

## **RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING: TOWARDS THE BUSINESS SUPPORT FUNCTION**

**Carolyn Nyaboke Musembe**

P.O. BOX 2327 - 30100, Eldoret, Kenya

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**ABSTRACT:** *Records are assets as they represent accumulated intellectual capital of organizations. For an institution to have sound decision making, efficient and effective records play a vital role. This paper probes into the business functions of institutions of higher learning as supported by proper records management. A case study research design was used to establish the records management policy of Moi University, Kenya. The study population consisted of 111 respondents drawn from the main campus. The sample size Purposively selected based on the respondents' role comprised 78 respondents including 6 Top Management representatives, 22 Action Officers, 6 Records Supervisors, 4 auditors, 30 Records staff and 10 Secretaries some of whom were interviewed while others filled questionnaires. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis approaches were applied. The study established that, the university lacked a clear records management policy, consequently; development and implementation of a records management programme and policies to establish formal records management programme with clear policies, infrastructure, staffing, guidelines and clear qualifications for records personnel is recommended.*

**KEYWORDS:** Records Management, Policies, Personnel, Guidelines, Infrastructure, Business Functions.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Records generated regardless of their physical characteristic, received, created recorded or legally filed in the course of the university business, serve as the institutions evidence of its functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations and other related activities.

#### **Records Management**

The term record has been defined by many scholars and organizations. ISO 15489-1:2001(ISO, 2001) defines a record as information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or a person in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. This implies that an institution in its business functions creates records as scholars Shepherd and Yeo (2003) opine that records may be created either in the course of an activity or afterwards in conscious act of record keeping. Cox (2001) on the other hand, defines records as an extension of human memory, purposefully create to record information, document transactions, communicate thoughts, substantiate claims, advance explanations, offer justifications and improve lasting evidence of events. Records management is therefore a vital information tool; records relay information about an activity, they provide evidence that an activity occurred and therefore they serve as a benchmark by which decisions are made. This is evidenced by scholars Mnjama and Wamukoya (2004) who observe that records are valuable assets that need to be managed and protected. Besides providing essential evidence of organizational activities, transactions and decisions; records also support business functions and are critical for organisational performance.

Further, ISO 15489-1:2001(ISO, 2001) points out that, records enable organizations to deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner, conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner, support and document policy formulation and managerial decision making, provide consistency, continuity and productivity in management and administration, facilitate the effective performance of activities throughout an organisation, meet legislative and regulatory requirements including archival, audit and oversight activities. Records carry the history of organisations and history cannot properly be told to the future generations if records are not properly and systematically kept. Van Der Waladt *et al.* (2002) observe that information is a fundamental resource for both government and private sectors alike and can be maintained and enhanced through appropriate records management. Sound Records management for institutions help yield good results through availability of information. It enhances service delivery and growth of an organisation.

Records management should be part and parcel of the strategic function of an organisation. Ambira and Kemoni (2007) and Wamukoya (2007) ISO 15489-1 (2001) state that, the objective of records management are to set policies and procedures, assign responsibilities for records management at various levels within the organisation, set best practice standards, process and maintain records retention and disposal policy, process and maintain records in safe and secure storage, implement access policies, integrate records management into business systems and processes, assign, implement and administer specialized systems for managing records, and provide a range of services relating to the management and use of records.

According to Shepherd (2006) organizations use records to support accountability when they want to prove that they have met their obligations or complied with best practices according to the established policies. Further, Shepherd (2006) states that proper records management provides the following benefits:

- i. Records which are well managed as part of an appropriate records management programme will help an organisation to conduct business in an efficient, accountable manner, deliver services consistently, support managerial decision making and transparent policy formulation and ensure continuity in policy execution, management and administration.
- ii. Effective records management will help the organisation to respond to planned or unplanned events such as audits or disasters.
- iii. It will also protect the interest and rights of present and future stakeholders, including employees, clients, government policy makers, historians and citizens maintaining corporate memory
- iv. It will help meet regulatory and audit requirements; provide evidence of organizational activity for litigation support.
- v. An effective management programme will ensure that records are available for use when needed, that privacy and confidentiality are maintained and that redundant records are destroyed.

As indicated from the above benefits accrued from proper management of records, organisations have a mandate to ensure proper management of records to all their business process and systems so as to enhance quality service delivery to its clients.

### **Records management for the business support functions in institutions**

Thornhill (2008) states that information is a key business resource for universities to aid competitiveness in higher institutions. Studies show that sound records management is the foundation for good governance in a democratic society (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005; King, 1997; Mullon, 2004; Ngulube, 2004; Shepherd, 2006; Willis, 2005). Good governance is characterized by transparency, accountability, due process, compliance with the set statutory framework and information security (Wallace, 2004; Willis, 2005) as cited by Legodi (2011).

Thurston (2005) and Iwhiwhu (2005) opine that reliable, timely and accessible records should avail information about administration actions such as resources received, committed or spent which facilitate and simplify accountability. He further states that ineffective records management leads to files being piled in different offices and corridors as a result of dumping difficult personnel to the records management unit and lack of continuous training, lack of policies, procedures and standards.

Managing records requires formal training as this will help ensure compliance with the legislation and International standards (ISO) as well as manage the control, custody, care and disposal of the institution's records in an effective manner for quality and better services.

The volumes of electronic and paper records are steadily increasing in institutions. This steady growth of records is experienced at high percentage in most institutions every year and by observation, the uncertainty about how records can best be managed in today's offices and organizations is high. This can be illustrated by the fact that, most organizations are looking for help from consultancy firms who offer records management services to streamline records management and offer training through workshops.

Jones (2003) states that, good records management practice is an investment for organisations although; it could easily be viewed as an overhead. The need to demonstrate tangible returns on investment is crucial if the programme is going to continue attracting funding and support. In managing records handlers should understand the institutions business functions its goals and objectives and how management of records contribute to achievement of these goals and objectives. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) state that knowledge of the organisation's operating environment is a key element in designing an effective records management programme.

Records management in an institution can either be centralized, decentralized or hybrid. This implies that university departments and offices should be responsible for the proper care of the records they create. This is important because managing and organizing records makes it simpler to find information and records when needed.

Universities are complex entities, this is because they exhibit a number of activities carried from teaching, research to consultancy, which are done at different levels, different department different offices but which should adhere to the core business of the organisation and its goals and objective.

### **Essential records in institutions of higher learning**

Institutions often have a particular set of records that are typical to their nature of business and activities. Upward (1996) while referring to the records continuum model stated that institutionalization of the recordkeeping profession's role requires a particular emphasis on the need to integrate recordkeeping into business and societal processes and purposes.

These records often define the institution and provide evidence that the institution in question is carrying out its mandate. For institutions of higher learning, there are also a given set of records that are commonly kept to facilitate the day to day running of the institution. These can be determined through a process known as functional analysis. Functional analysis provides a systematic way of establishing the key activities and transactions pertaining to the key functions of an organization, and in determining the records that support those activities and transactions. Therefore, as Robinson (1999) notes, functional descriptions link records directly to the business functions and activities that created them.

According to Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), citing Samuels (1992), The functional framework developed by Samuels (1992) and lists maintained by other university records management systems, such as at the University of Cincinnati (2002) and the University of Melbourne (2002), give a clear picture of the essential records that a University should maintain. A summary of the records generated by the functional analysis of university activities is presented below. It is evident from the list that the key functions of universities are conveying knowledge, conferring credentials, fostering top socialization, conducting research, sustaining the institution and providing public service.

### **Confer credentials**

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Admission policy           | 6. Scholarships and awards available    |
| 2. Applications received      | 7. Students awarded degrees             |
| 3. Selected students          | 8. Masters or doctoral theses passed    |
| 4. Registered students        | 9. Photographs of graduation ceremonies |
| 5. Personal files of students | 10. Videos of graduation ceremonies     |

### **Convey knowledge**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Courses run by the unit                 | 10. Student examination scripts        |
| 2. Curriculum of the courses run           | 11. Student evaluation policy          |
| 3. Complete list of current teaching staff | 12. Staff evaluation policy            |
| 4. Teaching responsibilities allocations   | 13. Student evaluations of lecturers   |
| 5. Timetables and class venues             | 14. Peer evaluation by other lecturers |
| 6. Attendance lists                        |  |
| 7. Student continuous assessment marks     |  |
| 8. Samples of assignments given            |  |
| 9. Examination questions                   |  |

### **Conduct research**

1. Research proposal submitted
2. Proposals accepted
3. Research grants management
4. Annual reports of research output

### **Sustain the institution**

1. Evidence of establishment of unit
2. Mission statement of unit
3. Governing board minutes and reports
4. Unit committees minutes and reports
5. Organizational chart of unit
6. Budget proposals and submissions
7. Expenditure records
8. Audit reports
9. Personnel policy
10. Current employment regulations
11. Staff recruitment in the unit
12. Performance appraisals
13. Outside earnings
14. Staff development and training
15. Plan of facilities of the unit
16. Current space use and planning
17. Architectural drawings of buildings
18. Maintenance of facilities

Equipped with these sets of records, institutions of higher education are able to discharge their business functions in a conducive manner and be able to prove that these functions conform to their vision, mission, core values, and policy statements.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A case study design approach was used. This focused on one of the Public universities in Kenya; Moi University, Main Campus, to establish how records management can be used to support the business function of the institution. The study population consisted of 111 respondents drawn from the University's main campus. The subjects included six (6) top Management representatives, thirty five (35) Action Officers six (6) Records Supervisors, Four (4) auditors, Forty (40) Records staff and Twenty (20) Secretaries. The author's criterion for selection was based on the respondents' role as creators, custodians, users and key informants. The population was derived from the following departments; University Management, Division of Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic, Research & Extension, Quality Management System & ISO Compliance department (QMS& ISOC), Quality Assurance (QA), Dean Student Affairs, Health Services Registry, Financial Services and, Central Registry System.

Purposive sampling was used to facilitate inclusion of the best candidates for the study to ensure that quality data is collected. This enabled the author to capture data from all the departments enabling the views of respondents on the roles of records management in enhancing quality of services in the University. The sample size comprised 78 respondents. They included: six (6) Top Management representatives, twenty two (22) Action Officers, six (6) Records Supervisors, four (4) auditors, thirty (30) Records staff and ten (10) Secretaries were interviewed or given questionnaires to fill.

Gay's guidelines (1996) that if a population is less than 100 there is no need for sampling and for a population up to 500, 50% of the population should be sampled were used to obtain the sample as given in table 1.

**Table 1: Study population and Sample size (n=78)**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Total population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Percentage Sample size (%)</b>
Top management representatives	6	6	100
Action Officers	35	22	63
Records supervisors	6	6	100
Auditors	4	4	100
Records staff	40	30	75
Secretaries	20	10	50
Total Targeted Population	111	78	70

Primary data was obtained from face to face interviews and self administered questionnaires. Documentary review including Official reports from KEBS and internal audit reports formed part of the secondary data. Observation was not a main data collection method but it was applied when carrying out interviews. The methods facilitated adequate and reliable data for the study.

The study applied qualitative and some element of quantitative data analysis approaches. Data analysis means to organize, provide structure and elicit meaning, as Mugenda and Mugenda (2004) is of the view that, data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of information collected.

## **RESULTS**

The study sought to establish how records are managed in support of the business function in institutions of higher learning. The respondents in each category provided various responses as presented below:

### **Management**

To establish their level of awareness of the business functions at the University, the author engaged the management in an interview which entailed the records generated, records or documents used in carrying out these functions, how the records are managed in support of the



business functions, services offered and whether the service addresses the quality principle in line with ISO standards.

All the 6 (100%) top management representatives stated teaching research and extension as the core business function of the university. They went ahead to inform of the various activities they were involved in, among them strategic planning for instance expansion, renovation and employment, mobilization of resources through resource funding, investments, policy formulation and implementation, review and monitoring of decisions approved by council, advising council and government on matters concerning the institution, public-private partnerships and implementing of vision 2030 flagship projects. The following was a list of records/documentation generated from these activities:

- a) Personnel records such as those pertaining employment, staff development, and disciplinary issues.
- b) Student's records such as population, performance, student's welfare and disciplinary issues.
- c) Administrative records.
- d) Financial records such as grants, research funds, budgetary records, salary payment, statements of accounts, fees payment, reports, and expenditure receipts.
- e) Architectural records such as maps, building plans.
- f) Performance contract reports.
- g) Internal and external audit reports.
- h) Committee records for instance minutes.
- i) Records of collaborations and memorandum of understanding.
- j) Records from communication to and from the ministry. (Moi University Strategic Plan, 2009/10-201/15 (revised)).

Specific records or documents are required to carry out the business functions. From their responses, the 6(100%) managers mentioned the MU Strategic Plan; Quality Manual and Procedures; University act 2012; Moi University Service Charter; Moi University revised Strategic Plan 2009/10-201/15; Collective bargaining agreement for various cadres; Moi University statutes 2013; Terms of service and; Commission of University Education Handbook 2013 as documents referred in carrying out the business function.

To establish how the records were management in support of the business function, the 6 (100%) management representatives stated that records are created in day to day activities. They appreciated that records management is important in carrying out the business functions of the university including Quality Management Systems. They stated that most records were managed largely manually and electronically for emails. Emails received from within and without are maintained electronically, memos, reports are also maintained manually and electronically. Central registry manages personnel records in a central place. They went ahead by stating that different offices generate their own records that help in carrying out their administrative function. The respondents appreciated the importance of maintaining records in the university as one of them stated that:

Everybody in the university is involved in the creation of records directly or in directly. The records provide evidence of the university's functions, decisions, procedures, organization policies operations and they help resolve conflicts among many others.

### **Auditors**

To find out from the auditors the business function of the University, the following are the functions mentioned. All the 4 (100%) interviewed auditors stated Teaching, Research & Extension as the major functions.

The records generated according to the auditors included; financial records, student's records, personnel records, administration records and accommodation records.

To find out how records are managed in support of the business functions of the University, the 4 (100%) auditors appreciated the importance of records for it is one of the mandatory requirements of the ISO 9001:2008 that is customized in Quality Manual System under clause 4.2.4 and stated that records are tools used in carrying out ISO internal and external audits. One of the auditors stated that:

Records are used as a tool to provide proof to whether given processes were carried out though, records management is not audited as an independent process but as part of the ISO internal and external auditing.

All of them however stated that records are managed in a centralized and decentralized system, they explained that there is a central registry where personnel records are kept (registry) and decentralized system where offices creates records uses them or/and send copies to other offices for action. They mentioned that in most of the departments, there is lack of qualified personnel to manage the records they create. One of the respondents stated that:

During audits, nonconformities have been identified in recordkeeping but no one can be held responsible for it is not part of the available staff's job description and they have no any training in the management of records.

The auditors were in agreement that Quality Management Systems influences the quality of services rendered by the university through records management. In this they said that in areas where records are well maintained, it becomes easy to serve the clients or action officers effectively and efficiently and it also saves time executing tasks. One of the respondents stated that:

Records are used as objective evidence to demonstrate that a certain target or expectation was carried out. Therefore records can be used as a point of reference in making decisions that will improve the service.

### **Supervisors**

The 6 (100%) supervisors identified the business function s of the University as; teaching, research & extension and mentioned that they were involved in following business activities.

1. Opening of files and data entry.
2. Receipt, capture, and creation of records.
3. Preparation of various reports for example quarterly reports, file census and financial reports.



4. They foresee maintenance of records by ensuring that files are in good shape and the storage conditions in the registry are conducive.
5. Ensuring security and confidentiality of records by restricting access from unauthorized staff.
6. Periodic appraisal of records-Carrying out physical checks to identify non-current records and storing them separately as archives.

The records generated and received included personnel, administrative, financial correspondences, minutes, academic, legal records among others.

In establishing the records required to carry out the mentioned business function and responsibilities, the 6 (100%) records supervisors mentioned terms of service, collective bargaining agreement for various cadres, labour laws, ISO procedures, service charter, service contracts and other legal documents.

The records supervisors also appreciated the importance of records in carrying out the business functions and in service delivery. All the respondents indicated that sound management of records provides quality services. One of the respondents stated that:

...as creators and custodians of records we strive to provide the right information through providing the right records to our users though there exists a number of challenges in the management of records for instance, confidentiality of records is compromised in the paper based system, slow retrieval of records, security of records is also a matter of concern

It was also noted that records were managed manually and electronically and most of the vital records were paper based in a centralized and decentralized system. One of the respondents stated that:

Staff personnel files, contracts and agreements and tender records are stored in the central registry in paper based format while records created or received by different departments are stored in their respective offices.

The supervisors further stated that the files are arranged numerically that's for personnel records in the central registry and alpha-numerical for the administrative records for those created in different departments of the university while others are stored according to their 'subjects'.

### **Action Officers**

Action officers in the institution comprised registrars, deputy registrars, senior assistant registrars and administrative assistants. Constituting 22 (28.2%) of the sample size. Through questionnaire responses, the officers stated teaching, learning, research extension as the business function of the institution and stated the following as activities they carry out in their respective departments.

1. Strategic planning for their various departments.
2. Attending meeting of various committees.

3. Coordinating of university activities such as international conferences, inaugural lectures and graduation ceremonies.
4. Implementation of decisions passed by management.
5. Act as a bridge between their departments and the management.
6. Monitoring and reporting on activities in their specific departments.
7. Planning, organizing and carrying out of workshops, seminars, trainings in their respective departments.
8. Procurement and accounting for funds.

The officers outlined MU Quality manual and procedures; performance contract; University Act (2012); Quality assurance handbook; strategic plan for MU; University charter; and various committee reports and minutes as the records and/or documents required to carry out their business activities. The records generated included; Administrative records, financial records, personnel files, expenditure records, reports, staff appraisal reports medical reports, students welfare reports for example bursary, club associations, accommodations, evaluation of instructor and course reports, curriculum development, medical reports, admissions audit reports, performance contract reports.

Among them, 12 (54.54%) of the action officers stated that records are managed electronically and manually in most of the offices. It was however observed that tender documents and staff personnel files are managed manually. On the other hand 8 (36.36%) of them stated that MU operates on a centralized and decentralized system of records management. It was clear that, personal files were kept in the central registry while action officers create and maintain records for the specific functions of their offices at departmental level. Only 2 (9.09%) of the officers did not have an idea on how records are managed in support of the business function of the University.

to establish how records support or undermine the business function and quality of services provided, 15 (68.18%) of the respondents acknowledged that records are vital in carrying out their specific departmental activities for they act as a tool for decision making, an evidence to show that an activity was carried out and they also act as references.

One of the respondents state that:

Records were the major tool for decision making without which, it is not possible to plan and make sound decision.

At least 4 (22.72%) of the respondents stated that records to some extent undermine the process of carrying out business activities, for instance one of the respondents stated that:

...Sometimes activities are carried out and the documentation is not well done or not done at all. The record of the activity therefore doesn't exist. Creating and maintaining of proper record of activities carried out are a major challenge in the institution.

Another respondent stated that:

...the paper based system compromises the security of records and there is slow retrieval of records thus undermining service delivery.

Table 2 shows the views presented by the respondents on the assertions about the records management practices at the University.

**Table 2: Records management practices at the University**

Assertions	Response rate					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
The university's records management practices make it stand out among other institutions	0	8	7	7	0	22
The records management practices at the university aid in the achievement of accountability and transparency	0	9	2	11	0	22
The university's achievements in its operations can be attributed to its records keeping practices	0	7	6	9	0	22

**Key: 1** - strongly disagree, **2** - disagree, **3** - undecided, **4** - agree and **5** - strongly agree

From the respondent's views, they are not satisfied with the records management in the university.

### Records staff

The records staff identified teaching, learning, research and extension as the business functions of the institution. Their administrative duties included:

1. Receiving and dispatch of mails.
2. Receipt, classification and filling of records into their personal staff or subject files.
3. Opening of files and data entry.
4. Storage and retrieval of files.
5. Receipt, capture, and creation of records.
6. Maintenance of records by ensuring that files are in good shape and the storage conditions in the registry are conducive.
7. Ensuring proper housekeeping.
8. Ensuring security and confidentiality of records by restricting access to authorized staff.

The records generated included: Reports, student records, administrative records and budget allocation records while those required to carry out the functions included; Financial records, service charter, quality manual and procedures and the University Act

Half of the records staff 15 (50%) stated that records were managed manually and electronically in a centralized and decentralized system. The personnel records are classified in a numerical filling system while records created and maintained by other departments are classified in alpha-numeric filling system. One of the respondents stated that:

Records are classified according 'subjects' and filing is based on subject indexing except those that relate to staff which are placed in the personnel files are numerically filed and managed manually.

Another 10 (33.3%) of them stated that records are managed in line with ISO 9001:2008 and the institutions quality manual and procedures while 4 (13.33%) stated that records are received and kept in files for day to day use.

To find out whether the records management practices at the university meets the ISO 9001:2008 standard, 16 (53.33%) of the records staff were of the view that the records management practices does not meet the requirements of the ISO 9001:2008. One of them stated that:

...the university lacks a record management policy and this has affected the records management practices in the University. Lack of retention and disposal schedule has lead to records that have lost meaning to stay in offices thus lack of space for current records.

However 14 (46.66%) of them commended that the audits both internal and external have impacted positively on the direction to be followed in the management of records. Table 3 represents the records management views on assertions about the records management practices at the University.

**Table 3: Records management practices at the university**

Assertions	Response rate					Total
	5	4	3	2	1	
The university's records management practices make it stand out among other institutions.	0	12	11	7	0	30
The records management practices at the university aid in the achievement of accountability and transparency.	0	10	2	18	0	30
The university's achievements in its operations can be attributed to its records keeping practices.	0	13	0	17	0	30

**Key:** 1 - strongly disagree, 2 - disagree, 3 - undecided, 4 - agree and 5 - strongly agree

From the views, it is evident that the records staff is not satisfied with the records management practices.

### Response from Secretaries

The 10 secretaries were sampled from the top management offices, QMS & ISOC, QA and Dean Student's affairs. The study sought to find out what activities the secretaries are involved in, how records are managed in support of the function and whether they had any training on records management. The study revealed that secretaries were involved in the following activities.

1. Handling incoming and outgoing mails.
2. Attending to inquiries.

3. Typing of minutes, memos, letters, and reports.
4. Receiving and attending to visitors.
5. Creation and maintenance of records.

Records created in their departments include; reports, minutes, personnel records, administrative records, budget records, requisition records, notices and other correspondences. All the 10 (100%) secretaries stated that records are managed manually and each department creates and maintains their own records. From the sample, 6 (60%) of the secretaries stated that management of records has improved as a result of both internal and external audits. They indicated that documentation of every activity has to be kept as proof that a given function was carried out as this can only be proved through keeping of the records. On the other hand, 4 (40%) of the respondents stated that poor record keeping is a major problem because there is no one to take collective responsibility for management of records. One of them said:

...Because any one in the department can file or retrieve records from a file, mishandling and misfiling has been a major issue.

All 10 (100%) of the respondents stated that they had a unit in their secretarial training called office practice in secretarial studies where records management was taught. It is thus evident that the secretaries had formal records management training and skills to enable them in efficient and effective management of records.

## DISCUSSION

Management of institutional records in support of the business function of the university was the area of focus in this paper. To understand this, the business function of the university, the records generation, and the records and/ or documents that are used to run this business function were the key elements that the author sought to examine. Functional analysis, a process that provides a systematic way of establishing the key activities and transactions pertaining to the key functions of an organization, and in determining the records that support those activities and transactions can be used. 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 an organisation, (Wamukoya, 2000) as cited by (Makhura, 2005). For institutions of higher learning such as Moi University, massive records are commonly generated and kept to facilitate the day to day running of the institution. Robinson (1999) notes, functional descriptions link records directly to the business functions and activities that created them. The records continuum model appreciates that from the business activities (acts) of an organisation, records are a presentation that a given activity has been carried out (McKemmish, 1997). The functional analysis was undertaken to help in understanding of the core functions and activities, records that support the discharge of functions and the records created in relation to service delivery.

The analysis of the business functions and activities revealed that all the 78 (100%) of respondents were aware of and involved in the business function of the university and related activities within the university. The business functions and activities created massive records, as observed by scholars such as Wamukoya (2000), who says that records are a by product of business activity and Shepherd and Yeo (2003) who stated that records may be created either

in the course of an activity or afterwards in conscious act of record keeping. Xioami (2001) on the other hand states that in a record continuum records model processes are so much interwoven in business processes that the boundaries are negligible.

The findings further revealed that the records are managed largely in a paper based system which has led to slow retrieval of files and compromised the security of records. It was also established that the records are managed in a centralized and decentralized system. That is, the personnel records are managed in a central system while records generated or received in different departments in the university are managed in a decentralized system.

The existence of the ISO 900:2008 standard is felt in the institution and has made the university realize the importance of documentation and records keeping, the respondents further appreciated the importance of records but noted that service delivery is still suffering from poor record keeping which has been brought about by unqualified personnel hence lack of professionalism in records management; poor filing and misfiling of records was also reported. This has also been observed Kemoni and Ngulube (2007) who opine that poor records keeping results in loss of files and documents leading to delayed services to citizens, poor image of the public service, poor organizational reputation, non-legal compliance, financial loss and information loss.

## CONCLUSION

The business functions in institutions of higher learning among others include teaching, research, extension, consultancy, community services, and administration and support services. A number of records are generated from these business functions to mention but a few: Administrative records; Personnel records such as those pertaining, employment, staff development, disciplinary issues; Student's records such as population, performance, student's welfare and disciplinary issues; Financial records such as grants, research funds, budgetary records, salary payment, statements of accounts, fees payment, reports and expenditure receipts among others; Architectural records such as maps and building plans; Performance contract reports; Internal and external audit reports; Committee records for instance minutes; Records of collaborations and memorandum of understanding; records from communication to and from the ministry.

Some of the ways in which records are managed in the institutions include:

Largely in a manual system with exception of the finance department that has financial system;

- a) Both centralised and decentralized forms of records management, Central for the personnel records and decentralized system for records generated in different departments,
- b) The filling systems used is alpha-numerical for those generated in departments and numerical filing systems for the personnel records, The records are found both in paper and electronic records



## RECOMMENDATION

The author recommends development and implementation of a records management programme and policies to establish formal records management programme with clear policies, infrastructure, staffing, guidelines and clear qualifications for records personnel.

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