

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE STATE OF RECORD MANAGEMENT AT
CHIBOMBO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY'S OFFICE AND THE
EFFECT ON TEACHERS IN CENTRAL PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA.**

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**A research report submitted to the University of Zambia, institute of Distance Education in
collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Management**

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DECLARATION

I, **Nyirenda Jessy**, do hereby declare that this research report is my own work and that all the works of other persons used in this dissertation have been duly acknowledged; and that this work has never been presented to the University of Zambia or any other University for academic award.

Signed:

Date:

APPROVAL

This dissertation of Nyirenda Jessy has been approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Educational Management at the University of Zambia.

SUPERVISOR

Signature..... Date.....

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to investigate the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and its Effect on Teachers in Central Province, Zambia. The study was purely qualitative and guided by the records life cycle model of Theodore Schellenberg and the records continuum model by Frank Upward. To carry out this study, a case design study design was adopted and 22 participants were selected who consisted of 10 technical members and 15 teachers from 5 different schools. The participants were selected using non-probability sampling design, specifically heterogeneous purposive sampling. The study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from the participants. In addition, secondary sources such as reports to augment the findings of the study were used. The Objectives of the study were to explore the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office; assess the extent to which teachers in Chibombo District are affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office; examine the level of security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office; determine the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office; and to find strategies that would improve record management at the Chibombo Education Board Secretary's Office. The data obtained from the participants was analyzed for findings accordingly using constant comparative analysis. The key findings indicated that the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office was poor. The investigation also revealed that the level of security provided for records was both adequate and inadequate. Furthermore, the research showed that mismanagement and lack of skilled personnel contributed to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. Recommended Strategies include digital migration, enhancement of office capacity, maintenance of office space and provision of continuous in-service training programs as well as the provision of trained equipped with the knowledge and skill to be responsible for records.

DEDICATION

This publication is dedicated to my dear parents Violet and Benard Nyirenda, my sisters Naomi and Ruth Nyirenda for their support and encouragement rendered to me during the course of the study.

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ACRONYMS

DEBS: District Education Board Secretary

R.M: Record Management

TS: Teaching Service Number

BMT: Between Method Triangulation

LCR: Life Cycle Records Model

RCM: Records Continuum Model

GRZ: Government of the Republic of Zambia

MDGs: Millennium Development Goals

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Words often have different meaning depending on their context. To frame this investigation, it is important to define the following relevant terms which will be used in the study to connote the following 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 of disposal and access.

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

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

Record: refers to information that an organization or person creates, receives, and maintains as evidence in the process of business transaction or pursuance of legal obligations.

Record creation: entails the development of consistent regulations to ensure accessibility and integrity through deciding techniques to track and log records by following specified processes for the registration, classification, and indexing of information.

Record preservation: refers to all the operations and processes involved in the protection and stabilization of documents against deterioration or damage and in the treatment of deteriorated or damaged documents.

Recordkeeping: refers to the making and maintenance of accurate and reliable proof of business operations through recorded information.

Records management: refers to the incorporation of various practices aimed at the proper management of an organization's information. It also entails the systematic control of all the records of an organization during the course of their life cycle for the attainment of operational business needs, fiscal and statutory requirements, as well as, the expectation of the community at large.

Security: is defined as protecting information from unauthorized access and disclosure; safe guarding and authenticity, accuracy and completeness of information and processing methods; ensuring that information and processing methods; ensuring that information and associated services are available to authorized users when required.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

COPYRIGHT.....
DECLARATION.....
APPROVAL.....
ABSTRACT.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ACRONYMS.....	iv
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.0 Overview.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	6
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	7
1.4 Research Objectives.....	7
1.5 Research Questions.....	8
1.6 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.7 Delimitation of the Study.....	9
1.8 Limitations of the Study.....	9
1.9 Theoretical Framework.....	9
1.10 Conceptual Framework.....	10
1.11 Chapter Summary.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.0 Introduction.....	11
2.1Records and Characteristics of Records.....	12
2.1.2Records Management Practices.....	15
2.1.3 Benefits of record management.....	16
2.1.4 Challenges in record management.....	17
2.2 Global Perspective on Record Management.....	17
2.3 African Perspective on Record Management.....	18
2.4 Zambian Perspective on Record Management.....	19

2.5 Summary.....	19
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY.....	20
3.0 Introduction.....	20
3.1Philosophical Orientation.....	20
3.1.1 Ontological Assumptions.....	20
3.1.2 Epistemological Assumptions.....	21
3.2 Research Approach.....	21
3.3 Case Study Research Design.....	21
3.4 Target Population.....	22
3.5 Sampling Design and Sample Size.....	22
3.6 Data Collection.....	22
3.6.1Types of Data Collection.....	23
3.6.2 Tools of Primary Data Collection.....	23
3.6.3 Tools of Secondary Data Collection.....	24
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	26
3.8 Data Analysis.....	26
3.9 Methods of Data Validation.....	27
3.10 Conclusion.....	27
CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	28
4.0 Overview.....	28
4.1The State of Record Management.....	28
4.1.1 Efficient Management of Records.....	26
4.1.2 Inefficient Management of Records.....	28
4.2 The effect of record management on Teachers.....	28
4.2.1 Missing Records.....	28
4.3 The Security provided for the Records.....	29
4.3.1 Poor Security for Records.....	29
4.3.2 Efficient Security Provided for Records.....	30
4.4 The Factors contributing to the State of Record Management.....	32
4.4.1 The state of security provided for records.....	34
4.4.2 Provision of Adequate Knowledge and Skills.....	35

4.5 Strategies for use in Record Management.....	36
4.5.1 Digital Migration.....	36
4.5.2 Enhancement of Office Capacity.....	37
4.5.3 Well Maintenance of Office Space.....	39
4.5.4 Having Credible and Trained Personnel to manage records.....	40
4.5.5 Provision of Continuous In-service Training Programs.....	41
4.6 Chapter Summary.....	41
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS.....	42
5.0 Overview.....	42
5.1 The state of Record Management at the Chibombo DEBS office.....	42
5.1.1 Management of Record at Chibombo DEBS office.....	43
5.2 The Effect of Record Management on Teachers in Chibombo District.....	43
5.3 The security provided for the records.....	44
5.4 The Factors contributing to the state of Record Management.....	44
5.4.1 Mismanagement of records.....	45
5.4.2 Unskilled Personnel.....	45
5.5 Strategies for use in Record Management.....	46
5.5.1 Digitalization of Records.....	47
5.5.2 Expansion of Office Capacity.....	48
5.5.3 Maintenance of Office and Storage Space.....	49
5.5.4 Employing Skilled Personnel to Manage Records.....	50
5.5.5 Provision of Continuous In-service training programs.....	51
5.6 Conclusion.....	52
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	53
6.0 Introduction.....	53
6.1 Conclusion.....	54
6.2 Implications of the Study.....	54
6.3 Recommendations.....	55
6.3.1 Digitalization of Records.....	56
6.3.2 Provision of relevant information to Staff members at Debs office...57	57

6.3.3 Enhancement of existing storage management system.....	58
6.3.4 Suggestions for possible further studies.....	58
FIGURE- Conceptual Frame Work.....	10
REFERENCES.....	59
APPENDICES.....	
Appendix I- Introductory Letter from the University of Zambia.....	
Appendix II- Permission to conduct research.....	
Appendix III- Informed Consent Form.....	
Appendix IV- Interview Guide for the DEBS.....	
Appendix V- Interview Guide for the Human Resource.....	
Appendix VI- Interview Guide for Data Clerks.....	
Appendix VII- Interview Guide for Teachers.....	
Appendix VIII Interview Guide for Other Staff Members at DEBS.....	
Appendix IV- Observation Guide.....	
Appendix X- Research Budget.....	

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter presents the background of the study; the statement of the research problem; objectives and research questions; the purpose and significance of the study. It provides the limitations of the study; and then the theoretical foundation of the study.

1.1 The Background of the Study

The adequate keeping of records over the years has given the educational administrators ability to unveil knowledge from educational-related data that could assist in effective management of schools in the 21st century. School records are official documents, books and files containing essential and crucial information on actions and events which are kept and preserved in the school offices for utilization and retrieval of information when needed (Durosaro, 2002). Such records are kept by principals, teachers, counselors and the administrative staff and these records are essential because they affect all areas of school management such as budgeting, planning, staffing, facilities among others.

According to Ngoepe (2004), in many countries around the world, record keeping systems are unable to cope with the growing mass of unmanaged records. This is particularly true in countries with limited financial or administrative resources or where records and archives managers lack training or professional development opportunities. Administrators find it ever difficult to retrieve the information they need to formulate, implement, and monitor policy and to manage key personnel and financial resources. For this reason, Ngoepe (2004) states that this situation impedes the capacity to carry out economic and administrative reform programs aimed at achieving efficiency, accountability, and enhanced services to citizens.

Mulauzi, Hamooya and Munsanje (2015), in their study ‘Records Management Practices in the Zambian Pension Industry’, indicated that record management in this industry was marred with inefficiency and ineffectiveness because of the many complaints that beneficiaries lodged with regards to service delivery. In most cases, the inefficiencies were because of the slow speed at which records were retrieved from the storage rooms or misplacement and loss of records. For

this reason, Mulauzi et al explained the need for organizations to demonstrate good and effective management of records.

Additionally, Malake and Phiri (2020) stated that the success of any organization is dependent upon effective records management practice that ensures the right records are availed when needed for effective operation. Administrators and record managers face challenges such as lack of retention and disposal schedule and lack of proper storage facility causing inefficiencies. Hamooya (2003) pointed out that in Zambian public sector; records were not managed effectively and to expected standards leading to loss of records of enduring value. And so, Hamooya (2003) states that for effective records management, public records cycle should be managed in a systematic manner.

The above has left questions around the state of record management at many organizations given the economic and social demands. It is for this reason that this research sought to investigate the state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Ngoepe (2004), there was substantial statistics indicating the number of general benefits and impact of record management in the education and other organizational functional areas. This was seen in the number of successful stories about the inclusion of record management to educational administration and management. However, challenges of mismanagement of record leading to loss of valuable data have been a major problem in most public sectors.

Ngulube (2010), in his studies on 'A lost opportunity to foster e-democracy and service delivery in sub-Saharan Africa,' asserts that good governance and accountability are fostered by well managed records and information systems. Record management empowers citizens to hold government accountable and responsive by ensuring the integrity and availability of government held information.

Hamooya, Njobvu and Mulauzi (2011), conducted a study on archives legislation and the management of public sector records in Zambia. The study found that record management in public sectors had challenges with retrieving records thereby not encouraging transparency and

accountability. In 2014, Hamooya, Njobvu and Mulauzi conducted another research on legal frameworks for archives and records management in financial institutions in Zambia and its role in the control and management of records. This study found that management of public sector records and archives was poorly done and hence leading to the loss of ensuring value the nation could not afford to lose. Mulauzi, Hamooya and Munsanje (2015) looked at the role of record management in the pension industry, the study revealed that inadequate financial allocation to record management, lack of training, shortage of storage facilities and limited equipment were some of the challenges faced in record management. Additionally, Mulauzi, Wamundila, Mtanga and Hamooya (2012) in their work on 'The Role of Record Managers in the Digital Age: The Zambian Experience' found that record managers in Zambia lacked knowledge on proper storage of records and preservation approaches and also faced challenges relating to security of information.

Furthermore, Bwalya (2010) conducted a research on the management of records at the University of Zambia and concluded that there was mismanagement of records with far reaching implications on the activities of the university. In addition, Bwalya (2010) also found that the cases of mismanagement at the University of Zambia demonstrated a sheer incompetency of the people entrusted with responsibility of managing records. In the same accordance, Muhaswa (2020) conducted a study in the education sector by researching on the state of financial records management in public secondary schools in Lusaka district, Zambia. The study found that the record managers in charge of handling records had no experience in record management hence, causing inefficiencies in record management. The study also found that record management policy; record retention and disposal schedule were not available, which are important financial management tools.

The challenges of mismanagement of records in public sectors prompted the researcher to conduct the study in order to understand the gravity of the problem and discover factors that contribute to mismanagement of records and the effect that has on stakeholders. Therefore, this research attempted to investigate the state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office and the effect on teachers in central province of Zambia.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and the effect on Teachers in Central Province of Zambia.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study was guided by the following objectives

- i. To explore the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- ii. To assess the extent to which teachers are affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- iii. To examine the level of security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- iv. To determine the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- v. To find strategies that would improve record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What is the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- ii. How are teachers in Chibombo district affected by the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- iii. What level of security is provided for the records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- iv. What are the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?

- v. What strategies would improve the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?

1.6 The Significance of the Study

This study contributes to literature on record management; therefore, reading through the findings of the study, some record managers might equip themselves with the best approaches and practices in ensuring effective record management in organizations. In addition, the findings of the study can inform policy and practice in the management of records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office in Chibombo District as well as the education sector and related industries.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study confined itself to record management at the Chibombo DEBS office in Chibombo and further focused on the effect of the state of record management on Teachers in Chibombo District. The targeted respondents were members of staff at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and Teachers in selected schools in Chibombo District.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The Study focused on selected informants that included staff and stakeholders from within Chibombo District. Due to a limited sample size that was employed in the study, the views and opinions of the study participants may not be taken to represent the general views and opinions of the entire population.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

Theories are essential in explaining, predicting, understanding phenomena, and challenging existing knowledge. Thus, Creswell and Plano (2007) defines a theoretical framework as a knowledge structure that can support or hold a theory of research. It describes and introduces the theory that explains the essence of a research problem. According to Braun and Clarke (2019:22), "a theoretical framework is an overarching explanation or model of something that explains why and how things happen". It consists of concepts, their definitions, and relevance scholarly literature. It strengthens the study through explicitly stating the theoretical assumptions to permit a reader for critical evaluation. It also connects the study to existing knowledge as

guided by the selected theory, which gives a basis for hypothesis. Additionally, it articulates the theoretical assumptions of a study and allows a researcher to address research questions, and also helps in the identification of the limits of generalizing research findings. It is against this background that the theoretical framework of this study covered two models namely; the Records Life Cycle Model and the Records Continuum Model to help understand records management practices at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.

1.9.1 Records Life Cycle Model

The Records Life Cycle Model perceives records as an analogy of a biological organism, which is born, lives and dies, and a record, which is created, maintained and used for as long as it has continuing value and is then disposed of either by destruction or by archival. Shepherd and Yeo (2003, p. 14) cite Schellenberg who developed the idea of the 'records lifecycle' concept; Schellenberg indicates that records are not still but have a life similar to that of biological organisms: they are born, live through old age and then expire. 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 (Brooks, 1996; Marutha, 2011; Read and Ginn, 2007).

The features of the records life cycle model imply that the model is more applicable and suitable for organizations dealing with the management of paper records. 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. As Kennedy and Schauder (1994) explain, 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.

According to Brooks, (1996), 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 traditional leaders and their stakeholders.

According to Brooks (1996), 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 organization 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). However, the life cycle model has been shown by researchers not to be suitable for organizations or studies investigating the management of electronic records. The perceived weaknesses of the records life cycle model led to the development of the records continuum model. This is related to the research as Chibombo DEBS deals with a number of records for teachers as well as for education management purposes.

1.9.2 The Records Continuum Model

This study used the records continuum model as it involved an investigation of the records management practices and their significance in organizational administration. In the 1980s and 1990s, the 'records continuum' model was developed by Frank Upward and his colleagues at the Monash University in response to the criticisms of record lifecycle model (Upward, 1990, 1996 & 1997). Such a continuum creates insight on the records management practices and their importance in various organizational processes such as organizational administration. Xiaomi (2003) describes the Records Continuum as a consistent and articulated administration process of

management beginning from the creation of records through to the utilization and conservation of organizational records as archives. This model demonstrates best records management practices enshrined in the incorporation of archives, records, and document management. In this model, records managers and archivists play significant roles in all phases of record management. This enables record creation with the right information in correct formats, record organization for the facilitation of their use, systematic disposition of redundant records, and the preservation and protection of records.

According to Coetzer (2012), Records Continuum Model frames issues concerning relationships between archivists and record managers, the present, past, and the future, as well as strategic thinking about collaborative working and partnership building among stakeholders. The structural principles of this model link to the concept of the continuing value of records. Additionally, Xiaomi (2003) explains that these principles, records are essential for the transactional, memory, and evidential purposes. Records also guide a unified approach to recordkeeping or archiving. Other structural principles consider records as logical and not as physical entities, despite the fact that their form is either electronic or paper-based. The institutionalization of archiving suggests a need for the integration of recordkeeping or archiving into societal and business processes and purposes.

In application to the current study, the continuum model was applicable to the records management processes as identified in the literature review starting from the creation of records to their disposal. The model also emphasized the role of records managers in the effective records management process. This model stressed that records management professionals are suitable in all phases of records management. According to Coetzer (2012), the model also identifies the outcomes of effective records management as inclusive of transaction, memory, and evidential purposes. Coetzer (2012) also stresses that effective records management practices play significant roles such as identification and acquisition, physical control, intellectual control, and access. These factors are critical in the entire organizational administration because such processes are critical for organizational management. For instance, the management of organizational activities and funds can only be possible through the provision of evidence as recorded in the organization's file.

The study opted for this model as compared to the other models as it delves into the specific records management practices in a continuum beginning from when records are created to their expiry. Therefore, this model was of significance to this study as it emphasizes on the effective records management, which is important for effective record keeping.

1.10 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this thesis will be based on the relationship between education management and management of records in an organization. In order to offer an overall understanding of the concept of record management, it is necessary to identify elements of this kind of management that includes infrastructure, filing system, human resource, and elements associated with managing records in its entity.

See diagram for the conceptual framework on the next page

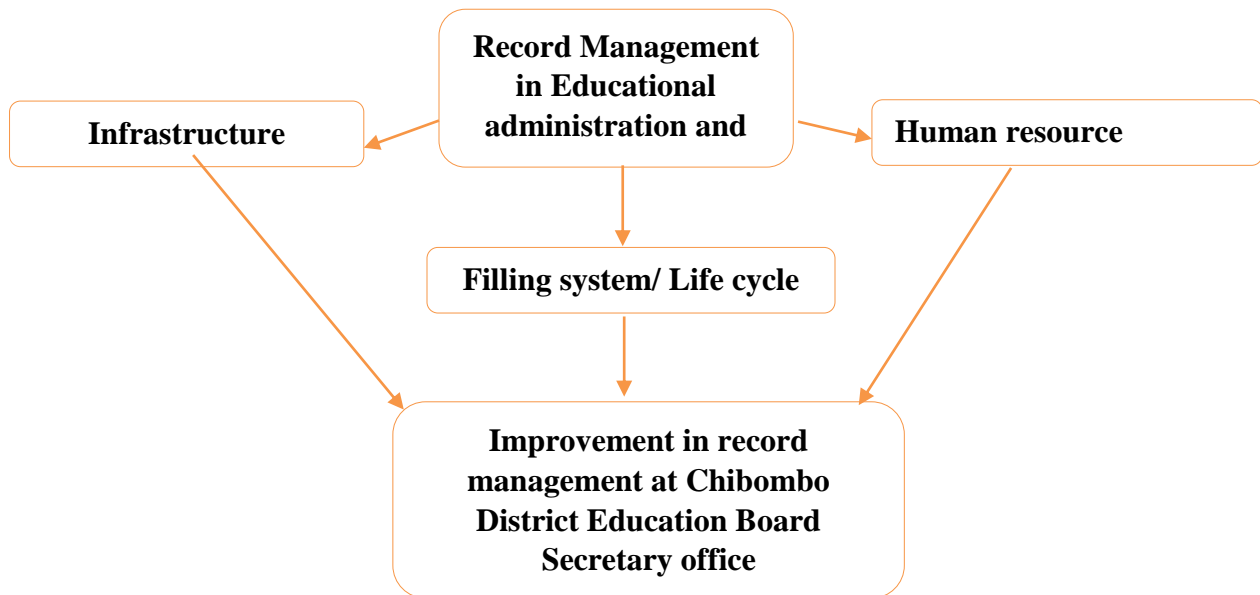


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The above conceptual framework showed how the concepts are connected for the investigation of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary’s Office.

In addition, the Concept of record management encompasses infrastructure, human resource and filling systems or the record life cycle. In relation to the research, the investigation of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary’s office included using concepts such infrastructure to help identify the state of record management, human resource to help interpret their interaction with record management and the filling system which helped understand the life cycle of records as well as contribute to the improvement of record management.

1.11 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter presented an overview of the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study which is the investigation on the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary’s office and the effect on Teachers in Central Province, Zambia. Also included are the objectives, the research questions and the significance of the study. In addition, the explanation of the delimitation and limitation of the study and finally the theoretical and conceptual framework on which this study was anchored was explained.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter provides a review of literature related to the study. The literature reviews data related to records management theories, benefits as well as challenges of record management. Additionally, the literature provided in this section also provides a benchmark for analysis and arriving at a conclusion for the carried out research.

2.1 Records and Characteristics of Records

International Organization for Standardization, (2002a) defines a record as information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organization. While there are many purposes to record management, as this definition highlights, a key feature of records is their ability to serve as evidence of an event.

Yeo (2007) defines records as persistent representations of activities as recorded or created by participants or observers. Additionally, an organization's records preserve aspects of institutional memory. In determining how long to retain records, their capacity for re-use is important. Many are kept as evidence of activities, transaction and decisions. As Megil (2005) adds, others document what happened and why. The purpose of records management is part of an organization's broader function of governance, risk management and compliance and is primarily concerned with managing the evidence of an organization's activities as well as the reduction or mitigation of risk associated with it. David (2017) in his writings 'Contribution of records management to audit opinions and accountability in government' explains how there is a link records management and accountability in governance of any organization.

2.1.2 Records Management Practices

Program records management implies a systematic approach, framework and strategies developed so as to attain efficiency in the process of record handling, control and management. According to Ngoepe and Ngulube (2014), a records management program 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. Notably, the purpose

of a records management program is to develop programs which will provide knowledge on the proper and adequate procedures to employ in the handling of records all through its life cycle.

Odeyemi, Issa and Saka (2011) stresses that a well-organized records management program 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. Griffin and Akotia (2007) adds that for an organization to attain efficiency in all its activities ranging from service delivery, enthronement of good governance and its attributes, such organization should embark on practices which advance a records management program. This is so because the attainment of good governance in any sector (public or private) is highly influenced by the availability of valid and reliable records.

Kennedy and Schauder (1994) highlight 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 program; policy and procedures documentation; training programs and ongoing review.

Similarly, Azman (2009) states that the structure and organization of a records management program 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 center 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.

Chirwa (2014) states that, a good records management program will result in the control over the creation and growth of records. 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.

According to Nwankwo 2001, Lundu and Mberve 2004, a good retrieval system must be a component part of an effective records management system. It is for this reason that implementing a records management program provides an opportunity to affect some cost savings in space and equipment and to utilize staff more productively (Mwaura, 2013).

According to Ngoepe (2004), 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. Properly designed records management systems 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 includes Forms management and control.

According to Ngoepe (2014), traditional record management practices include records capture or creation, records classification, records storage, records preservation, records security and records disposal. On the aspect of record creation, traditional operations, 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 (Chirwa, 2014; Saffady, 2015).

Similarly, United States Environmental protection agency (2013), postulate that properly designed records management systems thus 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. 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 (Ngoepe, 2014). Mountain (2012) on the

other hand, argues that record management also involves classification of records in an orderly manner for easy retrieval and storage.

Unegbu and Adenike (2013) in their study note that records at the Ministry of Information and Strategy in Nigeria kept their records safe on Compact Disks and flash drives. However, Nabombe (2012) highlight concerns that the registries might be unable to sustain the digitized system due to the rate at which equipment and software become obsolete and fails to migrate digitized 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-organized as files were housed in compacts units or filing cabinets and information was relatively secure and files were easily located by responsible staff. Consequently, record utilization and management improved.

2.1.2 Benefits of Proper Records Management

Some benefits of proper records management include better use of physical space, save time, improved control of valuable information resources, compliance with standards and reduction in its operational costs (UEW Records Management Policy Framework, 2000). According to Sanderson and Ward (2003), the importance of records management is increasingly being recognized in organizations. It is therefore the responsibility of records managers to ensure that they gain the attention of decision-makers in their organizations. Records represent major sources of information and are almost the only reliable and legally verifiable source of data that can serve as evidence of decisions, actions and transactions in any setup for example, organizations (Wamukoya, 2000; Barry, 1994).

De Wet and Du Toit (2000) state that the service provided by records management is of vital importance to the success of any organization. The primary function of records management is to facilitate the free flow of records throughout the entire population or institution if it's being looked at a company level. Most importantly, it remains the function of records management to ensure the records are safe for future reference.

According to Palmer (2000), the role of a records management system is that it acts as a control system that reinforces other control systems. The records themselves can serve to detect fraud and recover the loss. Since corruption creates an environment that allows opportunities to

commit fraud, records can provide a trail for investigators to track the root of corruption. However, for records to be useful in this capacity, they must be accessible.

Hare and McLeod (1979), highlight that organizations keep records for the following reasons; information retrieval, evidence of organization's activities and compliance with regulations. In support of Hare and McLeod, Cowling (2003), further identified four main reasons motivating organizations to preserve records permanently as: administrative value, financial value, legal value and information value. Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006) pointed out that without proper management of traditional records and archives, traditional leaders including the government in Lesotho risked being unable to earn people's trust as improper record management impacted negatively on accountability, evidence of transactions, and transparency.

Wamukoya and Hoyle (2007) postulates that all ministries, departments, agencies and parastatal organizations including traditional institutions 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. Leaders who received and recorded or documented their utilization of government funds to improve access to water in particular, were able to provide auditing information and transparency was ensured.

In the same vein, Bennett and Mannix (2002) proposes 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 (Azman, 2009; Mwaura, 2013).

2.1.3 Challenges in Record Management

According to Lauren (2017), it is essential for companies or organizations to have effective policies in order to prevent loss of data which can force companies to come to a grinding halt or even close their doors if data is lost permanently. Additionally, SeniWoliba, Mahama & Abilla (2017) revealed that information created or received and maintained by the University of Ghana was not properly controlled and hence, sometimes documents got missing. In another study

Bwalya (2010) in his study on 'Management of Records at the University of Zambia' explains that mismanagement of records was at rife at the university and some of the challenges were missing records from the stores room due to poor record management.

Asogwa (2004) says data which arises from the execution of legitimate functions of the organization should be properly managed and secured. Security permissions are set on records to ensure access to authorized personnel and to protect records. These measures ensure the integrity and security of the organization. Bwalya (2010) found that the University of Zambia kept records at the Registrar's office with access granted to only authorized personnel to ensure security of records. However, security of records is not taken seriously in organizations as Bwalya (2010) revealed that managers at the University of Zambia lamented that they did not have enough measures to ensure effective record management and security. SeniWoliba et al (2017) also found that security was not a priority at the University of Ghana as records were dumped in large numbers at the stores room making it hard to retrieve files. Additionally, Malake and Phiri (2020) in their study 'Developing a Records and Information Management Model for Oil Marketing Companies in Zambia Based on the Records Cycle Model' revealed that the organizations did not address security issues of these records for they kept them in areas where any person could access them at any given time.

According to Afolabi (2004) and Egwunyenga (2009), records management is plagued by such factors as inadequate skilled and experienced management personnel, lack of sufficient funds and the placement of records management in a low priority pedestal in relation to other things. Bwalya (2010) revealed that Lack of competent skilled workers in an organization causes maladministration of records. Maladministration of records was propounded by lack of competent officers to aid the registrar's office in the management of records at the University of Zambia. Afolabi (1999) explains that records management and archives staff should have appropriate training to ensure efficient and effective management. Lack of training on how to handle and manage records can lead to mismanagement of records in an organization. SeniWoliba et al, (2017) found that lack of training on how to handle records at the University of Ghana led to the loss of important documents despite efforts of retrieving them. In accordance, Joseph (2010), in her studies about record management at the University of Australia found that the importance of investing in the training of knowledge workers to provide them with the

records management skills they need to take responsibility for the information they create, receive and transmit cannot be underestimated. Lack of training may contribute to the lack of record management best practices implemented in the organizational cultures. Such training would enable record managers to lead by example and be prepared in their designated roles.

2.2 Global Perspective on Record Management

Information in form of records provides knowledge for development at individual and national level. This is because records and archives are used as a gateway into the past and pave way to sound decisions and actions (Mulauzi, 2009). It is important to note that organizations make decisions to take action and information in form of records have become useful in this vain. Phiri (2009), states that an organizations records management system can make a difference between a successful organization and one leading to failure. Another work related to this study is done by Hoyle and Sebina (2007) who noted that at the ministry of education, where files of teachers are kept, access to files for specific teachers is not easy. This implies that the registries are struggling to maintain registry systems hence this result in records missing.

In Australia, Joseph (2010) in her study on the ‘EDRMS Search behavior: Implications on records management practices and principles’ at the university of Australia revealed that lack of training to qualified personnel who handle records may contribute to the lack of record management practices implemented in the organizational cultures and so such training would enable record managers to lead by example and be prepared in their designated role. Joseph (2010) also alludes to the importance of investing in the training of knowledge workers to provide them with the record management skills they need to take responsibility for the information they create, receive and transmit cannot be underestimated.

2.3 African Perspective on Record Management

A study by SeniWoliba, Mahama and Abilla (2017) on the challenges of record management in higher education in Uganda hinted poor record storage, lack of record practices, failure to implement record management policies, missing records, poor security as some of the major challenges in management of records in public sectors. In addition, Mazikana (2009) and Chaterera (2016) confirms that most offices who manage records are not concerned with what goes on in the records management units until a key document goes missing in Zimbabwe. The

ability by members of the public to access public information is critical in supporting the social, economic and political development of the people. It also enables the public to engage in government's programs and activities in transparent and equitable ways (Ngulube, 2010).

Lack of training on how to handle records in the University of Ghana led to loss of important documents as Afolabi (1999) asserted that records management and archives staff should be responsible for providing appropriate record management training program to ensure efficient and effective management. A critical area that requires good records management is the human resource information systems of a country. Owing to the poor records management practices in Zimbabwe, Ngulube (2010) explains how the country has lost so much money through the paying of 'civil servants' who are non-existent. He further explains how the issues of trust, accountability and improved service delivery can only be attained if government records are properly managed and easily accessible to the public. In addition, Marutha (2010) conducted a study in the South Africa's public Health sector in Limpopo province and revealed that lack of proper filing system and lack of trained and skilled personnel were major challenges with regards to record management.

In Kenya public service, poor records keeping was reported in the study conducted by Mnjama in 2005. A similar study was situation of inappropriate records management in the public sector was also observed in South Africa by Chinyemba (2011) found that poor records management was the reason why financial audit reports were inaccurate and incomplete. The records can only be efficient if the record keepers are consistent in updating their records, whether they are digital or manual format, records have to be managed well (Mnjama, 2005).

2.4 Zambian Perspective on Record Management

In Zambia, several studies have been conducted concerning record management in various sectors. Scholars have done different studies on both paper and digital records management. It is interesting to note that Mulauzi, Hamooya and Munsanje (2015) asserts that there are no policies and procedures in most countries including Zambia on how to deal with electronic records creation, accessibility and disposal. Hamooya, Mulauzi and Njobvu (2011) in their study on Archival Legislation and the Management of Public Sector Records in Zambia, argues that records make it possible for people who have the right or obligation to know how things have

been done and to see exactly what has been done in public institutions. This therefore means that without proper records management and archival administration legislation, it is not possible for the public to access records and thus becomes difficult to hold individuals holding public office accountable for their deeds and omissions.

Another work relevant to the study was done by Phiri (2009) on the records management in the public service, in this study the author explains that any records management program should clearly state how active records need to be classified, indexed and filed. Active records either in offices or registries need to be organized so that they can easily be retrieved when needed. Phiri (2009) further states that the service provided by records management is therefore very vital to all organizations.

It is important to also highlight the work of Mulauzi, Hamooya and Munsaje (2015) as it is very relevant to the study. The study was conducted in Zambia to ascertain records management practices in Zambian Pension Industry. The study revealed that inadequate financial allocation to record management, lack of training, shortage of storage facilities and limited equipment were some of the challenges faced in record management.

2.5 Summary

Literature reviewed has indicated what exactly records are and what record management is about. Various studies have presented data on the general benefits of record management at various levels as well as the challenges encountered in records management. However, with regards to Chibombo case of record management at the District Education Board Secretary's office, there seems to be a gap on the literature available on the general state of record management. Despite studies done on record management around the Globe, Africa and Zambia, similar studies have not been done with regards to the general state of records management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. So, to bridge the gap, the intention of this study by the use of a qualitative approach was to investigate the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and to find out the effect it has on teachers in the district.

The next chapter highlights the methodology adopted for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes methods that were applied in the field of study. It specifies the steps and the methodology that was taken in carrying out the research. According to Dawson (2019), a research methodology is the primary principle that guides a research. Similarly, Igwenagu (2016) defines methodology as the systematic; theoretical analysis of the body of methods and principles associated with a branch of knowledge; while Grounder (2012) states that methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem, a science of studying how research is to be carried out. This study used a qualitative research methodology which according to Dawson (2012) examines the behaviours, opinions and experiences of individuals through methods of examinations.

3.1 Philosophical Orientation

This research was guided by the Interpretivist philosophy. According to Blaikie (2004), Interpretivist paradigm holds that only through the subjective interpretation of and interpretation of reality can that reality be fully understood. The study of phenomena in the natural environment is a key to the Interpretivist philosophy, together with the knowledge that scientists cannot avoid affecting those phenomena they study.

Since the research was qualitative in nature, this paradigm therefore was more appropriate for the research. Using an Interpretivist paradigm in this research was paramount as it explains subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office.

3.1.1 Ontological Assumptions

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) define ontology as the philosophical study of the nature of being, becoming, existence, or reality, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations. Traditionally listed as a part of the major branch of Philosophy known as metaphysics, ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist, and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences. Although ontology as a philosophical realm is academic in the sense that it is

inseparable from each thinker's epistemology, it also has practical application in information science and information technology, where it informs ontologies with chosen taxonomies (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994).

According to Seidman (2013), in the Interpretivist approach there can be more than one reality and more than a single structured way of accessing such realities. This research study was based on the following ontological assumptions.

Firstly, Reality exists in the human mind. This ontological assumption asserts that reality is there in the human mind. The assumption will influence this research study in the sense that reality cannot be seen physically. Therefore, the nature of reality is something that can be generated from respondents as they give reliable information based on the reality in their minds, concerning the research topic (Blaikie, 2004).

Secondly, Reality is conditional upon human experiences. The assumption helped the research study in finding out the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office based on the experience of the respondents who will be interviewed.

Thirdly, Reality is dependent on human interpretation of posteriori (prior experience). This assumption will influence the research study because the reality on the topic will be based on how the respondents will interpret their prior experience at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. Therefore, the information collected from respondents was subjective and helped to give multiple interpretations on the state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office.

Lastly, this philosophical orientation helped the research study owing to the fact that the researcher did not only rely on respondent's information but also construct ideas by interacting and observing how the people are interacting with the record management system in Chibombo district.

3.1.2 Epistemological Assumptions

Epistemology is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope of knowledge. Put concisely, it is the study of knowledge and justified belief. It questions what knowledge is and

how it can be acquired, and the extent to which knowledge pertinent to any given subject or entity can be acquired (Dawson, 2013).

This research study was based on the following epistemological assumptions: Knowledge is constructed through interaction with people. Thus, the researcher interacted with various stakeholders concerned in the record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in order to construct knowledge. Knowledge is known through the inter-subjective and intra-subjective dialogue which is considered to be critical in qualitative research. Therefore, this assumption influenced the research study in the sense that knowledge was gathered through interaction among researchers as well as between the researcher and the respondents.

3.2 Research Approach

According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) qualitative research approach is usually associated with the social constructivist paradigm which emphasizes the socially constructed nature of reality. It is about recording, analyzing and attempting to uncover the deeper meaning and significance of human behavior and experience, including contradictory beliefs, behaviors and emotions. Researchers are interested in gaining a rich and complex understanding of people's experience and not in obtaining information which can be generalized to other larger groups.

According to Bhattacharjee (2012), a qualitative approach is a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning. The main goal of this research approach is to enable the researcher to gain insights, explore the depth, richness and complexity inherent in the phenomenon or the subject of interest. Similar to record management at Chibombo DEBS, observing the state of record management required a systematic subjective approach used to describe their interactions with record management.

3.3. Case Study Design

The study used case study design. Rebolj (2013) describes a case study as a general term for the exploration of an individual, group or phenomenon. Therefore, it is a comprehensive description of an individual case and its analysis, that is, the characterization of the case and the events, as well as a description of the discovery process of these features that is the process of research

itself. The goal of a case study design in research is to fully understand the essence of record management. The rationale behind the use of a case study in this study was to help the researcher to describe and interpret the experiences of participants in order to understand the essence of the experience as perceived by the participants with regards to the investigation into the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office in Central Province Of Zambia. Additionally, a case study was used in an in depth multi-faceted understanding of issues in their real life context. In this regard this research used long, intensive individual interviews to help provide a very rich and detailed description of the human experience with regards to the an investigation into the state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia. Maykut and Morehouse (1994), recognizes that the basis of a case study is that there are multiple ways of interpreting the same experience, and that the meaning of the experience to each participant is what constitutes reality

3.4 Target Population

According to Collins (2010), a target population is a totality of all subjects, objects or members that replicate a designed set of requirements. For the research to be valid, a set of population will was identified as basis of information for this study.

The target population for the research was focused on teachers within the district and technical officers at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia. The sample size was chosen based on the number of key informants at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

3.5 Sampling Design and Sample Size

This research used non-probability sampling design. Dawson (2013) defines non-probability sampling design as a method of selecting units from a population using a subjective method. This research particularly used heterogeneous purposive sampling. According to Blackwell (1991), Heterogeneous purposive sampling is sampling where subjects were selected subjectively to characterize as accurately as possible the characteristics of the population of interest. The research used heterogeneous purposive sampling, which comprised different respondent's perceptions on the state of records management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

The sample size used was Ten (10) Technical members from the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia and fifteen (15) teachers in Chibombo district. The 15 teachers were sampled from Five 5 different schools in Chibombo District. Furthermore, the selected sample was believed to be able to provide relevant information for the accomplishment of the study.

3.6 Data Generation

The research used a qualitative method of data collection; the study utilized the following tools for data collection, semi-structured interviews and observations.

According to Bhattacharjee, (2012), semi-structured interview is a data collection method that involves asking participants a set of open-ended questions and following them up with probe questions to discover further their response and the topic of interest. Semi-structured interviews in qualitative research are a mixture of structured and unstructured interviews in that some questions are predetermined while others are not.

Maydanchik (2007) defines observation as a method in which researchers study the ongoing behavior of their participants (or subjects). This is different from techniques such as interviews or questionnaires because observations are a study of what subjects do instead of what they say.

3.6.1 Types of Data Collection

The research used both primary and secondary tools of data collection.

3.6.2 Tools of Primary Data Collection

This involves the use of the tools that are suitable for the collection of primary information. The methods used in collecting primary information included observations and semi-structured interviews. These interviews were generally conducted in an open-ended or semi-structured mode. According to Brymani(2012), open-ended (semi-structured) interview is a method for questions that allowed the interviewer to probe and follow up topics of interest in depth (rather than just "yes/no" questions).

3.6.3 Tools of Secondary Data Collection

According to Davies (1996), secondary data refers to data that is collected by someone other than the primary user. It involves the use of valuable information that will be obtained from already published materials such as journals, books and the Internet. Secondary data was used to compliment primary data collected so as to be in line with what other researchers have done before.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Every portion of research that involves human participants needs to go through a formal process of research ethics appraisal. It is important to note that research entailing ethical risk is spread across many fields, and the potential for harm is always there even though it may not necessarily be immediately apparent. Research involving human participants is always potentially ethically challenging, as there is clashes of interest between the researcher and the respondents (Robson, 2002). However, enticing as it was, the researcher was not involved in any unethical practices in obtaining data from the respondents. In order to do this, ethical principles were put into consideration during the period of data collection

Furthermore, participants were not interviewed without their consent, which was demonstrated by signing of the consent forms. Signing of the consent forms was an indication of the participants' statement of awareness of what the researcher wants from them and their willingness to provide it. Additionally, anonymity and confidentiality were applied and this involved retelling all the participants that their responses and identities were by no means to be published. Respect for individual's autonomy was well-thought in such a way that participants were made aware to feel free to withdraw from participating in the research if they did not feel comfortable at any point without having to explain themselves (Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2005).

3.8 Data Analysis

Analysis of data is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and molding data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making (Blackwell, 1991).

Constant comparative analysis was used in this research. It involves acute analysis of data collected in which the researchers will record of data from one text and then compared it to other pieces of data that are either comparable or different and made a list. During comparison, the researcher looked at what makes the piece of data different or similar to each other based on the responses given. Constant comparative analysis was used to compare data collected from selected respondents. This way of analyzing data was ideal for qualitative research because it allowed the researchers to critically examine and draw new meanings and ideas from data obtained (Dawson, 2013).

3.9 Methods of Data Validation

During the research the method of data validation employed was triangulation, in particular, methodological triangulation. According to Gliner (1994), Methodological triangulation requires the researcher to use more than one method of data validation. Furthermore, it involved within and between method triangulation. The validation method was Between Method Triangulation (BMT). This Method helped to check the trustworthiness of results and involved the use of different tools of data validation from two different families or groups.

Furthermore, when it comes to quality assurance, BMT ensured that all the necessary things that are in the set goals and objectives of the research are implemented effectively and within the timeframe. Additionally, to ensure the quality and validity of the information obtained, the key elements of data validation approach, which were used include prevention, which was used in order to ensure the data presented will be used for its intended purpose. This meant not allowing unrelated information into the database in the first place and if this was done, then the faulty data in the information provided was identified and appraised.

3.10 Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has discussed methods and respondents used in the study in the collection of data. It additionally discussed population, sample size, sampling procedures, data collection instruments used and how data was analyzed. It also looked at ethical issues considered during data collection process.

The researcher chose to study on the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and the effect on teachers because as an educationist who has served in management for the last 4 years, it was imperative that the researcher gets to know how records are managed in district education offices such as the Chibombo DEBs office.

Interviews and Observations were used as a means of data collection. Commonality between the researcher and participants enabled an easy familiarity and facilitated rapport, thereby yielding rich data. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

The previous chapter discussed different methods used to collect the data. It also discussed the population, sample size, sampling procedures, data instruments used and how data were analyzed. This chapter presents the findings of the study according to the following research questions:

- i. What is the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office?
- ii. How are teachers in Chibombo district affected by the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- iii. What level of security is provided for the records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- iv. What are the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?
- v. What strategies would improve the state record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office?

The research findings were from two instruments used to collect data namely semi-structured interview guides and observations. The content of the instruments was analyzed so as to draw comprehensive meaning and also the original unedited words of participants are used in all quotes although occasionally a word or two were added or changed for purpose of clarity. For easy identification, the research assigned letters of the alphabet to identify schools were teachers were interviewed such as School A, School B, School C; letters of the alphabet were also used to identify the technical members of staff interviewed at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office such as Officer A, Officer B, and Officer C.

4.1 The State of Record Management

In order to establish the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office, the researcher used semi-structured interview guides and observations. The researcher observed that the records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office were kept only in the registrar's office and placed according to Teaching Service Numbers on wooden shelves. The office storage space was small to accommodate the large numbers of files brought to the office and some of the files were placed in boxes on the floor. The registrar's office was open for access only to specific personnel and had a lock for security. From the observations, teachers had to request the front desk to access their files, the registrar then had to look through shelves in the registrar's office for the records. The researcher observed that the form of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office was manual filing.

The observations made by the researcher were in line with the responses from the respondents interviewed. The respondents were interviewed by the use of semi structured interview guides and from the findings; two sub-themes emerged as presented below;

4.1.1 Efficient Management of Records

Through semi-structured interviews with respondents, the data collected indicated that some of respondents felt that the state of record management was efficient.

This was expressed as in shown in the following excerpt:

My experience was good; I saw the clerk to access my records at the front desk and he told me to wait for some time till he could retrieve my records from shelves. I managed to access my records and got the help I needed (SubjectTeacher, School A, 2023).

Furthermore, another teacher expressed that the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office was good. And this is what he said;

The experience was favorable; I got the assistance I needed through the Standard Officer General without having to wait for long hours and in no time my records were

manually retrieved from the shelves in the registrar's office (Head of Department, School C, 2023).

In the same vein, a teacher at school C expressed satisfaction at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and this is what she said:

My experience at the office was fair; I had no trouble at all. I went there to retrieve my missing file and after making my request, the clerk at the registry found it without wasting so much time and gave it to me (Teacher, School C, 2023).

4.1.2 Inefficient Management of Records

While some of the respondents expressed satisfaction with record management, a number of them felt unsatisfied. One of the respondents interviewed reviewed that the record management was bad and this was expressed by the following statement:

The experience was quite strenuous since I had to wait long hours to access my documents. They could not attend to me there and then and so I was told to go back the following day after I had travelled from far to the DEBs office. The Debs office is very far from my school and going back and forth was very hard and expensive. The Clerk had to manually retrieve my files at the records room where the files are randomly put anywhere (Head of Section, School B, 2023).

In the same vein, another respondent indicated that the state of record management was bad. This is what was said in agreement with the above statement:

Terrible! My experience with retrieving my records at the Debs office has not been easy; it has been terrible because sometimes it takes days to have access. After following the office up for some days, the office clerk at the front desk found my file after searching through a pile of disorganized files and making some phone calls. And even when my file was retrieved after some days, some of the documents in my file were missing even when I was very sure I had submitted them (Teacher, School B, 2023).

More inefficiency noted as the following excerpt shows:

I had to exercise patience to have my file retrieved. This was during the time I had to transfer to another school and I desperately needed my files. The records clerk at the front desk manually retrieved my records from the shelves. I have encountered problems with my records at Debs office as some of my records were missing from the file. It is not easy to access records at Debs, you need to be very patient and it also depends on who you know in the office (Head Teacher, school A, 2023).

In the similar way, another respondent from school A indicated the following:

It has not been easy to access my records at DEBS office, the distance to Debs is too much and they people at Debs office are always busy to attend to you. I was told to wait for hours as the clerk went to search from the shelves for my records. And even after retrieving my files, some of my documents including the file had been eaten by termites. (Teacher, School A, 2023).

Findings from the interviews of technical members of staff at Chibombo District Education Board secretary office also indicated that record management was bad. This is in line with the following statement;

The records at the office are kept in the registry's office. Sometimes files are wrongly placed and documents wrongly filed, this is what has affected record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office (Officer D, DEBS Office 2023).

4.2 The Effect of Record Management on Teachers

The researcher engaged some teachers in Chibombo District by the use of semi-structured interviews in order to determine the effect record management had on teachers. Teachers are directly involved because their records are kept and managed at the office. Most teachers interviewed expressed that record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary was inefficient and has negatively affected them as they experienced missing records.

4.2.1 Missing Records

Most teachers interviewed reviewed that they had encountered challenges of missing records. This is expressed by the following statement below:

My experience with accessing my teaching file was bad. I was told to wait the whole day for my file so they could retrieve it but to no avail. Later on, I went back again and was told that my file was missing. I was very sure had I submitted my file but I was told it was not there (Teacher, school B, 2023).

In the same vein, another teacher expressed the following;

I went to access my records at the DEBS office and inquired by the front desk. I had to wait for so long so they could manually retrieve my documents. However, after retrieving my document, I discovered that some of the documents on my file were missing. I didn't get an explanation why, so I left the office very disappointed (Teacher, School C, 2023).

Another expressed the following;

When I went to the DEBS office, I didn't get the help I needed right away. I was told to go back another day. I inquired with the clerk who went to look for my file on the shelves. They lost my documents and I was told to re-submit some of them and that was very inconveniencing (Head of Section, School B, 2023).

4.3 The Security Provided for the Records

The semi- structured interviews were used to collect data from Teachers in Chibombo and Technical members of staff at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office; concerning the level of security provided for records at the office. The researcher observed that the records at the office were kept in the registrar's office on shelves and the office had locks to ensure security.

The findings from the interviews revealed different themes that emerged regarding the level of security provided for records. Most of the respondents felt that the level of security provided for records was poor and inadequate, while some felt that it was efficient.

4.3.1 Poor Security Provided for Records

The security provided for records was poor and inadequate. This is supported by the following statement from a respondent who mentioned that:

I have encountered challenges at the DEBS office. Some documents were missing from my file even when I had submitted them. Accessing the records at the DEBS office has not been very easy (Teacher, School B, 2023)

Similar sentiments were expressed by another respondent who added that:

I retrieved my file but a document I wanted from there was missing when I had submitted. And some pages were torn in half. I'm not sure how that happened. The frustrating part is submitting a file that is intact and then retrieving it in pieces and sometimes the whole file goes missing (Head of Department, School A, 2023).

In addition to missing records at the office, a respondent mentioned that:

I have had problems when accessing my records especially when I wanted a transfer. It was difficult to process my transfer letter. At times, though many times it has not been easy to access records at Debs office because of missing records. Overall, it has not been a horrible experience (Teacher, School C, 2023).

In addition, the findings from the interviews conducted with the technical members at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office indicated that records are placed haphazardly and this is supported by the following statement:

The registry's office is not all that secure. The office registrars sometimes temper with the files because sometimes there are misplaced. In most cases, the files are placed according to teaching service numbers but sometimes, some are found just piled up in places and boxes they are not supposed to be. And so, we have cases of missing files (Officer B, Debs office, 2023).

4.3.2 Efficient Security Provided for Records

From the findings of the research, some respondents expressed that the level of security provided for records was efficient. The researcher observed that records are kept only in the registrar's office which is locked with access only allowed to specific personnel. This is in line with what respondents from the office interviewed explained in the following statement;

There is only one office provided for records and that is the registrar's office. Records are not kept anywhere else but this office. We have shelves where teachers' files are placed according to their teaching service number (TS number). So, they are secure because we lock the office and only qualified personnel are allowed to enter the registrar's office (Officer A, Debs Office, 2023).

Another respondent indicated that there is adequate security provided for records at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office. He expressed this by the following statement:

The files are kept in the registrar's office which is equipped with shelves where the teachers' files are placed and the office is locked after use with access only allowed to specific personnel such as clerks and registrars (Officer C, Debs Office, 2023).

4.4 The Factors contributing to the State of Record Management

In trying to establish factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo DEBs office, the researcher through the use of semi-structured interview guides engaged respondents who expressed different views concerning factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo Education Board Secretary's office.

Some respondents indicated that poor security for records contributes to the state of record management. Others expressed that inadequate knowledge and skills contributes to the state record management.

4.4.1 Poor Security Provided for Records

The research found that some of the consequences of poor record management include failure to handle information securely and inefficiencies. Information security supports effective record management and this is in line with the findings and is evidenced by the following statement:

From my experience working in the education sector and especially from my previous position I held for a couple of years as a school manager, each file, be it paperwork or digitalized data, documents on office operations and relationships needs to be kept safe. To ensure this, security for records has to be a priority and in the case of our office, security is not all that good (Officer D, Chibombo Debs, 2023).

In the same vein, another technical member of staff at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office indicated that:

Due to poor security, files are tempered with and misplaced. Therefore, in order to ensure there is effective record management, there is a need to improve on security provided for records. Good security system is a factor to effective record management because it helps limit risks that come with poorly managed records (Officer C, Chibombo Debs, 2023).

4.4.2 Inadequate Knowledge and Skills

The research findings indicated that the lack of adequate knowledge and skills has contributed to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. This is evidenced by the following statement by one of the respondents interviewed:

In my experience working in the ministry of education and having held various positions that had to do with record management, what contributes to effective record management is having credible and trained personnel who have the knowledge and skills to manage records. If the custodians are not knowledgeable enough in record management, records end up being mishandled. Therefore, adequate knowledge and skills are relevant as it enhances information accessibility and thus allows the office to effectively manage records (Officer E, Debs Office, 2023).

In the same vein, another respondent indicated that effective record management can be achieved by having trained personnel equipped with knowledge and skills to manage records. In an interview with the respondent, he had this to explain:

In order to ensure effective record management in an organization, it is important to hire professionally qualified personnel to handle records. In most cases, records get mishandled because of hiring people that have no idea what they are working with. At

our office, it is because the members of staff do not acquire more skills in managing records through programs such as in-service training programs (Officer A, Debs office, 2023).

Furthermore, another respondent stressed that having knowledge and skill set is key to effective record management. This is expressed in the following excerpt:

From the experience I have acquired over the years, I know for sure that the key to an effective record management system is ensuring that one has the right knowledge and skill set to manage records. The knowledge and skill a record manager possesses enables them to document the data effectively and observe everything attentively in order to preserve the data for later (Officer D, Debs Office, 2023).

The above are in line with the findings of the researcher. The researcher found that the officers who work in the registrar's office that handle records had little or no knowledge about record management. During a one to one interview with the officer, he explained how he had no training in record management. This was evidenced by the following statement:

I do know what record management is based on the experience I have acquired over the little time I have worked here. However, I have no training in record management. I came here as a general worker and I found myself handling teachers' records and that is how I came to know about record management (Officer B, Debs Officer, 2023).

4.5 Strategies for use in Record Management

In trying to find out strategies that would improve the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office, findings from the interviews revealed different innovations that would improve record management at the office. Different responses were given in relation to strategies that would improve record management.

Based on the responses received this part of the research has been categorized by the use of the following themes; digital migration, Enhancement of office capacity, maintenance of office space and provision of continuous in-service training programs as well as the provision of trained personnel equipped with the knowledge and skill to be responsible for records also emerged as a strategy that would improve record management.

4.5.1 Digital Migration

Data collected through interviews revealed that digital migration could be one of the strategies that would improve the state of record management. This could help in ensuring that files are digitally stored to reduce them getting lost or misplaced. To affirm this, one of the respondents said:

I highly recommend that our records be kept on a computer for easy access. The government should come up with a system where teachers can access their files online by use of websites. We always have challenges of missing records at DEBS office; I strongly feel we should move to using computers and not the old way of keeping files which has proven to be old fashioned and outdated (Officer D, Debs Office, 2023).

In the same vein, the findings also reviewed that e-filing could also be a factor that would improve the state of record management and this was evidenced by another respondent who explained by the following statement:

E-filing should be introduced in place of storage rooms to accommodate the growing number of files. Due to poor security, files and documents are at most times mishandled and tampered with. The office of the registrar can be accessed by anyone who has an agenda, but if records are stored digitally and not manually, we can ensure that risks of fraudulent are reduced. A security code should be introduced as well, such as pin codes, passwords, face IDs to improve maximum security and easy access to records (Officer C, Debs Office, 2023).

In a similar way, another respondent interviewed expressed the same by the following excerpt:

I highly recommend digitalizing the storage, indexing and other related issues to help in effective record management. Gone are the days when manually keeping of records was a thing. We must move with the growing world of technology and use it to our advantage. By using technology to manage records, we can reduce issues of missing files (Officer B, Debs Office, 2023).

4.5.2 Enhancement of Office Capacity.

Data collected from the interviews also revealed that enhancing office capacity and well

maintenance of office space could be one of the strategies to improve record management. The researcher also observed that the office space was small to accommodate the large number of files and that there was need for office enhancement. This is in line with responses from respondents. To affirm this, one of the respondents said:

I recommend the expansion of the registrar's offices. The number of offices in the district has increased but file space has since remained the same hence not allowing officers to work well. The registrar's office is not huge enough to accommodate the large number of files brought to the office. The shelves are also not enough and this why some of the documents are placed in boxes for storage. This has affected the management of records here at the office and so we would very much recommend that more offices are built for the storage of files (Officer E, Debs Office, 2023).

In a similar way, another respondent expressed that office space is a challenge at the District education board secretary's office and that enhancing office space could improve the state of record management. This is evidenced by the following excerpt:

I would recommend that the government helps us to build more offices for storage of records. This would improve the state of record management at the office by ensuring that every file has space for storage. Some files go missing or get torn in the process because they get squeezed anywhere due to lack of adequate office space and shelves. So if the office is enlarged or more offices are structured, the issue of records would improve (Officer C, Debs office, 2023).

4.5.3 Well Maintenance of Office Space

In line with the well maintenance of the office space, the findings reviewed that maintaining of office space by doing regular inspections could improve the state of record management at the office. To affirm this, one of the respondents interviewed said:

The clerk or registrars offices must be attended to more often to avoid termites and maybe the storage should be changed by replacing the wooden shelves with those of steel

to avoid termites destroying paper files. The office has been experiencing massive attacks of wooden shelves by the termites. These end up destroying the files and therefore causing a risk of losing important documents (Officer E, Debs office, 2023).

In the same vein, another respondent interviewed stated that:

The office should buy steel shelves in place of wooden ones to reduce on termite problems. The termites easily destroy paper files and important documents. The wooden shelves also get destroyed and in the end files have to be stored somewhere where they are not supposed to be. Therefore, I highly recommend that we use steel shelves instead (Officer C, Debs office, 2023).

4.5.4 Having more Credible and Trained Personnel to Manage Records

The findings reviewed that one of the strategies that would improve the state of record management was having more credible and trained personnel who have the skills and knowledge to manage records. An officer was interviewed and he said there was need to hire more competent staff members. This is what he had to say:

I recommend that management department considers the hiring of more competent clerks. If the clerks who handle the records in the registrar's office are not trained in that area, that causes mismanagement of records. The custodians responsible for records management are not credible enough. They should be qualified in the field of record management before they are given the task of managing records at an office such the Debs office which handles large numbers of files across the district (Officer A, Debs office, 2023).

4.5.5 Providing Continuous In-Service Training Programs

The findings reviewed that one of the strategies that would improve the state of record management was the provision of continuous in-service training programs to ensure that the workers that handle records acquire more knowledge and skills in record management. An

officer was interviewed and he said there was need to provide more training for officers who handle records. This is what he had to say:

I would give recommendations that more training is provided for officers in the registry who handle these records. The clerks as wells as other officers who are responsible for the management of records should undergo training during their career to learn new ways of managing records. This would definitely improve the state of record management because every single day, there emerges new methods of management and I strongly feel this can be taken advantage of (Officer E, Debs office, 2023).

In the same vein, the researcher engaged an officer at the District Education Board Secretary's office who expressed similar views evidenced by the following excerpt:

Providing more professional training to workers at the Debs office would improve the state of record management. The officers in charge of managing records should be exposed to more trainings or workshops in order for them to acquire more knowledge and skills that would help them manage records effectively. The new skills and knowledge they acquire would help them in being innovative when it comes to issues of record management. Learning new skills can expand one's professional competency and can allow one to perform their job well (Officer D, Debs office, 2023).

4.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the results of the qualitative data have been presented and have indicated that the state of record management at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office was bad. The results have also indicated that the level of security provided for records at the office was inadequate and of poor quality.

The factors that contribute to the state of record management have been revealed to be provision of information security and adequate knowledge and skills. The researcher engaged some respondents who explained that they had encountered missing files, others complained about inefficient record management at the office. Therefore, it was discovered that in order to ensure that there were no inefficiencies, it was important to provide information security and also to

provide adequate knowledge and skills to the individuals handling the records at the district education board secretary's office. The results have also indicated that the strategies to improve record management are digital migration, enhancement of office capacity and well maintenance of office space, having credible and trained personnel as to manage records as well as the provision of continuous in-service training programs for the individuals who handle records at the office. The records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office are manually handled and because of that, there were cases of missing records and so one of the strategies recommended was digital migration. The research also indicated that the office space was small to accommodate large numbers of files and so enhancement of office capacity was recommended.

The next chapter discusses the results of the qualitative data and interprets the findings in relation to the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented the findings for the study. This chapter discusses the findings of the study presented in chapter Four. The discussion is furthermore based on theoretical relevance and other related literature. The findings of this study were deliberated with reference to the results obtained from semi-structured interviews and observations, as they emerged in the following five objectives;

- i. To explore the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- ii. To assess the extent to which teachers in Chibombo district are affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- iii. To examine the level of security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- iv. To determine the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office.
- v. To find strategies that would improve record management at the Chibombo Education Board Secretary's office.

5.1 The state of Record Management at the Chibombo DEBS Office

This subsequent section provides findings on the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. The state of record management was perceived differently according to the various views of respondents. Some respondents stated that the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office was efficient and others stated that it was inefficient.

5.1.1 Management of Records at Chibombo DEBS Office

From the research findings presented, it is clear that mismanagement of records is rife at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. The symptoms of mismanagement such as loss of records and inability for officers to retrieve the needed records on time have been

established to be happening at the district office. To attest to the feasibility of mismanagement of records at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office, the majority of respondents expressed they had encountered challenges when it came to retrieving and accessing records at the office. They expressed how the experience was strenuous because one had to wait for very long hours and in some cases even days in order to access documents. Respondents also expressed that their files were missing even when they were sure they had submitted them before. It was also expressed that some files are wrongly placed and filed and hence the challenge of mismanagement of records at the District office. The findings of the study were not in line with Mountain (2012), who argues efficient record management systems involve classification of records in an orderly manner for easy retrieval and storage. In contrast, these challenges enumerated above are in contention with Asogwa (2004) who asserted that data which arises from the execution of legitimate functions of the organization should be properly managed and secured. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in the management of records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. According to Afolabi (2004) and Egwuyenga (2009), records management is plagued by such factors as inadequate skilled and experienced management personnel, lack of sufficient funds and the placement of records management in a low priority pedestal in relation to other things. These problems have eaten deep into records management practice at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. In addition, archaic record-keeping methods and technology plus poor data storage facilities are part of the problems militating against record management as the study revealed.

In contrast to these findings, some respondents were of the view that record management at the district office was somewhat efficient in the sense that, they got the assistance they needed from the front desk to access their records. And that the registrar's office had been effective in the management of records at the Chibombo office. Majority of the activities carried out at the Chibombo District education board secretary's office are stored from the registrar's office where files are manually retrieved from the shelves. In accordance, (Nwankwo, 2001), (Lundu and Mberve, 2004) agree that a good record retrieval system must be a component part of an effective records management system. However, these responses should be taken with a pinch of salt, because they might not reflect the true feelings of the respondents. Going by some oral interviews conducted with the staff members at the Chibombo District Office, and the researcher's own acquaintance with record management at the office as well as researcher's

observations, it can be said that records are placed in the registrar's office and that is a good idea, but the office is very small to accommodate large numbers of files being brought to the office. The above findings coincide with SeniWoliba et al (2017) who said this was the case with the records at the University of Ghana which were dumped in large numbers at the stores room, making it hard for records to be retrieved. This was also the case at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and this made it difficult for retrieval of files.

From the ongoing discussion, it is evident that the state of record management at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office is poor. The study coincides with Hoyle and Wamukoya (2006) who pointed out that without proper management of traditional records and archives, traditional leaders risk being unable to earn people's trust as improper record management impacts negatively on accountability, evidence of transactions, and transparency. The researcher observed that the office manually stores the records on wooden shelves in a small registry office, with some files randomly placed in boxes on the floor. The above findings coincide with the work of Bwalya (2010), who in his study made observations at the University of Zambia about the registrar's office and how the office did not have enough drawer cabinets for storing records and hence caused challenges of retrieving files.

5.2. The Effect of Record Management on Teachers in Chibombo District

The research findings revealed that teachers are directly involved with the district education board secretary's office as their records are kept and managed at the office. Most teachers expressed disappointment with the way records are managed at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office being inefficient and negatively affected them as they experienced missing records. In the findings, missing records came up as an indicator that there is poor security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. In accordance to the findings, SeniWoliba et al, (2017) in trying to establish challenges of record management in Ghana Higher learning institutions alluded that information created or received by the university of Ghana were not properly controlled and managed and hence sometimes cases of missing records was apparent. However, the responses of the interviewed opposed De Wet and Du Toit (2000) who stated that the service provided by records management is of vital importance to the success of any organization. The primary function of records management is to facilitate the free flow of records throughout the entire population or institution if it's being

looked at an organization. Most importantly, it remains the function of records management to ensure the records are safe for future reference. With regards to the management of records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office, the responses showed that mismanagement of records caused challenges to teachers. Some of the respondents had some documents missing from their files while others had their entire file of documents recorded missing.

Data collected shows that the teachers are negatively affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. The researcher observed that the room where records are stored is small and some files are placed in boxes on the floor when the wooden shelves are full and therefore, that could be the reason why some records go missing.

5.3 The Security Provided for the Records

The research findings revealed different themes regarding the level of security provided for the records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. Most of the respondents felt that the level of security provided for records in the registrar's office was poor and inadequate. Security can be defined as protecting information from unauthorized access and disclosure; safeguarding the authenticity, accuracy and completeness of information and processing methods; and ensuring that information and associated services are available to authorized users when required (Joseph, 2010). The research findings were not in accordance with the theoretical framework used in the study, which is the records life cycle model of Theodore Schellenberg which provides the three steps in the maintenance of records which are storage, retrieval and preservation as well as protection of records. The record managers at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office did not follow all the three steps of the record cycle model in the maintenance of records especially preservation or protection of records. Despite having security measures in the registrar's office, set on records to ensure access to authorized personnel and to protect records, the findings showed that, retrieving files was still difficult. Brooks (1996) stated that once a decision has been made to keep a record for use at a later time, it must be stored, retrieved and protected by records managers and registry clerks. However, with regards to security at the Chibombo District Education Board secretary's office that was not the case.

While there have been participants who expressed poor security provided for records, some informed the study that the level of security provided for records was adequate. The researcher observed that records are kept only in the registrar's office which is locked with access only allowed to specific personnel, indicating that there is to some extent efficient security provided for records. The records are kept on shelves where teachers' files are placed according to their teaching service number (TS number). In accordance to the findings, Bwalya (2010) also found a similar arrangement at the University of Zambia where access was designed to be granted to authorized personnel to protect records. He also observed that additional security was in place to ensure that information stored in the records section of the university was secure. This is in line with the writings of Mountain (2012), who argues that efficient record management systems involve classification of records in an orderly manner for easy retrieval and storage.

5.4 The Factors Contributing to the State of Record Management

Data collected revealed different views concerning factors that contributed to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. It was indicated during the data collection that mismanagement of records and lack of skilled staff were factors that contributed to the state of record management. These factors will be discussed subsequently.

5.4.1 Mismanagement of Records

Participants explained that there was failure to handle information securely. Participants indicated that files, whether paperwork or digital should be kept safe and to ensure this, security for information has to be a priority. The findings are not in line with Mountain (2012) who argues that record management entails having a proper classification of records in an orderly manner for easy retrieval and storage. Despite having a records management system where files are stored in the registrar's office, retrieval and secure storage of records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office was a challenge. Due to poor security, files were tampered with and misplaced. The participants interviewed expressed that the cases of mismanagement demonstrated a sheer incompetency of the people entrusted with the responsibility of managing records. In accordance, Bwalya (2010) stated that maladministration of records is propounded by lack of competent officers to aid the registrar's office in the

management of records. This was the case at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office as well.

In summary, the data collected revealed that good security system is a factor to effective record management because it helps limit risks that come with poorly managed records.

5.4.2 Unskilled Personnel

Skills were seen to be lacking and to an extent this hampered effective record management. The importance of skills is stated in the argument of Afolabi (1999) who asserted that records management and archives staff should have appropriate training to ensure efficient and effective management. Findings indicated that adequate knowledge and skills can ensure effective record management in an institution like Chibombo District Education Secretary's office. It was revealed that what contributes to effective record management is having credible and trained personnel who have the knowledge and skills to manage records. If the custodians do not have pre-requisite knowledge in record management, records end up being mishandled. This was in accordance with SeniWoliba et al, (2017) who argued that lack of training on how to handle records at the University of Ghana led to the loss of important documents despite efforts of retrieving them. This was the case at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. Therefore, adequate knowledge and skills are relevant as it enhances information accessibility and thus allows the office to effectively management records. The findings of the study can be linked to the records continuum model by Frank Upward, which is a paradigm that was used in carrying out the study. The model emphasized the role of records managers in the effective records management process. Coetzer (2012) argues that this model stressed that records management professionals are important in all phases of records management. However, at the Chibombo DEBS office, that was not the case. The findings also indicated that effective management can be achieved by having trained personnel equipped with knowledge and skills to manage records. In order to ensure effective record management, the findings revealed that it is important to hire professionally qualified personnel to handle records. In most cases, records get mishandled because of hiring people that have no idea what they are working with.

In summary, the responses above indicated that to ensure effective record management, it is important to have the right knowledge and skills to manage records. The responses above

indicated that there is need to have people who work at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office to have the right knowledge and skills so as to effectively manage records.

5.5 Strategies for use in Record Management

From discussions with different participants, findings indicated that there are strategies that would improve the state of record management at the Chibombo Education Board Secretary's office. The data collected showed that different innovations that would improve record management at the office. Different responses were given in relation to strategies that would record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. During data collection, the findings showed various themes such as digital migration, enhancement of office capacity, maintenance of office space and provision of continuous in-service training programs as well as the provision of trained equipped with the knowledge and skill to be responsible for records. The findings support the assertion of Griffin and Akotia (2007) who posit that for an organization to attain efficiency in all its activities ranging from service delivery, enthronelement of good governance and its attributes such organization should embark on practices which advance a records management program. These strategies will be discussed subsequently below.

5.5.1 Digitalization of Records

The findings revealed that digital migration could be on the strategies that would improve the state of record management. This was revealed as that which could help in ensuring that files are digitally stored to reduce them getting lost or misplaced. The findings of the study can be supported by the writings of Ngoepe (2004) who discusses various ways of properly managing records especially in today's world of technology and among them is the digitalization of records. The respondents interviewed recommended that records be kept on a computer for easy access as opposed to the traditional and old ways of storing data in paper form. The findings of the study revealed that the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office has challenges of missing records and this could be solved by migrating to the use of computer in order to deal away with the old ways of keeping files which has proven to be old fashioned and outdated.

The data collected also pointed that E-filing could be introduced to the office and security codes should be improvised as well such as pin codes, passwords, face IDs to improve maximum security.

In summary, the findings have given strategies to improve the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and the use of technology to manage was indicated as a strategy to reduce the issues of missing records. It is also important to note that gone are the days when manually keeping of records was a thing. The findings of the study pointed out that the digitalizing of the storage and indexing and other related issues could help ensure effective record management at the office.

5.5.2 Expansion of Office Capacity

During data collection, it was indicated from the responses of the participants that enlarging office capacity and well maintenance of office might as well be one of the strategies to improve record management. The findings from the observations made by the researcher also indicated that the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office was too small to accommodate the large number of files and that there was need for office enlargement. The findings tally with works done by Chirwa (2014) who states that a good records management program results in the control over the creation and growth of records. The number of offices in Chibombo District has increased but the file space seems to have remained the same hence not allowing record managers to work effectively. The registrar's office cannot accommodate large numbers of files and that is why some files are placed in compromising locations such as boxes. There is need to expand the office so as to effectively manage records.

In summary, it can be said that one of the major challenges the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office is the office capacity which is inadequate to accommodate the large number of files brought to the office. Therefore, this has also brought above challenges of missing records and others being torn in the process of retrieval. There is need to enlarge the office capacity as well build more offices to deal with the issues of missing records and mishandling of records.

5.5.3 Maintenance of the Office and Storage Space

The findings of the study revealed that maintenance of office space could improve the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. The findings indicated that it was vital that the registrar's offices be attended to more often to avoid termites. In addition, wooden shelves could be replaced by those of steel to avoid termites destroying

paper files. To avoid losing important documents, well maintenance of the office space should be considered.

In the same vein, the above responses support the assertion of Ngoepe and Ngulube (2014), who stipulates that an effective record management system must seek to effectively control the lifecycle of records and this includes the maintenance as well.

Similarly, the researcher observed that the storage room had wooden shelves and this tallied with the responses from participants. Based on the above responses, it can be said that the registrar's office at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office must undergo frequent inspections to ensure the office is well maintained and data is protected.

5.5.4 Employing Skilled Personnel to Manage Records

The findings reviewed that one of the strategies that would improve the state of record management was having more credible and trained personnel who have the skills and knowledge to manage records. The responses from the participants indicated the need to hire more competent staff members. The respondents recommended that management department sees to it that the government hires more competent clerks and this was brought about because it was discovered that the custodians who manage records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office did not possess skills. The findings of the study can be linked to the work done by Azman (2009), who emphasizes that record management programs must be based on components such as personnel training for effective management of records. This can also be supported by the records continuum cycle by Frank Upward which emphasizes of the professionalism of record managers and personnel. Coetzer (2012) added that for the record managers to handle records effectively, they must have the right kind of training.

From the above responses, it is evident that the challenge of credible and well trained personnel is apparent at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office. To ensure effective records management, it is essential that the office considers hiring more credible and trained personnel who have the right kind of knowledge and skills to manage records.

5.5.5 Provision of Continuous In-service Training Programs

The findings of the study revealed that one of the strategies that would improve the state of record management was the provision of continuous in-service training programs to ensure that the workers that handle records have access to emerging trends in record management. The researcher engaged respondents who expressed that there was need to provide more training for officers who handle records during their career to learn ways of managing records. The findings also revealed that providing more in house training to workers at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office would improve the state of record management. The officers managing records should be exposed to more trainings or workshops in order for them to acquire more knowledge that would help manage records effectively. Learning new skills can expand one's professional competency and allow one to perform their job well.

The above responses give credence to the theoretical foundation of this study, the records continuum. Coetzer (2012) explains that, this model demonstrates best records management practices enshrined in the incorporation of archives, records, and document management. In this model, records managers and archivists play significant roles in all phases of record management. This enables record creation with the right information in correct formats, record organization for the facilitation of their use, systematic disposition of redundant records, and the preservation and protection of records.

In summary, the above responses indicate that there is need to have in-service training for the officers that handle records in order to equip them with skills and knowledge that could improve the state of record management at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office. The new skills and knowledge acquired would help in bringing about innovative ideas about how to manage records.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings in relation to the objectives of the study and the views of the respondents as well as the researcher's observations. The discussions of findings were presented in accordance with the objectives.

The first objective sought to ascertain the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. The discussion around this objective was that the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Secretary's office was efficient and to a larger extent was found to be inefficient and poor. The responses on the state of record management indicated that there was inefficient management of records at the district office.

The second objective focused on ascertaining the level to which teachers in Chibombo district are affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. The discussions around this objective were that challenges of missing records were apparent when it came to teachers trying to access their records at the office. The teachers are directly involved with the office and it is therefore their records that are handled more at the district office. Most teachers expressed disappointment towards the management of records at the district education board secretary's office especially issues surrounding missing records.

The third objective endeavored to examine the level of security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. The discussions around were that the security provided for records was efficient, however from the majority responses it was determined to be poor and inefficient. Issues of missing records came up again in the discussion indicating that the security for records at the office is poor.

The fourth objective sought to determine the factors that contribute to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. The discussions around this objective showed that there were a number of factors that contribute to record management namely; mismanagement of records as well as unskilled personnel.

The final objective sought to find out strategies that would improve record management at the Chibombo District Education Secretary's Office. The discussion around the objective revealed that there were a number of strategies that would improve the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office. The strategies discussed were; digital migrating, expansion of office capacity, maintenance of office space and storage room, employing trained personnel to manage records and the provision of in-service training programs. Having discussed the findings of the study, the next chapter will highlight the conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter is a synthesis of the entire study and contains summary of research findings, exposition of findings, commensurate with the objectives, conclusions and recommendations based there on. The purpose of this study was to investigate the state of record management and the effect on teachers at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Chibombo District of Central Province, Zambia.

Substantial evidence has indicated the number of general benefits and impact of record management in the education and other organizational functional areas. However, the concept of record management for many district educational offices is still being explored. Therefore, in consideration of the point that records management the research attempted to investigate the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office and the effect on teachers in central province. In addition, the study attempted to contribute to literature of record management in education sector by the use of a qualitative methodology.

Many studies around the globe, in Africa as well as in Zambia have been done on record management, its benefits as well as its challenges; however, similar studies have not been conducted at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and its effect on teachers. So, to bridge the gap, the study investigated the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and its effect on Teachers in Chibombo District of Central Province, Zambia.

6.1 Conclusion of the Study

The study concludes that the state of record management at the Chibombo District education Board Secretary's Office is poor. The participants interviewed expressed facing challenges of mismanagement of records. The symptoms of mismanagement such as loss of records and inability for officers to retrieve the needed records on time have been established to be happening at the district office.

It was found that the records at the District office were stored in the registrar's office where the teacher's files were labeled with their teaching service numbers (TS) and put on wooden shelves. However, It was also expressed that some files were wrongly placed and filed and hence the challenge of mismanagement of records at the District office. And this was because the office was too small to accommodate the large numbers of files brought to office. Additionally, the study concludes that records management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office is plagued by such factors as inadequate skilled and experienced management personnel, lack of sufficient funds and the placement of records management in a low priority pedestal in relation to other things. Therefore, these problems have eaten deep into records management practice at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office.

It is gratifying to note that teachers are negatively affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. Teachers are directly involved with the district education board secretary's office as their records are kept and managed at the office. Therefore teachers were interviewed and they expressed disappointment with the way records are managed at the Chibombo district education board secretary's office being inefficient and negatively affected them as they experienced missing records. In the findings, missing records came up as an indicator that there is poor security provided for records at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office.

The findings regarding the effect of record management on teachers at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office provide insight into the importance of having a good record management program in order to effectively manage records. A good record management program ensures the effective maintenance of records as well as security for records. The primary function of records management is to facilitate the free flow of records throughout the entire population or institution if it's being looked at an organization. Most importantly, it remains the function of records management to ensure the records are safe for future reference. With regards to the management of records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office, the responses showed that mismanagement of records caused challenges to teachers. Overall, the study's conclusion that teachers are negatively affected by the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office stresses the seriousness with which such matters should be addressed to ensure effective record management.

Additionally, it was concluded that all the participants interviewed felt that the security provided for records at the district office could be both adequate and inadequate. The security for records was considered adequate in cases where some respondents were able retrieve their files without any challenges. On the other hand, security was deemed inadequate in cases where it was difficult to retrieve files and some files were either lost or destroyed.

It was found that the reason why some participants felt the security was adequate and that the registrar's office was effective in the management of records was because they were able to retrieve their files upon request. Additionally, the registrar's office where records are stored only allows entry to authorized personnel and has locks to ensure security and has a classified system of records. However, it was also concluded that despite having measures set to ensure security, there were still challenges where files were lost or destroyed making it difficult for retrieval.

The study concludes that mismanagement of records and lack of skilled staff members were factors that contributed to the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office.

The findings of the study showed that there was failure to handle information securely. Therefore, participants interviewed expressed that the cases of mismanagement demonstrated a sheer incompetency of the people entrusted with the responsibility of managing records. It was concluded that the district office lacked skilled staff members who could properly manage records. Most of the staff members do not have knowledge and skills regarding record management, making it difficult for the office to effectively manage records. Additionally, observation was made on how small the registrar's office was and how some files were stored in compromising locations, implying that, that could be the reason why the files were missing. These challenges are the factors that have contributed to the poor state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office.

The study concludes that there are various factors that would improve the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office. The study suggests that innovative strategies, such as digital migration, enhancement of office capacity, maintenance of office space and provision of continuous in-service training programs as well as the provision

of trained staff equipped with the knowledge and skill to be responsible for records, could improve the state of record management at the District office.

The findings of this study regarding the various strategies that would improve the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office emphasize the importance of proactive measures in ensuring effective record management at the Office. By implementing innovative approaches such as digitalization of records, enhancing office capacity, maintenance of office space and provision of in-service training programs as well as the provision of trained staff equipped with knowledge and skills, the district office could effectively manage records. So, these findings highlight the importance of measures in ensuring effective record management.

6.2 Implications of the Study

This study is an important contribution to the field of Educational Management. This study can help educational managers to effectively manage records in an organization. It is significant for educational managers as its findings shed light on the impact of mismanaging records in an organization. Additionally, the study identifies several strategies that an educational manager can implement to ensure effective record management in an organization. These strategies include digitalization, enhancing office capacity while maintaining office space, providing continuous in-service training programs as well as providing trained staff equipped with knowledge and skills to manage records.

Digitalization of records is essential as it has proven to be more effective than manually storing records. It is easier to retrieve files digitally than it is manually. Enhancing office capacity ensures that the records have enough room for storage to avoid placing them in compromising locations. Some strategies educational managers can use to effectively manage records include providing continuous in-service training programs and hiring skilled staff members to manage records. The educational managers could encourage regular workshops on how to manage records to ensure record managers are up to date with innovative ways of managing records.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights for educational managers on how to effectively manage records in an organization. The findings can be used to inform policies and practices

aimed at preventing cases of mismanagement of records and improving record management which can ultimately benefit both the record managers and stakeholders.

6.3 Recommendations

From findings, the study recommends the following:

6.3.1 Digitalization of Records by DEBs Management

To improve accessibility, management at DEBs should provide modern and adequate facilities for management of records which will enhance the tracing of files and to make it easier to access and retrieve a given file. This can be done through electronic filing system instead of manually storing files on wooden shelves. Doing this will improve the corporate image because it will speed up service delivery, increase the efficiency and reduce on waiting time and client complaints. DEBs management should involve the government for financial support in order to purchase computers for electronic records management purposes.

6.3.2 Provision of Relevant Information to Staff members at DEBS office by DEBs Management

The DEBs management should frequently provide short training programs such as seminars and workshops to officers involved in the management of records so that officers are kept abreast with changes that are happening in their field. There is need to inform the employees at Chibombo DEBS office of all legislation and policies that govern records management. There is also need to provide filing skills to the registry clerks, to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage records. This can be done through regular staff training and awareness programs on record management systems.

6.3.3 Enhancement of Existing Storage Management System

There is need to enhance the efficiency of records management by enhancing the defined order and system which helps in knowing exactly where the file is located. The registry's office is small to accommodate large numbers of files making it difficult to properly file records. Hence, the office needs to enhance proper filing system in the registry and also enhance the office capacity to ensure that the records are effectively stored and easily retrieved. For efficient

maintenance, the office can also be conducting periodic census of records to ensure none are misplaced or accidentally stored in compromising locations.

6.3.4 Suggestions for Possible Further Studies

The management of records centers mostly on the competency of record managers. A quantitative study could be conducted to investigate challenges of records management in Zambia. Furthermore, a study could be done to investigate if the current records managing system at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's office has inbuilt capabilities to provide records audit trial.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA - ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY
(UNZA/ZOU)**

Telephone: 26021-1-291777-78 Ext. 3500/ 0978772249
 Telegrams: UNZA LUSAKA
 E-mail: director-ide@unza.zm

P.O. Box 32379
 LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

DATE: 31ST MAY, 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: CONFIRMATION OF STUDY

Name: NYIRENDA JESSY Computer #: 720000262

Reference is made to the above subject.

This serves to confirm that the above named student of NRC Number E1933916214 is a bonafide student of the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU).

The student is pursuing a Master of Education in Educational Management Programme and that he/she will be carrying out a research on AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE STATE OF RECORD MANAGEMENT AT CHIBOMBO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY'S OFFICE AND ITS EFFECT ON TEACHERS IN CENTRAL PROVINCE, ZAMBIA.

Any assistance rendered to him/her will be greatly appreciated.

Prof. Gistered Mulcya (PhD)
DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
 DIRECTOR
 31 MAY 2023
 INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
 P.O. BOX 32379, LUSAKA

APPENDIX II: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

21st May, 2023

The DEBS
Chibombo Office
.....
.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

REF: REQUEST AT YOUR OFFICE

The above subject matter refers.

I am a post graduate student at the University of Zambia doing Master of Educational Management, remaining only with the research component. I therefore, wish to undertake my study with your school. The topic of my study is ‘An Investigation into the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary’s office and the effect on teachers, in Central Province, Zambia. Kindly grant me permission to undertake the study (research) at your office any time within the period.

Find the attached introductory letter and Informed consent form.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,
Jessy Nyirenda.
Contact Line: 0978394790

APPENDIX III: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

APPENDIX III: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear respondent, Thank you in advance.

DESCRIPTION

This exercise is an educational research; the researcher is a student at the University of pursuing a Master of Education in Educational Management. This research is a major requirement for the researcher to complete her study Programme. Therefore, this exercise is purely academic.

PURPOSE

The researcher wishes to investigate the state of record management at the Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office and the effect on Teachers in Central Province, Zambia.

CONSENT

Participation in the exercise is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this exercise.

CONFIDENTIALITY

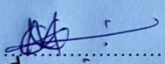
All data collected from this research will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Participants are assured that they will remain anonymous and untraceable in this research.

RIGHTS OF RESPONDENTS

All efforts will be taken to ensure that the rights of participants are protected and respected. Participants are assured that they shall suffer no harm as result of participating in this exercise. Participants are free to ask for clarification at any point of the exercise if they are not comfortable about any procedure of the research.

DECLARATION OF CONSENT

I have read and fully understood this document; I therefore, agree/ disagree to participate in this exercise.

Signature.....

Date.....23rd April 2023.....

APPENDIX IV: Semi Structured Interview Guide for Technical Members at DEBS Office.(DEBS)

(A) Demographic characteristics of respondent

- a) Gender ()
- b) Age ()
- c) Occupation ()

(B) The state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

1. A) To you, what is record management?
B) What does it mean to manage records?
C) What are your opinions on different forms of record management?
D) What forms of record management do you have at your office?
E) How are the records kept at your office?
2. A) What are your qualifications?
B) Did you have any course in record management?
C) Have you taken some training in record management?
3. What forms of training have you put in place for the people that manage records?
4. To what extent has record management made your work easier?

(C) The Security provided for the Records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

1. What facilities do you have for records in your office?

(D) The factors contributing to effective record management

1. From your experience, what factors contribute to effective record management?
2. In what ways have the factors identified affected record management?
3. What recommendations can you provide for effective record management?

APPENDIX V: Semi Structured Interview Guide for Technical Members at the District Education Board Secretary's Office. (Human Resource)

(B) Demographic characteristics of respondent

- a) Gender ()
- b) Age ()
- c) Occupation ()

(B) The state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

1. A) To you, what is record management?
B) What does it mean to manage records?
C) What forms of record management do you know?
2. A) Do you have any training in record management?
B) If your answer is no, how did you know about record management?
C) If your answer is yes, where did you acquire your training in record management?
3. To what extent has record management made your work easier?
A) What are your opinions on different forms of record management?
B) Which forms of record management do you regard as redundant?
C) Which forms of record management do you regard as valuable?

(C) The Security provided for the Records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

1. What types of facilities are provided for the records at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia?
2. Describe how secure the records are?

(D) The factors contributing to effective record management

1. From your experience, what factors contribute to effective record management?
2. In what ways have the factors identified affected record management?
3. What recommendations can you provide for effective record management?

(E) The extent to which the findings of the investigation can be used to improve record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office.

APPENDIX VI: Semi Structured Interview Guide for Technical Members at the DEBS Office (DATA CLERKS)

(C) Demographic characteristics of respondent

- a) Gender ()
- b) Age ()
- c) Occupation ()

(B) The state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

1. A) To you, what is record management?
B) What does it mean to manage records?
C) What forms of record management do you know about?
2. A) Do you have any training in record management?
B) If your answer is no, how did you know about record management?
C) If your answer is yes, where did you require your training in record management?
3. A) To what extent has record management made your work easier?
B) What are your opinions on different forms of record management?
C) Which forms of record management do you regard as redundant?
D) Which forms of record management do you regard as valuable?

(C) The Security provided for the Records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

1. What types of facilities are provided for the records at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia?
2. Describe how secure the records are?

(D) The factors contributing to effective record management

1. From your experience, what factors contribute to effective record management?
2. In what ways have the factors identified affected record management?
3. What recommendations can you provide for effective record management?

APPENDIX VII: Semi Structured Interview Guide for OTHER Technical Members at the DEBS Office.

(D) Demographic characteristics of respondent

- a) Gender ()
- b) Age ()
- c) Occupation ()

(B) The state of record management at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

- 4. A) To you, what is record management?

B) What does it mean to manage records and forms of record management do you know about?
- 5. A) Do you have any training in record management?

B) If your answer is no, how did you know about record management?
- 6. To what extent has record management made your work easier?

(C) The Security provided for the Records at Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

- 3. What types of facilities are provided for the records at Chibombo district education board secretary's office?
- 4. Describe how secure the records are?

(D) The factors contributing to effective record management

- 4. From your experience, what factors contribute to effective record management?
- 5. In what ways have the factors identified affected record management?
- 6. What recommendations can you provide for effective record management?

APPENDIX VIII: Semi Structured Interview Guide for Teachers.

(E) Demographic characteristics of respondent

- a) Gender ()
- b) Age ()
- c) Occupation ()

(B) The State Of Record Management At Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office in Central Province of Zambia.

1. A) How was your experience when accessing records at the DEBS Office?
 - B) Did you get the assistance you required?
 - C) Who did you see to access your records?
 - D) How were your records retrieved?

(C) The security provided for the records at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia.

2. A) Have you encountered any problems with your records at the DEBS Office?
 - B) If your answer is yes, what challenges have you encountered?
 - C) If your answer is no, how has been your experience with the DEBS Office?
 - D) Has it been easy for you to access records at DEBS office?
 - E) How easy has it been for you to access records at DEBS office?

APPENDIX IX: OBSERVATION GUIDE

FIELD OBSERVATION GUIDE		
Date	22 nd April, 2023	
Time	11:00 hrs.	
Location	Chibombo District Education Board Secretary's Office	
Topic	AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE STATE OF RECORD MANAGEMENT AT CHIBOMBO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY'S OFFICE AND THE EFFECT ON TEACHERS IN CENTRAL PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA	
S/N	Theme	Remarks
1.	The security provided for the records at Chibombo district education board secretary's office in central province of Zambia	
	a. Security :	There are locks on the doors of the registrar's office to ensure security. Only qualified personnel allowed entry.
	i. Infrastructure	Wooden shelves in the registrar's office.
	ii. Filing system	Documents are filed according to Teaching Service numbers.
	iii. Offices	7 offices for different staff members according to their positions such as the Human resource and the Debs. Only one is used to store records and that is the registrar's office.
	iv. Storage	The storage room is the registrar's office which is very small to accommodate the large number of files. Hence some files were placed on the floor in random boxes.

APPENDIX X: RESEARCH BUDGET

ITEMS	UNIT	COST
STATIONARY		
Diary	2	96
Ream of Paper	2	140
Pens	1	50
Staplers	1	75
Notebooks	2	75
FIELD BAG	1	250
SECRETARIAL SERVICES		
Questionnaire photocopying	40	200
Research proposal printing	4	500
Laptop	1	6000
Research report photocopying	2	2500
HUMAN RESOURCE EXPENSES		
Transport	30 days	3000
Lunch	30 days	1000
GRAND TOTAL		13886