

**RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AS CORRELATE FOR
INFORMATION SERVICE DELIVERY AND UTILISATION IN CIVIL SERVICE
COMMISSION IN NIGER STATE**

BY

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MTech/SICT/2018/8154**

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MINNA**

JULY, 2023

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, FEDERAL
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ABSTRACT

The study was on the records management practices as correlate for information service delivery and utilisation in civil service commission in Niger State. The study was guided by five objectives and five corresponding research questions. Among the objectives of the study were to: identify the records management practices adopted for effective information service

delivery in the Niger State Civil Service Commission, identify the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission to mention but a few. Survey research design method was adopted for the study. The total population for the study was 54 administrative staff in Civil Service Commission in Niger State. Total enumeration was carried out because the population size was manageable. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Out of 54 copies of questionnaire administered, 47 copies were filled, returned and used for the analysis. Descriptive statistical tool involving frequency counts and percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data. The findings of the study revealed that the civil service commission adopts policies and procedures for creating and storing records both in print and electronic format with highest mean score of 3.13. The highest mean score of 3.32 was obtained from the fact that proper record management enhances quick decision making. Effective management practice arises effective record management with highest mean score of 3.45. Effective utilisation of information is a function of good record management practices with mean score of 3.25. Hypotheses testing revealed significant relationship between record management practice and effective information service deliver and utilisation with correlation coefficient of 0.565, $p > 0.5$ and 0.143, $p > 0.5$ respectively. The study revealed further that factors such as improper record management, lack of proper security of records, lack of professionally trained record managers, inadequate resources to facilitate proper record management practice and insufficient space for record management were the challenges associated with record management in the civil service commission. The study concluded that effective organisational records management enables easy access to records to expedite accountability and verification processes. However, factors such as improper records management, lack of proper security for record affects the record management practices, lack of professionally trained record managers, inadequate resources are seen as challenges associated with record management which affects effective information service delivery and utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission. Through effective records management, impending risks can be identified, measured, and mitigated before they occur. It was recommended among others that the management of Civil Service Commission in Niger State should ensure the recruitment of adequately qualified records managers. This will definitely curb the situation whereby records are kept, there is need to develop and implement records management policies, standards, guidelines and procedures that will help improve the management of records in the civil service commission.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Records and archives provide the information that is required by those who make the decisions. The question only is whether these records are available to these decision makers and whether the decision makers are aware of their existence and thus make use of them when making decisions. Utilisation of records in most organisations tends to reduce uncertainty in information use. The use of information allows the user to identify the various information required to meet the information needs.

Government institutions all over the world are established to provide specialised functions and services to its citizens and international communities so as to satisfy their basic needs. According to Leach *et al.* (2011), government institutions are service providers who aim to meet the demands, needs and aspirations of those for whom the service is provided. As human organisations, government agencies function through the Personnel/Human Resource

Department, which is the custodian of rules, regulations, records and extra-ministerial circulars.

The civil service is typically described as the core, permanent administrative arm of government, including permanent and pensionable officials working in government ministries, departments and agencies. It includes staff who advise on, develop, and implement government policies and programmes and manage day-to-day activities. However, there is no universal definition for the civil service, and in some cases it is considered to include the wider public service, including the military, the police, teachers, health workers, and public enterprises.

A civil service commission is a government agency that is constituted by legislature to regulate the employment and working conditions of civil servants, oversee hiring and promotions, and promote the values of the public service. Its role is roughly analogous to that of the human resources department in corporations. Civil service commissions are often independent from elected politicians.

In the civil service, the importance of records and information management cannot be over emphasised. Records play important role at any given stage in the life cycle of an organisation. These include recruitment, training and development, promotion, transfer, implementation, monitoring, appraisal, separation, pension matters, organisational development to mention just a few and they are therefore an essential informational resources. Records or information management is anchored on the premise that records require managing, in a like manner that other government resources need managing. Information should be regarded and managed as fully important as other administrative functions since records are at the center of governmental operations. For example,

transparency and accountability could be achieved by giving the public the right of access to information and sound records management. Thus, effective information and records management is the key and foundation of any responsible government needs to provide public goods and services, fulfill its obligation of transparency and accountability towards its citizens and protect their human rights and dignity.

Records are created by an organisation in routine transaction of its business or in pursuance of its legal obligations. A record may consist of two or more documents. All documented information, regardless of its characteristics, media, physical form, and the manner are recorded or stored. Records include accounts, agreements, books, drawings, letters, magnetic/optical disks, memos, micrographics to mention but a few.

Records are one of the most important organisational assets that have value beyond the immediate environment (Usman and Udensi, 2013). They are the lifeblood of any organisation and they form the basis for decision-making, policy formulation and service provision. Various government ministries all over the world have been facing problems in the management of records and, consequently, this has affected the quality of public service delivery (Abuki, 2014; Mampe and Kalusopa, 2012; Marutha, 2011).

Records management (RM) is the supervision and administration of digital or paper records, regardless of format. Records management activities include the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposal of records. In this context, a record is content that documents a business transaction (Modebelu and Onyali, 2014). Records management activities include the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposal of records. In this context, a record is content that documents a business transaction. Documentation may exist in contracts, memos, paper files, electronic files, reports, emails, videos, instant message logs

or database records. The authors further mentioned that paper records may be stored in physical boxes on-premises or at a storage facility. Digital records may be stored on storage media in-house or in the cloud. Good records management boasts efficient and effective public service delivery as it minimizes litigation risks, promotes accountability and transparency, ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and supports informed decision-making (Abuzawayda *et al.*, 2013; Moemi and Rotich, 2015; Okoli and Onuigbo, 2014).

According to Hoque and Sorwar (2015), the development of any country depends on its capability to access and use records effectively. Accordingly, records managers should refine their records management programmes by implementing retention and disposal schedules, international records management standards and procedures, disaster management plans, user-friendly classification schemes, records management policies and electronic records management systems, which will improve information access and public service delivery.

Organisations create records to support the activities they carry out. However, if these records are not managed properly, they will not provide the necessary support and information might be lost causing problems for the organization. To provide an efficient and effective administration that ensures that organizations run as smoothly as possible, there should be proper management of records. International Organisation for Standardization (ISO) (2011) explained records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of an information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.

In the same vein, Mrwebi (2019) indicated that information plays a very vital role in the economic development of organizations which is essential for any corporate body to function effectively. Information is every organization's most basic and essential asset, and in common with any other business asset, recorded information requires effective management. Institutions produce increasingly large amounts of information and consequently greater volumes of records, in both paper and electronic forms. It is essential that information is captured, managed and preserved in an organized system that maintains its integrity and authenticity as well as fulfilling legal and financial requirements. According to Nyathi and Peterson (2017), organizations use records to support accountability, when they need to prove that they have met their obligations or complied with the best practice or established policies. An unmanaged record system makes the performance of duties more difficult, costs organizations all resources (e.g. time, money etc.) and makes them vulnerable to security breaches, prosecution and embarrassment.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Effective and efficient public service delivery remains an issue of great concern in Nigeria. One of the key contributors to this is the deliberate or unaware negligence of good records keeping practices in government ministries. In Nigeria, records management has remained a neglected function in most administration units especially in public organizations. This study is important because it looked at what the ministries ought to do in order to avoid repetition of poor records management practices in government. This is important because it is an opportunity for a fresh start and at this level, the Nigerian government have the opportunities to put appropriate practices, principles and other good records management requirements in place. There is a link between effective records management and enhanced public service

delivery. Records management is a key component of any public sector reform programme and the efficiency of which includes enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public service (Joy and Agala, 2019).

The study was also necessitated by the need to identify how records management can be related to good public service delivery in the government so as to gain the trust and confidence of the members of public that they serve. Inadequate records management practices in the government offices may lead to decentralization of corruption, delayed service delivery, multiplication of same services, lack of accountability, poor governance and poor decision making processes and this might lead to failed governments. Nyathi and Peterson (2017) pointed out that poor records management have devastating consequences such as, delayed and poor service delivery, difficulties in accounting for decisions taken. This study found out the linkage between records management, enhanced public service delivery and the attainment of the needs of the citizenry.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine records management practices as correlate for information service delivery and utilisation in Civil Service Commission in Niger State.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. to assess the records management practices adopted for effective information service delivery in the Niger State Civil Service Commission.
2. identify the benefits derived from proper utilisation of records management among staff in the Niger State Civil Service Commission.

3. ascertain the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission
4. find out the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission
5. identify the challenges associated with records management and effective information service delivery among staff in Niger State Civil Service Commission.

1.4 Research Questions

To achieve the above objectives, the study addressed the following questions.

1. What are the records management practices adopted for effective information service delivery in the Niger State Civil Service Commission?
2. What are the benefits derived from proper utilization of records management among staff in the Niger State Civil Service Commission?
3. What is the relationship between record management practice and effective service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission?
4. What is the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission?
5. What are the challenges associated with records management and effective information service delivery among staff in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The study was guided by two hypotheses:

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between record management practice and information service delivery among staff in Niger State Civil Service Commission

HO₂: There is no significant relationship of record management practice as correlate for information service delivery and utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings from this study would be of benefit to Niger State Civil Service Commission, Nigerian Government, Researchers and Students.

The Niger State Civil Service Commission would benefit from this study as it will propose different strategies and ways for better record keeping.

Nigerian Government would benefit from this study as it will create awareness on how to manage records of different states within the federation more effectively and with less stress.

The government can also get the knowledge of data of any state whenever required.

Researchers and Students will benefit from this study as it will add to the already existing knowledge and literature in the area of the study.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of this study covered Civil Service Commission in Niger State. The content scope of this study was restricted to records management practices as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilization in Niger State Civil Service Commission. The limitations of the study included: limited financial resources, time constraints, difficulty in retrieval of administered questionnaires and willingness of prospective respondents to answer questionnaire. This implies that the administrative staff of the state ministries delayed the data collection process for the researcher. The researcher did not add observations and conduct interviews due to limited time.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined operationally as used in the context of this study.

Civil service- is a sector of Niger State government composed mainly of career civil servants hired on professional merit rather than appointed or elected, whose institutional tenure typically survives transitions of political leadership.

Civil service commission- is a government agency that is constituted by legislature to regulate the employment and working conditions of civil servants, oversee hiring and promotions and promote the values of the public service in Niger State.

Information Service- is the procedures and operations of maintaining, developing and supporting collection of records and services in Niger State civil service commission.

Public service- is a service intended to serve all members of a community. It is usually provided by the Niger State government to civil servants and other people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing provision of services.

Records- These are documented information about activities performed, events occurred, results achieved in Niger state civil service commission.

Record management- activities responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records in Niger state.

Records management practices- are guidelines set up by the Niger State Civil Service in aiding the achievement of certain goals and objectives for which the organisation is established.

Utilisation- the measurement of the extent to which records are used in influencing the information service delivery of staff in Niger state civil service commission.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

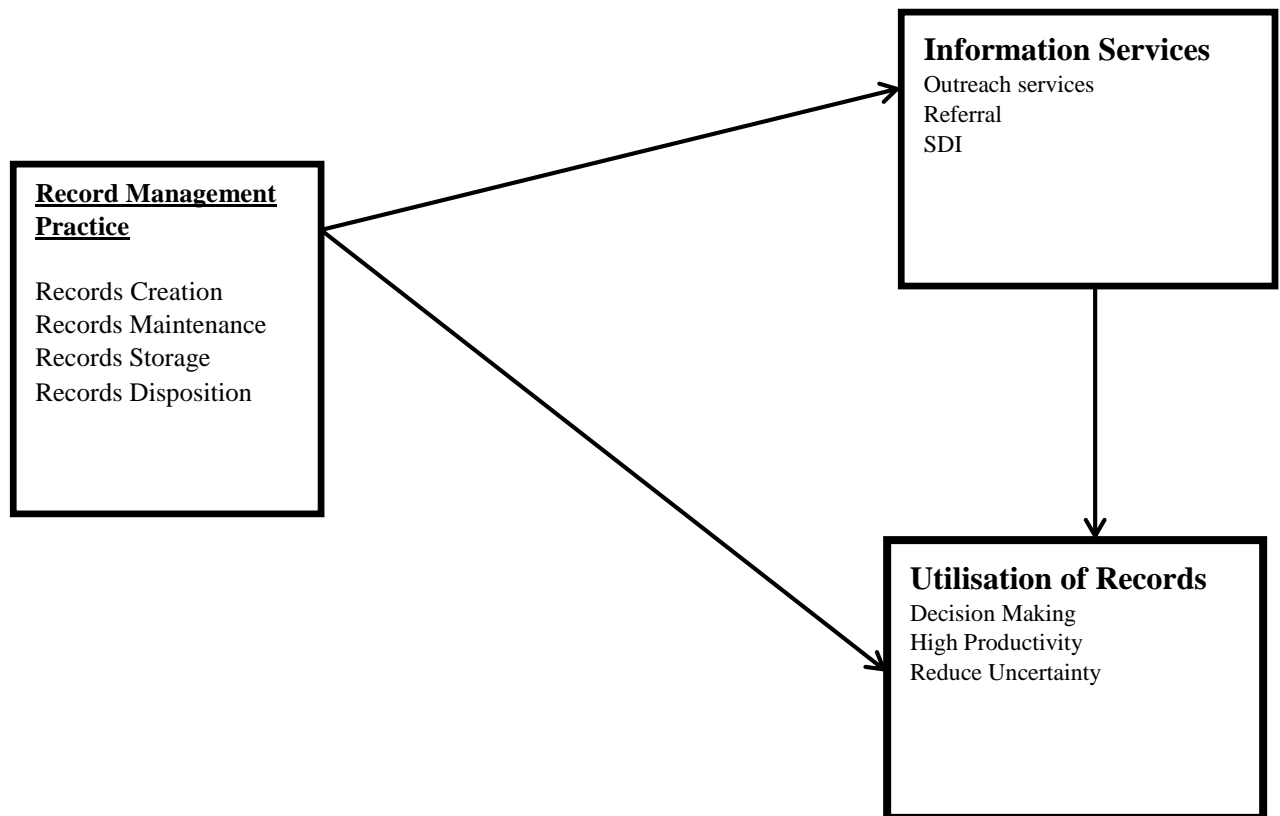


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model (Author's Construct, 2020)

Figure 2.1 shows the correlation between record management practices, information service delivery and utilisation of records. The figure shows that good record management practices such as record creation, disposition, storage and maintenance strongly have relationship with how information services are delivered by record management staff and the effective utilisation of the records by it users. Similarly, the figure showed that information services such as selection dissemination service, current awareness service, referral service and circulation service influences the utilisation of records.

2.2 Records

According to Pember and Cowan (2010), record can be seen in terms of the physical tangible format in which it appears, or in terms of the information it contains. They noted that records differ in format or size, and have different contents. The term record comes from the Latin word “recordari”, which means to recall, or to remember, or bring back to mind, and this is exactly what records do. Cox (2011) also explained records as an extension of human memory, purposefully created to record information, document transactions, communicate thoughts, substantiate claims, advance explanations, offer justifications and provide lasting evidence events.

Similarly, Kallus (2012) defined records as documented information, in any form, created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity. Kallus (2012) further defined a record as written or oral evidence that has been collected and kept for use in making decisions. The most common records (such as forms, correspondence, reports and books) are written, printed or typed on paper. Oral records capture the human voice on tape, and are

stored on cassettes or on other magnetic media. In support of Kallus's (2012) definition, Quible (2016) defined records as informational documents such as forms, letters, memoranda, reports and manuals used to carry out various functions. In a nutshell, the concept "record" could be defined as the information captured for re-use at a later stage as evidence of an activity or action undertaken, and a basis on which future decisions are made. Records are important and it is difficult to imagine life without them, particularly in the running of an organisation.

2.2.1 Record management

Institutions create records to support the activities they carry out. However, if these records are not managed properly, they will not provide the necessary support and information might be lost causing problems for the institution to provide an efficient and effective administration that ensures that the business runs as smoothly as possible, there should be proper management of records. Igwoku (2018) defined records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of an information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. Records management is also the discipline of applying well-established techniques and procedures to the control of those sources of information, which arises internally within an organization as a result of its own activities.

Unuigbe (2016) saw records management as the quality, quantity, and cost of records and encompassing the procedures, systems, operations, space, equipment and staff required for managing the records. Kanzi (2011) also recognized that records management is a dynamic science of handling recorded information for immediate and future use efficiently and

economically. Furthermore, Pali (2014) pointed out that records management is the systematic control of all records, either in media format or printed materials from their creation until its final disposition; including the development and application of standards to the creation, use, storage, retrieval, disposal and archival preservation of recorded information. In summary, an effective records management program will ensure that records are available for use when needed, that privacy and confidentiality are maintained, that redundant records are destroyed and that records ultimately contribute towards sustaining service delivery.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks are explanations about a phenomenon. According to Marriam (2011), theoretical framework provides the researcher the lens to view the world. Hoekman (2016) argued that theories can be classified according to their scope, function, structure and levels. Several theories and models have been put forward by scholars to explain the field of records management and service delivery. A concept would not be used in managing electronic records and needed to be replaced by a model which would appropriately reflect the special characteristics of electronic records. The authors emphasised that as technology changed; the record was prone to transformation and conversion. The concept of the records continuum had thus been promoted in the records management world as it addresses the management of paper and electronic records.

2.3.1 The life cycle model

The Records Life Cycle Model was developed in the USA after the First World War by the then National Records and Archives Administration in response to the ever increasing

volume of records produced by organizations and has been modified by other writers like Frank Upward and Atherton among others (Evenett and Hoekman, 2016). The records life cycle concept is regarded as a theory which provided the framework for the operation of a records management programme. The records life cycle concept was an analogy of the life of a biological organism, which was born, lived and died. In the same manner, a record is created, used as long as it has value, and is transferred to national archives or destroyed. The records life cycle concept has four phases, namely: creation, distribution, maintenance and use, and appraisal and disposition. Shepherd and Yeo (2013) observed that since 1950's many variants of the life cycle concept have been modeled and most of them were aimed at showing a progression of actions taken at different times in the life of a record, typically: its creation, capture, storage, use and disposal. Some writers have shown this as a linear progression while others describe it as a loop or circle. Mnjama (2013) cited in Kemoni (2012) observed that under the records life cycle, records passed through three stages, namely: creation, semi-active and non-active stages

In stage one of the Life Cycle Model; the record is created, presumably for a legitimate reason and according to certain standards. In the second stage, the record goes through an active period when it has maximum primary value and is used or referred to frequently by the creating office and others involved in decision making. During this time, the record is stored on-site in the active or current files of the creating office. At the end of stage two, the record may be reviewed and determined to have no further value, at which point it is destroyed, or the record can enter stage three. In stage three, the record is relegated to a semi- active status, which means it still has value, but is not needed for day to day decision making. Because the record is not consulted regularly; it is often stored in an offsite storage center. At the end of

stage three, another review occurs, at which point a determination is made to destroy or send the record to stage four. In stage four, the record is reserved for inactive records with long term, indefinite, archival value. At the archive, specific activities are undertaken to preserve and describe the records (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013).

2.4 Records Management Practices in the Civil Service

Records management practices are vital to every organization aiding in the achievement of certain goals set by the founders of that organization from the conceptualization of that business. Records management occupies a strategic position in the efficient and effective management of public institutions. In fact, the practice is central in the administration of the institutions because it documents the planning and implementation of appropriate courses of services allowing proper monitoring of work (Egwunyenga, 2019). As stated by Robeck *et al.* (2012), the reasons why organizations practice records management are to control the creation and growth of records, reduce operating costs, improve efficiency and productivity, assimilate new records management technologies, ensure regulatory compliance, minimize litigation risk, safeguard vital information, support better management decision making, preserve the corporate memory, and foster professionalism in running the business. The need for records preservation is, therefore, paramount to the cultural heritage of the past and for future generations obtainable in any organization (Abdulkareem *et al.*, 2013).

Akor and Udensi (2013) asserted that decision making in an organization is an administrative function and invariably requires information in the form of records. They asserted further that administration is ordinarily discussed as the art of “getting things done,” while emphasising the processes and methods for insuring incisive action. Principles are set forth for securing concerted

action from groups of people. Decisions are made at different levels in the organization—the lower, the middle, and the higher. Irrespective of the level, however, information will be required one way or another. In all spheres of activity, decisions are being made about the allocation of budgetary resources, the prioritization of programs, the granting of social benefits, the commissioning of new projects, the closure of unproductive ventures, and the information to release to the public, or the level of classification that certain information requires. Records and archives provide the information that is required by those who make the decisions. The main question therefore is whether or not these records are available to these decision makers and whether or not the decision makers are aware of their existence and thus make use of them for decision making.

Thus efficient and effective management of records helps the critical stakeholders of an organization or institution as well as its administrators who require records to facilitate accurate, timely decisions (Nwankwo, 2011). Decision making is the backbone of administrative actions and administrators execute plans through actions (Akor & Udensi, 2013). Information is every organization's most basic and essential asset, and in common with any other business asset, recorded information requires effective management. Records management ensures that information can be accessed easily and destroyed routinely when no longer needed, and enables organizations not only to function on a day to day basis, but also to fulfill legal and financial requirements. The preservation of the records of government, for example, ensures it can be held accountable for its actions, that society can trace the evolution of policy in historical terms, and allows access to an important resource for future decision making (National Archives of Scotland, 2013).

All organizations create records to support and provide evidence of their transactions. Consequently, records, regardless of their formats, are important sources of information and knowledge. They ensure effective transparency and accountability in decision-making and

contribute to national development (International Records Management Trust, 2013; Kemoni, 2017). Therefore, sound management of records, whether electronic or paper, has become a topical issue not only in Nigeria but globally. The World Bank (2016) and the International Records Management Trust (2013) concur that records are essential for the effective and productive functioning of private and public organizations. They assert that records register the decisions and activities of governments and other organizations, and serve as benchmarks against which they can measure their future activities and decisions. Without records, there can be no rule of law and accountability (World Bank, 2016). Consequently, without good records, organizations make ad hoc decisions without the benefit of institutional memories.

Kalusopa (2011) observed that for organizations to participate meaningfully in the national development process, they must develop the capacity to manage records and information. The reason is that the challenges of conceiving, initiating, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating activities will always require reliable, pertinent, and timely records as well as information. Therefore, every organization has the role to monitor and measure progress with inclusive participatory national economic processes and good corporate ethics that the principles of openness, integrity, and accountability underpin with regards to its records management (Kanyenze *et al.*, 2016).

Unuigbo (2013) mentioned that the past twenty years has revolutionized the way in which information is generated and stored. The service provided by records management is vital to any organization, and to every information-using employee in it. Its primary function is to facilitate the free flow of records through an institution, to ensure that information is rapidly available where and when it is needed. To carry out this function needs an efficient, effective

records management programme. By helping the users to do their jobs better and more easily, the records manager serves the organization. Given that an organization's records are unique to it, they need to be managed explicitly, just as the organization would manage its other resources (people, money and estate). Records management systems and procedures should facilitate compliance with university policies. Specific business functions and activities within universities may be subject to specific legislation or to professional best practice or relevant ethical guidelines.

Pali (2014) stated that heads of departments within the civil service have overall responsibility for the management of records generated by their activities thus ensuring that records controlled within their units are managed in a way which meet aims of the government. The key records management practices in the civil service records management policy framework are records creation and capture, records survey/audit, records analysis/retention schedule, disposal of records, records protection and security and provision of appropriate training for relevant staff.

Kanzi (2011) pointed out that for a sound records management practices to take place, heads of institutions should designate or appoint a staff member (Record Manager) at senior management level to whom they can delegate the responsibility of ensuring that sound records management practices are implemented and maintained. Kanzi (2011) added that records managers should develop and implement records management policies, which are endorsed by the heads of the institutions and their top management teams. Adherence to these should be continuously monitored and be reviewed on an annual basis. Furthermore, the researcher stated that there should be records management procedures to serve as a guide to employees, records classification system to facilitate efficient retrieval and disposal of

records, and training of records managers and records office staff to equip them with the necessary skills to carry out their functions properly.

Utulu (2011) also mentioned that if any information was to be lost or misplaced, it could cause a range of problems some of which might affect the future of students needing essential information from their records. According to Afolabi (2009), Records Management and Archives staff should be responsible for providing an appropriate record management training programme to the staff. Utulu (2011) added that records should not be taken from the organization without the permission of the Records Manager/Archivist or an appropriate Office Manager.

Scholars of records management theory and practice agree that, in principle, organisations should create and capture records for every activity that involves more than one party and that they should identify and record every process that generates records. Therefore, records must be authentic, complete and usable. For example, even Information Communication Technology (ICT) systems must be able to generate or capture the 'metadata' that record the contents, contexts and structures of records within the business processes that produce them (IRMT, 2009).

Furthermore, Shepherd and Yeo (2013), in assessing the need to create and capture records, suggested that it is essential to consider the requirements of the organizations or particular business units that need records to provide evidence and information for operational use, the requirements of the organizations, particular business units or external stakeholders that need evidence to ensure accountability, the cost of creating, capturing and maintaining the records that organizations require and the risk to them if they do not have these records. The authors

were of the view that a policy for creating records is also necessary. It should stipulate the requirements for capturing, registering, classifying, retaining, storing, tracking, accessing and disposing of records.

Organisations create and keep records so that designated users, mostly from within the organizations and occasionally from outside, can use them when they need to. Any records management system that captures records must have systems that allow users to use the records thoroughly (Shepherd and Yeo, 2013). Therefore, institutions create records for a purpose. The timely and accurate retrieval of records depends largely on how well organized and classified the records are. As a result, records classification systems should reflect the business activities of the organizations. Organizations need to determine the degree of classification control they require for their business purposes.

Shepherd and Yeo (2013) also pointed out that classification schemes are based on an analysis of functions processes and activities and document the structure of a records management system and the relationship between records and the activities that generate them. Again, they emphasized that it is necessary to use appraisal techniques to support decisions about retention, that is ‘which records can be destroyed at an early stage, and which merit longer-term or indefinite retention’. Other researchers and authorities emphasize that any effective records management programme requires classification. Vocabulary control tools usually support classification systems. They give institution-specific definitions and explain the usage of terms. Institutions should establish ongoing programmes for training in managing records. Institutions can design or set up this training together with external bodies. They cannot retain files, irrespective of their format (paper or digital), indefinitely. The reason for this is the cost of storage and maintenance as well as slower and difficult access

because of the high volumes. Records systems should be able to facilitate and implement decisions about retaining or disposing of records. Therefore, the effective management of records requires that there are procedures for the timely disposal of records that institutions no longer need to support current day-to-day activities or those that they do not need to retain for legacy purposes.

Mrwebi (2010) indicated records management principles and automated records-management systems aid in the capture, classification, and ongoing management of records throughout their lifecycle. ARMA International defines records management as "the field of management responsible for establishing and implementing policies, systems, and procedures to capture, create, access, distribute, use, store, secure, retrieve, and ensure disposition of an organization's records and information". Such a system may be paper-based (such as index cards as used in a library), or may involve a computer system, such as an electronic records-management application.

The records life-cycle consists of discrete phases covering the life span of a record from its creation to its final disposition. In the creation phase, records growth is expounded by modern electronic systems. Records will continue to be created and captured by the organization at an explosive rate as it conducts the business of the organization. Correspondence regarding a product failure is written for internal leadership, financial statements and reports are generated for public and regulatory scrutiny, the old corporate logo is retired, and a new one – including color scheme and approved corporate font – takes its place in the organization's history (Mwebi, 2010).

According to Modebelu and Onyali (2014), the examples of records phases include: those for creation of a record, modification of a record, movement of a record through its different

states while in existence, and destruction of a record. Throughout the records life cycle, issues such as security, privacy, disaster recovery, emerging technologies, and mergers are addressed by the records and information management professional responsible for organizational programs. Records and information management professionals are instrumental in controlling and safeguarding the information assets of the entity. They understand how to manage the creation, access, distribution, storage, and disposition of records and information in an efficient and cost-effective manner using records and information management methodology, principles, and best practices in compliance with records and information laws and regulations.

Managing physical records involves different disciplines or capabilities and may draw on a variety of forms of expertise.

2.4.1 Identifying records

If an item is presented as a legal record, it needs to be authenticated. Forensic experts may need to examine a document or artifact to determine that it is not a forgery, and that any damage, alteration, or missing content is documented. In extreme cases, items may be subjected to a microscope, x-ray, radiocarbon dating or chemical analysis. This level of authentication is rare, but requires that special care be taken in the creation and retention of the records of an organisation.

2.4.2 Storing records

Records must be stored in such a way that they are accessible and safeguarded against environmental damage. A typical paper document may be stored in a filing cabinet in an office. However, some organisations employ file rooms with specialized environmental

controls including temperature and humidity. Vital records may need to be stored in a disaster-resistant safe or vault to protect against fire, flood, earthquakes and conflict. In extreme cases, the item may require both disaster-proofing and public access, such as the original, signed US Constitution. Civil engineers may need to be consulted to determine that the file room can effectively withstand the weight of shelves and file cabinets filled with paper; historically, some military vessels were designed to take into account the weight of their operating procedures on paper as part of their ballast equation¹¹ (modern record-keeping technologies have transferred much of that information to electronic storage). In addition to on-site storage of records, many organizations operate their own off-site records centers or contract with commercial records centres.

2.4.3 Retrieval of records

In addition to being able to store records, enterprises must also establish the proper capabilities for retrieval of records, in the event they are needed for a purpose such as an audit or litigation, or for the case of destruction. Record retrieval capabilities become complex when dealing with electronic records, especially when they have not been adequately tagged or classified for discovery.

2.4.4 Circulating records

Tracking the record while it is away from the normal storage area is referred to as circulation. Often this is handled by simple written recording procedures. However, many modern records environments use a computerized system involving bar code scanners, or radio-frequency identification technology (RFID) to track movement of the records. These could also be used for periodic auditing to identify unauthorized movement of the record.

2.4.5 Disposal of records

Disposal of records does not always mean destruction. It can also include transfer to a historical archive, museum, or private individual. Destruction of records ought to be authorized by law, statute, regulation, or operating procedure, and the records should be disposed of with care to avoid inadvertent disclosure of information. The process needs to be well-documented, starting with a records retention schedule and policies and procedures that have been approved at the highest level. An inventory of the records disposed of should be maintained, including certification that they have been destroyed. Records should never simply be discarded as refuse. Most organizations use processes including pulverization, paper shredding or incineration.

Commercially available products can manage records through all processes active, inactive, archival, retention scheduling and disposal. Some also utilize RFID technology for the tracking of the physical file.

2.5 The Benefits Derived from Proper Records Management in the Public Service

Records Management's primary concern is the efficient, effective and economical management of information. The guiding principle of records management is to insure that information is available when and where it is needed, in an organized and efficient manner, and in a well-maintained environment. (Bowen, 2010). Bowen (2010) further stated that in today's litigious society Records Management is more important than ever but unfortunately is still overlooked and under-funded at all levels of government. A sound records management program does not cost, it pays. It pays by improving customer service, increasing staff efficiency, allocating scarce resources, and providing a legal foundation for how an agency conducts its daily mission.

According to Wamukoya (2012), government institutions face various challenges with regard to the management of records. African countries have tried to undertake civil service reforms but they have not been successful as anticipated. Shepherd and Yeo (2013) note that these reforms cannot be fully achieved without proper, reliable and effective records management programs. This is based on the fact that records play a critical role in service delivery. For instance, according to Wamukoya and Mutula (2015), records play a central role in combating vices such as corruption, promoting accountability, good governance, transparency and protection of citizens' rights. As such, any government should support sound records management programs as a priority area in its ministries.

Record management system has several benefits such as improving efficiency, better traceability and ensuring regulatory compliance. Record management and retention allows companies to make sure its staff has complete access to accurate information in a timely and cost-effective manner. Following are the most important benefits of setting up a good records management program in a typical office environment:

2.5.1 Control the generation and growth of records

Even though the Nigerian societies are supposed to be reliant on electronic files, the amount of paper used in offices has not significantly reduced (Wamukoya and Mutula, 2015). If a record management system is adopted, an organization can control the creation of records or copies and retain only those records that are actually needed or are active. This controls the growth of records and thus reduces the storage space needed.

2.5.2 Effectively retrieve and dispose records

The consequences of spending too much time searching for misfiled records can be quite severe; you may not only lose in terms of billable hours but also lose valuable customers. This is why it is important to invest in a well-designed filing system that can facilitate retrieving records and disposing of records past their end-of-life date.

2.5.3 Assimilate New Records Management Technologies

Investing in record management software can prove to be helpful if a company has physical record management system in place. The new record management technology can be assimilated with existing records system to make the system stronger.

2.5.4 Ensure regulatory compliance

With government becoming stricter about compliance issues, it is necessary for companies to apply a good record management system and ensure they are in full compliance with laws and regulations. If any company fails to provide essential records during litigation or regulatory check, it may have to pay severe penalties or face legal consequences. The only way to ensure regulatory compliance is through advanced record management technology and a firm policy for records management and retention.

2.5.5 Minimize litigation risks

Implementing a record management system can reduce the risk associated with litigation and potential penalties. A well-planned and thoughtfully applied record management program can reduce the liabilities associated with document disposal.

2.5.6 Safeguard important information

Every company, public or private, needs a systematic program for protecting its important records and information from disaster or theft. Record management system preserves the integrity and confidentiality of important records and safeguards it as per set rules. This disallows unauthorized users from tampering with sensitive and important records.

2.5.7 Cut costs and save time and efforts

Handling Records takes up a lot of time and money in terms of storage space, printing, filing and staffing to maintain an organized record system. It also takes a lot of time and money to search or reproduce lost records in absence of organized system. Records management system can help save considerable expenses by reducing operating costs and improving efficiency of employees.

2.5.8 Better management decision making

Making relevant data easily accessible allows companies to take decisions faster so that they can stay ahead of the competition or make an informed decision. Records management software makes useful data accessible and disposes off unwanted data, so that relevant data can be accessed faster. Indexing and retrieval capability allows managers and authorized executives to search and find files faster.

2.5.9 Preserve company knowledge

A company's files are its knowledgebase, which forms an integral part of its future planning and decision-making. Every single record created in a business day is a potential background

data for future management decisions and planning. These records document the activities of the company; which managers may use in future to research the workings of the company.

2.5.10 Keep employees motivated

Poorly managed records, unorganized filing system and frequent loss of important document creates a poor working environment, which has a direct effect on employees' motivation level. Though you cannot put a quantifiable figure on the loss of motivation due to these circumstances, it is one of the most important reasons to establish a good record management system.

According to Uwaifo (2014), the recording of information in paper and electronic forms help managers, particularly chief executives, to direct, control, communicate, plan, formulate policies, and make decisions. The author further explained that the availability of records is crucial in attaining organizational goals and establishing a comprehensive record management programme offers both immediate and long-term benefits to companies. Slote (2010) stated that record management includes: controlling the volume of records, improving access to information which leads to faster response to business challenges, provide better customer service and make more informed decisions, reduce litigation risks which insulates the company from potential risk associated with the premature disposal of information, ensures regulatory compliance: Organisations must adhere to a multitude of national and industry regulations concerning the maintenance and retention of records.

A records management programme determines which records must be kept and for how long to ensure regulatory compliance thereby avoiding destroying records too soon and not being able to produce them when legally required, improving efficiency and productivity thereby

saving time that could have been wasted searching for misfiled records, safeguarding vital information to help them recover or resume operation after a disaster situation, assimilating new information technologies which allows ministries to integrate cost effective and high performance systems and equipment to assist in protecting and managing records, which facilitates the standardization of information processing and control, and preserving the corporate memory of the organization. Accurate records are necessary to provide appropriate background information when planning for the future.

The importance of managing the records properly is still unclear. These are proven through several literatures which has continuously highlighted the issues regarding mismanagement of records in the organizations. Bunawan *et al.* (2016) stated that records are important aspects towards the organizational development. The study conducted by scholars shows that recording and maintaining organizational records properly is one of reliable factor in analyzing the gap of civil service quality. Ngoepe (2014) opined that, proper management on records can be used to solve the several issues in the government institutions. The author also added that, the records can be used as piece of evidence in solving the issues of underperforming staff. Moreover, the proper management applied could help to facilitate recovery and prevent damage to the government records of staff with concussion

Apart from quick and easy access to information, records management also has a role to play in promoting an organization's competitive position. Lack of attention to records management can, therefore, negatively affect the survival of an organisation against its competitors. Perhaps organisations that lack interest in proper records management do not know how to manage them. Records management is concerned with the generation, receipt, processing, storage, retrieval, distribution, usage and retirement of records (Reed, 2015). It

encompasses a wide variety of activities and sub-disciplines, such as the management of mail, correspondence, reports, copies, forms and directives. In support of the above definition, Quible (2016) indicates that the ever-increasing volume of an organization's records that must be maintained requires their efficient management. A well-designed, efficient records management program can significantly reduce an organization's operational costs.

According to McKemish (2015), records management is a key driver in increasing organizational efficiency and offers significant business benefits: improves the use of staff time by reducing the time spent looking for information. The reduction is achieved because information can be retrieved quickly and reliably. The author also submitted that a number of organizations have tried to calculate how much staff time is spent retrieving information. Better access to information also improves decision-making; reduces the unnecessary duplication of information. By reducing the amount of unnecessary information held it is easier for individuals to concentrate on managing the necessary information for which they are responsible; identifies how long records need to be kept before they can be destroyed, or transferred to the organization Archive and by doing so it reduces the costs associated with retaining unnecessary information, such as storage costs, server costs and costs associated with servicing information requests for information that the organization does not need to keep; optimizes the legal admissibility of our records and by doing so will protect individuals and the Organization from malicious litigation, as society becomes increasingly litigious. Also, legal admissibility is optimized when we can demonstrate the authenticity of records.

Meijer (2012) stated that as electronic records are increasingly becoming the “golden copy”, and as records in this format present special challenges it is important that proper consideration is given to the legal admissibility of our records; identifies how long records are needed and by doing so identify those records that are needed in the medium and long term. When those records are held in electronic format it is crucial that they are identified as soon as possible to protect them from loss. Electronic records are increasingly difficult to access over time because of hardware obsolescence, software updates and storage media failure. Records management identifies those records that need to be protected for future use and implements appropriate protection methods.

Records management processes are embedded in an increasing number of companies as a means to manage risk and cost. Records managers, who are often dually qualified as archivists, are able to set up and implement records management programmes at relatively low cost to the organisation but with great strategic benefits:

- i. Improved compliance with statutory and regulatory records requirements
- ii. Improved access to records in response to external audit and regulatory enquiries/legal discovery issues
- iii. improved access to company information and intellectual property
- iv. reduction in retention of duplicate and ephemeral records
- v. better management information for strategic decision-making
- vi. improved cost-efficiency in records storage/ office accommodation
- vii. improved cost-efficiency in electronic records storage and retrieval
- viii. improved business continuity planning by identifying and managing critical records
- ix. reduced risk that critical records are mismanaged or misplaced

- x. records of archival value are identified at source and captured by the records management process.

While some of these individual benefits could be achieved by good departmental controls, there is an over-riding advantage of a company-wide process that raises standards across all teams and departments and can identify issues and solutions around inter-disciplinary and project team activity. A company-wide approach supports electronic records in particular, where policies for file storage, database management and email retention benefit from records management as well as IT expertise.

Records therefore play a significant role in higher education management commencing from its establishment to the stages of development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and renewal of its programmes and these are essential information for the continues survival of the institution. Records management is based on the premise that records require managing, in the same sense that other higher education resources need managing. Records should be regarded as fully important as other administrative functions since records are at the heart of institutions of higher learning.

In essence, sound records management is the foundation of any higher educational institution needs to provide services, to fulfill its obligation of accountability towards immediate community, students and staff and to protect their rights (Ngoepe, 2014). No institution can survive without keeping records of its activities and also no office could operate successfully if it had to rely on memory alone to keep track of every transaction. Managing and maintaining student and staff records address the range of issues as the students make a lot of mistakes in completing their personal details as well as staff in their records. For instance,

student records enable the university or colleges to be able to recall what was done by the students throughout the whole year, for example by preserving students' examination scripts, assignment, together with their academic records.

Also, Organisations or government bodies that manage their records properly are rewarded with several benefits. These benefits include, but are not limited to, easy retrieval and access to records, ability to prevent and track fraud and corruption, ease to follow informed problem solving and decision-making and the protection of organizations against legal charges/claims (litigations). The organisation is also able to comply with pieces of legislation as well as professional administration and accountability.

Meijer (2012) underscore that effective management of records make records management even better since it enables a quicker and cheaper documents compilation, information retrieval and diverse clinical information audits. The author states that record keeping is an enabler since, without it, things like auditing and financial management will not be possible. Records can be used to support business activities, decision-making and accountability.

Proper records management assists the organisation in preserving well-organized records in their business. This is due to the fact that well-organised records enable an organisation to find the right information easily and comprehensively; enable the organisation to perform its functions successfully and efficiently and in an accountable manner; support the business, legal and accountability requirements of the organisation; ensure the conduct of business in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner; ensure the consistent delivery of services; provide continuity in service delivery when staff leave; support and document policy formation and administrative decision-making; provide continuity in the event of a disaster; protect the interests of the organisation and the rights of employees, clients and present and

future stakeholders; support and document the organisation's activities, development and achievements; provide evidence of business in the context of cultural activity and contribute to the cultural identity and collective memory of the nation (Ngoepe, 2014).

2.6 Challenges Associated with Record Management Practices

Record keeping and management occupies a strategic position in the efficient and effective management of the university system. It is central in the administration of institutions of learning because it documents the planning and implementation of appropriate course of services and programmes allowing monitoring of work. In the conventional paper based organization such as the universities, paper continues to be viewed as the materials for records in administrative documentations (Igwoku, 2018). However, there are daunting challenges affecting proper management of records in the universities.

Ibiam (2014) noted that many years of neglect had done great damage to the education sector and record keeping is not an exemption. In his view, Iguodala (2010) believes that personnel (secretaries and filing clerks) who maintain the registry system with filing cabinets containing the paper evidence of university business are inadequate and in fact ignorant of their responsibilities. This calls to question the reliability and authenticity of records kept in such a system. Giving credence to this Afolabi (2010) asserted that record management practice in Ghana has a number of problems which may include insufficient skilled and experienced record management personnel and possibly, low priority of record management in the scheme of things. Awe (2010) viewed the problem in record keeping from the perspective of these bodies "government, university management, the staff and the students.

He accused these bodies of being responsible for unavailable, inaccurate/incomplete and dishonest records. According to Utulu (2011), these adversely affect planning for and provision of structures and facilities, adequate funding, proper formulation and review of policies. Other associated problems of record keeping identified generally, in the educational system in Ghana include lack of record manual and filing guidelines which lead to loss of vital information (Egwunyenga, 2019) and inadequate computer terminals (Oketunji, 2012). Others are difficulty in record retrieval and lack of appreciation by management and staff of the need for well controlled records (Egunleti, 2010). The result of the foregoing is high profile failure in accountability.

Otuama (2010) mentioned the following as the problems associated with records management in most organizations; Absence of an archival institution, the problem of oral traditions, inadequate skills and high staff turn-over, inadequate funding, poor housing and equipment, absence of an archival law, high levels of illiteracy, Poor transport and communication network. Ilana (2008) identified lost records and record storage as challenges associated with records management. According to the researcher, lost records can range from a minor inconvenience for businesses to an enormous hassle that takes months, or even years, to resolve. Thus, if clients request documents from the company on a regular basis and the company is unable to provide them in a timely manner (or at all), the company risks the loss of their business in the future. If important records are needed for a legal matter, such as defending the company against a lawsuit, not supplying the appropriate documents can cost huge sums of money, or even mean the dissolution of the business entirely. On record storage, she stated that, depending upon the type of business for which the company keeps records,

as well as how long the company has operated, the company may find itself running out of space.

Brendan (2012) opined that, growing use of information technologies in record management creates a lot of problems in the management of records in both public and private organizations. The researcher added that in Africa and many developing countries governments are looking forward to computerizing their core functions and compelled most African countries to use ICTs in their public services by adopting e-government. Regrettably these projects fail to succeed because governments neither assess the available information framework suitable for electronic records management, nor consult the records managers to determine how the process of automation will not affect the role of records managers in providing reliable and authentic evidence.

2.7 Review of Related Empirical Studies

Bakare *et al.* (2016) in a study on the assessment of records management practice in selected local government councils in Ogun State, Nigeria noted that when the creation of records is not properly managed, attainment of goals and objectives becomes a problem. These problems often manifest in the difficulty in locating papers/information, bulky files, wrong filing, wrong titles of files, and having offices cluttered with papers and files. The findings also showed that the rate at which records were retrieved took an average of 5-10 minutes in the selected local governments. This is a better record retrieval rate considering the chaotic situation of records management in the local government councils, given the observation that some of the records were scattered over the shelves. However, this assertion only applied to the retrieval of active and vital records, which are kept in the registry. The same cannot be said of noncurrent and inactive records, which were just carelessly dumped in a records store. Interview responses also revealed that it took an average

of 1-2 hours and even at times one or two days to retrieve the needed records from their stores. Each attempt to search for required records in the store further compounded the situation as the records were left more disorganized than before the searcher met them.

In a similar study, Abioye and Habila (2014) noted that records are the life blood of any organisation and to treat the matter of storage and protection of these records lightly would be undesirable. He further argues that records which are not properly stored will be at the mercy of agents of records destruction such as rats and termites, and even human destructive tendencies like theft and vandalism, and concludes that if a record is worth keeping, then such records must be adequately stored and protected. Also, Atulomah (2011) in a study on Perceived records management practice and decision making among university administrators in Nigeria also revealed that a number of barriers were confronting effective management of records in the studied local government councils. These problems range from lack of equipment and materials, inadequate finance, and poor maintenance culture, to inadequate storage facilities. Other problems included erratic power supply, lack of management planning, and lack of skilled personnel.

The study established the prevalence of paper as the medium for recording and conveying information in the selected local government councils. However, with modern technologies, multiple copies of a record can be created, which may lead to unnecessary large volume of records. Popoola (2011), in Nakpodia (2011), noted that when the creation of records is not properly managed, attainment of goals and objectives becomes a problem.

In a study by Igbokwe-Ineto (2013) on record management in the Nigerian public sector and freedom of information act, it is concluded that records are inextricably entwined with increased transparency, accountability and good governance. It also became apparent that

fraud cannot be proven, meaningful audits cannot be carried out and government actions are not open to review when records are not properly managed. Records provide verifiable evidence of fraud and can lead investigators to the root cause of corruption. Effective information and records management are therefore at the heart of increased transparency and accountability and good governance, it is one of the major weapons in fighting corruption, and it will play a crucial role in the application and success of Freedom of Information Act in Nigeria and advancement of human rights as well as ensuring sound financial management.

Both private and public sector organisations are beginning to appreciate the need for reducing duplication of records and implementing effective retention schedules that will force safe destruction or deletion of records and archiving of those that have continuing value. This is the only real solution to the constant demand for storage space and ultimately saving costs. For many organisations, this has been the main driver for implementing changes in recordkeeping practices (Miles 2011). Another study by Weise (2013) also affirmed that compliance, effectiveness, efficiency and continuity are motivation for change in the records management environment. Compliance entails the need for organizations to create records and retain them for a specific period of time. Effectiveness involves carrying out business operations in a better way, whereas efficiency refers to productivity and cost saving. Business continuity ensures that organisations are able to conduct business transactions after having suffered substantial loss or interruption (Weise 2013).

In addition, Shepherd and Yeo (2013), when assessing the need to create and capture records, suggested that it is essential to consider the requirements of the organisations or particular business units that need records to provide evidence and information for operational use, the

requirements of the organizations, particular business units or external stakeholders that need evidence to ensure accountability, the cost of creating, capturing and maintaining the records that organisations require and the risk to them if they do not have these records.

Similarly, Gregg (2013) in a study on document imaging and electronic content management came out with two challenges faced by paper-based records management. Accessibility through hardcopy files is limited because paper-based information can only exist in a single location at a time. He added that with one copy of a document in existence, only one person can access that information at any given time. This serial approach to information management does not play well in today's "I need it now" business environment. This is especially the case since most organizations are decentralized and geographically dispersed. When there is only one version of information, managing the hardcopy document involved becomes a physical challenge

Studies by Kemoni and Wamukoya (2012), Iwhiwhu (2015) and Egwunyenga (2019) confirmed that African records keepers lack the basic skills and competences for handling records and archives in the public sector. There is a serious problem of technophobia in most offices in Africa especially among the older employees. Due to inadequate skills in information technology, many traditional librarians, records managers, and archivists are very conservative and have phobia for computers. This may be due to generation gaps between the new and old professionals which led analogue information managers to perceive computers as a threat to their status as experts. Ezeani (2010) in her studies observed that younger librarians are faster in capturing the use of ICTs than the older 32 librarians because "older librarians are finding it difficult to cope with the requirements of the digital age". Also, Ojedokun (2018) noted that older librarians are "too reluctant to jettison the old practices for

new one". Successful application of information handling technologies in the management of electronic records in developing countries requires an ability to overcome staff and personal resistance.

Institutions are under increasing pressure to become more efficient while at the same time maintaining or improving the quality of service. Electronic records with its potential play an important role in supporting efficiency, accuracy and accessibility of information. Sing (2012) pointed out that there is a direct relationship between investment in electronic records and productivity improvements in the office and these include; better customer service, greater product/service variety, shorter response time, enhanced product/service quality and better customization of products and services.

While information technologies have brought many benefits to organizations, they have also introduced a number of challenges and difficulties. The challenges posed by electronic records, particularly in the public sector, have been highlighted by Wamukoya (2012). In the study by Wamukoya (2012) these challenges include absence of organizational plans for managing electronic records, low awareness of the role of records management in support of organizational efficiency and accountability, lack of stewardship and coordination in handling paper as well as electronic records, absence of legislation, absence of policies and procedures to guide the management of both paper and electronic records, absence of core competencies in records and archives management, absence of budgets dedicated for records management, poor security and confidentiality controls, lack of records retention and disposal policies, absence of migration strategies for electronic records.

Furthermore, O'Hara and Sellen (2014) studied the differences in process between reading paper documents versus electronic documents. Their experiments showed that there was a

number of advantages to paper that must be addressed by the design of digital systems. Among the advantages that paper offers is the way it supports annotation while at the same time permitting quick and easy navigation, which in turn permits the user to develop a sense of overall structure.

Lawal (2017) in a study on corruption and development in Africa attributed the challenges associated with records management in most organizations to corruption or inadequate finance. According to him, corrupt leaders in Africa do not provide adequate funds, facilities, and infrastructure for proper and efficient electronic record management. Instead, corrupt bureaucrats intentionally distort public policies, public records, decision-making apparatuses, and sometimes go to a length to transfer experienced records managers in a bid to create opportunities for embezzlement. Bribery and corruption contributed to ninety percent (90%) of the underdevelopment of Africa and their ineffective records management institutions. For example, studies have shown that the African Union (AU) in September 2002 estimated that corruption costs African economies more than \$148 billion dollars a year.

2.8 Summary of Literature Review

The study found out that majority of the respondents indicated that records were managed manually and electronically in the organisations, and that the processes were not regularly audited for compliance. This has negatively impacted on records management in the state ministries and delivery of services. The findings collate with literature review by where it is argued that the key activity in the management of current records is maintaining records management processes.

The study found out that respondents strongly agreed on the statement that all records are created by authorized officers, referenced and copies filed in relevant files, and records are accessed only by authorized personnel. Respondents also agreed that all records are classified as either Top secret, Secret, Confidential, Restricted or Open to regulate access, and all received documents/mails are entered in a register, stamped, and classified and taken to action officers who initial receipt. Finally, respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that all personnel in the department have been vetted and therefore cannot manipulate records.

Furthermore, findings of this study indicated that registers were the commonest type of finding aid used in the selected local government councils. This was not surprising, since all records, especially those received, are usually registered as they are filed and their registers can be useful in locating the needed records from their stores. Next to this were index and simple list devices as other types of finding aids employed by these local government councils. He further argues that records which are not properly stored will be at the mercy of agents of records destruction such as rats and termites, and even human destructive tendencies like theft and vandalism, and concludes that if a record is worth keeping, then such records must be adequately stored and protected. Further to this, the preservation of records of government ensures it can be held accountable for its actions, that society can trace the evolution of policy in historical terms, and allows access to an important resource for future decision making.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design to gather data for the study. Descriptive research design is a type of design that describes a population, situation or phenomenon that is being studied. This research design was deemed appropriate for this study because it permits the use of variety of data collecting techniques such as questionnaire, interview and observation checklist for data collection was used to get results within relatively short period of time. Oyedum (2011) opined that surveys are used extensively in library and information science to assess attitudes and characteristics of a wide range of subjects.

The study adopted descriptive survey research because it allows extensive gathering of relevant information and it also served as a fast way of collecting data on records management practices as correlate for information service delivery and utilisation in Niger State civil service commission.

3.2 Population of the Study

Population of the study consisted of 54 administrative staffs in the Civil Service Commission in Niger State who are concerned with record management of the commission. The breakdown is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Population of the Study

S/N	Name of Commission	Number of Administrative Staff
1.	Niger State Civil Service Commission	54
	Total	54

Source: Office of the Head of Service, Niger State Civil Service Workforce, 2020.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted the entire population of the administrative staff in Niger State Civil Service Commission. This is called total or complete enumeration or census. This is because the population size was manageable. The researcher used random sampling technique to select the respondents. Popoola (2011) maintained that a researcher can study or adopt the entire population when the population size is not too large.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument used for this study was a self-developed structured questionnaire titled “Records Management Practices as Correlate for Information Service Delivery and Utilisation in Civil Service Commission in Niger State Questionnaire (RMPCISDUCSCQ)” The questionnaire instrument consisted of set of questions presented to respondents for their answers separated into five (5) sections. Section “A” contained information on demographic data of the respondents, Section “B” contained items on records management practices adopted for effective information service delivery, Section “C” contained items on the benefits derived from proper utilisation of records management among the staff, Section “D” contained items on relationship between record management practice and effective service delivery and utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission and Section “E” contained

items on the challenges associated with records management and effective information service delivery among staffs in Niger State Civil Service Commission. On the response rating, the instrument adopted 4 point Likert-rating scale ranging from Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D).

3.5 Validation of the Research Instruments

The face and content validity of the research instruments was done with the help of the researcher's supervisor, two lecturers in the Department of Library and Information Science, Minna and an expert in Statistics and Measurement Department. The researcher's supervisor alongside other experts were given a copy of the questionnaire to validate in terms of its appropriateness for the research. Observations, suggestions errors pointed out and corrections were effected by the researcher.

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire instrument was subjected to the Cronbach Alpha method of reliability measure to determine its reliability coefficient. A pilot study was conducted in the Ministry of Works, Bida, Niger State, using split half reliability method where thirty (30) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the staff in the ministry to determine the level of reliability coefficient. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was 0.69 indicating that the instrument is reliable.

3.7 Procedure for Data Collection

Letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Library and Information Technology (LIT) Minna was collected, attached to the copies of questionnaire and presented in the study areas for permission to administer the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher distributed the copies of questionnaire with the help of well-trained research assistants who were administrative staffs of the commission. Distribution and collection of the copies of questionnaire lasted for four (4) weeks.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data from this study was organised and analysed using descriptive statistical tools such as the use of frequency tables, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data for the study. Descriptive statistics enables a researcher to organise and summarise data in a very simple and effective way. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis was also be used to test all the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

A total number of 54 copies of questionnaire were administered on the respondents in Niger State Civil Service Commission. Out of this number, 47 copies of questionnaire were filled, returned and found usable for the analysis representing 87% response rate. Table 4.1 below shows the response rate based on the copies of questionnaire administered, returned and their percentage(s) in the studied area.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

S/N	Name of Commission	No. of Administered Questionnaire	No. of Returned Questionnaire	Percentage(s) (%)
1	Niger State Civil Service Commission	54	47	87

Table 4.1 reveals that out of 54 copies of questionnaire administered on administrative staff in Niger State Civil Service Commission, 47 copies were filled, returned and found useful for analysis. This represents 87% success.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Data

Respondents were requested to indicate their demographic variables; Table 4.2 shows the responses based on their age, gender, highest educational qualification, years of experience and category of staff they belonged to.

Table 4.2: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage(s)
25 years and below	2	4
26-35 years	12	26
36-45 years	21	45
46 years and above	12	25
Total	47	100

Gender	Frequency	Percentage(s)
Male	34	72
Female	13	28
Total	47	100

Highest Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage(s)
'0' level	6	13
B. Tech/B.Sc./B.Ed.	31	66
M.Tech/M.Sc./M.ed.	7	15
Ph.D	3	6
Total	47	100

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage(s)
1-5 years	6	13
6-10 years	13	28
11-15 years	19	40
16 years and above	9	19
Total	47	100

Category of Staff	Frequency	Percentage(s)
Senior member	11	23
Senior staff	12	26
Junior staff	24	51
Total	47	100

The result from Table 4.2 shows that 2 (4%) of the respondents are 25 years and below, 12 (26%) of the respondents are between the age range of 26-35 years, 21 (45%) of the respondents are between the age range of 36-45 years and 12 (25%) of the respondents are between the age range of 46 and above. On the other hand, 34 (72%) of the respondents are male, while 13 (28%) of the respondents are female. This shows that most of the respondents are males.

Similarly, 6 (13%) of the administrative staff are '0' level holders, 31 (66%) of the administrative staff are B.Tech/B.Sc/B.Ed. holders, 7 (15%) of the administrative staff are M.Tech/M.Sc./M.Ed. holders and 3(6%) of the administrative staff are Ph.D holders.

Table 4.2 equally indicated that 6 (13%) of the administrative staff have 1-5 years of working experience, 13 (28%) of the administrative staff have 6-10 years of working experience, 19 (40%) of the administrative staff have 11-15 years of working experience and 9 (19%) of the administrative staff have 16 and above years of working experience.

Furthermore, Table 4.2 revealed that 11 (23%) of the respondents are senior members in the Civil Service Commission, 12 (26%) of the respondents are senior staff in the Civil Service Commission and 24 (51%) of the respondents are junior staff in the Civil Service Commission.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question One: What are the records management practices in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

Table 4.3 shows the record management practices in the Niger State Civil Service Commission.

Table 4.3: Records Management Practices

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
		4	3	2	1	47				
1	The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts policies and procedures for creating and storing records in both paper and electronic format	15	25	4	3	47	147	3.13	0.63	Agreed
2	The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts record maintenance for effective information service delivery	13	27	5	2	47	145	3.09	0.59	Agreed
3	An organisational file plan that list primary types by functional unit so that information can be located without depending on any employee is available in the commission	7	9	19	12	47	105	2.23	0.27	Disagreed
4	A record management program is organised annually to ensure that quality records are kept	11	24	7	5	47	135	2.87	0.37	Agreed
5	The ministry has a vital record program that serves as a back-up in case of a disaster	14	19	8	6	47	135	2.87	0.37	Disagreed

6	The Niger State Civil Service Commission has in place periodic audits that provide an enforcement vehicle and assess the quality of procedures	6	13	20	8	47	111	2.36	0.14	Disagreed
7	The Niger State Civil Service Commission adequately address data privacy and security issues	10	24	10	3	47	135	2.87	0.37	Agreed
8	The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not store record which affects effective and efficient information service delivery	3	4	28	12	47	92	1.96	0.54	Disagreed
9	The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not dispose record that are not useful and valuable to the commission	2	6	21	18	47	86	1.83	0.67	Disagreed

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

The result from Table 4.3 shows that nine items were listed for administrative staff to respond on record management practices. Five items produced high mean scores which were above the average benchmark of 2.50. These items include item 1: The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts policies and procedures for creating and storing records in both paper and electronic format ($\bar{x}=3.13$; $SD=0.63$), item 2: The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts record maintenance for effective information service delivery ($\bar{x}=3.09$; $SD=0.59$), item 4: A record management program is organised annually to ensure that quality records are kept ($\bar{x}=2.87$; $SD=0.37$), item 5: The ministry has a vital record program that serves as a back-up in case of a disaster ($\bar{x}=3.05$; $SD=0.55$) ($\bar{x}=2.87$; $SD=0.37$) and item 7: The Niger State Civil Service Commission adequately address data privacy and security issues ($\bar{x}=2.87$; $SD=0.37$). On the other hand, four items produced low mean scores which were below the average benchmark of 2.50. These items include item 6: The Niger State Civil Service Commission has in place periodic audits that provide an enforcement vehicle and assess the quality of procedures ($\bar{x}=2.36$; $SD=0.14$), item 3: An organisational file plan that list primary types by functional unit so that information can be located without depending on any employee is available in the commission ($\bar{x}=2.23$; $SD=0.27$), item 8: The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not store record which affects effective and efficient information service delivery ($\bar{x}=1.96$; $SD=0.54$) and item 9: The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not dispose record that are not useful and valuable to the commission ($\bar{x}=1.83$; $SD=0.67$).

Research Question Two: How does proper records management benefit the Niger State Civil Service Commission?

Table 4.4 shows the responses of record management staff on the benefits derived from proper record management in Niger State Civil Service Commission.

Table 4.4: Benefits Derived from Proper Record Management

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
		4	3	2	1	47				
1	Quick decision making is achieved from proper records management	20	23	3	1	47	156	3.32	0.82	Agreed
2	Space saving is the benefit administrative staff of the commission derived from records management	17	21	5	4	47	145	3.09	0.59	Agreed
3	Reduction of storage is one of the importance of effective records management	10	8	16	13	47	109	2.23	0.18	Disagreed
4	Promoting good governance contributes to the benefit of proper records management	18	24	3	2	47	152	3.23	0.73	Agreed
5	Effective records management saves employees' time	19	26	4	1	47	163	3.47	0.97	Agreed
6	Proper records management maintain corporate and institutional memory	14	19	9	5	47	136	2.89	0.39	Agreed
7	Records management help to meet customers' demand	16	21	6	4	47	143	3.04	0.54	Agreed
8	Record management practices does not help to reduce uncertainty	3	5	24	15	47	90	1.91	0.59	Disagreed
9	Record management does not lead to high productivity of staff in the commission	2	5	21	19	47	84	1.79	0.71	Disagreed
10	Record management leads to prompt decision making among staffs	18	26	2	1	47	155	3.29	0.79	Agreed

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.4 showed that ten items were listed for administrative staff to respond on the benefits derived from proper record management. Seven items produced high mean scores which were above the average benchmark mean of 2.50. These items include item 5: Effective records management saves employees' time ($\bar{x}=3.47$; $SD=0.97$), item 1: Quick decision making is achieved from proper records management ($\bar{x}=3.32$; $SD=0.82$), item 10: Record management leads to prompt decision making among staffs ($\bar{x}=3.29$; $SD=0.79$), item 4: Promoting good governance contributes to the benefit of proper records management ($\bar{x}=3.23$; $SD=0.73$), item 2: Space saving is the benefit administrative staff of the commission derived from records management ($\bar{x}=3.09$; $SD=0.59$), item 7: Records management help to meet customers' demand ($\bar{x}=3.04$; $SD=0.54$) and item 6: Proper records management maintain corporate and institutional memory ($\bar{x}=2.89$; $SD=0.39$). On the other hand, three items produced low mean scores which were below the average benchmark of 2.50. These items include item 3: Reduction of storage is one of the importance of effective records management ($\bar{x}=2.32$; $SD=0.18$), item 8: Record management practices does not help to reduce uncertainty ($\bar{x}=1.91$; $SD=0.59$) and item 9: Record management does not lead to high productivity of staff in the commission ($\bar{x}=1.79$; $SD=0.71$).

Research Question Three: What is the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

Table 4.5 showed the responses of record management staff on the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery.

Table 4.5: Relationship between Record Management Practices and Effective Information Service Delivery

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
		4	3	2	1	47				
1	Good record management practice leads to quick access to information	14	19	8	6	47	135	2.87	0.37	Agreed
2	Effective record management practice provides avenue for effective management of government records	28	12	4	3	47	162	3.45	0.95	Agreed
3	Effective record management saves employees' time and increase their efficiency in service delivery	18	21	6	2	47	149	3.17	0.67	Agreed
4	Records management practice improves effective information service delivery in commission	13	20	8	6	47	134	2.85	0.35	Agreed
5	Effective record management does not help to support decision making	2	6	21	18	47	86	1.83	0.67	Disagreed
6	Effective record management does not help to reduce operating costs	3	4	28	12	47	92	1.96	0.54	Disagreed
7	Record management practice helps to assimilate new record management technologies	12	19	9	7	47	130	2.77	0.27	Agreed
8	Effective record management help to minimize litigation risks	14	19	9	5	47	136	2.89	0.39	Agreed

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.5 showed that eight items were listed for administrative staff to respond on the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery. Six items produced high mean scores which were above the average benchmark mean of 2.50. These items include item 2: Effective record management practice provides avenue for effective management of government records (\bar{x} =3.45; SD=0.95), item 3: Effective record management saves employees' time and increase their efficiency in service delivery (\bar{x} =3.17; SD=0.67), item 8: Effective record management help to minimize litigation risks (\bar{x} =2.89; SD=0.39), item 1: Good record management practice leads to quick access to information (\bar{x} =2.87; SD=0.37), item 4: Records management practice improves effective information service delivery in commission (\bar{x} =2.85; SD=0.35) and item 7: Record management practice helps to assimilate new record management technologies (\bar{x} =2.77; SD=0.27).

Research Question Four: What is the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

Table 4.6 shows the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in the studied area.

Table 4.6: Relationship between Record Management Practice and Effective Service Utilisation

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
		4	3	2	1	47				
1	Good record management practice enables efficient utilisation of government records	16	26	2	3	47	149	3.17	0.67	Agreed
2	Effective utilisation of records can lead to improved productivity of the civil service commission	13	29	4	1	47	148	3.15	0.65	Agreed
3	Proper records management improves fast and efficient access to and utilisation of government of records	13	16	10	8	47	128	2.72	0.22	Agreed
4	Good record management practice leads to effective utilisation of information which helps to reduce uncertainty in the commission	19	21	5	2	47	151	3.21	0.71	Agreed
5	Effective utilisation of record does not lead to better use of government record for informed decision making	6	9	15	17	47	98	2.09	0.41	Disagreed

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

Table 4.6 shows that five items were listed for administrative staff to respond on the relationship between record management practice and effective service utilisation. Four items produced high mean scores which were above the benchmark mean of 2.50. These items include item 4: Good record management practice leads to effective utilisation of information which helps to reduce uncertainty in the commission ($\bar{x}=3.21$; $SD=0.71$), item 1: Good record management practice enables efficient utilisation of government records ($\bar{x}=3.17$; $SD=0.67$), item 2: Effective utilisation of records can lead to improved productivity of the civil service commission ($\bar{x}=3.15$; $SD=0.65$) and item 3: Proper records management improves fast and efficient access to and utilisation of government of records ($\bar{x}=2.72$; $SD=0.22$). On the other hand, one item produced low mean score below the average benchmark of 2.50 which is item 5: Effective utilisation of record does not lead to better use of government record for informed decision making ($\bar{x}=2.09$; $SD=0.41$).

Research Question Five: What are the challenges associated with record management in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

Table 4.7 showed the challenges associated with record management in Niger State civil service commission.

Table 4.7: Challenges Associated with Record Management Practice

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	N	FX	\bar{x}	STD	Decision
		4	3	2	1	47				
1	Improper records management is challenge in retrieving office documents	13	27	5	2	47	145	3.09	0.59	Agreed
2	Lack of proper security for record affects the record management practices at the commission	10	24	10	3	47	135	2.87	0.37	Agreed
3	Lack of professionally trained record managers contribute to problems of record management	12	19	9	7	47	130	2.77	0.27	Agreed
4	Inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices is a problem	13	20	8	6	47	134	2.85	0.35	Agreed
5	Insufficient space for record management at the commission is also a challenge	11	24	7	5	47	135	2.87	0.37	Agreed

Key: Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)

The result from Table 4.7 showed that five items were listed for administrative staffs to respond on the challenges associated with record management in Niger State civil service commission. All the five items produced high mean scores above the average benchmark of 2.50. These items include item 1: Improper records management is challenge in retrieving office documents ($\bar{x}=3.09$; $SD=0.59$), item 2: Lack of proper security for record affects the record management practices at the commission ($\bar{x}=2.87$; $SD=0.37$), item 5: Insufficient space for record management at the commission is also a challenge ($\bar{x}=2.87$; $SD=0.37$), item 4: Inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices is a problem ($\bar{x}=2.85$; $SD=0.35$) and item 3: Lack of professionally trained record managers contribute to problems of record management ($\bar{x}=2.77$; $SD=0.27$).

4.4 Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery

Table 4.8 shows the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery.

Table 4.8: Relationship between Record Management Practice and Effective Information Service Delivery

Variable	n	df	Mean	SD	R	P
Record Management Practice			21.94	2.38		
		45			0.565	0.05
	47					
Effective information service delivery			15.69	3.06		

Table 4.8 shows that the correlation coefficient is 0.565, $P > 0.05$. That is, critical value R is greater than P value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that effective record management will lead to effective information service delivery among administrative staff in civil service commission.

H₀₂ There is no significant relationship of record management practice as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation

Table 4.9 shows the relationship between record management practice as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation.

Table 4.9: Relationship between Record Management Practice as a Correlate for Effective Information Service Delivery and Utilisation

Variable	n	df	Mean	SD	R	P
Record Management Practice			21.64	9.56		
	47	45			0.143	0.05
Effective information service delivery and utilisation			24.69	4.06		

Table 4.9 shows that the correlation coefficient is 0.143, $P > 0.05$. That is, critical value R is greater than P value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that increase in record management practice will improve information service delivery and use among administrative staffs.

4.5 Summary of Findings

The following are summary of findings based on the result of the analysis:

1. The respondents indicated that the civil service commission adopts policies and procedures for creating and storing records both in print and electronic format
2. The respondents indicated that record management leads to prompt decision making and saving of employee's time
3. The respondents disagreed that record management does not help to support decision making.
4. The respondents indicated that effective service utilisation leads to improved productivity of the civil service commission.
5. The administrative staff agreed that efficient access and utilisation of government record was achieved through proper record management.
6. The administrative staff indicated that improper record management, lack of proper security of records, lack of professionally trained record managers, inadequate resources to facilitate proper record management practice and insufficient space for record management are seen as challenges associated with record management in the civil service commission.
7. There was significant relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery.
8. There was significant relationship between record management practice as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation.

4.6 Discussion of the Findings

Research Questions

4.6.1 Research Question 1: What are the records management practices in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

The finding of the study revealed that the record management practices in the studied area is high. The respondents indicated that the civil service commission adopted policies and procedures for creating and storing records both in print and electronic format, adopts record maintenance for effective information service delivery, has a vital record program that serves as a back-up in case of a disaster, record management training program is organised annually to ensure that quality records are kept and the civil service commission adequately address data privacy and security issues. This is to ensure record preservations as well as enhance good managerial decisions. This is in line with the findings of Robeck *et al.* (2012) that the reasons why organisations practice records management are to control the creation and growth of records, reduce operating costs, improve efficiency and productivity, assimilate new records management technologies, ensure regulatory compliance, minimize litigation risk, safeguard vital information, support better management decision making, preserve the corporate memory, and foster professionalism in running the business. Abdulkareem *et al.* (2013) posited that the need for records preservation is, therefore, paramount to the cultural heritage of the past and for future generations obtainable in any organisation. Similarly, the respondents disagreed that the commission does not store record which affect effective and efficient information service delivery and the commission does not dispose records that are not useful and valuable to the commission.

However, having an organisational file plan that list primary types by functional unit so that information can be located without depending on any one employee is available in the commission, having periodic audit that provide an enforcement vehicle and assess the clarity of procedures were rated low by the respondents.

4.6.2 Research Question 2: How does proper records management benefit the Niger State Civil Service Commission?

The study revealed that record management staff agreed that quick decision making, space saving, promoting good governance, saving of employees' time, maintaining corporate and institutional memory, meeting customers demand, high productivity of staff and prompt decision making among staffs were seen as benefits achieved from proper records management. This is because all organizations create records to support and provide evidence of their transactions. Consequently, records, regardless of their formats, are important sources of information and knowledge which contributes to organisational and national development. This is in line Kemoni (2017) that record management ensure effective transparency and accountability in decision-making and contribute to national development.

4.6.3 Research Question 3: What is the relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

The analysis from research question three showed that the relationship between record management practice and effective service delivery is high. The administrative staff indicated that good record management practice leads to quick access to information, provides avenue for effective management of government records, saves employees time and increase their efficiency in service delivery, helps in reducing operating cost, helps to assimilate new record management

technologies and helps to minimise litigation risks. This is because good record management supports informed decision making. This is in line with the findings of Abuzawayda *et al.* (2013) that good records management boosts efficient and effective public service delivery as it minimizes litigation risks, promotes accountability and transparency, ensures compliance with regulatory requirements and supports informed decision-making.

4.6.4 Research Question 4: What is the relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

The study revealed that record management practice and effective service utilisation were high which enables effective utilisation of government records, improved productivity of the commission, ensure fast and efficient access to and utilisation of records, better informed decision making and helps to reduce uncertainty in the commission. This is because the development of any country, organisation or commission lies in its ability to access and use records effectively for decision making. This is in line with the findings of Hoque and Sorwar (2015) that the development of any country depends on its capability to access and use records effectively. The civil service commission should refine their records management programmes by implementing retention and disposal schedules, following international records management standards and procedures, disaster management plans, records management policies and electronic records management systems thereby improving information access and public service delivery.

4.6.5 Research Question 5: What are the challenges associated with record management in Niger State Civil Service Commission?

The study equally revealed that the respondents agreed with all the challenges associated with proper record management in the commission. This indicates that record management is negatively

affected. As such, urgent attention needs to be given on proper record management, provision of proper security, recruitment of trained and qualified record management personnel, provision of resources and space to ensure good record management practice. This is in tandem with the findings of Otuama (2010) that the problems associated with records management in most organizations include the absence of an archival institution, the problem of oral traditions, inadequate skills and high staff turn-over, inadequate funding, poor housing and equipment, absence of an archival law, high levels of illiteracy and poor transport and communication network.

4.6.7 Findings on the tested hypotheses

H₀₁: Relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission

The test of null hypothesis one revealed that there is significant relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery in the studied area. This implies that increase or enhancing record management practice will lead to effective and better information service delivery in the area studied. Proper record management will ensure the development of the commission. This is in line with the findings of Bunawan *et al.* (2016) that records are important aspects towards the organisational development. In corroborating the findings of Bunawan *et al.* (2016), Ngoepe (2014) stated that proper management of records can be used to solve several issues in government institutions.

H₀₂ Relationship of record management practice as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation.

The test of the null hypothesis of record management practice as a correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation has shown that there is significant relationship between them. This implies that the practice of record management in Niger State civil service enhances the use of records for informed decision. Record management can help to in making timely decision. This is in line with the findings of Nwankwo (2011) that efficient and effective management of records helps the critical stakeholders of an organization or institution as well as its administrators who require records to facilitate accurate and timely decisions.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Records management is an imperative element in Niger State Civil Service Commission. It is through records management that everyday activities of the commission can be accounted for. Such activities are recorded and provided as verification documents for effective information service delivery. Thus, records management is a critical element in the civil service commission administration, risk management, auditing, and financial accountability. Effective organizational records management enables easy access to records to expedite accountability and verification processes. However, factors such as improper records management, lack of proper security for record affects the record management practices, lack of professionally trained record managers, inadequate resources are seen as challenges associated with record management which affects effective information service delivery and utilization in Niger State Civil Service Commission. Through effective records management, impending risks can be identified, measured, and mitigated before they occur.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The management of Civil Service Commission in Niger State should ensure the recruitment of adequately qualified records managers. This will definitely curb the situation whereby records are inappropriate kept.
2. Training and re-training programs by way of seminars, conferences and workshops should be organised for records managers by the management of civil service commission in Niger State. This will keep them abreast with current practices in records management, which

will also on the whole reduce the difficulty involved in accessing information when the needs arise thereby enhancing information service delivery and utilisation of records.

3. The management of Civil Service Commission in Niger State should ensure the provision of sufficient resources and space for effective records management as it is critical for organizational administration purposes.
4. There is the need to develop and implement records management policies, standards, guidelines and procedures that will help improve the management of records in the civil service commission

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes to knowledge in the following areas:

1. The study provided empirical evidence that the development of the civil service commission and any organisation depends on its capability to access and use records effectively. This will enable the commission provide effective and efficient information services for informed decision making.
2. The study provided empirical evidence that record is the most important assets to the civil service commission that have value beyond and proper record management enables decision-making, policy formulation and effective information service provision in the commission.
3. The study has equally added to the already existing body of literatures available on records management in Niger State civil service and the field of librarianship.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the research findings and the contemporary technological advancement, future researchers interested in a similar topic could explore factors such as the role of records management in other organizational functions or factors impacting effective records management. In other words, prospective researchers can base their studies on finding out the other factors affecting or being affected by records management.

1. Records management practices as correlate for effective information service delivery and utilisation in Civil Service Commissions in North-Central, Nigeria
2. Impact of records management on academic staff practices for effective research output in federal universities in South-West, Nigeria
3. Impact of future technological advancement on records management in academic libraries in State owned universities in North-Central, Nigeria.
4. Long term impact of records management on respiratory health of workers in general hospitals in North-Central, Nigeria

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APPENDIX A

Department of Library and Information Technology
Federal University of Technology,
Minna

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is MAHMUD, Abdulmalik Abubakar. I am carrying out a research for my master's thesis at the Federal University of Technology Minna. The title of the study is “**Records Management Practices as a correlate for effective Information Service Delivery and Utilisation in Civil Service Commission in Niger State**”. I am hereby requesting you to assist me in completing this questionnaire in order to achieve my research objectives. The information provided will be purely for academic purposes and will be treated with confidentiality. Your participation in facilitating the study is highly appreciated.

Thank you very much.

MAHMUD, Abdulmalik Abubakar

MTech/SICT/2018/8154

QUESTIONNAIRE
RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICE AS CORRELATE FOR EFFECTIVE
INFORMATION SERVICE DELIVERY AND UTILIZATION IN CIVIL SERVICE
COMMISSION IN NIGER STATE

Section A: Demographic Information (Please tick where appropriate)

1. Age: 25 years and below 26-35 years 36-45 years 46 and above
2. Gender: Male Female
3. What is your highest educational qualification? Basic Secondary University
Tertiary Others (Specify)
4. How many years have you worked with the University? 1 – 5 years 6 – 10 years 11
– 15years 16 and above
5. What category of staff do you belong? Senior member Senior staff Junior staff
Other please specify

Section B: Assessment of Records Management Practices

The following statements give you a chance to assess the record management practices available at the University. Respond to the statement using the scale provided “Strongly agree (1), Agree (2), Neutral (3), Disagree (4), strongly disagree (5). Tick (✓) the boxes that most closely fit your opinion.

Research Objective 1: Assess the records management practices in the Niger State Civil Service Commission.

Assessment of records management practices	SA	A	N	D	SD
The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts policies and procedures for creating and storing records in both paper and electronic format					
The Niger State Civil Service Commission adopts record maintenance for effective information service delivery					
An organisational file plan that list primary types by functional unit so that information can be located without depending on any employee is available in the commission					
A record management program is organised annually to ensure that quality records are kept					
The ministry has a vital record program that serves as a back-up in case of a disaster					
The Niger State Civil Service Commission has in place periodic audits that provide an enforcement vehicle and assess the quality of procedures					
The Niger State Civil Service Commission adequately address data privacy and security issues					
The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not store record which affects effective and efficient information service delivery					
The Niger State Civil Service Commission does not dispose record that are not useful and valuable to the commission					

Section B: Benefits derived from effective Records Management

Research Objective 2: Identify the benefits derived from proper records management in the Niger State Civil Service Commission.

Please respond to the following statements on the scale provided “Strongly Agreed (1), Agreed (2), Disagreed (3), Strongly Disagreed (4). Tick (√) the boxes that most closely fit your opinion.

Benefits derived from record management practices	SA	A	N	D	SD
Quick decision making is achieved from proper records management					

Space saving is the benefit administrative staff of the commission derived from records management					
Reduction of storage is one of the importance of effective records management					
Promoting good governance contributes to the benefit of proper records management					
Effective records management saves employees' time					
Proper records management maintain corporate and institutional memory					
Record management practices does not help to reduce uncertainty					
Record management does not lead to high productivity of staff in the commission					
Record management leads to prompt decision making among staffs					
Record management practices does not help to reduce uncertainty					

Section C: The relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery

Research Objective 3: Identify the relationship between record management practice and effective service delivery in Niger State Civil Service Commission

Relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery	SA	A	N	D	SD
Good record management practice leads to quick access to information					
Effective record management practice provides avenue for effective management of government records					
Effective record management saves employees' time and increase their efficiency in service delivery					
Records management practice improves effective information service delivery in commission					
Effective record management does not help to support decision making					
Effective record management does not help to reduce operating costs					

Record management practice helps to assimilate new record management technologies					
Effective record management help to minimize litigation risks					

Section D: The relationship between record management practice and effective information service delivery and utilisation

Research Objective 4: Identify the relationship between record management practice and effective service delivery and utilisation in Niger State Civil Service Commission

Relationship between record management practice and effective information service utilization	SA	A	N	D	SD
Good record management practice enables efficient utilisation of government records					
Effective utilisation of records can lead to improved productivity of the civil service commission					
Proper records management improves fast and efficient access to and utilisation of government of records					
Good record management practice leads to effective utilisation of information which helps to reduce uncertainty in the commission					
Effective utilisation of record does not lead to better use of government record for informed decision making					

Research Objective 5: Identify the challenges associated with records management in Niger State Civil Service Commission.

Section E: Problems or challenges associated with Records Management Tick (√) the boxes that most closely match your opinion.

PROBLEMS / CHALLENGES	SA	A	N	D	SD
Improper records management is challenge in retrieving office documents					
Lack of proper security for record affects the record management practices at the commission					
Lack of professionally trained record managers contribute to problems of record management					
Inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices is a problem					
Insufficient space for record management at the commission is also a challenge					

APPENDIX A

Cronbach Alpha Reliability Analysis Result

Notes

Output Created	09-JUNE-2021 21:15:59
Comments	
Input	Data C:\Users\dell\Desktop\DEFAULT BACKUP\ANALYSIS\ESU, ABDULMALIK.sav
Active Dataset	DataSet1
Filter	<none>
Weight	<none>
Split File	<none>
N of Rows in Working Data File	
Matrix Input	
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
Cases Used	Cases Used Statistics are based on all cases with valid data for all variables in the procedure.
Syntax	RELIABILITY /VARIABLES=SB1 SB2 SB3 SB4 SB5 /SCALE('ALL VARIABLES') ALL /MODEL=ALPHA.
Resources	Processor Time 00:00:00.00 Elapsed Time 00:00:00.02

CRONBACH ALPHA RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT DATA

SECTION A

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.718	.835	7

SECTION B

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.718	.835	7

SECTION C

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.718	.835	7

SECTION D

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.617	.638	5

The total Cronbach's Alpha = $\underline{0.718+0.718+0.718+0.617}$

$$= \frac{6.742}{4} = 0.84$$

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.69 (This indicates that the instrument is reliable and can therefore be used for the study)