

COPYRIGHT DECLARATION

All rights reserved. No part or parts of this dissertation may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means such electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission from the author or the University of Zambia.

© University of Zambia, 2015

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the attached dissertation, “**An investigation of the knowledge levels and practices of the records management staff at the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education**”, is my own original work. All sources or materials used or quoted in the text have been acknowledged. Full details of sources or material used or quoted in the text have also been provided in the reference section.

Signature

Date

(Juliana Filomona Chirwa)

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, Felistus Chirwa and my siblings who struggled and sacrificed for me to acquire education and always encouraged me to work hard to achieve my goals.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This **dissertation of Juliana Filomina Chirwa** has been approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the degree of **Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS)** by the University of Zambia.

Examiners:

Signed:..... Date:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my research supervisor Dr Akakandelwa Akakandelwa for the knowledge he tirelessly shared with me and for ably supervising my research, I also express my gratitude to members of staff in the School of Education and the Department of Library and Information Studies in particular, at the University of Zambia, who in one way or another contributed to making this dissertation a reality.

I would also like to thank my superiors at Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts and Commerce for their support and encouragement throughout the duration of my studies and to my fellow employees in the Communication Skills Department for their unwavering support.

My sincere thanks go to the management and staff at the Ministry of Education, Science and Vocational Training and Early Education for allowing me to conduct research at their institution. To Miss C. Lukunka, the Chief registry officer at MESTVEE and Mr R.T. Chibuye I thank you most profoundly. I would like to thank all the registry clerks, registry supervisors who participated in the research and everyone who in one way or the other contributed to making this dissertation a reality.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the knowledge levels and practices of the records management staff at the Ministry of Education, Science Vocational Training and Early Education. Specifically, the research's objectives were to assess the knowledge levels of the registry staff at MESTVESS; to assess the elements of the records management program at MESTVEE; and to establish the challenges affecting the execution of an effective records management program at MESTVEE. Primary data relating to research objectives was collected using the triangulation method (comprising of a survey questionnaire, face-to-face interviews, non-participant observations, and secondary sources). Out of a target population of 48 records management staff earmarked for the study, 46 took part in the study representing 96% participation. The study used a case study design and it was a total survey. Research findings showed that the majority of the records management staff at MESTVEE were generally knowledgeable of basic records management concepts and practices and that there was no association between knowledge levels and education and between knowledge levels and work experience. First of all while the registries were generally adequately staffed several of them had no records management qualifications. Secondly, MESTVEE registries lacked certain key elements of a records management program such as a records management policy and up-to-date records retention and disposal schedules resulting into an inefficient records management program. Thirdly, findings showed that the registry service manual did not provide guidance on how to manage electronic records, incoming and outgoing mail. Research findings also showed that low motivation among registry staff, lack of supplies, poor and inadequate funding, inadequate shelving and filing equipment, inadequate storage space, difficulty in locating and retrieving active and semi-active contributed to the failure by records management staff to execute their duties efficiently.

This study recommend that the establishment register be revised owing to the growth of the volume of records and the administrative structure at MESTVEE. That the Public Service Management Division accelerates the development and publication of records management policy. MESTVEE should also build purpose designed records centers.

List of Table

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents.....	34
Table 2: Positions of respondents.....	35
Table 3: Total knowledge scores.....	36
Table 4: Preparation of Registry Procedures Manual.....	37
Table 5: Activities described in the Registry Manual.....	38
Table 6: When last the Records Survey was carry out.....	39
Table 7: Who undertakes Records Surveys.....	39
Table 8: Uses of information gathered from Records Survey.....	40
Table 9: Type of records generate or receive.....	41
Table 10: Measures put in place to control creation of records.....	41
Table 11: Filing methods used.....	42
Table 12: Elements on the Records Retention/Disposal schedule.....	44
Table 13: How often the Records Retention scheduled is revised.....	45
Table 14: How often Records Retention scheduled is implemented.....	45
Table 15: Disposal methods used.....	48
Table 16: Records storage equipment used.....	49
Table 17: Type of records staff training program.....	54
Table 18: Type of security measures in place.....	55
Table 19: IMS records management functionality.....	56
Table 20: Challenges and problems encountered.....	57

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents	Pages
Copyright Declaration.....	ii
Declaration.....	iii
Dedication	iv
Certificate of Approval.....	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Abstracts.....	vii
Contents.....	viii
List of Tables.....	xii
List of Figures.....	xiii
List of Acronyms.....	xiv
CHAPTER 1.....	1
Background to the study.....	1
1.0 Overview.....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.1.1 Elements of the Records of Management Program.....	3
1.1.2 Symptoms of a poor Records Management Program.....	6
1.1.3 The Ministry of Education in Zambia.....	7
1.2 Statement of the Problem	9
1.3 Aim of the Study.....	10
1.4 Objective of the study.....	10
1.5 Research questions.....	11
1.6 Significance of the study.....	11
1.7 Limitation of the study.....	11
1.8 Operational definition of terms used.....	11
CHAPTER 2.....	14
Literature Review.....	14
2.0 Overview	

2.1	Records Management Theories.....	14
2.1.1	Records Life Cycle Model.....	14
2.1.2	Records Cotinuum Model.....	16
2.2	Records Management and the Public Sector.....	18
2.3	Knowledge Levels of the Records Management Staff.....	19
2.4	The Records Management Program.....	20
2.4.1	Records Management Policy.....	21
2.4.2	Registry Procedure Manual.....	22
2.4.3	A Records Survey.....	22
2.4.4	Vital Records Management Program.....	23
2.4.5	Records Creation and Generation Control Plan.....	24
2.4.6	Methods of Organising Records.....	24
2.4.7	Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.....	25
2.4.8	Records Preservation and Storage.....	26
2.4.9	Records Centre.....	26
2.4.10	Staff Development Program.....	27
2.4.11	Electronic Records.....	28
2.5	Challenges and Problems	
2.6	Summary	

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

3.0	Overview
3.1.	Research Design
3.1.1	Target Population
3.2	Data Collection Methods
3.3	Data Analysis
3.4	Ethical Consideration
3.5	Challenges Faced during this study
3.6	Summary

5.3.4	Vital Records.....	67
5.3.5	Records creation and Generation Control Plan.....	69
5.3.6	Methods of Organising Records.....	70
5.3.7	Records Retention and Disposal Schedule.....	72
5.3.8	Records Preservation and Storage.....	75
5.3.9	Records Centre.....	76
5.3.10	Staff Development Records.....	80
5.3.11	Electronic Records.....	82
5.4	Challenges and Problems Encountered.....	82
5.5	Conclusion.....	85
CHAPTER 6.....		86
Conclusion and Recommendation.....		86
6.0	Overview.....	86
6.1	Summary of the Findings.....	86
6.2	Conclusion.....	87
6.3	Recommendations.....	87
6.4	Implications for further study.....	89
REFERENCES.....		90
APPENDIX 1: Letter to the Permanent Secretary.....		96
APPENDIX 2: Ann Introductory Letter to the Respondents.....		98
APPENDIX 3: Questionnaire.....		99
APPENDIX 4: Interview Guide for NAZ Personnel.....		105
APPENDIX 1: Observation Schedule.....		107

List of Figures

Figure 1: Filing System used.....	43
Figure 2: Boxes of Semi-active Records.....	46
Figure 3: Boxes of files for Retired Teachers.....	47
Figure 4: Newly Acquired Compactus.....	49
Figure 5: Newly Acquired Filing Cabinets and Compactus.....	50
Figure 6: Files of Serving Teachers on the Floor.....	51
Figure 7: Confidential Files Kept in Boxes.....	52
Figure 8: Confidential files stored in Boxes and Wooden Shelves.....	53