Effect of Record Management Policies in the Universities on Service Delivery

Rosemary MIRITI[1], Dr. Mbenge. T. Ndiku[2], Dr. Jotham M. Wasike[3]

Egerton University P.O Box 536-20115

[2, 3]Kisii University

Abstract: *This paper examines the level of record management policies within the public and private universities in Kenya. The study focused on two universities; Kabarak and Egerton universities in Nakuru County. The study also evaluated the effect of record management policies of service delivery within the Universities. A sample of 250 respondents was obtained from both the students and the employees of these institutions. Analysis was conducted using the descriptive analysis. From the results, the study found out that record management policies affected service delivery in the Universities since they provided the guidelines on how record management functions should be carried out*

Keywords: record, management, policies, service delivery

1. Background Information

Records management is the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information about a transaction in the form of records (Kemoni and Wamukoya, 2000). A study carried out by (Flynn, 2001), revealed that the primary concern of universities records management departments is the efficient, effective, and economical management of records and information. Proper records management practices ensures that information is available when and where it is needed, in an organized, in an efficient manner, and in an appropriate environment. While the importance of records management practice might not be obvious to everyone, its impact on the ability of an organization to function effectively is indisputable. It is only through the operation of a well-run records management program that an organization retains control of its corporate memory, which allows an organization, either public or private, to conduct business. Records management is more than retention, storage, and disposition of records. It entails all recordkeeping requirements and policies that allow an organization to establish and maintain control over information flow and administrative operations

The National Archives and Records Service of Australia (2013) revealed that records management as the management of information resources in a manner that makes information easily accessible, securely protected and stored, and correctly disposed off when necessary. Thus records management controls and oversees the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records. Records management is the process by which internally or externally generated physical or electronic records are managed from their inception, receipt and storage, all the way through to their disposal. A study by the National Archives of Australia (2013), states that records management can help answer important questions such as: Where are the organization's records? How long are they kept? When are they eligible for destruction? On what media are they recorded? Is the recording medium of sufficient stability to maintain the

viability of the records for the duration of their retention period? What records are vital to the continued operation of the organization? Are these vital records sufficiently protected? What recovery procedures are in place to help the organization assemble its records and resume administrative operations in case of a disaster? How do you manage electronic records? Is e-mail a record? Are any of the records in an organization historically significant? In this day of rapidly advancing technology and abundant information, records management is one of the key tools in assisting higher learning institutions to answer these questions and to function effectively in the information age (Beastall, 1998). Records management seeks to manage and control records throughout their life cycle, from their creation and distribution, through their filing and use, and ultimately to their final disposition or permanent retention. According to Xolile (2012) most record management practices in learning institutions are fairly effective. It was also revealed that majority 96% of the respondents indicated that the universities tracked records amongst users and 90% indicated that the universities disposed non-current records. A study by Karanja (2009) found out that inadequate records staff, lack of adequate records equipment and materials and limited library storage space are some of the library management problems that affect service delivery in universities.

According to Wamundila (2008) a policy is a set of guiding principles or rules intended to influence decisions and actions that reflect on agreed practice. However the institutions strategic plan articulates a planning process where the commitments, goals, and strategies set forth in the plan to indicate the direction that institutions will take in order to maintain and enhance excellence in all its endeavors. A strategic plan for proper records management needs to be developed to enhance the fulfillment its mission. According to Hassan (2009) information is an indispensable tool in office work, in management decision making and in work productivity. Therefore, effective organization and management of both private and public sector records in Universities depends heavily on the availability of current, complete, accurate and reliable information processed and

supplied on time to facilitate planning, decision making and to enhance productivity.

All Universities in Kenya have record management policies whose primary purpose is to provide guidance and assistance to persons within the institution as well as other stakeholders for proper and efficient use of information and records. Most universities create and use, records on a daily basis, this includes public records and information that need to be well managed. To that end, record management policies helps a learning institution to establishes standards for controlling, retaining, and destroying or preserving records, this provides an enabling environment necessary for compliance with state laws, regulations, and policies, facilitates records inventory and appraisal, including archival appraisal, supports records retention and disposition as well as sound records storage. Record management policies also guides on records preservation principles, records system design, including creation and maintenance, records filing, indexing, and retrieval equipment, electronic recordkeeping requirements and guidelines and vital records protection planning and disaster planning and recovery. These services are directed toward the ultimate goal of achieving effective and efficient handling of records and information. Mwaura (2007) found out that most learning institutions have got record management policies. Muge (2006) noted that most record management staffs are not aware of current record management standards and this affects service delivery. Ireri (2004) argued that most learning institutions have got records inventory but lacks standard operating procedures.

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2. Record Management Policies and Practices within the Universities

According to Wamundila, (2008) a policy is a set of guiding principles or rules intended to influence decisions and actions that reflect on agreed practice. However the institutions strategic plan articulates a planning process where the commitments, goals, and strategies set forth in the plan to indicate the direction that institutions will take in order to maintain and enhance excellence in all its endeavours. A strategic plan for proper records management needs to be developed to enhance the fulfilment its mission. However, Wamundila (2008) study explained knowledge management policies and thus cannot be relied upon to determine the effect of record management policies on service delivery in universities. Hassan (2009) explained that information is an indispensable tool in office work, in management decision making and in work productivity. Therefore, effective organization and management of both private and public sector records in Universities depends heavily on the availability of current, complete, accurate and reliable information processed and supplied on time to facilitate planning, decision making and to enhance productivity.

Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000) argued that records management is the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information about a transaction in the form of records. A study carried out by Flynn (2001), revealed that the primary concern of universities records management departments is the efficient, effective, and economical management of records and information. The study failed to show any relationship between record management policies and service delivery in universities.Other studies show that the relationship in record management policies and service delivery in universities have not been adequately explored. The National Archives and Records Service of Australia (2013) revealed that records management as the management of information resources in a manner that makes information easily accessible, securely protected and stored, and correctly disposed off when necessary. Popoola (2003), argued that records management practices seeks to efficiently and systematically control the records lifecycle that is, (creation, use, maintenance, archive or disposal) of records that are routinely generated as a result of activities and transactions. Chachage and Ngulube (2005) agreed that Proper records management involves establishing systematic controls at every stage of the record's lifecycle in accordance with established principles and accepted models of records management.

A study by the National Archives of Australia (2013) states that records management can help answer important questions such as: Where are the organization's records? How long are they kept, when are they eligible for destruction? On what media are they recorded, Is the recording medium of sufficient stability to maintain the viability of the records for the duration of their retention period, what records are vital to the continued operation of the organization, and if the vital records are sufficiently protected. However, the study did not show how record management policies affect service delivery in Universities. This demonstrates that a missing gap in literature exists on the effect of record management policies on service delivery in Universities in Kenya.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section outlines the methodology that was used to attain the objectives of the study. The chapter presents the study area, the research design, the population of the study, sample and sampling procedures, instrumentation, validity, reliability of the instrument, data collection and analysis procedures that were used. Kothari (2004), states that it is essential for the researcher to clearly state the research method as it results to a good research. The use of research methodology guides the researcher on what methods to use and why they were applied in that particular study.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted at two Universities in Nakuru County. Egerton, a public funded University is situated at

Njoro, 25 kilometres from Nakuru town on the Nakuru – Njoro – Mau - Narok road and Kabarak, a private University situated 20 kilometres from Nakuru town on the Nakuru – Eldama – Ravine road. The study selected the two Universities since they are rich in information, are the oldest Universities within the County and are easily accessible to the researcher.

3.3 Research Design

A research design is a structure that seeks to answer the research question (Flynn, 2001). According to Kothari (2004) research design is the arrangement for collection and analysis of data. It is a blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data and provides a conceptual structure within which any research is conducted. It true that a good research design ensures that the evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer original questions as unmistakably as possible (Creswell, 2010).

In this study, the researcher adopted quantitative and qualitative design, this is a method of study where the use of quantitative and qualitative techniques is predetermined and planned at the beginning of the study (Creswell, 2007). Triangulation allowed one to identify aspects of a phenomenon more accurately by approaching it from different points using different methods and techniques. This design adopted only one data collection phase during which quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis was conducted separately but concurrently. The findings were integrated during interpretation phase where equal priorities were given to the two types of research. Quantitative data was collected using structured questionnaires while qualitative data was collected using an interview schedule. This type of research design is used to document the occurrence of particular aspects and offers an opportunity to establish relations and variations between subgroups in the population of study.

3.4 Population of the Study

Population is the entire group of individuals, events, or subjects having common observable characteristics. According to (Ngulube 2005), population is a group of elements sharing the same sentiment. It is a large pool from which sampling elements are drawn and to which the researcher generalises the findings. The population for this study consisted of 1620 employees of the two universities (Egerton and Kabarak university human resource statistics, 2014). The population of Egerton workers who were involved in the study was 1215 while Kabarak workers who were involved were 405. The study specifically targeted records service providers who were records management staff, records beneficiaries, in the faculties who comprised of heads of departments, directors of the faculties, deans and students in different departments since they were in a position to make decisions on when and how information was passed from one department to another. According to Egerton and Kabarak universities staff profile (2014), 300 staff were directly involved in handling of records and thus formed the target population for this study. The number of respondents who were involved in the study was 180 from Egerton and 120 from Kabarak Universities respectively.

The study also targeted 25,000 students who were the records users from both universities. The target population was picked depending on the number of employees at different universities as shown in the table 3.1

Table 1: Target Population for Staff

Faculty	Egerton	Kabarak
Science	45	30
Education	45	30
Engineering	30	25
Arts	40	25
Commerce	20	10
Total	180	120

Source: Egerton and Kabarak Universities Staff Profile, 2015

The selection of the sample from different University is due to different in proportion.

Table 2: Target Population for Students

Faculty	Egerton	Kabarak
Science	5000	1250
Education	5000	1250
Engineering	3334	1042
Arts	4444	1042
Commerce	2221	414
Total	**20000**	**5000**

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample was drawn from a total population of 300 employees which consisted of 180 and 120 employees from Egerton and Kabarak Universities respectively. The study then employed stratified random sampling technique to select 30% of the population as the study respondents. According to Kathuri and Pals (1993), and Kothari (2004), 30% of the population is an adequate sample size for the study, and assisted in gathering data that represented the study population. This led to a sample size of 60 and 40 employees from Egerton and Kabarak Universities respectively. According to (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000), a sample of 150 students (50 from kabarak and 100 from Egerton) would effectively evaluate the efficiency of record management. According to (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000), the best sample size would be arrived at when the dependent variable (efficiency) is adjusted to act also as the control. The researcher also used purposive sampling technique to select 10 senior administrators. This group of respondents were records beneficiaries from the two universities 1 from the five departments under study. This is according to Creswell (2007), who argues that when cases are studied a small number is used such as 4 to 10. The sample size relates to question and the type of qualitative approach used such as case study approach. The other respondents in the study were proportionately selected from the two sampling frames using simple random sampling technique. This technique was most appropriate for this study because a random sample representative did not have any biasness. It also ensured that each member of the population had an equal chance of being included in the sample.

Table 3: Sample Size for Employees

Faculty	Egerton	Kabarak
Science	15	10
Education	15	10
Engineering	10	8
Arts	13	8
Commerce	7	4
Total	**60**	**40**

Source: Researcher

Table 4: Sample Size for Students

Faculty	Egerton	Kabarak
Science	25	13
Education	25	12
Engineering	16	10
Arts	22	10
Commerce	10	5
Total	**100**	**50**

Source: Researcher

Table 5: Combined Sample Size for the Study

Faculty	Egerton	Kabarak	Total
Science	40	23	63
Education	40	22	62
Engineering	28	18	46
Arts	35	18	53
Commerce	17	9	26
Total	**160**	**90**	**250**

4. Results and Discussions

Record Management Policies at Egerton University
The study aimed to investigate if the record management policies on service delivery are adhered to at Egerton and Kabarak University. The findings were as shown in figure 6 and 7.
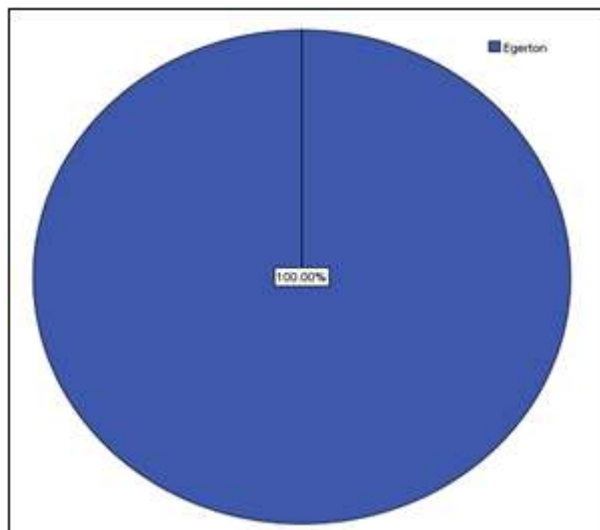

Figure 1: Records Management Policy at Egerton University

From the findings of the study in figure 6, it depicted that 100% of the respondents agreed that Egerton University had a policy in place. This concurred with qualitative data depicted by interviewing the top management staff of the institution.

Records Management Policy at Kabarak University

Figure 2: Records Management Policy at Kabarak University.

From the findings of the study in figure 6, it depicted that 100% of the respondents agreed that Kabarak University had a policy in place. This also concurred with qualitative data depicted by interviewing the top management staff of the institution.

Awareness of Records Management Standards
The study sought to find out if the respondents were aware of Records Management Standards. The summary of the findings is shown in table 10.

Table 6: Awareness of Records Management Standards

Awareness of Records Management Standards	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	195	78
No	55	22
Total	250	100

Source: Field data (2015)

Table 10 shows that majority of the respondents 195 (78%) were aware of records management standards and the minority 55(22%) indicated that they were not aware of records management standards. This shows that most of the respondents were conversant with records management standards. Qualitative data on the other hand agreed on the existence of records management standards.

Tools Availability
The study wanted to find out if the institutions under study had the required records management tools in support of records management practices. Table 11 shows the summary of the findings.

Table 7: Tools Availability

Tools Availability	Yes	No
Records Inventory	96%	4%
Standard Operating Procedures	90%	10%
Classification Scheme	92%	8%
Records Preservation programme/policy	88%	12%
Records retention/disposal schedule	94%	6%

Source: Field data (2015)

The findings of the study in table 11 shows that 96% of the

respondents indicated that the universities had records inventory while 4% did not have; 90% of the respondents agreed that there were standard operating procedures where as 10% of the respondents did not; 92% of the respondents indicated that there was a classification scheme while 8% disagreed; 88% of the respondents pointed out that records preservation programme/policy was available while 12% disagreed; 94% of the respondents also pointed out that there was a records retention/disposal schedule whereas 6% disagreed. The findings showed that although there were availability of records management tools in the institutions under study they lacked standard operating procedures.

Effectiveness of tools in record management
The study sought to find out if the available tools were effective in support of records management tools to enhance service delivery. The findings are shown in table 12.

Table 8: Tools Effectiveness

Tools Effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very effective	75	30
Fairly effective	140	56
Ineffective	35	14
Total	**250**	**100**

Source: Field data (2015)

Summary of the findings in table 12 showed that 140 (56%) of the respondents agreed that the records management tools were fairly effective, 75(30%) of the respondents indicated that records management tools were very effective and 35(14%) showed that the tools were ineffective. This meant that most record management practices in learning institutions are fairly effective.

Tracking and Disposal of Records
The study sought to find out if there was proper tracking and disposal of records. Results of the findings are shown in table 13.

Table 9: Tracking and Disposal of Records

Response Rate	Yes	No
Tracking Record movement among users	96%	4%
Disposal of non-current records	90%	10%

Source: Field data (2015)

Table 13 showed that (96%) of the respondents indicated that the records were tracked among users while 4% were not aware of the tracking process, 90% of the respondents indicated that they disposed non-current records. As a result of this tracking and disposal of records enhanced records management practices on service delivery.

Records Disposal Methods
The study sought to find out the availability of records disposal methods. Results of the findings are shown in table 14.

Table 10: Records Disposal Methods

Record Disposal Methods	Yes	No
Transfer to a store	96%	4%
Transfer to an established municipality records centre	90%	10%
Transfer to the national archives	92%	8%
Destruction	88%	12%

Source: Field data (2015)

Table 14 shows that 96% of the respondents agreed that transferring records to a store was a disposal method whereas 4% were not aware, 90% of the respondents indicated that another record disposal method was by transferring to an established municipality records center while 10% disagreed , 92% of the respondents also indicated that transferring to national archives was another method of records disposal while 8% disagreed, In addition, 88% of the respondents agreed that destruction was a method of record disposal whereas 12% disagreed. This means that most of the respondents were aware of the available records disposal methods in place in support of records management practices for service delivery.

Adequacy of Records Tools
The study wanted to find out the adequacy or records tools. Summary of the findings are shown in table 15.

Table 11: Adequacy of Records Tools

Record tools adequacy and appropriateness	Quite satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Staffing	20%	30%	50%
Equipment	10%	30%	60%
Quality Paper	12%	40%	48%
Storage space	20%	40%	40%
Filling system	14%	40%	46%

Source: Field data (2015)

As shown in table 15, 20%, 30%, 50% of the respondents indicated that the universities records staffing adequacy was quite satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory respectively; The findings also indicated that 10%, 30% ,16% of the Equipment in place were quite satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory respectively; 12%,40%,48% of the respondents indicated that the quality of paper for records were quite satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory respectively; In addition,20%,40%,40% of the respondents indicated that storage space for the records were quite satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory respectively; Furthermore 14%,40%,46% of the respondents indicated that the universities records filing system adequacy was quite satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory respectively. This implies that the adequacy of records tools were unsatisfactory hence affecting service delivery.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The study found out that record management policies affected service delivery in the Universities since they provided the guidelines on how record management functions should be carried out. All the respondents indicated that the two Universities had record management policies which acted as guidelines in the execution of record management practices. The findings were in agreement with Mwaura (2007) that most learning institutions have got record management policies. The study noted that majority of the respondents (86%) were aware of the records management standards. Muge (2006) noted that most record management staffs are not aware of current record management standards and this affects service delivery.

The study also noted that majority of the respondents (96%) were of the opinion that the Universities had records

inventory, 96% said there were standard operating procedures, 92% indicated availability of a classification scheme, 88% indicated availability of records preservation programme/policy and 94% of the respondents indicated presence of records retention/disposal schedule. Ireri (2004) argued that most learning institutions have got records inventory but lacks standard operating procedures. Findings from the study showed that majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that the records management tools were fairly effective, 30% said the tools were ineffective and 20% said the tools were very effective. According to Xolile (2012) most record management practices in learning institutions are fairly effective. It was also revealed that majority of the respondents (96%) indicated that the universities tracked records amongst users and 90% indicated that the universities disposed non-current records.

The study further noted that majority of the respondents indicated that the Universities disposed records by transferring to a store, by transferring to an established municipality records center, by transferring to national archives and by destruction. This implies that the Universities had record disposal policies. Findings from the study further revealed that majority of the respondents (50%) indicated that the universities records staffing adequacy was unsatisfactory, 60% of the respondents indicated that the universities records equipment's adequacy were unsatisfactory, 48% of the respondents indicated that the universities quality papers adequacy was unsatisfactory, 40% of the respondents indicated that the universities records storage space adequacy was unsatisfactory and 46% of the respondents indicated that the universities records filing system adequacy was unsatisfactory. Karanja (2009) found out that inadequate records staff, lack of adequate records equipment materials and limited records storage space are some of the records management problems that affect service delivery in universities.

5.1 Conclusion

The study also noted that both universities had record management policies which affected service delivery. It was also noted that both universities experienced record management challenges such as inadequate financing, inadequate library equipment's and materials, unfavourable economic policies, unfavorable climate, inadequate manpower and other infrastructure, lack of preservation and conservation policy and lack of quality filing materials. Findings also revealed that the major record management practices benefits that helped to improve on service delivery in the universities included; establishing standards for controlling, retaining, and destroying or preserving records; providing an enabling environment necessary for compliance with state laws, regulations, and policies; facilitating records inventory and appraisal; acting as guides on records preservation principles; leading to effective and efficient handling of records and information; space savings in the libraries; reducing the expenditures for filing equipment; enhancing efficient retrieval of information; reduction of misfiles and lost records; establishing of retention requirements and reducing the organization vulnerability to loss of records.

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