files
• Improves office efficiency and productivity
• Provides better documentation more efficiently
• Supports and documents historical and other research
• Frees up office space for other purposes by moving inactive records to storage facilities
• Avoids unnecessary purchases of office equipment

2.3 Types of records

Stewart and Melesco (2002) defines records as a piece of information created or received by an organization that gives evidence of business or transactions and should be preserved for future references. According to Stewart and Melesco (2002), there are various types of records which include papers based records such as maps, plans, photographs, reports, forms and correspondences. They further added that there is also word processed documents, electronic mail messages, digital images, audio and video records as well as spread sheets.

According to the southern Connecticut (2013) the different types of records are as explained below.

a. Administrative records, these are records which pertain to the organization development activities and accomplishment of the agency. These fall into two categories that are policy and operation records. Such records are; Organizational Documents like budgets, planning records, fiscal records, organizational and functional charts.
b. Governing Documents, like manual, directives orders and interpretations issued from top authority levels, correspondence files of high level officials, regulations, circulars, instructions and memoranda.

c. Reporting documents such as annual reports, periodic progress or summary reports, special reports, transcripts of hearing, minutes of meeting and conferences.

d. Legal records, these are records with evidence of legally enforceable right or obligations of state for example records related to property right citizenship and employee, Records relating to employment, like personnel records, payroll records. Records relating to property rights such as land, contracts, agreements, leases, license.

e. Fiscal records, records that have been relating to agency financial transactions they may be budget payrolls, vouchers and accounting records.

f. Historical records are records worth permanent preservation for references and research purposes and these are normally kept in archives.

g. Electronic records, these are records created, generated, sent, communicated, received and stored by electronic means.

h. Research records. These are records used in scholarly studies and investigation. For example organization structures like maps or sketches.

2.4 Challenges encountered in Records Management

Parer (2000) confirmed that African records keepers lack the basic skills and competences for handling records and archives in the public sector. There is a serious problem of technophobia in must offices in Africa especially among the older employees. The challenges are addressed as threats to information materials by researchers.

Inadequate skills in information technology

Many traditional librarians, records managers, and archivist are very conservative and have phobia for computers. This may be due to generation gap between the new and the old professionals which led analogue information managers to perceive computers as a threat to their status as experts Wakamoya (2010)
Lack of staffing

Lack of staffing is certainly an issue when it comes to storing records properly. However, if done correctly every employee should be participating in a records management program. Be proactive if records are managed properly from the moment they are created, the smoother process is not only more effective, but requires much less work in the future to secure it (Schenkalaars and Ahmad 2004)

Temperature and Relative Humidity

According to Welheise, (2002) he said It is a general rule that the higher a temperature, the more quickly archival materials will deteriorate. This is because higher temperatures speed up the chemical processes that cause deterioration. High relative humidity, particularly when coupled with high temperatures, accelerates the chemical deterioration of materials. High relative humidity can also cause some inks to feather: that is, to spread, sometimes well across the page, damaging the material. High relative humidity can also promote mould growth, which is highly dangerous to records and archives.

Dirt, dust

According to Wamukoya (2005), says Dirt, dust and other particles are also pollutants, and they can absorb gaseous pollutants, which then penetrate materials and promote chemical and physical deterioration. Pollutants can also come from paper products themselves, especially those made with poor quality materials, such as newspapers. As these types of materials age they generate dust particles that damage not only the items themselves but also any materials in the vicinity.

Fire and water damage

Fire is a serious threat to archival materials. If lost in a fire, records are lost forever. Equally, water – 100% relative humidity! – can cause great damage to records and archives. Paper-based materials in particular absorb water very quickly; when damaged by water, inks can run or dissolve, mould can grow and stains can appear. Papers may stick together and glues will soften and run. Water damage can come not only from putting out a fire but also from leaks, floods or heavy rains. Feather, (1997)
Biological Agents

Biological Agents, such as mould, insects and rodents can all damage information materials. Their presence can be encouraged by high relative humidity, high temperatures, a complete absence of light and the availability of nutrients. A mould is a woolly or furry growth consisting of minute fungi that forms on substances found in moist, warm air. When the relative humidity exceeds 70% and the temperature reaches 25°C or more, mould growth speeds up considerably. Non-ventilated areas may be more at risk than areas with ceiling fans or ventilators. Insects are attracted to the nutrients found in paper-based products, particularly adhesives and starches. Insects and rodents are also attracted to damp, dark and dirty locations. Rodents such as rats and mice can eat archival materials and use papers to build nests. Otuamas. (2010)

Human Threats

According to Wakamoya (2010) states that sadly, people can in fact pose the most serious hazard to archival materials. Intentional and accidental abuse can damage information materials and archives and lead to the loss of valuable information. Damaging activities include; Rough handling of paper, Excessive pressure on bindings or folders, Poor photocopying practices, Poor retrieval and filing practices, causing materials to be torn, folded or damaged, Inappropriate storage of oversized materials, Writing on documents, particularly archival materials, Spilling food or drink on records and archives, Tearing or folding papers, Handling information materials with dirty hands, Deliberate acts of vandalism

Deterioration of Digital Media

Storage media, such as disks, tapes and cartridges, decay relatively rapidly compared to other media, they are not designed for long term use and are therefore extremely susceptible to short and medium term decay. Deterioration of digital media is responsible for the disappearance of, or inaccessibility of digital information in the long run, this is because media deteriorates or decays within few years after digitization. Another challenge is that digital media get lost during disaster or virus attacks, and in Africa there may be absence of or inadequate organizational plans to manage e-records. (Judith and Ginn, 2010)
Inadequate Technology Infrastructure

Frequent power outages constitute serious bottlenecks to digitization in Africa. This has the effects in damaging digital equipment and where there is a standby electric generator, the cost of running them is prohibitive. Added to this is the harsh environment of Sub-Saharan Africa which is not always friendly with technology equipment. Most countries in Africa do not have adequate and reliable supply of electricity which consequently makes it impossible to maintain a conducive and sustainable technological environment suitable for digitization project in the continent. Again, telecommunications infrastructures in most African countries are either lacking or poorly developed, and few African states have modern digital and packet switching telecommunications facilities needed for data transmission. (Judith and Ginn, 2010)

Increased costs

The costs of acquiring hardware and software can be very high. Costs when upgrading equipment and systems is essential in order to keep up with changing technologies. For countries with limited resources, ongoing cost poses a serious challenge. Annual and unexpected costs also need to be considered, including: system maintenance fees; upgrades and repairs; and staff training which can exceed the cost of acquiring the equipment in the first place. (Judith and Ginn, 2010)

2.5 Strategies to overcome the challenges associated with Records Management

Educating employees about how to properly handle records from their creation will help organization reduce the resources necessary to manage them later. Team work is essential and working across departments will not only make your program more efficient it will also reduce the amount of designated resources needed to fulfill it (Timothy, 2002)

Digitizing records so that they are viewable on computers, tables or smart phones applying metadata to records, so that they are instantly searchable by record type using saved searches to quickly perform routine searches for a specific type of record. Installation of security software like antivirus, spy ware, firewall, in order to avoid viruses, worms and the Trojan horses that disable information systems (Judith and Ginn, 2010)
Access control - Refer to policies and procedures an organization uses to prevent improper access to the system. Access control only allows the authorized person to access and use the system; this can be the use of passwords, codes. Securing wireless networks, organizations can further improve wireless network by using it in conjunction with Virtual Private Network (VPN) technology when a wireless network has access to internal corporate data. The Wi-Fi alliance industry trade group issued a Wi-Fi protected access (WPA). Remember institutional data should be availed at only Intranet network. (Judith and Ginn, 2010)

Installation of digital cameras/ CCTV in different access points to enable easy monitoring of records movement and authentication. Someone seats at a certain point where he or she can view whatever is taking place in the records Centre. (Judith and Ginn, 2010)

Prevention is the best means of controlling moulds, insects and rodents. Whenever possible, information materials should not be stored in hot, damp, dark environments where the air does not circulate. Temperature and relative humidity should be controlled as close to ideal levels as possible, and air circulation should be good, while it is best to limit light levels, some lights should be kept on in environments with high relative humidity. In these instances, the lights can dry out the air somewhat, reducing relative humidity and inhibiting mould growth. Areas housing information materials should be cleaned and dusted regularly, and food should be prohibited in Archival and information materials should not be stored on the floor, in corners or in such a way that fire could jump from one box or bundle to another quickly.

According to Welheise (2002) says that, a number of steps can be taken to control temperature and relative humidity, changing temperature and relative humidity can cause more damage than consistently high or consistently low levels. Ensure good ventilation throughout the facility, so that air, particularly hot air, does not build up under the roof and raise temperatures and relative humidity. Store materials away from outside walls to allow air circulation to control temperature and to reduce the effects of external environmental changes; do not store records in basements or areas of high relative humidity or poor air circulation, do not pack documents too tightly into boxes, on shelves or in cabinets.

When using air conditioners, be sure to monitor the temperature and relative humidity regularly to check for fluctuations. If possible, store particularly fragile materials (such as
photographs or magnetic tapes) in one area where the temperature and relative humidity can be controlled.

2.7 Research Gap

A lot of literature has been reviewed on Records Management, Records Management Practices, Challenges involved but there is no study ever been conducted at the Ministry of Public Service on challenges and strategies to overcome the identified challenges hence the study.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes methods that were used to achieve the research objectives; it begins with the area of study. It also briefly explains and focuses on the research design, study population, research instruments, methods of data collection and analysis and the procedures that were used in order to accomplish the research study.

3.2 Research design

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) research design is an arrangement of conditions for collections and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance with research purpose. The study employed qualitative research design and it involved carrying out in depth interview with principle records officer, records assistant officers and internees to collect data. The study also involved questionnaires, interview guide and personal observation in the registry.

Qualitative data collection method plays an important role in impact evaluation by providing information useful to understand the processes behind observed results and assess changes in people’s perceptions of their wellbeing. The qualitative study includes data sources ranging from questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Questionnaires method was mainly employed in primary data collection although interviews, observation methods were also used. On the other hand quantitative method was also employed involving the gathering of statistical and numerical data from respondents who were the departmental staff. The combinations of both qualitative and quantitative studies were used because they provided a more in depth analysis of the issue or subject based on small sample population.

3.3 Area of Study

The study was carried out in Ministry of Public Service which is located in Wandegeya, Kampala because it handles a lot of information materials and these information materials are exposed to threats.
3.4 Population of the study

According to (Kakinada, 2008) population is defined as the complete set of individuals, objects or measurements having some common observable characteristics. The study targeted departmental staff especially in the registry these include two (2) records officers, three (3) records assistants, one (1) principle records officer and three (3) internees, in total they were nine (9) members.

3.5 Sampling Method and Sample Size

Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from the population such that the selected group contain elements representative of the characterizes found in the entire group (Orodho and Kombo, 2002). The study employed purposive sampling technique so as to target acknowledgeable and experienced persons to participant in the study in relation to the problem under investigation.

3.5.1 Sampling methods

According to Shammoo (2009), sampling is the small part of the population which is thought to be the representative of the large population. This is relatively cheap and an easy way of collecting information about a large group of persons. The researcher chose nine (9) respondents who were interviewed and these were (2) records officers, three (3) records assistants, one (1) principle records officer and three (3) internees. The listed respondents were chosen because they were the ones who face challenges during access, retrieval, preservation and management of records. The non-probability sampling design was selected under which a purposive sampling method was used, by help of this method; the research selected only those who directly participate in management of records. In the non-probability approach, the elements in the population do not have a well-defined chance of being selected (Amin, 2005). this study was used because it provides an opportunity to use own judgment or common sense regarding the participants from whom information on the status.

3.5.2 Sample Size

Sample size is the number of observations used for calculating estimates of a given population. The sampler size is as shown in table 1.
Table 1: Sample Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle records officer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records officer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant record officer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internees</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>09</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data (2018)

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Patton (2002), states that different data collection methods and tools can be applied in order to get quality data or information. These include;

3.6.1 Structured Interview Method

An interview is a conversation with a purpose between two or more person (Berg, 2009). In this study, a structured interview was used to obtain data from staff (records officer, assistants, internees, principle of records officer). Sarandakos (2005) defines a structured interview as a data collection method which employs structured questionnaires that are verbally presented to respondents with the answers recorded by the interviewer. This technique was chosen because, it permitted clarification of questions, and it had high response rate than written questionnaires.

The researcher used face to face interview to get first-hand information from the respondents. In this method, the researcher designed an interview schedule (See appendix 2) that helped while conducting the interview in relation to the objectives, this involved the researcher in asking questions on how records are managed at the ministry, the services offered by the ministry, the types of records obtained at the ministry and the challenges encountered during record management. The respondents understood the questions given to them and gave answers accordingly.
3.6.2 Observation method

Kakooza (2000) defines observation guide as a checklist or a form containing the things to be observed and this can be physical things or social processes.

The researcher observed the different types of records managed at the ministry, challenges encountered by the ministry. This involved the researcher to systematically watch and record the behaviors and characteristics of operations and processes in different departments. During observation, the researcher looked and took note of services offered by the ministry; the researcher then described what she had observed so as to meet the objectives of the research study. Although the method was time consuming, it had a number of advantages which include; it gave more detailed and correct related information, it permitted the collection of information on facts not mentioned in the interview schedule.

3.6.3 Questionnaire Method

Ahaja (2009) defines a questionnaire as a structured set of questions usually sent by e-mail or delivered by hand.

This method was involved in asking questions and the researcher was asking both open and closed ended questions for reliability and validity of data. This was used to get the required responses from the respondents. The method was used because it was cheap to administer the large population within a short time and it allowed the respondents to fill in their responses at their convenience. (See Appendix 1) The researcher interviewed 09 respondents including principle records officer, records officers, and assistant records officers.

3.6.4 Document Review Method

This involved the study of documents such as strategic plans, human resource management manuals, records operations manuals, records management’s policies and the national’s records and archives act 2001.

The researcher consulted already published and unpublished sources which include text books, journals and the internet all which offered relevant information on the topic of study for instance information on challenges faced while managing information materials. The method was used because; it’s inexpensive because the data is already there
3.7 Data Collection Instruments

These are methods that were used to collect data from the field (Kombo, 2006). In qualitative research, interview and observation methods are the most appropriate methods that were used in the data collection.

3.7.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions to which the subject responds in writing and it must explain what the study is about and also give the respondents all the instructions for giving the right answers. This method involved in asking questions and the researcher asked both open and closed ended questions for reliability and validity of data. (See Appendix 1) for example the researcher asked questions about the services offered by the ministry, the record types maintained at the ministry. The instrument was used because it allowed the respondents to fill in their responses at their convenience.

3.7.2 Observation Checklist

According to Shampoo (2009) the observation instrument contains general aspects of the research problem that the researcher, keeps her eye on during the processes of carrying out data. During observation process the researcher looked at the types of records, records management practices, challenges faced. (See Appendix 3) The researcher used this instrument because it gave more detailed and correct related information and it was cheap.

3.7.3 Interview Schedule

According to Ritchie and Lewis, (2008) an interview schedule lists questions, topics and issues to cover while collecting data especially in qualitative studies. (See Appendix 2) However it was noted that this study, being based on case study the interview schedule was to abide by the best practices of interview schedule construction. The questions on this tool were simple, direct and logically arranged which enabled the researcher to collect enough data to meet the research objectives and questions. In addition to the schedule the researcher interviewed nine (09) respondents and these were: (2) records officers, three (3) records assistants, one (1) principle records officer and three (3) internees. The interview practice lasted for one week this because some respondents were missing in some weekly days.
3.8 Research Procedure

Introductory letter was obtained from the HOD Records and Archives Management authorizing the researcher to go in the field and collect data during the research. The letter was delivered to the records officer of Ministry of Public Service by the researcher. The records officer of the ministry gave the researcher permission to carry out the study in their ministry. After obtaining permission the researcher administered the questionnaires to the end users. The researcher later collected the questionnaires, studied them and conducted the interviews there after.

Data collection in any study requires adherence to a number of systematic procedures. For this case, the researcher followed the following procedures to collect data: First and foremost the researcher prepared the research instruments and they were approved by the supervisor for use.

3.9 Data Quality Control

Epstiel, (2012) states that the quality of the research report depends on a larger degree on the quality of the data used to compile the report. Data quality control is through following: Rigorousness being strict on something;

Triangulation

Triangulation for example instruments like observation guide, interview guide and questionnaire guide (see Appendix 1, 2, 3) Data quality control is essential to ensure integrity of results from quality improvement projects.

The researcher employed interview and content analysis to overcome any bias. Quality control was achieved through data being obtained from numerous interviewees and the data was then compared. To ensure data quality control and internal validity of this study, a pilot study was conducted to pretest the data collection instruments used in this study.

Piloting

Piloting was conducted and necessary adjustments done on the data collection instruments. Yin (2009), notes that a pilot study enables one to refine the data collection tools that are to be used in collection of the data and the procedures to be followed. The participants were
selected purposively basing on their perceived knowledge of the subject under study. This is a way of making sure that the data collected is accurate. Coding of the interview was done to reflect information written on it. The interview also conducted in the presence of a note book to capture every kind of information during the process.

3.9.1 Validity and reliability of Research Instrument

According to Enon (2010), Validity is the extent to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. The question of validity is raised in the context of the three points made below, the form of the test, the purpose of the test and the population for whom it is intended. For the purpose of this study content validity was used.

Gay, (2001) Reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures. Errors of measurement that affect reliability are random errors and errors of measurement that affect systematic or constant errors.

3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

Yin, (2009) recommends that data analysis for case studies should be done by categorizing, tabulating and testing both quantitative and qualitative evidence. This involved refining data during and after collection of data to sort out mistakes, codes the data by building themes and subthemes, systematic description of contents of data in reduced form. Finally, explanation of meanings, interpretation in relation to research objectives, discussions and conclusions from emerging information will be drawn and presented thematically as per the propositions of this study.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher introduced the research topic by use of an introductory letter that was provided by the university. This helped the researcher to legally carryout her research at the Ministry of Public Service.

Prior permission to undertake the study was got from the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Service. The major issues that the researcher considered were honesty, keeping time, acknowledgement, confidence and respect during the research.
During the study process, no respondent was facilitated in terms of allowances, participants were objectively selected and the participants were assured of whatever was transpired between them and the researcher, this therefore guaranteed the validity and reliability of results.

3.12 Limitations of the Study

In a bid to come up with viable documentation of research findings, the following difficulties were faced:

- **Inadequate research knowledge:** the internees were new in the organization therefore they lacked a lot of information about the management of records at the Ministry of public service, however the researcher went ahead to ask the records officers who were well knowledgeable about management of records at the ministry hence solving that challenge.

- **Unwillingness to respond:** the respondents objected to some of the questions during interviews which to a smaller extent limited the quality of findings. This however was partly solved by use of other methods such as observation method.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the study about records management at the Ministry of Public Service: challenges and prospects. Interview guides and observation guides were used to gather data from the respondents at the ministry. The presentations of findings were guided by the objectives of the study reproduced below:

i. Types of records kept at the ministry

ii. Records management at the ministry

iii. Services offered by the ministry

iv. Challenges faced in record management

v. Strategies to overcome the challenges faced.

The table below shows a summary of the samples of the respondents who were chosen to participate in the research.

4.2 Positions held by the respondents

Table 2: Description of the respondents at the Ministry of Public Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principle records officer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Records officers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant records officers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data (2018)
Basing on the research findings, the researcher observed that the ministry has one principle records officer who oversees that the other records officers carry out their duties of information management. The researcher interviewed nine (9) respondents who were randomly sampled were asked in the questionnaires what positions they held in the ministry. 1 principle records officer, 2 record officers, 3 assistant records officers and three(3) internees.

4.2.1 Gender Distribution

Table 3: Respondents by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data (2018)

According to table 3 above four (4) respondents were male while five (5) respondents were female staff of ministry of public service. This meant that the majority respondents who took part in the study were females. However, all respondents provided relevant information for the study.

4.3 Types of records kept by the Ministry of Public Service

Objective one was to identify the types of records kept by the ministry of public service. Through questionnaire and interview the researcher was able to collect the necessary data concerning types of records at the registry.

Basing on the findings, the researcher observed different types of records at the ministry and these included policy records, personnel records, minutes, report and financial records.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of records kept in the ministry</th>
<th>Percentage according to response from respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Print</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-print</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data (2018)

The table shows that 95% of the ministry’s records are in print form and only 5% are in non-print form. Finding from the assistant records officers at the registry ministry of public service shows that the ministry keeps a wide variety of records and these include both print and non-print records. From the findings, different types of paper records were found in the registry of MOPS as explained below:

a. Policy records

According to the Principle records officer,” these are documents that describe policies of various organizations.” She explained that these records describe the policies of other ministries. For example policy records for Ministry of Health, policy records for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

b. Personnel records

According to records officer, “these are documents of the civil servants within the ministry.” He explained the registry keeps personnel records and these records are kept in open registry which is the internal registry within the ministry where the civil servants get access to their personal files. Personnel records also include the files of former public servants who qualify to be paid terminal benefits such as retirement benefits for teachers, doctors, police officers, army among others.

c. Minutes records

“Minutes records are notes written giving an account of what happened in a given meeting”, according to the assistant records officer. She further explained that the minutes include those of ministry of public service and other ministries.
d. Report records

“Report records are writing that give an account of happening in a given organization.” The principle records officer stated. She explained that they include reports forms the ministry of public service itself, reports from the Ministry of Health.

e. Financial Records

These records include vouchers, receipts, invoices, contracts created during different transactions. The principle records officer stated.

f. Legal records,

According to records officer,” these are records with evidence of legally enforceable right or obligations of state for example records related to property right citizenship and employee”, Records relating to employment, such as basic state personnel records, payroll records. Records relating to property rights such as land, contracts, agreements, leases, license.

g. Fiscal records,

Records that have been relating to agency financial transactions they may be budget payrolls, vouchers and accounting records. The records officer stated.

Non-print records

The non-print records are those in electronic from and the Ministry of Public Service keeps such records too for example email received online, recordings such as CD-ROM, the principle records officer noted. She noted that despite the registry keeping non print records too, the print records are the ones that are mainly kept in the registry.

4.4 Management of Records at the Ministry of Public Service

The second objective of the study was to find out how the records at the ministry are managed and through questionnaires and interviews the researcher obtained findings on how the records are managed.
Table 5: How records are managed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How records are managed</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manually</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronically</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2018

Table 5 shows that 80% of the records are managed manually such records include personnel records, report records, minutes records policy records among others and 20% of the records are electronically managed such records include; online applications, online emails, recordings. That was observed by the researcher.

In accordance with the field data obtained, records management at the ministry of MOPS rotates within the records lifecycle. The respondents were asked to rank the method mainly used to manage the information materials and manual management was ranked highly as indicated at 80%.

Basing on the findings, below are ways how records are managed at the MOPS:

- **File Classification**

  According to the principle records officer,” file classification is the process of devising and applying schemes based on the business activities which generate records, whereby they are categorized in systematic and consistent ways to facilitate their capture, retrieval, maintenance and disposal according to the scheme being used in the Ministry of Public Service.

  She further explained that file classification is of different types and of them is subject classification; here records are selected according to their subject titles for example local government records, confidential records among others.

- **Creation of files**

  The assistant records officer explained that in the creation of files, personal files are created for the new officers by allocating confidential personal (CP) numbers and recording them in
the master register. The CP numbers are allocated in ascending order. After recording the CP numbers in the master register, files are opened for the letters by recording the details on the file and filling letters.

- **Security Grading**

*The principle records officer* explained that this activity involves dividing records into different groups that require amounts of security from the largest group which requires no extra security to one which requires secrecy and must be treated carefully. There are four types of security grading which involve color coding that is filing records in different file colors as per security required. These are:

1. Open records filed in yellow files,
2. Confidential records filed in green files,
3. Secret records filed in red files
4. Pension records filed in pink files.

- **Indexing**

According to information from the *assistant records officers*, in the process of indexing, the new appointed staffs in civil services are signed reference numbers using the master register and later entered the data in the computer database using the refined software. A manual index is also kept in cases where the computer cannot be used for retrieval. This involves cases where there is no electricity. The index helps users to achieve the file number since it’s arranged alphabetically. Index desk is the desk where document are indexed using the database on the computer.

Basing on the finding the researcher also observed that there was a manual index card called kalamazoo which serves as backup when there is no electricity, it performs the same work as the other index card since it contains the same information.
Figure 1 kalamazoo it is a manual index card

Source: Field Data (2018)

- Shelving of the files

The assistant records officers explained that the files that have been created have to be shelved and so shelving of these files is done in ascending order of the CP numbers. In doing the activity shelf reading is involved and this on observation is done by the assistant records officers. Files were also booked out and brought back after action from action officers and shelved back. Basing on the researcher observation;
Below it is a figure representing the shelves in the registry; files are tied together according to number series. (In chronological order) it helps in easy retrieval of files from the shelves

Figure2: Mobile Shelves

Source: Field Data (2018)

• **Weekly file census**

_The assistant records officer_ explained that this is the physical counting of files in the offices of action officers. In file census, the records officers noted that the files in different departments are counted and recorded. These are usually subject and personnel files in those offices. The purpose was to enable the registry know where the files are the file census form is used for recording the files.

• **Weeding of the files**

According to findings from _the principle records officer_, this activity is done twice in a year in the registry of MOPS. It involves removal of files which are no longer referred to often. At the end of their retention period, at the records center, the files are disposed off or taken to national archives center. Files weeded were those of employees who had absconded duty died or retired. The purpose is to create space for other files to be shelved.
• Sorting of Personnel Documents

This entails separation of the documents according to their similarity so that files could be created for those without and those with would be filed respectively. From the field data acquired from the registry staff through interview, the personnel documents were organized in terms of letters of probation, acceptance and appointments. Stated by the principle records officer

• File Repair

Basing on the information obtained from the assistant records officer, the activity involves dressing damaged files where new files are created to replace the old tattered ones hence maintaining the information that was written on the old file. File repair according to the registry staff is done to keep the records in good condition thus avoid information loss.

Figure: 3 File repair

Source: Field Data (2018)

• Appraisal

According to information got from the internees, the retention and disposal schedule used by the Ministry, it is the process of evaluating the value of the records to determine which records needs to be captured and for what duration to meet business needs, the requirements
of accountability of organ of state and citizen’s expectations. The record retention and Disposal schedule guides in identifying which record is to be kept permanently or disposed. Retention is the length of the time an organization keeps a record to satisfy identified business needs and uses.

- **Listing**

During listing, the records that are listed on records center transfer forms to keep records of the document in order to account for when the need arises. Explained by the internees in the registry.

- **Boxing**

According to records officer, records are boxed in acid free boxes that are provided by the government to the Ministries. These boxes keep the records from getting damaged.

**Figure 4: Records placed in archival boxes.**

Source: Field Data (2018)

- **Bundling and Labeling**

According to the records officer, in cases where the boxes were inadequate, the records are bundled, tried and labeled.
4.5 Services Offered by the Ministry of Public Service

The third objective was to establish the services offered by the ministry of public service to the users. Respondents were asked on what services they offer to their users and through interview, questionnaire and observation as methods of data collection, the following were the services offered by the Ministry of Public Service.

4.5.1 Receiving and Recording of incoming mail services

According to findings from one of the assistant records officers,

Mail is correspondences that the ministry receives or sends out in the process of carrying out the actives and duties.

The assistant records officer explained that mail is received in hard copies. The mails are from line ministries, local government agencies and private individuals. In receiving the mails, the envelops are checked to ensure that it is directed to the Permanent Secretary, sorted and checked if the mail is in good condition. The envelope is then opened on finding that it is addressed to the permanent secretary and signed. The subject and purpose of the mail is then read and the mail put in the receiving tray that is the mail circulation box and finally recorded in the incoming mail register. The mail recorded are then taken to the PS so that primary classification is carried out and then brought back for secondary classification done by the principal records officer.

4.5.2 Dispatch of letters/mail services

Findings from the assistant records officers indicated that for the dispatch services the letters are read through to ensure they are proper letters for dispatch. The details of the mail being dispatched are recorded in the dispatch register and on picking the letter, the person signs in the delivery book to acknowledge receipt of the letters. Features that are looked for before dispatching the mail include the date the letter was written, reference number, subject of the letter, attachments, number of copies and signature.

A copy of the letter is kept in the file, another put in the roster file which is circulated at the end of every month. Letters for the local government are taken three times a week whereas those for the ministry are taken on daily basis.
The researcher observed that dispatch desk is where the dispatch of mail and recording of the disputed mail is done. Here, letters for dispatch are sorted and recorded in the delivery book.

4.5.3 Indexing Service

_The principal records officer_ through interview explained that the registry of public service provide an index.

An index is a set of articles or a database containing information, usually arranged in alphabetical order. An index of the letters kept in registry is provided. This is to help in the retrieval of the records on request.

The principle records officer further explained that the index helps in the retrieval of the information materials in circumstance where there is no electricity to access the database.

4.5.4 Dusting services

Dusting is carried out very frequently in order to maintain a clean working environment and to ensure that the materials in the collection remain clean and preserved for a long period without dust pollution. The principle records officer stated. She further explained that this is done by the assistant records officers whose work is to manage the information.

4.6 How the Ministry maintains Information Material Security in the Central Security Registry

The ministry is privileged to have the department of the registry which over sees record management activities in the Public Service as a whole and also maintains information materials security in numerous ways that is; as noted by the principle records officer.

i. The principle records officer explained that there is top secrecy and safety of records in the central registry of Public Service since the file can only be identified by the authorized staff only.

ii. She also noted that the Ministry has got professional Records managers and this is evident in the field data obtained that identified the qualification of records officers. For example the staff holding masters and bachelor’s in information science. This
means that they are well versed with maintaining the security of information materials.

iii. The principle records officer stated that, the registry utilizes files, folders, shelves and cabinets to keep their information materials and thus protecting the information materials from threats such as water. This was observed by the researcher who saw numerous folders arranged in shelves.

iv. The researcher noted on observation that the registry of MOPS is equipped with security measures of protecting the records and ensuring authorized access to the records. For example the registry has got a counter, fire extinguisher, burglar proof for the windows and doors.

4.7 Challenges faced during the management of records at the Ministry of Public Service.

Table 6: Challenges faced during Records Management at MOPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges faced at MOPS</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biological Agents</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse and mishandling</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperature and Relative Humidity</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirt, dust as pollutants</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire and water</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virus</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data, 2018
Table 6 shows how different challenges affect information materials. The findings of the respondents showed that abuse and mishandling challenges are the most deadly as ratings were at 44%, Biological Agents were the next at 25%, temperature and Relative Humidity at 10%, dirt, dust as pollutants at 13%, fire and water, light and virus challenges were the least attack to information materials rating at 5%, 2%, 1% respectively. The challenges to information materials at the Ministry are explained below;

4.7.1 Biological Agents

According to the information obtained from the respondent’s majority include rodents such as rats as indicated in the table at 25%. The rats damage the material by biting part of information materials such as pension files and therefore leaving information material incomplete this many happens in the pension registry at the ministry, stated by the principle records officer.

She further stated that rodents are attracted to warm, dark environments, thy also chew electrical insulation, which can result in short circuits and fires.

Insects are also attracted to the nutrients found in paper-based products, particularly adhesives and starches. Insects are also attracted in damp, dark and dirty locations. Also chew up the information materials hence losing out the information. Noted by principle records officer

4.7.2 Abuse and Mishandling

Abuse and mishandling is an area of concern that cannot be out looked at the ministry especially in the registry given that it is the major challenge to information materials as shown in the table at 44%. Explained the principal records officer, she further explained that employees lead both intentional and accidental abuse which lead to damaging of information materials. She noted below the damaging activities which include;

i. Rough handling of paper
ii. Excessive pressure on bindings or folders
iii. Writing on documents
iv. Spilling food or drink on records or archives
v. Tearing or folding papers
vi. Handling information materials with dirty hands
vii. Poor cleaning or housekeeping
viii. Theft of materials
ix. Poor retrieval and filing practices, causing information to be torn, folded or damaged
x. Wetting fingers before turning pages.

The principle records office stated that the above are some of the damaging activities caused by the employees at the ministry, such activities lead to loss of valuable information therefore actions are to be taken to control such activities’ hence smooth run of different activities performed in the registry.

4.7.3 Temperature and Relative Humidity

According to the principle records officer, she explained that the higher the temperature, the more quickly archival materials will deteriorate this is because higher temperatures speed up the chemical processes that cause deterioration. She further stated that if the relative Humidity is too high, materials can absorb the moisture and so swell and warp, high relative humidity also promote mould growth which is highly dangerous to records and archives. If the Relative Humidity is too low, therefore the air is dry materials will become brittle and may crack or split.

Finding show that the registry of public service is prone to temperatures and Relative Humidity threats such as moisture that causes fading of documents kept in the registry as indicated at 10% in the table. However, this is controlled through measures like controlling the temperature in the registry.

4.7.4 Light

According to the records officer, he explained that light is also another challenge at the ministry especially in the pension registry with 2% as indicated in the above table. He further explained that light speeds up the oxidation of paper, causing materials to deteriorate faster; he stated that oxidation is the combination of oxygen with another element to promote deterioration such as rusting of metal or disintegration of paper.
Therefore light is also a bleaching action, causing coloured papers and inks to whiten or fade especially the archives at the ministry. Light generates heat hence speeding up the process of degradation of materials.

4.7.5 Dirt, dust as pollutants

As information materials age, they generate dust particles that damage not only the items themselves but also any materials in the vicinity. The records officer stated. He further stated that pollutants also come from paper products materials themselves, especially those made with poor quality materials, such as newspapers hence leading to loss of information.

4.7.6 Fire and water

According to the record officer, fire is a serious threat to archives materials, if lost in fire records are lost forever. Paper based materials in particular absorb water very quickly, when damaged by water, inks can run or dissolve, mould can grow and strains can appear.

Paper may stick together and glue will soften and run, water damage can come not only from putting out fire but also from leaks, floods or heavy rains.

4.7.7 Virus

With the electronic records, this is the most affecting threats as it is at 1% in the table. Electronic records are destroyed by the viruses that attack the computer systems thus resulting into loss of data. Records officer stated.

However, there are other challenges faced when managing information materials in the registry of ministry of public service.

According to the finding from the assistant records officer below were the challenges as he Explained:

i. The central pension registry has limited space for storage of pension records since the ministry stores all records of government employees that are on pension pay roll. Therefore the space is small compared to the records for storage.

ii. The shelved files are dusty which makes shelf reading and retrieval activities difficult and worse still the dust is a health hazard to the employees.
iii. Some of the shelves in the pension registry are narrow which bring about poor shelving of files therefore records end up being torn as a result of difficult in retrieval activities in case a file is needed for action.
iv. Limited archival boxes in which the closed files are stored since there are expensive.
v. Shelves in the pension registry are wooden yet the recommended shelves should be metallic shelves and so exposing the records to threats such as insects.

4.8 Strategies to overcome the challenges faced in Record Management at the MOPS

4.8.1 Biological Agents

According to the principle records officer, she stated that fumigation practice should be carried out in the registry at least twice a week as it is a way to remove insects or moulds from the documents. She further noted that;

Fumigation is the process of exposing documents and records to a toxic chemical in a gaseous form to kill the insects and mould. She also noted that also the following should be done to control biological Agents such as insects, rodents, mould etc. at the registry;

i. There should be no live plants or flowers in the archival institution or registry, as plants can carry in insects, which can nest in the registry and lead to infestations.
ii. The registry should be cleaned and dusted on a regular basis particularly behind shelves and in dark areas
iii. Screens should be placed over windows and doors, if possible to reduce points of entry for rodents like rats.
iv. Temperatures and relative humidity should be controlled as close to ideal levels as possible and air circulation should be good this helps in controlling mould in the registry.
4.8.2 Abuse and Mishandling

According to the principle records officer, she noted that it is important to consider the following:

- Security copies of valuable materials should be made particularly if originals are being used or placed on display. If possible, original materials should not be put on display at all but use copies or duplicates.
- Close supervision on research area should be done
- There should be issued guidelines for the appropriate use of materials

4.8.3 Temperature and Relative Humidity

There are number of ways that should be taken to control temperature and relative humidity at the registry as explained below; noted by the principle records officer

i. Ensure good ventilation throughout the registry, so that air particularly hot air does not build up under the roof and raise temperatures and humidity.
ii. Records should not be stored in basements or areas of high relative humidity
iii. Records should not be packed too tightly into boxes, on shelves or in cabinets
iv. When using air conditioners, monitoring the temperature and relative humidity should be regularly checked for fluctuations.
v. Fragile materials such as photographs or magnetic tapes should be stored in one area where the temperature and relative humidity can be controlled

4.8.4 Light

According to records officer, he noted that light can be controlled through the following ways;

- Materials in the archives storage area should be stored in boxes or containers whenever possible, to keep out light
- In the registry records should be returned to filing cabinets, shelves or boxes when not in use.
- Information materials should not be left exposed on tables or counters, particularly near windows or areas of strong light
4.8.5 Dirt, dust as pollutants

There are alternative strategies for controlling pollution, as explained below;

It is difficult to control pollution, particularly if the organization is in an urban area, therefore the organization will install filter systems to filter out polluting air particles and it is quite expensive and requires high maintenance. **Noted by records officer**

Poor quality paper products, such as newspapers, should be stored separately from archives, so that the pollutants generated when the newspapers deteriorate are not transferred to valuable materials.

Information materials should be stored in boxes, containers or file cabinets to keep out dust and dirt and photocopiers should be placed in well ventilated areas away from record storage.

Dusting and cleaning regularly and thoroughly should be done to keep dust particles at a minimum, smoking, and eating or cooking near information materials should be prohibited.

4.8.6 Fire and Water

**According to the records officer,** he stated that archival and information materials should not be stored on the floor, in corners or in such a way that fire could jump from one box to another quickly therefore the following measures should be taken;

i. Remove all materials from the floor and store them at least 15 to 25 centimeters (6 to 8 inches) off the floor.

ii. Install fire and water alarms throughout the registry and make sure they are always operational.

iii. People should not be allowed to smoke or use matches or other lighters near records storage areas.

iv. Survey the building: look for leaks, soft spots in walls or the roof, weak pipes, or any other sign of potential or actual water damage.

v. Cover storage areas with a waterproof covering such as a plastic sheet or tarpaulin and if storing materials under a plastic sheet or tarpaulin, check them regularly for temperature, relative humidity and ventilation, as the sheet or tarpaulin may increase temperature and relative humidity and promote mould growth or insect infestation
4.8.7 Virus

According to record officer, he stated that;

Installation of security software like antivirus, spy ware, firewall, in order to avoid viruses, worms and the Trojan horses that disable information systems help in controlling virus which are a threat to electronic records. Information backup, different forms of information can be recovered through the use of maintenance of appropriate backup copies on the different backup equipment such as CDs, DVD, Flash disks, and online storage.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the summary of the study findings, recommendations of the study and conclusions. The findings have been based on the study objectives and research questions. The title of the study was “records management at the ministry of public service: challenges and prospects.” The researcher provided guidelines from findings of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The summary is guided by the objectives of the study which include the following:

i. Types of records kept at the ministry

ii. Records management at the ministry

iii. Services offered by the ministry

iv. Challenges faced in record management

v. Strategies to overcome the challenges faced.

5.2.1 The types of records generated and received by the ministry

Based on the findings of the study, the respondents indicated that print and non-print records are kept by the ministry mostly the non-print records such as personnel records, policy records.

   a. Policy records

These are documents that describe policies of various organizations.” She explained that these records describe the policies of other ministries. For example policy records for Ministry of Health, policy records for the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development.
b. Personnel records

These are documents of the civil servants within the ministry.” He explained the registry keeps personnel records and these records are kept in open registry which is the internal registry within the ministry where the civil servants get access to their personal files. Personnel records also include the files of former public servants who qualify to be paid terminal benefits such as retirement benefits for teachers, doctors, police officers, army among others.

c. Minutes records

“Minutes records are notes written giving an account of what happened in a given meeting”, according to the assistant records officer. She further explained that the minutes include those of ministry of public service and other ministries.

d. Report records

Report records are writing that give an account of happening in a given organization include reports forms the ministry of public service itself, reports from the Ministry of Health.

e. Financial Records

These records include vouchers, receipts, invoices, contracts created during different transactions.

f. Legal records,

According to records officer,” these are records with evidence of legally enforceable right or obligations of state for example records related to property right citizenship and employee”, Records relating to employment, such as basic state personnel records, payroll records. Records relating to property rights such as land, contracts, agreements, leases, license.

g. Fiscal records,

Records that have been relating to agency financial transactions they may be budget payrolls, vouchers and accounting records. The records officer stated.
5.2.2 Records Management practices at the ministry

Findings indicated many ways of information management practices, the respondents noted that records are majorly managed manually through many ways like file classification, creation of files, shelving of files, and retrieval of files and, many others

• File Classification

File classification is the process of devising and applying schemes based on the business activities which generate records, whereby they are categorized in systematic and consistent ways to facilitate their capture, retrieval, maintenance and disposal according to the scheme being used in the ministry of public service

• Creation of files

In the creation of files, personal files are created for the new officers by allocating confidential personal (CP) numbers and recording them in the master register. The CP numbers are allocated in ascending order. After recording the CP numbers in the master register, files are opened for the letters by recording the details on the file and filling letters.

• Security Grading

The principle records officer explained that this activity involves dividing records into different groups that require amounts of security from the largest group which requires no extra security to one which requires secrecy and must be treated carefully. There are four types of security grading which involve color coding that is filing records in different file colors as per security required. These are; Open records filed in yellow files, confidential records filed in green files, secret records filed in red files pension records filed in pink files.

• Indexing

In the process of indexing, the new appointed staffs in civil services are signed reference numbers using the master register and later entered the data in the computer database using the refined software. A manual index is also kept in cases where the computer cannot be used for retrieval. This involves cases where there is no electricity. The index helps users to achieve the file number since it’s arranged alphabetically. Index desk is the desk where document are indexed using the database on the computer.
• Shelving of the files

The files that have been created have to be shelved and so shelving of these files is done in ascending order of the CP numbers. In doing the activity shelf reading is involved and this on observation is done by the assistant records officers. Files were also booked out and brought back after action from action officers and shelved back.

• Weekly file census

This is the physical counting of files in the offices of action officers. In file census, the records officers noted that the files in different departments are counted and recorded. These are usually subject and personnel files in those offices. The purpose was to enable the registry know where the files are the file census form is used for recording the files.

• Weeding of the files

This activity is done twice in a year in the registry of MOPS. It involves removal of files which are no longer referred to often. At the end of their retention period, at the records center, the files are disposed off or taken to national archives center. Files weeded were those of employees who had absconded duty died or retired. The purpose is to create space for other files to be shelved.

• Sorting of Personnel Documents

This entails separation of the documents according to their similarity so that files could be created for those without and those with would be filed respectively. From the field data acquired from the registry staff through interview, the personnel documents were organized in terms of letters of probation, acceptance and appointments. Stated by the principle records officer

• File Repair

The activity involves dressing damaged files where new files are created to replace the old tattered ones hence maintaining the information that was written on the old file. File repair according to the registry staff is done to keep the records in good condition thus avoid information loss.
• Appraisal

It is the process of evaluating the value of the records to determine which records needs to be captured and for what duration to meet business needs, the requirements of accountability of organ of state and citizen’s expectations. The record retention and Disposal schedule guides in identifying which record is to be kept permanently or disposed. Retention is the length of the time an organization keeps a record to satisfy identified business needs and uses. Disposal is range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions.

5.2.3 Services offered by the Ministry of Public Service

The findings indicate that there are different services offered by the ministry of public service as below;

• Receiving and Recording of incoming mail services

Mail is received in hard copies. The mails are from line ministries, local government agencies and private individuals. In receiving the mails, the envelops are checked to ensure that it is directed to the Permanent Secretary, sorted and checked if the mail is in good condition

• Dispatch of letters/mail services

The details of the mail being dispatched are recorded in the dispatch register and on picking the letter, the person signs in the delivery book to acknowledge receipt of the letters. Features that are looked for before dispatching the mail include the date the letter was written, reference number, subject of the letter, attachments, number of copies and signature, letters for dispatch are sorted and recorded in the delivery book.

• Indexing Service

An index is a set of articles or a database containing information, usually arranged in alphabetical order. An index of the letters kept in registry is provided. This is to help in the retrieval of the records on request.
• Dusting services

Dusting is carried out very frequently in order to maintain a clean working environment and to ensure that the materials in the collection remain clean and preserved for a long period without dust pollution. The principle records officer stated.

5.2.4 Challenges faced in record management at the Ministry of Public Service

According to the findings from the study, the respondents noted various challenges faced while managing information materials at the ministry these include;

• Biological Agents

These include rodents such as rats and insects, rats damage the material by biting part of information materials and therefore leaving information material incomplete this many happens in the pension registry at the ministry, stated by the principle records officer.

• Abuse and Mishandling

Abuse and mishandling is an area of concern that cannot be out looked at the ministry especially in the registry, below are some of the damaging activities; Rough handling of paper, Excessive pressure on bindings or folders, Writing on document.

• Temperature and Relative Humidity

Finding show that the registry of public service is prone to temperatures and Relative Humidity threats such as moisture that causes fading of documents kept in the registry as indicated at 10% in the table. However, this is controlled through measures like controlling the temperature in the registry.

• Light

Light is a bleaching action, causing coloured papers and inks to whiten or fade especially the archives at the ministry. Light generates heat hence speeding up the process of degradation of materials.
• Dirt, dust as pollutants

As information materials age, they generate dust particles that damage not only the items themselves but also any materials in the vicinity. The records officer stated. He further stated that pollutants also come from paper products materials themselves, especially those made with poor quality materials, such as newspapers hence leading to loss of information.

5.2.5 Strategies to overcome challenges in Record Management at MOPS

According to the findings from the study, the respondents proposed different strategies to overcome the challenges faced at the Ministry of Public Service For example installation of antiviruses on computer systems, regular cleaning in record centers, fumigation practices etc.

• Fumigation practice

Fumigation is the process of exposing documents and records to a toxic chemical in a gaseous form to kill the insects and mould.

i. Ensure good ventilation throughout the registry, so that air particularly hot air does not build up under the roof and raise temperatures and humidity.

ii. Records should not be stored in basements or areas of high relative humidity

iii. Records should not be packed too tightly into boxes, on shelves or in cabinets

iv. When using air conditioners, monitoring the temperature and relative humidity should be regularly checked for fluctuations.

v. Fragile materials such as photographs or magnetic tapes should be stored in one area where the temperature and relative humidity can be controlled

5.3 Conclusions

In conclusion, good records management is essential for any corporate body to function effectively. Effective management of cooperate information allows fast, accurate and reliable access to records, ensuring the timely destruction of redundant information and identification and protection of vital and historical important records. Records need to be arranged,
organized and managed throughout their life cycle to help server their purpose in the institution.

- The ministry maintained mainly paper records

The researcher found out that paper records are mainly managed at the Ministry of Public Service with the percentage of 95% however all the paper records were scanned hence being digitalized.

- The ministry lacked a first aid box and a photocopier in the registry

The researcher also found out that the ministry lacked a first aid box and a photocopier in the registry, in case of any accidents like cuts caused by fasteners during file repair activity there is no first treatment given to the injured person.

- File census

The researcher found out that the organization does not often carry out file census, it does it once in the month, and therefore there are hardships in identifying the missing file from the registry.

- Luck of detection systems in the pension registry

The findings show that the ministry lacked detection systems like alarms that can create awareness to the staff incase unauthorized person tries to access and retrieve the files.

5.4 Recommendations

The ministry should practice the following activities

5.4.1 Installation of detection systems

Installation of detection systems like alarms that can create awareness to the staff incase unauthorized person tries to access and retrieve the files. Information backup, different forms of information can be recovered through the use of maintenance of appropriate backup copies on the different backup equipment such as CDs, DVD, Flash disks, and online storage.
5.4.2 Lockable cabinets

The ministry should use these cabinets especially in pension registry where wooden cabinets are used, these helps in keeping files that are categorized as secret or top secret files. Here the keys are safely kept and its access is limited.

5.4.3 File Census

The researcher recommends the organization to carryout file census at least once in the week this enables the registry to trace all the files which are out for action, it also helps the registry to easily identify the missing files from the organization there the staff members can easily take action on that matter.

5.4.4 First Aid Box

The researcher also recommends the ministry at least to put a first aid box to cater for the internees and staff members who get accidents like cuts caused by fasteners when carrying out registry work.

5.4.5 Purchase of a Photocopier

The researcher recommends the ministry to place a photocopier machine into the central security registry; this will increase the efficiency work for the staff performance.

5.5 Areas for further Research

In this study, there are some areas that were not studied. This study therefore proposes there be further research on:

1. Preservation of pension records at the ministry of public service.
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The ministerial policy statement for Ministry of Public Service 2016/2017

Dear respondent,

My name is Namukisa Joan a student at the east African school of library and information science, Makerere University. I am an undergraduate student pursuing bachelors of records and archives management. As part of the requirements, I am required to conduct a study entitled “Records Management at the ministry of public service; challenges and prospects”. You have been selected to participate in this study. The study is purely for academic purposes only. The information you are about to give will be treated with at most confidentiality and will be used purely for this study only. This is therefore to request you kindly to respond the questions here as honestly and accurately as possible.

Demographic information

1. Sex: male------ female-------

2. Age-----------------------------------------------

3. What is your title in the Ministry of Public Service? ----------------------------------------

   -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

4. What is your highest qualification? ----------------------------------------------------------

   -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

5. For how long have you worked in the ministry? ------------------------------------------------

   -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

B. Evolution of the current state of the registry in the ministry of public service

1. Background of the organization/registry? ------------------------------------------------------

   -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

2. What are the types of records acquired and stored in the registry? -----------------------------

   -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
3. How are the records acquired?

4. How many staff members in the registry?

5. Do you have a record retention policy?
   A. Yes
   B. No

6. What kinds of records are kept in the registry?

7. Does the organization use offsite storage areas?

8. What are the policies for maintenance of the records in the organization?

9. What security measures do you have in the registry?

10. What steps are taken when files are not being located?

11. What are the basic retrieval problems being faced?

12. Who is authorized to have access to records?

13. What are the requirements for someone to access records?

14. What are the types of records management system used at the Ministry of Public Service?
15. How are records stored?---------------------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

16. What type of filling system do you use?-------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

17. Do you have a records management disaster plan?--------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

18. If yes what does this plan contain?-------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

19. How often do you weed the files?-------------------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

20. What challenges do you face while using the current records management system? ----
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

21. Give opinions on how the records management system can be improved?-------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------

22. What future strategies do you have in the registry?------------------
-----------------------------------------------------------------------
Appendix 2: Interview Schedule

This is a guide to the interview

1. How records do comes in the registry?
2. How are the records classified?
3. What types of records are generated?
4. How are the records organized and kept?
5. What filling systems are in place?
6. How are records stored?
7. What disposition programs and polices do you have?
8. What problems are faced by the organization as far as records management is concerned?
9. What measures would you suggest to improve on records management system at the Ministry of Public Service?
Appendix 3: Observation Checklist

This instrument is for a study entitled management of records at the Ministry of Public Service; challenges and prospects, below are some of the issues that the researcher would like to be observed to supplement the information provided by the other data collection instruments.

1. State the quality of the storage equipment being used
   - State of computers
   - Number of computers
   - State of the cabinets
   - Number of cabinets and other storage equipment.

2. Staffing
   - Number of registry staff
   - Staffing lists

3. Design of the building/registry and specific placement within the environment in terms of security, air circulations and temperatures, cleanliness, lighting among others.

4. How effective are the skills of the staffs?

5. How speedy the retrieval process is?

6. How often are records accessed?

7. Filling system

8. Observe the dress code of staff if it suits the kind of work environment?

9. Observe general layout of desks, tables, chairs, cabinets, shelves in the registry
Appendix 4: Introductory Letter

July 9, 2018

The Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Public Service
P. O. Box 7003
Kampala - Uganda

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER – NAMUKISA JOAN REG. NO. 15/U/10450/EVE

This is to introduce to you the above named student of East African School of Library and Information Science under the College of Computing & Information Sciences, Makerere University. She is offering a Bachelor’s Degree in Records and Archives Management (BRAM) Year III.

As part of the study program, she is carrying out a research study entitled, “Records Management at the Ministry of Public Service: Challenges and Prospects”.

The purpose of this communication is to request you to offer her the necessary assistance required.

Please note that all the information obtained shall be used for academic purposes only.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Luyombya
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT
RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT