

CHAPTER 1

Background to the study

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the general introduction to the study. It provides an explanation of what constitute records and archival principles and practices. A brief background on the development of the education system in Zambia and subsequently the development of registries at the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education headquarters is also provided

1.1 Background

It is common knowledge that failing to plan is planning to fail. Planning is an important component of effective management in any given organisation. Read and Ginn (2007) define management as the process of using an organisation's resources to achieve specific goals through the management functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. The duo added that information is one of valuable and important business resource to be used to achieve organizational goals. According to Evans (1992) information is data that has been processed into a form that is meaningful to the recipient and is perceived of value in current and prospective decisions. In other words it must be up to date, in the right format, at the right time and in the right place.

According to Barata, Cain and Routledge , (2001:11) “a record is defined as a document regardless of form or medium created, received, maintained and used by an organisation (public or private) or an individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business, of which it forms a part or provides evidence.” In other words a record can be said to be information, regardless of media or characteristics, created or received by an organisation that is kept as evidence of its operations and has value requiring its retention for a specific period of time. Records not only provide information on which to base decisions but tell a story of what goes on in an organisation thus providing evidence for accountability purposes. Organisations need to develop records management frameworks and systems designed to ensure that records are managed appropriately. This commences with the creation and subsequent capture of records in recordkeeping systems, through to their maintenance and use, and ultimately their destruction

(Australian National Audit Office, 2012). Failure to do so will render it difficult to utilize records efficiently. Records management involves the systematic control of an organisation's records from their creation or receipt, through their processing, distribution, organisation, storage and retrieval to their ultimate disposition (Read and Ginn, 2007). A good records management program will result in the control over the creation and growth of records. Despite decades of using non-paper storage media, paper records continue to escalate. An effective records management program limits the generation of records or copies not required to operate the business and ensure there is a system for destroying useless records or retiring inactive records thus stabilizing the growth of records in all formats. Recordkeeping requires money for filing equipment, space in offices, and staffing to maintain an organized filing system or to search for lost records when there is no organized and effective system. Implementing a records management program provides an opportunity to affect some cost savings in space and equipment, and to utilize staff more productively. Efficiency implies being able to achieve intended objectives on time with little effort. Time spent searching for missing or a misfiled record is non-productive and costly. A well designed records recordkeeping system will enhance information retrieval with corresponding improvements in office efficiency and productivity. A properly designed and operated filing system with an effective index can facilitate retrieval and delivery of information to users as quickly as they need it.

Assimilating new Records Management Technologies and taking advantage of their numerous benefits is another obvious advantage of a good records management program. An investment in new computer systems does not solve filing problems unless current manual recordkeeping systems are analyzed before automation is applied. International, regional, national and industrial laws and regulations have a bearing on a records management program. Failure to comply with these laws and regulations could result in severe fines, penalties or other legal consequences for an institution and individuals. Noncompliance problems for businesses and government agencies could be as a result of the difficult in locating, interpreting and applying these laws. The only way an organization and institutions can be reasonably sure that it is in full compliance with laws and regulations is by operating a good records management program which takes responsibility for regulatory compliance. A consistently applied records management program can reduce the liabilities associated with document disposal by creating records and disposal schedules which

provide for their systematic and routine disposal of records in the normal course of business. This will reduce the risks associated with litigation and potential penalties in business organisations as well as government agencies. Identification and protection of vital records that are key to the continual existence of an organisation is important. In view of this every organization, public or private, needs a comprehensive program for protecting its vital records and information from catastrophe or disaster considering every organization is vulnerable to loss. Integral to the records management program is the vital records programs designed to preserve and safeguard the integrity and confidentiality of the most important records and vital information assets. A records management program can help ensure that managers and executives have the information they need on time. In today's dynamic world it is the manager that has the relevant data first that often wins, either by making the decision ahead of the competition, or by making a better and more informed decision. By implementing an organisation-wide file organization, including classification, indexing and retrieval capabilities, managers can obtain and assemble pertinent information quickly for current decisions and future business planning purposes. Corporate memory, an irreplaceable asset that is often overlooked, is contained in the organization's records. Every business day, generates records which could become background data for future management decisions and planning. These records document the activities of the organisation and contain information of continuing value which future scholars may use to research. However, offices with files stacked on top of file cabinets and in boxes everywhere, create a poor working environment and portray a very bad image of the organisation. In this regard therefore, the perceptions of customers and the public, and "image" and "morale" of the staff, though hard to quantify in cost-benefit terms, may be among the reasons to establish a good records management program. (United States Environmental Protection Agency, 2013).

1.1.1 Elements of the a records management program

Records provide the 'official' evidence of the activity or transaction they document. They show proof that an activity took place and how it was carried out. Records do not only document activities but also decisions that were made by different officials in the education sector. Therefore to be reliable they must have authority, ie by whom was the record generated or issued, under what authority and can this authority be proved? Records can be used as evidence

in cases of litigation and to be acceptable for submission they must be official. The obvious indicators of the official nature of records are signatures, letterheads, seals and office stamps. However, where these are not apparent indicators, continuous safekeeping of records also protects their reliability. A record can be reliable in the sense that it is accurate and complete thereby be a reliable source of information of the past and present state of an institution (Barata, Cain and Routledge, 2001:12).

Kennedy and Schauder (1994) highlighted nine elements of a comprehensive records management program. These include:

- Records Management policy
- Registry Procedures Manual
- Records management feasibility study and Records survey
- Vital records protection programme
- Management of the creation and generation of different types of records
- Filing system for active records/ methods of organising records
- Records retention and disposal planning
- Records preservation and storage
- Management of semi-active and inactive records (Records centers)
- Training programmes and ongoing review
- Electronic records

IRMT (1999:97) described a records survey as an activity that involves gathering comprehensive information about records held by an office or an organisation. Records surveys are an exercise that provides a snapshot about records management practices in the Ministries of Education and is the starting point towards gaining control over existing records and developing a systematic records management program.

A filing system for active records comprises of the physical location, classification and indexing methods used, filing sequence, filing procedures, supplies and equipment, file tracking and the technologies used in the system's implementation. On the other hand, management of semi-active and inactive records involves selecting storage facilities, developing procedures for transferring records and deciding on destruction procedures (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994).

A records retention and disposal schedule is a listing of all an organisation's records along with the stated time categories of how long records must be kept or disposed off (Read and Ginn, 2007). It is a document that provides instructions for the disposition of circulars, reports, memorandum and all other types of records of the department at MESVTEE. The process of preparing it involves records appraisal where values are determined for every record. Upon determining the value of records, records management professionals would have information to come up with instructions for the disposition or retention of a record (Chaterera, 2013). Marutha (2011) emphasized that public sector bodies such the Ministry of Education should decide what records to keep and for how long to avoid destruction of records of enduring value and to save registry personnel unnecessary time searching records from a large volume of dead ephemeral records.

Management of the creation and generation of different types of records is very important as the efficiency with which records are stored and retrieved is dependent on the controls that are implemented at the time of creation. Failure to control the creation of records may delay decision making, the more information managers need to sift through and assimilate the more cumbersome and slow the decision-making process becomes (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994).

According to Massey University (2013) vital records refer to those records without which an organisation could not continue to operate as they contain information needed to re-establish the organisation in the event of a disaster which destroys all other records in the organisation. Unlike important and useful records vital records are usually irreplaceable and require the highest degree of protection (Read and Ginn, 2007). Kennedy and Schauder (1994) further added that vital records protect the assets and interests of the Ministry of Education as well as those of its clients and shareholders. The three major elements of a vital records protection programme are the identification of vital records for an organisation; assessment and identification of risks and methods of protection.

Records management personnel must have clear procedures and guidelines, planning and strategy statements and disposition authorities. The formulating a records procedures manuals and policy that obliges all employees to create and maintain records that meet the legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational and archival needs of the organisation cannot be overemphasized.

Records procedures manuals and policy will clearly spell out who should do what and when (Chaterera, 2013).

Like any other profession, records and information management requires skilled and well trained staff. Failure to recognize this factor will render all the efforts to institute a good records management program futile. Today's business environment is dynamic and ultimately its policies and procedures. In view of this records management programmes must constantly be reviewed to accommodate the changes.

1.1.2 Symptoms of a poor records management program

Good records and information management principles are universal therefore, any deviation will create problems. The commonly identified problem and typical symptoms include among others lack of an overall plan for managing records in the MESVTEE, for retaining or destroying records, no standards for evaluating registry staff at provincial and district level in the Ministry of Education, hoarding of records, overloaded and poorly labeled drawers and folders, failure to protect records, misfiles resulting in lost records or slow retrieval of teachers files, reports and other records; no equipment standards, no use of fire-resistant equipment, improper type of storage containers for records such as carton boxes, lack of or improper use of automated systems, crowded working conditions, poor layout of storage area and resistance to the use of magnetic media (Read and Ginn, 2007).

Some records may have less value that may warrant immediately disposition while some depending on their value may warrant preservation for a certain period of time while others may warrant permanent preservation. In the absence of a policy that guides their appraisal, retention and disposition, school administrators to some extent determine those to be preserved or disposed running the risk of making wrong decisions. Experience has revealed that even in institutions of higher learning, records management a number of records that are supposed to be retained are disposed of and those that are supposed to be disposed of are unnecessarily retained thereby creating cumbersome and congested environment especially if they are not organized. The result of this state of affair is confusion and delay in accessing some important records (Gama, 2010:23-24).

The Ministry of Education cannot be held accountable for their decisions and actions, and the rights and obligations of citizens and corporate bodies cannot be upheld without accurate and reliable records and with no effective systems to manage them. Without reliable records no government can administer justice and manage the state's resources, its revenue or its civil service. In fact it cannot deliver services such as education and health care. Records provide the essential evidence that a particular action or transaction took place and in a particular manner or that a particular decision was made. Records support all business functions and reveal the operations of an organisation critical to the assessment of policies and programmes, and to the analysis of individual and organisational performance (Bennett and Mannix, 2002). Once records are not properly managed, fostering accountability, transparency and good governance may not be possible in government ministries (Chaterera, 2013).

The Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early education is one of the twenty two ministries in the government of Zambia. The core responsibility of the Ministry is to provide guidance in the provision of education for all Zambians. To achieve this, the ministry formulates educational policies

1.1.3 The Ministry of Education in Zambia

Zambia attained her political independence from Britain on 24th October 1964. During the 75 years of colonial administration, the provision of education in the country was mainly in the hands of missionaries. Had it not been for the missionaries, primary and secondary education could have delayed much longer coming to Zambia. The missionaries laid the foundation of the education system on which Zambia continued to build. At independence there were two education systems running parallel on racial lines one was for the European education and the other for the African education. The European schools catering for the whites, Asians and coloured were well funded, provided with good learning facilities, and sufficiently staffed with qualified teachers. African schools, on the other hand were neglected, poorly funded, staffed with ill qualified teachers, under staffed and with poor learning facilities. Consequently Africans education lagged behind in development. After independence the African government integrated the two systems of education for effective delivery to Africans.

In 75 years of colonial administration, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) had about hundred (100) African university graduates, a bare one thousand and five hundred (1500) Zambians with school certificate and only six thousand 6000 junior secondary education resulting in a critical shortage of manpower for its development. In response, the Zambia government quickly prepared strategies for intervention to correct the wrongs by the previous government. This was intended to expand the educational facilities in primary and secondary schools.

Hamusangu (2012) stated that “an education policy sets the vision and strategy for educational development, mobilizing support and cooperation for implementing the vision and strategy from a wide range of constituencies” Several education policies have been developed in Zambia overtime with aim of providing a vision and strategies in the education provision. Most significant being the Education Policy Reforms of 1977, Focus on Learning of 1992 and the Educating Our Future of 1996. Kasonde (2003) stresses that “the first major educational policy pronouncements were contained in the Educational Reform Document (GRZ 1977).”

MOE (1996) noted that the educational reforms stressed and expressed education as an instrument of personal and national development. Focus on Learning emphasized the mobilization of resources for the development of school education. While educating our future addresses the entire field of formal institution education with special emphasis to democratization, decentralization and productivity on one hand and curriculum relevance and diversification, efficient and cost-effective management, capacity building, cost sharing and revitalized partnership on the other.

In view of the National Educational Policy of 1996 the Ministry of Education decentralized and dissolved power, authority and the relevant functions from national and provincial headquarters to the districts, colleges and schools. Within the decentralized system, the Ministry of Education headquarters retained responsibility for key national functions like: Making legislation, policy formation, planning, resource mobilization and allocation, developing a national curriculum, setting standards and evaluation, collecting and analyzing data and providing effective mechanisms for accountability at different levels. The organizational structure of the Ministry of Education was changed so that the restructured ministry would be more responsive to the

changing needs and requirements of society and improve its operational efficiency and effectiveness.

The Ministry of Education headquarters has six departments. The first being Planning and Information Unity responsible for the formulation, analysis and review of educational policies within the frame work of national development policies. It is supposed to plan, provide and coordinate the delivery of education at all levels. It facilitates the building rehabilitation and maintenance of educational infrastructure. Standard and Curriculum Unity is responsible for developing a relevant diversified curriculum for pre-school, high school, teacher education and distance learning. It develops, provides and approves educational materials. The standard and curriculum unity also assesses and evaluates teaching and learning and controls the quality of education in all levels of education delivery. Facilitating and providing none segregative education and training is the responsibility of Teacher Education and Specialized services Department. It also promotes community participation in the provision of education. The Human Resources and Administration develops and manages human resources. The Unity promotes and strengthens communication between the MOE and the community. The Distance Learning Department facilities and provides education to the disadvantaged and vulnerable in the community. It is responsible for promoting literacy, distance learning and reading culture in the nation and ensures access to education for all Zambians is increased. The Accounts and Audit Unity mobilizes financial, material and resources through appropriate institutions and decentralized system.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Hoyle and Sebina (2007) observed that at the Ministry of Education, where the files of the Teachers Services Commission are kept access to files for specific teachers was not easy. The general picture is that registries are struggling to maintain registry systems. Staff at the ministries and departments did not always provide copies of correspondence to registries for filing, which resulted in records being lost and the registry staff being blamed for missing documents. Marutha (2011) observed that the implementation of a records management programme can be hampered by lack of well-trained records management personnel and added

that people needed to be capacitated through training and education with the skills, knowledge and ability to establish the necessary records keeping framework.

According to MOE (1996) the National Policy on Education in Zambia is conceived on the basis of the democratic principles such as efficiency, equity, accountability, transparency and cost effectiveness. Records are a source of corporate and collective memory and as such support accountability and transparency mechanisms. In this regard, fostering accountability, transparency and good governance in government ministries, departments and institutions may not be possible without properly managed records. Bennett and Mannix (2002:1) observed that organisations where records are poorly managed, business operations are crippled and the rights of citizens, employees and the wider community may be compromised. Chaterera (2013) emphatically stated that “delays and failure to access services due to missing or misplaced records from public institutions is a common challenge in Africa.” Therefore, the purpose of the research was to investigate the records management practices and knowledge levels of records management staff in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education headquarters in order to identify problems and challenges that may hinder the realization of the objectives of the National education policy which are efficiency, equity, accountability and cost effectiveness in the provision of education in Zambia. It is hoped that the findings of this study will help the MESVTEE deliver effective public services.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate the knowledge levels of records staff in the MESVTEE and assess the extent to which the MESVTEE create, manage and dispose of records in accordance with key records management principles and practices.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To assess the knowledge levels of registry staff at MESVTEE headquarters.
2. To assess the implementation of the elements of the records management programme at the MESVTEE

3. To establish the challenges affecting the execution of an effective records management program at MESVTEE

1.5 Research questions

1. What are the knowledge levels of registry staff?
2. What elements of the records management program, infrastructure are available and used at the MESVTEE
3. What challenges affect the execution of an effective records management program at MESVTEE

1.6 Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of this study will help in creating awareness of the need to establish an efficient records management program that will support efficiency, equity, accountability and cost effectiveness in the provision of education in Zambia. Secondly it is expected the outcomes of this investigation will be used by policy makers and registry staff to facilitate and formulate policies that promote efficient records management practices and principles.

1.7 Limitations of the study

This study may have the following limitations: firstly the study is not going to include all government ministries in Zambia. It will focus on the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education headquarters registries, excluding provincial and district registries. Secondly the study will be confined to Lusaka. This can make generalization to other ministries and the entire country inaccurate as the other parts of Zambia may be affected by different factors.

1.8 Operational definitions of terms Used

The following terms used in this study have these meanings:

Active records: in the study refer to records that were frequently used or referred to by Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education for administrative and operational purposes.

Archives: Refers to records that have archival value and the physical place where archival materials and records are stored.

Classification: It is the process of identifying categories of business activities and the records they generate and grouping them into files to facilitate description, control, links and determination disposal and access (GRZ, 2006)

Confidential files: refers to files of employees in the MESTVEE whose access and use is restricted to only certain officers.

Inactive records: in the study refer to MESTVEE records that were no longer referred to and were supposed to be permanently destroyed or transferred to the National Archives of Zambia.

Records center: refers to secondary storage facilities in the MESTVEE where semi-active records that are not referred to regularly are stored.

Record: refers to any document created or received by the MESTVEE in the course of executing their duties and retained for evidential, fiscal and administrative purposes.

Records management: “That area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of an organisation throughout their entire life cycle and in making the information they contain available in support of the business of that organisation.” (IRMT, 1999:14)

Registry: refers to a place where active records are stored in the Ministry of Education.

Registry clerk: refers to a clerical worker at the MESTVEE whose primary function is to perform routine registry duties such as sorting, classification and filing records.

Public Service: “Means the Civil Service, Teaching Service and the Police and Prisons Service duly established under the Laws of the Republic of Zambia or an Act of Parliament” (Republic of Zambia, 2006: VI)

Semi-active records: in the study refer to records that are no longer active but were referred to from time to time.

Vital records: in the study refers to records without which the MESTVEE would not resume its operations after a disaster that destroys all the records.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

2.0 Overview

This chapter provides a review of literature related to the study.

The literature reviewed relates to records management theories; records management and the public sector; Knowledge levels of the records management staff; the records management programme; and challenges in records management.

2.1 Records Management Theories

There are two schools of thought regarding records management. The first is the life cycle approach, which is an analogy of the life of a biological organism. A record is created, used for so long as it has value, appraised and is then disposed of by destruction or by transfer to a records center or an archival institution for permanent preservation. While the records continuum concept recognises that four actions ie: identification; intellectual control; provision of access; and physical control continue or recur throughout the life of a record (Barata, Cain and Routledge, 2001:13).

2.1.1 Records life cycle Model

The life-cycle concept of the records is an analogy from the life of a biological and living organism which is born, lives and dies. A record is said to be created, distributed, used for as long as it has value and then disposed of by total destruction or transfer to an archival institution (Barata, Cain and Routledge , 2001:13; Spiteri, 2012). The records life cycle concept illustrates the life span of any records in any format, whether it is paper based or electronic, as expressed in the five phases of creation, distribution, use, maintenance and final disposition. It is the core concept in the field of records management (Marutha, 2011; Read and Ginn, 2007). It provides the records manager with a useful starting-point and basis for developing a records management program. It enables the records manager who acknowledges the importance of each separate phase to develop policies and procedures that are supportive of the other phase in a coordinated way. For instance the manner in which a document is titled and formatted will substantially

affect the efficiency with which it can be retrieved in the maintenance phase. Likewise, when a document is created, it must be given a retention period which will inevitably affect various processes in the maintenance and disposal phases for example how and where the document will be stored and how and when it will be destroyed (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994).

A record is said to be created when for instance a letter is produced, an e-mail written, a form completed or a pamphlet printed in any government ministry. To facilitate the usage of the records by designated officers they must be sent or distributed using various means such as courier services, postal or office to office delivery. The records are used in various ways but they are commonly used in decision making, answering inquiries and satisfying legal requirements by government official and stakeholders.

The three key steps in the maintenance of records are storage, retrieval and preservation or protection of records. When a decision has been made to keep the record for use at a later it must be stored, retrieved and protected by records managers and registry clerks. At maintenance stage the record is stored or filed which involves preparing and placing records into their proper storage place and when a request is made for it, it must be quickly retrieved from storage for use. When records are no longer active that is they are no longer needed for active use they may be restored and protected using appropriate equipment and environment and human controls to ensure record security.

The fifth and last phase in the records life cycle is disposition. After the retention period indicated in the records and retention period has elapsed, records are disposed of either by destruction or by transfer to a permanent storage place. Records are transferred to a less expensive storage sites within the organisation or to an external records storage facility called an archives. The records life cycle is an important concept as it shows that many interrelated parts must work together for an effective records and information management program (Marutha, 2011; Read and Ginn, 2007).

The management of records and archives particularly within the context of the public sector is governed by four important principles or theories ie. records must be kept together according to the agency responsible for their creation or accumulation, in the original order established at the time of their creation; records follow a life cycle; records should follow a continuum; records be

organised according to hierarchical levels in order to reflect the nature of their creation. These approaches and concepts are commonly referred to as:

- (i) the principle of respect des fonds
- (ii) the life-cycle concept
- (iii) the continuum concept
- (iv) the principle of levels of arrangement and description (IRMT 1999:14-15).

The effective management of records throughout their life cycle is critical in public institutions. Failure to do so will result into vast quantities of inactive records clogging up expensive office space, making it be impossible to retrieve important administrative, financial and legal records (Nabombe, 2012:13).

2.1.2 Records continuum model

The massive shift in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in the proliferation of electronic records which called for new archival and records management practices. In view of the foregoing, debates arouse challenging the relevancy of the life cycle approach in managing electronic records. This culminated in the formation of the continuum theory (Chaterera, 2013). Mckemmish (1997) defines a continuum as something continuous of which no separate parts are discernible and in which continuous series of elements passing are into each other. He added that the dimensions of the continuum are not time-based. Therefore records are both current and historical from the moment of their creation. In other words they are not time and space bound, they are perpetually connected to events in the past and carried forward through time and space, and re-presented in the contexts of their use. This distinguishes it from the records life cycle model which stipulates five clearly identified stages. Barry (1994) cited in Nabombe (2012) notes that electronic records are dynamic and recursive in nature and may exist in more than one phage of the life cycle simultaneously. Electronic recordkeeping systems require that archival methods are applied throughout the life of the record hence the need to employ the records continuum concept in the management of electronic records. The division of activities into records management and archival phases as stipulated by

the records life cycle model, with the consequent division of responsibility between the records manager and the archivist could be seen as artificial and restrictive in this regard. The role of Recordkeeping in the Continuum model is to facilitate good governance and corporate, social, cultural, and historical accountability by capturing corporate and collective memory thereby providing evidence of both personal and collective identity (Spiteri, 2012).

There are four dimension of the records continuum. Creating is the first dimension. It encompasses the actors who carry out the act such as decision making, communicating, the acts themselves, the documents which record the acts (with or without archival characteristics), and the trace, (or representation) of that transaction embodied in the document. The continuum model endeavors to identify those accountable acts and creates reliable evidence of such acts by capturing records of related and supporting transactions. Capture is the second dimension and it encompasses the personal and corporate recordkeeping systems designed to capture documents to support their function to act as evidence of the social and business activities of the units responsible for the activities. Records created or received in an organization are suppose to be tagged with metadata, including how they link to other records. In this way records can now attest to evidence of action and can be distributed, accessed and understood by others involved in undertaking business activities. The third dimension, organise encompasses the organisation of recordkeeping processes and investing the record with explicit elements needed to ensure that the records are available over time. It is focuses on the manner in which a corporate body or individual develops and defines its recordkeeping regime and in so doing forms the archive as memory of its business or social functions. Pluralise is the fourth dimension and it is concerned with the manner in which the archives are brought into an encompassing framework in order to provide a collective social, historical and cultural memory for institutional, social purposes and roles of individuals and corporate bodies. In other words, it ensures that records can be reviewed, accessed, and analysed beyond the agency that created them for social, legal, and cultural accountability for as long as they are required (Spiteri, 2012; Mckemmish, 1997)

2.2 Records management and the public sector

Institutions can either be private or public in nature. The public service or sector consists of the “central ministries that formulated policies; the departments and agencies at national, regional and district level that implemented policies; the Education, Health and Judicial Services and a range of other specialist services” (Griffin and Akotia, 2008:7). According to Coetzer (2012:1) institutions, private, semi-government or government institutions are all legally bound to create, retain and preserve documents as a record or evidence of their activities and proceedings. Barata, Cain and Routledge (2001:11); International Records Management Trust (1999) define a record as “a document regardless of form or medium created, received, maintained and used by an organisation (public or private) or an individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business, of which it forms a part or provides evidence.” Massey University (2013); IRMT(1999:11) added that public records mean any record, in any form or medium, in whole or in part, created or received by a public office in the course of its business. The information contained in records, is a valuable asset and thus must be managed and protected. It is the responsibility of governments to ensure that the records of day-to-day business activities were authentic, accurate, reliable and complete for evidentiary purposes, while citizens on the other hand needed to be certain that records would be efficiently managed to ensure accountability and transparency of government and to protect their rights and entitlements. (Hoyle and Graffin, 2007:30). Accurate, authentic and complete records provide proof or evidence that a particular action or transaction took place or that a particular decision was made. Records support all business functions and activities. They are critical to the assessment of policies and programmes, and to the analysis of individual and organisational or government performance and progress. Without reliable and complete records, government cannot administer justice or manage the state’s resources, its revenue or its civil service. In the absence of accurate and reliable records and effective systems to manage, governments cannot deliver services such as education and health care. Furthermore, they cannot be held accountable for their decisions and actions, and the rights and obligations of citizens and corporate bodies cannot be upheld (Bennett and Mannix, 2002:1). Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006:2) pointed out that without proper management of government records and archives, Lesotho risked being unable to achieve its developmental vision for accountability, evidence of transactions, and transparency. Wamukoya and Hoyle (2007) added that all ministries, departments, agencies and parastatal organisations in

Tanzania were expected to carry out audits of financial performance and human resource functions and that recordkeeping was a critical component of the audit function. In the same vein, Bennett and Mannix (2002:5) remarked that well-maintained and managed financial records are essential to Nigeria's ability to meet its development aims as they support accountants in preparing financial reports for managing resources and for communicating their use to the public. The duo emphasized that well-maintained financial records, reports and audits also permit independent auditors to give the public assurance that financial reports are credible and underpin good financial management, information and accountability in a democratic state.

2.3 Knowledge levels of the records management staff

Australian National Audit Office (2012) noted that an appropriate trained staff was required to assist with the implementation of a records management framework. Salleh, Yaakub and Dzulkifli (2011) observed that good employee performance is considered as the measure of the quality of human capital held by the organization and it is determined by among other factors skill level and motivation. They stressed that the quality of employees is the major influence on performance and that for state governments, employees' job performance is very important as it will reflect the government performance. New South Wales (2004) argued that specialist records management skills were required to develop the framework of the records management program, implement the records management program and to manage the records of their organisation. Salleh, Yaakub and Dzulkifli (2011) posit that persons possessing high skills in job knowledge ie. Unique skills, intelligence and work methods will succeed in their task or job. Ngoepe (2008) noted that education plays an important role in updating knowledge and skills and that it enhances the resourcefulness of the records managers. In fact training and education are considered as indicator of skills level. Ngoepe (2008) further observed that governmental bodies generally ignore the qualification criteria and appoint records managers at a relatively low level which negatively impact on their ability to manage records effectively. Perhaps this could be attributed to what Hoyle and Sebina (2007) reported, that some officials in Zambia suggested that traditionally records management received low recognition in the public service and was considered to be work that could be done by anyone, regardless of skills and qualifications. Marutha (2009) observed that the implementation of a records management programme in Namibia was hampered by lack of well-trained records management personnel and added that

people needed to be capacitated through training and education with the skills, knowledge and ability to establish the necessary records keeping framework. Hoyle and Sebina (2008) mentioned that generally records managers in government Ministries, Departments and agencies in Botswana had no formal training and consequently possessed inadequate skills levels. They found that this was despite the fact that records and archives training and education was available in Botswana and the programme being considered one of the best in Africa. Ngoepe (2008) remarked that upgrading of skills can be achieved through workshops, vendor-sponsored programmes, professional seminars and college or university-level courses. Also as people interact, they learn new skills and gather information that promotes future performance potential during work experience. Thus the longer the period one has been employed, the more experience and better skill is obtained resulting in increased productivity and job performance. In other words, experience allows the accumulation of skills and knowledge that make an employee more productive and more valuable (Salleh, Yaakub and Dzulkifli, 2011).

2.4 The Record Management Programme

According to Ngoepe (2008:4) a records management programme “seeks to efficiently and systematically control the lifecycle (creation, use, maintenance, archive or disposal) of records that are routinely generated as a result of activities and transactions.” Odeyemi, Issa and Saka (2011:48) stressed that a well-organized records management programme saves a lot of money for the administration of the Public Service by helping to control the quantity and quality of information created and by ensuring the maintenance of the information in a manner that effectively serves the need of the organization. Barata, Cain and Routledge (2001:13); IRMT (1999:14) reiterated that a Records management programme is concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) and in making the information they contain available to support their business activities. Griffin and Akotia (2008) pointed out that to attain effective service delivery, good governance, transparency and accountability, a records management programme must be fostered within public institutions. Griffin and Hoyle (2007) emphasised that an effective and efficient recordkeeping programme is fundamental to good governance. Hoyle and Sebina (2007:10) in their study observed that in Zambia that there was a lack of accurate, comprehensive and consolidated information management programme to

support sound decision making. The duo posits that an improved records management programme ensure that important evidence is preserved in order to facilitate timely decision-making and support transparency in the Public Service and government at large.

Kennedy and Schauder (1994) highlighted eleven elements of a comprehensive records management program. These include Records management feasibility study and Records survey; filing system for active records; records retention and disposal planning; management of semi-active and inactive records; management of the creation and generation of different types of records; vital records protection programme; policy and procedures documentation; training programmes and ongoing review. Similarly Odeyemi, Issa and Saka (2011:48) stated that the structure and organization of a records management programme must be based on the following components: Personnel management; Financial management; Forms management and control; Reports management and control; Correspondence management and control; Records management procedures manual; Files management and control; Records Centre management; Vital Records management and control; Records inventory and appraisal; Records retention and disposition schedule; Directives management and control; Mails management; Micrographic and reprographic management; Archives management and ICT management and Equipment management.

2.4.1 Records Management Policy

A proper records management programme guided by policies, rules and procedures will ensure a conducive records management environment (Marutha, 2011:175). According to the National Archives of Australia (2014) the purpose of the policy is to provide guidance and direction on the creation, generation and management of information and records and to clarify staff responsibilities. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) mentioned that a Records Management Policy provided a framework within which the records and archives of the United Republic of Tanzania were managed in accordance with statutory requirements and international standards. Marutha (2011:177) observes that hospitals in South Africa were running the risk of officials operating on their own devices due to lack of policies that specifically address patient records management. In that regard if government Ministries, departments and agencies are going to make good on their best intentions for achieving excellence in records management best practices, they must bring all records, regardless of format or location, under a single set of policies (Iron Mountain

2012:4). Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) observed that the preparation of the new national Records Management Policy in Tanzania provided an opportunity to reconsider the role and procedures of the registry systems. Coetzer (2012:28) notes that the problem of records management in Ghana could be traced to the absence of a comprehensive records management policy regarding an integrated holistic approach to the management of the whole cycle of records. An organization's records management program should be supported and guided by policies and procedures that address each element of the records management program in accordance with operational and legal requirements (Association for Corporate Counsel n.d).

2.4.2 Registry procedure Manual

All procedures should be set out in a clearly worded and regularly updated procedures manual made available to all records management staff (IRMT 1999:128). In order to standardize procedures and prevent incompatible practices between registry units, a manual explicitly explaining all record procedures and related issues should be prepared (Külcü, 2009). Chaterera (2013) reported that most of the public registries in Zimbabwe operated inconsistently as they were operating without documented guidelines on how to execute their responsibilities in a registry manual. While Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) found a Registry Procedures Manual that described in detail the procedures and forms to be used when dealing with incoming correspondence, filing papers, creating a new file, recording the existence of a new file, controlling file movement, handling files returned to the registry, handling outgoing mail, storing files, handling closed files and maintaining the system in Tanzania. This fostered consistency and standardisation in all registry tasks.

2.4.3 A records survey

According to IRMT (1999:97) a "records survey is the application of the techniques of business systems analysis to the gathering of basic information regarding the quantity, physical form and type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, rate of accumulation, uses and similar data about the records of an organisation." Barata, Cain and Routledge (2001:22) states that before any records management systems can be designed it is important to understand what records exist, in what format and where they are located or else information and records systems are unlikely to meet their intended purposes. A records survey is undertaken to establish the

provenance of records and their original purpose and arrangement; identifying those records ready for disposal; identifying those records that still need to be retained within the organisation; determining the procedures, costs and facilities required to eliminate the backlog of unneeded records and managing those to be kept (IRMT, 1999:97). It is for this reason records surveys have so far been attested to be the primary mechanism for developing sound records management practices (Chaterera, 2013). A records inventory, the whole mark of records surveys is the key tool used to find out everything necessary for the design, justification and establishment of a records control system (Barata, Cain and Routledge, 2001:22). Griffin and Akotia (2008) attributes the storage of noncurrent records in cupboards, corridors and cellars in order to free office space for the latest current records in Ghana to the absence or poorly done records surveys. Chaterera (2013) observes that despite well conducted records survey in Zimbabwe, the information gathered was not utilized efficiently to improve the management of records.

2.4.4 Vital records management programme

Vital records refer to those records that are essential for the ongoing business of the organisation and without which the organisation would not continue to function effectively (Massey University). Unlike important and useful records vital records are usually irreplaceable and require the highest degree of protection (Read and Ginn, 2007). According to Kennedy and Schauder (1994) vital records refer to those records without which an organisation could not continue to operate as they contain information needed to re-establish the organisation in the event of a disaster which destroys all other records in the organisation. The duo further added that vital records protect the assets and interests of the organisation as well as those of its clients and shareholders. The three major element of a vital records protection programme are the identification of vital records for an organisation; assessment and identification of risks and methods of protection. There is need, however to establish systems and procedures for the identification of vital records to be captured for a certain function or activity (Marutha 2011). The study carried out by Australian National Audit Office (2012) revealed that surveyed agencies had no identified vital records in the context of their business continuity planning processes. By implication agencies had no programme to protect vital records and were at risk of collapse if a disaster occurred that destroyed all records. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) found a

registry service manual organised by Government ministry and department portfolio and domestic records in Zambia. This provided guidance on the determination of vital records.

2.4.5 Records creation and generation control plan

Business enterprise and transactions inevitably results in the creation and generation of records. Records management frameworks and systems commences with the creation and subsequent capture of records in recordkeeping systems, through to their maintenance and use, and ultimately their destruction (ANAO, 2012). Properly designed records management systems will limit the generation of records or copies not required to operate the business and ensure there is a system for destroying useless records or retiring inactive records thus stabilizing the growth of records in all formats (United States Environmental protection agency, 2013). The mechanism employed to control the creation and generation of records include Forms management and control; Reports management and control; Correspondence management and control; Records management procedures manual and Files management and control (Odeyemi, Issa and Saka, 2011:48).

2.4.6 Methods of organising records

Records generated and or received Nigerian elementary schools in the course of business activities must be organized to facilitate easy access whenever they are needed (Gama, 2010:29). Iron Mountain (2012:7) added that an organisation's ability to classify and manage its physical and electronic files can help it achieve faster, less costly, more streamlined access to government information. According to IRMT (1999:99) "Classification organises records into categories, based on the functions and activities the records represent, so that decisions about their organisation, storage, transfer and disposal may be made on a category-wide basis, not file by file or item by item." Records are categorised using different criteria such numeric, alpha-numeric, alphabetical or chronological. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006) found files within the Ministry of Public Service or the Treasury Department in Lesotho were organised numerically by the unique employment number and not by employee name in ministries or by ministry name within the Ministry of Public Service. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) reported that records in government registries in Tanzania were broadly classified by function and a retention period was

assigned to each series. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) notes that accessing manual files was problematic in government ministries of Zambia if individual staff numbers were not known because name /indexes were patchy. The duo stated that the use of different file numbering systems for the same employees caused difficulties in retrieving files at the Ministry of Agriculture in Zambia.

2.4.7 Records retention and disposal schedule

A retention and disposal schedule refers to the document that prescribes the length of time that ministry records are to be retained and disposal action when this time has been reached. It is also known as disposal list, disposition schedule, records schedule, retention schedule, or transfer schedule (Massey University: 2013); (IRMT 1999:101). The decision as to which records should be kept permanently and which ones would be retained for a specific short period normally depends on the type of record value, such as administrative, legal, financial and research values. Records with legal and research values have permanent values, whereas finance and administrative values are for short-term preservation of records (Marutha, 2011). The records retention and disposal schedule must indicate retention periods, disposal date and disposal action. Retention period is the length of time, as provided for by legislation, regulation or administrative procedure or based upon the value of information that records should be retained in an office or records centre before they are transferred to an archival institution or otherwise disposed of. Disposal date refers to the date on which disposal actions specified in a disposal schedule should be initiated. Disposal involves sending records from the office of origin to the records centre or the archival repository or destroying them under secure conditions if they are obsolete while Destruction is the disposal of records of no further value by incineration, maceration, pulping, shredding or another secure method (IRMT 1999:101-105). Iron Mountain (2012:4) stated that a well-designed and well-executed records retention schedule can increase efficiency and reduce risks in an organisation. Generally IRMT (1999:40) notes that in the absence of rules and guidelines of what should be kept and for how long, records management staff are reluctant to authorise destruction and over time, the registries became severely congested with older records. Hoyle and wamukoya (2007) pointed out that to prevent the buildup of inactive records in government registries in Tanzania there was need to develop procedures for the routine appraisal and disposal of records. Chaterera (2013) also observed that despite being given guidance by the

National Archives of Zimbabwe most of the public registries in Zimbabwe had no retention and disposal schedules. Marutha (2011) reasons that most serious administrative problems of records management experienced in hospitals in South Africa could be resolved using, amongst others, proper retention and disposal schedules. However, for records retention and disposal schedules to be effective they must be refreshed every 18 months or less (Association for Corporate Counsel, n.d).

2.4.8 Records preservation and storage

The reason for preserving records is to protect them from injurious factors such as excess heat or lighting, fire break outs and humidity and prolong their life span. There are several ways of preserving records among are Digitisation, Micrographic and reprographic management (Odeyemi, Issa and Saka, 2011:48). Unegbu and Adenike (2013) in their study noted that records at the Ministry of Information and Strategy in Nigeria kept their records safe on Compact Disks and flash drives. However, Nabombe (2012) raised concerns that the registries might be unable to sustain the digitised system due to the rate at which equipment and software become obsolete and fail to migrate digitised records to other media formats such as magnetic and optical media as a preservation measure. Hoyle and Sebina (2006) observed in Lesotho that personnel registries at the ministries were well-organised as files were housed in compactus units or filing cabinets and information was relatively secure and files were easily located by responsible staff. Marutha (2011:177) remarked that hospitals' patient records were at high risk of missing or being damaged due to lack of enough filing space and usage of good mobile cabinets, file covers and boxes may be compromised and damaged due to untidy, congested and overloaded files as a result of lack of enough space for filing. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) in their study carried out in Tanzania reported that records boxes were piled in columns on top of filing cabinets and added that these conditions, with limited space and no procedures for removing inactive records, it was impossible to operate an efficient records management system.

2.4.9 Records centers

A records center is also referred to as the secondary storage facility as it houses records at semi-current stage in the records life cycle. Kennedy and Schauder, (1994) defined semi-active records as "a category of records in between active and inactive records." Unlike active records

semi-active, they are not frequently used for operational and administrative purposes but can occasionally be used for reference purposes. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) carried out a study in Tanzania and found that there was no national records centre. They proposed that the construction of a national records centre be considered as an option for the storage of inactive files so that the congestion in the registries could be relieved. A national records centre would provide a long-term solution and needed to be pursued with a sense of urgency so that the problem of congestion would be tackled more systematically and on a coordinated national scale. Hoyle and Sebina (2007); Nabombe (2012) found a national records center located in the old Bank of Zambia building but pointed out that it was full and lacked lighting in the basement, air conditions and fire extinguishers. They added that the records center had water leaking into the storage areas, rusting shelves and questionable security. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) also who found that each Ministry in Zambia had a transit records centre for storing closed files before they were transferred to the National Archives Record Centre. However, they cited lack of space in these centers as the main driver for transferring records to the National Archives Records Centre.

2.4.10 Staff development programme

According to IRMT (1999:80) the quality of any records management programme is directly related to the quality of the records management staff that operate it. They added that Records management work must be viewed as a worthwhile profession for those persons who are well educated, intelligent and industrious, not as the posting of last resort for those who are unqualified, incompetent and idle. Hoyle and Sebina (2008) noted in Botswana that records managers in MDAs often had no formal training resulting in severe difficulties. They added records management units were often viewed as dumping grounds for non-performing or hard to place employees. Similarly ANAO (2012) established that many agency staff in Australia had not undertaken records management training for several years, and training was not tailored to meet staff needs. They observed that this contributed to records management staff not being aware of how to implement key aspects of records management programme. Marutha (2011:48) attributed the failure to implement the records management programme in Namibia to lack of trained records management professionals. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) emphasized that a significant capacity building exercise was needed in Zambia to bring records and registry

management staff into the era of electronic record and document management. Chaterera, (2012) stressed that poor records management practices in Zimbabwe were as a result of a high rate of staff turnover and lack of staff with records management training. IRMT (1999:127) posits that all individuals appointed to posts involving records management, whether or not they already possess a professional, paraprofessional or specialist qualification, must be trained in the specific policies, procedures and records systems. According to Ngoepe (2008) and Külcü (2009) training and upgrading of records management skills can be achieved through workshops, vendor-sponsored programmes, orientation and professional seminars and college or university-level courses.

2.4.11 Electronic records

The massive shift in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the 1980s and 1990s resulted in the proliferation of electronic records which called for new archival and records management practices (Chaterera, 2013). Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) suggested that new methods of records management were needed in Tanzania to deal with electronic records within the broader context of basic records management principles and standards. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006) attributed some of the problems that were experienced in Lesotho in managing human resources to the manual recordkeeping system, which made tracking information on public servants slow and cumbersome. They proposed that since electronic document and records management systems allowed for document sharing and access to records in a centralised database or digital repository, the concept of the centralised control of filing or folders system could be employed as part of the transition to electronic business processes. Hoyle and sebina (2007) observed that the proliferation of unmanaged documents on personal computers (PC) hard drives in Zambia resulted in a great deal of time being wasted when searching for documents, misplaced information. They went on to say that this weakened accountability in Government Ministries. The nature of electronic records makes confidentiality and security crucial in the management of e-records. The offset this concern, passwords, firewall and audit trail could be used (Chaterera, 2013).

2.5 Challenges and problems in records management

According to IRMT (1999: 179) Eastern and Southern African countries had several challenges with regard to the capturing, preservation and management of records. They added that in many countries of the world, public records are unmanaged and government information is not easily accessible. Coetzer (2012) reiterates that records management programmes in Africa were plagued with various challenges and problems, due to the inability of registries and national archival institutions to perform their roles effectively. Some of the common challenges include a lack of records management plan; inadequate knowledge about the importance of records management for organisational efficiency; no legislation, no policies and procedures, lack of central ability to manage records, understaffing of records management units; poor records security and access control; no budget for records management; no records retention and disposal policy and no records movement control techniques (IRMT, 1999:179). According to Marutha (2011:175) records management challenges can be addressed or prevented through the establishment and implementation of an effective records management programme. Marutha (2011:173-174) added The most serious administrative problems for records management such as shortage of filing space; misfiling and missing files; damage to record; incompetent/unskilled staff; shortage of staff; inadequate budget; Lack of general staff awareness about the importance of records; Insufficient budget; in the hospitals could be resolved using, amongst others, proper retention and disposal schedule and training.

2.6 Summary

The records life cycle and records continuum models are the most commonly used approaches in the execution of records management program. A comprehensive records management programme must have major elements such as the records management policy, records procedure manual, records retention disposal schedule and staff development programme. Due to involvement of other stakeholder other than records management personnel, implementation of a records management program is usually rocked with several challenges.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.0 Overview

Chapter three describes the research design, type of research, and the population under study. Detailed procedures of sampling, data collection, the research process and the statistical analysis method used in the study are also highlighted. Ethical considerations have also been stated in this chapter.

3.1 Research design

According to kasonde-Ng'andu (2013:34) a research design “is the blue-print or recipe for the study and determines the methods used by the researcher to obtain participants, collect data, analyse the data and interpret the results.” In other words a research design involves defining the population and how it was obtained, sampling procedures and sample size, research instruments used, procedures employed in gathering and processing data and the statistical analysis of the data (Coetzer, 2012:63). The method used in this investigation was a case study of a single case to provide a detailed evaluation of the management of records. The study was undertaken at the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education headquarters in Lusaka. The choice of the research design was influenced by the type of research topic, the target population, data collection methods and the research process among others. The research used quantitative and qualitative approaches. The qualitative approach helped to bring out and explain the feelings, views and ideas of the respondents while quantitative research facilitated the measurement and analysis of quantifiable values. According to Coetzer (2012:65) quantitative research uses descriptive statistics that enable the researcher to summarize quantities of data by using graphs and numbers such as values and percentages while qualitative research does not describe data using statistics, but by using words, sound, images/visuals or objects to make a detailed report of the feelings, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and behavior of the respondents. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed in this study in order to maximise the theoretical implications of research findings and to summarize quantities of data by using graphs and numbers (Ngoepe, 2008:24). Triangulation i.e the use of both approaches is

important in this as they complement each other allowing the researcher to have a comprehensive view.

3.1.1 Target population

The research study targeted a population of 48 registry staff from the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational training and Early Education headquarters and the science and vocational training unit. The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education has a departmentalized or decentralised registry system with eleven registries. According to the MESVTEE establishment register (2000) these include six registries at the Ministry Headquarters, Zambia Library Services, Department of Science and Vocational Training, Zambia national commission for UNESCO, National Science Council and Bursaries committee.

3.2 Data collection methods

Self-administered questionnaires and non-participant observations including semi-structured interviews were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from respondents. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants at National archives of Zambia, Public Service Management Division, UNESCO and MESTVEE headquarters. Secondary data was collected from legal documents and government documents at the MESTVEE. Self-administered questionnaires were used as they enable respondents to answer at their own convenient time without demand for immediate response. To authenticate and validate the responses from the questionnaires semi-structured interviews with key informants were conducted.

3.3 Data analysis

Cooper and Schinder (2001) cited in Mwale-Munsanje (2011:18) data analysis is “the reduction and accumulation of data to manageable size, developing summaries, looking for patterns and applying statistical techniques.” Data analysis is important as it enable the researcher to establish consistent patterns with the data collected.

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential methods and the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used to create tables, charts and graphs, and run

frequencies and other statistics. Qualitative data analysis was done using content analysis by interpreting views, perceptions and ideas of respondents.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The researcher observed ethical considerations in the study. Confidentiality was upheld at all times, informed consent was obtained and enforced. Full explanation was given to respondents on the purpose and use of the study in advance.

3.5 Challenges, discrepancies and limitations

This study had experienced various challenges. Some respondents were not willing to answer the questionnaire claiming they were occupied with their daily routine duties. However, with much persistence some answered the questionnaires. Also some registry clerks were transferred to other ministry in the same capacity and others were coming from other ministries where they were working as registry clerks, as a result they exhibited ignorance in some cases.

3.6 Summary

This study surveyed respondents using qualitative and quantitative research methods through self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. A total survey of the forty-eight (48) registry staff was conducted at MESVTEE headquarters. Quantitative data was analysed using a statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) and qualitative was analysed using content analysis.

CHAPTER 4

Presentation of the Findings

4.0 Overview

Chapter four present the research findings from the data collected through questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, non-participant observation and secondary sources of information. The findings are presented in narrative format, tabula format and photographic images. Data gathered from face-to-face interviews, non-participant observation and content analysis of secondary sources of information was analysed and presented around appropriate themes. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyse the data obtained from questionnaires. Data obtained from interviews was analysed through content analysis.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

A total of 48 questionnaires were distributed and responses were obtained from a total of 46 respondents. Therefore, the response rate was 96%. Of the 46 participates 28 (60.9%) were females while 18 (39.1%) were males. In terms of the respondents' age 3 (6.5%) were in the age range 24 years and below, 11 (23.9%) were in the range of 25-30 years, 5 (10.9%) were in the age range 31-35 years, 9 (19.6%) were in the age 31-40 years, 10 (21.7%) were in the age range 41 years and above. Eight (17.4%) did not state their age. The distribution of respondents by departments indicated that the Ministry Headquarters accounted for 32 (69.6%) of the respondents. The Department of Science and Vocational Training accounted for 8 (17.4%), Bursaries 3 (6.5%), National Science Council 1 (2.2%) and Zambia National Commission for UNESCO 1 (2.2%). The study revealed that 12 (26.1%) research respondents had work experience in the range of 5 years and below, 4 (8.7%) were in the work experience range of 6-10 years, 6 (13%) were in the range 11-15 years, 5 (10.9%) were in the range 16-20 years and 2 (4.3%) were in the range of 21 years and above. Seventeen (37%) of the informants did not state their work experience. With regards to the level of education attained, the study showed that 1(2.2%) had a university degree, 11(23.9%) had diplomas and 24 (52.2%) had certificates in records management. Six (13%) had no professional qualification and 4 (8.7%) did not state their

education qualifications. Other qualifications attained by respondents are ACCA skills, certificate in information technology, clerk of court certificate, diploma in management studies, diploma in human resource, advanced diploma in computer engineering, information systems and programming/ management of information. Findings from the interview with Senior Registry Officer also revealed that some registry personnel had diplomas and certificates in library and information science (Table 1 below)

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Values	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Department	HQ	32	69.6
	SCIE & VOC	8	17.4
	Bursaries	3	6.5
	Nat Science	1	2.2
	UNESCO	1	2.2
	ZLS	1	2.2
Gender	Females	28	39.1
	Males	18	60.9
Age	24 years & below	3	6.5
	25-30 years	11	23.9
	31-35 years	5	10.9
	36-40 years	9	19.6
	41 years & above	10	21.7
	Not stated	8	17.4
Work experience	5 years & below	12	26.1
	6-10 years	4	8.7
	11-15 years	6	13.0
	16-20 years	5	10.9
	21 years & above	2	4.3
	Not stated	17	37.0
Educational level	University degree	1	2.2
	Diploma	11	23.9
	Certificate	24	52.2
	None	6	13.0
	not stated	4	8.7

4.1.1 Work positions of respondents

Table 2 below depicts that the majority (65.2%) of the records management staff were registry clerks while 13% were registry officers, and two were data entry clerks. The positions of Acting Registry Officer, Clerical officer, Records Officer, Senior Library Officer and Senior Registry Officer were all occupied by one (2.2%) person each. Three (6.5%) research participants did not state their positions. Findings from the interview established that the positions of the senior

registry and library officer were not in the establishment and that currently no one held those titles in the registry. It was further revealed that in the establishment there were only three positions namely: chief registry officer, registry officer and registry clerk.

Table 2: Positions of respondents

Job description	Frequency	Percent
Registry clerk	30	65.2
Registry officer	6	13.0
Data entry clerk	2	4.3
Acting Registry Officer	1	2.2
Clerical officer	1	2.2
Records Officer	1	2.2
Senior library officer	1	2.2
Senior registry officer	1	2.2
Not stated	3	6.5
Total	46	100.0

4.2 Knowledge levels of records management staff

To ascertain the knowledge levels of participants in records management nineteen of the thirty four (34) questionnaire questions with the total score of thirty four were used. The minimum score was five, the maximum score was 27 and the average score was 18.91 (SD = 3.982). Two respondents got twenty seven (79.41%) score out of thirty four while one participant got five (14.70%) out of thirty four. Six respondents got seventeen (50%) out of thirty four. Eight (17.39%) respondents got below (50%) while thirty eight respondents (82.60%) got above seventeen (50%). The average score was 52.94% and mode was 58.82%. Three participants got the average score and most of the participants got 58.82% (Table 3 below).

Table 3: Total knowledge scores

Score (n=34)	Score (percent)	Frequency (n=46)	Percent
5	14.70	1	2.17
10	29.41	1	2.17
11	32.35	1	2.17
13	38.23	1	2.17
15	44.11	1	2.17
16	47.05	3	6.52
17	50.00	6	13.04
18	52.94	3	6.52
19	55.88	5	10.86
20	58.82	10	21.73
21	61.76	8	17.39
22	64.70	1	2.17
23	67.64	1	2.17
25	73.52	2	4.34
27	79.41	2	4.34

Further analysis was conducted to establish whether there was an association between knowledge levels and a) educational level and b) work experience and an analysis of variance between groups (ANOVA) was used to test these associations at a significance level of 0.05. The results are presented in tables 5 below. The results were $F=0.533$ ($df=3, 38$); $p=0.663$. Since $p > 0.05$ we accept the null hypothesis. In other words, there was no association between knowledge levels and educational level.

4.3 Elements of a records management program

4.3.1 Records management policy

When respondents were asked whether they had a records management policy 43 (93.5%) indicated that they had a records management policy, 1 (2.2%) indicated they did not have the policy and 2 (4.3%) did not indicate whether they had or not. However, a face-to-face interview with PSMD official revealed that Zambia as a country did not have a written national records

management policy and that the policy was in draft form waiting to be endorsement by cabinet and published.

When asked who prepared the policy, the majority of the respondents (70.5%) showed that it was the Public Service Management Division while 45.5% respondents showed that it was Ministry of Education. Findings from a face-to-face interview revealed that the Records Management Systems and Policy Development Department in the Public Service Management Division was responsible for developing the policy and it is currently in draft form.

4.3.2 Registry procedure manual

When asked as to whether their department had a registry procedure manual to assist them manage their record systematically, 95.7% of the respondents stated that they had while one respondent stated that they did not have and one did not state whether they had or they did not have. The researcher observed that there was a registry service manual prepared by the Public Service Management Division and made available to all government ministries, departments and divisions

Findings from an interview revealed that MESTVEE had a registry manual on which they based many decision and that they also had a filing index which was based on the registry manual.

Research participants were requested to state who prepared the registry procedure manual, most (77.3%) of the respondents stated that it was the Public Service Management Division, 47.7% stated that it was the Ministry of Education and one stated that it was National Archives of Zambia. The researcher through an interview PSMD official established that the registry procedure manual was prepared by the Records Management Systems and Policy Development (RMSPD) Department of the Public Service Management Division (PSMD) and made available to all government ministries, departments and divisions (Table 4 below)

Table 4: Preparation of the registry procedures manual

	Frequency	Percentage
Ministry of Education	21	47.7%
Public Service Management Division	34	77.3%
National Archives of Zambia	1	2.3%
Total	44	100.0%

In response to a multiple response question regarding the activities described in the registry manual, 91.1% stated that the registry described how to handle incoming mail in paper form, 88.9% stated that the registry manual gave instructions on how to create a new file, 84.4% indicated that the manual provided filing procedures and 82.2% stated that the registry manual gave guidance on how to handle outgoing mail in paper form. The study also revealed that 75.6% of the respondents stated that the registry manual described how to control the movement of files. Sixty percent of the participants stated that instructions on how to close a file were also provided in the manual and 55.6% of the respondents indicated that responsibilities of registry staff towards users were also enshrined in the registry manual. In addition, the study further revealed that 53.3% research participants stated that the manual described records security measures, 51.1% of the informants showed that the registry manual gave instructions on how to record the existence of a new file while 28.9% respondents indicated that the manual described how to handle incoming electronic mail and 15.6% stated that the manual showed how to handle outgoing electronic mail.

Through content analysis of the registry service manual and a face-to-face interview PSMD official, the researcher observed that the records manual mainly focused on classification, indexing and filing. It basically gave instructions on how to categorise, label, title and tracking systems for paper based records. Instructions on how to carryout routine registry duties were contained in a document called government office instructions (Table 5 below).

Table 5: Activities described in the registry manual

	Frequency (n=46)	Percent
How to handle incoming mail in paper form	41	91.1%
How to create a new file	40	88.9%
Filing procedures	38	84.4%
How to handle outgoing mail in paper form	37	82.2%
Controlling file movement	34	75.6%
Instructions for closing files	27	60.0%
Responsibilities of registry staff towards users	25	55.6%
Security of records	24	53.3%
How to record existence of a new file	23	51.1%
How to handle incoming electronic mail	13	28.9%
How to handle outgoing electronic mail	7	15.6%

4.3.3 A records survey

When respondents were asked whether a records survey was carried out by their department, 77.5% were in the affirmative while 22.5% stated that records surveys were not carried out. Six (13%) of the respondents did not respond.

When asked when last they carried out a records survey, 17.4% of the respondents stated previous year, 17.4% stated two years ago while 8.7% respondents indicated five years ago. The remaining respondents 37% said they did not know and 19.6% did not state whether they carried out the survey or not (Table 6 below).

Table 6: When last the records survey was carried out

	Frequency	Percentage
Last year	8	17.4
Two years ago	8	17.4
Five years ago	4	8.7
I don't know	17	37
Not stated	9	19.6

Table 7: Who undertakes records survey exercise

	Count (n=46)	Table N %
Ministry of Education	35	76.1%
National Archives of Zambia	27	58.7%
Public Service Management Division	23	50.0%
All of the above three institutions	14	30.4%

In response to a multiple response question regarding the use of the information gathered from the records survey 24 (52.2%) stated that they used the information for records tracking, 21 (45.7%) stated that they used the information for records preservation and conservation and 21(45.7%) stated they used the information to prepare a vital records management program. Other uses cited included records security 19 (41.3%), creation, retention and disposal schedules 18 (39.1%) and file creation 18 (39.1%). The study further revealed that 30.4% used the

information for automation, 12 (26.1%) used the information to prepare a disaster management plan and 17.4% used the information for registry layout and design (Table 14).

Table 8: Uses of information gathered from records survey

	Count (n=46)	Table N %
Records tracking	24	52.2%
Records preservation & conservation	21	45.7%
Prepare a vital records management program	21	45.7%
Records security	19	41.3%
Creating, retention & disposal schedules	18	39.1%
File creation	18	39.1%
Automation	14	30.4%
To prepare a disaster management plan	12	26.1%
Registry layout & design	8	17.4%

4.3.4 Vital records management program

When asked whether they had a vital records management plan, 84.8% of the respondents were in the affirmative while 4.3% were negative. Ten percent (10.9%) did not state whether they had a vital records management plan or not.

On the guidelines to determine vital records, 82.6% of the respondents indicated that the records management policy was their source of guidance to determine vital records, 17.4% stated that the National Archives Act provided guidance to determine vital records. Only four (8.7%) respondents cited Institutional policy and standing orders were also cited as the source of instructions to determine vital records.

The study revealed that 78.3% of the participants claimed that fire proof cabinets and vaults were used to protect vital records, 26.1% claimed duplication and 19.7% off-site vital records centre as the method to protect vital records while 13% stated that digitization was used as a method of protecting vital records. Some respondents cited use of computers in place of office cabinets and automatic fire extinguisher as another method of protecting vital records.

4.3.5 Records creation and generation control plan

Research participants were asked whether they had a records creation and generation plan, the majority (58.7%) of the participant acknowledged having a records creation and generation control plan while 19.6% indicted that they did not have a records creation and generation

control plan. Twenty one point seven percent (21.7%) did not state whether they had a records creation and generation plan or not (Table 10).

All the records listed were either created or received however, 61% were circulars followed by education policies (59%) then annual reports (50%) while 11% were receipt of purchase. Letters and minutes were also cited as other types of created or received (Table 9 below).

Table 9: Types of records generated or received

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Circulars	28	60.9%
Education policies	27	58.7%
Annual reports	23	50.0%
Receipt of purchase	5	10.9%

Research participants were asked to indicate the measures they have put in place to control the creation of records; 35% indicated policy and procedures management program, 33% indicated report management program, 30% indicated forms management program, and 11% correspondence management program as measures put in the place to control the creation of records (Table 10).

Table 10: Measures put in place to control creation of records

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Policy & procedures management program	16	34.8%
Report management program	15	32.6%
Forms management program	14	30.4%
Correspondence management program	5	10.9%

4.3.6 Method of organizing records

The study revealed that every registry used one method of filing or the other. However, 47.8% of the respondents stated that they used numeric filing, 30.4% stated serialization filing, 21.7% indicated alpha-numeric filing, 21.7% showed subject filing, 13% stated chronological filing and 8.7% indicated alphabetical filing as the filing method used (Table 11).

Findings from observation and interviews confirmed that alpha-numeric and numeric filing methods were used.

Table 11: Filing methods used

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Numeric	22	47.8%
Serialization	14	30.4%
Alpha-numeric	10	21.7%
Subject	10	21.7%
Chronological	6	13.0%
Alphabetical	4	8.7%

Figure 1 below shows the filing system used and the Prefix MESTVTEE stands for Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 101 is controlling number, 13 for Kabwe district and the last number for given school.

LUNSEMFWAPOWER STATION BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/23
MWIMBULA BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/24
MPANDE BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/25
GEORGE NDASHE BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/26
MUBALASHI BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/27
MULENGA BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/28
MULULI BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/29
MWEMBESHI BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/30
LUILI BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/31
KATETAULA BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/32
MUUNDU BASI C SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/33
KABWE MINE BASIC SCHOOL	MESTVTEE /101/13/34

Figure 1: The filing system used.

4.3.7 Records retention and disposal schedule

The research participants were asked as to whether they had a records retention schedule. The study revealed that 96% of the respondents stated that they had a records retention and disposal schedule while 4% stated that they did not have a records retention and disposal schedule (Table 22).

To establish which institution was responsible for preparing the records and retention schedule a number of institutions were listed for the respondents to tick as applied. The study revealed that 78.3% of the respondents stated Ministry of Education, 21.7% stated Public Service Management Division and 15.2% indicated National Archives of Zambia as institutions responsible for preparing the records retention and disposal schedule.

Findings from a structured interview revealed that the NAZ prepared a retention schedule for generic records. Thereafter NAZ officials together with the ministry concerned would form a committee to prepare the records retention and disposal schedule for specific ministries

When asked what elements were on the records retention and disposal schedule, 80.4% indicated records retention period, 73.9% indicated disposal date, 45.7% stated records series title and 41.3% stated disposal action as the elements on the records retention and disposal schedule.

Findings from the interview confirmed that the four important elements of a records retention schedule; records series title, retention periods, disposal date and disposal action were indicated although the general retention schedule from NAZ did not indicate disposal actions except for those records of continuing value (Table 12).

Table 12: Elements are on the records retention/disposal schedule

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Records retention period	37	80.4%
Disposal date	34	73.9%
Records series title	21	45.7%
Disposal action	19	41.3%

When requested to indicate how often the records retention and schedule was revised, 10.9% of the respondents stated monthly, 39.1% annually, 15.2% after five years and 34.8% did not state. Others stated ten years, not often and when need arise (Table 13).

However, through a structured interview with a NAZ official the retention schedule was revised after five years and that the current retention schedule was prepared in 2007.

Table 13: How often the records retention schedules is revised

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	monthly	5	10.9	16.7
	annually	18	39.1	60.0
	after five years	7	15.2	23.3
	Total	30	65.2	100.0
Missing	not stated	16	34.8	
Total		46	100.0	

The study also sought to establish how often the records retention and disposal was implemented. Eight point seven percent (8.7%) stated monthly, 69.6% stated annually 21.7% did not state how often the records retention schedule was implemented. Others indicated that they had no idea and other stated not often (Table 14).

Table 14: How often the records retention schedule is implemented

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	monthly	4	8.7	11.1
	annually	32	69.6	88.9
	Total	36	78.3	100.0
Missing	not stated	10	21.7	
Total		46	100.0	

When asked what could be the cause of the problem in implementing the retention schedule, the study showed lack of the records retention schedule and delayed implementation of the retention schedule by the ministries.

The researcher also observed that boxes of records were kept in registries containing records to be transferred to the records center. The researcher found out that there were no immediate plan to transfer the records in boxes to records centre as there were no up to date records and disposal schedule.

Figure 2 below shows semi active records at the Zambia national commission for UNESCO waiting to be transferred to the records center. Findings from the interview revealed that were no

immediate plans to transfer the records to the secondary storage facility and that they did not have a records retention schedule.



Figure 2: Boxes of semi active records waiting to be taken the records center.

Figure 3 below shows boxes of files for retired teachers at the Ministry headquarter from pension service commission waiting to be taken to the records center.



Figure 3: Boxes of files for retired teachers

In order to find out how unwanted records were disposed off, a number of methods were listed for the respondents to tick as applied to them. Their responses indicated transfer to the archives (80.4%), transfer to the records centre (43.5%), shredding (39.1%), palpating (17.4%) and burning (6.5%). Others stated that Most of the inactive files were taken to records centre and then to national archives later (Table 15).

Table 15: Disposal methods used

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Transfer to the archives	37	80.4%
Transfer to the records centre	20	43.5%
Shredding	18	39.1%
Palpating	8	17.4%
Burning	3	6.5%

4.3.8 Records preservation and storage

Records are preserved using various method depending on the capability and initiative of the institution and records manager. Multiple methods can be used to preserved records. Questionnaire item 23 sought to establish the methods of preserving records used by the registries at Ministry of education. In response 26% of the respondents stated optical discs, 20% stated digitization and 9% cited microfilming as the methods of preserving the records. Others indicated sending to the archives, filing cabinets and computers as other methods that were used to preserve records.

When asked what type of filing equipment they were using. The majority of the respondents cited boxes (65.2%) as the storage equipment used followed by shelves (63%), then compactus (50%). The study also revealed that drawers (45.7%) and cupboards (23.9%) were also used as storage equipment. Others cited were filing cabinets (Table 16).

Findings from observation and interviews revealed that newly acquired compactus and cabinets were mostly used storage equipment. Files in boxes were slowly being put in the newly acquired compactus. Boxes were still used for records at semi current stage waiting to be transferred to the secondary facility and in the confidential registry.

Table 16: Records storage equipment used

	Frequency (n=46)	Percentage
Boxes	30	65.2%
Shelves	29	63.0%
Compactuses	23	50.0%
Drawers	21	45.7%
Cupboards	11	23.9%

Figure 4 below shows the newly acquire compactus and boxes of files for retired teachers from different districts of Zambia waiting to be put in the compactus in the pensions registry at headquarters.



Figure 4: Newly acquired compactus

Figure 5 below shows newly acquired cabinets and compactuses housing files for serving teacher in the main registry at ministry headquarters.

However the researcher observed that the newly acquired compactus were not enough especially in the teachers registry housing files for serving teachers resulting in some files for serving teachers being housed in the main registry responsible distributing incoming mails and dispatching outgoing mail. The researcher also observed that the effect of inadequate filing cabinets was more critical in the confidential registry where files were still stored in boxes and left lying on the floor (figure 6).



Figure 5: Newly acquired cabinets and compactus



Figure 6: Files of serving teachers on the floor.

Figure 7 below shows confidential files of serving teachers in the confidential registry at the ministry headquarters kept in boxes due to inadequate filing equipment.



Figure 7: Confidential files kept in boxes

Figure 9 below shows confidential files for serving teachers kept in boxes in the confidential registry and stuck on wooden shelves due to inadequate storage equipment. The researcher observed that the confidential registry was kept locked and could only be opened if there was a request for a file. No staff was specially assigned to manage confidential files.



Figure 8: Confidential files stored in boxes and wooden shelves

4.3.9 Records centers

When asked whether they had a records center, 82.6% respondents stated that they had while 4.3% stated that they did not have. Thirteen percent did not state whether they had a records centre or not.

Findings from unstructured interview revealed that the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education had a records center and that the records center was meant to be a transit point for records to be taken to any of the records centers maintained by NAZ or to be taken to the national archives for permanent preservation.

Questionnaire item 26 sought to establish the type or types of records center that were used at the Ministry of Education. The findings revealed that 56.5% of the respondents indicated warehouse records center, 43.5% indicated off-site records center, 26.1% on-site records center and none cited commercial records center.

Findings from a structured interview confirmed that MESVTEE had a warehouse records center which was not purpose built hence lacked the required facilities of records center. It was established the warehouse records center was meant to be a transit point though records ended up being kept there for many years due inadequate space in the records center maintained by NAZ. The interview findings further revealed that NAZ had embarked on rehabilitating existing records center and also building new ones in Mansa and Ndola and that they intended to build a records center in every province of Zambia.

4.3.10 Staff development program

When respondents were asked of the existence of a staff training program in the Ministry of education, 67.4% of the respondents said they had a records staff training program and 21.7% said they did not have a records staff training program. Five (10.9%) did not state whether they had a staff training program or not.

Different programs were listed and respondents were asked to tick as applied. Workshops (76.1%) rated the highest followed by In-house training (43.5%), then seminar attendance (26.1%) and conferences (21.7%). Four (8.7%) respondents did not indicate any type of records staff training program (Table 18)

Table 17: Type of records staff training program

	Frequency (n=46)	Table N %
Workshops	35	76.1%
In-house training	20	43.5%
Seminar attendance	12	26.1%
Conferences	10	21.7%
None	4	8.7%

4.3.11 Electronic records

Respondents were asked whether they managed electronic records, in response 52.2% stated that they managed electronic records while 30.4% stated that they did not manage electronic records. Eight (17.4%) respondents did not state whether they managed electronic records or not. In a structured interview with NAZ official it was established that electronic records were not managed by registry staff currently in government registries because there were no written guidelines or policy. However, he added to acknowledge the existence electronic records in government offices and ministries but that they were managed by individual officers (Table 34).

When asked whether they had a standard way of labeling e-storage devices, 43.5% of the respondents were in the affirmative while 32.6% stated that they did not have a standard way of labeling e-storage devices. Eleven (23.9%) did not state whether they had a standard way of labeling e-storage devices or not.

Table 36 shows that password (61%) and login procedures (15%) were the mostly used security measures for electronic records. Table 37 also indicates that access levels and audit trail to track use were also used as security measures and both accounted for 6.5%. Firewalls were the least used at 4.3% (Table 19).

Table 18: Type of security measures in place

	Frequency (n=46)	Table N %
Password	28	60.9%
Login procedures	7	15.2%
Access levels	3	6.5%
Audit trail to track use	3	6.5%
Firewalls	2	4.3%

In an open ended question respondents were asked what type of records and information systems they had. The question yielded poor and wrong responses. However, few respondents stated human resource information and management system (HIRS), standard records management system and the file movement information system and database for schools and teachers.

When asked what records management functionality the records and information systems had. Seventy percent (70%) indicated classification, 52% indicated records tracking, and 50% stated indexing. Audit trail and abstracting were also cited as some of the functions provided by Information Management System (IMS). These accounted for 17% and 13% respectively (Table 38).

Table19: Records management functionality for IMS

	Count	Table N %
Classification	32	69.6%
Tracking	24	52.2%
Indexing	23	50.0%
Audit trail	8	17.4%
Abstracting	6	13.0%

4.4 Challenges and problems encountered

In a multiple response question respondents were asked to tick as apply the challenges and problems they encountered while executing their records management responsibilities. The study revealed that locating and retrieving active records (76%), lack of supplies (folders, file clips, etc.) (72%) and poor and inadequate funding (67%) were all high contributors to the failure by the records management staff to execute their duties efficiently. Low motivation (63%), tracking and locating semi-active records (60%) and inadequate shelving and filing equipment (63%) were cited as some of the problems encountered by the records staff in executing their duties. The study also revealed that inappropriate shelving and filing equipment (60%), inadequate trained personnel (45%), and low job esteem (41%) also contributed to the failure to execute responsibilities efficiently. Lack of records policy (17%) was the least cited problem by the records staff in carrying out their responsibilities (Table 21).

Table 20: Challenges and problems encountered

	Count	Table N %
Locating & retrieving active records	35	76.1%
Lack of supplies (folders, file clips, etc.)	33	71.7%
Poor & inadequate funding	31	67.4%
Inadequate shelving & filing equipment	29	63.0%
Low motivation	29	63.0%
Tracking & locating semi-active records	28	60.9%
Inappropriate shelving & filing equipment	28	60.9%
Inadequate storage space	26	56.5%
Inadequate trained personnel	21	45.7%
No opportunity for further training	20	43.5%
Low job esteem	19	41.3%
Lack of e-records management policy	18	39.1%
Lack of records protective measures	16	34.8%
Overcrowding working environment	15	32.6%
Lack of prospects for promotion	14	30.4%
Inadequate filing & classification system	13	28.3%
Lack of job satisfaction	12	26.1%
Unsatisfactory salary & other fringe benefits	11	23.9%
Lack of records retention & disposal schedules	9	19.6%
Lack of operational manual	9	19.6%
Lack of records policy	8	17.4%

4.5 Summary of research findings

This chapter presented findings of the research as analysed from all the administered questionnaires, interviews and observation. The findings revealed that:

1. Most of the registry staff were generally knowledgeable of basic records management practices and principles.
2. There was no national records management policy in Zambia. However, it was in the process of being published
3. Registry service manual was produced by the public service management division and made available to government ministries, departments and division
4. Records survey was carried out by the ministry of education although the frequency of carrying out the exercise was not known
5. There was a vital records management program and they were mainly protected using fire proof cabinets and vaults

Electronic records were being generated and created although there was no electronic records management policy.

CHAPTER 5

Discussion and interpretation of findings

5.0 Overview

Chapter five discusses the research findings based on a general assessment of records management practices and principles in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education in Lusaka.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

4. What are the knowledge levels of registry staff in the MESVTEE?
5. What elements of the records management program are available at the MESVTEE
6. What challenges affect the execution of an effective records management program at MESVTEE

This chapter is divided into four sections namely: Demographic characteristics of respondents, knowledge levels of records management staff, elements of a records management program and challenges and problems encountered in executing records management functions at MESVTEE.

5.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

On the aspect of demographic characteristics of respondents, research findings showed that staffing levels in the MESVTEE registries were generally adequate. For instance, the establishment register showed that there were thirty positions for registry clerks at the Ministry headquarters and the actual number of registry clerks in the six registries at ministry headquarter was thirty. There were eight positions for registry staff at the Department of Science and Vocational Training including one position for senior registry office as stipulated in the establishment register. However, at the bursaries committee there were three registry personnel instead of the four according to the establishment register. Therefore the research results indicated that the MSVTEE registries were generally adequately staffed going by government establishment register. All things being equal, adequate staffing in registries could imply that employees had normal worked load, less stress, low levels of absenteeism, excellent performance with interest in work.

While the MESTVEE registries were generally adequately staffed, research results showed that the quality of registry staff might have been compromised as most of the registry staff had certificates; six had no tertiary training and four did not state their qualification (see 4.1.5 and Table 5 in chapter 5). This implies that ten registry staffs were ill qualified to undertake records management functions. A number of them had qualifications in other fields and not in records management. Findings from a structured interview further revealed that individuals with cases to answer would be taken to the registry as a form punishment and those persons the human resource department could not identify where to place them in the Ministry would be taken to the registry. These findings confirmed what Hoyle and Sebina (2007) observed. They noted that traditionally records management in Zambia received low recognition in the public service and was considered to be work that could be done by anyone, regardless of skills and qualifications. They further added that very junior staff, sometimes including cleaners, had been brought in to help in the registry and this had led to problems. In a similar study conducted by the Hoyle and Sebina (2008:16) revealed that records management units in the Land Boards in the Ministry of Land and Housing in Botswana were often viewed as dumping grounds for non-performing or hard to place employees.

Such a scenario inevitably results into a demoralised and non-performing staff in registries. Ill qualified staff lack appreciation of the importance of records management resulting in mediocrity in how they carry out their duties. Lack of appreciation of the significance of carrying out certain records management activities may lead to non performance of such activities. Registry staff may have learnt how to perform routine tasks but without understanding the essence of performing such tasks may lead to substandard work performance still. Ultimately the whole records management program becomes ineffective and inefficient. The quality of staff is one of the constraints that affected the development of records management programmes in most public institutions (Marutha, 2011:48).

5.2 Knowledge levels of records management staff

The study sought to ascertain the knowledge levels of participants in records management. The study results showed that only eight of the respondents got below fifty while the majority of the respondents got above fifty percent. By implication the majority of the respondents were knowledgeable in records management practices. This could be as a result of interacting with

those who had been to college to pursue records management and in-service training or workshops that were periodically conducted in collaboration with Public Service Management Division. Ngoepe (2008) remarked that upgrading of skills can be achieved through workshops, vendor-sponsored programmes, professional seminars and college or university-level courses. However, the results further revealed that there was no association between knowledge levels and work experience and also between knowledge levels and educational levels. In other words people who have worked longer and those who have worked for fewer years more or less possessed the same knowledge levels. It may also suggest that the people with records management qualifications and those without records management qualification had more or less the same knowledge in records management.

This could be attributed to the fact that most of the staff had worked in the registry for a long period of time and so with passage of time they may have acquired a certain level of knowledge in records management. According to Salleh, Yaakub and Dzulkifli, (2011) the longer the period one has been employed, the more experience and better skill is obtained resulting in increased productivity and job performance. In other words, experience allows the accumulation of skills and knowledge that make an employee more productive and more valuable. It may not have necessarily been in the MESVTEE but other government ministries considering the fact that all government registries use the same registry service manual and Government office instructions. As a norm public servants are normally transferred from one ministry to the other. On the part of education and knowledge levels, the likelihood is that since most of the participants were certificate holders their knowledge levels were superficial hence there was no much difference with the knowledge of those who had not done any records management training course. Similarly Hoyle and Sebina (2008) mentioned that generally records managers in government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Botswana had no formal training and consequently possessed inadequate skills levels. Ngoepe (2008) pointed out that education plays an important role in updating knowledge and skills and that it enhances the resourcefulness of the records managers. There is also the possibility that most of the registries engage in very basic records management functions and activities. Such basic records management functions and activities are characterized by incomplete and inadequate records management elements thereby rendering the whole records management program inefficient and ineffective. Marutha (2011) observed that the implementation of a records management programme in Namibia was hampered by lack of

well-trained records management personnel and added that people needed to be capacitated through training and education with the skills, knowledge and ability to establish the necessary records keeping framework.

5.3 Elements of a records management program

According to Kennedy and Schauder (1994) a comprehensive records management program has eleven key elements. The records management elements the research assessed in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education include the records management policy, records procedural manual, records survey, vital records management program, records creation and generation plan, methods of organizing records, records retention and disposal schedule, records preservation and storage, records center, staff development plan and electronic records program.

5.3.1 Records management policy

Kennedy and Schauder (1994) highlighted eleven elements of a comprehensive records management program including policy and procedures documentation. The findings (see 4.2 and Table 6 in chapter 4) from the study showed that the majority of the respondents indicated that they had a records management policy while the findings from interviews revealed that there were no written policies at national or institutional level concerning records management in Zambia. Similarly studies conducted by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) and Nabombe (2012) revealed that Zambia did not have a nation records management policy. However, the national records management policy in Zambia was in draft form waiting to be approved. The Hoyle and wamukoya (2007:5) added that Zambia like Tanzania had a new records management policy which was being drafted covering both paper and electronic records. On the contrary, Unegbu and Adenike (2013) observed that the Ministry of Information and Strategy in Nigeria had a well documented records policy guide which all the workers were aware of. The responses of the majority could imply that they were ignorant of what a national records management policy was or they have confused the records policy with the records procedural manual. According to the National Archives of Australia (2014) the purpose of the policy is to provide guidance and direction on the creation, generation and management of information and records and to clarify staff responsibilities. Marutha (2011:175) added that a proper records management programme guided by policies, rules and procedures will ensure a conducive records management

environment. The absence of a records management policy in the MESVTEE meant registries lacked guidance and direction on the creation, generation and management of information and records and clarity on staff responsibilities and tasks. With this state of affairs, it is possible that the staffs in the Ministry of Education were not creating and capturing certain records as there were no clear guidelines on which records to create and capture or not to create. The records policy specifies what aspects of the ministry's business and business transactions including business applications and systems e.g. websites, email, and business systems are to be covered and captured into the record keeping system. Records document business transactions in all government ministries, providing evidence of what was done and how it was done. Failure to capture certain business transactions in government ministries may compromise accountability requirements and transparency in government and public offices. Hence, without a records policy the MESVTEE's commitment to establishing and maintaining information and records management practices that meet its business needs, accountability requirements and stakeholder expectations might be lacking in this regard. In a similar study Coetzer (2012:28) notes that the problem of records management in Ghana could be traced to the absence of a comprehensive records management policy regarding an integrated holistic approach to the management of the whole cycle of records. Nabombe (2012) points out that the lack of a records policy may cause registries to regard ministry records as not important assets to the nation.

Ideally the policy covers the legal, regulatory and business context within which the ministry should operate, meaning without a records policy the MESVTEE had no clear directions of which legal and regulatory frameworks to comply with. Presumably, the registries may not feel compelled to consider certain legal and regulatory instruments such as International Organisation for Standardization guidelines on records management (ISO), National Archives Act of Zambia and Information and Communication Technology Act of Zambia. This may perpetuate bad records management practices in the ministry. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) raised similar concerns. He pointed out that lack of standards and procedures cause poor management of records. The duo added that a Records Management Policy provided a framework within which the records and archives of the United Republic of Tanzania were managed in accordance with statutory requirements and international standards. Marutha (2011:177) observes that hospitals in South Africa were running the risk of officials operating on their own devices due to lack of policies that specifically address patient records management.

The absence of a policy may result in a situation where undesignated offices and locations store records. A policy will ensure that systems or locations endorsed for the capture and storage of records and information are specified as well as those which should not. It will prevent ministry staff from hoarding records and transfer them to designated places. Keeping records in undesignated office and place may delay retrieval or indeed result into the loose of records. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) observed that records in most Zambian Government ministries are sometimes not taken to the registries and that registry staff are blamed for failure to locate them. The right to information, privacy and confidentiality in MESVTEE may also suffer due to lack of a policy. A policy provides a statement supporting the concept that staff should have ready access to corporate information and describes circumstances when it is appropriate to restrict information access to information and records (National Archives of Australia, 2014).

5.3.2 Registry procedure manual

A registry procedures manual is an essential guide for the operations and daily routine tasks of a registry. It provides personnel with guidelines that define departmental records management procedures thus standardizing procedures and prevent incompatible practices between registry units (Kulcu, 2009). The research examined the availability of records management registry manuals in the MSVTEE registries (see 4.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.2 and Tables 8, 9 and 10). Unlike the findings of the study carried out by Chaterera (2013) which revealed that most public registries were operating without documented guidelines in a registry manual on how to execute their responsibilities, the findings from this study showed that most respondents had a registry manual. The results of this study are in conformity with the findings of a study conducted in Tanzania by the Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) which indicated the presence of a registry procedures manual in the surveyed Ministries. Similarly, Nabombe (2012) in study observed that records management manuals were available in the court registries in Zambia although very few registry clerks had access to them.

However, a content analysis of the registry service manual developed and released by PSMD revealed that it lacked certain features generally described in the registry procedure manual. The registry service manual mainly focused on records classification, indexing and filing. For instance it lacked an introduction explaining what a record and records management are. This is

intended to help the reader distinguish a record from any other document and inculcate an appreciation of the importance of managing records. In other words, the records manual provides guidelines on how to distinguish a records from non-records and personal papers including electronic records. A records management manual must have an introduction explaining what a record is and qualities or characteristics of a record that make it trustworthy. The absence of guidelines on the appropriate qualities of a record may result in the creation of records that are not authentic and reliable. There is a possibility therefore, that the registry staff in the MESVTEE were capturing even ephemeral documents that were not authentic thereby taking up valuable space for records. Ephemeral document may get into the way of more active records and delay retrieval. A record begins as a document that is created or received and if that document meets the definition of a record, it must be captured in a recordkeeping system. The registry service manual has no general records schedules to determine whether the records are temporary or permanent (FAA, 2012). This may explain why the Ministry registries are experiencing space problems. There was congestion in the registries with boxes of records kept on top of filing cabinets.

On the other hand, the registry service manual at the MESVTEE provides guidelines on filing, storing, or otherwise systematically maintaining records in the recordkeeping system. In a similar study the Hoyle and sebina (2007) observed that the PSMD had developed a registry service manual on classification, indexing and numbering of Subject papers in Government Ministries and Departments, which was released in February 2006. It provided guidance on keeping files in the public service. The manual identified subjects for classifying correspondence based on the Statutory Functions, Portfolios and Composition of Government published in Gazette Notice No 547 of 2004. The registry service manual mainly focused on records classification, indexing and filing. Therefore failure by most registries to file records accordingly may not be as the result of lack of instructions but negligence on the part of registry staff and inadequate filing equipment.

The records manual does not provide information on the type of records centre used to preserve and store semi-current records. There are no instructions on how records and particularly vital records are to be protected from threats such as fire, pests, theft, natural disasters and water damage. The absence of such guidelines in the records manual may result in lack of proper

protective measures for records from natural and manmade hazards. This may explain why some records at the ministry are kept in boxes and shelves made from very poor wood quality. By implication records are at risk of being lost in the event of a disaster. Yet the registry manual provides instructions to offices on how to implement a tracking system for retrieving and checking out records from its recordkeeping system. The system includes at least charge out registers and cards that are placed in the record's location in the filing cabinet or shelf to indicate the current location of a record. However, Nabombe (2012) and Chaterera (2013) noted that charge out books were outdated methods that are inefficient. They are cumbersome and can easily be manipulated by unscrupulous individuals.

Further content analyses of the registry service reveal that it does not provide information regarding duties and responsibilities of the registry staff. The absence of such information may result in people not taking responsibility. Clear and distinctive description of what a person is to undertake certain responsibilities facilitates accountability in a work environment. In view of this there is a likelihood that duties in the ministry registries are assigned haphazardly. The registry service manual in the MESVTEE did not also provide general guidelines on how staff can match records and general disposition schedules. The resultant effects are the lack of up-to-date records retention and disposal schedule. Currently the ministry registries depend on NAZ officials when preparing the records retention schedules for guidance. If general guidelines were provided in the registry manual probably the ministry registries could have been preparing their own schedules than having outdated records retention schedules which are updated after five years. The absence of records retention schedules implies that records are either destroyed prematurely or kept for a much longer period than their value warrants. This may also explain why registries are congested with records despite the fact that new filing equipment were recently acquired.

The findings from an interview revealed that there were Government Office Instructions which provided instructions for all government officials including registry staff on how to carry out their duties. Similarly Hoyle and Sebina (2007) in their study found that there were Government Office Instructions dating from 1984, with chapter five on registry services and procedures, including mail handling and file management. In the case of Zambia therefore, the components of a records management manual have been produced partly in the Government office instruction

and partly in the registry service manual. This might prove to be cumbersome to staff and result in inefficient work procedures. In fact the Government Service Instructions are not readily available and only a few copies are kept with the human resource department in the ministry. On the contrary, Chaterera (2013) observed that registry procedure manual in the registry department in Zimbabwe covered most of the key records management activities. The Hoyle and wamukoya (2007) stated that the Registry Procedures Manual used in government ministry registries in Tanzania described in detail the procedures and forms to be used when dealing with incoming correspondence, filing papers, creating a new file, recording the existence of a new file, controlling file movement, handling files returned to the registry, handling outgoing mail, storing files, handling closed files and maintaining the system.

5.3.3 Records survey

Records surveys are a critical exercise intended to achieve proper records management practices. The key step in developing sound and proper records management practices is to inspect, monitor and examine all records created and kept by an office through conducting records and information management surveys amongst other records management activities (Barata, Cain and Routledge, 2001:22). Findings from this study revealed that registries in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education of Zambia conducted records surveys although they had no specific time period in which to undertake the exercise. The study also established that the MESVTEE conducted the records survey and NAZ officials were on hand to offer professional advice. This does not agree with the research findings of Chaterera (2013) which revealed that the National Archives of Zimbabwe's Records Centers were responsible for carrying out records surveys in public registries. During the records survey information on how records are created, kept, used and disposed within a public office is gathered with the emphasis on quantity, physical form, type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, use and rate of accumulation. The failure by the MESTVEE registries to conduct records surveys on a regular basis may result in lack of up-to-date information regarding the physical condition of records, physical format, quantity and accumulation rate. Such information could be used for planning, making informed decision, archival activities and for the efficient operation of the overall records management program. A records survey is therefore linked to records management activities. For instance, knowing the accumulation rate can help the

records management staff in the MESTVEE to plan the size and type of their records center and also to consider conversion of records to either microforms or e-records which do not consume a lot of space. The MESTVEE lack of up-to-date information on different aspects of records may affect their budgeting. This could be the reason why inadequate filing equipment was secured.

The study results showed that the information gathered from the records survey in MESVTEE was mainly used for records tracking, preservation and conservation of records and preparing the vital records management program. Using a walk through or questionnaire method of conducting records surveys, records staff in the MESVTEE could trace missing and misplaced records. The person conducting the records survey walks through every office and storage area gathering all the required information by querying, looking and measuring depending on the question on the inventory form (IRMT: 1999:97). Vital Records and records of continuing value are identified during the records survey. Records of continuing value are taken to the records center then to the National archives of Zambia or straight to the archives. However, lack of a specified period in which to conduct the records survey may have negative effect on the records management program as a whole. It may affect planning, budgeting and updating documents such the records retention and disposal schedule

5.3.4 Vital records

As stated earlier, unlike important and useful records vital records are usually irreplaceable and require the highest degree of protection (Read and Ginn, 2007). Vital records refer to those records that are essential for the ongoing business of the organisation and without which the organisation would not continue to function effectively (Massey University, 2013). Vital records protect the assets and interests of the organisation as well as those of its clients and shareholders. The three major element of a vital records protection programme are the identification of vital records for an organisation; assessment and identification of risks and methods of protection.

The study revealed (see 4.5, 4.5.1, 4.5.2 and Tables 15, 16 and 17) that the MESTVEE had a vital records management plan or program. The results of this study are not consistent with the finding of the study conducted by the Australian National Audit Office (2012) which revealed that surveyed agencies had no identified vital records in the context of their business continuity planning processes. On the guidelines used to determine vital records, the study showed that the

Records Management Policy and National Archives Act were the one which were mainly used. However, as stated earlier Zambia has no national records management policy. The respondents might have been ignorant of a records policy and mistook the registry service manual for a policy.

Notwithstanding, through content analysis of the manual and findings from the interview the study established that the manual was organised by Government Ministry and Department portfolio and domestic records. Portfolio refers to functions assigned to a given ministry and department. Within a given ministry the same portfolio are referred to as domestic. Therefore codes in the manual represent functions and activities government ministries and departments. In this regard it is possible for a given government ministry to identify their key functions and thus establish the ones that are vital records.

While the National Archives Act of Zambia was cited as the source of instructions for determining vital records, a content analysis of the National Archives Act mainly describes the responsibilities of the NAZ. As stated earlier vital records relate to crucial records of a particular organisation and will document such information that will protect the assets and rights of an organisation, its stakeholders and clients. It is recommended that the MESTVEE has a vital records management plan as the assets and rights of the ministry, its stakeholder and clients may be protected. However, lack of clear guidelines to vital records may create problems as some vital records may not be identified and protected.

The study established that the MESVTEE registries mostly used fire proof cabinets and vaults and duplication to protect to vital records. Similarly the study done by Chaterera (2013) revealed that vital records in public registries in Zimbabwe were mainly protected by duplication. Unlike the findings from the study carried by Chaterera (2013) which indicated that digitization was another major method of protecting vital records, in this study digitization received the least attention. This could be because MESTVEE has a small volume of vital records. Kennedy and Schauder (1994) explained that an organisation with a small number of vital records can use a lockable fireproof cabinet or a safe. They added that fireproof rooms are expensive to install but very effective when set up properly with fire resistance for a minimum of four hours, fire detection system, temperature and humidity control, dust-free conditions and a secure locking mechanism.

The findings from the study revealed that MESVTEE used duplication and dispersal. Duplication in this context implies a situation where the organisation opens several files for one individual containing the same documents which are then dispersed to several departments or locations. In this case it is existing dispersal because by virtue of the ministry's operation, each teacher for instance has several files, at the Ministry headquarters there is one file in the confidential registry, one in the teachers' registry and one at the salaries unit within the ministry. Also they have files at the provincial and district offices. In addition each teacher also has a file at PSMD. This implies that each teacher has six files. These findings are in conformity with the findings of the study undertaken by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) in Zambia. The duo stated that maintaining accurate and complete teachers' records was a challenge due to the multi-layered nature of the management of teachers, including the central Ministry of Education, Teachers Service Department (TSD) and regional and local government employing authorities. They added that this was so as teachers were answerable to TSD on professional issues and to the relevant employing authorities for routine administrative matters. Such an arrangement where administrative operations require several files for one employee is referred to as existing dispersal. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) alluded to the research findings and urged that maintaining confidential files must be revisited considering the fact that the emphasis today is transparency in government ministries.

While this set up has an advantage in case a fire breaks out or any calamity in one office as its duplicate file can be used, yet it can also be expensive and consume a lot of space. This could also contribute to congestion in registries resulting in inadequate filing equipment. The MESTVEE should consider reducing the number of files per individual although Hoyle and Sebina (2007) cited inconsistency in the number and type of documents contained in files for an individual. They observed that Ministry files contained the greatest quantity of information, and were in effect, the master files. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) suggested that decisions were required regarding what documentation needed to be held on which file and how many files were actually required for each teacher and public servant.

5.3.5 Records creation and generation control plan

All business enterprise and transactions inevitably results in the creation and generation of records. Records management frameworks and systems commences with the creation and

subsequent capture of records in recordkeeping systems, through to their maintenance and use, and ultimately their destruction (ANAO, 2012). Properly designed records management systems will limit the generation of records or copies not required to operate the business and ensure there is a system for destroying useless records or retiring inactive records thus stabilizing the growth of records in all formats (United States Environmental protection agency, 2013).

The study sought to establish what type of records were created and generated in the MESVTEE. The finding revealed that circular, education policies and annual reports were the mostly created and generated records in the MESVTEE. In his study Gama (2010) came across similar findings, where circulars, annual reports and educational policies were also kept in the registries he visited. However, while the findings of this study revealed that educational policies were among the mostly created and generated records, Gama (2010) in his study found that educational policies were the least received records.

On the measures to control the creation and generation of records, in this study procedures manual and other procedures, report management program and forms management program were cited as the mostly used methods. The efficiency with which paper and electronic records are stored and retrieved is dependent on the controls that are implemented at the time of creation. Report and forms management program are intended to control the creation and generation of reports and forms within the Ministry. Failure to control the creation and generation of records may result in duplication of information, lack of uniform procedures for information processing, lack of control of the standard of presentation of information and increased cost of information processing (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994). The existence of a records creation and generation plan in the MESTVEE implies there is less duplication of information other than the documents relating to teachers, there are uniform procedures for information processing and control on the standard of presentation of information and reduced cost of information processing

5.3.6 Methods of organizing records

A filing system for active records comprises of the physical location, classification and indexing methods used, filing sequence, filing procedures, supplies and equipment, file tracking and the technologies used in the system's implementation (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994).

Findings from interviews revealed that previously there was no uniformity regarding organisation of files in the government ministries and departments. The government of Zambia engaged a United Kingdom based company called Organisation and Methods to offer consultancy services in administration and redesigning of the Civil Service. Consultants from Organisation and Methods then suggested that there be a common filing system for all government ministries and departments. In response to this, the PSMD embarked on developing a registry service manual to be used by all government ministries and department. The essence of devising a uniform filing system was to facilitate transfer of portfolios including staff within the public service.

Content analysis of the registry service manual revealed that each ministry has a reference number together with all its portfolios (government responsibilities, duties or functions). In other words portfolio subjects are predetermined in the registry service manual with their corresponding reference number. The registry service manual is hierarchical i.e. it starts with a code for the Ministry, and then its portfolios (functions) followed by the code for the subjects. Instructions on how to add codes for subtopics are given in the registry service manual. Predetermined codes for Ministries, Departments and their portfolios generally pose challenges when there are changes made to Ministry titles or a particular is moved to another ministry. It means revision of the registry service manual. However, the findings revealed that when a particular portfolio is moved to another ministry its code does change although the manual must be revised to indicate that a portfolio has moved. The manual provides instructions on how to classify, index (labeling and assigning retrieval keys) and how to open new files or records series. It has a sample of a file movement card for tracking records. Following the instructions in the registry service manual each ministry develops its own filing index. This can be used as training tool for new employed registry staff and ensures uniformity.

Research findings (see 4.7.1, Figure 1 and Table 21) revealed that alpha-numeric, serialization and numeric were the mostly employed filing methods in the MESVTEE. Similarly, Gama (2010) in his study established that serialization was mostly used filing method. The study revealed that serialization was used for policy records while teachers' files were filed numerically. Hoyle and Sebina (2007) also observed that to retrieve a file for a specific teacher, the Teaching Services Commission number was required which were generally running numbers.

In a similar study Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006) observed that Files were organised by employment number and not by employee name in ministries or by ministry name within the Ministry of Public Service or the Treasury Department in Lesotho.

Other files were also filed numerically. For instance a file containing all correspondence from mwembeshi basic school in kabwe would be given a file number **MESTVTEE/101/13/30**. Where MESTVTEE is the acronym for the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education, 101 is the control number, 13 is for kabwe district and 30 for mwembeshi basic school. In the Registry Service Manual the reference number for the MESVTEE is 9 but within the Ministry of Education 9 is not used instead 101 is used. In like manner the reference number for the Ministry of Finance and National Planning is 71 but within the Ministry of Finance and National Planning 71 will not be used instead 101 will be used. This applies to all Ministries than other the concerned Ministry will use the actual reference for other ministries. 101 is therefore referred to as the control number.

According to Gama (2010) serial and numeric arrangement may not need much technical skills on the part of the records managers and it tends to be easy to employ. Nabombe (2012) added that using numeric filing enhances the security of records. However, numeric and serial filing methods tend to depend so much on the index to establish what a given number stands for and this can delay the process of retrieving records. Registry staffs had to constantly refer to the index in order to identify the numbers for a given subject and with limited copies of indexes, retrieval of records is often delayed. In a similar study Hoyle and Sebina (2007) noted that without establishing the correct employee number it was practically impossible to retrieve a file in the ministry.

5.3.7 Records retention and disposal schedule

Another important element of a records management program is the records retention and disposal schedule. A retention and disposal schedule refers to the document that prescribes the length of time that ministry records are to be retained and disposal action when this time has been reached (Massey University, 2013). Disposal involves sending records from the office of origin to the records centre or the archival repository or destroying them under secure conditions

if they are obsolete while Destruction is the disposal of records of no further value by incineration, maceration, pulping, shredding or another secure method (IRMT 1999:101-105).

The study revealed (see 4.8.1, 4.8.2, 4.8.4 and 4.8.5 also Table 22, 23, 25 and 26) that MESVTEE had retention and disposal schedules and that the Ministry was responsible for preparing the retention schedule. According to the findings the retention schedules were revised annually. Results from the interview revealed that NAZ officials formed a committee with the Ministry officials to formulate the records retention and disposal in 2007 and since then the records retention schedules have not been updated. Similarly in their study Hoyle and Sebina (2007) observed that government ministries, departments and agencies in Zambia had the responsibility of drafting records retention and disposal schedule with the Director of the National Archives of Zambia or whom she may delegate this responsibility. It was established through an interview that the records retention and disposal schedule was revised after five (5) years. Association for Corporate Counsel, (n.d) states that for records retention and disposal schedules to be effective they must be refreshed every 18 months or less. This implies that the records retention and disposal schedules are outdated as it was revised seven years ago. Records created from 2007 to date are not reflected on the schedule and therefore registries lacked guidance on the disposition of records. This may result is either records being kept for a longer period than their value warrants or being destroyed prematurely. IRMT (1999:40) notes that in the absence of rules and guidelines of what should be kept and for how long, records management staff are reluctant to authorise destruction and over time, the registries became severely congested with older records.

On the contrary Nabombe (2012) noted that the courts of Law in Zambia did not have nor apply any records retention and disposal schedules. Chaterera (2013) also observed that despite being given guidance by the National Archives of Zimbabwe most of the public registries in Zimbabwe had no retention and disposal schedules. Mnjama (2004) in his study established that many African and Caribbean countries lacked retention and disposal schedules.

The non-availability of retention and disposal schedules or out-dated records retention and disposal schedules in many public registries in Zambia and in Africa in general implied that disposition was rarely practiced and when it was done, it was on an ad-hoc basis. That probably

explained why some government departments were congested with semi and non-current records kept in corridors, on the floor in offices where ever space was available thus creating congestion in offices (Marutha, 2011).

The study established that the NAZ was responsible developing retention schedules of records of a generic nature. This is in consistent with the research findings of Hoyle and Sebina (2007) who also noted that NAZ was responsible for drawing up general records retention and disposal schedules. An analysis of that the general schedule revealed had no disposal actions for most records except for those with continuing value. In a similar study in Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006:5) stated that more detailed and comprehensive records retention and disposal schedules for government ministries records were required. Without disposal actions it would be impossible to establish the next storage facility of records in their life cycle. This may result in keeping semi-active records in registries indefinitely.

The study revealed (see 4.8.3 and Table 24) that the retention and disposal schedules at MESVTEE had the four main elements i.e. records series titles, retention periods, disposal dates and disposal actions. Generally a records retention and disposal schedule lists the records series of an organisation with specific instructions of how the records are to be disposed of or transferred to secondary storage or archives or destroyed after their creation and initial use (IRMT 1999). The records retention period indicates the specific time period records must be kept in the Ministry registries and the disposal date is the actual date when a record is supposed to be transferred to a records center or National Archives of Zambia. Disposal action refers to either total destruction or transfer of records to a records center or National Archives of Zambia. Therefore the records retention and disposal schedules in the MESTVEE are generally comprehensive.

On the disposal methods or actions, the study (see 4.8.6 and Table 27) revealed that transfer to the archives, transfer to the records centre and shredding were mostly used method. Unlike findings from the study carried out by Gama (2010) which revealed burning as the mostly used disposal method, in this study burning was the least used method of disposal. However, it is apparent that due to the absence of an update records retention schedule records in the MESTVEE were rarely transferred to the records center or archives resulting in semi-current and non-current taking up space for active records (see figure 2). This may cause delay in the

retrieval of records as one has to sift through so many files to get to the needed file. The study findings revealed that non implementation, delayed implementation, unqualified staff and poor funding caused problems in implementing the retention schedules in the MESTVEE. Some registry staff were said to be generally fearful of implementing the retention schedules particularly ultimate destruction even in cases where directions in the schedule so requires. Delayed or non-implementation of the records retention and disposal schedule has a negative impact on the records management program as whole. Implementing a records retention and disposal could probably help the Ministry registries regarding the budget. For example, the money reserved for acquiring filing cabinets could be used for other registry activities as the filing cabinet would have space to file more active records.

4.3.8 Records preservation and storage

According to the findings of this study (see 4.9 and Table 28) records in the MESVTEE are mostly preserved using optical discs and digitization. Similarly Odeyemi, Issa and Saka, (2011:48); Unegbu and Adenike (2013) in their study noted that records at the Ministry of Information and Strategy in Nigeria kept their records safe on Compact Disks and flash drives. The reason for preserving records is to protect them from injurious factors such excess heat or light, fire break outs and humidity. Optical discs and digitization require computers and appropriate computer software to be accessed. Computers and appropriate software quickly get obsolete. Nabombe (2012) raised similar concerns that the registries might be unable to sustain the digitised system due to the rate at which equipment and software become obsolete and fail to migrate digitised records to other media formats such as magnetic and optical media as a preservation measure. He added that electronic files might be damaged due to lack of protection from hackers as well as lack of antivirus software needed to protect digitised files from viruses. He added that electricity power surges currently experienced in Zambia might also affect the use and storage of digitised Ministry records. The study revealed that at ministry headquarters that the building dedicated to records management was purpose built therefore it was designed to control over lighting and heat. Air conditioners were also installed and fire extinguishers were recently acquired. However, the research results revealed (see figure 5 and 6) that files and boxes of files lying on the floor in the teachers' registry, confidential registry and pension registry were at the risk of being affected by any water spillage and termites. Therefore while the building

was designed to protect records from excessive heat and over lighting other hazards like water and termites still pose a problem in the MESTVVEE due to poor storage equipment.

The study (see 4.9.2, Table 29, figure 3 and 4) showed that boxes, shelves, compactus were the mostly used storage equipment. Through observation and interviews it was noted that the MESVTEE has recently acquired compactus. However, the compactus were not enough hence boxes were still used in the confidential and pension registries. In fact in the confidential registry no compactus had been taken there only boxes wooden shelves were used. In the teachers' registry files (figure 6) were lying on the floor because the newly acquired compactus were not adequate. Nabombe (2012) observed that registries at the courts of Law in Zambia had recently secured compactus although they were not adequate and not appropriate for certain types of file folders. To try and offset the problem of inadequate compactus in the teachers' registry some files of serving teachers were accommodated in the main registry meant for distributing and dispatching mail. As noted earlier, boxes are susceptible to hazards such as fires, water and termites. They easily suffer from wear and tear which may result in the destruction of records. Retrieval speed is also compromised when records are stored in boxes. Ultimately this might affect the efficient and effective operations of an organisation. Boxes are labeled according to the number of records stored there and with passage of time the numbers begin to fade away making identification and retrieval difficult. However, compactus are generally secure and designed to house files in an orderly manner. Hoyle and Sebina (2006) carried out a similar study in Lesotho and observed that personnel registries at the ministries were well-organised as files were housed in compactus units or filing cabinets and information was relatively secure and files were easily located by responsible staff.

4.3.9 Records centers

A records center is also referred to as the secondary storage facility as it houses records at semi-current stage in the records life cycle. Kennedy and Schauder, (1994) defined semi-active records as “a category of records in between active and inactive records.” Unlike active records semi-active, are not frequently used for operational and administrative purposes but can occasionally be used for reference purposes.

On the existence of a records center in the MESVTEE, the study (see 4.10, 4.10.1 and Table 31 and 32) revealed that there was a records centre in the MESVTEE and that they used a warehouse records center. The results from the interview further revealed that MESVTEE had a warehouse records center and that it was not purpose built hence lacked the required facilities of records center. The findings of this study are not consistent with the findings of the study undertaken by Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) in Tanzania that revealed lack of a national records centre. Initially the Ministry records center was meant to be a transit point though records end up being kept there for many years due inadequate space in the records center maintained by NAZ. In a similar study Hoyle and Sebina (2007) research findings commented that the Lusaka records center located in the old Bank of Zambia building was full and lacked lighting in the basement, air conditions and fire extinguishers. They added that the records center had water leaking into the storage areas, rusting shelves and questionable security. The findings of this study were however in harmony with findings of the study carried out by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) who found that each Ministry in Zambia had a transit records centre for storing closed files before they were transferred to the National Archives Record Centre. They cited lack of space in these centers as the main driver for transferring records to the National Archives Records Centre.

In his study Nabombe (2012) found a similar situation at the courts of Law in Zambia where the records center did not have ventilation system, lighting system, air condition neither fire monitoring or fighting systems and did not offer protection from intense heat absorbed by the steel containers. This implies that semi-current records transferred to the warehouse records center had a short life space as overheating and over lighting caused records to be brittle and the prints to fade. Absence of fire monitoring and fighting systems meant that any fire break out would instantly destroy the records.

The management of records in most Government Ministries including Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational training and Early Education Zambia is based on the records life cycle approach. As stated earlier the life-cycle concept of the record is an analogy from the life of a biological and living organism, which is born, lives and dies. A record is said to be created, distributed, used for so long as it has value and then disposed of by total destruction or transfer to an archival institution (IRMT, 1999). The fifth and last phase in the records life cycle is

disposition. After the retention period indicated in the records and retention period has elapsed, records are disposed of either by destruction or by transfer to a permanent storage place. Records are transferred to a less expensive storage sites within the organisation or to an external records storage facility called an archives (Read and Ginn, 2007). However, the life cycle concept distinguishes in a dysfunctional way between records and archives (the act of selection or transfer, and research value) demarcating as a consequence the work of records managers and archivists (Mckemmish, 1997). An analysis of the National Archives Act (Chap 175) of 1969 reversed in 1994 and 1995 revealed that the National Archives of Zambia was largely responsible for the management and preservation of records at their latter stage in the records life cycle. While the RMSPD of the Records control unit within PSMD was responsible for the first stages of a records life cycle. Therefore the records life cycle model has been adopted in the management of records in Zambia. In a similar study the Hoyle and Sebina (2007) stated that two departments had specific responsibilities for records management within the Zambia Public Service: the Records Management Systems and Policy Development Department (RMSPD) within the Public Service Management Division and the National Archives of Zambia. However, there was an apparent lack of clarity and distinction between the respective roles of the Archives and the RMSPD. Although some officers at the Archives maintained that the NAZ was concerned with government records at all stages of their existence (Hoyle and Sebina, 2007). An attempt has been made in the draft policy to highlight the responsibilities of NAZ and PSMD in the management of records in Zambia.

According to the draft Public Records Policy 2006, the PSMD was responsible for overseeing recordkeeping practices in the Public Service, with responsibilities for inspection, and for:

- developing and periodically reviewing records management policies, systems and procedures for the Public Service
- facilitating the installation of standard record management systems and procedures in the Public Service
- conducting regular inspections of Public Service registries
- providing in service training to registry cadres in the Public Service
- maintaining collaborative links with the National Archives of Zambia
- providing consultancy services on records management in the Public Service

- providing professional assistance, advice and guidance to Public Service registries on records management systems and procedures
- ensuring compliance with standards for management of public records.

The draft policy has also stated the National Archives responsibility as:

- drawing up general retention and disposal schedules
- agreeing with the heads of public offices retention and disposals schedules relating to records specific to each MDA
- ensuring that the provision of retention and disposal schedules were implemented
- authorising the disposal of public records other than as provided for by retention and disposal schedules
- preserving all public records of enduring value
- doing all such things that appear necessary or expedient for maintaining the utility of the National Archives.

While Ministries, Departments and Agencies had the responsibility for creating and maintaining adequate documentation of functions and activities of their respective public offices through established record keeping practices and procedures including:

- creating and managing current records with established filing and registry system and procedures
- drafting, with the Director of National Archives, retention and disposal schedules
- developing schedules relating to records specific to each public office
- implementing retention and disposal schedules
- transferring semi current records into custody of the Director except in as far as they might remain classified as confidential or secret on grounds of national security, maintenance of public order and protection of personal privacy
- cooperating with the National Archives in the management of semi current records
- ensuring that registry staff liaised with information management staff concerning the appropriate creation use, maintenance and disposal of electronic records in the Public Service.

It is hoped that when the draft records policy is finally launched and implemented the roles of PSMD, NAZ and MDAs with regards to records creation and management in Zambia will be clarified.

4.3.10 Staff development

Developing an effective employee training program is vital to the long-term success of any Government Ministry. Training programs carefully planned and properly implemented provide multiple benefits for employees and the organisation (Mckay, 2014)

The study (see 4.11.1, 4.11.2 and Tables 32 and 33) revealed that there was a staff training program in the MESVTEE and it was mainly workshops and in-house training. Ngoepe (2008) remarked that upgrading of skills can be achieved through workshops, vendor-sponsored programmes, professional seminars and college or university-level courses. The study conducted by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) also revealed similar findings, that Records Management Systems and Policy Development department within the PSMD had quarterly meetings with registry supervisors including chief registry officers. The study carried out by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) further showed that RMSPD had conducted training courses and gave advice freely, particularly when records systems had collapsed. The duo added that a significant capacity building exercise was needed in Zambia to bring records and registry management staff into the era of electronic record and document management. There are several benefits accrued from conducting workshops and in house training for registry staff. Workshops and in house training are tailored to meet an institution's specific needs, improves communication and builds a greater understanding between registry staff. They provide in-depth training on real-life, business-world applications and great experience for records management personnel to learn and work together in a familiar work environment. Workshops and in house training generally reduces overall training costs and eliminates travel time and expense for records management staffs. Ultimately workshop participants are very motivated (CLR, 2014).

However, workshop participants may have a broad range of skills and at different levels making comprehension of some concepts challenging for some participants. At the MESTVEE, for instance some registry personnel possess a certificate in Information Technology, a diploma in human resource, advanced diploma in computer engineering while those with records

management others have certificate, diplomas and a first degree. This implies that those without any formal training in records management may have difficulties comprehending some concepts. Hoyle and Sebina (2008) notes in Botswana that records managers in MDAs often had no formal training resulting in severe difficulties. They added that records management units were often viewed as dumping grounds for non-performing or hard to place employees. In case of Zambia, Hoyle and Sebina (2007) reported, that some officials in Zambia suggested that traditionally records management received low recognition in the public service and was considered to be work that could be done by anyone, regardless of skills and qualifications. Similarly ANAO (2012) established that many agency staff in Australia had not undertaken records management training for several years, and training was not tailored to meet staff needs. They observed that this contributed to records management staff not being aware of how to implement key aspects of records management programme. IRMT (1999:127) posits that all individuals appointed to posts involving records management, whether or not they already possess a professional, paraprofessional or specialist qualification, must be trained in the specific policies, procedures and records systems.

On other hand those with records management would either find the contents of the training materials superficial or too advanced. Workshops and in house training are usually conducted within a short period of time and as such it may be hard to fit everything that is intended to be covered into a single workshop especially hands-on practice for online searching. Handling large classes, in this case forty six registry staffs for hands-on practice may be difficult. Instructor resources such transparencies, presentation software and live online are required for a successful workshop and these may add to the total cost for a workshop of forty six participants in a Ministry that is poorly funded like MESTVEE (Huber, 1997).

The findings from interviews revealed that in an effort to tackle inadequate records training, Cabinet Office introduced a records management program at the National Institute for Public Administration (NIPA). It was pointed out that the training offered at UNZA was not enough as it just offered a component of records and archival management and not the entire course. This implies that the knowledge grandaunts possessed was not adequate and possibly superficial to effectively work in the registry or undertake records management responsibilities. Ill qualified staffs inevitably fail to perform to the expected standard thus resulting into poor service delivery.

Nevertheless, in their study Hoyle and Sebina (2007) observed that librarians were permitted to join the registry cadre owing to the shortage of trained records staff. This is irrespective of the fact that the library training program at the university and college level included only records and archives modules. In most case library professionals have been promoted to registry supervisors and chief registry officers (Hoyle and Sebina, 2007). The findings revealed that one of the registry officers at MESVTEE headquarters had a diploma in Library and Information science from Evelyn Hone College. Salleh, Yaakub and Dzulkifli (2011) amplified the fact that education, knowledge and skill were essential elements in the continuing development of efficient records management practices.

4.3.11 Electronic records

The study revealed that MESVTEE registries managed electronic records and e-storage devices were labeled in a standard way. However interview results revealed that the concept of electronic records existed in the public service of Zambia but that because there were no written guidelines or policies relating to the management of electronic records, individual officers managed their own electronic records and not necessarily registries. Certain registry officers had electronic records stored on their personal computers. Passwords were the mostly used security measures while firewalls were the list used security measures. Interview results also showed that Audio-visual and electronic records were mainly stored on flash discs. The findings of the current study were in harmony with the study carried out by Chaterera (2013) which indicated that passwords were the mostly used means of security for electronic records while firewalls were the least used. In line with the above findings Hoyle and sebina (2007) observed that the proliferation of unmanaged documents on personal computers (PC) hard drives resulted in a great deal of time being wasted when searching for documents, misplaced information. They went on to say that this weakened accountability in Government Ministries

5.4 Challenges and problems encountered

The study also sought to identify the problems faced by registry staff (see 4.13 and Table 38) in executing their duties. The findings revealed that retrieving active records, lack of supplies (folders, file clips, etc.) and poor and inadequate funding were all high contributors to the failure by the records management staff to execute their duties efficiently. Similarly Unegbu and

Adenike (2013) in their study observed that inadequate funding in the offices contributed to some challenges faced by the employees including registry staff. Failure to retrieve active records on time meant decisions and other operational activities were delayed. This could lead to lack of confidence in the capability of registry staffs by other members of staff in the Ministry. As stated earlier, the absence of an up-to-date records and retention schedule may result in semi-active records being kept for a much longer period than their value warranted. Consequently, there is congestion in the Ministry registries and naturally to retrieve a specific record one had to sift through so many files hence the delay in retrieval of active records. From observation several shelves and cabinets in the MESTVEE were not labeled while some numbers on the boxes were slowly fading away. These factors could possibly make retrieval of active records as well as semi-active records difficult and slow. In fact transfer of records to semi-active records to records centers on time would free filing cabinets leaving enough space for more active records and reduced cost for filing equipment. Eventually registries could save some money and use it acquire supplies. Similarly Nabombe (2012) described the same scenario in his research findings. His research findings revealed that court registries often stored active, semi-active and inactive records together due to lack of adequate space in record centers and storage shelves.

Marutha (2011) observed that there was congestion in registries resulting in difficulties in retrieving documents and information from registries. Hoyle and sebina (2007) confirmed that inadequate resources, the lack of training and professional support, proliferation of paper documents without provisions for disposal including limited equipment and supplies were the problems that rocked most public registries in Zambia. They added that accessing the files was not easy and that registries required more space. Failure by the MESTVEE to have an up-to-date records retention and disposal schedule and subsequently failure to dispose of semi-active and non-active records on time could be attributed to the absence of the records management policy. The records management policy would stipulate specific instructions on how to determine records of value and those of continuing value hence providing guidelines on how to establish retention periods. As the case stands the MESTVEE depends on NAZ officials for guidance who are also preoccupied with other responsibilities. Generally most Government Ministries complained of inadequate funding. To try to cope with inadequate funding Government

Ministries identify and set priority areas and findings from the interview revealed that registries are not among the priority area in terms of funding in the Government in general.

Low motivation, tracking and locating semi-active records and inadequate shelving and filing equipment were also cited as some of the problems encountered by the records staff in executing their duties. In a similar study Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) identified low morale, lack of space in registries including limited capacity in terms of shelving and accessing information as problems faced by public registries in Tanzania. Low motivation could be as a result of how some registry staffs found themselves working in the registry. As alluded to earlier persons with cases to answer with the administration would be transferred to the registry as a form of disciplinary measure and those they failed to find vacancies in the establishment would also be taken to the registry. This was amplified by GRZ (2012) which explicitly stated that in the Public Service records management "...has largely remained unattractive to professionals due to low levels of grades. Furthermore, there has been lack of recognition of records management as a profession like any other within the public service resulting in low entry requirements for records cadre. This had led to registries being managed by personnel with some of the least qualification in the Public Service which has negatively affected the effectiveness of the system and thus adversely impacting on the delivery of the Public Service in the country. Furthermore, the motivation among the records management has remained low." In a similar study Hoyle and Wamukoya (2007) added that it was difficult to retain registry staff in Tanzania due to low salaries and the poor image of the work, which was viewed by many as only suitable for people who were not educated.

Hoyle and wamukoya (2006) attributed the problem of inadequate space to large volumes of files which were not disposed in the Ministry of Education in Lesotho. As stated earlier, each serving teacher in the MESTVEE has about six files. At the MESTVEE headquarters there is the pension's registry, teachers' registry and confidential registry housing duplicate files. There is another one at the salaries department. The files contained more or less the same documents. This could explain why there is congestion in the registries. Perhaps digitizing the files and creating a relational database accessible to all departments would alleviate the problem of space in the MESTVEE. The MESTVEE registries used charge out books and if a file is misplaced the registry had to flip the pages to locate the page with the details of where a particular is being

kept. Flipping page can be cumbersome and time consuming. This could explain why tracking a misplaced file is a challenge in the MESTVEE. Probably introducing bar coding system would be helpful.

5.5 Conclusion

Research results have clearly shown that MESTVEE registries were faced with many challenges. Delayed retrieval of active records, lack of supplies and poor and inadequate funding and low morale might affect the management of active and semi-active records. The study showed that MESTVEE failure to develop the records management policy and records retention and disposal schedule might have contributed to poor records management in the Ministry registries. Findings on the caliber and professional qualifications among registry staff raised some concerns regarding the quality of the registry staff and their capacity to implement records management programmes in the MESTVEE. Consequently inadequacies in the registry staffs' capacity might have led to an inefficient and an ineffective records management program in the MESTVEE registries. Low motivation and inadequate training personnel might be indicative of poor conditions of service in the MESTVEE. This raises the need for the MESTVEE to re-design registry jobs in order to motivate and more qualified employees.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.0 Overview

This chapter provides the conclusions, recommendations and possible areas for future research based on the results that were presented in Chapter 4 and interpreted and discussed in Chapter 5. The conclusions and recommendations provided in this chapter were guided by the research purpose, research objective, research questions and the problem that the study attempted to solve as explained in Chapter 1.

6.1 Summary of the findings

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the knowledge levels of registry staff, the elements of the records management program and challenges encountered by registries in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education in Zambia. Specifically, the research's objectives were to assess the knowledge levels of the registry staff at MESTVEE; to assess the elements of the records management program at MESTVEE; and to establish the challenges affecting the execution of an effective records management program at MESTVEE. The questions included an enquiry into the knowledge levels of registry staff and the comprehensiveness of the records management elements as well as problems faced by registry staff in executing their duties.

Primary data relating to research objectives was collected using the triangulation method (comprising of a survey questionnaire, face-to-face interviews, non-participant observations, and secondary sources). Out of a target population of 48 records management staff earmarked for the study, 46 took part in the study representing 96% participation. The study used a case study design and it was a total survey. Research findings showed that the majority of the records management staff at MESTVEE were generally knowledgeable of basic records management concepts and practices and that there was no association between knowledge levels and education and between knowledge levels and work experience. While the registries were generally adequately staffed several had no records management qualifications. Secondly,

MESTVEE registries lacked certain key elements of a records management program such as a records management policy and up-to-date records retention and disposal schedules resulting into an inefficient records management program. Thirdly, findings showed that the registry service manual did not provide guidance on how to manage electronic records, incoming and outgoing mail. Research findings also showed that low motivation among registry staff, lack of supplies, poor and inadequate funding, inadequate shelving and filing equipment, inadequate storage space, difficulty in locating and retrieving active and semi-active contributed to the failure by records management staff to execute their duties efficiently.

6.2 Conclusion

A comprehensive and an efficient records management program must consist of eleven elements and adequate and well qualified staff. The results of the study revealed a number of deficiencies and challenges which were affecting the records management program from attaining its intended goal of achieving efficiency and economy in the creation, use, maintenance and disposal of records. The challenges and deficiencies included ill qualified and low motivated staff, lack of a records management policy, lack of up-to-date records retention and disposal schedule and lack of guidelines for managing electronic records. Owing to these deficiencies, the records management program at the MESTVEE is not comprehensive and efficient hence problems such as congestion in registries, poor service delivery and low image of the registry staff.

6.3 Recommendations

Various deficiencies and challenges affecting the records management program in the MESTVEE from attaining its intended goal of fostering accountability and transparency were identified and discussed in this study. Based on the identified challenges, the study suggests possible recommendations to address these problems. The provided recommendations are intended to enhancing acceptable records management practices in public registries, so that effective service delivery is realised:

1. The establishment register should be revised owing to the growth of the volume of records and the change in the administrative structure at MESTVEE.
2. MESTVEE should come up with clear policies on staff career development and in-service training for all registry staff. Policies and guidelines should also be formulated indicating who is eligible to work in the registry and with what qualifications.
3. Public Service Management Division and Cabinet Office should endorse and launch a unified records management policy that would serve as a guide in good records management practices.
4. Revise the registry service manual to include chapter 5 of the Government Office Instructions so that it could be used both as a guide and a training tool for registry staff at all levels
5. Compel all MESTVEE registries to comply with existing records management regulations as stipulated in the National Archives Act of Zambia and Government Office Instructions
6. Revise the records retention and disposal schedule to include new records series and to consistently implement the records retention and disposal schedule by regularly transferring semi-active and inactive records to records centers and National Archives of Zambia respectively.
7. Established purpose built record centres at the MESTVEE in order to improve the management of semi-active.
8. Increase budgetary allocations to all MESTVEE registries in particular in order to improve registry operations
9. Modernise registry infrastructure taking into account storage environment requirements for both paper and electronic records such as fire sensors, air conditions, and humidity control systems

6.4 Implications for further study

The researcher recommends that future research should look at some of the challenges in government Ministries, Departments and Agencies concerning records management such as:

- a) Records management legislation, policy and standardisation
- b) Low motivation and low job esteem among registry staff

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Letter to the Permanent Secretary

The Permanent Secretary

Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational training and Early Education

Department of Science and Vocational training

P. O. Box 50093

LUSAKA

ZAMBIA

1 July, 2014

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF : REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY TO GATHER INFORMATION FROM
THE REGISTRY STAFF**

With reference to the above mentioned subject, may you kindly grant me permission to gather information from registry staffs.

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Masters Studies in Library and Information Science in the Department of library and information Studies. My research project assesses the practices and principles of records management of public records in the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational training and Early Education headquarters including the bursaries, UNESCO, Science and Vocational training, National Science Center and Zambia Library Service units.

The gathering of information will characterize distribution of questionnaires and observation methods. Observation will be restricted to records management aspects such as infrastructure (storage facilities, supplies and space), manuals, policies, lighting, ventilation, disposal schedules, classification and filing system.

It is envisaged that the publication from this study and the literature will help public registries better their records management practices leading to effective service delivery.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could assist by permitting me to have the attached observational schedule and questionnaire completed by the registry staff.

The information obtained will only be used for the purpose of completing this study and will therefore be treated confidential.

Yours Faithfully

Juliana Filomina Chirwa

Tel:0977 216563or 0964 322734/ Email Chirwajuliana@yahoo.com

APPENDIX 2: An Introductory Letter to the Respondents

**The University of Zambia
School of Education
Library and Information Studies Department
P O Box 32379
Lusaka.**

Dear Respondent,

RE: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE KNOWLEDGE LEVELS AND PRACTICES OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT STAFF AT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EARLY EDUCATION.

I am a postgraduate student pursuing a Master degree in Library and Information Science at the University of Zambia. The objective of this study is to investigate the knowledge levels and practices of records management staff at the Ministry of Education, Science, and Vocational training and Early Education.

I am now at the stage of gathering data and your institution has been selected purposively to participate in this research. The findings of this research are purely for academic purposes. Therefore you are assured that your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Nothing that can reveal your identity will be published.

Your response and cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for accepting to be a respondent.

Juliana F. Chirwa

APPENDIX 3: Questionnaire

TOPIC: An investigation of the knowledge levels and practices of records management staff at the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational training and Early Education.

INSTRUCTIONS

Please kindly respond to the following questions as sincere as possible. Write or tick appropriate responses in the space or box provided.

SECTION A: Demographic data

1. Gender: [] Male [] Female
2. Age: [] years
3. Highest academic qualification obtained in records management:
(a) Degree [] (b) Diploma [] (c) Certificate [] (d) None []
(e) Other (specify).....
.....
4. Position: (e.g Chief registry clerk, registry clerk etc).....
5. Years of experience in registry work []

SECTION B:

1. Do you have records management policy? **(KL)**
a) Yes []
b) No []
2. If yes to the above question who has prepared the records management policy are using in your organisation?
(KL)
a) Ministry of Education []
b) Public Service Management Division []
c) National Archives of Zambia []
d) The above three institutions []
e) Others (please specify).....
3. Does your department have a registry procedures manual? **(KL)**
a) Yes []
b) No []

4. If yes to above question who has prepared the registry procedures manual you are using in your organisation?

(KL)

- a) Ministry of Education []
- b) Public Service Management Division []
- c) National Archives of Zambia []
- d) The above three (3) institutions []
- e) Others (please specify).....

5. Which of the following activities are described by your registry manual? (Please tick as many as apply) **(KL)**

- a) Responsibilities of registry staff towards users []
- b) How to handle incoming mail in paper form. []
- c) How to handle incoming electronic mail. []
- d) How to handle outgoing mail in paper form []
- e) How to handle outgoing electronic mail []
- f) Filing procedures []
- g) How to create a new file []
- h) How to record the existence of a new file []
- i) Controlling of file movement. []
- j) Instructions for closing files []
- k) Security of records. []
- l) Good housekeeping procedures []
- m) Other specify.....

6. Do you carry out a records survey in your registry?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

7. How often do you conduct records surveys in your registries?

- a) Last year []
- b) Two years ago []
- c) Five years ago []
- d) I don't know []

8. Who undertake the records survey exercise? **(KL)**

- a) Ministry of Education registry staff []
- b) Public Service Management Division []
- c) National Archives of Zambia []
- d) The above three (3) institutions []
- e) Others (please specify).....

9. What do you use the information collected during the records survey for? (Please tick as many as apply)

- a) Controlling records creation []
- b) Records maintenance and use. []
- c) Records appraisals. []
- d) Records disposition. []
- e) Creating retention and disposal schedules. []
- f) Records preservation and conservation. []
- g) To prepare a disaster management plan. []
- h) Prepare a vital records management programme. []

- i) Registry layout and design. []
- j) Automation. []
- k) Records tracking []
- l) File creation. []
- m) Records security. []
- n) Others (specify).....

10. Do you have a vital records management program? **(KL)**

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

11. What guidelines do you use to determine vital records? Tick [] against the appropriate options **(KL)**

- a) Records management policy []
- b) National Archives Act []
- c) Institutional policy []
- d) Standing orders []
- e) Others (please specify).....

12. What vital records protection methods are you using? Tick [] against the appropriate option **(KL)**

- a) Off-site vital records centre []
- b) Fire proof cabinets and vaults []
- c) Duplication []
- d) Digitization []
- e) Others (please specify).....

13. Do you have a records creation and generation control program? **(KL)**

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

14. What type of record do you generate or receive? Tick [] against the appropriate options **(KL)**

- a) Circulars []
- b) Education policies []
- c) Annual reports []
- d) Receipt of purchase []
- e) Others (please specify).....

15. What measures have you put in place to control the creation and generation of records? Tick [] against the appropriate options

- a) Correspondence management program []
- b) Report management program []
- c) Policy and procedures management program []
- d) Forms management program []
- e) Others (please specify).....

16. What filing methods do you use? Tick [] against the appropriate options
- a) Alphabetical []
 - b) Numeric []
 - c) Alpha-numeric []
 - d) Serialization []
 - e) Subject []
 - f) Chronological []
 - g) Others (please specify).....
17. Do you have a records retention and disposal schedule? Tick [] against the appropriate options **(KL)**
- a) Yes []
 - b) No []
18. Who prepares the records retention and disposal schedule? Tick [] against the appropriate options **(KL)**
- a) Ministry of Education registry staff []
 - b) Public Service Management Division []
 - c) National Archives of Zambia []
 - d) Others (please specify).....
19. What elements are on the records retention and disposal schedule? (Please tick as many as apply) **(KL)**
- a) Records series title []
 - b) Records retention period []
 - c) Disposal date []
 - d) Disposal action []
 - e) Others (please specify).....
20. How often do you revise the records retention and disposal schedule? **(KL)**
- a) Monthly []
 - b) Annually []
 - c) After five (5) years []
 - d) Others (please specify).....
21. How often do you implement the records retention and disposal schedule?
- a) Weekly []
 - b) Monthly []
 - c) Annually []
 - d) Others (please specify).....
22. What disposition methods do you use? (Please tick as many as apply)
- a) Burning []
 - b) Shredding []
 - c) Palpating []
 - d) Transfer to the archives []
 - e) Transfer to the records centre []

- f) Others (please specify).....
.....
23. What records preservation method do you use? (Please tick as many as apply)
- a) Microfilming
 - b) Digitization
 - c) Optical Discs
 - d) Others (please specify).....
.....
24. What records storage equipment do you use? (Please tick as many as apply)
- a) Compactuses
 - b) Drawers
 - c) Cupboards
 - d) Boxes
 - e) Shelves
 - f) Others (please specify).....
.....
25. Do you have a records center? **(KL)**
- a) Yes
 - b) No
26. What type of records center do you have? **(KL)**
- a) On-site records center
 - b) Off-site records center
 - c) Warehouse records center
 - d) Commercial records center
 - e) Others (please specify).....
.....
27. Do you have records staff training program? **(KL)**
- a) Yes
 - b) No
28. What records staff training program do you have? (Please tick as many as apply) **(KL)**
- a) In house training
 - b) Seminar attendance
 - c) Conferences.
 - d) Workshops.
 - e) None.
 - f) Others (please specify).....
.....
29. Do you manage electronic records?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
30. Do you have a standard why of labeling electronic storage devices?
- a) Yes
 - b) No
31. What security measures have you put in place to protect electronic records? (Please tick as many as apply)
- a) Login procedures
 - b) Password

- c) Access levels []
 - d) Firewalls []
 - e) Audit trail to track use []
 - f) Others (please specify).....
-

32. What records and information management systems do you have?

.....

.....

33. What records management functionality has it got?

- a) Classification []
 - b) Indexing []
 - c) Tracking []
 - d) Abstracting []
 - e) Audit trail []
 - f) Others (please specify).....
-

34. What problems and challenges do you encounter while executing your records management responsibilities?

(Please tick as many as apply)

- a) Locating and retrieving active records []
- b) Tracking and locating semi-active records []
- c) Inadequate shelving and filing equipment []
- d) Inappropriate shelving and filing equipment []
- e) Inadequate storage space []
- f) Inadequate filing and classification system []
- g) Lack of records retention and disposal schedule []
- h) overcrowding working environment []
- i) Lack of supplies (Folders, file clips etc) []
- j) Lack of records policy []
- k) Lack of operational manual []
- l) Lack of electronic records management policy []
- m) Lack of records protective measures []
- n) Lack of job satisfaction []
- o) Unsatisfactory salary and other fringe benefits []
- p) Lack of prospects for promotion []
- q) Low motivation []
- r) No opportunity for further training []
- s) Inadequate trained personnel []
- t) Low job esteem []
- u) Poor and inadequate funding []

END

THANK YOUR FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO ANSWER THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

CONTACT: Cell: 0977216563/096322734/0953166622

APPENDIX 4: Interview Guide for NAZ Personnel

POSITION HELD:

1. Which of the following indicates area(s) of professional records management advice given by NAZ to government ministries and department registries?

- a) Registry management []
- b) Records security []
- c) Appraisal of records []
- d) Creation of vital records management programmes []
- e) Managing electronic records []
- f) Creation of retention and disposal schedules []
- g) Preservation of records []
- h) Records storage []
- i) Housekeeping practices []
- j) Filing procedures []
- k) Other.....
.....

2. What means of contact do you use to advise government ministries and departments registries?

- a) Personal visits []
- b) Correspondence []
- c) Fax []
- d) Email []
- e) Telephone []

3. What elements are on the records retention and disposal schedule? (Please tick as many as apply)

- a) Records series title []
- b) Records retention period []
- c) Disposal date []
- d) Disposal action []
- e) Others (please specify).....
.....

4. How often do you reverse the records retention and disposal schedule?

- a) Monthly []
- b) Annually []
- c) After five (5) years []
- d) Others (please specify).....

5. What guidelines do you use to determine retention periods? Tick [] against the appropriate options

- a) Records management policy []
- b) National Archives act []
- c) Institutional policy []
- d) Standing orders []
- e) Others (please specify).....

6. Do have problems with government ministries and department registries implementing the records retention schedule?

- c) Yes []
- d) No []

7. What could be the cause of the problems in implementing the retention schedule?

- a) None implementation []
- b) Delayed implementation []
- c) Unqualified staff []
- d) Poor funding []
- e) Others (please specify).....

8. what is your relationship with records management systems and policy development at public service division:

9. What is your role regarding of registries and records management Zambia

APPENDIX 5: Observation Schedule

DATE:.....

1. Availability of the following documents

	YES	NO
Registry operational manual		
Records management policy		
Records retention and disposal schedule		
Classification and filing index		

2. Quality of the following documents

	POOR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Registry operational manual				
Records management policy				
Records retention and disposal schedule				
Classification and filing index				

3. State and conditions of the following

	POOR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Storage facilities (shelves, cupboard, cabinets e.t.c)				
Supplies (folders, file clips e.t.c)				
Working environment				
Lighting				
Ventilation				