Managing university records and documents

in the world of governance, audit and risk

Case Studies from South Africa and Malawi

Mathews Joseph Phiri

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute

University of Glasgow

October 2015

Abstract

There are enormous benefits for any organisation from practising sound records management. In the context of a public university, the importance of good records management includes: facilitating the achievement the university's mandate; enhancing efficiency of the university; maintaining a reliable institutional memory; promoting trust; responding to an audit culture; enhancing university competitiveness; supporting the university's fiduciary duty; demonstrating transparency and accountability; and fighting corruption.

Records scholars and commentators posit that effective recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance. Although there is a portrayal of positive correlation, recordkeeping struggles to get the same attention as that given to the governance. Evidence abounds of cases of neglect of recordkeeping in universities and other institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa. The apparent absence of sound recordkeeping provided a rationale for revisiting some universities in South Africa and Malawi in order to critically explore the place of recordkeeping in an organisation's strategy in order to develop an alternative framework for managing records and documents in an era where good governance is a global agenda.

The research is a collective case study in which multiple cases are used to critically explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance. As qualitative research that belongs in the interpretive tradition of enquiry, it is not meant to suggest prescriptive solutions to general recordkeeping problems but rather to provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that arise in managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk. That is: what goes on in the workplace; what are the problems; and what alternative approaches might address any existing problem situations.

Research findings show that some institutions are making good use of their governance structures and other drivers for recordkeeping to put in place sound recordkeeping systems. Key governance structures and other drivers for recordkeeping identified include: laws and regulations; governing bodies; audit; risk; technology; reforms; and workplace culture. Other institutions are not managing their records and documents well despite efforts to improve their governance systems. They lack recordkeeping capacity.

Areas that determine recordkeeping capacity include: availability of records management policy; capacity for digital records; availability of a records management unit; senior management support; level of education and training of records management staff; and systems and procedures for storage, retrieval and dispositions of records.

Although this research reveals that the overall recordkeeping in the selected countries has slightly improved compared with the situation other researchers found a decade ago, it remains unsatisfactory and disjointed from governance.

The study therefore proposes *governance recordkeeping* as an approach to managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk. The *governance recordkeeping* viewpoint considers recordkeeping as a governance function that should be treated in the same manner as other governance functions such as audit and risk management. Additionally, recordkeeping and governance should be considered as symbiotic elements of a strategy. A strategy that neglects recordkeeping may not fulfil the organisation's objectives effectively.

Acknowledgement

The following friends deserve special mention: Dr Godfrey Siu and Dr Paul Lihoma. They supported me immensely when I arrived in Glasgow to start my PhD journey with the University of Glasgow.

Lastly, but in no way the least, I would like to give thanks to God the Almighty for seeing me through. His love indeed endures forever (Psalm 136 verse 1).

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and has not previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted at any university in order to obtain an academic qualification.

Mathews Joseph Phiri

October 2015

Contents

List of figures

List of tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

In an era where good governance is high on the global agenda, effective recordkeeping tends to be overlooked, and therefore it is essential to redefine the role of recordkeeping in achieving organisation goals and objectives. Records scholars and commentators posit that effective recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance[1], but nevertheless, records management receives inadequate attention. Evidence abounds of cases of neglect of recordkeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa. The purpose of this study is to critically explore the place of recordkeeping in an organisational strategy in order to provide an alternative framework for managing records and documents in an environment in which governance, audit and risk are major drivers.

1.1 Conceptual framework

Organisations are called upon by their stakeholders to be transparent and accountable. Governance, audit and risk management are used to support performance, transparency and accountability requirements. The cumulative effect of governance, audit and risk management can be vital to any organisation's survival. As a result of this, structures and reforms that promote the trio are given priority. In essence, organisations set strategies to achieve desired goals. These strategies are impregnated with governance, audit and risk management requirements.

Records and documents provide evidence of and information about an organisation's activities and transactions. They are created "to support and manage work, to record why, when, where, in what capacity and by whom particular actions were carried out" (Ketelaar, 2000, p. 327). David Levy (2001) is of the opinion that they are talking things and that they can give an account of an undertaking.

---

[1] Records scholars and commentators who suggest that effective recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance include: Kemoni, Ngulube and Stilwell (2007); Willis (2005); Mnjama (2004); and Lipchak (2002). The Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA, 2005) and the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO, 2003) are amongst the organisations supporting the close link between sound recordkeeping and good governance.

The International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) has provided, in ISO 15489-1: 2001 Records Management, Clause 4, an extended list of what records and documents can do for an organisation, including to:

- Conduct business in an efficient and accountable manner
- Support and document policy formation and managerial decision making
- Provide consistency and productivity in management and administration
- Meet legislative and regulatory requirements including audit and oversight activities
- Provide protection and support in litigation including the management of risks associated with evidence of organisational activity
- Support and document current and future research activities
- Maintain corporate or collective memory

These benefits can be summarised as ranging from operational concerns with efficiency and effectiveness, to managerial concerns with accountability and risk management, to a concern for protecting future needs for research (Carlisle, 2008). Xiaomi An and Hongyan Jiao (2004) categorised these benefits into five main aspects: administrative, financial, operational, legal, and societal.

To be able to reap these benefits, records and documents have to be managed in a planned and methodical way. They have to be managed by design rather than by accident (Parker, 1999). The way to do this includes putting in place a framework of policies, procedures and practical guidelines so that everyone within the organisation understands their roles and responsibilities in managing the records and documents effectively and efficiently (McLeod and Hare, 2006). From a similar perspective, Michael Moss (2011) asserts that the management of records and information must be embedded within the organisational structure and in the overall management of risk and expectations.

1.1.1 Importance of good records management in universities

Good records management is essential in universities. More so, when the universities are operating in an environment in which governance, audit and risk are important issues.

The importance of good records management in universities includes:

i.   Facilitating the achievement of the universities' mandate

The core business of universities, including those in South Africa and Malawi, is teaching and learning, conducting research, and carrying out consultancy and community services. Carrying out these activities produces records which provide evidence that the universities are fulfilling their statutory obligations and meeting legitimate societal expectations. If such records are not properly managed, then valuable evidence would be lost forever or would take extra time and money to access it.

ii.   Enhancing efficiency in the operation of the universities

Similarly, good records management facilitates the efficient running of a university. It ensures that records are kept as evidence of the decision making and of the day to day operations of the university. This means that good records management ensures that sound decisions are made based on full, accurate and up to date information, and that the rationale for and the impact of such decisions can be traced, scrutinised and justified as required (University of Glasgow, 2006).

iii.   Maintaining a reliable institutional memory

It is essential for a university to maintain a reliable institutional memory which serves as evidence of its activity, and as a meaningful collation of its educational and research outcomes, and of its contributions to academia and the wider community (University of Adelaide, 2015). The increase in part-time and contract staff means that the universities will increasingly be relying on its records and documents as evidence of and information about their activities. Good records management produces reliable institutional memory.

iv.   Complying with relevant legislative requirements

Good records management practice is required across the universities in order to comply with relevant legislative requirements. For example, passing of access to information laws makes the management of university records of great importance. These laws give the public the right of access, upon request, to records held by the universities. Compliance with the requirements of legislation means that the universities must have in place comprehensive records management programmes that map all their records. The universities might find themselves experiencing reputational damage if requested records are not found as a result of poor records management (Chinyemba and Ngulube, 2005).

v.   Standardising records management practices

A university is a highly decentralised organisation in which many autonomous individuals and units carry out the core functions of the institution. Without standardised processes, records management practices would differ between departments, campuses, and faculties within a single institution. Good records management ensures that university units are employing similar recordkeeping practices. This is the essence of a university-wide records management system.

vi.   Promoting trust

Good records management helps to build trust. This is particularly the case in this modern era in which the public seem to trust less their public bodies, including universities. Sound recordkeeping generates reliable records, which are essential in decision making, transparency and accountability. Trust is essential to democracy and that when recordkeeping fails, that trust is broken (National Records of Scotland, 2012)

vii.   Responding to an audit culture

The concept of audit is no longer the preserve of financial accounting. It is now entrenched in the form of academic monitoring.

The external demand for transparency, accountability and efficiency in universities is the basis of an audit culture phenomenon in academia (Strathern, 2000). Although academics are often uncomfortable with this new form of accountability, it is essential in the world of governance, audit and risk management. Good records management is essential to conducting an effective audit. This is the case because an audit exercise reviews actions through examining documents that authorised the actions and recorded their details. If the records and documents were not effectively managed, an audit opinion would not be reliable because it would be based on untrustworthy information.

viii.   Enhancing university competitiveness

Universities that manage their recorded information well are able to utilise all available information resources for competitive advantage (Chinyemba and Ngulube, 2005). For example, university records and documents that are preserved because of their enduring value can be used as marketing and promotional tools if their content depicts high moments of the university.

As explained earlier, effective records management systems provide information required for the proper functioning of universities. This information is retrieved efficiently hence saving time and money. On the other hand, the net effect of poor records management is a decrease in the efficiency of the university and an inflation of its operating cost.

Similarly, universities are always striving to advance in the league tables and world rankings. To achieve this, the universities are required to produce evidence of performance. This evidence can only be trustworthy if emanating from records that are well managed.

ix.   Supporting the university's fiduciary duty

Universities have a fiduciary duty to maintain records of their students. For instance, they have an obligation to manage students' records which can have an indefinite use as proof a student has matriculated and graduated. Similarly, documents such as decrees, charters, and acts have to be preserved and accessed as major source of information for institutional governance. Documents generated by the accreditation of universities by government authorities and professional bodies have to be kept as a source of critical evidence.

x.   Demonstrating transparency and accountability

Good records management helps to demonstrate that the money the universities get from government, students and others stakeholders is well spent. Although demands by government and other external authorities to know exactly how academic institutions spend their funds and to provide documentation for academic programs have been perceived as a threat to the academic autonomy and to the traditional patterns of university governance (Altbach, 1979), universities have to demonstrate transparency and accountability in this era where good governance is an important issue. Sound recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of transparency and accountability.

Universities that ignore good records management are at risk of losing funding from some of their stakeholders. In the absence of audited reports, which to some extent rely on effective recordkeeping, the stakeholders may not be convinced by other explanations which are not evidence based.

xi.   Fighting corruption

Recordkeeping and corruption are closely linked. Poor records management attracts corruption like flies to a carcass (Auditor General of Western Australia, in McKemmish, 1998). For instance, carrying out audit effectively and ensuring that procurement procedures are adhered to is rendered difficult where reliable and authentic records are either not created or are not kept safe from loss or falsification.

The absence of effective audit and procurement procedures is a fertile ground for corruption. As explained earlier, an audit exercise reviews actions through examining documents that authorised the actions. Poor recordkeeping produces unreliable audit opinion. This is the case because the audit opinion would be based on untrustworthy information. On the other hand, good records management fights corruption. For example, a full understanding of the context in which financial decisions were taken often requires access to records of meetings and to correspondence such as letter, memo or email. Sound recordkeeping is essential to effectively achieve this. Universities that have poor records management are at risk of encouraging a culture of impunity.

1.1.2 Recordkeeping as an essential underpinning of governance, audit and risk

Debates about the notion that record and document management is an essential underpinning of governance, audit and risk management have been wide ranging. Anthony Willis (2005) is of the view that recordkeeping is a vital element of governance, and that governance is a vital ingredient to the survival of an organisation.

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) has also made several proclamations in its reports on the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, including "recordkeeping is a key component of any organisation's corporate governance and critical to its accountability and performance" (ANAO, 2003, in Willis, 2005, p. 87). Its counterpart, the Auditor General of South Africa asserts that recordkeeping must be approached as a risk management function (Bhana, 2008). There cannot be adequate risk mitigation efforts without sound recordkeeping. This implies that the risk assessment in an organisation should also review recordkeeping.

Thomas Rabovsky (2012) is of the view that public organisations tend to be inefficient, and blames this on the prevalence of incrementalism in the budgetary process. He argues that reform efforts aimed at greater utilisation of information regarding organisation performance make budgets less political and more merit based, which in turn boost cost efficiency gains in the public sector.

The Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA) has gone further in its attempt to support the recordkeeping and governance relationship by producing special publications, including the "Declaration on Recordkeeping for Good Governance" (PARBICA, 2005), and "Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit" (PARBICA, 2007). These publications illustrate clearly the close link between recordkeeping and governance.

Steve Bailey (2011) ventured into the economics of recordkeeping by providing empirical data regarding the return on investment that can be achieved through various approaches to improving the management of records and documents. His study is part of the business case for investment in record and document management. He surveyed six British universities and found a demonstrable proof that investment in improved recordkeeping can realise significant and substantial financial returns on investment. The results of his study add support to the assertion that recordkeeping can be a tool for improved organisational performance.

Palmer (2000) identified records management, accounting and auditing as tools that provide layers of control that are essential to ensure transparency, probity and integrity in financial management systems. In this context, recordkeeping is amongst the key elements of governance. Its impact on the governance is as critical as that of other governance elements such as audit.

Some contributors to this recordkeeping and governance nexus have been cautions but nevertheless they tend not to shift fundamentally from the core of this proposition. For example, Alistair Tough (2007) took a different approach by drawing a distinction between probity and responsibility in debating recordkeeping versus accountability, but he did not reject the assertion that recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of governance. Rather, he wanted to probe and question certain fundamental aspects. His "objective was "not to undermine the argument but rather to bring a greater clarity to it" (Tough, 2007 p. 1).

Chris Hurley (2005, p. 224) was philosophical in his contribution to the debate, and was of the opinion that "effective recordkeeping is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for accountability". He acknowledged the relationship but less strongly.

Azman Mat Isa (2009) argued that recordkeeping is just a tool that ensures the availability of evidence for accountability in relation to governance which in turn relies on the ethical standards of those involved. In this context, if governance is corrupt, recordkeeping may not put it right.

1.1.3 Study hypothesis

The hypothesis underpinning this study is that an organisation cannot operate effectively if its recordkeeping system is ineffective. Efficiency, transparency and accountability are unattainable if the organisation has poor recordkeeping.

1.2 Contextual framework

Whilst the analysis of the relationship between record and document management and governance, audit and risk management will be broad-based, the main focus will be on universities in a changing world, with a focus on South Africa and Malawi.

1.2.1 Universities as unique organisations

Universities are unique organisations. Like other complex organisations, the web of relationships in a university is wide; students, academic staff, administrative staff, and governing board have all critical roles to play in the management of the university. In the same perspective, universities have to manage a wide range of records, including databases of students, both present and past. They must be able to retrieve students' information to provide evidence of matriculation. In addition to the governance structure, scholarship in a university also results in the creation of research records and documents, often funded by third parties.

From its birth in medieval Europe to the present, the university has undergone changes in its function, governance and recordkeeping. The functions of early universities were mostly teaching and preserving established culture, while modern universities have added research to their functions. Early universities were either student-controlled or faculty-controlled universities; and students or kings or churches were the sources of funding.

Modern universities have complex governance systems. Their sources of funding include government, student fees, and other competitive sources, such as research funding provided by government, charities, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Universities in open democracies are autonomous with guaranteed academic freedom. Universities in Sub-Saharan Africa face more frequent direct government interference than their Western Europe counterparts. For example, in Malawi the government of President Mutharika became embroiled in a conflict with the academics in the University of Malawi over the question of academic freedom (Lee, 2011).[2]

As registration and graduation became norms in the early universities, attention had to be given to recordkeeping. For example, it became necessary to identify and authenticate the persons to whom degrees had been granted. Enrolment with a licensed master was the first step towards this; it was called matriculation because of the condition that the scholar's name must be on the master's matricula or roll. It was also desirable to mark the stage in a scholar's progress by a ceremony of admission, known as graduation, to the different grades or degrees of membership.[3]

The recordkeeping systems in the modern universities are mostly hybrid, incorporating both paper and digital records. Just as globalisation and technology have transformed other organisations, modern universities are also exploiting information and communication technologies (ICTs) to be competitive. For example, online courses are being introduced to enable universities to increase enrolment numbers, the essence of the massive open online courses (MOOCs)[4] (Coughlan, 2013b). ICTs have also improved the preparation, storage and delivery of campus-based teaching through virtual learning environments (VLEs).[5]

---

[2] The fight began when a lecturer discussed the political developments that led to the overthrow of dictatorships in Egypt and Tunisia as an illustration in a lecture session; he was interrogated by the Chief of Police; fellow lecturers reacted swiftly saying they would no longer teach unless they were guaranteed academic freedom; and the University was subsequently closed because of the standoff.

[3] University of Cambridge, "The Medieval University". Available at: http://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/history/the-medieval-university; accessed on 15th May 2013.

[4] MOOC is an online course aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web.

[5] A VLE is a system for delivering learning materials to students via the web; usually within educational institutions

National universities in Sub-Saharan Africa were established in the twentieth century to spur development. That is, when a country gained independence, it required home grown human capital to exploit its potential and further economic and social progress. To this effect, universities became catalysts for development. The governance systems that these new states established had a direct impact on the recordkeeping systems as well.

1.2.2 Impact of public sector reforms on the governance of universities

Over the past three decades, countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have been reforming their public sector with a view to improving efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability as part of efforts to improve the delivery of public services (Chanie and Mihyo, 2013). In universities, like in other organisations, reform actions have included:

- Privatisation – services such as catering, cleaning, and security are outsourced; the university concentrates on its core functions such as teaching and research
- Public-private partnerships – the private sector is increasingly becoming an essential stakeholder in the design and implementation of the university curriculum
- Commercialisation – some services of the university are offered on a commercial basis, including health, agricultural and engineering facilities, and other services offered by the university's registered companies
- Adoption of private sector approaches in managing public sectors – this includes corporatisation of universities

The public sector reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa and its impact on the governance of universities as well as on recordkeeping is explained further under the following subheadings:

i.   Public sector reforms in Sub-Saharan Africa

Major public sector reforms in Sub-Saharan African started in the mid-1980s and became widespread in 1990s. Steve Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2001) is amongst the many commentators on this subject, and provides a brief background in his article, "Globalisation, Growth and Income Inequality: The Africa Experience".

He argued that the combined effect of the conditions of the public service left behind by colonialism and the state-led development strategies after independence worsened economic performance and produced growing structural problems by the 1970s. This was often exacerbated by political and civil strife as well as natural disasters.

Reintegration of Sub-Saharan Africa into the global economy in order to generate sustained growth and reduce poverty was a major goal of the mid-1980s reforms. The reforms were supported by multilateral agencies and donor countries. The Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Bank and its sister organisation, the International Monetary Fund, were amongst the key organisations supporting reform. The reforms were expected to reduce economic distortions and bureaucratic waste, increase foreign direct investment and technology flows, and raise efficiency through increased domestic and international competition (Demery and Squire, 1996, in Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2001).

Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2003) adds that the public sector reforms pursued for much of the 1990s had two dimensions. The first dimension focussed on improvement of incentives in the public sector by first reducing the size of the civil service, including ridding central registries and payrolls of ghost workers, and then raising remuneration for those remaining in the system. It is interesting to note that the efforts to rid payrolls of ghost workers rarely included work on personnel records systems and on using records as a means of verifying employment status. This meant that payroll reform often had to be repeated.

The second dimension of reform focused on the improvement of management systems and raising accountability in the public service. Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2003) observed that there was no single Sub-Saharan Africa country that did not attempt public sector reform in the 1990s. However, as Meredith (2006) has pointed out, some countries were clearly not sincere in wishing to carry out public sector reforms in the spirit that they were originally framed.

Through these reforms, governments no longer saw themselves as sole suppliers of social services but frequently opted for partnerships with the private sector and NGOs (Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2003). Efficiency and choice were increasingly becoming norms in the planning and implementation units of line ministries or departments.

According to Kayizzi-Mugerwa (2003), privatisation was longer the controversial subject it used to be when the reforms started. His final assertion was that there had been moves towards more open and democratic government.

Hellen Kilelo (2015) corroborates Kayizzi-Mugerwa's (2003) observation. She asserts that almost all African countries are carrying out some form of public sector reform, and adds that good governance, efficient public administration, transparency and accountability are all unachievable without public sector reforms.

It is evident from the above explanation that in the contemporary world, the world in which governance, audit and risk are important issues, reforms are frequent occurrences. Public institutions, including universities, are required to demonstrate good governance in their operations.

ii.   Public sector reforms and university governance

Critics of the major public sector reforms that started in the mid-1980s posit that more harm might have been done by the reforms than the claimed benefits, especially in the higher education subsector. Thandika Mkandawire, a scholar working on African development, argues that the influence of the international financial institutions and their neoliberal prescriptions contributed to the decline of university education in Sub-Saharan Africa (Coughlan, 2013). He singles out the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) of the 1980s as a major culprit.

The SAPs contributed to enormous social costs through the deindustrialisation of national economies and the substantial loss of national control over economic and social policy making. In saying this, however, it needs to be recognised that many state-owned industries were so inefficient that a creeping deindustrialisation had commenced prior to the SAP (Mwanatakwe, 1994). The World Bank advised governments to concentrate on basic education rather than tertiary education. Consequently, funds were channelled into primary and secondary education. Universities and colleges were neglected.

Therefore, the World Bank programmes affected university education in Sub-Saharan Africa because in the post-colonial era of the 1960s and 1970s universities grew across Africa but expansion came to an abrupt halt in the 1980s. Thandika Mkandawire calls the period of inactivity in university education as the "lost decade". While other parts of the world invested in higher education, African universities missed out on an entire cycle of growth.

It is important that universities in Sub-Saharan Africa are not left out in the reform process. They, like other public institutions, are expected to operate in an efficient, transparent and accountable manner. This is notwithstanding the fact that academic members of staff are often uncomfortable with university reforms. The reforms are perceived as tampering with their academic freedom and the university's autonomy. For example, when the South African Government announced major reforms in higher education after the dawn of multiracial democracy in 1994, the academic community were not enthusiastic as they interpreted these drastic changes as state interference rather than supervision (Mthembu, 2009). Similarly, the academic staff in Malawi objected to the new University of Malawi Bill of 2012 that would have restructured the operations of the University on the same premise of fear of state interference. As explained earlier, reforms in the public universities are inevitable in an environment in which governance, audit and risk are important issues. The universities are expected to demonstrate transparency and accountability and value for the taxpayers' money.

iii.   Organisational reforms and recordkeeping

The major public sector reforms presented challenges and opportunities in the management of recorded information. Unfortunately, however, the significance of records management for achieving the reforms has never been fully recognised, particularly in the digital environment. The national records and archives institutions that were set up to manage public sector records had their shares of national budgets reduced in response to the economic and practical necessities that prevailed. For instance, administrators had to prioritise health care, education and physical infrastructure, and as a result, the national records and archives institutions were starved of resources. Their ability to promote and sustain good records management was eroded.

This in turn affected the public institutions, including the universities, which looked to the national records and archives institutions for effective management of their recorded information. Anne Thurston (1996) summarised examples of the breakdown of recordkeeping from the works of Peter Mazikana, who conducted a study of the archival institutions in Africa:

> Ministries and departments operated without functional registry systems and with no manuals to guide the staff except those produced in the bygone days. In some cases the registry systems had collapsed altogether… The archival institutions were operating with grossly insufficient human resources. The remuneration of the personnel was inadequate and their status was very low resulting in a high turnover rate… (Mazikana, 1996, in Thurston, 1996, p. 190).

She added that such a breakdown in recordkeeping had significant consequences. For example, key state resources, such as finance and personnel, could not be effectively managed and monitored. People's lives were also affected in that patients returning to hospitals for treatment had very little hope that their files could be found; land claims could not be substantiated; electoral rights could not be exercised; and court cases could not be resolved equitably. The recordkeeping regime during this period was mainly paper.

Computers became necessary tools in the management of recorded information during the major public sector reforms, and this trend has continued. In essence, the public service reforms and computerisation were the two global developments influencing recordkeeping. Anne Thurston (1996, p. 192) put it succinctly: "

> As donor and national governments began to focus on restructuring laws, procedures and organisational structures and to redefine their management approach, it became increasingly apparent that the written evidence required to underpin accountable, transparent, efficient structures and systems was not in place.

> Initially the official response was that the answer lay in computerisation, which would 'leapfrog' developments elsewhere and provide a modern, efficient information base. By the mid-1990s computerisation was a feature of virtually every donor assistance programme across the public sector…

Although many computerisation programmes failed and, in doing so, left the position even worse (Cain and Thurston, 1997), it nevertheless, offered an opportunity for recordkeeping to gain significance in an organisation strategy. Had they been in a stronger position, records managers could have forged news relationships with administrators who created the records they managed and who influenced the expenditure. There was a gradual awakening by administrators, records professionals and donors to the critical importance of establishing sound recordkeeping systems to provide the evidential base required to support structural adjustment, public service reform and computerisation (Thurston, 1996).

As explained earlier, reforms in universities, as in other public institutions, are essential in this modern era. It is common for modern universities to acquire latest information technologies in its quest to improve information service delivery. This would in turn bolster efficiency and competitiveness, and transparency and accountability. For example, a university acquiring a system that enables students manage personal, academic, and financial information themselves.

iv.   Importance of recordkeeping in institutional reforms

There was more recognition of the importance of records management in institutional reforms, and recordkeeping featured in some reform programmes in the 1990s. Examples can help to explain this further.

In Ghana, Pino Akotia (2003) captured a newspaper article that highlighted an observation by the country's former minister of education:

> The major contributing factor to gross inefficiencies and lack of continuity in the policies, procedures and measures of many African states is not, as commonly supposed, frequent changes in governments, but bad management of records (People's Daily Graphic, 1989, in Akotia, 2003, p. 110).

A significant Records Management Improvement Programme was introduced in Ghana 1991. This was a UK Department for International Development supported initiative aimed at restructuring government recordkeeping systems in order to improve the efficiency of development management interventions because it was assumed that computerisation would resolve the problems involved in keeping and accessing reliable information..

In August 2003, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone noted, in a speech, that poor storage and retrieval of information slows down work of the public service and impacts negatively on policy formulation, planning and financial control. He added that improvement of recordkeeping is absolutely essential for moving the reform process forward (IRMT, 2005).

It should be noted that International Records Management Trust (IRMT) worked with governments of Ghana, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Tanzania and Uganda on records management reform projects. Unfortunately, the subject then became less, rather than more prominent in the digital environment.

In Zambia, a deputy minister of home affairs made a statement in support of recordkeeping in the conduct of public affairs when opening a biannual meeting of the ESARBICA in 1996:

> Most counties in this part of Africa are undertaking structural adjustment and public reform programmes aimed at good governance. This is being done by introducing changes in the management of public affairs to enhance accountability, efficiency, transparency and the protection of human rights. The above mentioned objectives cannot be achieved in the absence of reliable and accurate information which has become a vital resource for governments in the management of public affairs
> (Thurston, 1996, p. 197)

During the same period, IRMT provided professional advice to the Government of Zambia on records management procedures and advised the Central Revenue Authority of that country on the development of a central registry.[6]

---

[6] International Records Management Trust (IRMT), "Consultancy Projects". Available at: http://irmt.org/consultancy-services/consultancy-projects-2; accessed on 20th January 2014.

Alistair Tough (2002) reported on the Tanzanian Records Management Project (TRMP) in which he served as a project manager. This project was an integral part of the Public Sector Reform Programme (PSRP) aimed at improving efficiency and reoriented the civil servants to the delivery of services to the public and their fellow workers. The project had a target of rehabilitating recordkeeping in twelve core ministries in three years.[7] Later, Esther Ndenje-Sichalwe, Patrick Ngulube, and Christine Stilwell (2011) conducted a study of the current state of recordkeeping practices in fostering accountability in the implementation of the PSRP in Tanzania. The study established that the introduction of the PSRP had resulted in some reform of recordkeeping practices, though records in some government ministries were still not managed as a strategic resource. This result cannot be a surprise because, as much as the PSRP had managed to improve recordkeeping in a small measure, its objective was to promote good governance. Recordkeeping was inevitably an offshoot or by-product that those responsible were left to discover for themselves. Nevertheless, these two Tanzanian cases are good examples to show that reforms can have an impact on recordkeeping.

v.   Treatment of governance and recordkeeping during reforms

Governance, audit and risk management usually receive good deal of attention in organisational reform programmes. In essence, reform programmes are undertaken to achieve efficiency, transparency and accountability which are essential pillars of an organisation's good governance agenda. Major donors and international financial institutions corroborate this by basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure good governance are undertaken (UNESCAP, 2012).

The proposition underpinning this study is that sound recordkeeping is essential for good governance. This means that any proposal to reform an organisation should also consider the recordkeeping system. For example, in order for a university to improve its efficiency, transparency and accountability to meet stakeholders' demand for these governance requirements, its recordkeeping system should also be reformed so that reliable and authentic records are produced and accessed when required.

---

[7] Tough, Alistair, "Tanzania records management project", University of Glasgow Archive Services, 2002. Available at:
http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/archives/news/dunaskinnews200207/tanzaniarecordsmanagementproject/;
accessed on 11th September 2013.

1.2.3 Neglect of recordkeeping in universities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Although public sector reforms have stimulated a positive leap in recordkeeping in the civil service across Sub-Saharan Africa, universities in the region have largely neglected recordkeeping. Examples can help to explain this further.

A study by Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) found that the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa fell below requirements when it came to maintaining records series that documented its functions. They identified areas such as unavailability of university-wide records management guidelines; such practices and procedures as existed were developed through individual initiatives.

Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000) studied Moi University in Kenya where they found that none of the seven records staff were conversant with issues affecting the management of electronic records, and that two of the three senior administrative officers did not know how electronic records could be managed.

Enemute Iwhiwhu (2005) investigated four federal universities in Nigeria: University of Ibadan, University of Ilorin, University of Benin, and University of Nigeria – Nnsuka. He found that the management of records was without recourse to the principles of records management. There were no records management policies; no documented procedures; and inadequate management support.

These indications of the absence of sound recordkeeping in universities in Sub-Saharan Africa provided a rationale for revisiting universities in the region and exploring further the governance and recordkeeping relationship. How are records and documents managed? What factors impact recordkeeping? And what relationship can be drawn between the management of records and documents and institutional governance within universities? These were the questions that the fieldwork research sought to investigate.

1.3 Problem identification

Recordkeeping has been neglected despite pronouncements that it forms the backbone of governance, audit and risk management. This is a global trend but can be viewed as more dire in organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa than those in developed countries. Examples can help to explain this further.

The Forrester Research / ARMA International Records Management Survey analysis by Brian Hill (2012)[8] reveals that "executives perceive records management to mainly be a dusty cost centre – many see records management as a mix of warehouses, technologies, and a set of complex, costly steps requiring their reluctant attention due to compliance mandates". This is a good example of the perception of recordkeeping in the context of developed countries. However, management can view recordkeeping in a different light if they are provided with a different viewpoint.

In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, Paul Sturges (2000) reported a Zimbabwe experience. Whilst at the Zimbabwe Government offices on his information work assignment, a Zimbabwean lady decried the state of records in her country: "Our biggest information problem here in Zimbabwe is the state of our records".[9] The lady described the plight of veterans of the freedom struggle who were unable to draw the pensions and allowances of which they were entitled because of the chaotic state of the relevant official records. Similar difficulties also existed with the records of the registration of births, which were vital for matters such as the issue of passports and the establishment of eligibility for entry to the schools system.

In Malawi, the Government has been promoting higher education governance through the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008 – 2017. This is the Malawi Government's policy framework and blueprint for education in the period 2008 – 2017.

---

[8] Hill, Brian, in his analysis of the Forrester Research / ARMA International Records Management Survey, in *Information Management September/October 2012*, ARMA International. Available at: http://content.arma.org/IMM/images/September-October%202012/IMM_0912_full%20issue.pdf; accessed on 20th November 2013.

[9] Paul Sturges quoting the lady in his article "Records Management in Africa: Three Case Studies and a Proposal" in Chisenga, Justin et al (eds.), *Information 2000: A Vision for the SCECSAL Region*. Windhoek: Namibian Information Workers Association, 2000, p. 219.

The Malawi Government envisaged tackling higher education challenges through a number of strategies including: "strengthening governance, management, oversight, transparency, and accountability of higher education institutions; and develop and implement other programmes to improve quality and efficiency, funded by the universities themselves from their own resources".[10] There is no recordkeeping requirement in any of these strategies.

In a contrasting development, the report of a meeting in 2012 that brought together senior academic and administrative staff in the University of Malawi to deliberate on quality assurance recognised the key role recordkeeping plays in the management of the University. One of the themes of the meeting was "Organisation and Management" in which delegates proposed improvements that included to "improve recordkeeping from central office to colleges especially Principals and Accounts offices"[11]. The problem that prompted the delegates to make such a recommendation was the state of recordkeeping in the University, both at the college and central administration levels. Their correspondences including letters, memos, completed forms, and reports are often misfiled or lost altogether.

Mathews Phiri (2007) conducted a study on the state of recordkeeping at Mzuzu University, another public university in Malawi, and found neglect. Issues like completed forms for members of staff getting mixed up or missing altogether in the administration or accounts offices were frequent occurrences. The problems at Mzuzu University were also manifested in the University of Malawi hence the recommendation for improved recordkeeping by the delegates to the Quality Assurance Workshop in 2012. However, for effective recordkeeping to be realised as demanded by staff of the University of Malawi, a recordkeeping policy has to be in place and effectively implemented.

In 2011, the Malawi Government commissioned SGS of Switzerland to assess the procurement audit performance of fifty public sector bodies (ODPP, 2011).[12] The result was that only one public body passed the test.

---

[10] Malawi Government, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, *National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008 – 2017: A Statemen*t. Lilongwe: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2008.

[11] University of Malawi, Report of Quality Assurance Workshop and Dissemination Meeting, 1-2 October 2012, Zomba, Malawi; available at: http://www.unima.mw/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/QA-dissemination-meeting.pdf; accessed on 15 November 2012.

[12] Malawi Government, Office of the Director of Public Procurement (ODPP*), Draft Audit Report: Procurement Review/Audit of Selected Procuring Entities in the Public Service.* ODPP, 2011.

The public institution that passed the test was judged to have sufficiently robust processes and recordkeeping to demonstrate its probity in handling public funds; and that almost all the forty-nine institutions that failed the inspection exercise were criticised for poorly organised and badly implemented recordkeeping (Tough, 2012). The two public universities were amongst those institutions that failed the test.

The examples from Zimbabwe and Malawi add to a list of cases of neglect of recordkeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa. Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005), Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000), and Iwhiwhu (2005) have all provided evidence of the neglect of recordkeeping in universities in South Africa, Kenya, and Nigeria respectively. This is despite the assertion that recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of governance, audit and risk management; and against a backdrop where governance, audit and risk management continue to receive greater attention within the same region. What can be the missing link? Or what can explain this state of affairs? This question forms a basis for this critical exploration of the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk, the subject of this thesis.

1.4 Research objectives

This study aims to critically explore the place of recordkeeping in an organisation's strategy in order to provide an alternative framework for managing records and documents in an environment in which governance, audit and risk are important issues. Four specific objectives of the research can be analysed thematically as follows:

Theme 1: Recordkeeping capacity

1. Assess how records and documents are managed
   This is an assessment of working practices, including processes, procedures, policies, and standards. It is also an attempt to relate record and document management with governance, audit and risk management. Can the way records and documents are managed provide a picture of the health of organisational governance?

Theme 2: Factors impacting on recordkeeping

2. Analyse internal and external factors impacting on recordkeeping

   This is an analysis of factors that impact on the way records and documents are managed. How do these factors strengthen or weaken the relationship between record and document management and governance, audit and risk management?

Theme 3: Relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk

3. Explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk

   This is a critical exploration of governance structures and recordkeeping systems in an organisation. What relationships can be identified from the interaction of the two?

Theme 4: Different approach on recordkeeping and governance relationship

4. Develop a recordkeeping and governance relationship model

   The objective is to redefine the relationship between record and document management and governance, audit and risk management. What might be a suitable approach to the management of records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management?

1.5 Research questions

From the themes and objectives of this research, four research questions can also be generated. They are repeated in this separate section for emphasis purpose.

1. How are records and documents managed?
2. How do internal and external factors impact on record and document management?
3. What relationships can be drawn between the management of records and documents and institutional governance, audit and risk management within universities?

4. What can be a suitable approach to managing records and documents in order to foster good organisational governance?

1.6 Research methodology

This is a qualitative research. As will be explained in the methodology chapter, the qualitative approach is best suited to investigate what goes on in the workplace; what the problems are; and how could they be addressed. Its process involves literature review, theoretical framework formulation, purposive sampling, fieldwork, data collection, and analysis of results (Pickard, 2013). Alan Bryman (2012) asserted that the stages of a social research process of this nature include literature review, concepts and theories, research questions, sampling cases, data collection, data analysis, and writing up.

The research is a collective case study in which multiple cases are used to critically explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance. It is not meant to suggest prescriptive solutions to general recordkeeping problems but rather to provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that arise in managing records and documents in the world in which governance, audit and risk are important issues.

1.7 Scope and limitation

The research focuses on public organisations in general and public universities in particular, rather than in private entities. The hybrid recordkeeping environment in this research is that which combines paper and digital media for recorded information.

The findings of this study, like any other qualitative research, are transferable rather than generalizable. Generalisation usually employs a positivist approach, including use of statistical analyses.

This research, however, employs an interpretivist approach. It uses limited number of phenomena. This being the case, one should not expect fully-fledged predictive explanations to proceed from this study. Although accomplishing external validity is not necessary within an interpretivist approach (Foscarini, 2009), several measures, as will be seen in the methodology chapter, are taken to ensure that the results of this study have the highest possible degree of reliability and external validity.

1.8 Significance of the study

This research generates a governance and recordkeeping relationship model. This can be viewed as a marked departure from the oversubscribed abstract approach. Consequently, the research provides a significant contribution to knowledge and furthers the debate on the topic in particular and the field of information management in general.

1.9 Chapter outline

Chapter 2: Managing records and documents introduces records and information management concepts including record, document, recordkeeping, records management, document management, and record and document management. Modalities of checking an organisation's recordkeeping capacity are explored; and factors affecting the recordkeeping environment are analysed. The objective of such exploration and analysis is to put records and documents into an organisational management context.

Chapter 3: Universities in a changing world will briefly explore the university in a changing world: its history, function, and governance systems. It will provide some background information which may be useful in understanding universities in an attempt to answer the question on how university records and documents could effectively be managed in an environment where governance, audit and risk are important issues.

Chapter 4: Research methodology provides details on how this study was conducted. The details include the philosophy underpinning this research; data collection; and data analysis.

Chapter 5: Governance recordkeeping explores the concepts of governance, audit and risk management at micro and macro levels. At micro level, each concept is explained in relation to recordkeeping. At macro level, the three concepts are merged into a single concept, the governance phenomenon, and its relationship with recordkeeping is thoroughly explored

Chapter 6: Governance structures and the drivers for recordkeeping presents the first set of findings. The first set of findings focuses on the governance structures and drivers for recordkeeping. The second set focuses on recordkeeping capacity and factors affecting recordkeeping. The second set of results is presented in the next chapter

Chapter 7: Recordkeeping in universities in South Africa and Malawi presents the second set of results focussing on how records and documents were managed in selected cases in South Africa and Malawi, including factors affecting recordkeeping.

Chapter 8: Conclusion outlines conclusions based on the themes of the study. It also offers recommendations, and suggests areas for further research.

Chapter 2: Managing records and documents

2.1 Introduction

Records and documents, which are discussed and defined in this chapter, constitute the bulk of information in an organisation, including a university. In essence they are an information asset, and used as evidence of decision making and risk mitigation. They are also kept for compliance, cultural and research requirements. A large part of an organisation's memory and knowledge is in its records and documents, thus making record and document management a tool to manage explicit knowledge.

As universities become large and more complex, the volume of records and documents to be managed continues to grow exponentially. Such being the case, a more proactive, consistent and comprehensive approach to managing the records and documents is desirable. More so, good practice itself helps create a reliable circle as access to accurate and reliable records and documents can support accurate and reliable outputs. Universities are also under pressure to proactively demonstrate their accountability and good standards of corporate governance. This can take the form of an audit or of public scrutiny through appropriate legislation such as access to information.

This chapter introduces records and information management concepts including record, document, recordkeeping, records management, document management, and record and document management. These concepts are often used loosely and in certain circumstances carry value connotations. Modalities of checking an organisation's record and document management capacity are explored; and factors affecting the recordkeeping environment are analysed. The objective of such exploration and analysis is to put records and documents into an organisational management context, and that organisation in this case being a university. In essence, this is a literature review on the management of records and documents in organisations in general and universities in particular.

2.2 Record and document

The terms record and document are sometimes used interchangeably. An overlap between records and documents can justify the interchangeability. The blurred distinction is also exacerbated by the growing use of digital records and documents; that is, as more information is being generated or received and maintained electronically, the distinction between a record and document is becoming hazier. Many characteristics and qualities of a record and document in a traditional paper environment are still relevant in the digital environment, though the traditional practice may not be sufficient to ensure authenticity and reliability in an electronic record. Although the study's general approach is to consider records and documents without regard to their medium, there is a special interest in digital records and documents as the digital era has spawned new working practices.

In a book which aims to provide a conceptual base for archival science, *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, one of the contributing authors, Sue McKemmish (2005), introduces the concepts of document, record, archive and archives under a broad theme of 'traces'. She is of the view that when an activity takes place, it results in a footprint called a trace, and writing is one of the representations of such a trace. A document, as a constituent of the traces tells a story: "A narrative of self or the stories people tell may never be written or documented, but for some people a diary or a journal is an indispensable part of keeping their personal story going…" (McKemmish, 2005, p. 1). David Levy (2001), writing in his book S*crolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age*, had previously expressed similar views to McKemmish's (2005) that a document tells a story. He refers to documents as talking things: "They are bits of the material world – clay, stone, animal skin, plant fibre, sand – that we've imbued with the ability to speak" (Levy, 2001, p. 3).

McKemmish (2005) distinguishes elements in her traces terminology where a record is described as a document captured in a recordkeeping system; an archive as the aggregate of the records; and the archives as records preserved because of their particular attributes. Hans Hofman (2005), another contributing author to *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, provides a definition of an archive similar to McKemmish's (2005); thus, grouping of records. In his opinion, "it is not the individual record that is relevant in meeting the recordkeeping requirements, but aggregations of all available records of an organisation – the archive" (Hofman, 2005, p. 140). Levy (2001) does not distinguish a record from document. In his analysis, the receipt and book are both documents.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003, p. 13) provide an illustration in their attempt to show the difference between a record and document: "Completed application forms, letters, invoices, register books and hard-copy ledgers are all documents. They are also records, since each one of them provides evidence of activity". They add:

> Blank forms, picture postcards, advertising posters and reference books are also documents, but they are not records. The form can become a record if it is completed and transmitted to initiate some action; the postcard can become a record if it is used to send a message. Until then they are documents but not records, because they have not participated in a business activity.

They have also illustrated the record and document relationship diagrammatically. Figure 1 below is a reproduction of their illustration.
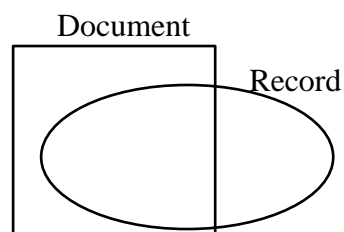
Figure 1: Record and document relationship (Adapted from Shepherd and Yeo, 2003)

As much as Shepherd and Yeo have attempted to illustrate the difference between a record and document through examples, they have not given an example of a record which is not in document form. Oral communication can be a record not in document form. For example, an African society is predominantly an oral culture where the tendency is likely to be that more business is settled informally face-to-face or over the phone and less is written (Tough, 2012; Lihoma, 2015). An audit culture can also promote oral communication in organisations though this can defeat the whole essence of an effective corporate memory. As Cox (2000) has stated, an oral culture is not without its difficulties: "And the fact that the correspondence won't be on record makes it easy for the conversationalists to drift toward vagary and unintentional compromise or misstatement, only to misremember and misreport their positions and statements as much firmer and tougher after the fact than they actually were during the call" (Cox, 2000, p. 6).

Although records and documents are closely linked, Geoffrey Yeo (2011, p. 8) argues further that they follow different logic: "Documents are characterised by their format, records by their relation to activities, events or other temporal occurrents".

2.2.1 Record

A record has varied definitions prompting Yusof and Chell (1998, p. 95) to provoke a debate as "whether a universally acceptable definition is possible". They themselves did not come up with a definitive definition of record but offered a clue that "any new definition needs to take account of the component parts of a record: the information, the medium and the function". This was prior to the publication of ISO 15489 in 2001 that gave a universalised definition of records: "information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business" (ISO 15489-1, 2001, Clause 3.15). ISO 15489 identifies authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability as the characteristics of a record. An authentic record is one that is genuine. A reliable record is one that is trustworthy and shows a clear provenance. Integrity in a record exists when it is complete and unaltered. When a record is altered, it results in a different record altogether; one record begets another record. A useable record is one that can easily be retrieved and used as required. Authenticity, reliability, integrity, and useability can be achieved when an organisation implements recordkeeping policies and procedures with the appropriate technical infrastructure.

Prior to the ISO 15489 definition, the International Council on Archives (ICA) Committee on Electronic Records had defined a record as "recorded information produced or received in the initiation, conduct or completion of an institutional or individual activity and that comprises content, context and structure sufficient to provide evidence of the activity regardless of the form or medium" (Erlandsson, 1996, p. 19). The term content implies the information contained in the record; context implies how the record relates to other records and to the organisation that created it; and structure implies the way in which the information is laid out.

Erlandsson (1996) suggested that the three qualities of record should be captured and preserved together in order to meet the requirements for "recordness"; and that the content should be put together with data about context and structure, that is, the metadata. If the metadata are lost, then the item loses its "recordness", that is, evidential value. David Bearman (1994) had previously viewed a record as a metadata encapsulated object. He illustrated the metadata requirements for evidentiality through a reference model for business acceptable communications. He viewed his work as a scheme for addressing electronic envelopes containing business communications that would ensure that the envelope could be opened by different computers and staff in the future and its contents would still be completely understandable.

Geoffrey Yeo (2007, p. 315) dedicated a full article to explore the meaning of the term record. His analysis agrees with Yusof and Chell observation that there are varied definitions. He goes beyond the evidence and information characteristics of record by proposing a third characteristic, "records as persistent representations of activities". It is evident from Yeo's (2007) approach that a function or business process is reflected in its records, corroborating Erlandsson's (1996) proposition that records are the remnants of the process and its transactions.

In an article "What is an electronic record?" Roy Turnbaugh (2002; p. 30) describes electronic records as "… a variety of things – databases, word processing documents, spreadsheets, and increasingly, e-mail and images. They are produced on a myriad of hardware and software platforms that are in a state of continuous change". He indicates that this description constitutes the first part of defining a record; the second part of the definition is the fulfilment of the conditions for the recorded information to qualify as records. This correlates with Shepherd and Yeo (2003) who also provide examples of records but with a caution.

Records managers usually work in collaboration with other professionals in managing an organisation's recorded information. It is common for other disciplines allied to records management to refer to Turnbaugh's (2002) examples as records at face-value. A good example is a computer scientist working on a database management system and who considers complete databases as records. Joshua Finnell (2011), in his article "Records Management Theory's Dilemma: What is a Record?", observes that definition by example is not sufficient definition of a record. But he acknowledges that records managers work in collaboration with other disciplines such as computer scientists. Lack of uniqueness in records management theory could be as a result of such a collaborative approach by some of the disciplines working with the organisation's recorded information.

The origin of records management theory has had influence on the definition of records. Does the theoretical root lie in diplomatics? Does it lie in systems sciences? Or does it lie in information science? Although the debate on records management theory has to continue, the workplace requires a reference point on what a record is. The ISO 15489 definition of a record has attempted to fill such a gap. The researcher has of necessity adopted the ISO 15489 definition of a record – "information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business" (ISO 15489-1, 2001, Clause 3.15).

2.2.2 Document

Shepherd and Yeo (2003), McKemmish (2005), and Levy (2001), have all defined a document. Additionally, ISO 15489 defined a document as "recorded information or object which can be treated as a unit" (ISO 15489-1, 2001, Clause 3.10). Kennedy and Schauder (1994, p. 5) provided a detailed description of a document from the New South Wales Evidence Act of 1991 in which a document is viewed to include:

    a. anything on which there is writing; and

    b. a map, plan, drawing or photograph; and

    c. a thing from which sounds or visual images (including writing) are capable, with or without the aid of a device, of being reproduced;

    d. anything on which there are marks, symbols or perforations having a meaning for persons qualified to interpret them.

Craig Cochran (2009) was of the view that a document is a living thing. Information contained in it is subject to change; it can be edited and revised. It can include databases, websites, email messages, MS Word and MS Exel files, letters and memos. Some documents are of short-term value and never end up in a recordkeeping system whilst others need to be kept as evidence of business transactions, routine activities or legal obligations, and placed into an official filing system where they become records upon filing. In this case, all records start off as documents but not all documents will ultimately become records, corroborating the standpoint of Shepherd and Yeo (2003)

In an organisation, documents can include published and unpublished information. Publications can provide important information to support business activities, but unlike records, they are not evidence of such activities; and may take the form of books, journals, newspapers, technical literature, DVDs, CDs, and videos. Similarly, unpublished information can be a source of information but cannot provide evidence of the business activities since they are not records; and examples may include market research data, contact information for clients, purchase news, and reports[13].

---

[13] State Records NSW, "Introduction No. 3: Introducing records, recordkeeping and records management", Sydney: Government of NSW, 2004.

As much as published and unpublished information appear to be the domain of a librarian, they can also be the concern of the records manager if they provide information which is critical to the survival of the organisation. The two information and knowledge intermediaries, librarians and records managers, can work in collaboration to exploit information resources in their totality.

2.2.3 Categories of records and documents

There are different ways of categorising records and documents. One approach is to categorise them by record type as correspondence, reports, policy and procedures, and forms, in a general organisational context (Kennedy and Schauder, 1994).

Another approach is to view them as essential information underpinning the following requirements: legal, like charters; financial, like payroll; operational, like examination papers; commercial, like contracts; intellectual capital, like research data; and disaster recovery, like emergency service contact; all in the context of vital information of an organisation, particularly a university.[14] Organisational records can also be categorised using a functional or business activity approach. "The functional approach is based on the premise that records are the input to and output of business functions and activities. It considers what an organisation does and therefore what it should have in terms of records to document its activities, rather than what it has got" (McLeod and Hare, 2006, p. 86). Universities carry out a range of different functions and inherently generate records in the course of carrying out their work. These records can also be categorised according to functions and associated activities. Functions are what universities do to achieve their goals and strategies, and activities are carried out to fulfil each function.

In her book, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities*, Helen Samuels (1992) challenged the information and knowledge intermediaries to document their institutions aggressively, thus, advocating an activist role for the records manager or archivist.

---

[14] Jisc infoNet, "Records management"; available at: http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/records-management; accessed on 14th July 2014.

Though mainly focusing on colleges and universities, she preceded Julie McLeod and Catherine Hare (2006) with the notion that the records managers or archivists should focus on functions rather than structures and hierarchies in categorising their records, "on what organisations do rather than who does it" (Samuels, 1992, p. 5). This is because administrative structures and personnel remain fluid whilst the functions of universities appear relatively stable. She examined the available sources of information using functional appraisal studies, and came up with seven core functions performed by most colleges and universities:

1. Conferring credentials, for example, admissions, advising, and degree granting
2. Conveying knowledge, for example, teaching, learning, and evaluation
3. Fostering socialisation, for example, academic rules, facilities, and services
4. Conducting research, for example, research proposals, and research grants
5. Sustaining the institution, for example, governance, finances, and personnel
6. Providing public service, for example, continuing education, and technical assistance
7. Promoting culture, for example, fine arts, libraries and museums

The diversity and complexity of universities can make Samuels's (1992) guidelines difficult to adopt in their entirety but modification to suit each local university can be a better option.

JISC provided an alternative categorisation of university records that was not a complete departure from Samuels's model. It commissioned a study of the archives of British universities in 1997. The results of this study were used to further develop the archival selection criteria and the Higher Education Institution (HEI) functional and activity model as recommended in the study, with a view to create a model scheme of archival arrangement for the archival records of the HEIs and guidelines for its implementation. The JISC HEI Functional Activity model came up with six functions of universities:[15]

1. Strategy development and implementation, with activities such as strategic planning
2. Teaching and learning, with activities such as course accreditation
3. Research and development, with activities such as research programme management

---

[15]JISC, "Life Cycle Study", available at:
http://www.jisc.ac.uk/publications/generalpublications/1997/recordslifecyclestudy97.aspx; accessed on 15th October 2013.

4. Student administration and support, with activities such as student admission
5. Resource management, with activities such as procurement and estates management
6. External relations, with activities such as government and regulator relations

Like Samuels's guidelines, the JISC model was a generic guide and could be modified to suit the local environment.

2.3 Record and document management

As records and documents have varied benefits, ranging from operational concerns with efficiency and effectiveness, to managerial concerns with accountability and risk management, and to concerns with protecting future needs for research (Carlisle, 2008), it is desirable to manage them in a planned and methodical way.

As explained in the previous chapter, records and documents have to be managed by design rather than by accident. This involves putting in place a framework of policies, procedures and practical guidelines so that everyone within the organisation can understand their roles and responsibilities. Similarly, the management of records and documents should be embedded within the organisational structure and in the overall management of risk (Moss, 2011). Recordkeeping and records management set out the framework for managing records throughout their existence, including identifying records and documents of long term value that may become archives (State Records NSW, 2004).

2.3.1 Recordkeeping

The Australian Standard (AS 4390 – 1996, Clause 4.19) defines recordkeeping as "the making and maintaining of complete, accurate and reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information".

There are three elements in recordkeeping. The first element is the creation of adequate records in the course of business activity. Authenticity, integrity, usability and reliability of records have to be ensured in the creation phase of the recordkeeping process. Records that possess these characteristics provide a full and accurate representation of the processes and activities that give rise to them.

They serve the purposes of business users, lawyers, auditors and regulators; they underwrite the organisation's requirements for accountability and transparency as well as providing for its needs and corporate memory (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). Creating records in such a manner, and maintaining them effectively, forms an element of governance recordkeeping, a concept this study is promoting. As will be observed in Chapter 5, governance recordkeeping is an approach to recordkeeping that fosters the governance agenda of an organisation. Additionally, "a records creation strategy helps to ensure that records meet the appropriate standards of quality…" (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003, p. 101).

The second element is the design, establishment and operation of recordkeeping systems. It is vital that records are captured into a secure and effective recordkeeping system so that their essential characteristics remain intact over time.

The third element is the management of records used in business and those used as archives. Traditionally, the management of records used in business was the domain of records management whilst the management of records as archives was regarded as the domain of archives administration. This division was heightened by the popularity of the life cycle concept in the management of records.

2.3.2 Records lifecycle

The records lifecycle concept indicates that "records are not static, but have a life similar to that of biological organisms: they are born, live through youth and old age and then die" (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003, p. 5). It presupposes that records are transferred to an archive so that they may be used for historical and cultural purposes after their value for business purposes has been exhausted or they are destroyed (Tough in Tough and Moss, 2006).

The lifecycle model was first developed by Phillip Brooks and Emmett Leahy of the United States (US) National Archives in the late 1930s, and first appeared in print in Brooks' article, "The Selection of Records for Preservation", in the *American Archivist* of October 1940 (Perkins, 2010). The need to effectively control and manage physical records after World War II signified the practical birth of this concept (An, 2003).

The life cycle concept has been useful in promoting a sense of order. It employs a systematic approach to the overall management of recorded information (Atherton, 1985-86).

The records lifecycle concept has been subjected to criticisms that are based on the trends in the work environment and on the logic in the concept itself. Jay Atherton (1985-86) identified three changes in the work environment that made the life cycle concept ineffective in its traditional approach. Firstly, organisations began to combine records manager and archivist functions. Secondly, the computers changed the working environment. With electronic records and documents, the stages in the life cycle could not be separated. Thirdly, external pressures, such as access to information legislation that permitted access to records that were still in administrative use, made a re-evaluation of the traditional approach unavoidable; the formal differentiation between the active, dormant and the dead stages in the life of a record became decidedly fuzzy.

Atherton (1985-86, p. 47) asked the following questions to support his argument: "Does the archivist really have no role to play in serving the creator of the records, in determining disposal periods, or developing classification systems? Does the records manager really have no responsibility in identifying permanent valuable records or servicing readers?"

Critics of the lifecycle have also argued against the logic behind the concept. For example, they argue that some records do not die but are retained indefinitely because of their continuing value; that the concept focuses on records as physical entities and on operational tasks when electronic records rely on logical rather than physical structure; that system design should be the first stage in the recordkeeping system; and that some records can be of value for business, and historical and cultural purposes at the same time hence the stages can be blurred (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003; Tough in Tough and Moss, 2006). There is a convergence in the criticism of the lifecycle, that it cannot be effective in the electronic environment. Organisations in the twenty-first century are increasingly operating in an electronic environment.

2.3.3 Records continuum

The records continuum concept offers a different perspective in the management of records. There are no steps in a continuum: "managing records is seen as a continuous process where one element of the continuum passes seamlessly into another" (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003, p. 9). The traditional lifecycle approach separated the management of records into two distinct phases with the records manager assuming responsibility for the first phase, the records phase, whilst the archivist assuming responsibility for the second phase, the archives phase. The records continuum approach aspires to integrate and unify the management of records (Duranti, 1996).

Three names are usually associated with the records continuum concept: Ian Maclean, Jay Atherton, and Frank Upward (McLeod and Hare, 2006). Ian Maclean had the earliest view of the concept in the 1950s; Jay Atherton popularised the concept through his conference presentations in the 1980s; and Frank Upward formulated a model of the concept in the 1990s (An, 2003).

Frank Upward developed the records continuum model which was being used in Australia "as a metaphor to assist in getting records management 'right' in recordkeeping environments built around electronic communications" (Upward, 2000, p. 115). Contributing to *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*, Frank Upward (2005, p. 202) outlines the genesis of his records continuum model when summarising the traces (documents, records, archive, and archives) introduced in the book by Sue McKemmish (2005):

> The model was designed to help build a form of activity theory for archivists out of their concern with the relationships between recordkeeping and accountability. It draws upon writings of its time about the relationship between archival studies and business processes, especially analyses built upon teasing out the functions, activities and transactions of records creating agents".

Upward's model maps the traces onto appropriate dimensions in a recordkeeping system. The model has four dimensions relating to records processes. Create, capture, organise and pluralise are the records processes linked to dimensions 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. There are four axes, the continua, which represent major records themes. On each axis are the dimensional elements; this links records management themes to processes.

The axis with the recordkeeping theme has the traces themselves, the recordkeeping containers: the document, record, archive, and archives that are created, captured, organised, and pluralised respectively. The evidential theme has trace, evidence, corporate memory, and collective memory; the identity theme has actor, unit, organisation, and institution; and the transactional theme has transaction, activity, function, and purpose. The elements of each theme correspond to the processes of creation, capture, organisation, and pluralisation respectively. Figure 2 is a reproduction of Frank Upward's model.
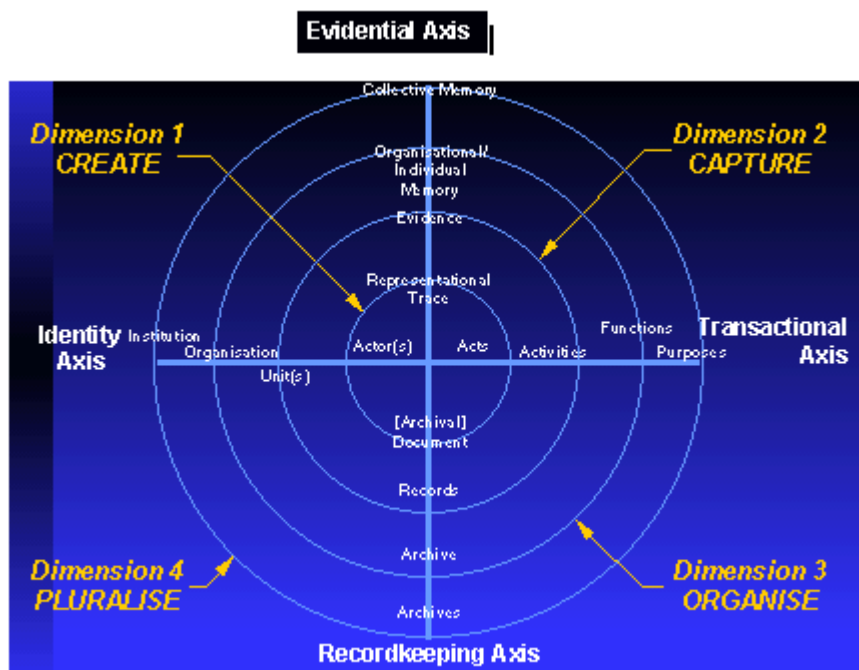
Figure 2: Records continuum model (© Frank Upward, 1996)

Organisations are in the transition to the digital, and the obvious expectation would be to see them adopting the records continuum model. However, because of its complexity or for other reasons, this is not always the case. This study will investigate approaches that institutions of higher learning in South Africa and Malawi are employing to manage their records and documents.

2.3.4 Records management

The Australian Standard, AS 4390 of 1996, has been superseded by the International Organisation for Standardisation, ISO 15489 of 2001. The term recordkeeping is not used in the ISO 15489 though the concept still applies in the Australian jurisdiction and other regions outside Australia. It is also widely used in the literature on records. The ISO 15489 has instead adopted the term records management, defined as the "field of management 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" (ISO 15489-1, 2001, Clause 3.16). There is an overlap between recordkeeping and records management; and using the two terms interchangeably has become unavoidable.

In an article that aimed at providing an overview of the UBC-MAS Research Project undertaken to identify and define the requirements for creating, handling and preserving reliable and authentic electronic records, Luciana Duranti and Heather MacNeil (1996, p. 48) elucidated the recordkeeping and records management nexus:

> Recordkeeping is "keeping record of action": as such, it is the presupposition for the existence and the first object of records management, which is the management over time, from the creator's perspective and for its purposes, of the creator's records, of the means used to control their creation (e.g., classification, registration, and retrieval instruments), and of the human, technological, and space resources necessary to their handling, maintenance, and preservation.

There has been a fiery argument amongst records scholars and commentators regarding the theoretical roots of records management. In his article, "Records management: confronting our professional issues", J. Michael Pemberton (Pemberton, 1998, in Duranti, 2010, pp. 78-79) asserts that "the theoretical roots of records management, archives, and librarianship lie in information science, cognitive science, systems sciences, and at conceptual intersections with fields cognate with our own". Luciana Duranti (2010) strongly disagrees with this assertion. She is of the view that the theoretical roots of records management lie in diplomatics as it has developed over the centuries for archival purposes. Concepts and principles for the management of electronic records that have been developed by using archival diplomatics theory and methodology consolidate Duranti's (2010) argument.

An analysis of the two arguments reveals a convergence; there is a recognition that records and documents are increasingly being managed in an electronic environment. Nonetheless, Pemberton's (Pemberton, 1998, in Duranti, 2010) argument could be viewed as leaning more towards transactionality, whilst Duranti's (2010) argument can be viewed as leaning more towards evidential value.

Approaches to records management theory can have an effect on the place of records management in education and training programmes. Records management can find itself housed in different areas including business management, information systems, administrative studies, and archival studies. It could also be a standalone programme. The changing world is increasingly pushing records management to be a multifaceted discipline as observed by Finnell (2011). James Currall and Michael Moss (2008, p. 69) "challenge archive and records management educators to align their curricula with contemporary need and to recognise that partnership with other professionals, particularly in the area of technology, is essential".

ISO 15489 has its roots in AS 4390. The Australian recordkeeping community developed AS 4390 in 1996 as the first international standard for records management, despite the Norwegian Noark standard which was released in 1984.

Noark is a Norwegian abbreviation for *Norsk arkivstandard*, translated in English as *Norwegian Archive Standard*. It was developed in 1984 as a specification of requirements for electronic recordkeeping systems used in public administration, and quickly became established as the de facto standard (National Archives of Norway, 2015). Noark compliant systems were recognised as having better functionality and stability than other records and document systems. Even before Noark became mandatory, records created in government agencies were largely compliant with the Noark requirements (Thurston, 2015).

Noark was developed further with new reports in 1987, Noark 2, and 1994, Noark 3. These initial versions of Noark Standard mainly covered how to keep a register of documents. The Archives Act of 1992 required public organisations to register all incoming and outgoing records, and internal records that document official activity, in a national records management system, Noark (Thurston, 2015).

Noark 4, which was introduced in 1999, specified a complete, mandatory electronic records management system, integrated with e-mail and general case handling systems. It now became mandatory for public bodies to use a Noark-based system for electronic recordkeeping. Once the government endorsed the Noark Standard, vendors were permitted to sell only Noark compliant electronic records and archives systems in the public sector (Thurston, 2015). Noark 5, which was introduced in 2008, further developed the principles from Noark 4. This further development covered both modernisation in line with technological advances and expansions to the systems' information content and functionality (National Archives of Norway, 2015).

The development of AS 4390 by the Australian recordkeeping community was in response to the Quality Standard, ISO 9000, which indicated the need for quality records but did not elaborate. In 1997, discussions ensued to internationalise AS 4390. A group of recordkeeping professionals and standards experts from Australia, France, Sweden, UK and US met and agreed to urge ISO to set up a subcommittee to develop AS 4390 into an ISO Standard (Healy, 2010).

The publication of ISO 15489 signified a new era in the management of records. Unlike AS 4390, ISO 15489 has been shaped in such a way that recordkeeping functionalities move from the backroom filing domain, recordkeeping, to the management process domain, records management. This move gives records management a more academic and professional dimension, whereas previously it seemed to have a more closed and vocational nature.

Although ISO 15489 has been lauded as a breakthrough in the management of records, and raising the profile of the records profession, it is a guidance standard and not a compliance standard. The standard does not include the management of archival records. The omission of archives can be viewed as breaking the custody norm. The records professionals have traditionally been viewed as custodians of organisation's recorded information. In an electronic environment, the omission can be justified as records are logical rather than physical.

The recordkeeping roles and responsibilities in an electronic environment are shared with other groups such as records creators who are responsible for creating and keeping accurate and complete records of their activities, and systems administrators who ensure that all documentation is accurate, available and legible. In such a shared environment, records managers and archivists become more of facilitators and directors, and get more preoccupied with the development of recordkeeping policies, strategies, procedures, systems, and providing training and monitoring mechanisms (McLeod and Hare, 2006). This is the essence of the post-custodial or distributed custody concept. McLeod and Hare (2006, p. 45) have provided a simple description of a post-custodial model:

> Because records are *logical* rather than physical, as in the paper environment, their location can be '*virtual*'. Records will not necessarily need to be amassed in a single or limited number of locations (such as physical records centres and archives), but could live out their lives in virtual, distributed electronic collections, records centres and archives.

Post-custodialists argue that "archivists should focus on preserving records and making them accessible, even if this means leaving them in the systems that first created them" (Tough in Tough and Moss, 2006, p. 20). Samuels (1992, p. 12) adds that "to meet the challenges posed by modern documentation, archivists and their colleagues must become active participants in the creation, analysis, and selection of the documentary record". The post-custodial approach is inescapable in the growing digital environment and calls for records managers and archivists to be team-players.

ISO 15489 is well known in Sub-Saharan Africa, at least amongst the senior records professionals. Alistair Tough (2004) research suggests that 70% of Commonwealth African heads of records services in the public sector had heard of ISO 15489; and 85% of those who had heard of ISO 15489 had plans to use it.[16] This suggests the concept of records management is embedded in the region.

2.3.5 Document management

Document management can imply the management of an organisation's documents. The term is becoming synonymous to managing documents in an electronic environment and often referred to as document management system.

The Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) definition confirms this technology biased view: "Document management, often referred to as Document Management System (DMS), is the use of a computer system and software to store, manage and track electronic documents and electronic images of paper based information captured through the use of a document scanner"[17]. Terry Lundgren (1994, p. 178) also approaches document management from a computer-based system perspective; and in his view, "document management refers to an efficient computer-based methodology to store and retrieve documents, primarily in a digital format".

---

[16] One of the key objectives of Alistair Tough's research was to gauge awareness on the part of Directors of National Archives and other key players of ISO 15489 and any other relevant standards available to them.

[17] Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM): The Global Community of Information Professional, "What is Document Management (DMS)?" Available at: http://www.aiim.org/What-is-Document-Management; accessed on 7th January 2014.

Lundgren (1994) views document management as a field that represents the convergence of technologies from subcomponents of document storage, retrieval and workflow; and argues that its goal is to control documents from all sources that relate to business operation. Although a document management system can provide an efficient and effective means of managing an organisation's recorded information, it lacks the functionality for managing records, including records retention and disposition functionality because the system can allow documents to be modified. A document management system can be modified to include records management functionalities, and this can result in having more of a complete document and record management system.

2.3.6 Record and document management system

A record and document management system is an integrated information system comprising a recordkeeping or records management system and a document management system.

Systems in general can be viewed as consisting of interdependent components that are organised to achieve an end. Information systems are organised collections of hardware, software, supplies, people, policies, and procedures; and all the maintenance and training which are required to keep these components working together (Bearman, 1994). They store and provide access to information including a document, record or an archival item.

Recordkeeping systems are information systems that capture, maintain and provide access to records over time. Duranti and MacNeil (1996-97, p. 48) described a recordkeeping system as comprising "a set of the internally consistent rules that govern the making, receiving, setting aside, and handling of active and semi-active records in the usual and ordinary course of the creator's affairs, and the tools and mechanisms used to implement them". Bearman (1994) argued that recordkeeping systems should be accepted as the fundamental locus of provenance as opposed to the fonds, record groups or record series.

Bearman's (1994) argument is based on the premise that recordkeeping systems have concrete boundaries and definable properties. They give records professionals' new tools with which to play an active role in the electronic environment.

He also argued that the focus on functional requirements for recordkeeping systems allies records professionals with auditors, systems administrators, lawyers, and senior managers who all have a responsibility for corporate memory and its management. This alliance is both strategically critical and intellectually desirable, and in essence makes the records manager a team player in addition to raising the profile of records management amongst collaborating disciplines which seem to obscure the records profession.

Like recordkeeping systems, records management systems provide an organisation's evidence of business transactions. ISO 15489-1 (Clause 3.17) defines a records management system as an "information system which captures, manages and provides access to records through time". The huge overlap between recordkeeping and records management can also be identified in the recordkeeping system and records management system relationship, resulting in the two systems being viewed as almost synonymous.

Bearman (1994) viewed document management systems as information systems that store information in discrete chunks that can be recombined and reused without reference to their documentary context. As information-as-a-thing is big business in the digital era, there is a proliferation of document management systems that can be sold as records management systems. The confusion arising from the failure to distinguish a document from a record can also culminate in another confusion, that of failing to distinguish a document management system from a records management system.

Document management systems, designed to manage textual electronic information that may not necessarily qualify as records, have been marketed as recordkeeping systems, causing loss of context and evidential value in records managed by such systems, as observed by Alf Erlandsson (1996). His observation was a common occurrence in the 1990s. This is however being improved. Some systems are being embedded with recordkeeping functionalities.

Electronic document management systems (EDMS) and electronic records management systems (ERMS) are applications or approaches to managing organisations' recorded information in an electronic environment. An EDMS "includes all the technology functions related to the scanning, indexing, modifying, processing, storing, and retrieving of documents (electronic, graphical, compound or virtual) required to meet the customers' needs relevant to the information content of the documents" (Megill and Schantz, 1998, p. 81).

It emphasises the flexibility, sharing and retrieval of structured data objects in order to improve the sharing of information and its integration into business workflows (Rankin, 2006). Many EDMS "have very few, if any, records management features or discipline" (Allison, 2001, in Rankin, 2006, p. 28). An ERMS enables the capture and management of those electronic documents required as records.

Electronic document and records management systems (EDRMS) combine the functions of an EDMS and ERMS. In essence, it combines electronic records management functionality with the ability to hold a wider range of business information and documents that are not required as part of the formal corporate record but do have to be retrieved and reused for everyday business needs (Rankin, 2006). To be effective, EDRMS should be integrated with business processes.

It is worth noting that an EDRMS may not produce the intended results in practice. An analysis of EDRMS use in the UK by Alistair Tough (2012) is amongst the contributions that have gauged EDRMS effectiveness against its hype. Although records with a high security classification had not been incorporated into the EDRMS in UK public service and instead separate registry services had continued to operate, the EDRMS implementations were deemed not to have produced the expected results. Sir Alex Allan (2015, par 3c) summarised the practicality of EDRMSs through his independent report after reviewing the UK Government's strategy for managing its digital records:

> Existing systems which require individual users to identify documents that should constitute official records, and then to save them into an EDRMS or corporate file plan, have not worked well. The processes have been burdensome and compliance poor. As a result, almost all departments have a mass of digital data stored on shared drives that is poorly organised and indexed

Similar patterns had emerged in Australia (Cunningham, 2011, in Tough, 2012). It would not be a surprise to find these patterns in other countries of the Commonwealth, including those in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In this thesis, record and document management is an umbrella term for the management of records in document form and those documents which might not be records but contain information critical to the performance, transparency and accountability of an organisation, including a university. It encompasses recordkeeping, records management, and documents management. The terms record and document management, recordkeeping, and records management are used interchangeably, not because the difference between them is not understood; rather, in the context of this thesis, they overlap and converge.

2.4 Record and document management environment

Internal and external factors either promote or hinder the management of records and documents in an organisation. An analysis of these factors can assist the information and knowledge intermediaries in their efforts to exploit the strengths and opportunities, as well as to devise mechanisms to deal with the weaknesses and threats the environment poses to effective recordkeeping.

Internal factors are inherent in an organisation and contribute to its culture and behaviour. The organisation also operates in an environment of assorted external factors that influence its culture and behaviour. An environmental scanning, which is more of a technique for identifying and predicting the impact of external trends and developments on the internal functioning of an organisation, can be used to analyse the political, economic, social, technological, legal, and ecological factors that can impact on the management of records and documents in an organisation in general and a university in particular.

2.4.1 Organisation culture

Culture is a complex concept and can be defined in context and with examples. To a manager, it relates to organisational behaviour; to a teacher, it is about ethos and norms; and to an anthropologist, it is about learned behaviour patterns. In an organisational context, culture can have a bearing on the way records and documents are managed. For instance, an organisation that values efficiency, compliance and accountability can more readily rollout a record and document management system, especially when there is a realisation that well managed records and documents can foster efficiency and accountability.

In the book they edited, *Culture and Leadership Across the World: The GLOBE Book of In-Depth Studies of 25 Societies*, Jadeep Chhokar, Felix Brodbeck, and Robert House (2008, p. 3) have reproduced the definition of culture by the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) researchers; defining culture as "shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations".

In their book, *Organisational behaviour*, David Buchanan and Andrzej Huczynski (2010, p. 100) corroborate this view and define organisational culture as "the shared values, beliefs and norms which influence the way employees think, feel and act towards others inside and outside the organisation". Similarly, Chris Baker (2000, p. 37), in his book, *Cultural Studies*, illustrates how to identify people of the same culture: "To say that two people belong to the same culture is to say they interpret the world in roughly the same way and can express themselves, their thoughts and feelings about the world, in ways which will be understood by each other".

Contributing to the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, Chun Choo et al (2008: 792) have concentrated on information culture, which they describe as "the socially shared patterns of behaviours, norms and values that define the significance and use of information". Chhokar, Brodbeck, and House, (2008, p. 4) are also of the view that culture can be manifested in two distinct ways, "should be" and "as is", being the attributes and practices respectively.

Buchanan and Huczynski (2010) view an organisation as "a social arrangement for achieving controlled performance in pursuit of collective goals" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 8). Controlled performance in their view implies "setting standards, measuring performance, comparing actual with standard, and taking corrective action if necessary" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 9). Controlled performance can be viewed as a product of organisational governance. A corporate governance structure specifies the formal distribution of rights and responsibilities among participants in an organisation and spells out the rules and procedures for making decisions. This can be effective if the corporate governance and record and document management elements are embedded in an organisation strategy.

Therefore, the "the issues which drive the organisation should also be those which drive effective records management" (McLeod and Hare, 2006, p. 9). Chapter 5 explores the governance and recordkeeping nexus further.

It is evident that organisational culture is dynamic and a possible vehicle for effective recordkeeping. In her editorial in the *Records Management Journal*, Julie McLeod (2013) highlights the growing realisation amongst records professionals of the centrality of people and information culture in successful approaches to managing records and documents in the digital era. In this specific issue of the journal, all contributors chose information culture and recordkeeping as their themes. In the same perspective, organisation leadership forms a critical component of the people to be persuaded and incorporated in the culture and recordkeeping equation.

As will be discussed later in this chapter, soft systems methodologies are essential considerations in designing a recordkeeping system for an organisation. Soft systems methodology is an holistic approach to investigating real-world situations. As a result of differences in life experiences, educational and professional backgrounds, and any other pre-existing social, economic and cultural factors, each individual has their own way of looking at their world. This would to some extent influence their understanding of the problems at hand.

2.4.2 Organisation leadership and management

As much as the board of directors, or the council in the case of universities, are the governing bodies, executive teams led by chief executives or vice chancellors or principals have delegated powers to provide sound leadership and management. These executive teams are crucial in the implementation and sometimes initiation of organisations' cultural and behavioural change programmes.

Buchanan and Huczynski (2010) have attempted to explain the two overlapping concepts of leadership and management. Who is a leader and who is a manager? In their view, leaders have followers while managers have subordinates; leaders are visionary and drive new initiatives while managers seek to achieve stability.

Leaders do the right thing while managers do things right; the leader is a prophet and strategist while the manager is a technician and problem-solver; and the leader influences others to sign up to their vision, inspires them to overcome obstacles, and generates positive change while the manager establishes plans and budgets, designs and staffs the organisation structure, monitors and controls performance, and delivers order and predictability.

In an organisational context, the distinction between leadership and management is blurred in a practical sense because managers also provide leadership roles: "Leadership is one dimension of a multifaceted management role. The effective manager requires at least some leadership qualities. The neat distinction between leader and manager does not translate neatly into practice" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 599). Both the leader and manager are involved in decision-making which is one of their essential functions. Buchanan and Huczynski (2010) provide two models of decision-making, classical decision theory and rational economic theory.

Classical decision theory "assumes that decision-makers are objective, have complete information and consider all positive alternatives and their consequences before selecting the optimal solution" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 631). The rational economic model assumes decision-making to be a rational process consisting of a sequence of steps that enhance the probability of attaining a desired outcome. Regardless of the model, decision-making will depend on information. An organisation's information is mainly found in its records and documents, implying that sound record and document management is essential to effective decision-making.

Power and politics are concepts associated with leadership and management in organisations. Buchanan and Huczynski (2010) have explored these concepts where power is viewed as "the capacity of individuals to overcome resistance on the part of others, to exert their will, and to produce results consistent with their interests and objectives" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 694). Organisational politics are "the techniques and tactics used to acquire, develop, retain and use power to obtain preferred outcomes in which there is uncertainty or an absence of consensus about choices" (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2010, p. 711). Although the two authors have not explicitly incorporated information in their power and politics exploration, it is evident that organisations' information, mostly in records and documents, can play a key role in the exercise of power and influence.

The notion that information or knowledge is power can arguably work well in an organisation that has an effective recordkeeping system; the right information can be obtained at the right time.

2.4.3 Management and business cases for recordkeeping

There are diverse opinions from records professionals on the reasons organisational management can be an impediment to effective record and document management. One school of thought is that management teams are not provided with business cases for effective record and document management; they do not see the importance of recordkeeping hence their lack of support. Even if they seem to support the recordkeeping programmes, they do it out of fear of statutory penalties and not through conviction that it has anything positive to offer. The Forrester Research / ARMA International Records Management Survey analysis by Brian Hill (2012), as noted earlier, reveals that management executives might support recordkeeping on the basis of compliance only and not on the overall business case.

Therefore, some organisations will only introduce good records management because of the regulatory environment. For example, they will introduce good recordkeeping to meet the requirements of legislation such as Freedom of Information and Data Protection; and to meet the requirements of e-discovery and audit. They may react affirmatively from a 'campaign of fear' such as telling them how they will suffer if they do not do anything about their records, rather than explaining the benefits of sound records management to them. The concepts of audit and access to information legislation are explained in detail in Chapter 5.

Electronic discovery, e-discovery, is a process of identifying, collecting and producing electronically stored information in response to a request for production in a law suit or investigation. Unlike hardcopy evidence, electronic documents are more dynamic and often contain metadata such as time-date stamps, author and recipient information, and file properties. Preserving the original content and metadata for electronically stored information is required in order to eliminate claims of tampering with evidence later in the litigation (CDS, 2016)[18].

---

[18] Complete Discovery Source (CDS), "The Basics: What is eDiscovery?" Available at: http://cdslegal.com/knowledge/the-basics-what-is-e-discovery/; accessed on 31st January 2016.

After data is identified by the parties on both sides of a matter, potentially relevant documents, including both electronic and hard-copy materials, are placed under a legal hold – meaning they cannot be modified, deleted, erased or otherwise destroyed[19].

E-discovery is having an impact on recordkeeping in two ways. Firstly, it is making organisations more aware of their records and possibly leading to timely destruction of the unwanted information materials. This is usually done following good records management practice. Secondly, it is leading to the development of technologies which have powerful capacities for finding information and potentially for managing records and documents.

i.   Management and neglect of recordkeeping

As much as the neglect of recordkeeping can be viewed as a result of the lack of a convincing business case, it can also be viewed as a result of management oversight. Often, the management of records and documents is given low priority in organisations including universities. Nathan Mnjama (2002) attributes lack of seriousness in the management of records and documents to bad management, as explained in the previous chapter.

Evidence abounds of cases of neglect of recordkeeping in universities in Sub-Saharan Africa, including studies by Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa; studies by Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000) at Moi University in Kenya; and Enemute Iwhiwhu (2005) at the universities of Ibadan, Ilorin, Benin, and Nigeria − Nnsuka; as discussed previously.

Although higher education management has been enthusiastic about acquiring new technologies, such technologies are usually not exploited for effective recordkeeping. Examples can help to explain this further.

Michael Kyobe et al (2009) at the University of Cape Town in South Africa investigated the extent to which academics and students managed electronic records in accordance with good practices and regulatory requirements. They found several incidences of poor records management and lack of compliance with regulations.

---

[19] Ibid

Brendan Asogwa (2012) conducted a study in Nigeria to investigate the level of readiness of universities for managing digital records. At the universities of Abuja, Ife, and Nigeria, he assessed the e-records frameworks, infrastructure, and structural facilities. He found that the universities were not ready to manage electronic records due to weak legislative and organisational frameworks.

Henry Kemoni (2009) conducted an extensive study on the management of electronic records in the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region, which covers fourteen countries. The research revealed that most countries in the region lacked capacity and faced various challenges in managing electronic records: "The challenges related to lack of policy and legislation, standardisation, authenticity, capacity building, physical infrastructure and lack of awareness among recordkeeping professionals and government authorities on electronic records management issues" (Kemoni, 2009, p. 190).

ii.   Management and the promotion of recordkeeping

Not all managers neglect recordkeeping, nor are they simply coerced by law to implement effective record and document management. As much as they may be required by law, they institute sound recordkeeping systems because they realise that effective recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance, audit and risk management. The Management at the University of Johannesburg in South Africa provides a good example of executive management that promotes effective record and document management. The rationale for effective records management at the University was mandated by the executive management team's resolution after realising that recordkeeping forms part of good corporate governance, as will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Another example of management and leadership commitment to providing effective recordkeeping is demonstrated by the Obama administration in the US through its records management directive. In her captivating article on "Big government, big solutions: could there be a message for all?" in the *Records Management Journal*, Catherine Hare (2013, p. 8), reviews the recent initiatives by the American Federal Government to put in place a robust and comprehensive framework and programme to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of managing federal records.

This was in response to the President's signing of the memorandum entitled *Managing government records* on the 28th November 2011. The memorandum states clearly the aims and purpose of improving records management across the federal government, underlining the fact that proper records management is the backbone of open government. "The memorandum also mandates, from the head of each agency, full commitment to ensure that successful records management is a priority for senior management within their agency and that the necessary resources are made available" (Hare, 2013, p. 9).

The American example is in sharp contrast with the working environment that records professionals in other parts of the world are subjected to where they are "battling budgets cuts and staff redundancies and are still being asked to do more and more often with less and less" (Hare, 2013, p. 9). In her final analysis, Catherine Hare (2013, p. 8) is of the view that "while very few organisations will have the authority and the resources available to the US Federal Government, the overall framework and its various elements provide a good, concise and up to date guide, irrespective of an organisation's size".

The Americans have had a global influence politically, economically and technologically. Will this records management drive signal a positive change in the management of records and documents across the globe? The way records and documents are to be managed in the last half of the 2010s may partly answer this question.

2.4.4 Records profession and associations

The records profession is an information profession that has expertise in the management of, amongst others, records, archives and documents. Similarly, records professionals include practitioners and academics in archives and records management. Records associations are organisations or institutions that promote records management and the interests of records professionals. A well-developed records association can have a positive impact on the management of records. Similarly the availability of robust records associations or institutions can provide a positive push to the management of records and documents.

In relation to the related professions of librarianship and archives, records management can be viewed as the most neglected information profession. The amount of literature and research as well as education and training in records management is arguably dwarfed by that in librarianship and archives. However, there is a positive change in the amount of research, literature, education and training in records management despite being viewed as the youngest information profession and one that is still growing. However, Paul Sturges (2000, p. 218) argued that records management is not in fact the youngest information profession because "… the oldest form of information institution is not the library, nor even the archive, it is the records centre".

For the development and sustainability of any profession, education and training are essential as they provide life-long skills and expertise. Records management education and training can be acquired through workshops, vendor-sponsored programmes, professional seminars, and college or university-level courses (Yusof and Chell, 1998).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, like elsewhere, many records management education and training courses originated in the library schools where they either eventually become independent or continue to be an offshoot of a librarianship programme. Others are provided by civil service training colleges.

Having a records management education and training programme in a cross-disciplinary format has a number of proponents though with different justifications. Zawiyah Yusof and Robert Chell (1998) were of the view that information professionals tend to be better equipped if they have a background in various segments of information skills. Though they were not proposing the creation of a hybrid manager, they argued for better cross-disciplinary knowledge. Cross-disciplinary knowledge can provide intellectual breadth and experience, which in turn can enable the records manager to solve problems from different perspectives.

Profession organisations are important in that they guide the profession's practices through formulated code of ethics; promote good practice; and promote the exchange and sharing of ideas and experiences. Records organisations that have an impact on the management of records and documents in Sub-Saharan Africa include the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) and the International Records Management Trust (IRMT).

ESARBICA, which was established in 1969, brings together individuals and institutions concerned with the management of recorded information in Eastern and Southern Africa. Its objectives include providing a forum for the exchange of professional experience and expertise in the management of records; promoting, organising and coordinating activities in the management of records at both regional and international levels; facilitating continuing education through professional attachments, study visits, seminars and workshops; and promoting and implementation of a professional code of conduct.[20] ESARBICA conferences have been particularly successful and many of the papers are published in the ESARBICA Journal, and eventually contribute to the recordkeeping literature.

Kimberly Barata, Piers Cain, and Anne Thurston (2000) recounted that IRMT was set up in 1989 to develop new approaches to managing public sector records after recognising major recordkeeping problems in the public sector of English-speaking developing countries. Most of these countries were also members of the Commonwealth. "Its ongoing programmes of development research and educational and consultancy services offer new solutions to records issues as governments make the transition to working in the electronic environment"[21].

The Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL) is an information association that also promotes the records profession in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. The objectives of SCECSAL include to establish, strengthen and spread information professionalism in all countries of the region; collect, collate, publish, preserve, conserve and disseminate research information through publications to potential and prospective clientele in the region and beyond; encourage capacity building by promoting education and training of library and informational professionals; and promote the adoption and use of ICTs in library and information work.[22] Its biennial conferences provide spaces for records management papers alongside those of other professions.

---

[20] Eastern and Southern Africa Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA), "About ESARBICA". Available at http://www.esarbica.com/aboutus.html; accessed on 2nd December 2013.

[21] International Records Management Trust (IRMT), "The IRMT". Available at http://irmt.org/; accessed on 2nd December 2013

[22] Standing Conference of Eastern and Southern Africa Library and Information Associations (SCECSAL), "SCECSAL Constitution". Available at http://www.scecsal.org/documents/constitution.html; accessed on 2nd December 2013.

2.4.5 Records management standards

A standard can be viewed as a benchmark stating a level of requirement. Standards Australia defines standards as "published documents setting out specifications and procedures designed to ensure products, services and systems are safe, reliable and consistently perform the way they were intended to."[23] The Standards Australia definition of standards can be contextualised to define records management standards.

There are two broad categories of standards, thus, guidance and compliance standards. Guidance standards are voluntary and simply recommendations. There is no enforcement. However, as much as the guidance standards are voluntary, they can turn out to be compliance standards by default when practices require them as the basis to measure performance. For compliance standards, there is understandably compliance testing, and it may be that enforcement mechanisms are available.

Standards can also be viewed as internal or external. Internal standards are those generated by an organisation or the national standards body. External standards are those coming from outside the country or *de facto* international standards.

In her article "Records management standards: What they are and why they are important", Diane Carlisle (2008) provided a summary of the advantages of records management standards. Firstly, standards are objective because they pass through a rigorous process in their formulation. Secondly, standards are authoritative because they are developed by experts. Thirdly, standards provide a common benchmark of expectations and outcomes that can be used to forge consistency out of the varying practices.

A standard can be used as a bargaining tool when establishing a records management programme in an organisation. It is arguably more persuasive to say that the practices will be based on requirements in a formal standard than to confess that it just seems like a good idea. A standard can also be viewed as raising the profile of the records profession, more so when the records professional is amongst a multidisciplinary team where others are pointing to their standards for reference.

---

[23] Standards Australia, "What is a Standard?" Available at:
http://www.standards.org.au/DevelopingStandards/WhatisaStandard.aspx; accessed on 20th December 2011.

Although there are advantages in adopting records management standards, there are also challenges associated with their use. There are many standards; so, which standard to adopt? Margaret Pember (2006, p. 24) has some statistics: "Standards today are big business with over half a million published worldwide through over 1,000 recognised standards organisations." The more numerous the standards the more confusion they can cause. Another challenge of standards, especially compliance standards, is the connotation the checking exercise brings with it. Checking up on people can carry sinister overtones. As Marilyn Strathern (2000) rightly observed, checking becomes necessary in situations of mistrust.

Hans Hofman (2005) provided five hints to consider when adopting a standard. His first hint is that standards reduce flexibility, and that a reduction in flexibility can hinder innovation. The second hint is in agreement with Margaret Pember (2006) that there are so many standards; the records professional has to be careful in the choice. Thirdly, one size does not fit all in many cases, so adaptation to the actual situation is required. The fourth hint is that standards may be too perfect, reflecting the ideal situation, or too abstract, because they try to cover all situations. His last hint is that standards are not fixed and will change over time and thus require on-going future maintenance.

There are various records management standards, including reference and guidance models that become *de facto* standards. As an international records management standard, ISO 15489 can be used in any region of the world to benchmark levels of best practice. Xiaomi An and Hongyan Jiao (2004) used ISO 15489 to assess records management in China. As already mentioned, Alistair Tough (2004) found that that 70 percent of Commonwealth Africa heads of records services in the public sector had heard of ISO 15489 and 85 percent of those who had heard of ISO 15489 had plans to use it.

DoD 5015.2 – STD is more of a set of functional requirements for records management software applications. It is a compliance standard. This set of functional requirements is not intended to be an international standard but designed specifically to meet the US Department of Defense recordkeeping requirements. The Department of Defense requires software vendors to certify their software application against the Standard. Although the Standard was written specifically for the Department of Defense it is spilling over into the private sector as well as across the globe.

Although institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa can have the knowledge and appreciation of records management standards, they may find it challenging to access and use them. Even if the standards are available, the cost of acquisition and implementation can be prohibitive. This is where records management manuals and standing office instructions become handy and *de facto* standards. Records management manuals and standing office instructions in Commonwealth Africa are usually used for operational guidelines and staff training (Tough, 2004).

IRMT is playing a critical role in providing relevant guidance manuals and creating partnerships in records management training. It has also been proactive in incorporating records management functionality in ICTs.[24]

2.5. Legal and regulatory environment

Julie McLeod and Catherine Hare (2006) outlined key drivers for record and document management, including business needs, risk management, and legal and regulatory demands. In the context of legal and regulatory demands, they argued that managing records for legal and regulatory compliance was an important part of any records management programme.

McLeod and Hare's (2006) observation on the drivers for record and document management in general, and the legal and regulatory demands in particular is still relevant in this second decade of the twenty-first century. The twenty-first century is characterised by fundamental changes in recordkeeping processes, accelerated by rapid changes in technology. In his foreword in *Managing Electronic Records: Methods, Best Practices and Technologies*, Robert Williams (in Smallwood, 2013) has outlined these changes, including evolution of the historical function of recordkeeping from material management to risk management; an increased focus on the broader tenets of information governance as opposed to the narrow concerns of records management; the widening of scope of the very nature of what constitutes records to include email, messaging, social media, and cloud use; exponential growth of the volume of records and documents being created and to be managed; and the expansion of the use of records to resolve legal disputes.

---

[24] International Records Management Trust, "About the Trust", available at: http://www.irmt.org/about; accessed on 27th May 2015.

The use of records to resolve legal disputes includes the notions of admissibility and discovery. Legal admissibility is the admission of records as evidence in a court of law. McLeod and Hare (2006, p. 62) have summarised the development of the concept of legal admissibility from a UK perspective which could also be applicable to other countries in the Commonwealth in general and Sub-Saharan Africa in particular.

> In the past courts of law in the UK, and in other countries whose legal system is based on the English one, normally considered all records to be hearsay evidence, i.e. secondary evidence not given directly by a witness in person, and potentially not admissible as legal evidence. But today, with the passing of legislation such as the Civil Evidence Act (1995) in the UK and the establishment of precedent, records, including electronic records are like other evidence legally admissible.

It can be noted that admissibility is not the end of the matter. The court will determine the weight or value of the records as evidence. McLeod and Hare (2006) argue that records will have more weight if they meet particular conditions:

- If they have been created and captured as close as possible in time to the event or transaction to which they relate; a good example being minutes written hours or days rather than weeks or months after the meeting
- If the systems in which they are managed are well documented and operated
- Where records have been converted from one format or medium to another, best practice guidelines have been followed to make the conversion
- If copies, where originals are unavailable, have been appropriately authenticated

Another point to note is the debate on admissibility of electronic records in a court of law in view of the concerns about their volatility. Electronic records can be tampered with more easily than paper records. However, there is a convergence of opinion that effective recordkeeping systems can ensure that electronic records have the essential characteristics (McLeod and Hare, 2006; Duranti and MacNeil, 1996-97; Erlandsson, 1996; and Bearman, 1994). Specific laws dealing with electronic communication have added support to the status of electronic records as evidence.

The Electronic Communications Act 2000 was the first piece of legislation to confirm the legal recognition of electronic signatures in the UK (McLeod and Hare, 2006). Equivalent legislation in South Africa is the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 2002 (Selepe, 2002).[25]

2.5.1 Laws and regulations impacting on recordkeeping

Although some laws and regulations can be universal, others vary according to business sector. Like technology, they are also constantly changing. As rightly observed by Robert Smallwood (2013), highly regulated industries such as banking, energy and pharmaceuticals have had the history of having the greatest need to implement records management programmes due to their compliance and reporting requirements. This trend has however changed; "increased regulation and changes to legal statutes and rules have made records management a business necessity for nearly every enterprise" (Smallwood, 2013, p. 5). In essence, drivers for the surge in laws and regulations impacting on recordkeeping include increased government oversight and industry regulation; changes in legal procedures and requirements during civil litigation; information governance awareness; and business continuity concerns (Smallwood, 2013).

Some laws and regulations directly relate to recordkeeping, while others indirectly relate to it. If an organisation is registered for compliance with, for example, an international standard such as ISO 14001 for environmental management systems, it would be obligatory to have an effective recordkeeping system in place. Thus ISO 14001 could be viewed as a regulatory requirement and compliance is essential (ISO 14001, 2004, paragraph 4.5.4, in McLeod and Hare, 2006, pp. 5-6).

An implicit requirement for recordkeeping can be derived from legislation such as that dealing with, for example, access to public information, data protection, and audit, all of which have implications for managing records to ensure their access and availability.

---

[25] Sydney Selepe in his article "The Role of Records Management in Statutory, Regulatory and Corporate Governance Compliance – A Case Study", presented at the Archives and Records Management Conference, *Managing the Past! Accounting for the Present! Predicting the Future!*, in Sun City, South Africa, on 8-10 September, 2009. He identified several legislations impacting on records management in South Africa, including the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act 2002.

Organisations have to put in place effective recordkeeping systems in order to ensure successful execution of these laws and regulations.

Every jurisdiction has laws and regulations which have recordkeeping implications. Compliance with such laws and regulations could be mandatory or best practice. Although each jurisdiction has its own laws and regulations, there can be some overlaps because of shared administrative traditions and other collaborative functions. For instance, laws and regulations that impact on recordkeeping in the UK and the US may have a bearing in Sub-Saharan Africa due to some common shared administrative traditions and global influence.

As already noted, the Commonwealth countries have shared constitutional, legal and administrative traditions and structures, though each country may have its own specifics. Even after gaining independence, the new nations continued to get assistance for improved recordkeeping from the British Government. The shared traditions and cooperation amongst Commonwealth members is still evident in the twenty first century through cultural ties as well as technical cooperation and assistance. Development agencies of the UK and US governments sometimes support the development of recordkeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2.5.2 Explicit laws and regulations

National records and archives legislation are amongst the laws that directly affect recordkeeping. These laws have been evolving from being viewed as concerned with non-active records to being concerned with records in all phases of their lifecycle or continuum. In the UK, the Public Record Office Act 1838 created the Public Record Office, the *de facto* national archive of England, Wales, and the UK, dedicated to preserving key public records and making them accessible to researchers[26].

Between 2003 and 2006, the Public Record Office was merged with three other public government bodies, each specialising in particular aspects of managing information, to form a single organisation, The National Archives.

---

[26] The National Archives, "Who are we", online. Available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/who-we-are.htm; accessed on 10th March, 2014.

The public bodies were: the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, appointed under Royal Warrant in 1869 to locate and identify manuscripts and private papers of historical interest and reporting on their contents; Her Majesty's Stationery Office, founded in 1786 and holder of Crown copyright and official printer of all Acts of Parliament since 1889; and the Office of Public Sector Information, created in 2005 following a European Union directive to promote the re-use of information produced and collected by public sector organisations[27].

In essence, the Public Record Office legislation had to be transformed to cater for the new legal body. The National Archives is now operating in a digital era that is characterised by rapid changes in information technology. Like all other public organisations, it is exploiting use of information technology to serve the public better: "The National Archives brings together the skills and specialisms required in the digital world for managing and preserving government information past, present and future. We work with all kinds of information from paper and parchment to digital files and datasets, building on over 170 years of pioneering work in managing key public records."[28]

Two devolved regions of the UK have recordkeeping legislation addressing their specific jurisdictions. There is legislation for Northern Ireland and for Scotland. The devolved recordkeeping legislation for Scotland provides an excellent example of laws that explicitly impact on recordkeeping.

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 which came fully into force in January 2013 intends to promote efficient and accountable recordkeeping by public authorities in Scotland. The Public Records (Scotland) Implementation Team[29] has outlined in detail the purpose of this legislation. It starts by asserting that trust is essential to democracy and that when recordkeeping fails, that trust is broken.

Though not explicitly linking recordkeeping, Onora O'Neill (2002) expressed a similar view in *A Question of Trust* in which she emphasised the importance of trust in society, including big societies such as governments.

---

[27] The National Archives, "Who are we", online. Available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/who-we-are.htm; accessed on 10th March, 2014.

[28] The National Archives, "Who are we", online. Available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/who-we-are.htm; accessed on 10th March, 2014.

[29] National Records of Scotland, "Implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act"; Edinburgh: Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 Implementation Team, 2012.

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 was a result of the Shaw Report[30] and a review of the previous public records legislation by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland, both of which found evidence of poor records management across the public sector. The Public Records (Scotland) Act Implementation Team is of the view that The Shaw Report demonstrated that management of records in all media was not just a bureaucratic process; it was key to good governance and that public authorities could not afford to ignore it. The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 obliges public authorities to prepare and implement a records management plan that sets out proper arrangements for the management of their records in consultation with the Keeper of the Records of Scotland. The plan is supposed to ensure that policies, including those for storage, retention, disposal, archiving and security, are in place. This legislation is arguably leading legislation driving recordkeeping in a changing environment.

There are similarities between the state of records that led to enactment of the Public Records Act (Scotland) 2011 and the state of records in Sub-Saharan Africa during the initial public sector reforms of the 1980s when the records were often in a shambles. There is no evidence, however, that governments in Sub-Saharan Africa responded by reforming their national archives and records laws and regulations. For instance, the national archives law in Malawi has remained unchanged since it was enacted in 1975. The week legal and regulatory environment is amongst the challenges facing recordkeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa (IRMT, 2009).

In the US, records management practices are delineated in many federal regulations. As observed by Smallwood (2013, p. 379), there are also "a number of state statutes that have passed and in some cases they actually supersede federal regulations". The counterpart of The National Archives of the UK is the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in the US. Congress established this national archive in 1934 to preserve and care for the records of the US federal government.

---

[30] This report revealed how its investigations were hampered by poor recordkeeping. Thousands of records had been created but got lost because of inadequate legislative framework and poor recordkeeping.

The functions of NARA have evolved in the wake of information technology developments. They include overseeing physical and electronic recordkeeping policies and procedures of government agencies, requiring adequate and proper documentation of the conduct of government business; defining formal electronic records as machine-readable materials created or received by an agency of the US federal government under federal law or in the course of the transaction of public business; and requiring that organised records series be established for electronic records on a particular function to facilitate the management of these electronic records (Smallwood, 2013).

The US Code of Federal Regulations and presidential decrees also have explicit recordkeeping requirements. Robert Smallwood (2013) observed that there were over 5,000 references to retaining records in the Code of Federal Regulations. Catherine Hare (2013) analysed the recent initiatives by the US federal government to put in place a robust and comprehensive framework and programme to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of managing federal records following President Obama's signing of a memorandum, *Managing government records*, on the 28th November 2011, as explained previously

If decrees to improve recordkeeping such as the one from President Obama could influence leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa, it would result in creating an environment conducive to good recordkeeping. But as has been observed, the recordkeeping environment in Sub-Saharan Africa has multiple obstacles including culture. Alistair Tough (2012) observed several cultural challenges including oral culture and other cultural issues in the work place. He provided an example of Malawi where there was ample evidence of an overwhelming oral culture. Most Malawians demonstrated a very clear preference for oral rather than written communication. This oral communication could be an impediment to recordkeeping. On other cultural issues, he commented that to some civil servants, work was a place not an activity. It was where they went between prescribed hours rather than being about delivering outputs or services. Although the public sector reform packages had been addressing this issue for many years, it remains a significant challenge, not only in Malawi but also in many other Sub-Saharan Africa countries.

The national archives and records legislation in Commonwealth Africa has a resemblance to its British counterpart due to the shared common administrative traditions and structures as alluded to earlier. According to Alistair Tough (2009) recordkeeping in the Commonwealth Africa began with colonial administrations. He argued that although political power had been exercised prior to colonialism, this pre-colonial political culture had been predominantly oral.

Recordkeeping in the colonial era was built around the concept of the registry. In turn, the registry system was built around pre-action work flow. The link between London and other capitals meant standard procedures applied in London spilled over to other countries in the Commonwealth Africa. As succinctly put by Alistair Tough (2009, p. 189): "In some countries, the registry system was brought to its highest level of efficiency just around the time of independence. In part this may be because the British Department of Technical Cooperation had registry specialists available for secondment in the years before and after independence". The National Archives of Malawi provides a good example of a national archives and records institution that shared common administrative traditions and structures with the National Archives of the UK.

The origin of the National Archives of Malawi can be traced from the then Central African Archives (CAA), which was established in the 1930s (Tough, 2009). Zimbabwe, then known as Southern Rhodesia, played an important role in the establishment of this archive. Unlike other colonial office territories, Southern Rhodesia was internally self-governing. It also did not employ the common cadre of expatriate colonial civil service officers (Tough, 2004). The settler administration decided to establish the national archives primarily to act as a memorial to their predecessors and themselves (Tough, 2009). Alistair Tough (2004) further noted that this initiative of establishing a national archives was lacking in most other colonial office territories.

The CAA became a centre of influence in the region and its function evolved to include management of records. In essence, the CAA was central to the development of records management in its areas of influence that included Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi and Botswana. Alistair Tough (2009) argued that in technical terms, the CAA became the outstanding repository in Sub-Saharan Africa. It opened its branch in Malawi, then known as Nyasaland, in 1947.

This Malawi branch was later incorporated into the then National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland after the creation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953 (Lihoma and Gondwe, 2006). The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was a federal government incorporating three territories: Nyasaland, Southern Rhodesia, and Northern Rhodesia that later became Zambia. When the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was dissolved in December 1963, the Nyasaland branch was transformed into a national archives in January 1964, signalling the birth of the National Archives of Malawi (Lihoma and Gondwe, 2006).

The mandate of the National Archives of Malawi is derived from two statutory obligations of the Laws of Malawi, the National Archives Act 1975 and the Printed Publications Act 1968. The main functions of the National Archives of Malawi include the following: to regulate the preservation of public records; to promote effecting recordkeeping practices in government departments and other public bodies through the provision of advisory services regarding the creation, maintenance, and disposal of records; and to administer the International Standard Book Numbering (ISBN) system in Malawi (Lihoma and Gondwe, 2006).

Although the National Archives of Malawi is bestowed with legal powers to ensure effective recordkeeping, evidence abounds with cases of poor recordkeeping in the public bodies. For example, when the Government of Malawi commissioned SGS of Switzerland to assess the procurement audit performance of 50 public sector bodies in 2011, only 1 organisation was judged to have sufficiently robust processes and recordkeeping to demonstrate its probity in handling public funds (Tough, 2012), as discussed earlier. There could be a number of reasons to explain the dismal performance of the public bodies in their recordkeeping. The national archives law itself could be archaic and not in tandem with new developments in the work place. Another reason could be culture in the work place as has been observed earlier. Or it could be for other reasons including lack of recordkeeping infrastructure; unavailability of a business case for recordkeeping; and lack of further laws and regulations impacting on recordkeeping.

The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa is a good example to parallel that of the National Archives of Malawi. They both have a regulatory role to manage records in the public sector of their respective countries. The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa has fairly new legislation, the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act 1996.

This legislation came into being after the country's first democratic and multiracial elections of 1994, the same year Malawi had its first multiparty democratic elections since independence. Although the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa has new legislation, it may not translate into sound recordkeeping just as is the case with Malawi. A study by Mpho Ngoepe and Patrick Ngulube (2013) that aimed at exploring the role of records management in corporate governance in governmental bodies in South Africa revealed poor recordkeeping in some public bodies.

The origin of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa dates back in 1919. It was previously known by various names including the State Archives Service, its immediate predecessor.[31] This was after the formation of the Union of South Africa, the predecessor of the Republic of South. The Union of South Africa came into being on 31st May 1910 with the unification of four previously separate British colonies.

The British colonies forming the Union of South Africa were: Cape, Natal, Transvaal, and Orange River.[32] After the First World War, the Union was granted the administration of the German South-West Africa, present day Namibia, by the League of Nations.[33] The two national archives could therefore be viewed as having a history involving multiple territories and the British administration. Their role in the new democratic nations which value governance is to promote efficient, accountable and transparent government through proper management and care of public records.[34]

---

[31] National Archives and Records Service of South Africa, "About the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa", online; available at: http://www.national.archives.gov.za/; accessed on 20th March 2014.
[32] Republic of South Africa, "About South Africa: History", online; available at: http://www.gov.za/aboutsa/history.htm; accessed on 20th March 2014.
[33] Government of Namibia, "Namibia: An Overview", online: available at: http://www.gov.na/documents/10180/33317/Chapter_2.pdf/3981de5b-b231-4ffb-8fa5-19b07b3e5044; accessed on 20th March 2014.
[34] Republic of South Africa, "About South Africa: History", online; available at: http://www.gov.za/aboutsa/history.htm; accessed on 20th March 2014.

2.5.3 Implicit laws and regulations

Although governance, audit, and risk are amongst the phenomena driving organisations in the twenty-first century, the organisations are operating in a complex legal and regulatory environment, including laws and regulations dealing with governance codes of conduct, and access to information. Examples from US, UK and Sub-Saharan Africa can help to explain these implicit laws and regulations.

At the dawn of the third millennium, the US was reeling from a number of business scandals that brought to light the need for greater corporate accountability and called into question the integrity of the financial and accounting systems of publicly held companies. The scandals included the alleged financial mismanagement and shredding of documents in the oil company, Enron, which resulted in the demise of a leading management and accountancy firm, Arthur Andersen (McLeod and Hare, 2006). In the wake of this Enron-Arthur Andersen Affair and other scandals, the US Congress enacted the *Public Company Accounting Reform and Investor Protection Act of 2002,* popularly referred to as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002, in recognition of the two main congressional sponsors (Stephens, 2005).

The key provisions of Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002 require that: public corporations implement policies, procedures, and tools to prevent fraudulent activities; financial control and risk mitigation processes be documented and verified by independent auditors; executives of publicly traded companies certify the validity of the company's financial statements; and business records to be kept for not less than five years (Smallwood, 2013). Stephens (2005, p. 99) had observed some recordkeeping implications for senior managers as a result of this law:

> The Sarbanes-Oxley Act introduces compelling reasons for CEOs to implement corporate records management. Prior to the enactment of this legislation, many corporate executives were inclined to regard records management as a discretionary endeavour, unrelated to the overall success of the business and therefore unworthy of serious management attention. With Sarbanes-Oxley on the books, these executives are much more likely to regard records management as an essential function, one that they must initiate, fund and manage to the level of proven success.

The guidelines for good corporate governance in the UK are contained in the UK Corporate Governance Code. It is overseen by the Financial Reporting Council and its importance had been derived from the Financial Conduct Authority's Listing Rules. The Listing Rules themselves are given statutory authority under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and require that public listed companies disclose how they have complied with the code and explain the areas where they have not applied the code. The Financial Reporting Council (2012) explains that the comply-or-explain approach has been the trademark of corporate governance in the UK and is the foundation of its flexibility. This is in contrast to the comply-or-else approach of the US Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002. It further observes that the comply-or-explain approach has been strongly supported by both companies and shareholders and has been widely admired and imitated internationally.

Major scandals associated with governance failures in the UK brought about convergence of ideas for effective corporate governance. The UK Corporate Governance Code is essentially a consolidation and refinement of a number of different reports concerning good corporate governance. The first version of this code was produced in 1992 by the Cadbury Committee, named after the chair of the committee, Sir Adrian Cadbury. It has evolved significantly over the past two decades. The latest version of the code applies to all companies with a premium listing of equity shares regardless of whether they are incorporated in the UK or elsewhere (Financial Reporting Council, 2012).

In South Africa, the King Report on Corporate Governance is an equivalent of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act 2002 in the US and the UK Corporate Governance Code. Unlike Sarbanes-Oxley, the King Report is non-legislative and works more like the UK's governance code by being based on principles and practices. This code of corporate governance derives its name from a committee chaired by a retired Supreme Court of South Africa judge Mervyn King who accepted the role after a request from the Institute of Directors in South Africa.

The King Report has also evolved with time. The first report was issued in 1994, referred to as King I; the second report was issued in 2002, referred to as King II; and the third report was issued in 2009, referred to as King III.[35]

---

[35] Institute of Directors Southern Africa, "King Report on Corporate Governance in SA", 2012, available at: http://www.iodsa.co.za/?kingIII; accessed on 15th March, 2014.

The King report III, which could be viewed as superseding the first two reports, came into effect on 01 March 2010. Mpho Ngoepe and Patrick Ngulube (2013, p. 3) argued that King III "heralded a new era in which risk management, internal auditing and recorded information were regarded as important".

Another set of implicit rules and regulations concern access to information. In the UK, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA), which applies to publicly funded universities, is an example of access to information legislation. Major recordkeeping implications of the FoIA include the need to have an integrated approach to information and records management with clearly defined and assigned responsibilities for implementing records management; the need to have a policy statement on how records are managed; and the need to ensure that resources are available for managing records (McLeod and Hare, 2006).

Additionally, rule of law is an essential phenomenon driving organisations in the twenty-first century. Tom Bingham (2010) explored the rule of law notion in its entirety; from Magna Carta, the rule of law in embryo; to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the rule of law under dispute. The rule of law phenomenon is as fresh in the modern era as it was a century ago. Bingham (2010) asserted the core of the existing principle of the rule of law, "that all persons and authorities within the state, whether public or private, should be bound by and entitled to the benefit of laws publicly made, taking effect (generally) in the future and publicly administered in the courts" (Bingham, 2010, p. 37). He suggested eight principles to support his assertion:

- The law must be accessible and so far as possible intelligible, clear and predictable
- Questions of legal rights and liability should ordinarily be resolved by application of the law and not the exercise of discretion
- The law of the land should apply equally to all, save to the extent that objective differences justify differentiation
- Ministers and public officers at all levels must exercise the power conferred on them in good faith, fairly, for the purpose for which the powers were conferred, without exceeding the limits of such powers and not unreasonably
- The law must afford adequate protection of fundamental human rights

- Means must be provided for resolving, without prohibitive cost or inordinate delay, bona fide civil disputes which the parties themselves are unable to resolve
- Adjudicative procedures provided by the state should be fair
- The rule of law requires compliance by the state with its obligations in international law as in national law

These principles expounded by Bingham (2010) have all recordkeeping implications. For example, the laws are always in documentary form. An effective recordkeeping system would ensure that these laws, which are usually in document form, are accessible at the right time and in the right format. This could also help to create an effective compliant environment.

Records manager have to be tactical in exploiting implicit legislations. Recordkeeping is not the end in itself. There is evidence that executives have always given priority to issues of governance which these laws are primarily meant to address. An objective to improve governance, for example, through accountability can be worked upon to be an outcome for a recordkeeping programme. In this way a business case for recordkeeping that dwells more on an output such as accountability rather than on an outcome such as recordkeeping policy could be more appealing to executives. Danielle Wickman (2009, p. 119) corroborates this observation: "I imagine that not many governments really care whether or not they have improved recordkeeping. They may, though, care about a policy outcome of increased efficiency and accountability which recordkeeping enables". But as had been observed by Stephens (2005), laws and regulations also present opportunities for recordkeeping. Organisations may be compelled to support records management because of legal and regulatory demands, as had been observed in the previously sections.

2.6 Digital records management

ICTs have revolutionised the recordkeeping landscape. They are transforming recordkeeping from its seemingly dusty back office to a clean front office. Where these technologies are used well, the speed and efficiency in record retrieval and access have improved tremendously. This improved access is essential in promoting transparency and arguably bolstering organisational governance.

Communication between members of an organisation and between the organisation and members of the general public has improved due to the use of modern technology. Organisations are able to interact with their stakeholders including getting rapid feedback through the use of these technologies.

Of even greater significance, digital technologies create digital records, which must be managed if they are to survive and be accessible through time. Digital records may be born digital, that is created using computer technology, or they may have been converted into digital form from their original format such as scans of paper documents (National Archives of Australia)[36].

2.6.1 Categories of digital records

Organisations, including universities, generate a wide range of digital records on a daily basis. Examples of digital records that organisations create include[37]:

- Documents created using office applications such as word-processing documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and desktop-publishing documents
- Complex documents in which text is combined with graphics and/or tables and links may be embedded to provide access to imaged, sound and videos
- Records in online and web-based environments such as intranets, extranets, public websites, and records of online transactions
- Records generated by business information systems such as databases, human resources systems, financial systems, and workflow systems
- Digital communication systems such as email, short messaging services, multimedia messaging services, and voice mail
- Records generated by social media tools such as blogs, social networking sites, media sharing, and instant messaging (National Archives of Australia, 2015)

---

[36] National Archives of Australia, "Digital Records", available at: http://naa.gov.au/records-management/agency/digital/; accessed on 10th October 2015.
[37] Ibid.

Due to their nature, digital records present unique challenges in their management. Nevertheless, in many cases inadequate attention is given to how to manage them effectively. This has an impact on the accessibility and integrity of the recorded information.

2.6.2 Impact of poorly managed digital records

When digital records are poorly managed, they do not remain accessible. They also lack integrity. Availability is achieved when an organisation manages and protects digital records to ensure their timely, efficient and accurate retrieval, whilst integrity is achieved when records are managed through a consistent regulatory framework that enables stakeholders to trust the evidence provided (Thurston, 2015). Good governance goals such as transparency and accountability cannot effectively be achieved if digital records are not accessible or are unreliable. This is illustrated further in the following subsections.

i.   Transparency

Transparency in this context involves the release of evidence about an organisation's decisions, business processes and activities in such a way that it is easy for stakeholders to observe how the organisation has performed and used resources (Thurston, 2015). Availability comes into question when records are incomplete, corrupted, and inaccessible or are lost completely. In such a case, policies, expenditure and transactions cannot be transparent. As for integrity, it comes into question when records do not provide authentic and credible evidence as a basis for developing policies, and where resources are used. In such a case, stakeholders lose faith in the information their organisations provide.

ii.   Accountability

Accountability involves the ability of an organisation to provide reliable evidence that its policies, decisions, and transactions are subject to oversight by concerned parties such as auditors and regulatory bodies. This ensures that organisations are meeting their statutory obligations, responding to the needs of the community they serve, and providing value for money in public services (Thurston, 2015).

Availability is of real concern when records cannot be accessed to demonstrate accountability, trace corruption, enable audits, and monitor other activities. Integrity comes into question if records are not reliable, and progress towards achieving goals and objectives of an organisation cannot be measured in a meaningful way.

2.6.3 Risks associated with digital records

Although there are enormous benefits brought about by ICTs, there are also risks and challenges in the management of information generated by and housed in these modern technologies. For instance, these technologies are constantly changing. Steve Bailey (2008) asserts that the only constant thing in information technology is change, and that change is the oxygen that the information technology industry breathes. His observation relates well to trends on the work front. For example, information management software and hardware are frequently being changed. New versions and specifications are also continuously being released on the market. The latest technology of 2015 can be an obsolete technology by 2017.

Another risk is the security of information created through these technologies. Who is keeping such information and where? And how secure is the information? In her book *Using Social Media in the Classroom: A Best Practice Guide*, Megan Poore (2013, p. 201) offers a risk management tip for academic institutions that would like to use social media as a form of instruction:

> The choice to use an externally hosted social media service for teaching and learning purposes should not be taken lightly. Blindly stepping into the world of Web 2.0 can expose your school, staff, and students to a number of risks, including risks to reputation, privacy, confidentiality, copyright, data security, and intellectual property ownership… As with any risk, though, the response should not be to launch a blanket ban on activities, but, rather, to manage the risk…

Anne Thurston (2105) details the risks for digital records which can result in cumulative losses that may have significant consequences for any organisation's ability to achieve transparency and accountability. These risks are prevalent in both developed countries and developing countries, such as those in Sub-Saharan Africa, and are important issues for universities to address.

i.   Lack of awareness that ICT systems create records

Senior management teams may not be aware that ICT systems create records. Also, some ICTs do not have the full functionality needed to capture and retain records as accurate evidence. This is usually the case when technology is seen as a solution to all information management problems. It is important for an organisation to ensure that the acquired technology has the recordkeeping functionality. Use of a skilled records manager can be of great help.

ii.   Lack of structures and resources for managing digital records

Structures capacity for managing digital records may include policies, standards and skilled human resource. The absence of such structures and capacity may result in digital records being altered, deleted, fragmented, corrupted or lost.

iii.   Digital records can be difficult to access and share

It is common for digital records to be stored on personal drives, un-networked computers, and unmanaged network drives. This makes them unavailable as an organisation's resource. Similarly, different versions of the same records can be kept without adequate identification. This lack of version control can result in confusion, inefficiency and useful and updated information being missed.

iv.   Essential metadata not being captured systematically

Metadata are essential in providing evidence of how the records were created, managed and used, and of their relationship to other records. Metadata provide an audit trail of changes in status of the records. This makes it possible to identify fraud and illegal actions.

If the necessary metadata are not captured systematically, the context of records may be lost which would eventually put the integrity of the records into question.

v. Procedures and facilities for preserving digital records do not exist

Technology evolves at a fast rate. Special mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that accessibility and integrity of the records are maintained. Digital media deteriorate; records should, therefore, be transferred to secure preservation facilities where they can be managed over time. Organisations should, therefore, ensure that strategies are put in place to deal with, for example, obsolescence. An example of dealing with obsolescence is migrating to systems that will allow the information to be accessible over time.

vi. Digitised records may lose their legal value and usability if they are not well managed

Digitised papers records often fail to incorporate requirements for legal admissibility, reliability and usability; for example, requirements for metadata capture and classification structure. This results in difficulties in retrieving and using the digitised records, and it can mean that they lack legal value.

vii. Poor-quality data has limited value

When data, which become digital information when processed, is not well protected and preserved, it can easily be lost and its value diminished. And without accurate and consistent metadata to provide contextual information, data may have insignificant value.

2.6.4 Managing digital records

There are many aspects involved in managing digital records. According to the National Archives of Australia (2015), these aspects include: obsolescence, accessibility versus security, searching and access, and digital continuity planning. What follows is an explanation of these aspects.

i.   Obsolescence

Digital technology changes at a fast rate.   It is therefore necessary for organisations to develop and put in place measures to ensure that information is available in the long term, both for business and legal requirements. This can effectively be achieved when the recorded information is treated as a strategic resource.

A strategic approach to information and records management includes: implementing policies, procedures and controls in order to ensure that an organisation's information is managed as a valuable asset; adhering to standards and legislation; allocating roles and responsibilities; and linking records to business processes. As explained in the previous chapter, a strategic approach to managing records and documents reduces business risk, increases accountability, and improves operational efficiencies.

ii.   Accessibility versus security

Unlike paper records, digital records can quickly and easily be updated, changed, moved and copied or deleted. There is a need, therefore, to protect the records from unauthorised access in order to ensure that their integrity is not compromised.

iii.   Searching and access

Capturing and maintaining information that describes records, the metadata, is essential. As explained earlier, it describes the content and context of the records. It also ensures that records can be searched effectively, and allowing for information reuse.

iv.   Digital continuity plan

Digital continuity is an approach in which digital information is kept and managed for the medium and long-term future. This means putting in place a plan of activities that ensures that technology supporting recordkeeping is always up-to-date. Its advantages include: more efficient and effective business processes; reduced storage costs; and reduced risks to business of unusable or lost information.

2.6.5 Benefits of digital records management

The benefits of properly managing digital records cannot be overemphasised. The last chapter detailed the benefits an organisation derives from managing its records well. This section emphasises these benefits in the context of digital records. The overlap is expected because the benefits of records management transcend the media.

Anne Thurston (2015a) in her report on "Managing Records and Information for Transparency, Accountability, and Inclusive Governance in the Digital Environment – Lessons from Nordic Countries" summarises these benefits, some of which are listed below.

i. The public can have confidence in the credibility, authenticity, and integrity of the organisation's information.
ii. It is possible to rapidly trace, relate, and compare policies, decisions, actions, and expenditure accurately over long periods of time.
iii. Accountability and transparency are safeguarded; an audit trail of any changes or unauthorised use of the records makes it possible to detect and trace corruption.
iv. Access to information requests can be met rapidly and reliably; documents can be tagged when there is a legal restriction on publication.
v. Records can be migrated to new formats and software and hardware environments as necessary.
vi. Standardized interoperability rules can be applied effectively, making it possible to interface dispersed information systems, such as document management systems, accounting systems, or information systems specific to an organization's activities.
vii. Records can be securely and systematically extracted from diverse digital systems and transferred to long-term digital custody, where they can continue to meet legal, administrative, fiscal, or other evidentiary needs through time.
viii. Information loss is minimized; the high risk of holding digital records outside secure managed storage decreases.

2.6.6 Key areas to consider when managing digital records

Organisations need to consider a number of key areas when managing digital records, including the following:

i.   Types of digital records generated

Organisations need to take into consideration the range of different types of digital records they generate in doing their business, their characteristics and how the records need to be managed. For example, how do they manage records generated by the email and those generated by the short messaging services?

ii.   Email management

Email is increasingly becoming the *de facto* standard for business communication. Some organisations hold their emails in inboxes, sent folders, and deleted items folders. This, however, adversely impacts the performance of email servers in the organisations. Email servers are usually not designed to act as repositories of such great quantities of information. Other organisations simply remove emails from servers and save them to repositories. However, emails must be classified, stored and destroyed in a manner consistent with the established policies. Email management therefore involves the systematic control of the quality and quantity of digital messages that are sent from within, and received by, an organisation (AIIM, 2016)[38].

iii.   Systems that make, keep and manage digital records

An organisation needs to be aware of the information systems in existence and how to select them for records management compliance. A skilled records manager is required to liaise with other information professionals in the organisation.

iv.   Social media

Organisations need to be conversant with social media tools they use, and how the records they generate should be managed. This can be especially challenging in relation to academic staff and collaborative research projects. Social media is widely used in conducting the business of organisations, both in developing countries (Chaputula and Majawa, 2013) and developed countries (Queensland State Archives, 2010).

---

[38] AIIM, "What is email management". Available at: http://www.aiim.org/What-is-Email-Management-EMM; accessed on 30th March 2016.

v.   Storage and retrieval

There are a number of ways in which digital records can be stored. They can be stored online, whether locally on an organisation's server, or by hosted storage through the internet such as in cloud storage. Online storage is characterised by quick access to the stored information (National Archives of Australia, 2015).

Digital records can also be stored offline where data can quickly be retrieved through a near-line storage system and brought online for access. CD jukebox is a good example.

The third method of storing digital information is through removable media such as magnetic tapes, CDs, DVDs, memory cards, and USB sticks. These devices are not usually directly accessible, and have a limited life span

An organisation can also outsource its digital data storage. This can relieve pressure on storage capacity and ICT resources whilst at the same time reducing costs.

vi.   Managing access

An institution's records can only be useful if they are accessible to the members of the institution who need to use them. Thus, it is necessary to make sure that they are readily retrievable when required (Chinyemba and Ngulube, 2005). It is also concerned with making arrangements to comply with access requirements either from within or outside the institution, and particularly in an environment with access to information legislation.

As explained earlier, digital records can easily be retrieved hence they are susceptible to being changed, moved and copied by unauthorised persons. Such actions compromise the integrity of the records. Organisations need therefore to put in place measures to ensure that its recorded information is not accessed by unauthorised persons. This can be done in many ways including physical barriers, issuing of passwords, and utilisation of enterprise data management (EDM), electronic document and records management system (EDRMS), and content management system (CMS) software.

The technology itself can also be a hindrance due to constant changes. Both the hardware and software are susceptible to obsolescence, which can make the records inaccessible. Obsolescent technology cannot retrieve information in its right content and context and as a result compromises the integrity of the records. In this case, migration of the hardware and software can be a good remedy.

vii. Creating and preserving high-quality digital records

Ensuring that high quality digital records are created and preserved should be a priority of any organisation operating in the digital environment. However, "building high quality evidence involves developing and implementing a framework of interconnected laws, policies, standards, procedures, responsibilities and capacity for creating and preserving digital records" (Thurston, 2015, p. 33). A set of ten high level questions developed by Thurston (2015) can help to determine whether the necessary framework is in place.

1. Is there a law that establishes the requirements for managing records, regardless of media or format, from creation to destruction or preservation as archives? Is the law harmonized with other relevant laws and regulations, for instance laws governing security, privacy, and access to information?
2. Is there a high-level policy that establishes requirements for creating, managing and preserving records and their metadata across the organization? Has the policy been harmonized with policies for digital governance, open data and access to information?
3. Have international or national standards been implemented to provide common and consistent guidance on the structure and management of records for the entire organisation? Are the standards understood and consistently applied?
4. Are senior management teams aware that digital administrative systems create digital records, and have their responsibilities for these records been clearly defined at all levels across the organization?
5. Is there a central agency or authority with responsibility for oversight of the quality of digital records and data?
6. Do ICT and records authorities collaborate to define, implement, and audit sustainable good practice for managing digital records and data?

7. Are procedures in place to:

    a. Ensure that appropriate metadata are captured for organisational records and data?

    b. Define how long the records and data need to be kept to support legal, regulatory, fiscal and operational needs?

    c. Capture and retain email in a record-keeping system?

    d. Protect security of records and prevent unauthorized access, alteration or deletion?

8. Are records professionals trained, in universities or management institutes, to understand national policy and international standards for creating, managing and preserving digital records?

9. Do digitization initiatives incorporate requirements for legal admissibility, reliability and usability?

10. Are adequate finances available as part of routine operational budgets to consistently provide qualified staff and facilities needed to manage and monitor the availability and integrity of digital records across the organisation?

viii.   Challenges for the future

As explained earlier, technology evolves at a fast rate. It is essential for organisations to embrace changes in technology in order to effectively manage their records. This will ensure that the organisations are maximising new opportunities for sharing, coordinating and reusing information brought about by effective use of digital records. Those organisations that fail to develop requirements for managing digital records will be at a significant disadvantage (Thurston, 2015).

2.7 Recordkeeping capacity

An organisation's recordkeeping capacity can be viewed as the ability of its structures, processes, staff, resources and rules to work together to manage its recorded information well.[39] It embraces the notion of recordkeeping infrastructure whose elements include systems and technologies, policies, standards, tools and practices, as well as skilled and competent human resources (McLeod and Hare, 2005), as explained earlier. In essence, organisations need to have in place the right people, resources, policies and processes in order to have a basic level of recordkeeping capacity.[40]

What constitutes a basic level of recordkeeping capacity may be a subject of more debate. However, there is a convergence of opinion amongst recordkeeping professionals about what is acceptable recordkeeping practice regardless of the position of the organisation on the paperless office continuum.

Complexity of systems and standards my not necessarily imply having the necessary recordkeeping capacity. Recordkeeping capacity in an organisation that has acquired and rolled out a system can be compared in a proportionate manner with a recordkeeping capacity in an organisation that does not have a specifically acquired system. Similarly an organisation that uses acquired standards can be compared in a proportionate manner with that which does not use specifically acquired standards but is able to improvise to meet its recordkeeping requirements. Costs of recordkeeping systems and standards can be prohibitive to some organisations, as a result locally developed recordkeeping manuals and standing office instructions can be used.

It is essential to assess recordkeeping capacity in order to identify and address the potential threats and weaknesses of a recordkeeping system or programme. The assessment exercise can either be done by the organisation's recordkeeping specialists or outsourced. The recordkeeping community has developed standards and guidelines to establish benchmarks for how organisations of all types and sizes can build and sustain an effective recordkeeping programme. What follows are examples of these standards and guidelines.

---

[39] PARBICA, "Guideline 1: Recordkeeping Capacity Checklist", *Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit*, 2007. Online; available at: http://www.parbica.org/content/RGGT1_tcm50-74677.pdf; accessed on 20th December 2013.
[40] Ibid

2.7.1 Recordkeeping standards and capacity assessment

A recordkeeping standard can be used as a benchmark to evaluate an organisation's recordkeeping capacity. For example, ISO 15489 is used as a benchmark for effective recordkeeping because it is viewed as a statement of good practice. Global business and communication has increased its appeal. A uniform means of managing recorded information may provide confidence and arguably promote trust.

In comparing records management processes in China with ISO 15489-1, An and Jiao (2004) used a table that directly mapped the Chinese processes to those of ISO 15489-1. They were however cognisant of the flexibility of this standard, and that it might not have covered all the processes that their own approach covered. Their inclusion of "Filing" as a process that was deep-rooted in Chinese practice can arguably be an example to this proposition. Table 1 shows their comparison of records management processes in China with ISO 15489-1 (An and Jiao, 2004, p. 36).

	Process	ISO 15489-1 [Yes, Y; No, N]	Organisation [Yes, Y; No, N]	Same [√]
1	Capture	Y	N	
2	Registration	Y	Y	√
3	Classification	Y	Y	√
4	Storage	Y	Y	√
5	Access	Y	Y	√
6	Tracking	Y	Y	√
7	Disposition	Y	Y	√
8	Documentation	Y	N	
	Filing	N	Y	

Table 1: Organisation records management processes compared with ISO 15489-1

Although Table 1 might look simplistic, it may provide a good pointer to gauge the parity of the processes between ISO 15489 and the organisation concerned. A more detailed investigation would however be required for a detailed explanation on either the parity or disparity.

ISO 15489 can therefore be a useful tool to assess recordkeeping capacity. It can be used as the best practice standard for measuring records management performance. It can contribute to the identification of gaps in records management policies, programmes, procedures, and processes, and then provide directions for effective improvements (An and Jiao, 2004).

2.7.2 Records management maturity model

The second evaluative method to be analysed is the records management maturity model. This methodology attempts to gauge the level of maturity of the recordkeeping practices in an organisation.

Jisc infoNet, a service providing advice and guidance on records management to the UK higher education sector, developed one such tool, the Records Management Maturity Model. This Maturity Model was designed to help further and higher education institutions to assess where they currently sit in relation to meeting the recommendations set out within the revised UK Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the management of records to conform with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, issued on 16th July 2009. The Records Management Maturity Model may be viewed as not only a compliance measure in the UK Academy, but also as a form of good practice, and can be applicable to any organisation world-wide.

The Model provides statements describing specific features of records management programmes. From this Model's perspective, there are thirty-three aspects of what constitutes a records management programme. Each aspect is evaluated and assigned a level of maturity. There are four levels of maturity as shown below.

0 – Absent
- Institution shows no evidence of awareness of the need to take a strategic approach to the management of records

1 – Aware

- Uncoordinated local attempts to improve records management in response to local issues

2 – Defined

- Coordinated attempts to improve records management underway across the institution

3 - Embedded

- The effective management of records is fully integrated within the institution's strategic and operational activities.[41]

An example can help to explain this Model. A statement on records management policy can read, for example, 'the policy should be kept up-to-date so that it reflects the current needs of the institution'. Depending on the organisation's current practice, a score of 0 or 1 or 2 or 3 can be assigned on this aspect, reflecting the level of maturity.

A simple spreadsheet can be used to work out an organisation's records management maturity level using the Records Management Maturity Model approach. Nine sections can be made, say, A – I. Each section may have its own worksheet within the downloadable workbook. Each worksheet can have a section title and description. Each statement within the section is displayed and can have an identifier, say μi[42]. And the statement will have four descriptions, one for each level of maturity specific to the statement.

Jisc infoNet (2014) asserts that by using its model, records managers will be able to possess an accurate, reliable and honest summary of the current level of maturity of their records management measures within their institution. This would in turn help their institutions to:

- Identify their strengths, thereby providing evidence of the impact of previous/current investment in this area
- Identify areas of good practice which can act as exemplars for further development
- Provide evidence of institutions' ability to comply with relevant laws and regulations
- Provide data for internal audit and quality assessment purposes

---

[41] Jisc infoNet, "Guidance notes for the Records Management Maturity Model", 2014. Online, available at: www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact/maturity-model; accessed on 25th February 2014.

[42] In this case, μ represents a section such as A or B or … or I; and i represents the statement on the section; say, A1, A2, …A5, for statement one on section A; B1, B2, for statements on section B; …I1, for the statement on I.

- Provide evidence to help inform risk management decisions

- Help identify gaps and thus where best to target resources and focus efforts

- Raise the overall profile of records management as a strategic priority

- Measure progress in this area over time through repeated application of the Model after set intervals[43]

Although the scores in this Maturity Model can provide an effective way of highlighting areas of strength and weakness, the Model may not provide any insight as to why these weaknesses exist, and how best to tackle them (Oliver and Foscarini, 2014). This could be viewed as the consequence of leaning heavily towards a quantitative exercise. Nonetheless, these approaches can be useful indicators of problem areas, as previously noted.

2.7.3 Checklist

Different authors have contributed articles on recordkeeping capacity to the recordkeeping community through books and journal articles. Contemporary technologies can have in themselves inherent recordkeeping capacity checklists. For example, an information system can be designed in such a manner that it is embedded with recordkeeping functionalities. There are also special tools designed to assess recordkeeping systems or programmes that can be used to evaluate recordkeeping capacity. Jisc infoNet's Records Management Maturity Model is a good example of many tools available.

Tools for measuring recordkeeping capacity vary in their rationale, purpose and intended audience. According to MacLeod et al (2006) there might not be a need for a generic or global toolkit for records management:

PARBICA's (2007) toolkit, "Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit"[44] is a good example of an assessment tool with a distinct purpose. It was formulated to expound the strong link between recordkeeping and governance. However, it might as well be just like the other toolkits; at least in its structure and methodology.

---

[43] Jisc infoNet, "Guidance notes for the Records Management Maturity Model", 2014. Online, available at: www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact/maturity-model; accessed on 25th February 2014.
[44] PARBICA, "Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit". Available at: http://www.parbica.org/sharing/publications/recordkeeping-for-good-governance/; accessed on 20th May 2016.

A unique feature of PARBICA's (2007) toolkit is its checklist. There are ten questions in the checklist and if an organisation answers in affirmative to all of them, it is assumed to have a basic level of recordkeeping capacity. PARBICA (2007, np) asserts that:

> Organisations can use this checklist as a monitoring tool to evaluate and review how their records are being managed and to see where they need to make improvement to their recordkeeping arrangements. If the organisation cannot answer 'yes' to all of the questions in the checklist, it does not have the ability to meet its recordkeeping requirements, and should begin to make improvements.

Each of the questions in the checklist also includes a description of the kinds of things an organisation needs to be able to do to answer in affirmative to the question. There are also suggestions on what the organisation can do to perform better in that area, information which can provide useful guidance on where the organisation can begin to improve its recordkeeping capacity (PARBICA, 2007). So, it is not just a matter of 'yes' or 'no' but also the 'how' which is critical to the improvement of recordkeeping.

The ten questions in the checklist can be summarised are as follows:

  i. Does the organisation have a records management policy?
       • A records management policy should:
            ➢ be written down
            ➢ be signed by the chief executive officer or another senior manager
            ➢ be issued to all staff
            ➢ describe responsibilities of all staff in managing the records
            ➢ include email and other electronic records in defining records
            ➢ allow for penalties for staff who do not comply with the policy
  ii. Do senior managers of the organisation support good records management?
       • Senior managers can show their support by:
            ➢ assigning overall responsibility for recordkeeping to a senior manager
            ➢ providing adequate budget support and equipment
            ➢ ensuring that breaches of the policy are dealt with decisively

iii. Is responsibility for records management tasks assigned to a specific area?

- Someone needs to manage the records on day-to-day basis
  - ➢ If no-one is assigned to manage records, no one will do it

iv. Do the organisation's records management staff have enough training to do their jobs?

- Staff who are assigned to an organisation's records management unit should:
  - ➢ know how to identify records and other information
  - ➢ be familiar with standard records management practices
  - ➢ be able to analyse recordkeeping requirements

v. Does the organisation have procedures for managing its records?

- Records management procedures should:
  - ➢ be written down
  - ➢ not in conflict with the organisation's records management policy
  - ➢ state clearly who is responsible for carrying out the work it describes

vi. Does the organisation know what its recordkeeping requirements are?

- An organisation should examine various laws, policies and procedures
  - ➢ be able to identify where these documents require it to keep records

vii. Can the organisation find particular records when it needs them?

- Organisations will be able to find their records more easily if they:
  - ➢ keep a file movement register
  - ➢ store their records in a secure place
  - ➢ have a system of naming and numbering files that is understood by all

viii. Does the organisation abide by the rules for deciding when to dispose of the records?

- Organisations should refer to the authorities governing their disposal
  - ➢ retention and disposition schedules
  - ➢ national archives instructions
  - ➢ laws and regulations references

ix. Are the records stored securely so that they cannot be stolen, damaged or altered?

- To protect records from loss, damage and destruction, organisations should:
  - ➢ keep files in secure area
  - ➢ have back-up systems for computers that keep electronic records
  - ➢ have a written plan for salvaging important records if there is disaster

x. Does the organisation set performance indicators for its records management unit, report on those indicators, and make improvements when indicators are not met?

- Organisation should be able to set recordkeeping goals such as:
  - ➢ retrieval time in a given range
  - ➢ number of recordkeeping training workshops conducted

(Adapted from PARBICA, 2007)

A close examination of the PARBICA (2007) toolkit can reveal that it suits well those organisations that are on the middle ranges of the paperless office continuum. It has given a great deal of attention to records in the traditional paper medium. Therefore, organisations in developing countries, including Sub-Saharan Africa, are likely to find this tool useful.

2.8 Conclusion

A record is different from a document unless they intersect. The area of their intersection is what can be used interchangeably. Similarly, the overlap between recordkeeping, records management, and record and document management is so entrenched that any attempt to isolate an individual term may not be attainable. In this research the three terms are used interchangeably.

Recordkeeping is affected by a number of factors including legislation and technology. Recordkeeping legislation alone may not guarantee sound recordkeeping unless the organisation buys in the business case for effective recordkeeping. Similarly technology alone may not be a solution to a recordkeeping problem. How people use the technology affects the way records and documents are managed.

Assessment tools for recordkeeping capacity have different purposes, audiences and coverage. This being the case, an organisation needs to select the toolkit most appropriate to its own context and requirements (MacLeod et al, 2006). In this research, a unique toolkit has been developed to measure recordkeeping capacity of the case study institutions. The *Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit*, as will be seen in Chapter 5, draws upon recordkeeping tools such as PARBICA (2007) Toolkit, ISO 15489 (2001) and Jisc infoNet's Records Management Maturity Model, amongst others, in the context of the southern African universities studied.

Chapter 3: Universities in a changing world

3.1 Introduction

Universities as institutions of higher learning have been in existence for more than nine hundred years, since the establishment of the University of Bologna in 1088. Their functions have undergone transformation from that of teaching and preserving established culture for the early universities to that of teaching and research for the modern universities (Perkin, 2007). Both early and modern universities have been vehicles for entry into professions such as the clergy, education, law, medicine, and later engineering, business, and even recordkeeping.

Early universities were small in terms of physical space, student population, and the number of faculties. Students or kings or churches were the sources of funding. Governance was arguably straight forward. The universities were either student-controlled or teacher-controlled. But they were self-governing institutions that jealously guarded their freedom. Paper and parchment were the medium for recording of information such as matriculations and graduations. Modern universities on the other hand are big in terms of physical space, student population, and the number of faculties. Their sources of funding still include government and student fees, but other new competitive sources such as research councils and charities may also form part of the funding mix. They have complex governance systems. Their recordkeeping regimes are mostly hybrid, incorporating both paper and electronic media.

Modern universities are being corporatized though unlike companies whose governing boards are answerable to the shareholders, governing boards of modern universities are answerable to stakeholders, which include students, government and the public. The use of public resources to run universities makes accountability to government inevitable; and it is this accountability that conflicts with autonomy and academic freedom. An audit culture which has its origins in new management theories, has further entrenched transparency and accountability practices, eroding academic freedom even more.

And like any other organisation, modern universities are also operating in a volatile and unstable environment and required to manage risks not only as a means of mitigating hazards but also as an opportunity for improved service delivery.

When countries in Sub-Saharan Africa were gaining independence, universities were established as partners in development. The universities were looked upon as essential sources of new leadership that would provide personnel to develop and manage resources. However, government interference, especially during one-party regimes, seriously affected operations of the universities, negated autonomy and academic freedom, and had a malign effect on governance and recordkeeping. An example can help to explain this further.

During the autocratic one-party regimes, university governing boards became an extension of the ruling elite. Research and publication became a risky undertaking; and any publication that was deemed to be subversive was destroyed. In Malawi, the first head of state and government, Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda, had a marked antipathy to written records (Mapanje, 2002).

The adoption of democratic principles in recent years by governments and the effect of globalisation are changing the way universities are being governed in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, despite this positive change in governance, evidence abounds of the neglect of effective recordkeeping in the region.

The twenty-first century is a digital age and requires all organisations to have well developed information systems in order to be competitive. This is also the case in the education sector, where IT is changing the way information is managed, the way teaching and learning instructions are delivered, and the way governance is executed. The digital era can be a threat as well as an opportunity to universities. It can be a threat in the sense that without adapting to change, a university can find itself irrelevant; and it can be an opportunity in the sense that universities can reach out to target groups in the global village, making them competitive and justify their existence.

Recordkeeping has played a role in the governance of both the early and modern universities. For instance, documents such as decrees, charters, and acts have to be preserved and accessed as major source of information for institutional governance. Student records have to be managed as they can have an indefinite use as a proof a student has matriculated and graduated. Documents generated by the accreditation of universities by government authorities and professional bodies have to be kept as a source of critical evidence. University records and documents that are preserved because of their enduring value can be used as marketing and promotional tools.

Efficiency in obtaining the required information can make the university competitive in its service delivery. In essence, records and documents are essential university assets that are required to provide evidence of actions and decisions; to support transparency and accountability; to comply with legal and regulatory obligations; to support decision making; and to protect the interest of students, staff, and other stakeholders.

3.2 University development

The word university can be traced from Latin word *universitas*. In classical Latin, *universitas* meant the whole or totality hence the emergence of the English words universe or universal. In late Latin it meant a corporation or collectivity, a group of people who have banded together and act together.[45] Those pursuing higher education in the eleventh century Europe referred to themselves as *universitas*. Thus, the *universitas* was not the institution itself but the guild of those working there: the *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*, that is, guild of masters/professors and scholars/students.

The institution itself came to be known by another Latin term *stadium generale*, an "expression that meant no more than a celebrated school which attracted students from a wide area and which could provide teaching, not only in arts, but in at least one of what became the superior faculties in the universities, law (civil and canon), theology, or medicine" (Cobban, 1975, p. 25).

---

[45] Ninth Level Ireland: Irish University News, Politics and Law, "The word university"; available at http://9thlevel.ie/history-of-irish-universities/the-word-%E2%80%9Cuniversity%E2%80%9D/; accessed on 13th June 2013.

Paul Zeleza's (2006) view of a university as coming out from the three institutional traditions: the Alexandria Museum and Library, the early Christian monasteries, and the Islamic mosque, can be related to the concept of *stadium generale*. In both cases, the institution is the university. In essence, the university was the institution, and *stadium generale*, was what was found in government documents and papal decrees.[46] A university could eventually be seen as possessing both characteristics, as a guild and as an institution, and this is the hallmark of a modern university.

Early universities grew out of the cathedral and municipal schools amidst a culture of teaching the basic skills needed for the literate professions: grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic, the three arts that constituted the *trivium*. For the scholar to qualify as a master, who could be able to teach others and to proceed to the higher faculties of theology, law, or medicine, the *quadrilium* had to be completed, thus music, arithmetic, geometry, and medicine (Perkin, 2007). The function of a university then was to teach and preserve established culture. It is obvious that the categories of records and documents the university generated did not include research records and documents. Corporatisation was also not a critical issue in the governance of the early university.

The decision to transform the civic and cathedral schools into universities meant a new role altogether for the universities as candidly observed by Philip Altibach (1979, p. 13):

> The universities were not to be the direct outgrowth of a movement which echoed the Ciceronian ideal of the *doctus orator*[47]; their roots were inextricably bound up with utilitarian values. They evolved as institutional responses to the pressures to harness educational forces to the professional, ecclesiastical and governmental requirements of society.

---

[46] Ninth Level Ireland: Irish University News, Politics and the Law, 2008.
[47] *Doctus orator* is described as "the man who combines in his person an extensive knowledge of all the sciences with a wide experience of the problems of everyday living. It was a form of education designed not only to make a man learned but humane and just, and eminently fitted to lead in society" (Cobban 1975:5).

Old universities had the freedom to explore and discuss ideas and issues based on logical thought and argument. The Christian episcopate and civic leaders gave their universities autonomy and academic freedom. This is in contrast with succeeding universities that were subject to government interference as was the case with public universities in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kerr and Mapanje, 2002).

Examples of early universities include Bologna in Italy, Paris in France, and Cambridge in the UK. The University of Bologna was established in 1088 when masters of grammar, rhetoric and logic began to devote themselves to the law.[48] It started primarily as a law school until scholars from other disciplines began to collaborate with it. As a student controlled model:

> The power acquired by the students, although falling short of the control over the curriculum, was used to impose the most draconian discipline upon their teachers. The student rector and proctors determined the doctors' fees, levied fines on them for starting or finishing their lecturers late, not keeping up with the syllabus, leaving the city without permission or without giving sureties for their return, and forced them to deposit large caution money from which to deduct the fines (Perkin, 2007, p.165).

The University of Paris was established in about 1150. Unlike Bologna which was a university of students, Paris was a university of masters. According to Altbach (1979, p. 21):

> Virtually all decisions relating to the internal governance of the institution were made by the faculty. Degree requirements, the curriculum, the appointment of staff, and the other academic were all made by the professors. The administration of the institution was uncomplicated. A chief administrative officer, usually called the rector, was chosen from among the senior faculty and served for a short period.

---

[48] History of the University of Bologna, 2014. Available at: http://www.eng.unibo.it/PortaleEn/University/Our+History/default.htm; accessed on 20th April 2014.

The University of Paris can be an example of a legally constituted autonomous entity standing outside the ecclesiastical structure. It is important to note, however, that although the episcopate had a duty to nurse its university offspring towards maturity and full corporate independence, there seemed to be a lot of conflicts of interest as other forces in the Church wanted their university to be integrated into the existing ecclesiastical structure and subjected to permanent ecclesiastical governance (Cobban, 1975). This was in contrast with the fifteenth century Scottish universities that received full support for their autonomy from their episcopal sponsors. The bishops who founded the universities of St Andrews (1413), Glasgow (1451) and Aberdeen (1495) gave their universities a high degree of autonomy.

> The Scottish bishops of the fifteenth century had no thought of affecting a permanent episcopal stranglehold over the universities they had brought into being. On the contrary, they freely gave of their wealth and energies in the realisation that adequate endowments and organisational maturity would inevitably bring full independent status to these university guilds (Cobban, 1975, p. 76).

So, there were two extreme ends on a governance continuum for the early universities. At one end was the student-controlled model of the University of Bologna, whilst on the other was the teacher-controlled model of the University of Paris. As years passed by, there were movements towards the centre of the continuum.

The teaching in the mediaeval universities took the form of reading and explaining texts. The examinations were oral disputations in which the candidates advanced a series of questions or theses which they disputed or argued with opponents a little senior to themselves, and finally with the masters who had taught them. Some of the masters went on to advanced studies in divinity, canon and civil law, and, more rarely, medicine. These higher disciplines were taught and examined in the same way by those who had completed their studies and become masters and grouped themselves into specific faculties.[49]

---

[49] University of Cambridge, "The Medieval University"; available at http://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/history/the-medieval-university; accessed on 15th May 2013.

Some elements of this traditional approach to teaching still survive in modern universities especially at the higher level of scholarship. For instance, this oral disputation is the essence of a *viva* when research students defend their theses. Modern universities also encourage members of their teaching staff to advance in their chosen teaching fields. Unlike the early universities where advanced education and training were the preserve of the masters who taught at the universities, modern universities offer advanced education and training to those in the academia as well as those outside the academia.

In case of the management of records and documents, medieval universities employed different strategies. An example from the University of Cambridge is worth noting.

> It soon became necessary, to avoid abuse of the royal privileges conferred on scholars, to identify and authenticate the persons to whom degrees had been granted. Enrolment with a licensed master was the first step towards this; it was called matriculation because of the condition that the scholar's name must be on the master's matricula or roll, but later the University itself assumed this duty.[50]

At the University of Cambridge, the regent masters soon found that in addition to a ceremonial head they needed other representatives to speak and act for them. The first of these were the two proctors whom they elected annually to negotiate on their behalf with the town and other lay authorities; to keep the accounts; to safeguard their treasures and books; to moderate in examinations; and to supervise all other ceremonies. These duties were soon to be shared by other elected officers. By the sixteenth century a registry recorded matriculations, admissions to degrees, and decisions of the regent masters. A community of such complexity needed rules hence statutes were adopted by the whole body of the University. These were not at first arranged or codified in the books kept by the proctors. This is an illustration of the governance and recordkeeping relationship in a medieval university. Such governance and recordkeeping practices as observed at the University of Cambridge in the medieval era are still prevalent in the modern era.

---

[50] University of Cambridge, "The Medieval University"; available at http://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/history/the-medieval-university; accessed on 15th May 2013.

The function of a university can change over time. Research was not part of the function of medieval universities; they concentrated on teaching and preservation of established culture. The function of a modern university has been summarised by D'Andrea and Gosling (2002)[51] as the teaching of undergraduates and postgraduates; carrying out research and scholarship to advance knowledge and its application at national and international level; and providing a range of services to industry and the wider society, including advising government on policy and contributing to economic development and social progress.

The challenge for modern universities is to balance these functions. How much teaching and learning; how much research; and how much community service? With universities urged to perform and justify their existence, there is a tendency for modern universities to concentrate on the metrics used for performance measurement. If research scores highly, the university will exert a lot of its effort in research. Similarly, if teaching and learning are given more weight, the universities may put more effort in the teaching and learning.

The early modern university still valued autonomy and academic freedom, and depended on the state for material support and defence of academic freedom. The dilemma was to expect the state to defend the university's academic freedom against the state itself.

As a measure of accountability, "demands by government and other external authorities to know exactly how academic institutions spend their funds and to provide documentation for academic programs have been perceived as a threat to the academic autonomy and to the traditional patterns of university governance" (Altbach, 1979, p. 14). The external demand for transparency, accountability and efficiency in universities can be viewed as the basis of an audit culture phenomenon in academia (Strathern, 2000), as explained earlier. Although academics usually detest this new form of accountability, it is essential in the world of governance, audit and risk management; more so when universities are being corporatised.

---

[51] D.Andrea, Vaneeta-marie and David Gosling in their article "University Education" in Gearon, Liam (ed.), *Education in the United Kingdom: Structures and Organisation*. London: David Fulton Publishers, 2002: 169.

The increasing size of the modern universities made running them burdensome. As a result of this, full-time administrators took over the bulk of their management. "The increased demand of the state for audit, inspection and a stream of paper returns also accelerated the trend to full-time managers, who naturally expanded their role, and indeed began to think of themselves as "the university"" (Perkin, 2007, p. 200). Although there could arguably be some conflict between academic and administrative members of staff, they do complement one another in the governance of the university.

Altbach (1979) argued that in the course of a university transformation, the following are usually observed:

- Expansion – universities in most countries have expanded in terms of student and staff numbers, infrastructure, and diversity of disciplines.
- Changing roles for universities – as technology has expanded and research has become increasingly important to modern societies, the importance of universities has increased and roles have expanded.
- Increased expenditures – as universities have expanded their roles and numbers of students, their budgets have naturally risen as well; most of the additional funds have come from governmental sources which demands greater accountability and calls into being more complex bureaucratic structures to administer.
- Curriculum – the traditional liberal arts and professional curriculum has been under attack and in some countries virtually destroyed; but there is no coherent curriculum to replace them.
- Accountability – demands by governments and other external authorities to know exactly how academic institutions spend their funds and to provide documentation for academic programmes have been perceived as a threat to academic autonomy and to traditional patterns of university governance.
- Elite versus mass higher education – universities have traditionally been elite institutions serving small populations for specific purposes; in essence they maintain elements of this elitism against the popular demand for increased access.
- Politicisation – as universities have assumed a central role in their society, they have increasingly reflected the political concerns and problems of that society; and student and faculty activism in some countries are part of this trend.

3.3 Universities in Sub-Saharan Africa

Sub-Saharan Africa is a developing region and the need for modern universities cannot be overemphasised. Upon attaining independence, countries in the region established national universities to spur development. Ghanaian scholar, Akilagpa Sawyer aptly calls these institutions of higher learning "developmental universities"[52].

Most counties in Sub-Saharan Africa attained their independence in the 1960s. More than fifty years down the line, universities in the region are still struggling, either to sustain themselves or compete with their counterparts in Western Europe and North America. They have been confronting challenges, either external or internal or even cultural.

The external factor that is usually thought to attribute to the decline of university education in Sub-Saharan Africa is the influence of international financial institutions and their neoliberal agendas. The World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes of the 1980s are the major culprits, as has been explained in the preceding chapters. This was a global factor and beyond the control of universities and governments.

Political interference also affects growth of universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. Steve Sharra (2013) has outlined what he views as the death of intellectualism, and the sour relationship between academics and politicians in Africa. His first reference is to the 2003 lecture given at the University of Nairobi in Kenya by a distinguished academic, Ali Mazrui, who decried the death of intellectualism in the African university. Mazrui argued that for a university to help develop its society, first the society has to help develop the university.

He identified three crucial relationships that mediated the role of the university and its dealings with the wider world. The relationships include political distance from the state; cultural closeness to society; and intellectual links to wider scholarly and scientific values. He argued that it was possible for a university to be funded by the state and still maintain its political distance, as was the case in North America and Europe.

---

[52] In Sharra, Steve "university education and the crisis of leadership in Malawi", 2013; available at http://mlauzi.blogspot.co.uk; accessed on 11th June 2013. Dr Steve Sharra is an accomplished Malawian academic and blogs on different academic issues.

He cited the example of Kenyan President then, Mwai Kibaki, whom he said had surrendered his chancellorship of six public universities.[53] Although it could be argued that he was under pressure from educational commentators, he nevertheless made a bold decision which other African leaders can emulate.

Sharra's (2013) second analysis on the factors affecting growth of universities in Sub-Saharan Africa is the relationship between academics and politicians. In Malawi the relationship between the University of Malawi and Malawi's political leadership has never been cordial. For example, although the establishment of a national university was one of his major dreams when the country became independent, founding president Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda, himself a medical graduate, detested the idea of a university that exercised intellectual autonomy.

Workplace culture has also contributed to the decline of university education in Sub-Saharan Africa. John Holm (2010) recounts his experience when he came to Africa to help the University of Botswana create an international office. During his four years stay at the institution, he "saw firsthand the obstacles hindering the development of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa."[54] He asserts that many African academics dedicate little time to teaching, advising students, conducting research, writing scholarly articles, and serving as administrators. They are often away from their universities for a combined period that equals as much as half or more of the academic year. For example, the academics frequently go to their rural homes for weddings and funerals of extended family members, and to help with health or financial crises of their relatives. As would be expected, this keeps them away from their campuses for long, and can subsequently hinder university development.

---

[53] Steve Sharra's reference to Professor Ali Marzui's lecture "Towards Re-africanizing African Universities: Who Killed Intellectualism in the Post Colonial Era?" Lecture given at the University of Nairobi, published in *Alternatives: Turkish Journal of International Relations, Vol 2 No 3&4, 2003*).

[54] John Holm is the former director of the Office of International Education and Partnerships at the University of Botswana and the Centre for International Services and Programs at Cleveland State University. His article "When family ties bind African universities" appeared in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* of 19th August 2010. Available at: http://chronicle.com/article/When-Family-Ties-Bind-Afric/124011/; accessed on 21st October 2013.

3.4 Universities in the twenty-first century digital age

Mike Newby (2002) rightly predicted the impact of ICTs in the education sector in his foreword to the book *Education in the United Kingdom: Structures and Organisation*[55]: "Our futures are digital ones. Though this book considers education in different parts of the UK, our children and young people will increasingly come to be educated in a virtual world, where geographical distance is immaterial…". Just as globalisation and technology have transformed other sectors of the economy, universities are also facing transformation. Online courses are being introduced to enable universities to enrol a bigger number of students and from different parts on the globe. The debate between the traditional ways of instruction and online delivery is intense. Proponents of the traditional system emphasise soft skills and a hidden curriculum that can only be acquired by physical face-to-face learning while those advocating online delivery highlight economy and competiveness.

In 2012, two reputable US universities, Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology launched pioneering online courses. In a statement which could be viewed as a response to this development, Sir Michael Barber who is a chief education advisor for Pearson – a major publisher, and former Downing Street adviser, has urged the UK universities to adapt to changes in ICTs to remain competitive in the global society.[56] He argues that complacent UK universities that fail to respond to the rise of online universities could be swept away by global competition. He further argues that online courses will present both threats and opportunities for UK universities; and that middle-ranking universities could close if they fail to adapt.

Barber has also made predictions about the future university. He forecasts that in this competitive environment, component parts of universities will be unbundled; and that research could be taken over by private specialists institutions or universities could simply focus on the quality of teaching, using lectures and special course materials created elsewhere. If this happens, then a circle will be completed as universities would return to where they started, where research was not part of their function.

---

[55] Mike Newby gives a foreword in the book *Education in the United Kingdom: Structures and Organisation*, edited by Liam Gearon, London: David Fulton Publishers Limited, 2002, p.v.
[56] Sean Coughlan, BBC News education correspondent in his article "UK university face online threat" , 2013. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-21670959; accessed on 11th March 2013.

Jimmy Wales, the custodian of the world's biggest online encyclopaedia, Wikipedia, also gives his opinion on the impact of ICTs in the delivery of instructional materials. He is of the view that unless universities respond to the rising tide of online courses new major players will emerge to displace them. He uses his own experience as a student to suggest that the traditional university lecture should have been condemned to history decades ago and replaced with an online video recording that can be stopped and started. He is of the view that future provision will be through online courses delivered through libraries of video-lectures, supplemented by interactive information that can be used at any time on tablet computers or laptops. In the final analysis, he proposes a future model of higher education that would allow students to use recordings of lectures and to use teaching time to discuss and develop what the students have been watching[57].

Davide Savenije (2013)[58] has identified trends in the higher education sector which, in his view, universities cannot afford to ignore in the twenty-first century. His list includes:

- The proliferation of mobile devices
  - Smartpads and tablet devises are surpassing PCs and laptops
- The rise of social networks
  - Universities are using social media to deliver instructional materials
- The privatisation of the cloud
  - University information is increasingly being managed by third parties
- The legitimisation of online leaning
  - Online delivery is becoming a norm

Savenije (2013)[59] is also of the opinion that universities have to evolve their business models in order to avoid extinction. They may no longer have the luxury of simply targeting the high school graduates or mimicking Harvard model of being good at everything. There are opportunities to be found for institutions of all shapes and sizes. This can be viewed as marketization of higher education.

---

[57]Sean Coughlan, BBC News education correspondent in his article "Jimmy Wales: Boring university lectures are doomed". Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-22160988; accessed on 11th March 2013.
[58] Savenije, David, "12 tech trends higher education cannot afford to ignore", *Education Drive*. Available at: http://www.educationdive.com/news/12-tech-trends-higher-education-cannot-afford-to-ignore/156188/?goback=.gde_129709_member_5823852189054943235#!; accessed on 3rd January 2014.
[59] Savenije, Davide, "4 ways universities can survive extinction", *Education Drive*; available at: http://www.educationdive.com/news/4-ways-universities-can-survive-extinction/148644/; accessed on 3rd January 2014.

As with marketization, corporatisation is also affecting universities in the twenty-first century. Joel Bakan (2004, p. 1) has put it succinctly in his book *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*:

> Over the last 150 years the corporation has risen from relatively obscurity to become the world's dominant economic institution. Today, corporations govern our lives. They determine what we eat, what we watch, what we wear, where we work, and what we do. We are inescapably surrounded by their culture, iconography, and ideology.

3.5 Conclusion

A university has evolved from a simple institution concerned with teaching and preserving established culture to a complex institution with multiple functions such as teaching, research, and advisory service. Similarly, governance and recordkeeping in these institutions have also evolved. For example, from a simple governance system such as student or staff controlled university to a complex governance system where a university is accountable to multiple stakeholders such as government, students, and the general public. From a simple recordkeeping system in which recorded information were mainly in a physical medium such as paper to a complex recordkeeping system where the recorded information are mainly in a hybrid recordkeeping system, and increasingly in an all-electronic recordkeeping system.

Modern records and documents such as email messaging, social media, and cloud use, are changing the recordkeeping landscape. This changing character of information that now needs to be kept calls for collaborative effort between records managers, systems experts, and executive teams, as explained in the previous chapter.

Modern universities are also operating in an environment in which governance, audit and risk management are important issues. With this in mind, it is necessary to develop recordkeeping systems that can foster the governance agenda of a modern university, considering that sound recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed account on how the study was conducted, including the philosophy underpinning the research, methodology adopted, methods employed, and techniques used to collect data. In a broader perspective, this is social science research. In his book, *Social Science Methodology: A brief but critical introduction*[60], Frank Lewins (1992) defines social science as the attempt to explain social phenomena within the limits of available evidence. This is the essence of this research, to gather available evidence in order to explain and understand the relationship between recordkeeping, governance, audit and risk management within Sub-Saharan Africa higher education.

Different scholars have provided detailed definitions of research methodology. Lewins (1992) views research methodology as the systematic scrutiny of what researchers do and why they do it. This involves looking at areas such as the notion of theory, the relationship between theory and evidence, the strengths and weaknesses of particular methods, and understanding the nature of analysis (Lewins, 1992). Colin Neville (2007) in his manual written for the University of Bradford, *Introduction to Research and Research Methods*, views research methodology as the overall approaches and perspectives to the research process as a whole. It is concerned with the following main issues: why you collected certain data; what data you collected; where you collected it; how you collected it; and how you analysed it (Collis and Hussey, 2003, in Neville, 2007).

Alison Pickard (2013, p. xviii) in her book *Research Methods in Information* supports Neville's (2007) view on research methodology. "A methodology is perspective, the angle the researcher wishes to take on the question being asked". The angle may be quantitative such as how many or how often. It may also be qualitative such as why or how.

---

[60] Although written more than two decades ago, most of the information in the book is still relevant to the twenty-first century researcher.

This research employed a qualitative approach. As will be explained below, the qualitative approach is best suited to investigate what goes on in the workplace; what the problems are; and how could they be addressed.

As outlined in Chapter 1, this study addresses four specific objectives in the course of exploring the place of recordkeeping in an organisation's strategy. The first objective is to assess how records and documents are managed. This involves examining recordkeeping practices to determine the levels of recordkeeping capacity. The second objective is to analyse factors impacting on recordkeeping. This involves identifying and examining the internal and external factors affecting recordkeeping. The third objective is to explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk. This involves a critical exploration of the governance structures and recordkeeping systems to determine their correlation. The fourth objective is to develop a governance and recordkeeping relationship model. This involves redefining the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk.

4.2 Research hierarchy

Lewins (1992) argues that all social science research differs in terms of four broad dimensions: type of approach to theory, whether theory testing or theory construction; type of approach to evidence, whether quantitative or qualitative; type of method, whether questionnaire or participant observation; and type of concepts employed, whether observer's concept or participant's concept. Figure 3 below illustrates the dimensions of social science research with two significant patterns.

1. Theory testing → Quantitative → Questionnaire → Observer's concept

2. Theory construction → Qualitative → Observation → Participant's concept
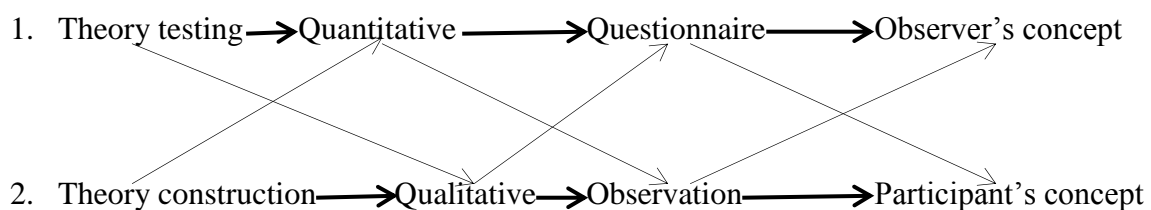
Figure 3: Dimensions of social science research (Lewins, 1992).

As will be noted in the subsequent sections of this chapter, this research mainly followed pattern 2 of Figure 3. The study generated a framework for managing records and documents, the essence of theory construction. It employed a qualitative approach to evidence, using interviews, observations, and relevant institutional documents to collect data. The quantitative aspects in the study, as will be observed in the presentation of the results, were for illustrative purposes only. As will be seen in the section on interviews, some respondents provided written answers to the questions asked, effectively turning the interview schedule into a questionnaire. Therefore, elements of pattern 1 in Figure 3 were also employed in this study.

Five levels of research hierarchy, as proposed by Alison Pickard (2013), are used to illustrate how this research was conducted. Figure 4 below is an illustration of the research hierarchy.

Research paradigm
- Constructionist
- Interpretivist

Research methodology
- Qualitative

Research method
- Case study

Research technique
- Interview
- Observation
- Institutional documents

Research Instrument
- Researcher
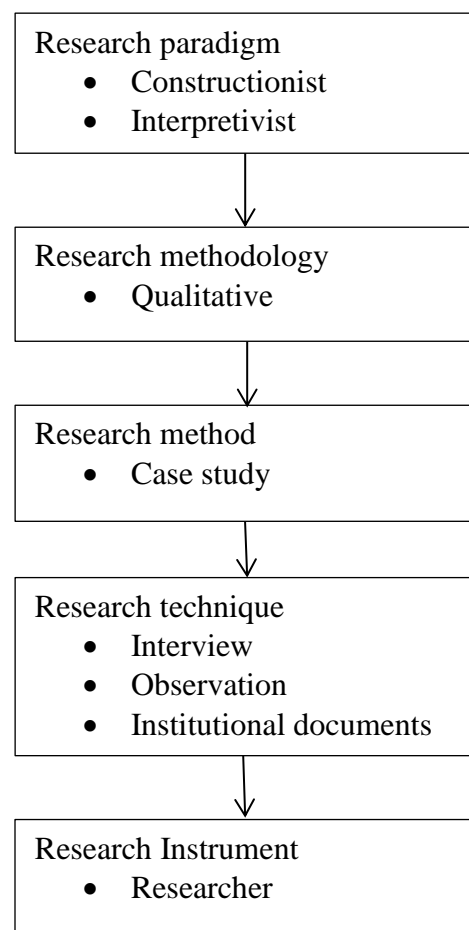
Figure 4: Research hierarchy (Pickard, 2013)

Each level of the research hierarchy is explained in detail in the subsequent sections.

4.3 Research paradigm

In outlining her research hierarchy phenomenon, Alison Pickard (2013, p. xvii) asserts that "whether we are concerned with the philosophical forces driving the research or not, all research models begin at that philosophical level which defines the paradigm". A paradigm is a means of viewing the world, influencing but not controlling the assumptions and direction of research. According to Pickard (2013), paradigms include the entire constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques shared by members of the professional community. They "provide the concrete puzzle solution or exemplar of how to solve a scientific problem" (Seale, 1998, in Pickard, 2013, p. xviii).

Ontologically, this research has taken a constructionist viewpoint as it will generate a recordkeeping and governance relationship model. Ontology in this case can be viewed as the nature of social phenomena and the beliefs that researchers hold about the nature of social reality (Denscombe, 2010). Some researchers are realists who see the social world as having properties that can be measured. They also see it as having structures and relationships that are fairly consistent and stable.

The researcher in this study is a constructionist, and agrees with Denscombe (2010, p. 119) that social reality is "something that is constantly being produced and re-produced; something that exists only as long as people persist in creating it through their actions, words and beliefs". Constructionists see the social world as comprised of multiple realities unlike the realists who see it as a single objective social reality (Denscombe, 2010).

Epistemologically, this study has adopted the interpretivist viewpoint as it will create a recordkeeping model based on an understanding of recordkeeping and governance principles and practices. Epistemology can be viewed as the ways that humans create their knowledge about the social world and involves philosophical debates about the basis on which they claim to have knowledge of social reality (Denscombe, 2010). The positivist viewpoint is centred on the use of scientific methods to gain knowledge; thus, discovering knowledge.

The interpretivist viewpoint on the other hand centres on produced knowledge; thus, "only through interpreting the world do we come to know anything about it" (Denscombe, 2010, p. 119). The positivist viewpoint fits well with realist ontology whilst the interpretivist viewpoint tallies with the constructionist ontology.

4.4 Research methodology

Research can either employ a qualitative approach, quantitative approach or both approaches. As indicated in the preceding section, this research is mainly qualitative as opposed to quantitative, and as a result employed qualitative methods. Qualitative methods are those research techniques that employ non-mathematical, naturally occurring, and non-experimental research practices in order to uncover the meanings and significance of the wide variety of evidence that social researchers collect.[61] On the other hand, the quantitative approach involves the generation of data in numerical form which can be subjected to a rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion.

In the context of systems approach, this research adopted the soft systems methodology as opposed to the hard sciences. Soft systems methodology is an holistic approach in investigating real-world situations. One of the key thoughts that inspired academics at Lancaster University in the UK in the mid-1960s to come up with the soft systems methodology concept was that human situations in which people were attempting to take purposeful action which were meaningful to them were more complex, less structured, and less easily definable than natural and mathematical systems investigated by the hard sciences (Oliver and Foscarini, 2014).

Checkland (1999, in Oliver and Foscarini, 2014, p. 156) had asserted that "a problem relating to real-world manifestations of human activity systems is a condition characterised by a sense of mismatch, which eludes precise definition, between what is perceived to be actuality and what is perceived might become actuality". He argued for the need to draw a rich picture of the problem situation, and taking into consideration as many viewpoints as possible, rather than to privilege one perspective over others.

---

[61] Qualitative Methods course, URBAN 5035, coordinated by Dr Jo Ferrie and Dr Jonathan Oldfield of the University of Glasgow, 2012.

For example, if email management is a problem in the work place, it may be necessary to seek opinions of not only the information professionals but also those of other professionals such as sales managers, lawyers, accountants, auditors, human resource managers and to some extent, other users. Their particular interpretations of why emails are not managed properly will be matched with information about their respective world views (Oliver and Foscarini, 2014).

The soft systems methodology approach relates well with a qualitative research project, the essence of this study. It is in contrast with a quantitative research, which stems from the positivist tradition that considers that everything is quantifiable and objectively knowable, as explained earlier. The quantitative approach assumes that the reality out there is subject to laws that can be discovered and verified, and attempts to apply methods used in natural sciences to the social sciences. The qualitative approach on the other hand belongs in the interpretive tradition of enquiry, a tradition that is primarily concerned with meaning, arguably an advantage it has over the quantitative approach. According to this qualitative research paradigm, "our social world is interpreted or constructed by people, and is therefore different from the natural" (Oliver and Foscarini, 2014, p. 29). In essence mere figures or other quantifiable values in the quantitative approach may not provide the insight into why things worked the way they did and how. They nevertheless can provide essential pointers to problem areas.

4.5 Research method

Research method can be viewed as the bounded system created by the researcher to engage in empirical investigation (Pickard, 2013). Examples of research methods include case studies, social surveys, and statistical methods.

4.5.1 Case studies

A case study is an "empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2003, p. 13). It is clear from this definition that case studies involve an in-depth study of a unit which could be a section of an organisation or the organisation as a whole. The objective is to gather extensive data about the unit being studied (Aina, 2002).

Writing in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Bent Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 314) endorses Aina's (2002) observation by asserting that "the main strength of the case study is depth – detail, richness, completeness, and within-case variance".

Although case studies usually fit well with qualitative research, they can also, to some extent, be employed in quantitative research. However, a statistical method is usually employed in a quantitative research, and has an advantage of greater breadth compared to a case study.

The case study method was chosen for this research so that recordkeeping and governance phenomena are explored in detail in order to establish their relationship, particularly as phenomena and context boundaries are not clear, relationships potentially complex and variations within and between organisations possible. In essence, this research is a collective case study in which multiple cases are used to investigate recordkeeping and governance relationship at both the micro and macro levels. Universities and their components are cases at micro level. The aggregate of the chosen universities in a country constitutes the national case which is at macro level in respect of the universities but at micro level in respect of the Sub-Saharan Africa region as a whole.

4.5.2 Case study design and implementation

As explained in the preceding section, this research involves a multiple-case design as the researcher's intention was to investigate a particular phenomenon, that is the relationship between governance and recordkeeping in diverse settings. To have sufficient evidence for comparison, this researcher decided to select six institutions on the basis of their history, difference, and performance, as will be seen later in this chapter.

The researcher planned to spend between five and ten working days in each participating institution, and to conduct interviews and observations, as well as to collect any documentation relevant to the study. Collection and analysis of background information about each case study site were activities also performed by the researcher prior to commencing any *in-situ* data collection[62].

---

[62] Adapted Fiorella Foscarini's (2009) case study design for her PhD project which shares this study

4.6 Sampling

Sampling can be viewed as the selection of some representatives from a study's population of interest (Aina, 2002). There are two extreme ends on a sampling frame. On one end there is probability sampling that uses the laws of probability to select the representatives. This has an advantage of minimising bias. However, it might not be a good technique when the researcher would like to get some desirable features in the representatives. It is possible that members chosen might all fail to possess the desirable characteristics. Examples of probability sampling include random sampling, stratified sampling, and systematic sampling.

On the other end of the sampling frame is the non-probability sampling. This is a biased sampling technique. Members of the population do not have equal chances of being picked. However, it is advantageous in that the researcher can choose representatives who have the desired characteristics. Examples of non-probability sampling include quota sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling.

This study adopted purposive sampling in choosing its study sites and respondents. According to Aina (2002), purposive sampling can be viewed as a judgemental form of sampling in which researchers, based on their knowledge of the population, handpick certain individuals for their relevance to the issues being studied. It is evident from this description of purposive sampling that one of its major advantages is that it increases the likelihood that researchers get at least some relevant information from the respondents at sites considered to possess certain characteristics crucial to the study.

However, a major drawback of purposive sampling is to determine who should actually be picked within the chosen category. This being the case, this researcher undertook prior analysis of the characteristics of the proposed respondents based on his ten years' experience associating with public universities in Sub-Saharan Africa in order to address the indicated drawback of purposive sampling.

4.6.1 Selecting suitable case study sites

Fiorella Foscarini (2009) whose research on function-based records classification systems shares its methodological approach with this study, especially in its methods, argues that selection of suitable sites for conducting case study research requires careful consideration of the objectives the researcher aims to achieve. Yin (2003) suggests that each case involved in a multiple-case study should be considered like an experiment. This insight implies that the researcher will approach the selection of cases according to replication logic. As aptly put by Oliver (2004, p. 299): "Each case must be carefully selected so that it either (a) predicts similar results (*a literal replication*) or (b) predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (*a theoretical replication*). Considering the research objectives formulated for this study, both replication methods were employed.

When choosing cases from different countries, it is recommended to select an organisation type that is represented, and which will have similar functions, in each subject country (Oliver, 2004). In this context, this study chose universities from different countries. It was evident that all the six universities selected had similar functions despite operating in different countries.

The researcher's familiarity with the university environment oriented his choice towards this type of organisation, which has an established presence in every country in Sub-Saharan Africa, and has more or less the same functions, though national differences in the types of activities involved do exist (Foscarini, 2009). Additionally, as universities are becoming more corporatized and the issues of governance spoken of enthusiastically in the region, it is essential to investigate the role of recordkeeping in achieving the good governance agenda. And being institutions that are involved in training and generation of knowledge, universities should lead by example in the manner they manage their knowledge resources.

It is usually argued that conducting case studies of one's own organisation is unlikely to be appropriate because of potential problems with reliability and objectivity. In additional to that, where the researcher is affiliated with the organisation to be investigated, almost all interactions will be based on prior acquaintance and shared existing knowledge, which can result in frustrating the exploratory aims of the research (Foscarini, 2009).

This researcher, however, did not refrain from including his workplace amongst the study subjects. It was more of a follow-up research after conducting a similar one six years earlier.

Similarly, the researcher took advantage of his familiarity with the functions and recordkeeping needs of the institutions under examination. Such insider knowledge allowed him to take an informed approach to his interviews, observations, and analyses of findings, and consequently reduced the time he had planned to spend in each case study site (Foscarini, 2009). And being already part of the university business environment undoubtedly facilitated the initial phases of the research project and expedited the researcher's admittance in the universities for the data collection exercise.

Case study sites selected were as follows: University of the Western Cape (UWC), University of Cape Town (UCT), University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), University of Johannesburg (UJ), University of Malawi (UNIMA), and Mzuzu University (Mzuni). The first four universities are in South Africa whilst the last two universities are in Malawi.

In South Africa, there are three categories of universities:

- Traditional universities
- Universities of technology
- Comprehensive universities.

Traditional universities offer theoretically oriented degrees; universities of technology offer vocationally oriented qualifications; and comprehensive universities offer a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees.[63]

A brief introduction of each university in order to explain their inclusion is worthwhile.

---

[63]   SouthAfrica.info, "South Africa's Universities". Available at: http://www.southafrica.info/about/education/universities.htm#.VCmQU_m-0yo; accessed on 29th Sept 2014.

i.   UCT

UCT is one of SADC's oldest universities. It was founded in 1829 as the South African College, a high school for boys[64]. It was formally established as a university in 1918 by the 1916 Act of the Union Parliament (UCT Annual Report, 2011). Like all other public universities in South Africa, UCT is currently governed in terms of the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended. The Act requires a public university to have amongst others, a council, a senate, an institutional forum, and a students' representative council.

The Act is supplemented by the UCT Institutional Statute. These two regulatory instruments together define the role, powers and composition of each governance body. Council is the prime governing body while senate has jurisdiction over the academic functions.

The institutional forum advises council on issues affecting the university such as national policies on higher education, equal opportunity policies, codes of conduct, and the fostering of institutional culture[65]. The students' representative council promotes the interest of students.

UCT had a total of 25, 500 students enrolled in the first half of 2012 with a staff compliment of over 5,000 in its six faculties of Commerce, Engineering and the Built Environment, Health Sciences, Humanities, Law, and Science, and the Centre for Higher Education Development.[66] This was against the backdrop that in the preceding year, the University enrolled 25,301 students, excluding 3,085 students who had dropped out. Of the total number of dropouts, 867were academically excluded whilst 2,218 dropped out in good academic standing. There were 3,413 members of staff, 8 faculties, 60 academic departments and 16 service departments in that preceding year.[67]

---

[64]   University of Cape Town, "About the University – Introducing UCT".   Available at: http://www.uct.ac.za/about/intro/history/; accessed on 3rd September 2014.
[65] South Africa, *Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended*. Cape Town: Government of South Africa, 2008, Chapter 4, Section 31.
[66]   University   of   Cape   Town,   "About   UCT   2012-2013".   Available   at: http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/aboutuct_2012-13.pdf; accessed on 3rd September 2014.
[67] Interview response from UCT's Director: Legal Services and Secretariat, representing the University Registrar held on the 19th October 2012.

UCT is a traditional university in the contexts of history of universities as well as in the category of South African public universities. A further explanation of these two aspects may be worthwhile.

UCT's academic disciplines such as the arts, theology, law, and medicine are hallmarks of a traditional university. This means UCT teaches a wide spectrum of the curriculum of a traditional university, including courses with a strong foundation in the *trivium* and *quadrilium*. Although the University has evolved into a modern university and has incorporated changes in technology, its traditional hallmark is conspicuous.

As the oldest university in SADC and arguably still performing well according to major world university rankings such as Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) and Times Higher Education (THE), UCT presents an interesting case in terms of how it manages its records in the world in which good governance is a global agenda.

ii.   UWC

Established in 1959 as a constituent college of the University of South Africa, UWC has a history of creative struggle against oppression, discrimination, and disadvantage.[68] It gained university status in 1970, and was able to award its own degrees and diplomas. The Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended and UWC's Institutional Statute guides the University's governance and management. Like UCT, the governance constituents at UWC include Council, Senate, Institutional Forum, and the Students' Representative Council.

UWC had a total of 19,590 students and 1,467 permanent staff members in 2012 (UWC Annual Report, 2012). Total staff members were, however, in excess of 1,500.[69] The additional staff represented those who were not employed on permanent basis.

---

[68] University of the Western Cape, "UWC History". Available at: http://www.uwc.ac.za/Pages/History.aspx ; accessed on 28th November 2013.
[69] Interview response from UWC's Registrar held on 15th October 2012.

The University had seven faculties: Arts, Community and Health Sciences, Dentistry, Economic and Management Sciences, Education, Law, and Natural Sciences. It can also be viewed as a traditional university. The University teaches a wide spectrum of the curriculum of a traditional university, and is categorised as a traditional university in the banding of universities in South Africa.

Like other traditional universities, UWC's curriculum has evolved to meet the demands of the modern society. The University has nevertheless maintained a full curriculum encompassing disciplines such as science, engineering and technology; business, management and law; humanities and social sciences; and health sciences. This can be deduced from the compartmentalisation of the University's academic function, the essence of its faculties.

From such an origin as an ethnic college for a special category of students referred to as *coloured students* to the present form as an integrated university that is also performing well according to the QS and THE world university rankings of the 2010s, UWC also presents good case on how it manages its records and documents in the context of governance, audit and risk management.

iii.   UJ

UJ was born in 2005 from the merger between the former Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), the Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR), and the Soweto and East Rand campuses of Vista University. Council governs UJ in accordance with the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended and UJ Statute. Other governance elements include Senate, Committee Structures, and Students' Representative Council.

The University is one of the largest residential universities in South Africa. In 2010, it had a total of 48,466 students with a staff complement of 9,935 of which 2,942 were academic staff.[70] Although the 2011 – 2013 enrolment plan was to cap the enrolment growth at 48,000, UJ enrolled 49,854 students in 2011.[71] This study adopted the figure 49,854 as the number of students of UJ in 2012 from the three sets of students' numbers that were in use.

---

[70] University of Johannesburg, "Fast Facts About University of Johannesburg". Available at: http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/AboutUJ/Documents/UJ%20fast%20facts.pdf; accessed on 23 November 2012.
[71] Ibid

Unlike UCT and UWC which are categorised as traditional universities, UJ is a comprehensive university, offering a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees. This would be expected because the institutions that formed UJ had different orientations. An example can help to explain this comprehensive nature of UJ.

Technikon Witwatersrand offered vocationally oriented qualifications, and could be viewed in a similar manner as a university of technology. Rands Afrikaans University was a traditional university, and offered mostly theoretically oriented degrees. The joining together of these two institutions unavoidably produced a mixture of vocational and theoretical orientations hence the comprehensive nature of UJ.

UJ had nine faculties covering the full curriculum as well as incorporating changes in technology to meet the demands of the modern era. The faculties included: Arts, Design and Architecture; Economic and Financial Sciences; Education; Engineering and the Built Environment; Health Sciences; Humanities; Law; Management; and Science.

From a merger of three such distinctive institutions to a modern comprehensive university, UJ presents another perspective on how it manages its records and documents in the world in which governance, audit and risk are important issues.

iv.   Wits

Wits was established in 1922. Its origins lie in the South African School of Mines, which was established in 1896 in Kimberly, the mining town in the Northern Cape, before it transferred to Johannesburg in Gauteng in 1904.[72] Imperial College London in the UK had a similar genesis. Its origins lie in the Royal School of Mines which came together with the Royal College of Science and the City and Guilds College in 1907, the year the Imperial College London's Charter was signed.[73]

---

[72] University of the Witwatersrand, "History of Wits". Available at: http://www.wits.ac.za/aboutwits/introducingwits/short-history-of-the-university/3162/short_history_of_the_university.html; accessed on 17th August 2014.
[73] Imperial College London, "Our Past". Available at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/Centenary/our_past.shtml; accessed on 30th September 2014.

Like the other three South African universities already discussed, the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended and an institutional statute put in place the governance and management structures of Wits.

In 2012, Wits had 30,606 students with a staff complement of 6,200 of whom 3,900 were academic staff and 2,600 permanent members of staff (Wits Annual Report, 2012).[74]

Although Wits was associated with mining technology in its origin and could be construed as a vocational institution, it has evolved into a traditional university and as a result offers a full curriculum. This is depicted in the disciplines the University is offering through its academic units that include five faculties: Commerce, Law and Management; Engineering and the Built Environment; Health Sciences; Humanities; and Science.

Wits has been associated with Johannesburg, the industrial and commercial hub of SADC for more than ninety years. From what seemed to be a vocational institution to a comprehensive university, it is useful to know how Wits manages its records and documents.

v. UNIMA

UNIMA was founded in October 1964, just three months into independence from Britain. It was established under the University of Malawi (Provisional Council) Act which was later replaced by the University of Malawi Act of 1974 and further amended in subsequent years.[75] Like other national universities born just after independence, UNIMA's main purpose was to produce the human resources required by the nation for the development of the economy.

UNIMA's administration structure comprises the Chancellor, Chairman of Council, Vice Chancellor, University Registrar, Finance Officer, and University Librarian. The academic structure comprises the Senate, Deans, Heads of Departments, and teaching staff.

---

[74] Annual Report of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the year ended 31 December 2012. Available at: http://www.wits.ac.za/files/fo5ti_548676001373872945.pdf; accessed on 13th July 2014.
[75] University of Malawi, "Historical Background". Available at: http://www.unima.mw/?page_id=193; accessed on 20th July 2014.

The University has a federal structure and comprised of four constituent colleges each on a separate campus. The colleges are: Chancellor College, specialising mainly in liberal arts, law, sciences, and education; College of Medicine, specialising in medicine and the medical sciences; Kamuzu College of Nursing, specialising in nursing sciences; and the Malawi Polytechnic, specialising mainly in commerce, engineering, technology, and applied sciences. UNIMA can be viewed as a traditional university. It is also adapting to changes in technology and undergoing reforms in order to be effective and efficient, and transparent and accountable.

Each college is semiautonomous with a principal as its chief executive, registrar as head of administration, finance officer as comptroller of funds, and librarian as head of information services including the college library. The University's Central Office has designations similar to its colleges. The offices include that of the Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Finance Officer, and Librarian. In essence, College Principals are representatives of the Vice Chancellor; College Registrars represent the University Registrar; College Finance Officers are representatives of the University Finance Officer; and College Librarians represent the University Librarian. The Office of the University Librarian has since been scrapped following some structural changes in the University.

In 2012, UNIMA had 8,579 students, 885 staff, 15 faculties, 68 academic departments, and 15 service departments.[76] The 8,579 UNIMA students' population excluded the 100-plus students who had earlier dropped out. This may reconcile the figure of 8,750 indicated as the students' population in 2012 by the University of Malawi Strategic Plan of 2012-2017.[77]

As a university born at independence and still operating in the twenty-first century, fifty years on, it is worth investigating how UNIMA manages its records and documents to meet the demands of a modern university in what at times has been a totalitarian country.

---

[76] Interview response from UNIMA's Assistant Registrar held at the Central Office on 12th December 2012.
[77] University of Malawi, "University of Malawi Strategic Plan 2012-2017". Available at: http://www.unima.mw/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/2012-2017-UNIMA-Strategic-Plan-30-March-2012.pdf; accessed on 20th July 2013.

vi.   Mzuni

Mzuni was established by the Mzuzu University Act No 12 of 1997 as Malawi's second national university. It admitted its first students in January 1999.

The need to establish a second university came about after the Government of the Republic of Malawi had studied the problems inherent in the delivery of tertiary education in the country.[78] In essence, Mzuni was established to complement UNIMA. It had an opportunity to learn from the challenges faced by its sister university such as the duplicated bureaucracy caused by its federal structure.

The University had 2,600 students in 2012/2013 academic year, an increase of about 30 percent on the preceding year's enrolment of 2,003. It was expected to increase its enrolment number by about 20 percent to have a student population of 3,100 in the following academic year. There were 164 members of academic staff.[79]

The number of Mzuni's non-academic staff, including temporary staff, was higher than that of academic staff, but changing rapidly as more restructuring took place. Services such as security and catering were being outsourced, resulting in a major decrease in the number of non-academic staff.

Mzuni has five faculties: Education, Environmental Sciences, Information Science and Communications, Health Sciences, and Hospitality Management and Tourism. Half of the student population was from the Faculty of Education. Similarly, the Faculty of Education had half of all members of staff. This Faculty had diverse programmes, including theology, mathematics, and arts and humanities.

---

[78]   Mzuzu   University,   "About   Mzuzu   University".   Available   at: http://www.mzuni.ac.mw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=2; accessed on 21st July 2014.
[79] Information from Mzuzu University Registry and corroborated by Lizzie Malemia in her article "The Use of Electronic Journal Articles by Academics at Mzuzu University, Malawi", *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 2014, Paper 1097; and from the speech of the University's Vice Chancellor at the 15th University Congregation in September 2013.

Although Mzuni was operating under those five academic compartments, its Statutes indicated that the University would offer diverse academic disciplines including law, medicine, and engineering which were not yet offered when this research was conducted. The University could thus be viewed as having a traditional set up in its design.

As explained earlier, all the case studies had similar functions, vis-à-vis, teaching and learning, conducting research, and carrying out consultancy and community services. And they were operating in an environment where governance, audit and risk management were important issues.

4.6.2 Selecting suitable respondents

The respondents were selected purposively. The research planned to interview the following, or equivalent, at each institution:

1. Deputy vice chancellor (academic)
   - Usually heads academic function on behalf of the vice chancellor
   - In a position to answer questions on academic audit, risk management, and vital records of the university
2. University Registrar
   - Usually heads the administrative functions including records management
   - Usually acts as secretary to council, senate and executive management team
   - In a position to answer questions on governing bodies' structures and proceedings, and university statistics
3. Director of Finance
   - Usually heads the finance function
   - In a position to answer questions on sources of finance and financial audit
4. Procurement manager
   - Usually heads the procurement function
   - In a position to answer questions on characteristics of a winning bid and the procurement process
5. Professor
   - Usually conduct teaching and research

- In a position to answer questions on student continuous assessment grades management and institutional repository

6. Faculty manager/secretary
   - Usually coordinates administrative functions in the faculty
   - In a position to answer questions on storage, security, and disposition of faculty records and documents

7. Records manager
   - Usually coordinates the records management function of the university
   - In a position to answer questions on the following:
     - Medium of recorded information
     - Records management policy
     - Senior management support
     - Recordkeeping training
     - Recordkeeping unit
     - Recordkeeping awareness campaigns
     - Classification schemes
     - Storage of records and documents
     - Access to information
     - University-wide retention and disposition schedules
     - Records management programmes
     - Factors affecting recordkeeping

All the planned categories were interviewed. Additionally, the research also selected the following respondents to complement those chosen from the universities:

8. Auditor General
   - Usually has a constitutional obligation to audit public universities
   - In a position to answer questions on the role the Office of the Auditor General plays in the governance of public universities; and the challenges it faces in accessing information from the public universities

9. Director of Higher Education
   - Usually coordinates the quality assurance in higher education

- In a position to answer questions on the role the directorate of higher education plays in the governance and management of higher education; and challenges in accessing information from the public universities

A common question that was asked of all respondents related to their suggested areas for improvement, vis-à-vis, what they would like to be done to improve the way records and documents were managed in their universities.

4.7 Data collection

There are different methods of collecting data including questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentary sources. Each method has advantages as well as disadvantages. For example, an interview has higher response rate than a questionnaire. Respondents may not return a questionnaire whilst if it were an interview, their oral response concludes the data collection exercise. Another advantage of an interview over a questionnaire is its ability to probe. It is difficult to probe with a questionnaire whilst an interview gives an opportunity to make follow-up questions.

The advantage of a questionnaire over an interview is that the questionnaire may not be subjected to researcher influence. The absence of the researcher's physical presence gives the respondent opportunity to answer the questions freely. The questionnaire can also be quicker to administer. All the questionnaires can be sent to respondents on a single occasion.

To have a high response rate, and probing more into issues investigated, this research employed mainly face-to-face interviews to collect data. They were, however, supplemented with observations and relevant institutional documents. The content of the interview protocol was informed by, amongst others, the governance recordkeeping toolkit.

Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit, as will be seen in Chapter 5, is a unique data collection tool developed by the researcher when exploring the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk. It contains questions on all the themes of the study, and as a result, capturing data on recordkeeping capacity; recordkeeping environment; and the relationship between recordkeeping and governance.

As data were analysed thematically at both micro and macro levels, Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit suited well this study. In essence, data were collected according to themes and subthemes in the Toolkit. The Toolkit, as shown in Appendix 1, has clearly outlined the themes or subthemes such as record and document management, for the recordkeeping capacity theme; external factors affecting records management, for the recordkeeping environment theme; and managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management, for the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk theme. This simplified the analysis of the data collected.

4.7.1 Interviews

Interviews take many forms. Some are more structured whilst others are very informal. Structured interviews are formal interviews conducted in a conversational style, more like job interviews.

The questions are usually asked in a set order and the interviewer will not deviate from the interview schedule. An interview schedule in this context is the guide an interviewer uses when conducting a structured interview. It has two components: a set of questions designed to be asked exactly as worded, and instructions to the interviewer about how to proceed through the questions. The questions appear in the order in which they are to be asked. The questions are designed so they can be administered verbatim, exactly as they are written.

Saul McLeod (2014) identifies some strengths and weaknesses of structured interviews. The strengths include the following: they are easy to replicate as a fixed set of questions are used – this means it is easy to test for reliability; and they are fairly quick to conduct which means that many interviews can take place within a short amount of time. The weaknesses include the following: they are not flexible – this means new questions cannot be asked impromptu; and the answers from structured interviews may lack detail if only closed questions are asked.

Unstructured interviews, also referred to as informal interviews, are more like guided conversation than a strict structured interview. An interview schedule might not be used. In the event that it is used, the interview schedule will contain open-ended questions that can be asked in any order. Some questions might be added or missed as the interview progresses.

Strengths of the unstructured interviews include the following: they are more flexible as questions can be adapted and changed depending on the respondents' answers – the interview can deviate from the interview schedule; and they also have increased validity because it gives the interviewer the opportunity to probe for a deeper understanding, ask for clarification and allow the interviewee to steer the direction of the interview. The limitations of the unstructured interviews include the following: it can be time consuming to conduct an unstructured interview and analyse the qualitative data; and it requires certain skills by the interviewer, including the ability to establish rapport and knowing when to probe, which could make the whole exercise more expensive (McLeod, 2014).

The research here presented employed structured interviews. The interviews were conducted in a conversational style with the researcher leading the conversation in order to collect extensive data from them. The researcher prepared an Interview Guide listing the topics and questions to be covered in the interviews.

The Interview Guide in this study is the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit which the researcher prepared as a basis for the case study research. Appendix 1 is the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit used to collect some of the data

4.7.2 Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit as an Interview Schedule

As explained earlier, the Interview Schedule in this research is the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit developed by the researcher. It contains questions on recordkeeping capacity, recordkeeping environment, and the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk management.

Different sets of questions were asked to different categories of respondents as shown in section 4.6.2. That is, all records managers were asked the same set of questions; all registrars were asked the same set of questions; all professors were asked the same type of questions; and so on. The responses were mapped onto the appropriate research questions.

The Interview Schedule questions were peer-reviewed rather than pilot-tested. It was not necessary to conduct a pilot study to test the Interview Schedule questions.

The feedback from peers provided enough checks to refine this data collection instrument before its administration. The banding of the questions to specific groups, with each group answering questions they were familiar with, ensured that the interview exercise ran without difficulties. The questions did not pose any problem to the respondents.

In answering a research question, such as the one on recordkeeping capacity, the researcher looked at whether the university had in place the right people, resources, policies, and processes in order to achieve a basic level of recordkeeping capacity (PARBICA, 2007). The Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit provided the elements to be examined including questions on the following:

- Records management policy – whether available, and its structure
- Records management process – classification, storage, retrieval, and disposition
- Recordkeeping expertise – trained recordkeeping personnel
- Management support – level of management support for recordkeeping
- Recordkeeping environment – technology, culture, laws

Appendix 1 is the Interview Schedule used to collect data. As explained earlier, the interviews were supplemented by observations and institutions documents in the data collection exercise.

4.7.3 Observations

Along with the interviews, the researcher engaged in direct observation of the environment and the people acting on it. For example, the location and furnishing of an office may be quite revealing of one's job status in the hierarchy of the organisation. This type of observation is also very helpful in understanding the actual use of technology at the workplace (Foscarini, 2009).

In all the universities, the researcher was shown the records and documents storage facilities. This accorded him an opportunity to observe the recordkeeping implications such as retrieval and security of the universities' recorded information.

The researcher developed collegial relationship with the people in the various settings. For example, he was invited to join lunch breaks, farewell parties, and other social events. More importantly, he was invited to meetings on records and information management. A university-wide records management consultative meeting to look at proposals for recordkeeping projects at UCT is a good example of the meetings attended by the researcher. This accorded the researcher an opportunity to identify key players in the management of the universities' records and documents.

Field notes were taken during the observations, in the same manner notes were taken during the interviews. The use of multiple sources of evidence and different data collecting methods, that is, triangulation, contributed to the enhancement of the validity and reliability of the findings.

4.8 Fieldwork

As explained earlier, the fieldwork accorded the researcher an opportunity to physically observe the recordkeeping and governance systems of the six public universities. It was also an opportunity for the researcher to acquire relevant institutional documents. Some of the documents the study planned to collect include the following:

1. Legislation – higher education; national archives, public audit, public procurement, public finance management, Mzuni and UNIMA Acts
2. Annual reports – latest annual report for each university
3. Strategic plans – latest strategic plan for each university
4. Record management policies – working records management policy for each university

A list just after References shows the legislation, annual reports and records management policies the researcher collected.

Access to the universities to conduct research was sought before travelling to the field. Informal requests were made to the universities' records managers or those responsible for recordkeeping. A formal request was thereafter made through the university registrar after an input from the records manager or the one responsible for recordkeeping.

At the universities, the registrar or records manager introduced the researcher to the respondents. Although this approach makes it formal and compels the respondents to be available for the interview, it can also be viewed as encouraging the respondents to give a positive image of their institutions. This is the reason the interviews were supplemented by relevant institutional documents and observations.

Appendix 2 is an example of a formal request letter sent to an institution for a fieldwork research. Appendix 3 is an example of the institution's letter introducing the researcher to one of the respondents.

4.9 Ethics

Before the fieldwork, ethical approval was given by the College of Arts Ethics Committee of the University of Glasgow. Appendix 4 is the ethical approval the researcher received. This was followed by the Study Furth of Glasgow in which the University of Glasgow allows the researcher to go for his fieldtrip. Appendix 5 is the permission to go for the field research.

In the field, each respondent answers the questions voluntarily after informed consent is sought. Appendix 6 is an example of consent given during the fieldwork. In giving their consent, respondents were assured that:

- Their names would be anonymised as much as possible
- They would have an opportunity to check factual accuracy
- The data would be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times
- The data would be destroyed once the research project is completed
- The results would be used for academic purposes only

It is on this basis that the respondents in this research are only identified by their designations and not by their names. This is done to anonymise them as much as possible though it is also possible to unmask some of them if one checks the occupational designations against the names in that particular year of the fieldwork. The notes taken during the research were secured in both electronic and hardcopy forms.

4.10 Data analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis can be viewed as the range of processes and procedures whereby the researcher moves from the qualitative data that have been collected into some form of explanation, understanding or interpretation of the situations investigated.[80]

The field notes were analysed as close as possible to the time when the interviews and observations took place in order to create a sort of interplay between data collection and data analysis. Any theme generated through this iterative process was then explored through further documentary analyses. This process is usually associated with grounded theory and ethnography. Although this research has traits of these research methods, it is limited in its design to claim to have used grounded theory and ethnography in great detail. This is notwithstanding the fact that the analysis of case study evidence is the least developed and most difficult aspects of doing case studies (Yin, 2003).

There were a number of approaches the researcher weighed to analyse the fieldwork data. Coding was amongst the analytical strategies evaluated by the researcher. It is the analytical process through which data are fractured, conceptualised and integrated to form theory; and is one of the most popular techniques used especially in grounded theory.[81]

In the initial coding phase, according to Foscarini (2009), researchers look for what they can define and discover in the data and thereafter look for leads, ideas, and issues in the data themselves. Categories and sub-categories are then developed to label, sort and organise data. Current researchers who intend to use this technique are usually assisted by software for qualitative data analysis (Foscarini, 2009).

This research adopted Foscarini's (2009) argument in rejecting coding as a strategy for data analysis. Coding technique is rigid whilst other analytical techniques are more flexible. This is expected because coding technique is usually automated whilst the other analytical techniques are manual.

---

[80] Presentation by Tilahum Nigatu, "Qualitative Data Analysis", March 2009. Available at: http://www.slideshare.net/tilahunigatu/qualitative-data-analysis-11895136
[81] Glaser, Barney and Anselm Straus, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies of Qualitative Research*, New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967, in Fiorella Foscarini (2009).

By reading through notes many times and with different questions in mind, one triggers a learning process that is not compatible with the quick scanning allowed by a machine.

Methods of analysing data in multiple-case study research include the following: detailed case study write-ups for each site in order to become intimately familiar with each case as a stand-alone entity; and examining the data in all cases in different ways such as by looking for differences and similarities between cases.[82]   This study adopted both of these approaches.

Each individual case study was treated as a separate study where the researcher looked for themes and any other element useful to get as rich a picture as possible of the situation under examination. Thereafter the cross-case analysis started where common issues were identified and the evidence derived from all six cases was categorised under them. The aggregation of cross-case data enabled differences and similarities amongst cases to emerge, and themes to be compared (Foscarini, 2009). In essence, data were analysed thematically at both the micro and macro levels. That is, findings at a university level should be able to give a complete picture of the state of its affairs. The findings were aggregated to give a picture of each country's state of affairs.

4.11 Conclusion

In outlining how this research is conducted, five levels of the research hierarchy proposed by Alison Pickard (2013) are identified, as shown in Figure 4. At the apex is the interpretive tradition of enquiry which forms the research paradigm level. The qualitative approach employed in this study comes next and is on the research methodology level.

The collective case study can be viewed as being on the third level which is research methods. Face-to-face interviews, observations, and relevant institutional documents used to collect data can be on the fourth level which is research technique. Alison Pickard (2013) argues that in interpretivist research the fifth and last research level is the research instrument.

---

[82] Eisenhardt, Kathleen "Building Theories from Case Study Research." *The Academy of Management Review* 14, 4 (October 1989): 532-50.

She gives an example of the researchers themselves as elements of this level: "In interpretivist research the 'human' instrument is the researcher, someone who has been trained to look, feel, respond and collect data within a natural setting, sometimes using an additional instrument, sometimes not" (Pickard, 2013, p. xx).

The selection of case study institutions required careful consideration of the nature of the research questions, the unit of analysis, and expected outcomes. This is the essence of theoretical sampling (Williamson, 2002). Under such circumstances, the kind of generalization one may obtain is analytic generalization. Theoretical or analytic generalization has the potential to generate the following outcomes: development of concepts; generation of theory; drawing of specific implications; and contribution of rich insight. The hypotheses developed prior to the data collection exercise are used as a template with which the empirical results of the case studies can be compared. If two or more cases are shown to support the same hypotheses, replication can be claimed (Yin 2003), an advantage multiple-case designs offer in terms of external validity of the research findings.

And finally, the study proposed an intellectual and analytical framework that may be useful in managing university records and documents in the context of governance, audit and risk.

Chapter 5: Governance recordkeeping

5.1 Introduction

Recordkeeping usually finds itself on the periphery of an organisation's strategy in which other governance functions are embedded. This state of affairs can be explained from different perspectives. For example, an organisation's core business is rarely that of managing records and documents, though recordkeeping systems will inevitably form part of the business processes.

The world of governance, audit and risk compels an organisation to put in place governance infrastructure in order to achieve its goals and objectives. A central contention of this thesis is that an organisation's governance agenda will not be fulfilled if its recordkeeping is side-lined. Governance and recordkeeping are viewed as symbiotic elements in any organisation's strategy. Both of them have to be promoted in order to achieve the organisation's goals and objectives effectively and efficiently. A strategy that does not fully embed recordkeeping is, arguably, inadequate. In this context, a strategy is viewed as a plan of action designed to achieve the goals and objectives of an organisation whilst accommodating the competitive agendas of people within the organisation.

Governance recordkeeping can be viewed as an approach to recordkeeping that fosters the governance agenda of an organisation. It includes the management of governance records and documents, and the governing of an organisation's information as a strategic resource. When information is governed as a strategic resource, clear policies and procedures have to be in place to specify what information is stored; where it resides; who has access to it; how to protect it; and when to get rid of it. Recordkeeping becomes a governance function, subject to rigorous management and examination.

In the context of governance recordkeeping, a governance recordkeeping toolkit was developed to measure recordkeeping capacity using the organisation's governance infrastructure. The availability of working governance structures presents an opportunity for sound recordkeeping. Governance in this case can be viewed as a necessarily condition for recordkeeping.

It can be argued that records managers have limited authority to direct recordkeeping. The mandate usually rests within the governance structure. In any event mandates, unless they add value to the front end, will be largely ignored. But records managers need to play an advisory role even though governing bodies have to decide on major recordkeeping investments. In essence, they need to be part of the solution to problems facing the organisation, including information management problems. However, if the governance structure is diffuse and politicised, it may be very difficult for records managers to play their rightful role, so they must be careful not to be blamed. Recordkeeping usually receives particular attention when a query or scandal hits the organisation. This is the case because well maintained records and documents provide evidence of and information about the organisation's activities.

This chapter explores the concepts of governance, audit and risk management at micro and macro levels. At micro level, each concept is explained in relation to recordkeeping. At macro level, the three concepts are merged into a single concept, the governance phenomenon, and its relationship with recordkeeping is thoroughly explored.

5.2 Governance, audit and risk

The concepts of governance, audit and risk management are so closely connected that any attempt to isolate an individual concept may not be realistic. For example, governance can be viewed as an umbrella term that encompasses, amongst other elements, audit and risk management. An audit exercise or a risk management strategy contributes to an organisation's governance agenda.

Although the three terms might have different meanings, they are often used interchangeably, especially when they intersect. When this thesis uses the term governance only, it is assumed that it encompasses audit and risk, coming from the point of their intersection. Figure 5 is a simplistic illustration of the relationship between governance, audit and risk.
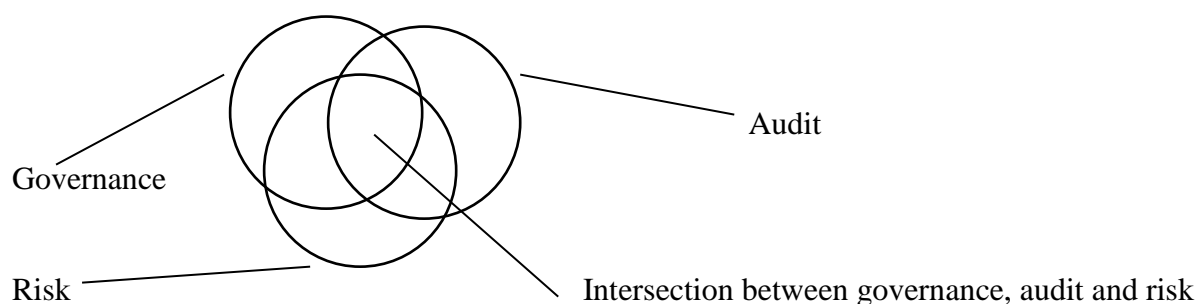
Figure 5: Relationship between governance, audit and risk

5.2.1 Governance

Jill Solomon (2010) traces the origin of the term governance from the Latin *gubernare*, which means to steer, as in the steering of a ship. The UK *Leadership Foundation for Higher Education* (2011)[83] describes governance as the system by which organisations are directed and controlled. It adds that governance structure specifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among participants in an organisation, spelling out the rules and procedures for making decisions. This view, which is mainly premised on using the notion of governance in the context of an organisation, be it a private or public sector organisation, including a university, is the philosophy underpinning this thesis.

Contributors to the debate about governance take different perspectives. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)[84] has taken a general perspective and views governance as the process of decision making and the process by which decisions are implemented. It observes that an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in making and implementing the decisions, and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision.

---

[83] The UK *Leadership Foundation for Higher Education*, 2011. Available at: http://lfhe.ac.uk/governance; accessed on 20th January 2012.
[84] United Nations ESCAP, "What is Good Governance?", *United Nations ESCAP Manuals, Guidelines, Training Materials*. Bangkok: United Nations ESCAP, 2009. Available at http://www.unescap.org/resources/what-good-governance#; accessed on 19th May 2014.

Organisations operate on different levels of the *bad-good governance continuum*.[85] They all strive to be seen as moving towards the good governance end. However, reaching this endpoint may not be possible. Good governance is an ideal which may be difficult to achieve in its totality.

Although different governance models are applied under different environments, there is a convergence of opinions amongst the contributors to the governance debate as to what can be viewed as essential characteristics of good governance. ESCAP (2009) identifies eight characteristics of good governance. It is transparent, accountable, participatory, responsive, consensus oriented, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law.

Jo Bryson (2011) adds trust in organisations to the list of essential characteristics of good governance. She contends that "the important features by which organisations are increasingly judged, namely trust in organisations and corporate reputation, is predicated on the organisation having good governance, transparency in decision making and social responsibility" (Bryson, 2011, p. 265). Her argument that an organisation needs to maintain trust can be viewed as corroborating the views of Onora O'Neill (2002), who wrote about the importance of trust in society. O'Neill (2002) however challenged the new approaches to accountability, which she observed were not actually promoting trust but rather exacerbating mistrust. For example, checking on academics that have long valued their freedom and view themselves as responsible enough can arguably heighten mistrust. The new accountabilities, such as an audit culture, may suggest loss of trust in professionals.

Marilyn Strathern (2000) argued that checking up on people could carry sinister overtones. In her view, checking becomes necessary in situation of mistrust. However, in the world of risk, a question of mistrust is unavoidable. What might be required are mechanisms that could promote trust. Effective recordkeeping can help to build trust. It generates reliable records which are essential in decision making.

---

[85] The *bad-good governance continuum* may be viewed as a progression from governance that is totally bad to the one that is perfect.

According to O'Neill (2002), conformity to procedures and protocols, detailed recordkeeping, provision of information in specified formats and access, are essential to safeguard the reliability of records. When recordkeeping fails, trust is broken.[86]

Patricia Bradshaw and Christopher Fredette (2009) in their article "Academic Governance of Universities: Reflections of a Senate Chair on Moving from Theory to Practice and Back" described governance from different perspectives. They described it from the viewpoint of public sector scholars; of corporate governance; and of academic governance. Their observations relate well with ESCAP's (2009) view that governance can be used in several contexts.

Bradshaw and Fredette (2009) observed that those commenting on governance from a public administration perspective see it as something different from governing and as resulting from the outsourcing of traditional government functions to civil society-based organisations.

> Governing is the sole prerogative of governments because it involves the possible use of coercion while governance involves the cooperation and collaboration among multiple governmental and nongovernmental actors with diverse economic and non-economic interests (Halachmi, 2005, in Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009, p. 124).

They added that within this perspective are those who see governance as having a profound role in "doing the work of democracy" (Boyte, 2005, in Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009, p. 124).

They also examined the issue of corporate governance. Governance in this context has been defined in different ways. It is "the determination of the broad uses to which organisational resources will be deployed and the resolution of conflicts among the myriad participants in organisations" (Daily et al, 2003, in Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009, p. 124).

---

[86] National Records of Scotland, "Implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act". Edinburgh: Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 Implementation Team, 2012.

The definition of corporate governance from an agency theory perspective is that it is a mechanism to protect shareholders from managerial self-interests. Within the not-for-profit organisations, "governance is the establishment and safeguarding of the organisation's mission and the general oversight of its direction" (Gill, 2005, in Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009, p. 124).

In their analysis of academic governance, Bradshaw and Fredette (2009) observed that universities have a system of governance made up of three voices that usually compete amongst themselves. These voices are those from the governing board, the administration, and the faculty. They can be kept separate through the establishment of both a senate and a board, the essence of a bicameral structure. In a unicameral structure, the senate and board are combined (Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009).

The academic community has debated the advantages and disadvantages of each structure. For example, the bicameral structure is viewed as dividing the academic world into two cultures that may work against each other. It is also viewed as giving more power to senate and relegating the board to a ceremonial adjunct (Bissell, 1972, in Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009).

University governance can be viewed as having a hybrid form, incorporating the government, not-for-profit, and corporate governance models as observed by Bradshaw and Fredette (2009):

> In addition to having a multi-headed system of governance, universities fall conceptually in between corporate, non-profit, and government models and definitions of governance. As a result, the differences that characterise each field of study about the meaning of governance impinge on efforts to even define university governance (Bradshaw and Fredette, 2009, p. 124).

The corporate governance element is arguably becoming more pronounced in a modern university governance model as the academic world becomes more global. The corporatisation of public institutions, including universities, is exacerbating this trend.

What follows is a detailed analysis of corporate governance as used in the corporate world but is becoming adopted in academia. Universities may not adopt the wholesale form of corporate governance. They may modify it to suit their missions, goals and objectives.

5.2.2 Corporate governance model

The emergence of the modern corporation has a bearing on the way organisations are managed. For example, public organisations, including universities, are being corporatized in order to improve efficiency in their service delivery and compete in a global marketplace. The corporation is usually viewed as an efficient entity.

Joel Bakan (2004) in his book *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power* explored the concept of corporation that first emerged in the late sixteenth century and separated ownership from management. One group of people, directors and managers, ran the firm. Another group, the shareholders, owned it. This unique design was criticised by some economic commentators to be a recipe for corruption and scandal. Adam Smith (in Bakan, 2004) warned in *The Wealth of Nations* that because managers could not be trusted to steward other people's money, negligence and profusion would inevitably result when businesses were organised as corporations. He could also be viewed as introducing a question of trust into his observation. It requires responsible leaders to direct organisational strategies and operations with a view to achieving sustainable economic, social and environmental performance (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2009). By the time Smith made this observation in 1776, the private sector business corporation with outside shareholders had been banned in England for more than fifty years (Bakan, 2004). Government passed *The Bubble Act* in 1720 which made non-chartered companies illegal, implying that from 1720 only companies incorporated by Royal Charter or Act of Parliament were allowed to trade until 1825 when Act was repealed.[87]

---

[87] The Insolvency Service, "History of Companies in the British Isles". Available at: http://www.insolvencydirect.bis.gov.uk/technicalmanual/Ch73-84/Chapter%2075/Part%202/Part%202.htm; accessed on 16th June 2014.

Corporation scandals continue to make headlines in the modern era. The Enron-Arthur Andersen affair, as explained in Chapter 2, is a good example. Measures to enhance corporate governance, vis-à-vis enacting relevant laws and issuing of governance code of practice, have recordkeeping implications, and agrees with the assertion that governance and recordkeeping are interdependent, as explained in the second chapter of this thesis.

The corporation has consistently been growing, rising from relatively obscurity to become the world's dominant economic institution affecting every public sphere. The rise and dominance of the modern corporation can be attributed to its successful governance structure with built-in checks and balances, all of which may have recordkeeping implications.

The impact of the corporation is so immense that it can even be viewed as dictating the decisions of its supposed overseer in government (Bakan, 2004). Its approach to doing business is a phenomenon. However, its pursuit of profit and power often receives criticisms from social and economic commentators.

> The most powerful class of institution on earth, the corporation, is by any reasonable measure hopelessly and unavoidably demented. The corporation lies, steals and kills without hesitation when it serves the interests of its shareholders to do so. It obeys the law only when the costs of crime exceed the profits. Corporate social responsibility is impossible except in so far as it is insincere.[88]

A university that has adopted corporate governance in its entirety may be criticised as having neglected its key roles in society such as the generation of new knowledge and the preservation of culture. Its focus could be construed as market-oriented.

Anthony Willis (2005)[89] has summarised corporate governance succinctly:

- Corporate governance refers to the processes by which organisations are directed, controlled and held to account

---

[88] Critical review at the back of *The Corporation* under the heading "What would the world be like if its rulers were insane".

[89] His summary is derived from the works of the Australian National Audit Office (2002) and the HIH Insurance Royal Report (2003).

- It encompasses authority, accountability, stewardship, leadership, direction and control exercised in the organisation
- It is the control of corporations and systems of oversight and the accountability of those in control
- It is not limited to the legal controls established under legislation or the general law
- It also includes accountability, not only in terms of legal restraint but also in terms of self-regulation and best practice

An addendum to this summary is that recordkeeping and governance are not mutually exclusive. In essence, recordkeeping "is a key component of any organisation's corporate governance and critical to its accountability and performance".[90]

Anthony Willis (2005, pp. 90-94) proposes six key requirements for good corporate governance which have also been corroborated by ESCAP (2009). Achieving these requirements may depend on effective recordkeeping.

i. Transparency – doing things in a way which is open to appropriate scrutiny.
    Effective recordkeeping delivers transparency. The organisation's records are what make it possible for people who have a right or an obligation to know what has been done, to see exactly what has been done and how it has been done.

ii. Accountability – having to answer for things one does.
    Effective recordkeeping enables accountability. Those with a right to know are able to see what has been done and how. This enables them to hold to account those charged with the management of organisations, the conduct of processes and the delivery of outcomes.

iii. Due process – doing things in an agreed, documented, and controlled manner.
    Effective recordkeeping underpins due process in that it allows and supports proper processes and shows how processes have been undertaken, allowing review, challenge and appeal. Transparency and accountability combine to deliver due process.

iv. Compliance – having systems to ensure that things are done properly.

---

[90] The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) Report No. 7 of 2003-4, entitled *Recordkeeping in Large Commonwealth Organisations* (ANAO, 2002, in Willis 2005) made such observation.

Effective recordkeeping demonstrates compliance with rules and regulations. Office holders are obliged to show care in order to avoid both corporate and personal liability. In such a case, records will show what matters were considered and what steps were taken.

v. Laws – meeting applicable legal obligations.

Effective recordkeeping is demanded by numerous statutory and common law requirements.

vi. Security – having systems to ensure protection of information.

Sound recordkeeping delivers security of information, both personal and organisational. Wrongful disclosure of information may breach privacy and other obligations such as contractual obligations. It may also cause loss of corporate intelligence and valuable intellectual property. Effective recordkeeping would therefore put in place mechanisms that would ensure that access to both personal and corporate information is controlled

Efficiency and effectiveness can also be added to the list of key requirements for good corporate governance proposed by Willis (2005). It is amongst the pillars of good corporate governance (ESSCAP, 2009).

5.2.3 University governance model

University governance addresses how universities define and implement their goals; how they manage their institutions; and how they monitor their achievements.[91]

Modern universities are complex and difficult organisations to manage and govern. Bradshaw and Fredette (2009) compiled metaphors in their attempt to illustrate the complexity and difficulty of managing and governing universities, including herding cats; garbage cans; organised anarchies; loosely coupled systems; and a big bowl of jelly.

---

[91] World Bank, *Universities through the looking glass: Benchmarking university governance to enable higher education modernisation in MENA*. The World Bank: Washington D.C., 2012. Available at: *https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/12535;* accessed on 20th May 2014.

The complexity and difficulty of managing and governing universities, and many other organisations, can be exacerbated by the environment in which they operate. The environment is increasingly becoming dynamic, uncertain and complex. It is arguably a turbulent environment.

The World Bank (2012) has identified three main forces at play in defining university governance models. These are the state, market forces, and academic excellence and the capacity to exert academic freedom. The resultant force from the interaction of the three may suggest the type of university governance to be adopted. The more the government exert pressure, the more the university becomes another government agency. The dominance of the market forces enable universities to be like entrepreneurial organisations. And the more autonomous the universities the more the academic staff take the lead. Figure 6 below is an illustration of the three forces at play.
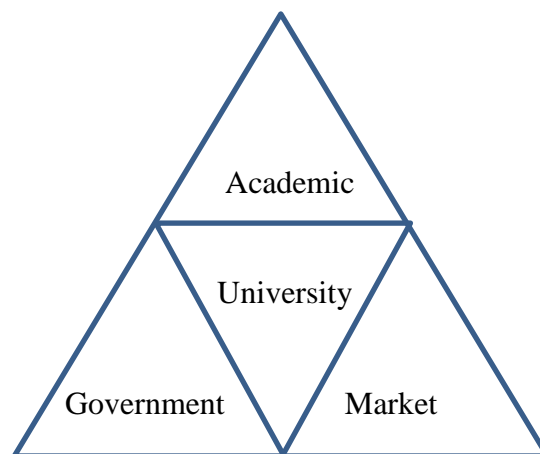
Figure 6: Main forces at play in defining university governance models (World Bank, 2012)

Garry Carnegie and Jacqueline Tuck (2010) in their article *Understanding the ABC of University Governance* introduced a particular type of composite university governance model, ABC of University Governance. This model is a composite of three forms of governance. The first form is the academic governance which encompasses governance of the teaching/learning and research activities of universities, that is, scholarship. The second form is the business governance which encompasses performance. It is concerned with resource utilisation and risk management.

The third form of governance is corporate governance which is concerned with the conformance framework in which universities are supposed to operate, including mandated procedures and processes. Figure 7 illustrates the ABC of University Governance.
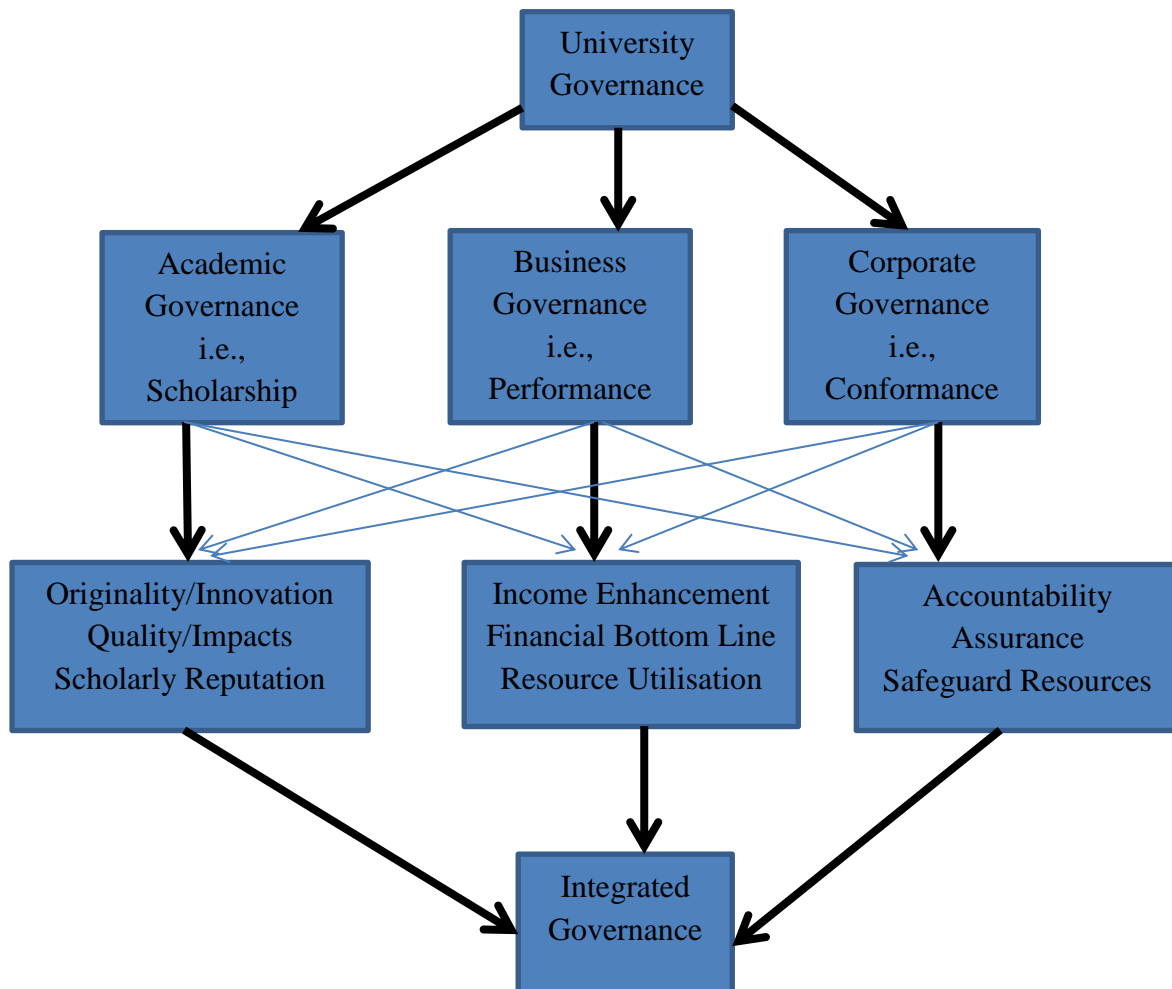
Figure 7: The ABC of University Governance (Carnegie and Tuck, 2010)

This thesis is mainly focused on a composite university governance model in its exploration of the relationship between recordkeeping and governance. This hybrid governance model has features of mainly the academic and corporate governance models. This form of university governance is predominant in public universities in Sub-Saharan Africa.

5.2.4 Audit and recordkeeping

The concept of audit is no longer the preserve of financial accounting. It is now entrenched in other professions and operations. The demand for accountability can be viewed as a contributing factor to the development of an audit culture.

Proponents of an audit culture view it as a means of promoting trust. They argue that people usually trust those in positions of responsibility who act on their behalf, and expect honest behaviour in return. An audit exercise validates this accountability process. This notwithstanding the fact that an audit exercise also receives mixed reactions. For example, there can be resentments when checking on academics. They fiercely guard their academic freedom and view bureaucratic structures as encroachments into their academic environment.

Audit and recordkeeping are inextricably intertwined though the former usually receives greater attention than the latter. For example, audit is usually recognised and treated as a governance function. Structures that promote it such as audit committees and internal audit are put in place. Recordkeeping does not get the same recognition and treatment. But when audit fails due to lack of documentation, recordkeeping is the focus of attention, an approach that can be viewed as reactive.

Recordkeeping's close link with audit makes it an indispensable governance function, either explicitly or implicitly. This section explores this link.

The term audit is derived from the Latin verb *audire*, meaning to hear, and the hearing involves public inspection (Shore and Wright, 2000). In its traditional domain of financial accounting, the audit took on the sense of a review of actions through examining documents that authorised actions and recorded their details (Craig, 2002). This principle is still applicable in the modern era in both financial accounting and other professional domains.

As audits aim to express continuing accountability and strengthen trust bestowed on those in positions of responsibility, they are an essential underpinning of good business practice. Barbara Craig (2002, p. 283) asserts that "accountability anchors trust and is a cornerstone of moral behaviour". In essence, audit ensures accountability in all its forms, either in the context of procedural validation or as a calling of responsibility.

The former aspect emphasises due process – doing things in an agreed, documented and controlled manner. It ensures that public property and funds are used honestly and protected from being siphoned off for private gain (Tough, 2007). The latter is the social purpose of the audit, which is to maintain or re-establish the balance of trust amongst members of a community through the exercise of judgement on those things for which one is responsible (Craig, 2002). It is about making the correct decision on matters of public policy (Tough, 2007). This is the ethical aspect of accountability.

On both sides of the accountability debate, recordkeeping plays vital roles. It provides layers of control that are essential to ensure probity and integrity in financial management systems (Palmer 2000). This may promote efficiency, minimise corruption and bolster trust. As corporate memory, records continue to tell the organisation's story without bias. This may also promote trust.

> Responsible recordkeeping practices that are sensitive to their part in cementing the bonds of trust give us the best way of returning to the past to relive its contingencies without ambiguity – the planned and the contingent intersect in our documents (Craig (2002, p. 284).

Although effective recordkeeping can help to build accountability, it may not be a sufficient condition. As Chris Hurley (2005, p. 223) aptly observes: "The most that can be fairly claimed, therefore, is that effective recordkeeping is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for accountability". An example can help to explain this further.

In an attempt to evade freedom of information obligations, a public institution's governing board may decide not to record some of its deliberations. Its records and documents may appear to be well managed, and continue to fulfil other freedom of information requests.

This can be a good example of lack of ethical responsibility and would agree with Azman Mat Isa's (2009) contention that recordkeeping is just a tool that ensures the availability of evidence for accountability of governance which in turn relies on the ethical standard of those involved. Barbara Craig (2002, p. 289) had previously argued that "Good records kept well cannot correct malevolent personal behaviour nor can they make better human flaws".

This thesis, however, assumes that records and documents are generated and maintained in an honest and ethical manner within the framework of good governance. As such, they have the power to establish a basis of truth within the organisation and beyond it. That truth cannot be broken if actions can be defended and revisited in documents honestly prepared and kept. These records and documents are at their best in dispelling doubt and accounting for official work. In essence, "our documents are ourselves" (Craig, 2002, p. 289).

As recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of audit, a close working relationship between the national records office and the national audit office is to be expected. National record offices are usually accountable for proper management of public records whilst national audit offices have oversight and monitoring roles in the transactions made by public bodies. The national records offices should be enforcing effective records management on public bodies within the support of the executive. The national audit offices should then be able to find the information they require in order to carry out their duties effectively. This, however, is not always to be the case.

Public bodies are often found wanting in terms of effective records management. In his article "The importance of records management towards auditing process: South African perspective" Mphalane Makhura (2008) observed that in 2006/2007 municipalities audit reports, 60 percent of the municipalities failed the audit because of ineffective recordkeeping. Auditors were unable to get supporting documents for the transactions and representations made. These are frequent occurrences in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Mphalane Makhura (2008) argues that records management should be approached as a risk management function, corroborating an observation made by the Auditor General of South Africa. He proposed that national record offices should receive the same status and recognition as national audit offices. In principle, the national records office should inspect and assist struggling organisations before an audit process. These views are similar to the general approach of this study. It is argued that records management should be viewed as a governance function and be given the same attention as that given to other governance functions such as audit and risk management.

5.2.5 Risk and recordkeeping

There is risk in every action. Risk as a result of doing something and risk as a result of not doing anything, risk in commission and risk in omission. Risk may not necessarily imply something going wrong. It can be turned into opportunities if managed effectively. An example can help to explain this positive side of risk.

Although data that has been captured and stored effectively can present risk in terms of storage cost and security, the same data can be mined to provide, for instance, marketing opportunities. In universities, keeping track of graduates provides opportunities to raise funds through alumni contributions.

This section introduces the concepts of risk and risk management and explores the relationship between risk management and recordkeeping.

Risk management guru Michael Power (2004) in his book *The Risk Management of Everything: Rethinking the Politics of Uncertainty* explored the concepts of risk and risk management, initially in the context of the UK and the developed countries, but his analysis can be applicable in the developing countries including those in Sub-Saharan Africa. He aptly observed that the concepts of risk and risk management have expanded tremendously and that many disciplines have embraced them. With such a diversity of interest from different fields, he opted to put the terms in context rather than defining them: "The question 'what is risk?' is less important than the question: 'how do we know risk and what are the social and economic institutions that embody that knowledge?" (Power, 2004, p. 14). This comes close to definition by example, an approach which some scholars detest when defining a concept. Joshua Finnell (2011), in his article "Records Management Theory's Dilemma: What is a Record?" asserted that definition by example was not sufficient definition of a record.

Nonetheless with risk and risk management being used in a myriad of disciplines, defining them by example can help to put the concepts in context. For example, the unavailability of a records retention and disposition schedule can define risk in the context of recordkeeping. The probability of not keeping vital information is usually high in an organisation that does not have this tool, posing great danger of incurring legal, social and economic costs.

Similarly, developing and maintaining a records retention and disposition schedule can define risk management in the context of recordkeeping.

Another risk management guru, Victoria Lemieux (2004), in her book *Managing Risks for Records and Information* provided detailed descriptions of the concepts of risk and risk management. She agreed with Michael Power (2004) that these terms are context dependent. "An event that is risky in one business context may not be in another (Lemieux, 2004, p. 9).

Lemieux (2010) published a full article aimed at exploring the relationship between recordkeeping and risk, "The records-risk nexus: exploring the relationship between records and risk". She observed that there were many contributions on the records-risk nexus from a viewpoint of identification of risk as a reaction to perceived threat such as disasters and digital deterioration or risk events such as Enron[92] and 9/11[93], to or posed by, records. She argued for a further step in the application of risk management processes. Some arguments advanced in this thesis, such as the need to have an alternative approach when managing records and documents in a risky world, corroborate her argument.

Jisc infoNet (2012) defines risk as a future event or series of events with a probability of occurrence and the potential for loss or impact on the objectives that can be either positive or negative. Risk management involves managing risks not only as a means of mitigating hazards but also as an opportunity for improved service delivery.

Victoria Lemieux (2004, p. 10) summarised the two concepts succinctly. As regards to risk, she made the following observation:

- Risk is a description of a thing, event, or action that has not yet occurred.

---

[92] The alleged financial mismanagement and shredding of documents in the oil company, Enron, which resulted in the demise of a leading management and accountancy firm, Arthur Andersen, can be viewed as a deliberate crime. This is an organisational risk as opposed to global risk.

[93]"9/11" is shorthand for four coordinated terrorist attacks on the morning of September 11, 2001 in the US. On this day 19 terrorists hijacked four commercial airplanes, deliberately crashing two of the planes into the upper floors of the North and South towers of the World Trade Centre complex in New York, a third plane into the Pentagon in Arlington, and the fourth plane was crashed into an empty field in western Pennsylvania. The attacks killed nearly 3,000 people from 93 nations. 2,753 people were killed in New York, 184 people were killed at the Pentagon and 40 people were killed in Pennsylvania. Source: *9/11 Memorial*, 2014. Available at: https://www.911memorial.org/faq-about-911; accessed on 17th June 2014.

- That thing, event, or action has probability of occurring.

- A risk has a consequence or impact after it has occurred.

- Determination of probability/impact requires making assumptions about the future.

- Risk is a relative concept – assumptions about the future need to be made within an organisational context.

- Risk can be managed.

In summarising risk management, Lemieux (2004, p. 8) argued that it is:

- A systematic process comprised of a deliberate set of actions required to identify and control exposure to risk.

- A proactive process for handling risks.

- A decision support tool.

- A process aimed at preventing loss and capitalising on opportunities to improve the operations of the organisations.

Risk categorisation takes different viewpoints. There are global risks that are rarely manageable but have a significant impact on the operations of businesses. Examples include climate change, nuclear proliferation, political fragmentations, terrorism, and pandemics. Another category can be that of organisational risks. These risks are more susceptible to control. Examples include market risks such as interest rate changes, political risks such as state policy changes, legal risks such as contractual obligation, and operational risks such as human resources (Lemieux, 2004).

Recordkeeping risks are those associated with poor management of records and documents. Examples of recordkeeping risks, which can be viewed as overlapping with those of the other two categories, include reputational risk, legal risk, financial risk, and informational loss (Bhana, 2008). Operational risk can also add to the list of examples of recordkeeping risks. Examples can help to expound on recordkeeping risks category.

When records and documents are not safely kept, the chances of unauthorised access to personal and corporate information are high. This can impact negatively on the organisation, including putting its reputation at stake. Those with malicious intentions can access private organisations' intelligence which is usually not subject to freedom of information. They can use this information against the organisations.

If records are not effectively created and kept, the authenticity and integrity of the corporate memory can be at stake. This will have a serious consequence, including failure of the organisation. In her article, "The Jamaican Financial Crisis: Accounting for the Collapse of Jamaica's Indigenous Commercial Banks", Victoria Lemieux (2002) presented a case study of the failure of Jamaica's indigenous commercial banks and identified weak records management practices as important factors in the bank collapses.

Organisations often spend unnecessary amounts of money by not practicing good recordkeeping. At the simplest level, they may be billed for one delivery of goods more than once. They can be charged for not complying with legislation requiring them to keep and maintain specific records and documents. They can also pay huge sums of money when they fail to defend themselves in courts of law because of lack of supporting documents. High levels of missing documents and inaccessibility of information are amongst key features of poor recordkeeping that present organisations with insufficient records and documents to defend themselves.

With poor recordkeeping, vital information may not be recovered when disaster strikes. This can also cause the total collapse of the organisation. Just as people need insurance, organisations need records management programmes to ensure that they are covered if and when, disasters strike (Bhana, 2008).

Oral culture which is predominant in Sub-Saharan Africa can also present a good example of recordkeeping risks. As discussed earlier, people demonstrate a very clear preference for oral rather than written communication (Tough, 2012). This can be viewed in the same manner as having an organisation that has lost most of its recorded information. It can also be viewed as relying on informal actors and structures.

Although it can be argued that keeping records and documents would in itself present more risks, corporate memory is essential in this era where long service at the workplace is not guaranteed, and part-time and contract jobs are becoming a norm. It can benefit an organisation if a recording culture is promoted at the expense of the oral culture. This can be achieved by putting in place regulations where oral instructions are required to be confirmed in writing.

When records and documents are managed effectively, they present an opportunity in that efficiency, economy, transparency and accountability can be improved. Records managers are in essence becoming good risk managers. This corroborates observations that records management should be approached as a risk management function. Achieving this would require governing bodies and management giving serious attention to records management in the same manner they do with risk management. One way of doing this is to treat recordkeeping as a governance function. This thesis explores this relationship in detail. A new approach is proposed in the last chapter.

Like the concept of audit which had its origin in the business world of financial accounting but which is now entrenched in the public sector, risk management techniques can also be traced from the private sector business domain. Michael Power (2004) identified three techniques in risk management that originated from the private sector and now applied in the public sector. The first technique involves internal control and the subsequent operational risk. The second technique involves reputational risk. The third technique involves risk management ideas driving the corporate agendas. The collapse of the Maxwell Empire[94] in the UK and the publication of the COSO[95] document on internal control in the US were the major events that gave birth to internal control as a form of risk management. Internal controls are not without challenges; they are organisational projections and as such subject to misplacement (Power, 2004).

---

[94] The Maxwell Empire was a business establishment founded by Robert Maxwell. Its line of trade included the media and information services. He was criticised for his business methods and abrasive management style. His financial practices were officially questioned. His empire collapsed in 1991, the same year he died. Source: The New York Times of 20th December 1991, "Maxwell's Empire: How it grew, how it fell – a special report; charming the big bankers out of billions". Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/20/business/maxwell-s-empire-it-grew-it-fell-special-report-charming-big-bankers-billions.html?src=pm&pagewanted=2; accessed on 17th June 2014.

[95] Committee of Sponsoring Organisations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) is a joint initiative of the five private sector organisations dedicated to providing thought leadership through the development of frameworks and guidance on enterprise risk management, internal control and fraud deterrence. Available at http://www.coso.org/default.htm; accessed on 19th June 2014

Operational risk can be viewed as the "risk of direct or indirect loss resulting from inadequate or failed internal processes, people and systems or from external events" (Power, 2004, p. 9). Ineffective recordkeeping is arguably a good example of a failed internal process.

Reputational risk management can be viewed as "the rationally self-interested recognition of the risks posed by various agents in the organisational environment" (Power, 2004, p. 34). As various agents may impact on organisational reputation, reputational risk management demands the risk management of everything. For example, CSOs play crucial roles in promoting transparency in Africa. Governments may work in close collaboration with these CSOs to achieve this objective and subsequently promote their reputation.

In their article "The Role of Civil Society Organisations in Supporting Fiscal Transparency in African Countries", Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako (2009) examined the diverse roles which CSOs play in supporting fiscal transparency in developing countries, including interventions in the budget process. For example, proving some input at the budget formulation stage; analysing the budget at the budget review stage; and supporting expenditure tracking and performance monitoring at the implementation stage. They argued that this can be made possible by amongst others, improving access to relevant information.

Modern corporate governance models have strong risk management components. Adopting any of the models can imply adopting risk management ideas driving the corporate agendas of the modern business.

Risk measurement involves quantification of certain risk exposures for the purpose of comparison to organisational risk tolerances (Lemieux, 2004). Probability is usually used as a tool to measure risk. It involves predicting the likelihood that a risk will occur. This being the case, experience can be an essential consideration in determining the probability. An organisation's experience is usually found in its records and documents. For the experience to be reliable, records and documents have to be managed effectively.

The assessed level of risk may be expressed either qualitatively or quantitatively. In some cases it can be expressed as a mixture, both qualitatively and quantitatively. A qualitative risk management measurement, an approach adopted by this thesis, involves assigning a ranking such as high, medium or low to the probability and impact of a risk, based on a predetermined scale (Lemieux, 2004). Table 2 illustrates a qualitative risk assessment.

Scale	Probability	Impact
High	Likely to occur each year	Significant impact on the organisation's strategy
Medium	Likely to occur in a ten-year time period	Moderate impact on the organisation's strategy
Low	Not likely to occur in a ten-year period	Low impact on the organisation's strategy

Table 2: Sample risk measurement scale (Adapted from Lemieux, 2005, p. 17)

The high scale in Table 2 above implies both probability and impact are high, and that risk is at its highest. Similarly, the medium scale implies both probability and impact are medium, and the risk is moderate. The low scale implies both probability and impact are low, and that risk is at its lowest. Priority is usually given to events which have got the highest risks.

After determining the rankings of an organisation's risks, plotting these ranks on a risk map is usually helpful. A risk map is aptly described by Lemieux (2004):

> A risk map graphically illustrates where the risk sits in relationship to the organisation's other risks and therefore whether it should be treated as high, medium, or low priority risk (Lemieux, 2004, p. 19)

Figure 8 below illustrates a risk map.

Medium	High
Low	Medium

Impact — Medium risk
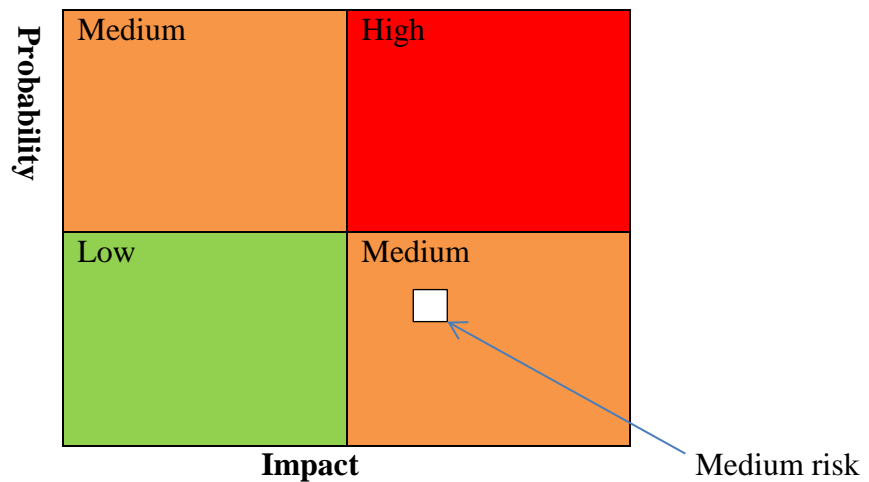
Figure 8: Sample risk map (Adapted from Lemieux, 2004, p. 18)

There are many strategies organisations pursue in dealing with risk, including risk avoidance, risk transfer, probability reduction, impact reduction, and acceptance (Lemieux, 2004). Risk avoidance involves taking steps to avoid the risk completely. Risk transfer involves passing the risk to a third party. In the context of recordkeeping, this may include outsourcing some activities such as storage of records and documents.

Reducing the likelihood of risk from occurring involves focussing on the sources of the risk and taking preventive measures. For example, if careless usage of e-mail leaves the organisation open to litigation, policies and user training aimed at controlling e-mail usage within the organisation can be introduced (Lemieux, 2004). Uncontrollable occurrences, those that cannot be prevented from happening, may require corrective controls as risk treatment strategies. For example, an organisation can put in place a backup system in case of systems failure.

Reducing the impact of risk can be viewed in many contexts including financial impact. One common method of reducing the financial impact of a risk is by means of risk financing, a strategy most often associated with the taking out of insurance (Lemieux, 2004). As for risk acceptance, an organisation can choose to accept a risk when the probability of occurrence and impact are relatively low, and when the cost of mitigating the risk is unattractively high (Lemieux, 2004). Why outsource the storage of records and documents to breakeven when the security of the information can be under threat?

The final aspect in analysing risk and risk management is to describe a risk management process. Azman Mat Isa (2006) viewed a risk management process as consisting of a series of activities undertaken to achieve organisation's goals. These activities include risk analysis that involves risk identification, description and estimation; risk evaluation; risk reporting; risk treatment; and monitoring. The activities of a risk management process have to be audited to ensure their smooth functioning. Effective audit is dependent on effective recordkeeping.

5.2.6 The Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit as a means of measuring risk and capacity

It is argued that governance and recordkeeping are symbiotic elements in an organisation's strategy. As sound recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of good governance, the converse can be true. That good governance is a necessary condition for sound recordkeeping. A governance recordkeeping toolkit has been developed to measure recordkeeping capacity using the organisation's governance and recordkeeping infrastructure. This section explores the governance recordkeeping toolkit notion that informed the data collection exercise of the study under review.

Chapter 2 explored various tools and methodologies used to assess an organisation's recordkeeping capacity. These tools and methodologies include:

- Recordkeeping standards such as ISO 15489
  - A recordkeeping standard can be used as a benchmark to evaluate an organisation's recordkeeping capacity (An and Jiao, 2004)

- Recordkeeping maturity models such as JISC's Records Management Maturity Model
  - This methodology attempts to gauge the level of maturity of the recordkeeping practices in an organisation.
- Checklists such PARBICA's Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit
  - This toolkit can be used as a monitoring tool to evaluate and review how organisations' records and documents are being managed and to see where they need to make improvement to their recordkeeping arrangements (PARBICA, 2007).

These tools and methodologies have different purposes, audiences and coverage. Organisations need to select the tools and methodologies most appropriate for them depending on their own context and requirements (McLeod et al, 2006). There are different approaches to this. An organisation can adopt a toolkit in its entirety if it suits its requirements. It can also develop a new toolkit to suit its context and requirements. The governance recordkeeping toolkit is a good example of the latter approach. Its purpose is to assess recordkeeping capacity using governance and recordkeeping infrastructures.

It can also be used as a monitoring tool to evaluate and review how an organisation's records and documents are managed in fostering its governance, audit and risk management agenda; and see where it needs to make improvement to its recordkeeping arrangements. This toolkit is mainly aimed at the university recordkeeping environment of the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

As explained earlier, elements of a recordkeeping infrastructure include systems and technologies, policies, standards, tools and practices, as well as skilled and competent human resources (McLeod and Hare, 2005). Similarly, features of corporate governance include systems, structures, practices, procedures, and corporate culture (Bryson, 2011). The overlap between elements of a recordkeeping infrastructure and that of governance can be viewed from the inextricable linkage between recordkeeping and governance. The corporate culture may not be amenable to management in the way that procedures are, but it is essential for effective operation of an organisation as it involves people issues.

In their research project, Accelerating Positive Change in Electronic Records Management, Julie McLeod et al (2010) put people issues at the centre of their study. They observed that the management of electronic records had been a significant issue for organisations for more than two decades, and that although various bodies had developed guidelines, standards and systems, the pace of change in the management of the electronic records had been relatively slow. The key headline findings that emerged from this project included:

- The people, process and systems/technology aspects of electronic records management are inextricably linked; though may be useful for research design and as an analytical tool, the distinction between them is not one that can legitimately be drawn in modelling what actually happens
- People issues are predominant, fundamental and challenging as they concern culture, philosophical attitudes, awareness of records management and electronic records management issues, preferences, knowledge and skills

  (McLeod et al, 2010, p. 17)

Similarly, a governance model and subsequent governance recordkeeping toolkit can be informed by people issues including cultural beliefs and philosophical attitudes. An African Ubuntu philosophy is a good example of cultural beliefs shaping corporate governance models in Sub-Saharan Africa. In their study that aimed at establishing a corporate governance approach as practiced by organisations within an African context, James Khomba et al (2013) found that Africa's socio-cultural framework premised on the Ubuntu philosophy resonates with general principles surrounding business ethics and corporate governance. The King Code of Governance Principles embedded the Ubuntu philosophy, making the governance code more relevant to its working environment.

The concept of Ubuntu has received great attention in Southern Africa. Coincidentally, this is the sub-region that coined the wording of the concept from an expression *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu,* "I am because you are; you are because we are" (Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2009, p. 61). The concept is however not confined in this sub-region. It is omnipresent throughout Sub-Saharan Africa (Khomba et al, 2013). In their final analysis, Khomba et al (2013) asserted that wholesale adoption of an external management system would bring challenges in the operations of an African-based organisation. They argued for application of Ubuntu philosophy to such organisations.

Although the Ubuntu philosophy can be viewed as promoting cohesion in society and enhancing ethical aspect of accountability, its wholesale adoption can also be viewed as an obstacle hindering development, including university development. This means that university governance can negatively be affected as a result of a wholesale adoption of Ubuntu philosophy. John Holms (2010) has aptly outlined cultural issues hindering the development of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa. These cultural issues, as explained earlier, can be viewed as elements as Ubuntu.

5.2.7 Structure of the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit

The electronic environment presents challenges and opportunities in the way records and documents are managed. Organisations usually come up with special mechanisms in order to manage their records and documents in line with changes in technology. Similarly, special mechanisms can be considered in the management of records and documents when organisations operate in an environment where governance, audit and risk are important issues. This environment equally presents challenges and opportunities in the way records and documents are managed. The governance recordkeeping toolkit can help to ensure that an organisation has a basic level of recordkeeping capacity that responds to the demands of governance, audit and risk management.

The elements of a governance recordkeeping toolkit can be viewed from the perspective of good corporate governance functions such as recordkeeping, auditing, risk management, and leadership. Some organisations exclude recordkeeping from the criteria for good corporate governance infrastructure (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2013). It is, however, argued that recordkeeping should be an essential function of good corporate governance. This assertion corroborates an observation by Marlize Palmer (2000) who posited that records management, accounting and auditing are the three functions supporting good corporate governance. For instance, they can provide layers of control that are essential to ensure transparency, probity and integrity in financial management systems (Palmer, 2000). It is also argued that governance recordkeeping toolkits serve different purposes; they can have different audiences; and can have different purposes. What follows is an extract from the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit in Appendix 1. Its structure covers the following: function – the corporate governance function; element – the component of governance recordkeeping infrastructure; and examination – the evaluation of governance recordkeeping element.

The same approach can be adapted for use in other types of institutions. Table 3 is the structure of the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit.

Function	Element	Examination
Recordkeeping	1. Medium of information	Checking the predominant medium
	2. Records management policy	Checking availability
	3. Records management process	Assessing classification, storage, retrieval, and disposition of records
	4. Records management project	Checking availability
	5. Recordkeeping expertise	Assessing availability
	6. Management support	Examining level of management support for records management
	7. Recordkeeping environment	Analysing internal and external factors affecting recordkeeping
	8. Users views on how to improve recordkeeping	Examining suggested areas for improved recordkeeping
Governance	9. Governing bodies makeup and proceedings	Analysing the structure and conduct of meetings
	10. Executive management team composition	Analysing the management team and its link to governing bodies
	11. Financial management	Analysing sources of funds
	12. Procurement	Analysing the procurement committee and winning bid
	13. Strategic plan and budget	Checking communication modes
	14. People issues	Identifying cultural philosophies
Audit	15. Financial audit	Analysing internal and external audit
	16. Academic audit	Checking the frequency and areas of assessment
	17. Recordkeeping audit	Monitoring recordkeeping system
Risk management	18. Risk Management committee	Checking availability
	19. Vital records and documents	Assessing their maintenance
	20. Compliance bodies	Analysing internal and external compliance bodies

Table 3: Governance recordkeeping toolkit structure

Further analysis of the structure of this governance recordkeeping toolkit can be useful. Firstly, the elements of recordkeeping, governance, audit, and risk management are inextricably linked. This is expected because records are generated as a result of business undertakings. Embedding records management into business process should be the normal practice. As aptly put by Barbara Reed (2006, p. 23), "… integrating records into business is a no-brainer. That is what it's about. That's what records are, they come from business". Elements of the governance recordkeeping toolkit should therefore not be viewed in isolation.

Checking on the medium of information may be useful in determining the position of the organisation on the paperless office continuum. This would in turn help to design appropriate recordkeeping systems using available technology and other resources. For example if university records and documents are mainly paper based, it may require a different approach to their management from that needed if they were mainly electronic based.

A records management policy is essential for effective management of records and documents in an organisation. TNA (2010)[96] argued that a records management policy:

- Demonstrates to employees and stakeholders that managing records and documents is important to the organisation
- Provides a statement of intentions that underpins a records management programme
- Services as a mandate for the activities of the records manager
- Provides a framework for supporting documents including procedures, business rules and disposal schedules

The contents of a records management policy will vary and depend on the nature of the organisation. However, the following elements are usually found in a recordkeeping policy, corroborating TNA (2010):

- Overall commitment to keep the organisation's records
- Role of records management in an organisation
- Reference to related policies

---

[96] The National Archives (TNA), "Guide 3: Records Management Policy". Kew, Richmond, Surrey: TNA Information Policy Team, 2010. Available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/rm-code-guide3.pdf; accessed on 15th July 2014.

- Responsibilities of managers, staff, contractors and volunteers with respect to records management

- References to supporting documents – procedures dealing with day-to-day records management operations

- Monitoring compliance – mandating an appropriate person to undertake monitoring and prepare reports

For example, elements of the University College London Records Management Policy[97] includes aims, responsibilities, related policies, and policy statements on different areas such as records management systems, records creation, classification, access and security, records preservation, retention schedule, disposal, email, and vital records.

As regards the records management process, the Toolkit assesses how records are classified, stored, and disposed of. It will determine whether the processes are carried out efficiently and well; whether they are carried out to an acceptable standard; or whether they are carried out poorly. It will also check the availability of documented procedure manuals.

Records management projects, recordkeeping expertise and management support are gauged to determine their impact on recordkeeping capacity. Records management projects such as digitisation and installation of a Local Area Network linking computers, printers, scanners and other peripheral devices via servers may suggest management support and the resolve to improve recordkeeping in line with changes in technology. It is argued, however, that technology alone is not a solution to recordkeeping problems. It requires recordkeeping expertise to ensure that systems acquired have the necessary recordkeeping functionalities.

The Toolkit analyses the environment in which the organisation is operating in order to identify the extent environmental forces are impacting on the operation of the organisation. These forces include legislation and the general regulatory environment, economic and political forces, and the expectations of key stakeholders. They present opportunities as well as challenges. It is imperative for the organisation to optimise the opportunities and limit the challenges.

---

[97] University College London, "University College London Records Management Policy". London: University College London Library Services, 2011. Online; available at: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/records-office/policy.shtml; accessed on 15th July 2014.

Council, senate, and executive management are usually constituted using appropriate legislation, charters and statutes. These legal instruments change with time to suit the governance demands. In their book *The University of Glasgow: 1451 – 1996*, A.L. Brown and Michael Moss (1996) outlined changes in legal instruments governing a university using the University of Glasgow as an example.

> It was soon recognised that the 1858 Act had given too much power to the Senate and too little to the newly established University Court, …, and a further Royal Commission on Scottish Universities, set up in 1876, recommended that their functions and membership should be better balanced. The Universities (Scotland) Act of 1889 therefore vested all university property and control of all finances in the Court (Brown and Moss, 1996, p. 103)

The composition of councils or governing boards can have a bearing on university governance. A university governing board with the majority of its members from outside the university may exercise its powers in a different style than if a majority of its members were from inside the university. This however may not be the case with some universities in Sub-Saharan Africa where governments overrule council mandates. Councils are usually figureheads, rubberstamping governments' decisions.

Governing boards, senate and executive management operate through meetings though significant conversations may take place in advance of these formal meetings. The Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit analyses procedures for the meetings including minutes generation, maintenance, storage and use. These records in the form of minutes are what direct and control universities.

As for financial management and procurement, the toolkit analyses the sources of university financial resources and its procurement processes. Effective recordkeeping provides layers of control that are essential to ensure transparency, probity and integrity of financial management systems (Palmer, 2000).

Strategic plan and budget processes include consultation, writing-up, implementation, and monitoring. In these processes, communication is essential. Recordkeeping plays a vital role in the communication process by amongst others ensuring that the strategic plan and budget information is effectively maintained, stored and used when required.

People issues are essential in the running of an organisation, including a university. The Toolkit identifies cultural issues that are incorporated and those that are not incorporated in the management of the university.

In the case of audit, the Toolkit makes the link to internal and external audits. It also assesses the challenges that auditors encounter when they carry out their work in universities. When records are not well structured and managed, universities find it difficult to produce the records the auditors require. The audit assessment extends to academic activities. The Toolkit identifies the frequency of academic audit and its focus area. Recordkeeping systems are usually audited to determine if they are achieving their objectives. The toolkit monitors the recordkeeping system for this purpose.

The Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit checks the availability of risk assessment tools and methodologies including risk registers, and risk management committees. The risk register lists potential risks and information associated with them such as their probability, impact, and counter-measures. It is essential to audit the risk register for it to be effective.

Risk management committees are usually put in place to coordinate the risk management functions. They may be subcommittees of governing bodies or standalone committees.

Vital records and documents present a special challenge to a university. Students' databases, registers of graduates, marketing intelligence, and all those other records which if missing would render the university dysfunctional should have their way of maintenance assessed.

Internal and external compliance bodies are analysed to determine their level of influence on the operation of the university. What are these bodies and how do they affect the university operations? The Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit exists to answer these questions.

5.3 Conclusion

Governance recordkeeping is an approach to recordkeeping that fosters the governance agenda of an organisation. As recordkeeping and governance are symbiotic elements in an organisation's strategy, the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit has been generated and used to assess the organisation's recordkeeping capacity using the governance and recordkeeping infrastructure. The Tool can also be used as a monitoring tool to evaluate and review how an organisation's records and documents are managed to meet the demands of a modern organisation.

Cultural beliefs and philosophical attitudes should however be critically analysed when developing a governance model and subsequent governance recordkeeping toolkit. They may have a bearing on the performance and development of the organisation, including universities. The next chapter presents findings of the study using, amongst others, the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit.

Chapter 6: Governance structures and the drivers for recordkeeping

6.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explored governance, audit and risk, in general and in the context of recordkeeping.   The author's concept of governance recordkeeping is the basis for the Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit.   This chapter and the one that follows present findings of this research which sought to critically explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk management.

As argued in the previous chapter, records managers have limited authority to direct recordkeeping.   The mandate usually derives from the governance structures.   In any event mandates will be largely ignored unless they add value to the front end.

Traditionally, in commonwealth African public institutions, the effectiveness of recordkeeping has been underpinned by the registries.   In his article "The Hutton Inquiry, the President of Nigeria and what the Butler hoped to see", Michael Moss (2005) observed that apart from providing an accurate journal of transactions and thereby precedent, the registry also protected the impartiality of civil servants as the records were managed by registry clerks who were expected to act in the ambit of their fiduciary duties.   Some public institutions such as UNIMA and Mzuni, as will be noted in the findings in the next chapter, maintained this traditional aspect of recordkeeping.   However, relying on the registry clerks as *de facto* records managers accentuates the slow movement of recordkeeping staff up the professional ladder.

Michael Moss (2005) further observed that in the registry system, there were elaborate safeguards by which documents and later files had to be signed in and out; papers could only be added to a file or docket by an authorised registry clerk; and all those who consulted a file or docket had to be initialled. Such arrangements, according to Moss (2005), represented the classic distinction between the front and back office and the security it afforded. The absence of such security contributed to the collapse of Barings Bank, the London merchant bank, in 1995.

Similarly, the Butler Report[98] disclosed weaknesses of recordkeeping practices in the government, and resulted in the receding of public trust. This was expected because effective recordkeeping is essential for promoting trust. In order to restore public confidence and trust in the machinery of the government, Moss (2005) argued that authority for managing information must continue to reside with the cabinet secretary who is the head of the civil service and other permanent secretaries and be much more explicitly exercised. It is also essential to empower the recordkeeping staff with training and authority to effectively complement the top management effort in managing the institution's recorded information.

The arguments put forward by Michael Moss (2005), though largely focussing on the mainstream civil service, can be applicable in other public organisations where the authority for managing information resides with the governance structures. In public organisations, governance structures include governing bodies. In the context of universities, they include council, senate, and executive management teams. These were the focus of this research as they were the predominant governance structures in universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. How do the governing bodies impact on recordkeeping? And how does recordkeeping affect the proceedings of the governing bodies?

In addition to the governing bodies, the research focussed on other drivers for recordkeeping including: the legislative environment such as laws impacting on recordkeeping; the regulatory environment such as outside bodies which validate courses; and the strategic environment such as intention to compete internationally that would require audited records to support claims such as those about student numbers and satisfaction and research income.

Other drivers for recordkeeping focussed on include audit, such as internal, external and institutional; and risk management. Similarly, Julie McLeod and Catherine Hare (2006) came up with three categories of the drivers for recordkeeping; vis-à-vis, business needs, risk management, and legal and regulatory demands.

---

[98] The Review of Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Butler Review, examined the intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction which played a key part in invading the country in 2003.

Recordkeeping fosters efficiency and effectiveness, transparency and accountability, and competitiveness in the operations of business. These, alongside the need to audit the business operations and implement a strategic plan, constitute a business need that can drive recordkeeping. What follows is a detailed analysis of the drivers for recordkeeping that this research identified. This analysis partly answers the second research question on how the internal and external factors affect recordkeeping.

6.2 Legal and regulatory demands

Organisations operate in an environment with a number of laws and regulations that directly or indirectly affect recordkeeping. Some of these laws and regulations contain explicit recordkeeping requirements; for instance, the need to create specific type of records and the need to keep records for specific length of time (McLeod and Hare, 2006). Others contain implicit requirements for recordkeeping; for instance, the need to promote transparency and accountability. Transparency and accountability can only be demonstrated if records and documents are well managed (Willis, 2005).

As will be revealed later, the existence of legislation and regulations may not necessarily deliver good recordkeeping. Their implementation is as important as their existence. As Ngulube and Tafor (2006) rightly observed, the existence of progressive and comprehensive legislation is not likely to bring about any positive changes in the management of public records unless resources to implement the laws are made available. The executive management team, as an element of the governance structure, is vested with responsibilities to implement the legislation by providing the necessary tools and resources. The study identified different laws, regulations, standards, and regulatory bodies which had the potential to drive recordkeeping, as shown in Table 4.

South Africa	Malawi
5. Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended	1. National Council for Higher Education Act No 15 of 2011
6. Council on Higher Education (CHE)	2. National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)
7. Promotion of Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000 (PAIA)	3. Public Audit Act No 6 of 2003
8. South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)	4. National Audit Office
	5. National Archives Act of 1975
9. Public Audit Act No 25 of 2004	6. National Archives of Malawi
10. The Auditor General	7. Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi
11. National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act No 43 of 1996 as amended	8. Medical Council of Malawi
12. The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARSSA)	9. National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008-2017
13. King III	10. UNIMA Act of 1974 as amended, and Mzuni Act No 12 of 1997
14. South African Nursing Council	
15. Health Professions Council of South Africa	11. Public Finance Management Act No 7 of 2003
16. SANS 15489: Part 1 – General; and Part 2 – Guidelines	12. Public Procurement Act No 8 of 2003
17. Public Finance Management Act No 1 of 1999	13. Comptroller of Statutory Corporations directive: Ref. No. 1/01/03/VII

Table 4: Laws, regulations, standards, and regulatory bodies

6.2.1 Regulatory bodies

Both South Africa and Malawi had independent regulatory bodies for higher education. In South Africa, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) was the regulatory body established by the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended. In Malawi, the National Council for Higher Education Act No 15 of 2011 established the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) as a regulatory body for higher education. It was evident that the South African higher education sector had an independent regulatory body that was in existence more than a decade longer than Malawi, implying a much more established system.

The Malawi Government operationalised the NCHE two years after it was approved by Parliament. Before the establishment of the NCHE, all matters to do with the accreditation of higher education institutions were handled by a special committee in the Office of the President and Cabinet[99]. This researcher visited the Directorate of Higher Education in Malawi which was responsible for regulating higher education before NCHE started working. He also relied on CHE reports, some of which were online.

 The CHE had executive responsibility for quality assurance and discharged this responsibility through the establishment of a permanent committee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC).[100] This statutory committee was led by an executive director who was responsible for coordinating the work of the HEQC with that of the higher education institutions and for relations with stakeholders in general. The HEQC had three directorates:

i.   Institutional Audits Directorate - responsible for conducting audits of the higher education institutions' systems to ensure good quality service delivery in the three core functions of teaching, research, and community engagement.

ii.   National Reviews Directorate - responsible for re-accrediting existing programmes in specific disciplines and/or qualification areas, and consequently increasing public confidence in higher education programmes.

iii.   Programme Accreditation Directorate - responsible for accrediting the learning programmes of the higher education institutions, leading to qualifications registered on the National Qualification Framework (NQF).

The equivalent of the HEQC at the NCHE was the Quality Assurance Directorate. It coordinated the accreditation and quality assurance services in higher education institutions in Malawi.

---

[99] University World News, "Malawi: Higher education council finally gets going"; Issue No 107, 30 March 2013. Available at: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130329105258983; accessed on 30th March 2015.
[100] Council on Higher Education, "Mandate". Available at:
 http://www.che.ac.za/about/overview_and_mandate/mandate; accessed on 20 February 2015.

According to the NCHE Act (2011), a higher education institution was issued with a certificate of accreditation if it demonstrated the achievement of prescribed standards in terms of physical, human, financial, teaching and learning resources; management and operational procedures; and an acceptable standard of academic life focusing on teaching, research, community and expert service. For each programme, the accreditation process took into account the following aspects: academic staff qualifications; total number of students enrolled; ICT infrastructure; teaching and learning resources including the library; physical facilities; student-staff ratio; availability of financial resources, certified by the institution's auditors; and the currency, relevance and frequency of review of the curriculum for each programme for comparability nationally and internationally.[101] The performance of higher education institution was usually evaluated every academic cycle.

Notwithstanding some contradictions such as the emphasise on physical facilities such as land when at the same time the universities were encouraged to optimise new technologies and offer distance or online mode of learning hence emphasis on ICT infrastructure, the accreditation process in particular and the quality assurance process in general can be effective if the higher education institutions maintained their records well. These processes required audited records to support claims the higher education institutions would make such as student and academic staff numbers in determining student-staff ratios.

As will be detailed in the section on audit, all universities audited their academic activities as a means of improving quality. The study found the following:

i. UWC – conducted annual reviews regularly; had rigorous departmental reviews every five to seven years.

ii. UCT – conducted audit of their teaching and learning activities annually; had rigorous department reviews once in every ten years.

iii. UJ – apart from annual reviews, the University conducted a rigorous faculty audit in a cycle of 4 or 5 or 6 years.

iv. Wits – conducted triennial reviews.

v. UNIMA and Mzuni - quality assurance units conducted academic audits when required.

---

[101] NCHE Section 28(2)

In addition to these reviews being advantageous to the universities themselves, as they helped to ensure improved quality, the reviews could also be viewed as precursors for the work of the independent regulatory bodies, and would undoubtedly make their work much simpler.

The CHE and NCHE mandates involved the broader aspects of the institutions of higher education. However there were other regulatory bodies targeting specialist areas of the universities. Examples identified include the regulatory bodies overseeing the education and training of the health personnel including nurses and medical practitioners. These were the Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi and the Medical Council of Malawi on the Malawi side. On the South Africa side there were the South African Nursing Council and the Health Professions Council of South Africa, an equivalent of the Medical Council of Malawi. All six universities studied provided education and training for nurses and/or medical practitioners.

The Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi's powers, as a statutory body, included issuing or renewing a licence to carry on the business of a nursing agency after inspecting the records and accounts, and investigating the activities of the nursing agency[102]. The Medical Council of Malawi's powers included the following: to register medical practitioners; to remove any name from any register or restore it subject to such conditions imposed; to appoint examiners and moderators to conduct examinations and approve certificates; and to approve of institutions for the training of medical and related personnel.[103]

Similarly, the South African Nursing Council sets standards for the establishment and outcomes of education and training programmes for the nurses.[104] The Health Professions Council of South Africa determined standards of professional education and training, and setting and maintaining excellent standards of ethical and professional practice for the medical practitioners.[105]

---

[102] Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi, "About us". Available at: http://www.nmcm.org.mw/index.html; accessed on 5th January 2015.

[103] Medical Council of Malawi, "About us". Available at: http://medicalcouncilmw.org/about.htm; accessed on 5th January 2015.

[104] South African Nursing Council, "Nursing education and training standards". Available at: http://www.sanc.co.za/pdf/Nursing%20Education%20and%20Training%20Standards.pdf; accessed on 20th January 2015.

[105] Health Professions of South Africa, "Overview". Available at: http://www.hpcsa.co.za/About; accessed on 20th January 2015.

It was evident that these nursing and medical schools had to possess some form of effective recordkeeping to ensure their continued operation. This however did not translate into university-wide recordkeeping improvements for some universities, as will be seen in the next chapter. It was revealed that the universities in Malawi, despite their strong nursing schools, had overall inadequate recordkeeping.

6.2.2 Laws

Key legislation that had an impact on recordkeeping in some public institutions in South Africa was the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA).[106] At the time of data collection, this law had been operational for more than a decade in South Africa. Malawi had not yet enacted similar legislation. It was evident that this law contributed to the improvement of the recordkeeping systems in the public organisations in South Africa as will be attested later in this section.

PAIA had the following objectives: promoting transparency, accountability and effective governance of all public bodies by empowering and educating everyone to understand their rights so that they are able to exercise those rights in relation to the public institutions; and establishing voluntary and mandatory mechanisms or procedures which give effect to the right of access to information in a speedy, inexpensive and effortless manner as reasonably possible[107].

These objectives are in line with freedom of information (FOI) laws being enacted across the globe. The objectives for these FOI laws include: to promote transparency and openness; to promote effective and efficient governance; foster a culture of accountability; as a vehicle to access other rights; to ensure participative democracy; and to provide information in swift, inexpensive and effortless manner. These objectives are and their relationship to records management are can be illustrated in relation to the South African law.[108]

---

[106] Republic of South Africa, Department of Arts and Culture, "Records Management Policy Manual". Available at: http://www.national.archives.gov.za/rms/Records_Management_Policy_Manual_October_2007.pdf; accessed on 20th August 2015.

[107] South African Human Rights Commission, "Compliance for Public Bodies: An Information Officer's Understanding of PAIA". Available at: http://www.sahrc.org.za/home/index.php?ipkContentID=26&ipkMenuID=46; accessed on 25 March 2015.

[108] Ibid

Challenges associated with FOI laws encouraged some nations, such as Malawi to continuously postpone their enactment. They included aspects such as: relevance to people's needs; inadequacy in protecting the poor, vis-à-vis fees and courts costs; non user friendly legal frameworks, especially the timeframes; and lack of appreciation that access to information is crucial for developing and sustaining a human rights regime. This was compounded by the fear of some governments that they might be challenged if their citizens had knowledge of what the government was going.

PAIA prescribes that every public body must have an information manual. This manual serves as a roadmap to assist the public when making a request for information. It shows how the organisation is structured and the services it provides, a list of all the records held by the organisation and the process the public must follow to lodge a request with the particular organisation. The manual also includes the phone number, email address and postal address of the information officer and deputy information officers to allow requesters to easily send the request form to them. The information officer of a public body is the head of that public body. They usually delegate their duties to a deputy information officer to ensure that request for information made to their organisation is dealt with in an effective and efficient manner.

The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) enforced compliance with the PAIA. It compelled public bodies to submit annual reports and the manual to it. Three of the four universities investigated explicitly indicated that they did submit these annual reports. The annual report content included:

    i.   Number of PAIA requests received.
   ii.   Number of requests granted in full.
  iii.   Number of requests granted despite there being a ground of refusal.
   iv.   Number of requests refused in full or refused partially.
    v.   Number of instances where the 30 day period to deal with a request was extended.
   vi.   Number of internal appeals lodged with the relevant authority.
  vii.   Number of internal appeals lodged on account of a deemed refusal.
 viii.   Number of applications to court on the grounds that an internal appeal was dismissed.

ix. Comments including those relating to implementation, application, and requests[109].

The research revealed that South African universities, in principle, complied with this legislation. At UCT, the Registrar was designated as the information officer with faculty representatives as deputy information officers. Records held by UCT that were subjected to voluntary disclosures included:

i. Reports
ii. Student handbooks, rules and syllabus information
iii. Student academic results and whether a person has a UCT qualification
iv. Transcripts (issued to the student concerned, on payment of a processing fee)
v. Library materials
vi. Archival records over 30 years, except where an obligation to a third party exists
vii. Newsletters

UCT records that had to be formally requested included:

i. Records of organs of internal governance (the Council, the Senate, the Institutional Forum, the SRC, the Convocation, and of University Committees)
ii. Records of individual students
iii. Records of individual personnel
iv. Results of research, completed or in progress
v. Financial records[110]

At UWC, the Deputy Vice Chancellor and senior managers were appointed deputy information officers. The University published its manual on its website as a strategy for compliance[111].

---

[109] SAHRC Annual Report template; available at:
http://www.sahrc.org.za/home/21/files/Section%2032%20Reporting%20Template%202012.pdf; accessed on 18 February 2015.
[110] UCT Manual in terms of Section 14(1) of the Promotion of Access to Information Act No.2 of 2000. Available at: https://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/policies/PAIA_eng.pdf; accessed on 20th January 2015.
[111] Interview with UWC's Archivist/Records Manager held on 12th October 2012.

Similarly, at Wits, the University had an information manual. It also prepared reports to the South African Human Rights Commission once a year[112]. UJ had the same trend as Wits. According to UJ Director of Corporate Governance, the Act enhanced transparency, accountability and effectiveness of governance.

Like the FOI Act in the UK, the PAIA in South African had recordkeeping implications. Major records management implications brought by the FOI included the need to have an integrated approach to information and records management with clearly defined and assigned responsibilities for implementing records management; the need to have a policy statement on how records are managed; and the need to ensure that resources are available for managing records (McLeod and Hare, 2006).

The research revealed that all four of the South African universities studied had records management policies, received good management support, and integrated information and records management save for UCT whose recordkeeping was, to some extent, disjointed as will be revealed in the next chapter. Three of the four universities had records management units and employed qualified records managers. According to PARBICA (2007), records management units and training are essential components of a recordkeeping programme.

Although an equivalent legislation was not in operational in Malawi, the two universities had other legislation that could drive recordkeeping. Examples can help to explain this further.

UNIMA and Mzuni Acts and Statutes provided basic requirements for recordkeeping. For instance, the UNIMA Act and Statutes gave recordkeeping responsibilities to the University Registrar. Its Statutes indicated that the Registrar was the custodian of all of the records of the University, and that he/she was required to keep a register of all staff members of the University under their respective qualifications.[113] Similarly, Mzuni Act and Statutes gave the Registrar recordkeeping responsibilities. He/she is required to keep and maintain a register of members of the University which is available for scrutiny by the general public at all reasonable times.[114] Custody of students' records was also under the jurisdiction of the university registrars.

---

[112] Interview with Wits' Archivist/Records Manager held on 29th October 2012.
[113] UNIMA Act and Statues, Statute VIII (1) and (2) – The Registrar
[114] Section 4(3) of Mzuni Act and Statues

The Public Audit Act, Public Finance Management Act, and Public Procurement Act, all aimed at ensuring transparency, accountability and good governance. These Acts relied on recordkeeping for their effective implementation. For example, the National Audit Office in Malawi was created by Section 184 of the Malawi Constitution. It established the office of the Auditor General. The operating Act was the Public Audit Act No 6 of 2003.

The Auditor General in Malawi had an obligation to audit all public institutions including universities. However, he gave liberty to each institution to hire audit firms whilst he had the final say. If the subcontracted audit was found to be wanting, the Auditor General had the power to intervene.

The Assistant Auditor General explained that two types of audits were usually performed by the National Audit Office in Malawi. Firstly, an investigative audit which was done to pursue a suspicion. He asserted that this type of audit required effectively managed records to conduct. Secondly, a normal audit was done to examine financial statements of public institutions. This was done to ascertain whether the statements reflected the true picture of state of affairs of the institution at that particular point in time. Qualified audit reports were usually caused by lack of supporting records and documents. In his final analysis, the Assistant Auditor General was of the view that audit efficiency was affected by the quality of recordkeeping. He asserted that there was no audit without records.[115] In the absence of explicit laws on recordkeeping, the audit exercise came close to compelling the universities to manage some of their records and documents well. If the universities had audit queries, they risked losing some of their funding from government.

As for the Public Finance Management Act No 7 of 2003 in Malawi, the legislation also implicitly mandated effective recordkeeping. Controlling officers, vis-à-vis vice chancellors in universities who usually delegate the recordkeeping responsibility to university registrars, were responsible for ensuring that all accounts and records relating to the functions and operations of the public bodies were properly maintained[116].

---

[115] Interview response from the National Audit Office of Malawi's Assistant Auditor General held on 28th November 2012. He was speaking on behalf of the Auditor General.
[116] Section 10(1)(c) of the Public Finance Management Act.

In the context of the Public Procurement Act No 8 of 2003 in Malawi, it was observed that procurement proceedings depended on recordkeeping. "A procuring entity shall maintain a record and preserve documentation of the procurement proceedings, including originals of bids received.[117]" The SGS Report is a good example to show the close link between procurement and recordkeeping. As noted earlier, the Malawi Government commissioned SGS of Switzerland to assess the procurement audit performance of fifty public sector bodies (ODPP, 2011).[118] The result was that only one public body passed the test. The public institution that passed the test was judged to have sufficiently robust processes and recordkeeping to demonstrate its probity in handling public funds. Almost all the forty-nine institutions that failed the inspection exercise, including the two public universities, were criticised for poorly organised and badly implemented recordkeeping (Tough, 2012).

Above all, the National Archives Act of 1975 in Malawi had provided the mandate of ensuring that public records were well maintained. Therefore, the National Archives of Malawi had the legal power to enforce good recordkeeping in the public organisations including the public universities. However, it failed to issue records management guidance to the public institutions. Resource constraints and the lack of adequate human resource capacity prevented it to fulfil this requirement, confirming the assertion made earlier that the availability of legislation alone does not imply good recordkeeping; it also may depend, to some extent, on the support from senior management.

6.2.3 Standards

The international records management standards such as ISO 15489 were adopted by the South African Bureau of Standards and introduced as local standards. For example, ISO 15489-1: Information and Documentation − Records Management Part 1: General became South African National Standards (SANS) 15489-1: Information and Documentation − Records Management: Part 1: General.[119] These recordkeeping standards were applied to manage records and documents in the universities.

---

[117] Section 27(1) of the Public Procurement Act
[118] Malawi Government, Office of the Director of Public Procurement (ODPP), *Draft Audit Report: Procurement Review/Audit of Selected Procuring Entities in the Public Service.* ODPP, 2011.
[119] Republic of South Africa, Department of Arts and Culture, Records Management Policy Manual; available at: http://www.national.archives.gov.za/rms/Records_Management_Policy_Manual_October_2007.pdf;

For instance, UWC, Wits and UJ applied these standards in managing their records and documents (UWC DRAM Policy, 2009; Wits Records Management Policy, 2012; and UJ Records Management Policy, 2009).

No formal records management standards were identified in the universities in Malawi. This might not have come as a surprise considering that the two universities did not have formal policies for managing records; nor did they have records management units and records managers. This was despite the existence of the National Archives of Malawi, which was supposed to issue records management guidance, as explained earlier.

Notwithstanding the absence of formal records management standards, which might not be available due to high cost of acquiring them or because the local standards board cannot produce the recordkeeping standards, organisations still improvise guidelines for recordkeeping to meet their local needs. This is the essence of records management manuals and standing office instructions. They are usually handy and become *de facto* standards. Alistair Tough (2004) found that records management manuals and standing office instructions in Commonwealth Africa were used for operational guidelines and staff training. However, this study did not identify improvised recordkeeping standards in the universities in Malawi.

6.2.4 Regulations

Regulations include codes of practice such as King III in South Africa, and directives such the Comptroller of Statutory Corporations directive in Malawi.

As already discussed, King III was the most important code of governance identified in South Africa. It heralded a new era in which risk management, internal auditing and records management were all regarded as important (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2013). The universities explicitly stated their adoption of King III in their annual reports.

UWC Council statement on corporate governance indicated that:

> The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is committed to the principles of discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility, fairness and social responsibility, as advocated in the King III Report on Corporate Governance. Accordingly, the Council endorses the codes and practices as set out in the King III report as they apply to the higher education sector (UWC Annual Report, 2012, p. 54).

Wits acknowledged the growing emphasis on integrated reporting recommended by King III. Integrated reporting required the inclusion of non-financial reports such as the report of the chairperson of council; report of the chair of senate; and reports of other governance structures when providing the university's state of affairs at the end of a year.

> The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg acknowledges the growing emphasis on the need for integrated reporting as recommended in the KING III Report. The importance of the concepts of integrated sustainability and social transformation are supported by Wits and is included in its 2022 vision document. In terms of good governance all Annual Reports of the University from 2013 onwards will incorporate integrated reporting as the University has commenced with working on a road map towards integrated reporting (Wits Annual Report, 2012).

According to the Director of Finance at Wits, the integrated reporting was one of the tools used to measure the University's governance.[120]

Similarly UJ endorsed King III. The establishment of a specialised unit to coordinate corporate governance, the Directorate of Corporate Governance, was evidence enough to show that the University considered issues of corporate governance seriously. To show that recordkeeping and governance were closely linked, the records management unit was a subunit of the Directorate of Corporate Governance. The full composition of the Directorate of Corporate Governance at UJ was as follows:

---

[120] Interview response form the Wits Director of Finance held on 31st October 2012.

i. Records management – focussing mainly on the management of physical and electronic records.

ii. Contract management – focussing mainly on the management and administration of contracts.

iii. Corporate governance – mainly dealing with the protection of access to information, protection of personal information, institutional nominations and elections, and policies and procedures[121].

UCT Council statement on corporate governance indicated that:

> The Council is committed to high standards of corporate governance. Care is taken to ensure that:

> i. The University complies with the governance prescripts contained in the Act and the Institutional Statute.

> ii. That the mandates of committees are clear, written, and consistent with the legislation and fully adhered to.

> iii. That full and accurate records are kept of the proceedings of Council, Senate, the Institutional Forum and their applicable committees.

> iv. That where decisions are made under delegated authority the written authority limits are not exceeded (UCT Annual Report, 2012, p. 33).

Although not explicitly referred to, King III was implicit at UCT. It was also evident from the UCT's statement on corporate governance that sound recordkeeping was essential for effective conduct of the University's business affairs.

The Malawi Government through the Comptroller of Statutory Corporations issued a circular on 16th June 2008 titled "Internal audits and financial statements" which could be seen as another step to strengthen the audits in parastatals, including public universities. It states:

---

[121] Interview response from the Director of Corporate Governance held on 31st October 2012

In a bid to improve the performance and accountability in parastatals, Government intends to strengthen its monitoring of parastatals through regular review of financial statements, internal audit reports and inspection visits. This will facilitate the reporting requirement by the Department of Statutory Corporation of the Quarterly Report on Parastatals to Audit Committee in the Office of the President and Cabinet.

In view of the above, all parastatals are requested to provide the following information: evidence of the existence of a functional internal audit department within the organisation structure; copies of annual work plans for the internal audit department of the parastatal and evidence showing whether internal audit reports are submitted to the board.

This directive to some extent can be viewed as an effort to improve the audit aspect of a public body. However, this could only be achieved effectively if recordkeeping in the public bodies was also supported. Although keeping records for audit purposes is only one aspect of records management, an organisation also benefits enormously by practising good records management. Other benefits of good records management, as outlined in Chapter 1, include enhancing efficiency in the operation of the organisation; enhancing competitiveness of the organisation; maintaining a reliable institutional memory; and demonstrating transparency and accountability. Research conducted by Mathews Phiri (2010) on the challenges and opportunities in training information professionals in Malawi, identified the dearth of qualified personnel to effectively manage public information, including records and documents. It was evident that senior management support was very low.

6.3 University strategies

Universities usually aspire to be competitive and be amongst those on top of league tables and rankings. Such intention to compete internationally would require them to manage their records properly so that their claims about student and staff numbers, research activities, and other parameters used in assessing them are easily accessed and are trustworthy. Auditable records would achieve this. University strategies can be identified through their strategic plans and visions. Table 5 lists the strategies identified during the fieldwork.

University	Strategy
UWC	Shape its internal and external standing and profile as a vibrant institution [Institutional Operating Plan 2010-2014 (UWC Report, 2012)]
UCT	Enhance the quality and profile of UCT's graduates [Executive Level Goals 2012 (UCT Annual Report, 2012)]
Wits	Aspiring to be a leading research-intensity university firmly embedded in the top 100 world universities by 2022 [Wits 2013 Strategy: Towards Global Top League Status]
UJ	Improve in world university rankings [Global Excellence and Stature Initiative: 2025 Strategic Plan]
UNIMA	To enhance governance and management (UNIMA Strategic Plan 2012-2017; NESP 2008-2017)
Mzuni	To enhance governance and management (NESP 2008-2017)

Table 5: University strategies

It was evident that the universities in South African were better prepared to compete in the global market. They put in place strategies as shown in Table 5. In the past decade, they dominated the top ten positions in Africa according to the QS and THE world university rankings. It will be noted in the next chapter that these universities had also better recordkeeping. In contrast, the universities in Malawi were more focussed in improving their governance and management. They were implementing the National Education Sector Plan (NESP) which was the Malawi Government's policy framework and blueprint for education in the period 2008 – 2017. The Government envisaged tackling higher education challenges through a number of strategies including, strengthening governance, management, oversight, transparency, and accountability of higher education institutions; and develop and implement other programmes to improve quality and efficiency. As previously explained, this strategy did not accompany measures to improve recordkeeping. Effective recordkeeping would be essential for measuring the success or failure of the NESP Project, as reliable information would be kept and retrieved when required.

Nevertheless, this presented an opportunity for recordkeeping because any improvement drive in governance, management, efficiency, transparency, and accountability should drive recordkeeping. It is argued that the two sides are symbiotically related. Therefore, it was incumbent upon the records management community in Malawi to use this opportunity to develop systems and structures for recordkeeping whose outcomes should be to improve governance elements, assuming the level of recordkeeping expertise improves. Executive management teams may accept such proposals given the improvements they would bring to the governance agenda of their institutions.

6.4 Governing bodies

Governing bodies are key drivers for recordkeeping. When council or executive management team see the importance of recordkeeping, they will take it as an essential function, one that they must initiate, fund and manage to the level of proven success (Stephens, 2005).

6.4.1 University council

As explained earlier, in those studies, university councils were identified as the highest decision making bodies with overarching responsibilities in terms of the governance of the universities and the conduct of their businesses. They also had the authority to direct recordkeeping. They were responsible for approving recordkeeping policies, expenditures such as acquisition of technologies for recordkeeping and recordkeeping training. In the same perspective, records managers had opportunities to lobby for improved recordkeeping using council representations which, as will be noted, comprised some internal members of the universities. It was against this background that this research explored university council structures in the context of size and composition, and their effect on recordkeeping.

The size and composition of university councils were determining by the governing legislation. In South Africa, the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended and an institutional statute determined the size and composition of the university council. In Malawi, the UNIMA Act of 1974 as amended and the Mzuni Act of 1997 determined council size and composition of UNIMA and Mzuni respectively.

Table 6 shows council size and composition of each university. It compares council size and composition as stipulated in the legislation governing the university with the actual council size and composition identified during the fieldwork.

	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Stipulated maximum council size	30	30	30	30	23	13
• Minimum number from outside	18 (60 %)	18 (60%)	18 (60%)	18 (60%)	10 (43%)	6 (46%)
• Maximum number from within	12 (40 %)	12 (40%)	12 (40%)	12 (40%)	13 (57%)	7 (54%)
Observed council size	30	30	30	33	26	13
• Number from outside	21 (70%)	18 (60%)	17 (57%)	18 (55%)	9 (35%)	6 (46%)
• Number from within	9 (30%)	12 (40%)	13 (43%)	15 (45%)	17 (65%)	7 (54%)

Table 6: University council size and composition

Results as presented in Table 6 are further analysed to explain the differences between the stipulated and observed council sizes and compositions. UWC, Wits, UJ and UNIMA revealed variations between stipulated and observed council structures. An organisation can have well documented legislation and policy but with a different practice on the ground. This mismatch can be caused by, amongst others, the need to harness the prevailing environment so that the organisation is able to effectively achieve its goals and objectives.

Although maintaining council size at 30, UWC varied composition of its Council. It had 21 (70 percent) of its members from outside the University and 9 (30 percent) from within. According to the UWC Annual Report (2011), new membership in the Council brought a breadth of skills and experiences to govern structures which enriched the Council's work.

Council at UJ invited three members of the executive management team to join it. Unlike co-opted members who have the same rights and privileges as those elected or appointed, the members who attend council meetings on invitation do not exercise their full rights and privileges such as voting despite bringing the breadth of skills and experiences to the meetings. The invited members increased the number of inside representation from 12 to 15 and subsequently increased the total number of UJ Council membership to 33. This had an effect of reducing the outside representation which dropped from 60 percent to 55 percent.

Similarly, Wits invited the Registrar to be member of its Council (Wits Annual Report, 2012). This increased internal representation to 13 (43 percent). There were 17 (57 percent) external members and an additional external vacant position which was filled a year later as explained in the 2013 Wits Annual Report.

Like UJ, the size of the UNIMA Council increased because of the invited members who included the Pro Vice Chancellor, Internal Auditor, Finance Officer, and Registrar. These were employees of the University. When the Office of the University Registrar was asked to provide the exact number of Council members, it stated 26 as the total number of Council members which included these invited members. Of the 26 Council members, 17 (65 percent) were from within the University whilst 9 (35 percent) were from outside the University.[122] One outside member had left the Council hence the decrease of outside membership from 10 to 9 as shown in Table 6.

In the South African context, the broad representation on the university councils emanated from the philosophy of cooperative governance which had its roots in the governance model of the new multiracial South Africa. An underlying element of this governance philosophy was that of assuring social justice through establishing social contracts in which stakeholders were willing to strike a compromise for the sake of the common and public good.

In the realm of cooperative governance philosophy, government was viewed as an arbiter which monitored how the rules governing higher education were being followed properly, and changed them if the environment so demanded. This was the essence of state supervision as opposed to state control or state interference.

---

[122] Interview response from the Assistant Registrar (Academic), responding on behalf of the University Registrar, held on 12th December 2012

An eminent academic and higher education manager in South Africa, Thandwa Mthembu (2009, p. 10), distinguished these three models of relationship between government and higher education aptly: "

> State control refers to centralised and systematic state administration of higher education. The state supervision model shifts the mode of control to that of steering, with government providing a broad regulatory framework and using instruments like planning, funding and quality management to steer the system. The state interference model, if it is a model at all, constitutes seemingly whimsical forms of intervention.

Similarly, the councils of the public universities in Malawi had broad representation. In principle, the two public universities in Malawi had a state supervision model. However, as noted in the previous chapters, events made the universities look as if they were operating, at least in some respects, under a state interference model.

1. Council size

At 13, Mzuni had the smallest council size, followed by UNIMA at 23 and 26 for the stipulated and observed sizes respectively. The South Africa universities had their membership at 30 although council with a membership of 33 was identified at UJ as noted earlier. All these council sizes resonated well with the findings of William Saint (2009) on university governing boards around the globe. He found that university councils' membership ranged from fewer than 10 such as those in Chile and Malaysia, to 50 or more such as those in Argentina and Spain.

Notwithstanding the lack the breadth of representation which can bring new knowledge and skills necessary to effectively drive the organisation in the modern age, smaller council sizes have some advantages. They can be flexible, responsive, and efficient. As correctly observed by Saint (2009), the worldwide trend had been to have smaller and learner councils. For example, a number of British universities had gone through the exercise of reducing the size of their councils. In the US, the mean size of public university councils in the 2000s was ten members (Saint, 2009).

Although the trade-offs are between breadth of representation and cost-efficiency, and between diversity and homogeneity in viewpoints, as explained earlier, efficiencies in costs and decision making would seem to argue in favour of smaller council numbers. For instance, smaller council sizes can be efficient in decision making, including those decisions supporting recordkeeping programmes. William Saint (2009) argued for numbers in the range of 15 to 20 members. Smaller numbers, for instance, between 10 and 20, are essential in an African context in order to improve efficiency of council meetings. Coincidentally these were the numbers that were close to the council sizes in Malawi.

Smaller council sizes however did not translate into effective recordkeeping. This research found no correlation between council size and recordkeeping. Coincidentally, as will be revealed in the next chapter, Malawi with smaller council sizes had inadequate recordkeeping than South Africa with larger council sizes.

2. Council composition

When the majority of council members are internal, the university is usually considered to have a high degree of autonomy. As Philippe Aghion et al (2010) asserted, "…universities are more productive when they are both autonomous and face more competition". UNIMA and Mzuni had high internal representations at 65 percent and 54 percent respectively. The two universities would have been considered to be more autonomous than their South African counterparts. This however was not the case. The Government had a lot of control over the universities, which could be viewed as seriously diluting the essence of the supervision governance model. The head of state was the chancellor of the public universities in Malawi and appointed chairpersons and other council members[123]. He sometimes singlehandedly overruled decisions of council for political expedience. There have been cases in early 2010s when council unanimously agreed to revise tuition fees and even informed potential students, only to be overruled by the president on a political podium. Chairpersons of university councils in South Africa were elected amongst council members themselves, and the university chancellors were merely ceremonial.

---

[123] UNIMA Act (1974 as amended) Sections 13 and 14 details the office and functions of the chancellor; Mzuni Act (1997) Sections14 and 15 details the office, functions and duties of the chancellor.

The importance of the chairpersons of councils is usually enormous. They hold power to call meetings, set the agendas, appoint subcommittee membership, cast tie-breaking votes, and generally influence the direction of discussion. If they are appointed and supported by government they understandably exercise a degree of indirect government control over the council. If the chairpersons are chosen by the council members themselves, the result may be an affirmation of merit-based choice. It may also be a reflection of the dominance of a particular group if they were chosen by the council members themselves (Saint, 2009).

Similarly, if the chairpersons are supporters of recordkeeping or are enlightened about the importance of recordkeeping in achieving the organisations' goals and objectives, they can have some influence on recordkeeping programmes brought before the councils for deliberations. From the profiles of the chairpersons of the case study institutions, none had explicitly expressed passion for recordkeeping. Therefore, it was the collective responsibility of the governing boards to institute sound recordkeeping.

All the South African universities had majority of council members from outside the universities. UWC had 70 percent; UCT had 60 percent; Wits had 57 percent; and UJ had 55 percent; as shown in Table 6, and discussed earlier. They presented a shift in governance of universities. William Saint (2009, np) explained this shift succinctly:

> As these changes in board composition occurred, universities transitioned from "old accountability" in which they were answerable mainly to their own members, to a "new accountability" in which they became broadly responsible to society at large through a high diversity of board representation.

6.4.2 Council committees

In addition to having full council deliberations, university councils also operate through committees. Council committees are mainly specialist committees, and are formally constituted with terms of reference. They include executive, finance, audit, and risk.

Councils delegate specific formal decision making functions to their executive committees (UCT Annual Report, 2012). The finance committee of council is responsible for all matters pertaining to the financial affairs of the university apart from the audit matters. The audit committee of council is usually composed of non-executive members, and is responsible for all matters pertaining to the audit of the university's financial affairs and related matters. The risk committee considers material issues of risk, asset protection, security, legal, and corporate governance (Wits Annual Report, 2012).

This research identified several committees of council. Table 7 shows committees of councils that appeared more than once. A tick (√) signifies the presence of the committee of council whilst a dash (-) signifies the absence of the committee of the council.

Committee of council	Council					
	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
1. Executive	√	√	√	√	√	√
2. Finance	√	√	√	√	√	√
3. Audit	√	√	√	√	√	√
4. Risk	√	_	√	√	_	_
5. Appointments	√	√	_	√	√	√
6. Remuneration	√	√	√	√	_	_
7. Human resources	_	√	_	√	_	_

Table 7: Committees of council

The research found that all universities had finance committees of council. Finance committees advised councils on financial strategy; made recommendations on revenue and capital budgets; and monitored and reported on progress against these budgets (UCT Annual Report, 2012). This makes accounts sections of universities a beehive of activities and usually provided with resources to effectively management the universities' financial resources.

Usage of accounting packages; usage of payroll systems in conjunction with the human resources subsection of the registrars' offices; and using the accounts clerks as *de facto* records officers were common practices. Additionally, the motivation for well-resourced accounts offices was to avoid audit queries.

Issues of recordkeeping concern that this research identified during the fieldwork in the accounts offices of the universities in Malawi included the following:

i. The accounts clerks who were the *de facto* records officers had no proper recordkeeping training.

ii. Cases of missing files and long periods of retrieving records were prevalent, evidence that financial transactions were not accurately coded.

iii. Storing stacks of physical files on the ground on the pretext of lack of storage space, supporting the other finding that the universities did not have records centres besides being predominantly paper-based.

Nevertheless, credibility of the financial reports was ensured by an audit exercise. All university councils had audit committees and internal audit functions, as will be explained in detail later in this chapter. As will be noted later, UWC, Wits, and UJ outsourced their internal audit function, whilst the other universities provided the internal audit function themselves.

Only three councils indicated that they have a risk management committee. However, further investigation revealed that the risk management functions of UCT, UNIMA, and Mzuni were either embedded in their audit committees of council or were committees of senior executive teams. As aptly put in the UCT Annual Report (2012, p. 36): "A standing Risk Management Committee, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor, supports the University Audit Committee. The University Audit and Risk Management Committees continued with a comprehensive review of the risk measures in place to manage and mitigate identified risks".

6.4.3 Council and committees of council meetings

Council and committees of council meetings were what shaped the universities' directions. Deliberations in the meetings had to be accurately captured; they had to be securely stored; and they needed to be efficiently retrieved. Effective recordkeeping was the basis to achieving these processes.

What follows is an analysis of the meetings of council and some committees of council. The committees under review were finance, audit, and risk. They formed the theme of this research. Table 8 gives the frequencies of the ordinary meetings.

Institution	Frequency of meetings			
	Council	Finance	Audit	Risk
UWC	4	3	4	4
UCT	5	5	4	_
Wits	4	3	2	3
UJ	4	3	3	3
UNIMA	3	3	3	_
Mzuni	3	3	3	_

Table 8: Council and committee of council ordinary meetings

Councils of South African universities had on average 4 ordinary meetings per year. There were 3 ordinary meetings for the councils of the universities in Malawi. There were at least 3 ordinary meetings per year for the committees of council for both South Africa and Malawi. The continuum on council meetings may have two implications. On one end, the council may play a formal rubber-stamping role when the frequency of its meetings was very low. For example, if it met just once in a year. On the other end, it may be viewed as playing an active semi-executive role when its frequency of meetings was very high. For example, if it met for more than six times a year (Saint, 2009).

The results in Table 8 suggest that university councils in South Africa and Malawi played more of a governing function than an executive one. At 3 meetings per year, Malawi joined the majority of Sub-Saharan Africa universities whose frequency stood at around 3. This corroborated William Saint's (2009, np) observation that the "norm for Sub-Saharan Africa seems to be two or three meetings annually". The norm for US appeared to be 4 times a year (Saint, 2009). This matched universities in South Africa.

The quorums of all councils except UNIMA were simple majority. This also confirms William Saint's (2009) observation that the majority of universities in Sub-Saharan Africa had a quorum requirement of 50 percent of membership. UNIMA required one-third of council members to form a quorum[124], a practice that was similar to some universities in the US such as Chicago and Virginia (Saint, 2009). Smaller quorums can easily be met. This ensures that council meetings are taking place as scheduled, resulting in promotion of good governance, and generation of more records such as minutes emanating from the meetings.

Offices of the university registrars provided the secretariat for council meetings. They were involved in the distribution of the agenda and minutes of meetings and carrying out attendance registers. However, some committees of council were served with different secretariat. For example, the Finance Committee at Mzuni had the Finance Officer not the Registrar as its Secretary.[125] This arrangement, though having some advantages can disjoint the recordkeeping function.

6.4.4 Senate

University senates were responsible and accountable to councils for the general academic and research functions of the universities. UWC summarized senate functions as follows:

i. The superintendence and regulation of instruction and research.

ii. The organisation and control of the curricula, syllabi and examinations.

iii. Performing other functions delegated or assigned to it by Council[126].

---

[124] Section 12(3) of UNIMA Act
[125] Statute XVII (3) of Mzuni Act
[126] UWC "Governance Structure – Institutional: Senate"; available at: http://www.uwc.ac.za/Pages/Governance-Structure--Institutional-.aspx#SENATE; accessed on 20th March 2015.

The sizes and composition of senates varied with South African universities having big senate sizes and Malawi having relatively smaller senate sizes. Table 9 shows constituent elements of senate.

Constituent element of senate	Senate					
	UCT	UWC	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Vice Chancellor (Chairperson)	√	√	√	√	√	√
Deputy Vice Chancellors	√	√	√	√	_	√
Registrar	_	√	_	√	_	_
Deans of faculty	√	√	√	√	√	√
Heads of academic departments	√	√	√	√	_	_
Students representatives	√	√	√	√	√	_
Librarian	_	√	√	_	_	√
All professors of the university	√	√	√	√	_	_
Council member representatives	√	√	√	√	_	_
Academic employees representatives	√	√	√	_	√	√
Executive Directors	_	√	√	√	_	_
Non-academic staff representatives	√	√	√	_	_	_
Co-opted members	√	_	_	_	√	√
Directors of centres and institutes	_	√	_	_	√	√

Table 9: Constituent elements of senate

Like council, senate also operated through committees. Common committees in all the senates included executive committee, teaching and learning committee, and academic planning committee. It was evident in the South African context that these committees were easier to handle than a full senate meeting which ran into hundreds of membership. For example, there were 330 senate members at UCT in 2012 (UCT Annual Report, 2012). A quorum of one-third of its membership was required for a full senate meeting. This implied having a minimum of 110 members to constitute quorum of a meeting of senate.

Mzuni had a membership of 20 in its senate in 2012, a numbers that was close to a committee membership of a South African university. For instance, UWC's executive committee of senate had a membership of 20 in 2012.[127]

The average frequency of the ordinary senate meetings in South Africa was 3 meetings per year, ranging from UCT which had a minimum of 2 to UJ which had a minimum of 4 (UCT Institutional Statute, 2013; UJ Institutional Statute, 2012). Similarly, the quorum ranged from one-third for UCT and two-fifth for UJ. The statutes of the universities in Malawi did not specify the frequencies of ordinary meetings of their senates rather than specifying that any statutory committee had to meet three times a year [UNIMA Statute XVIII(1); Mzuni Statute XXVI(1)]. The senate meetings in the universities in Malawi were determined by the academic calendar which at times got disrupted due to either staff or student disturbances.

During the period of data collection and in the subsequent two years, there were at least two occasions when students at both universities boycotting classes to demand increased government allowances. Staff had an equal number of prolonged sit-ins demanding increased salaries and better working conditions. These disturbances had been frequent for the past decade.[128] They usually disturb academic calendars hence senate and other statutory meetings also got disrupted.

At each ordinary senate meeting of a typical South African university, the following activities which had recordkeeping implications took place:

  i. Confirmation of the minutes of the last ordinary meeting, and the minutes of any special meeting held since then, with or without amendment; the minutes to be taken as read if copies have been sent to members at least five days prior to the meeting.
  ii. Dealing with the business of which notice has been given and any other business which a three-quarters majority of those present and voting agrees to consider[129].

---

[127] UWC "Governance Structure – Institutional: Senate"; available at: http://www.uwc.ac.za/Pages/Governance-Structure--Institutional-.aspx#SENATE; accessed on 20th March 2015.

[128] From the researcher's own experience working as an academic member of staff at a public university in Malawi for more than ten years

[129] University of Cape Town, "Institutional Statute"; available at: http://www.uct.ac.za/downloads/uct.ac.za/about/governance/UCT_statute_2013.pdf; accessed on 20th March 2015.

Similarly, the conduct of the meetings of senate and committees of senate for the universities in Malawi which had recordkeeping implications could be summarised as follows:

i.   The minutes of all meetings of every committee held since the last preceding meeting of the parent body of such committee shall be laid on the table at each meeting of that body.

ii. The minutes of all meetings of the Faculties and Schools held since the last preceding meeting of the Senate shall be laid on the table at each meeting of the Senate.

iii. The minutes of all meetings of the Senate shall be sent to the Council.

iv. In the event of any equality of votes on any question, motion or resolution at a meeting of the Senate, Faculties, Schools or of any committee, the chairperson or person presiding at such meeting shall have a casting vote in addition to his/her deliberative vote[130].

As argued earlier, these activities comprised records in the form of minutes driving the governance process in senate meetings. The authenticity of these records would determine the quality of decisions senate would make. Although memories of those members in the last meeting would be essential for checks-and-balances, well captured and maintained records in the form of minutes would produce a stable memory that could be trusted.

6.4.5 Executive management team

The executive management team runs a university on behalf of the council. In essence, it is the vice chancellor, acting on behalf of the executive management team who directs university operations. Some of the functions of the executive management team in general, and the vice chancellor in particular include:

i.   Controlling, managing and administering the university from day to day
  - As the chief executive officer, the vice chancellor directs university operations on daily basis

---

[130] UNIMA Statute XII

ii. Taking decisions subject to policy and other decisions taken by council and senate

- The vice chancellor makes executive decisions in the framework of the policies

iii. In the event of urgency, taking any decision in the interest of the university, provided that the chairperson of council is informed urgently[131]

- Universities in Malawi, like other countries, are prone to disturbances; and the vice chancellor had been in the fore in taking remedial actions such as closure of the university, as has been noted earlier, before informing the chairperson of the council who is usually not a fulltime member of staff

Different names were given to the executive management teams. The executive management teams' names identified during the research were as follows:

i. UJ – Management Executive Committee (MEC)
ii. Wits – Senior Executive Team (SET)
iii. UCT – Senior Management
iv. UWC – Management Executive
v. UNIMA and Mzuni – Principal Officers

Table 10 below gives the composition of the executive management teams.

Component	Executive management team					
	UCT	UWC	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Vice Chancellor	√	√	√	√	√	√
Deputy/Pro Vice Chancellor	√	√	√	√	√	√
Registrar	√	√	√	√	√	√
Executive Director	√	√	√	√	_	_
Dean	√	_	√	√	_	_
Council nominee	_	√	_	_	_	_
Finance Director/Office	_	_	_	_	√	√

---

[131] UWC "Governance Structure – Institutional: Senate"; available at: http://www.uwc.ac.za/Pages/Governance-Structure--Institutional-.aspx#SENATE; accessed on 20th March 2015.

Librarian	–	–	–	–	–	√
Director of Research	–	–	–	–	–	√

Table 10: Composition of the executive management teams

Unlike councils or senates which had their ordinary meetings at least 3 times a year, the executive management teams met regularly. This was expected as they had to run the universities' businesses on a daily basis. For example, the executive management committee at UWC met twice a month (UWC Annual Report, 2011). This frequency of meetings was replicated in other universities in South Africa and Malawi. These meetings took place throughout the year including when the students were on long vacation except when the universities have shut down as a result of a holiday or when there were serious disturbances on the campuses as was the case with universities in Malawi as explained earlier.

There was an overlap of membership of the three governing bodies: council, senate, and executive management team. For example, the vice chancellor was a member of all the three governing bodies. The registrar was either a member or serving as secretary to the governing body. In all the universities, the registrar was the ultimate keeper of the university's records and documents. Multiple membership of governing bodies by the vice chancellor and registrar can be advantageous to the university; more so when these representatives to the multiple governing bodies have the passion for recordkeeping. For example, investments in recordkeeping such as acquisition of new technologies and long-term training that require huge sums of money can be deliberated at both management and council meetings where these members would be in attendance. They can defend recordkeeping cases in both meetings.

6.5 Recordkeeping function

The recordkeeping function was directly under the registrars' jurisdiction. Records managers were reporting to the Offices of the Registrars.

At UWC, the Archivist/Records Manager reported directly to the Deputy Registrar. At Wits, the Archivist/Records Managers also reported directly to the Deputy Registrar. At UJ, the Records Manager reported directly to the Directors of Corporate Governance who in turn reported directly to the Registrar. At UCT, the Registrar Office still had an oversight of the recordkeeping function through the Director of Legal Services and Secretariat who was the centre person for meetings and minutes.

The Archivists/Records Managers at UWC and Wits expressed their confidence and trust in their Registrars. According to the UWC Archivist and Records Manager, records management at his institution was championed by the Registrar, and she was "very supportive of records management programmes"[132]. This type of support was evidenced during the fieldwork at the University when the Archivist/Records Manager wanted to attend a very important records management training workshop. He got an instant approval and support from the Registrar.

Similarly, the Registrar at Wits was highly commended by the Archivist/Records Manager for her support, including supporting her for the long-term records management training she was undertaking. Recordkeeping training is an important aspect in records management; more so in countries such as Malawi where very few people are trained in archives and records management (Phiri, 2010).

As will be revealed in the next chapter, there was some form of management support for recordkeeping at UCT as evidenced by records management projects undertaken at the institution despite the University lacking a centralised records management unit. The registrar's office still had an oversight of records management and implemented the records management policy (UCT Records Management Policy, 2012).

---

[132] Interview response from UWC Archivist/Records Managers held 12th October 2012

The Director of Corporate Governance at UJ had a passion for recordkeeping. This was from her own admission, and evidenced by her work including recordkeeping talks and publications. Therefore, the registrar's office in which the Director of Corporate Governance was housed gave support to records management at UJ. Similarly, the registrars in Malawi universities were the custodian of records. However, the recordkeeping functions in the two universities were yet to be developed, as results in the next chapter show.

When members of the executive management team do not see the business case for recordkeeping, a records management development agenda may not be supported at executive management meetings. Even if these agendas go through the management meetings, these representatives may not passionately promote the cause for recordkeeping in the council meetings. It is the duty of records managers to present business cases for recordkeeping to management. The records managers may not be in those decision making bodies as proposed by Mpho Ngoepe and Patrick Ngulube (2013) who argued for inclusion of records managers in the governing bodies. More persuasive pressure can be applied to management for effective recordkeeping. As Alistair Tough (2011, p. 225) aptly puts it "A more pressing need is for political pressure to be applied at the highest level, to ensure that there is a record".

However, to achieve better management understanding of the importance of recordkeeping, management has to see the recordkeeping benefits in business terms. This entails putting in place mechanisms to translate top management support for records management into business operations of the university. Taking advantage of the close relationship between recordkeeping and governance, any changes in governance function would change the recordkeeping function. Danielle Wickman (2009) in her article "Measuring performance or performance measurement? Measuring the impact and sustainability of the PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit" posed many insightful questions whose answers could help to reposition recordkeeping in the new era. Her questions revolved around the following: How can records managers demonstrate their impact on recordkeeping outcomes when so much depends on other actors? How can recordkeeping initiatives be made sustainable when their use and implementation is largely handed over to others? An emphasis on the outcome of a recordkeeping programme rather than its output (Wickman, 2009), as explained in Chapter 2, can ably help answer these questions.

As strategies for governance are continuously changing, strategies for recordkeeping should also be changing. An example can help to explain this further.

The Council on Higher Education's policy report in South Africa, entitled *Promoting Good Governance in South African Higher Education*, made recommendations on how the principles of good governance, as set out in both policy and legislation, could be translated into day-to-day practice within individual institutions (Wits Annual Report, 2012). From these recommendations, it is clear to conclude that this would in effect also translate the principles of effective recordkeeping into daily recordkeeping practice within a university. This would entail a code of governance and recordkeeping to be developed within individual institutions. The recommended code of governance and its associated recordkeeping can be illustrated as in Table 11 below.

Code of governance	Associated recordkeeping
A statement of institutional values and principles, related to standards of behaviour which could be framed as an institutional *code of ethics* or *code of conduct*	An information culture such as the need to record all business transactions including those transacted orally can be developed at this stage
A general statement of the roles and responsibilities, rights, duties and obligations of different governance bodies and/or actors and stakeholder groups	Documenting and availing this information to all concerned parties through an effective information system would help the parties make informed decision

Table 11: Code of governance and associated recordkeeping

The areas outlined in Table 11 were addressed by Wits and were elaborated in rules, standing orders and other University documentation (Wits Annual Report, 2012). The universities' statements on corporate governance were efforts to implement this evolution in governing public universities in South Africa.

6.6 Audit function

The audit function of a university can be viewed from different perspectives including internal auditing, external auditing and institutional auditing. Notwithstanding these viewpoints, the audit can either be dealing with financial matters, the traditional practice of auditing, or dealing with both financial and non-financial matters, which can be viewed as the contemporary audit practice. This section presents results and discussions on the audit function and its relationship with recordkeeping in the context of the six public universities under review. More specifically, the section analyses internal, external, and academic audits.

According to UNIMA Internal Audit Department (2012), internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organisation's operations. It helps an organisation realising a systematic and disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes. It is inherent from this definition that services an internal audit function can provide include:

  i. Assurance services – this is an objective examination of evidence for the purpose of providing an independent assessment on governance, risk management, and control processes for the organisation.
 ii. Consulting services - this is an advisory and related client service activities intended to add value and improve the university's governance, risk management, and control processes without the internal auditor assuming management responsibility.
iii. Investigations – this involves different activities ranging from fraud awareness training and the design of anti-fraud programmes and control activities, to testing the operating effectiveness of such control activities, to conducting a full-fledged investigation at the request of the executive management team and audit committee.

Internal auditors are part of the university. Their objectives are determined by the executive management team, council, and to some extent, by professional standards. They report to the executive management team for assistance in establishing direction, support, and administrative interface. They also report to the audit committee of council for strategic direction, reinforcement, and accountability (UNIMA Internal Audit Department, 2012).

External auditors are not part of the university but are engaged by it. Their objectives are usually set by statute and council. Unlike internal auditors, who have executive management team and council as their primary clients, external auditors have council as their primary client (UNIMA Internal Audit Department, 2012).

Institutional auditors carry out periodic reviews of the university's quality and standards as part of the quality assurance framework (UNIMA Internal Audit Department, 2012). Academic audit and recordkeeping audit are good examples of institutional audits. Table 12 below summarises findings on different aspects of audit from the six universities

Audit aspect	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Committee of council	Audit and Risk	Audit	Audit	Audit and Risk	Audit	Audit
Internal audit function	Outsourced	Internal audit unit	Outsourced	Outsourced	Internal audit unit	
External auditors	Independent professional audit firms hired					
Academic audit	Annual and rigorous reviews	Quality assurance review in academic department	Quality assurance review	Faculty audit	Quality assurance monitoring	Quality assurance monitoring
Recordkeeping audit	Records audit	Records management compliance			None	

Table 12: Aspects of audit

The research found each of the six public universities' councils had a committee responsible for audit. Four named their committees Audit whilst two named theirs Audit and Risk, as shown in Table 12.

As audit contributed to the effectiveness and efficiency of governance, risk management and control processes in the universities, it was obvious to see the two governance functions, audit and risk, being dealt with in the same governing body committee of the two universities, UWC and UJ. This also agreed with the researcher's contention that governance, audit and risk management hugely overlap.

Membership of the audit committees were mainly from outside the universities. This ensured impartiality when dealing with matters that may be brought before the audit committee by internal and external auditors in the course of their work (UNIMA Internal Audit Department, 2012). Besides being impartial and objective, membership from outside the university brought into this statutory committee a wide range of experience to the decision making process. What follows is a detailed analysis of the aspects of audit for each university.

6.6.1 Malawi universities' audit

The research found that UNIMA and Mzuni had similar audit aspects, including:

i.   Having a unit responsible for internal audit – the universities did not outsource their internal audit functions.

ii.   Hiring the same external auditors – both universities had Graham Carr as their independent auditors.

iii. Having quality assurance unit for the academic audit – both universities had quality assurance units coordinating the quality improvement drive by the two universities.

iv.   The universities started putting in place mechanisms to ensure quality of their services in 2008, before the enactment of a national legislation overseeing quality in higher education. The National Council for Higher Education came into being on 18th August 2011. Amongst its objectives, it was responsible for quality assurance in higher education as explained earlier. UNIMA had Quality Assurance Unit coordinated from the Office of the Pro Vice Chancellor whilst Mzuni had a standalone Quality Assurance and Enhancement Department reporting directly to the Vice Chancellor[133].

---

[133] Interview response from UNIMA Assistant Registrar held on 12th December 2012; Mzuni Quality Assurance and Enhancement. Available at:

v. Absence of recordkeeping audits – the two universities did not assess their recordkeeping systems. As revealed in this research, the two universities did not manage their records and documents effectively. There was lack of senior management support; recordkeeping policies and guidelines were not available; university-wide records retention and disposition schedules were lacking; and recordkeeping staff were inadequately trained; amongst other recordkeeping deficiencies. It was interesting to note that audit units did not raise clear questions about this. However, the Assistant Auditor General lamented the lack of sound recordkeeping, which made his work difficult when carrying out his audit assignments in the public bodies, including difficulties in retrieving required documents.

vi. An interesting finding of this research on UNIMA and Mzuni was that the two universities had internal audit units whist at the same time lacked an effective recordkeeping system. Either these internal audit also lacking those who could assess recordkeeping effectively or that it is a matter of confirming the statement of problem of this research which observed greater attention given to other governance functions such as audit but neglecting recordkeeping.

Auditing standards emphasise that auditing is a process of gathering evidence supporting the auditors' findings and opinions (Bhana, 2008). Without this evidence, which is usually found in well maintained records and documents, the auditors' assessments could be challenged as nothing more than speculation. Their credibility would be at risk.

The National Audit Office was another institution that promoted audit in the public organisations such as the universities. Although it did not have a direct mandate to enforce effective recordkeeping in the public bodies, it recognised the close link between recordkeeping and audit. In an interview that centred on the role the National Audit Office played in the governance and management of public universities; and the challenges it faced in accessing recorded information from the public universities, the Assistant Auditor General, speaking on behalf of the Auditor General, asserted that there would be "no audit without records"[134].

---

http://www.mzuni.ac.mw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=104&Itemid=55, accessed on 20th January 2014
[134] Interview response from the Assistant Auditor General held on 28th November 2012

He actually meant that if records were not properly managed, it would be extremely difficult to carry out an effective audit exercise. He went on to hint a number of aspects including the following:

i. The Auditor General had the overall oversight in auditing the public bodies including the universities.

ii. However, the Auditor General gave liberty to public bodies to hire audit firms of their choice; but the Auditor General will have the final say. If the audit did not meet the required standard, the Auditor General would recommend to the contrary.

iii. The audit efficiency was affected by the state of recordkeeping in the public bodies. Records and documents required were not retrieved efficiently. It took long to get the required information. When retrieved, not all information could be found.

iv. No audit without records as mentioned before.

v. Audit staff, like other public workers who handle recorded information should also undergo training in records management. Although turning the Staff Development Institute[135] into a commercial concern seemed a viable option for sustainability, it killed training opportunities for most recordkeeping personnel in the public service.

vi. Required electronic recordkeeping systems; handling of paper records was becoming cumbersome.

The mandate to ensure effective recordkeeping rested with the National Archives of Malawi. In an ideal situation, the National Archives of Malawi would be enforcing effective records management in the public bodies. This would make the National Audit Office able to easily find the information it required to carry out its duties. However, the state of funding at the National Archives of Malawi from the time of this research in 2012 to the analysis of the research in 2014 was very low, making it impossible for the officers to carry out fieldworks and trainings effectively.
.
Figure 9 summaries an annual work plan for the Internal Audit Department of UNIMA during the researcher's fieldwork in 2012.

---

[135] Staff Development Institute used to be a wholly government institution training the public service in different skills but was commercialised hence becoming unaffordable to many government departments
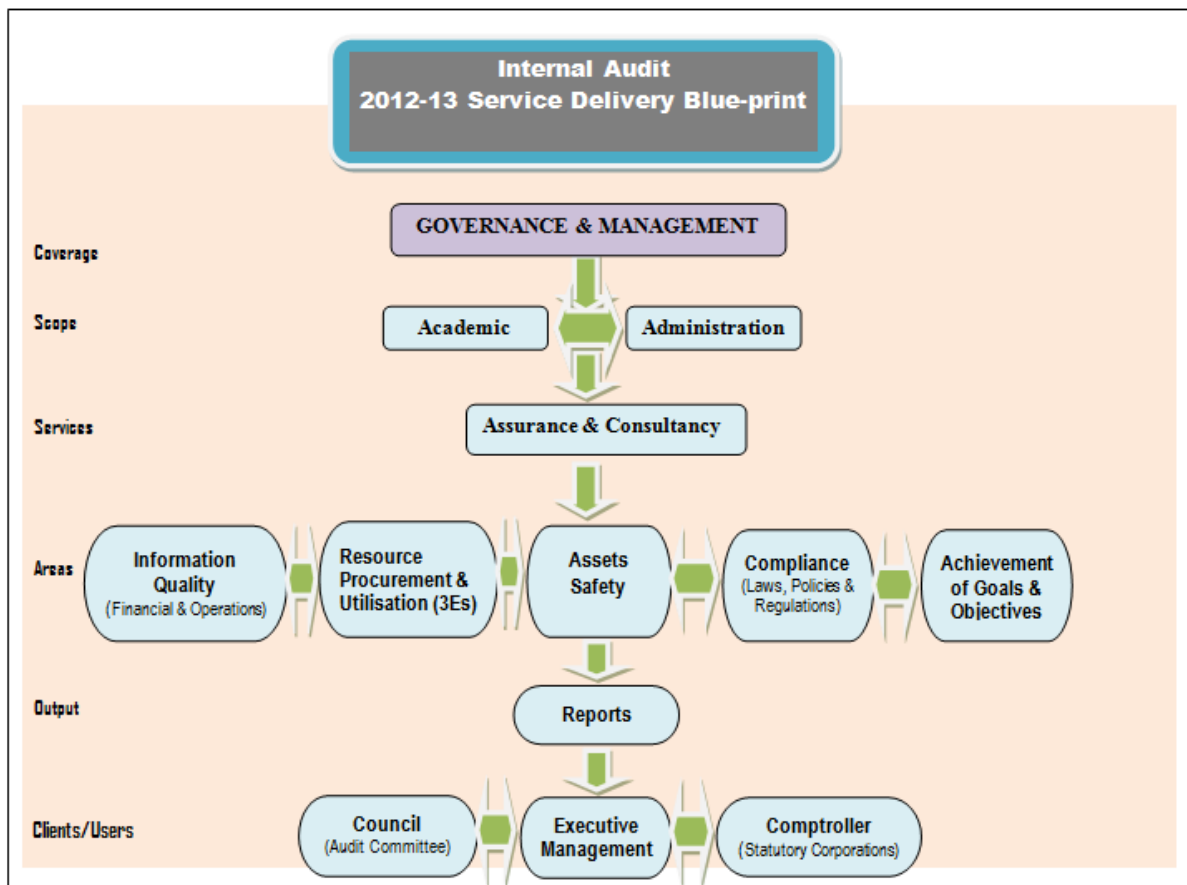
Figure 9: UNIMA Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2012-2013

6.6.2 South Africa universities' audit

As shown in Table 12, all but one university in South Africa outsourced their internal audit functions. As in all other outsourcing ventures, whether in the UK or South Africa, expert knowledge and skills are optimised and that other overhead costs are avoided when services are outsourced, though the organisation's information becomes unnecessarily exposed.

The following statements summarise findings on all aspects of audit in the South Africa universities.

i.   UCT had an internal audit which coordinated the internal audit function in a similar manner as the universities in Malawi.

ii. Wits appointed KPMG Services (Proprietary) Limited as its internal auditors. Both management and the Audit Committee approved the internal audit plan. KPMG, as internal auditors, monitored the operation of the internal control systems based on the approved audit plan and report findings and recommendations to management and the Audit Committee. In planning the internal audits for the year ended 2012, KPMG, considered the key risks documented in the University's strategic risk register as well as their knowledge of the University and other areas of concern raised by management (Wits Annual Report, 2012, p. 169).

iii. According to its Executive Director: Finance, UWC also appointed KPMG Services (Proprietary) Limited as its internal auditors. The internal auditors worked in similar manner as at Wits.

iv. UJ appointed Deloitte as its internal auditors. An example as in Table 13 below illustrates an internal audit area, a contract, which revealed excellent application of internal controls by the University (UJ Corporate Governance Annual Report, 2010):

Internal audit area and control objective	Adequacy	Effectiveness
Initiation of contract • Initiated in term of UJ policies and directives • Indexed and included in a central contact register		
Implementation of contract • Approved • Valid before commencement of the project		
Management and monitoring of contract • Controlled access • Amendments documented and approved		
Contract register • Valid, accurate and complete • Updated on regular basis		
Compliance with policies and procedures • Contract management policies and procedures developed and implemented • Monitored		
Contract renewals		

• Valid			
• Accurate and completely recorded			

Table 13: An example of internal audit area at UJ

The aggregate assessment in this audit was 100 percent for Adequacy, and 88 percent for Effectiveness, implying that UJ had in place effective internal controls. Effective internal controls are evidence of effective recordkeeping.

v. Ernst & Young Inc. was the external auditors for the two Cape Town based universities, UCT and UWC while Pricewaterhouse Coopers was the external auditors for the two Johannesburg based universities, Wits and UJ.

vi. According to its Deputy Vice Chancellor[136], UWC conducted academic audits regularly. Self-evaluation through the annual reports of departments and faculties, and external peer review through external examination were conducted annually. Departments underwent rigorous reviews every five to seven years (UWC Annual Report, 2012).

vii. According to its Archivist/Records Manager, UWC planned to conduct a records audit. By the time of compiling this report, the University had not yet commenced this project.

viii. According to the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor at UCT[137], the University audited its teaching and learning activities. Departments produced teaching and learning reports annually to inform the University of their teaching and learning activities. Rigorous departmental reviews were conducted once in every ten years.

ix. Instead of assessing the whole recordkeeping function, UCT designated its internal audit unit to monitor compliance of its records management policy.

x. UJ conducted a rigorous faculty audit in a cycle of 4 or 5 or 6 years[138].

xi. The Records manager audited adherence to UJ's records management policy.

xii. Wits introduced a Quality Improvement Unit in the Strategic Planning Division with the intention to carry out Triennial Reviews in Professional and Support Services across the University (Wits Annual Report, 2011).

---

[136] Interview response from UWC's Deputy Vice Chancellor held on 12th October 2012.

[137] Interview response from UCT's Deputy Vice Chancellor representative held on 19th October 2012.
[138] Interview response from UJ's Deputy Vice Chancellor's representative held on 31st October 2012

xiii.   Wits Archivist/Records Manager audited the recordkeeping practices when the need arose (Wits Records Management Policy, 2012).

The Auditor General of South Africa was clear in his defence of the audit-recordkeeping nexus. Like his Malawian counterpart, he asserted that ineffective recordkeeping resulted in challenges to retrieve required records and documents which would make the auditor fail to express an opinion on the underlying representation made (Bhana, 2008). As will be noted in the next chapter, the recordkeeping of the four South Africa universities, including digital records management, was good. Assigning an excellent opinion as Deloitte did on its assessment of UJ's contract management and administration might not have come as a surprise.

6.7 Risk management function

Effective recordkeeping mitigates risk. Pramesh Bhana (2008) asserted that risk assessment in public organisations should also review recordkeeping so that the organisations' recordkeeping practices do not pose any legislative or business risk to the organisation.

The overlap between audit and risk management was reemphasised in the preceding section. Some universities such as UWC and UJ merged these functions in their council operations hence their council committees had the name audit and risk committee. Other universities such as UCT, Wits, UNIMA and Mzuni did not explicitly have risk committees of council, but inherently having the risk management functions in their audit committees of council and committees of executive management team. The latter case can be explained further by a Three Lines of Defence model[139].

In the Three Lines of Defence model, management control is the first line of defence in risk management. The various risk control and compliance oversight functions established by management are the second line of defence. The independent assurance is the third line of defence. Each of these three lines plays a distinct role within the organisation's wider governance framework (Institute of Internal Auditors, 2013). Figure 10 is an illustration of this Three Lines of Defence model.

---

[139] Institute of Internal Auditors Position Paper, "The Three Lines of Defence in Effective Risk Management and Control". Florida: Institute of Internal Auditors, 2013.

The Three Lines of Defense Model
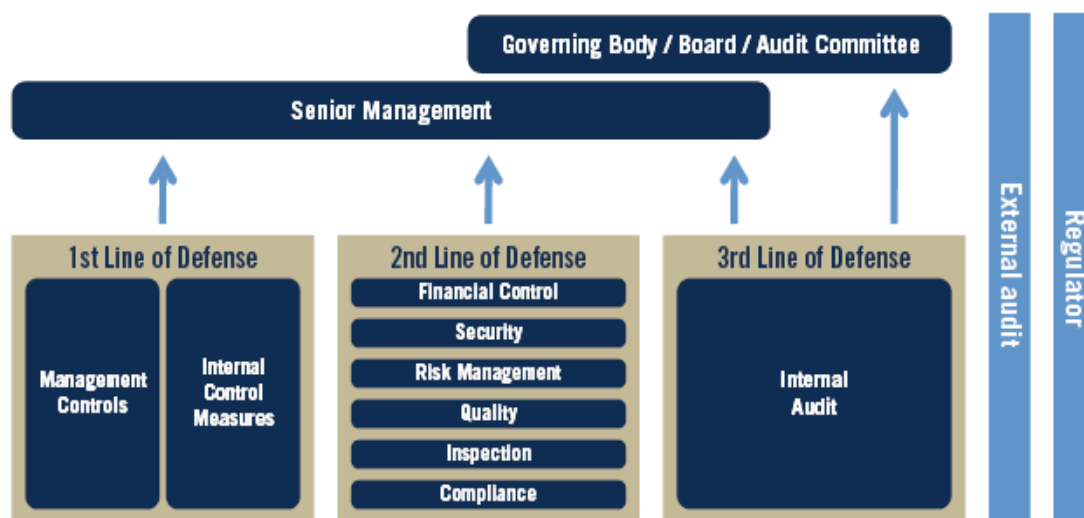
Adapted from ECIIA/FERMA *Guidance on the 8th EU Company Law Directive, article 41*

Figure 10: The Three Lines of Defence Model

It is evident from this model that executive management teams play essential roles in establishing internal controls. In the same perspective, they are critical in establishing effective recordkeeping which in essence is a risk management function (Bhana, 2008).

The fieldwork sought to find out what the universities considered to be their vital records and documents and what strategies they had in place to mitigate risks. Different responses were captured as shown below.

i. According to the Deputy Vice Chancellor, UWC considered student records including modules, and research output as vital records. In his view, the modules were "financially viable.[140]" Tuition fees from these modules generated revenue.

ii. As a strategy to mitigate risk, the UWC Deputy Vice Chancellor indicated availability of Academic Planning Committee of Senate as an aid to proper planning; and selecting capable masters and PhD students for lectureship positions.

iii. UCT considered student, staff, and finance records as vital records.

iv. As an early warning system to retain students, UCT devised "First Year Experience[141]". This was an early warning system to ensure that new students were retained by the University.

---

[140] Interview response from UWC's Deputy Vice Chancellor held on 17th October 2012

v. UJ considered students' register, staff, and financial records as vital records.

vi. Relying on audit and risk committee of council was amongst UJ's strategies to mitigate risk.

vii. Student, staff and finance records were consider vital records at Wits.

viii. As a strategy to mitigate risk, Wits increased its focus on risk management. Risk management was embedded at a strategic level whilst the process had been extended to all levels of management. Risk assessment and managing of risks was regarded as an ongoing management process, integrated in the daily operational activities of the University. The Council Risk Management Committee had embarked on a project to broaden the scope of the risk policy framework by including the Quinqennial reviews of faculties within the ambit of their activities (Wits Annual Report, 2012).

ix. As for UNIMA and Mzuni, they considered policies, students' register, register of graduates, minutes of council, senate, committees of council and senate, and executive management team, as vital records.

x. Strategies employed to mitigate risks included having electronic backups of the records which were deposited in the improvised records centres. They also relied on their internal audit units on risk mitigation.

These responses ranged from mitigation of general risks to mitigation of recordkeeping risks. It was interesting to note that the universities in Malawi identified strategies which focused mainly on recordkeeping while the universities in South Africa identified general academic risks.

Although the Universities in Malawi were able to rightly identify their vital records and risk mitigation strategies for the general recorded information, there were few salvage measures, that is, disaster response and recovery measures identified from both the respondents and on the ground. This might not come as a surprise considering the absence of a recordkeeping policy in either of the universities. The South African universities did not explicitly indicate salvage measures but their recordkeeping policies gave some indications of their availability. Although respondents were not directly asked whether they considered poor recordkeeping as a risk, it was evident from their responses that they recognised it as such.

---

[141] Interview response from UCT's Deputy Vice Chancellor representative held on 19th October 2012

Respondents from Malawi proposed improvements in some elements of recordkeeping as measures to mitigate risk whilst those in South Africa gave recordkeeping more attention for effective running of their universities.

6.8 Conclusion

The research findings as explained in this chapter have revealed that the universities under review had sound governance structures. These structures continued to improve, aided by, amongst others, legislation, regulations, standards, regulatory bodies, and governing bodies. This presented an opportunity for improved recordkeeping.

The study also revealed that some universities were taking advantage of these governance structures to improve their recordkeeping whilst other universities were missing this opportunity. It was evident that some of these governance structures had direct impact on recordkeeping whilst others affected it indirectly.

Chapter 7: Recordkeeping in universities in South Africa and Malawi

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explored some recordkeeping drivers including laws, regulations, standards, regulatory bodies, governing bodies, audit, and risk management. It partly answered the research question about the impact of external and internal factors on recordkeeping. This chapter explores how records and documents were managed in universities in South Africa and Malawi. It answers the question on recordkeeping capacity. It also continues to explore factors affecting recordkeeping, and relates recordkeeping and governance, audit and risk management.

7.2 Managing records and documents in the case study institutions

What follows are findings of the study on how records and documents were managed in case study institutions, presented in line with research objectives and questions.

7.2.1 Medium of information

The assessment included identifying the predominant medium of information used. This can determine the position of the university on the *paperless office continuum*, and ensure that appropriate mechanisms are devised to effectively manage the recorded information.

Electronic records and documents require a different approach in their management from their paper counterparts. The rapid integration of multimedia ICTs and their proliferation for information delivery has often meant that the technical aspects of information management obscure the effective management of its content, flow, and retention. There has been an explosion in the supply and demand of information in many media and a paradoxical decrease in the resources available to acquire and manage it. Recordkeeping provides methodologies for closing this gap and making the best use of information resources (Shepherd and Yeo, 2004).

Table 14 below presents findings on the most frequently used medium of information for the records and documents at the six universities[142].

	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Predominantly paper	√	-	-	-	√	√
Predominantly electronic	-	√	√	√	-	-

Table 14: Medium of information for records and documents

The study revealed that 50 percent of the institutions had paper as the most used medium whilst the remaining institutions had their records and documents in mostly electronic form. 75 percent of the institutions in South Africa had their records and documents in mostly electronic form whilst 100 percent of the institutions in Malawi had their records and documents predominantly in paper form. Some of the areas identified to determine the medium of information are summarised as below:

   i.   Communication within the university
      a. The universities in South Africa relied extensively on their intranet and internet to communicate. This was identified at UCT, UWC, Wits and UJ
      b. Although use of internet was identified on a small scale at both UNIMA and Mzuni, the Malawi universities predominantly used paper-based memoranda for communication
  ii.   Application for admission
      a. Online application was predominant in South African universities
      b. Malawi universities used full paper-based application system
 iii.   Instructional materials
      a. In South Africa universities, lecture notes were stored in the university systems which were networked. The lecturers retrieved these materials in any lecture room
      b. Lecture materials were mostly physical at UNIMA and Mzuni

---

[142] Interview response from the records managers or their representatives, and researcher's own observation

iv. Systems for storing students' assessment records

    a. The South Africa universities had mostly parallel storage systems. They used both manual and electronic systems to store students' assessment records

    b. UNIMA and Mzuni predominantly used manual systems

v. Use of social media for business purposes

    a. South African universities made use of the social media for business purposes. Facebook and Twitter were the most used social media platforms.

    b. The universities in Malawi did not use the social media for business purposes

vi. Systems for financial and human resource records

    a. The universities in both South Africa and Malawi automated their accounting and human resource records

    b. Finance and human resource records considered critical in all the six universities

It was evident that the South African universities invested hugely in technology. As revealed in the previous chapter, one of their strategies was to be highly competitive in the global market, including being amongst top universities in respectable rankings such as QS and THE. Technology helped them to organise their recorded information effectively. Computers have an impressive advantage in that information can be managed and retrieved much more cheaply, securely and effectively (Moss, 2005). These universities, as will be discovered later in this chapter, had good recordkeeping. However, as has been argued previously, technology alone might not be a solution to the recordkeeping problems. People issues such as culture at workplace can also be a contributing factor as will be explained later.

Although paper records and documents were predominant in Malawi universities, recordkeeping was increasingly becoming digital. Personal computers were present in all offices visited expect one, and local area networks in some designated departments were present. This showed that the universities were increasingly making use of digital records, and that the records and documents were continually being generated in electronic format, and might exist only in that format (Chinyemba and Ngulube, 2005).

Introducing new technology to help improve the work environment require people to change their approach to work. Some cultural issues in the work place in Sub-Saharan Africa are an impediment to a successful implementation of an IT programme. Alistair Tough (2012) shared his experience on how technology was misused in offices in Malawi, a trend which occurred in other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. He observed a rampant misuse of IT equipment, including client-server networks, for personal and recreational use such as downloading music and photographs on the university system, as explained in detail in Chapter 2. A similar trend was revealed at Mzuni. Members of staff used official computers for games and social media that were unrelated to their work.[143] Dealing with this situation would require serious change management strategies such as formulating and implementing policies that are easily understood by staff members.

Another strategy, as suggested by Alistair Tough (2012), would be to employ specialist software designed to detect and prevent abuse. This strategy, however, may not be of immediate application at the two Malawi universities considering their pace of technological advancement. The findings of this research imply that different organisations operated on different points on the paperless office continuum even within the same geographical region. The technological gap was not purely an inter-regional one.

Notwithstanding the 50-50 divide between paper and electronic media, the study revealed that all the universities applied the records lifecycle principle in managing their recorded information. For example, UCT, regardless of having its records and documents predominantly in electronic medium, explicitly stated that "all official UCT records must be managed in accordance with the records management lifecycle, file plan and retention plan" (UCT Records Management Policy, 2012). Its records lifecycle had the following stages:

 i. Creation – receipt, identification, declaration, classification
 ii. Maintenance and use – storage/retention, retrieval, distribution
 iii. Legal hold (overrides disposal lifecycle) – records are held because of ongoing legal case

---

[143] During the period 17th September 2012 and 3rd October 2012, the researcher observed that some offices visited at the University had their screens showing games such as solitaire and social media including Nyasatimes feedbacks.

iv.   Disposal – archival/preservation, destruction/deletion

Figure 11 is a visual representation of UCT's records management lifecycle.
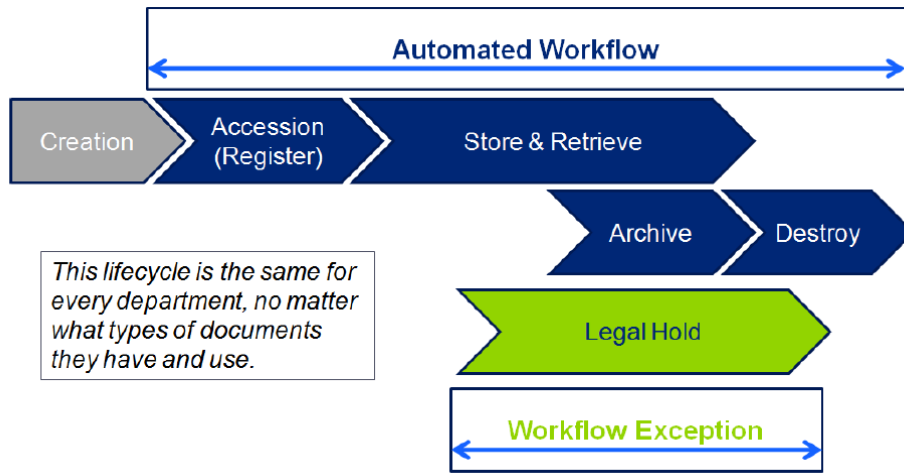
Figure 11: Visual representation of UCT's records lifecycle

Although the other three South Africa universities did not explicitly indicate that they were using records lifecycle to manage their recorded information, their practice suggested that the records lifecycle was in use. Their records management units managed semi-current records in special repositories reminiscence of records centres. For example, the records management unit which was known as Document, Records and Archives Management Services (DRAMS) at the UWC was responsible for "providing storage for semi-current documents and records at the Central Records Office" (UWC Document, Records and Archives Management Policy, 2009). Similarly, the Central Records Office, as the records management unit was referred to at Wits, had clear guidelines on how to manage semi-current records, including guidelines on transfer and storage.

Inactive and semi-active records must be transferred to the Central Registry at the Senate House Room 4042. The records transfer index (list) must be attached to the files being transferred. No records shall be accessioned by Central Registry or Archives without the signed records transfer list. The transfer of records must be aligned to the applicable Records Retention Schedule.

All records will be stored in an appropriate manner i.e. a secure filing cabinet, drawer, cupboard properly indexed to enable easy access to records. All records must be arranged in accordance with the approved Wits File Plan.

(Wits Records Management Policy, 2012)

At UJ, the Records Management Department oversight roles, including auditing storage of the records such as those in semi-current state (UJ Records Management Policy, 2009) confirmed the application of the records lifecycle principle.

The application of records lifecycle principle was also evident in the Malawi universities which were predominantly paper based. An observation at Mzuzu University provides a good example. At this institution, students' records and documents such as continuous assessment grades and marked scripts were stored in the academic departments where they were referred to on a regular basis. When these records and documents moved to the registrar's office after senate deliberation on the examination results, they were rarely referred to except when a student appealed against senate's determination.

These semi-active records and documents were kept by the registrar's office till their disposition. This was a clear indication of the records lifecycle process with records phases such as active, semi-active, and non-active. Mzuni, however, did not have a records centre to manage the semi-active records. These records and documents were kept in improvised storage systems such as spare spaces in offices and other rooms within the University campus. This practice was also observed at UNIMA's Central Administration Office and the adjacent constituent college, Chancellor College.

The absence of records centres at the two Malawi universities contradicted the generally held view that as records become less necessary for the day-to-day operations of an office, they are taken off-line or taken to a records centre for effective maintenance and security (Ashe and Nealy, 2004).

This study therefore found that the records lifecycle was the predominant recordkeeping principle used to manage records and documents in the six universities. This corroborated an observation by Bakaza Chachage and Patrick Ngulube (2006) who argued that the records lifecycle was the predominant principle in the management of records and documents in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. They observed that the records lifecycle was not as ineffective as portrayed by the proponents of the records continuum:

However, the need to embrace the digital environment for efficiency and competitiveness unavoidably meant some universities modifying the records lifecycle principle. For example, although UCT had explicitly stated that it used the records lifecycle principle to manage its records and documents, the use of ITs to manage its recorded information such as shared network drives, document management systems, web content management systems, and databases, as storage media, meant extending the records lifecycle phases to include the systems design phase which is usually associated with the records continuum principle. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) called this new-look principle a *hybrid records lifecycle*.

This entails extending the role of records managers to being collaborators. Scholars such as Shepherd and Yeo (2003) and Currall and Moss (2008) have emphasised the need for collaboration between records professionals and information systems experts. This collaboration was however not conspicuous at UCT. Instead, there was a lack of clarity about the roles of records professionals and systems experts. Systems experts were not only predominant but also took up the roles and responsibilities of records managers in electronic records management. For instance, an IT expert oversaw the recordkeeping function.

The absence of a records manager did not cause any noticeable problem at UCT, especially in the management of digital records and documents. The Enterprise Content Manager, popularly referred to as the ECM Manager, who was an IT person, played the role of a records manager at UCT. Despite having insufficient knowledge in records management in general and records standards in particular, the ECM issued guidelines for managing digital records and documents. This was incorporated in the University's information systems. This brings credence to the argument that unless records managers realign themselves with changes in technology, they may be pushed to the periphery of the EDRM endeavours.

However, as has been argued on many occasions in this thesis, the emphasis on in technology, and its subsequent adoption by organisations may not necessarily guarantee solutions to recordkeeping problems. In fact, debate has ensued about the unintended consequences and downside risks for transparency and accountability associated with the way recorded information is produced and managed in digitally enabled developing country public sector contexts. What this means is that ICTs are seen as further weakening government records and information management. In her article, "One step forward, two steps backward? Does e-government make governments in developing countries more transparent and accountable?", Victoria Lemieux (2016) explores the negative effect of technology on recordkeeping in the developing countries' public sector:

> Though government recordkeeping was weak in many countries before the introduction of ICTs and growing digitalization and existing paper based recordkeeping systems often continue to be weak, there is mounting evidence to suggest that the situation has worsened, not improved, with increased use of technology in the conduct of government business. This is not to make the Luddite's case that governments would be better off without ICTs. Rather, the argument is that it may be a case of 'one step forward, two steps backwards', as ICTs may not have successfully solved information problems within public authorities in many developing countries, as some suggest they have, and may, on the contrary, in a number of cases have made the task of gaining control over recorded communication to ensure that it is accessible and has integrity much more challenging.

This can also be the case of public universities, which often see technology as the only solution to their recordkeeping problems and do not recognise the need for records management solutions. This is illustrated by the situation at UCT, which had an archives service with a purpose built repository managed by the Archivist. This archives service operated in a traditional setup and concentrated on those records deemed to have historical and research values. It had nothing to do with the business records of the University.

This arrangement isolated the Archivist from the business activities of the University save for special cases when the Archivist was invited to some of the University's information management meetings. To give an example, one such meeting was the Consultative Meeting on Records Management[144], which was more of a brainstorming meeting on records management strategy for the University and discussed issues such as records management projects to be considered by the Vice Chancellor's funding programme. The ECM Manager, as the *de facto* records manager, represented the records management function, whilst the Archivist represented the archive function. The University Archives had mainly physical records.

Unlike the other three South Africa universities, which had records managers and centralised records management units, UCT did not have a centralised records management unit. It instead distributed the records management roles and responsibilities across the University in a move that could be viewed as wholesale postcustodialism. Table 15 shows the roles and responsibilities of different designations towards recordkeeping.

Designation/Department	Role	Responsibility
1. Registrar	• Chief information officer • Records management policy owner	• Oversight of records management • Implementation of records management policy
2. Internal Audit	• Monitoring of compliance with policy	• Compliance reviews
3. Legal Secretariat	• Monitoring of legal/statutory compliance requirements	• Compliance reviews
4. Information and Communication Technology Services (ICTS)	• Provision of information technology services and maintenance thereof	• Server and systems maintenance • Maintenance of security and authentication of electronic records management systems
5. Properties and Services Department	• Physical access control • Facility maintenance	• Control of physical access to physical record repositories • Control of environmental hazards at

---

[144] The researcher attended this meeting held on the 18th October 2012, and accorded him an opportunity to have an overview of UCT's records management system.

		physical record repositories
6. University Archives	• Custodianship of records stored in the University Archives	• Day-to-day management of University Archives records • Maintenance and implementation of retention schedules
7. Record Owner	• Oversight of a collection pertaining to or held by a specific department, office, group or unit	• Assigning and managing record keeper • Implementation of records management retention schedule • Review of retention schedule
8. Record Keeper	• Designated staff member responsible for the management of records pertaining to or held by a department, office, or group	• Day-to-day management of the records of a specific department, office, group , unit or committee • Maintenance of metadata associated with such records

Table 15: Roles and responsibilities towards records management at UCT

7.2.2 Records management policy

The investigation in this area involved checking the availability of a records management policy. Each university should define and document policies for records management, and ensure that such policies are implemented and maintained at all levels in the organisation (ISO 15489-2, 2001, clause 2.2).

Table 16 below shows the universities that had policies for managing records and documents, arranged in the order of effective date, starting with the oldest policy.

University	Policy	Effective date
UJ	Records Management Policy	21st July 2009
UWC	Document, Records and Archives Management Policy	1st January 2010
Wits	Records Management Policy	2nd February 2012

UCT	Records Management Policy	13th June 2012
UNIMA	None	Not applicable
Mzuni	None	Not applicable

Table 16: Availability of policies for managing records and documents

The study revealed that each of the four South African universities had a records management policy whilst their Malawian counterparts had none. UCT policy was approved by Council of the University and was owned by the Registrar's Office. The Internal Audit ensured compliance with the policy. The policy had a review period of five years.

UWC had a unique unit coordinating the management of documents, records and archives. This unit, DRAMS, was overseen by the University's Archivist/Records Manager who also owned the DRAM Policy under delegated authority from the University Registrar. The policy was approved by UWC Council.[145] It outlined the way in which UWC would manage its documents, records and archives in order to achieve administrative efficiency and to meet statutory requirements (DRAM Policy, 2009). The policy had a review period of at least two years or whenever changes in recordkeeping requirements occurred.

UWC's DRAM Policy acknowledged the need to effectively manage the University's recorded information in the world of risk. It asserted that the University would face the following risks if it could not manage its documents, records and archives well:

i. Not being able to achieve administrative efficiency if some documents, records and archives required for decision making could not be found when needed hence losing the competitive edge

ii. Facing potential embarrassment or even financial prejudice in the event of litigation if it could not produce evidence of its actions

iii. Not being able to meet its obligation in terms of the law such as the PAIA 2000 which required the institution to be able to meet the information requests within stipulated times

---

[145] Interview response from the Archivist/Records Manager of UWC on 12th October 2012

iv.   Not being able to meet its accountability requirements in terms of the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended. Although the Act gave autonomy to the public universities, it stated that they would still remain accountable to the public

v.   Not being able to re-establish its essential services and functions in the minimum possible time in the event of a disaster

vi.   Not being able to preserve its valuable memory for posterity as those documents, records and archives that showed the history of the University would not be preserved according to standards and may subsequently be lost to the system
(DRAM Policy, 2009).

The study revealed that UWC averted these risks. According to the University's Archivist/Records Manager, there were no major hitches emanating from poor recordkeeping in the last two years he had been the Archivist/Records Manager.

Wits and UJ records management policies were approved by top executive management teams. At Wits, the Central Records Office oversaw the policy. However, the overall responsibility for this policy was vested in the University Registrar. Wits reviewed its policy on an annual basis and/or as the need arose (Wits Records Management Policy, 2012).

Although there was a Records Management Department at UJ, the oversight of its policy was vested in the Directorate of Corporate Governance, which was in itself under the Office of the University Registrar. The review period for records management policy at UJ was five years. A unique feature of UJ Records Management Policy was its proposal for a Records Management Charter having the following functions:

i.   Creating a conducive environment that promoted recordkeeping

ii.   Developing of a strategy to promote and practice functional recordkeeping

iii.   Developing of an action plan for effective implementation of records management

iv.   Providing effective advice on implementation of records management

v.   Making recommendations to Management Executive Committee and Senate

vi.   Liaising internationally, nationally or inter-institutionally with regards to records management development in higher education institutions as well as in industry
(UJ Records Management Policy, 2009)

This Records Management Charter was a basis for the creation of the Records Management Committee (RMC). The RMC, functioning as a committee within the Corporate Governance unit under the auspices of the Registrar, had the following membership, according to UJ Records Management Policy (2009):

i. The University Registrar as chairperson
ii. The Corporate Governance Officer
iii. The Records Manager as head of Secretariat
iv. Director: Academic Administration
v. Chief Information Officer
vi. Executive Directors
vii. Heads of Academic Administration
viii. Co-opted staff members as approved by the Records Management Committee

This charter is a good example of how to imbed recordkeeping in an organisational strategy. Like UWC which had a Document and Records Committee and comprised similar membership as those of UJ, such setup is a clear demonstration of the close relationship between recordkeeping and governance.

According to UJ's Director of Corporate Governance, the rationale for sound records management at the University was as a result of the Management Executive Committee's resolution after realising that effective records management formed part of good corporate governance[146]. Again, this was a clear manifestation that executive management teams are drivers for effective recordkeeping.

The records management policies of the four South Africa universities satisfied key requirements of a standard records management policy, including:

i. Signed by the chief executive officer or another senior manager
ii. Issued to all staff
iii. Described responsibilities of all staff in managing the records

---

[146] The Director of Corporate Governance gave the researcher one hour lecture on the role of records management on institutional governance on 31st October 2012 – "Corporate Governance and Records Management: University of Johannesburg", 2012, slide 7.

iv.   Written policy statements

v.   Included email and other electronic records in defining records

vi.   Allowed for penalties for staff who did not comply with the policy

(PARBICA, 2007)

The absence of records management policies in the universities in Malawi confirmed the assertion that it was possible for an institution to operate without a formal records management policy, more especially in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In their exploratory case study of selected companies in Tanzania on how the companies managed their business records, Chachage and Ngulube (2006) found that four of the nine companies studied operated without formal records management policies. Without formal records management policies, organisations may not effectively demonstrate to their employees and stakeholders that managing recorded information is essential for their organisations' performance and accountability.

Cases of poor recordkeeping in the two Malawi universities can be attributed to a number of factors including: the absence of formal records management policies and guidelines, a lack of senior management support and workplace culture. These were revealed in this study, and are explained further below.

The report of a meeting in 2012 that brought together senior academic and administrative staff in the University of Malawi to deliberate quality assurance recognised the key role recordkeeping plays in the management of the University. The delegates proposed improvements that included improving recordkeeping (Report on Quality Assurance Workshop, 2012), as explained earlier. The problem that prompted the delegates to make such recommendations was the poor state of recordkeeping in the University

With regard to organisational culture, there is a growing realisation, as discussed in Chapter 2, amongst records professionals of the centrality of people and information culture in successful approaches to managing records and documents in the digital era (McLeod, 2013). Therefore the culture at the work place can be a hindrance to effective recordkeeping. For example, use of office PCs for personal use, as mentioned earlier, is one of such cultural aspects.

Other cultural aspects include the widespread practice of staff using personal e-mail accounts and telephone communication to conduct official business (Tough, 2011). Usually, business transacted in this manner would not be documented in official systems.

All these cultural aspects were prevalent in the Malawi universities. Unreliability of the university systems was identified as the major reason for relying on the personal email accounts. The researcher at one point used personal email accounts of officers at Mzuni for official communication. It was also evident that most office bearers at the universities in Malawi preferred telephone conversation to sending email messages.

When the researcher sent communications through the email, responses were rarely given until a telephone was used to make follow-ups. These oral communications were rarely followed up with written communications.

Although a formal records management policy can signify recognition of recordkeeping and management support, implementation of the policy is of prime importance. A policy that is not put into use is as good as having no policy at all. This explains the need for monitoring compliance with the policy, including mandating an appropriate person or unit to undertake monitoring and prepare reports. This should be amongst the key elements of a records management policy (TNA, 2010). All of the four South Africa universities fulfilled this requirement. For example, UCT designated its internal audit to monitor compliance; and UJ designated its Records Manager to audit adherence (UCT Records Management Policy, 2012; UJ Records Management Policy, 2009). However, the effectiveness of these compliance measures would depend on management commitment to take action on the reports submitted.

7.2.3 Records management process

Records management processes include classification or filing, storage, retrieval, and disposition of records. The field study examined the extent these processes were carried out and implemented in the universities. Table 17 presents the findings.

Recordkeeping Process	University					
	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Classification	Use of classification scheme					
Storage	1. Physical tools and equipment 2. Electronic media 3. Records Centre 4. Outsourced	1. Physical tools and equipment 2. University managed electronic systems	1. Physical tools and equipment 2. Electronic media 3. Records Centre 3. Outsourced	1. Physical tools and equipment 2. University managed electronic systems	1. Physical tools and equipment 2. Electronic media	
Disposition	Use of university-wide retention and disposition schedules				Discretionary	

Table 17: Records management processes

The study revealed that each university had a form of classification scheme. Classification schemes and file plans ensure coherent and consistent arrangement of records and subsequently form the basis for effective retrieval, retention and disposition of the records. They are also essential in assigning security status to users, including restricting access to some classes of records as a legal requirement.

(a) Records management process at UWC

UWC classified its records and documents functionally and developed a file classification scheme. The University had different modalities of storing its records and documents. According to its Archivist/Records Manager, there were three different ways of keeping semi-active records. Firstly, departments were free to keep them. This was when the records were being stored in physical tools and equipment such as filing cabinets, drawers, cupboards, and shelves; and electronic storage media such as databases and network drives. Secondly, the records and documents were transferred to the University records centre for their storage. Thirdly, the records were being managed by outside service providers in the form of outsourcing.

In case of different versions of records and documents, such as application forms and research records, the head of the unit was responsible for their management. Old versions were however deposited to the records centre.

As noted earlier, UWC used social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter for communication. Some of the content of these social media platforms included critical information such as lecture notes, feedbacks, and other academic discussions. These constituted important university records and documents requiring effective management. Smallwood's view (2013) that the new social media platforms are creating content that must be managed, monitored, and archived is relevant. However, it was discovered that UWC records management policy did not specifically cover these new technologies. Records and documents generated by these technologies were exposed to greater risks. The social networking sites usually make it much easier to pirate copyright protected materials. This could result in loss of intellectual property to the University.

Each member of teaching staff at UWC was responsible for keeping their records and documents. According to one professor interviewed, they stored their students' continuous assessment grades either manually or electronically. For example students' grades were stored in the marks administration system which could be done manually or electronically.[147] The academic personally captured the grades into the system.

Although UWC had an institutional repository, catering for mainly digital information materials, members of teaching staff rarely deposited their research papers and publications. For example, the professor interviewed confirmed this observation by stating that he had never deposited any material for the past three years. These publications can be records if they could be used as evidence of the member's contribution to research and need for promotion at their University and to rankings.

UWC employed different strategies to secure its records and documents. It restricted unauthorised access to its recorded information by putting physical barriers such as locking the file cabinets and strong-rooms to prevent such access to the physical records. It also provided passwords to prevent unauthorised access to its electronic records.

---

[147] Interview response from UWC professor held on 15th October 2012.

Access to stored records and documents was made easier by the shared network drives for the electronic records and documents. As for paper records, the cabinets, drawers, and shelves were properly marked to identify where particular records were housed and subsequently ease of retrieval.

UWC had a university-wide retention and disposition schedule, catering for both paper and digital records. So no records and documents should be disposed of without following laid down procedures. As aptly stated by the Faculty Manager, "We follow university regulations to get rid of the records and documents we no longer want in our Faculty.[148].

(b) Records management process at UCT

Like UWC, UCT used a functional classification scheme. The University stored its paper records and documents in filing cabinets in the faculties or units. Some units asserted that they stored their records in the University Archives as attested by a faculty manager: "We store our records in the Faculty and University Archives where necessary".[149] A follow-up to the University Archives however did not indicate holdings of semi-active records. The faculty manager might have mixed up archives and records. The two terms are frequently mixed up and used interchangeably.

UCT stored electronic records in different storage media including shared network drives, document management system, web content management system, and databases. These storage methods, according to the ECM manager, did not cause major problems. Things were under control. It would have been necessary to add the views from a records manager on the effectiveness of these storage methods. However, as outlined earlier, the University did not have a records manager. On version control, according to the ECM Manager, the University managed different versions of records and documents on an ad hoc basis and at other times followed specific policy generating the particular version.[150]

---

[148] Interview response from the UWC Faculty Manager held on 12th October 2012
[149] Interview response from the UCT Faculty Manager held on the 19th October 2012.
[150] Interview response from the UCT ECM Manager held on 18th October 2012

As for students continuous assessment grades, members of teaching staff were replacing the old marks register with an electronic system locally named Vula. It was UCT's online collaboration and learning environment, used to support UCT courses as well as other UCT-related groups and communities. The word Vula meant open, and referred to the many possibilities provided by Vula, as well as its open source origins. Vula was jointly developed with other universities worldwide as a project[151].

UCT had an institutional repository but it was not optimally utilised by members of academic staff. One member stated that the institutional repository "formally existed but no procedures available on how to go about it.[152]

Like UWC, UCT secured its recorded information by controlling access to the physical records and documents, and making use of passwords for the electronic records and documents. The institution had a university-wide retention and disposition schedule. The availability of the university-wide retention and disposition schedule implied that the risk of destroying records and documents haphazardly was reduced.

(c) Records management process at Wits

Wits also classified its records and documents functionally. Faculties and units stored their physical records and documents in filing cabinets, drawers, shelves and cupboards. There was, however, a regular transfer of these records and documents to the registry. One faculty registrar corroborated this observation.

In her faculty, undergraduate records and documents were kept for one year before being transferred to the registry; postgraduate records and documents were kept for the entire period of enrolment before they were sent to the registry; and letters and other correspondences were sent to the registry on a regular basis.[153] The bulk of semi-active records were stored in the Central Records Office repository. This repository had a dual function, as a records centre and an archives service. Like the UWC, the person in charge of this unit at Wits had also a dual designation; that of archivist/records manager.

---

[151] University of Cape Town, "What is Vula?"; available at: https://vula.uct.ac.za/portal/site/!gateway/page/!gateway-200; accessed on 20th January 2015.

[152] Interview response from the UCT Professor of History held on 18th October 2012

[153] Interview response from Wits Faculty Registrar held on 30th October 2012.

The combined roles of a records manager and archivist gave the officer holder more say in the management of the institution's recorded information.

Outside service providers were also involved in managing Wits semi-active records and documents. This outsourcing involved storing the records and documents offsite. Although Wits had a repository, the Central Records Office, to manage its records, it was too small to accommodate the amount of records it had. Additionally, the records management staff it had was inadequate to handle all the University records. The University also used this outsourcing mechanism as a risk mitigation drive.

Therefore, the outsourcing service at Wits, like that at UWC, was a form of risk mitigation, the risk transfer. As explained earlier, risk transfer involves passing the risk to a third party. Both traditional paper and digital information can be stored by a third party. This involves agreeing to the terms of reference between the University and the contracting company.

The terms of reference give assurance that the stored information will be secured as much as possible. It is like entering a contractual obligation with all rules governing the contract. All the universities that outsourced their services underwent these forms of paperwork. This, however, may not guarantee total security of the stored information when it is in the hands of the third party. In fact, it presents another risk, that of security of the recorded information in the hands of the third party. Reparations as a result of breaches to contractual obligations may not be enough to repair damages caused by the loss or tampering of the organisation's information.

Wits provided security of its records and documents by restricting access to them. For example, the faculty registrar stored physical records and documents in secured shelves, including mobile steel shelves. Access to these shelves was controlled. Only authorised person had access to the faculty's strong room.

Filing cabinets, drawers and cupboards were lockable to control unauthorised access. The University also used passwords to help control access to its electronic records and documents. However, to retrieve recorded information, the University employed different measures. It ensured that filing cabinets, drawers and cupboards were properly labelled to enable ease of access to the records and documents.

It made a policy statement that "All records must be arranged in accordance with the approved Wits File Plan" (Wits Records Management Policy, 2012).

As regards e-mails, the University had an explicit policy statement:

> E-mail shall be filed in a central located shared folder by the author or sender except if:
> - there is a person in the department/school or project group to whom the responsibility for this task has been designated
> - it is an external e-mail in which case the Wits recipient is responsible for filing it (Wits Records Management Policy, 2012)

The Records Manager/Archivist hinted that this policy statement was working well. She had the oversight responsibility for the policy statement in particular, and the records management policy in general. This contradicted the generally held view that an email filing policy which relies on users to do the filing does not work well. This, therefore, requires further research on email policies.

Wits developed a university-wide retention and disposition schedule. It emphasised that:

> Records shall only be kept for the times as prescribed within the approved retention schedules unless prior consent has been received from both the Records Manager and the relevant Head of School or Department (Wits Records Management Policy, 2012).

(d) Records management process at UJ

UJ classified its records and documents functionally. This classification scheme suited well those institutions in South Africa. They underwent major reorganisation in the early 2000s. Some institutions merged whilst others split. UJ is a good example of a university born from organisational changes. It was born as a result of the merger of three distinct institutions as explained previously.

The birth of UJ confirmed the generally held view that organisational structures are fluid in the modern era where change is a frequent occurrence. Alistair Tough (2006), as has been shown, endorses the suitability of functional classification in catering for any organisational changes:

> While departmental boundaries often change and teams are short-lived, the underlying functions being delivered tend to remain much more stable. Thus functional classification schemes enable the delivery of services to continue during periods of organisational upheaval (Tough, in Tough and Moss, 2006, p. 17).

UJ stored its physical records and documents in filing cabinets, drawers, and cupboards. These records were secured by amongst others, locking them up using keys. They were also secured by restricting access whereby unauthorised entry to places housing them was prohibited[154].

The University also had electronic storage systems, which simplified retrieval of its recorded information. As asserted by the faculty administrator," the university records and documents are extremely accessible".[155] This included emails.

Teaching members of staff stored students' continuous assessment grades both in hard copies and electronic forms. For example, a class list with the grades was in both electronic and hardcopy. According to one lecturer, this list was sent to faculty administrator for securing and storage. It would be sent back to the lecturer for verification.[156]

It was observed that UJ had made tremendous progress in its transition to using digital records, which had an impact on its storage space. The Director of Corporate Governance gave an example of the digitisation project the University was undertaking, which would result in a comprehensive file plan.[157]

---

[154] Interview response from the UJ Faculty Administrator held on 31st October 2012.
[155] Ibid
[156] Interview response from UJ Lecturer held on 31st October 2012
[157] Presentation by the UJ Director of Corporate Governance held on 31st October, 2012.

Like the other three South Africa universities, UJ also had an institutional repository catering mainly the digital information materials, but it was underutilised by the academic members of staff. For example, the lecturer interviewed indicated that she had never deposited any material in it.

UJ also developed a university-wide retention and deposition schedule. Disposal needed to be authorised by the records management office.

(e) Records management processes at UNIMA and Mzuni

Records management processes at the Malawi higher education institutions studied, UNIMA and Mzuni, were similar. Culturally, Mzuni was not completely detached from UNIMA as the majority of its academic and non-academic staff members once worked with UNIMA. For example, 80 percent of the principal officers at Mzuni had worked with UNIMA for more than five years before joining Mzuni.

Although there were no records management units at these two institutions, their registries coordinated the records management function. At UNIMA Central Administration Office, the Executive Officer (Documentation) combined the roles and responsibilities of a records manager and librarian. His stock was equally divided between records and published information. His counterpart at Mzuni, the Executive Officer, played the role of a records manager. He had mainly the University's records and documents to manage.

UNIMA and Mzuni both classified their records and documents. In the offices and the registry, shelves and cabinets had tags, as pointers to the records and documents held in those offices and registries. Their classification schemes were mainly departmental. The departmental classification scheme worked well with these two universities as they were predominantly paper-based and departmental boundaries were stable. The physical nature of paper enables it to be identified with the department of its origin despite organisational restructuring that may render this departmental classification scheme ineffective.

The two universities stored their active physical records and documents in filing cabinets, drawers, cupboards, and shelves in the offices. Electronic records were stored in office computers, personal computers, and other removable devices such as memory sticks. This resulted in a lot of personalisation of university information, and in some cases, loss of the information when the offline storage devices got lost or damaged.

Semi-active records at UNIMA Central Administration Office were mainly deposited in the Documentation Centre. At Mzuni they were stored in improvised storage systems, such as spare spaces in the offices and other rooms at the Campus. For example, some of the records from the Vice Chancellor's Office were locked up in a spare room in the University Library.

Attempts were made to secure the institutions' records and documents, especially students' information. For example, the Faculty Secretary at UNIMA ensured that the cabinets that stored students' information, including assessment grades, were locked; the door to the office was usually locked; and she restricted access to the office computer by not allowing unauthorised use, and having a password for the computer.[158]

However, the study revealed two major risks to the records and documents. Firstly, the tendency to store some university records in personal computers compromised the security of the records. These computers were not guaranteed in terms of security. They could easily be stolen or damaged in the homes of the staff members. Secondly, poor storage of the records and documents exposed them to multitudes of threats, including insects, rain and moisture, extreme heat, and unauthorised access.

Both UNIMA and Mzuni had institutional repositories, catering for mainly digital information materials, and both were managed by the librarians. The two universities did not have records managers, as explained earlier. As was the case in the South African universities, the institutional repositories in Malawi were not optimally utilised. Few members deposited their materials. A professor at UNIMA corroborated this observation. He had just sent his material to his department before depositing the material in the institutional repository. He conceded that the "Librarian has been calling for the materials.[159]

---

[158] Interview response from UNIMA Faculty Secretary held on 12th December 2012.
[159] Interview response from UNIMA Professor of Chemistry held on 12th December 2012.

This research revealed that unlike the records centres, institutional repositories in all six universities were well organised with both material and staff capacity. In essence, the institutional repositories were all in digital format and technically were working well in this electronic era, albeit encountering human challenges such as culture at workplace. The records centres were yet to emulate this excellent organisation from the institutional repositories. The subsection on digital records management later in this section summarises what was happening to the digital records in the case study institutions.

The level of difficulty in retrieving recorded information at both UNIMA and Mzuni varied depending on the medium of information and the system employed. For example, at UNIMA a professor provided an example of how he retrieved university information. He usually did not have much problem to retrieve records and documents in electronic form. He even converted some electronic copies into hard copies and stored them in paper form. Email records were good examples of converted records. The professor however indicated that he had faced some problems to retrieve general university records and documents that were in paper form, including correspondence, minutes, and reports.[160] His experience confirmed the general view of UNIMA members of staff who had observed that the recordkeeping system at their University was wanting and recommended its improvement (Report on Quality Assurance Workshop, 2012).

There were no university-wide retention and disposition schedules in the Malawi universities. Retaining and disposing of some records depended on the availability of statutory guidelines and to some extent discretion of individual departments or units. On whether the universities had documented guidelines or procedure manuals for managing records and documents, the study revealed that all the four South Africa universities had documented records management guidelines. There were no documented guidelines or procedure manuals for managing records and documents in the Malawi universities.

---

[160] Interview response from UNIMA Professor of Chemistry and Dean of Faculty of Sciences held on 12th December 2012.

Records management guidelines or procedures manuals, or in some cases standing office instructions provide details on how to manage an organisation's recorded information. They are can be used for operational guidelines and staff training (Tough, 2004). Their absence in Malawi universities was a sign of ineffective recordkeeping.

Although the study found that the Malawi universities were predominantly papers-based, they were increasingly adopting new technologies, which resulted in creating a wide range of digital records on a daily basis. Examples of these digital records include documents created using office applications, such as word-processing documents and spreadsheets; records generated by business information systems such as databases, human resource systems and financial systems; and digital communication systems such as emails. What was more striking was the establishment of the directorates of ICT in these universities to coordinate the technical aspects of the new technologies. For example, the Directorate of ICT at Mzuni was established during the period of this research.

The Mzuni ICT Directorate was established by the University in order to keep up with global trends of integrating the power of information technology to deliver effective teaching and learning services[161]. It is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that ICT services are up and running, and supporting the University activities. According to the Mzuni Directorate of ICT[162], its functions include:

  i.   Network design, planning, installation and maintenance
 ii.   Software and operating system configuration, testing, installation and support
iii.   Software and license control for all software purchased for use within the University
 iv.   Database/environment creation, maintenance and administration
  v.   Implementation and monitoring of the best practice information related security processes
 vi.   Project co-ordination for both internal infrastructure-based and the University-wide projects
vii.   ICT Policy and strategy development and implementation

---

[161] Mzuzu University, "Welcome to the ICT Directorate – Online". Available at: http://ictdirectorate.mzuni.ac.mw/index.html; accessed on 10th October 2015.
[162] Ibid

viii.   Maintain server functions for email, internet, databases, file storage and administration

ix.   End user ICT training, data management services and technical support services

x.   Website design and development

This is another clear example of the claims of technology, in their attempt to be globally competitive, that have bring risks for digital records and may result in cumulative losses with significance consequences for the University's ability to be transparent and accountable. For example, there was lack of awareness that ICT systems create records. It was evident that senior management at Mzuni was not aware that ICT systems create records which should be managed effectively. This was the case because management did not have a business case for recordkeeping, and as a result neglected it, as has been shown in this study. It is important for an organisation to ensure that its technology has the recordkeeping functionality.

Similarly, there was lack of structures and human resources for managing digital records at Mzuni. Although the IT personnel were critical component in the implementation of ICT projects, they do not substitute the need for a records manager to ensure that the technology the University is using has recordkeeping functionalities. The records manager may also ensure that there are functioning structures for recordkeeping such as policies for email.

(f) Digital records management

As explained earlier, the universities in Malawi were increasingly adopting new technologies which resulted in creating a wide range of digital records. However, there was lack of structures and human resources for managing the digital records at the two universities. They, nevertheless, had institutional repositories which managed digital information, such as published materials, well. There were no digital repositories for records; and there was no indication of developing the digital records repositories.

As for emails, there were no guidelines on how to manage them. The emails were being held in the inboxes and sent folders, turning the email servers as repositories for the emails. This had an effect on the server space which retained most of the emails received, either for business or personal use.

It is essential for emails to be appraised, classified, stored, and destroyed in a manner consistent with established policies and guidelines, which, as explained earlier, were not present at the two universities.

This study established that records in the South African universities were predominantly in digital form. However, strategies for their effective management were not uniform, and in some cases, there were no clear strategies for the management of the digital records.

UWC, which coincidently was predominantly paper-based, had put in place standards to manage its digital records. The standards included SANS 2308-1: Information and Documentation – Records Management Processes – Metadata for Records – Part 1: Principles; and SANS 15801: Electronic Imaging – Information Stored Electronically – Recommendation for Trustworthiness and Reliability (UWC DRAM Policy, 2010). This was in anticipation of its EDRMS project, which would also ensure that digital repositories for records were being developed. Determining the success of this project would be another follow-up study. Nevertheless, these standards were expected to provide guidelines to help in the capture of metadata and storage of the digital records.

On the other hand, UWC had no clear email policy, unlike Wits which had clear email guidelines in its records management policy. Wits had also a digitisation project and developed its digital repositories for records, albeit unclear references to records management standards.

Similarly, UJ had a digitisation project which resulted in the development of digital repositories for records. In this project, metadata were being captured using records management standards such as those used by UWC. There were also no clear email guidelines at UJ.

As for UCT, the heavily built information system at the University did not translate into effective recordkeeping system. There were no clear guidelines for emails and there were no evidence to show that digital repositories for records were being developed.

Therefore, universities in South Africa did not have adequate strategies for managing digital records despite operating in an environment which was predominantly digital.

7.2.4 Records management project

The presence of records management projects can indicate perceived challenges and/or imply the university's resolve to improve its recordkeeping capacity. Therefore the field research included checking the availability of a records management project. Table 18 shows some of the major records management projects identified at the universities.

University	Records management project
UWC	1. EDRMS 2. Retention Schedule
UCT	1. Governance Intranet 2. Institutional Memory
Wits	1. Scanning/Digitisation 2. File Plan 3. Retention Schedule
UJ	1. File Plan 2. EDRMS
UNIMA	1. Scanning/Digitisation
Mzuni	1. Scanning/Digitisation

Table 18: Major records management projects at the six universities

Each of the South African universities had at least one major records management project. UWC embarked on a comprehensive records retention and disposition schedule. It was also carrying out a pilot project on EDRMS till 2014, and then implemented it university-wide after 2014. UCT had several projects including Governance Intranet, an official forum for meetings and communication; and Institutional Memory in which the university's special collections were being preserved. Wits had three main records management projects – the scanning project which would eventually do away with the microfiche; a comprehensive file plan project which would pave the way for an EDRMS; and the compilation of a comprehensive records retention and disposition schedule. UJ had File Plan and EDRMS projects. Apart from scanning/digitisation on a small scale, there were no major records management projects conducted in the Malawi universities during the research period.

The study revealed the enthusiasm amongst South Africa universities to acquire modern technology to effectively manage their records and documents. For example, 75 percent of the universities had already acquired or were preparing to acquire EDRMSs, as explained in the subsection on digital records management above. This recordkeeping system was so popular that it was viewed as a solution to records management problems. The universities seemed to have not detected major problems with EDRMSs.

This was contrary to evidence in other regions where EDRMSs had caused problems. In his report, *Records Review*, Sir Alex Allan (2014) highlighted problems of EDRMSs in the UK. He observed that EDRMSs proved a menace to all government departments:

> A more pressing issue is the systems in place for capturing and storing data and organising it in a way that will enable records to be searched and retrieved. Almost all departments have struggled with Electronic Document and Records Management (EDRM) Systems, switching between systems as experience with earlier ones proved unsatisfactory (Allan, 2014, par 66).

Although there were no major records management projects in the two Malawi universities, scanning/digitisation was being conducted on a small scale. Apart from scanning the usual correspondences to be put in the universities databases, the digitisation also involved scanning of old staff publications and theses for the universities' institutional repositories. Although this can be viewed as a librarian's work, it can in fact extend to records management when the institutional repository is used as a monitoring mechanism for human resource and research assessment. For example, when an academic applies for promotion, the easiest means to retrieve their publication is to go into the institutional repository.

7.2.5 Recordkeeping expertise

Members of staff with skills and knowledge on how to manage records and documents are essential to ensuring that university recordkeeping systems are working well. ISO 15489-1 (2001) argued that an organisation should implement a training programme for all personnel who create records or use a records system. Recordkeeping staff should have in-depth education and training in managing records and documents.

Patrick Ngulube (2001, in Chachage and Ngulube, 2006) argued against holding records personnel accountable when they are not trained since they would not have been empowered to work effectively. Therefore, the investigation involved assessing the levels of recordkeeping training and awareness. Table 19 provides results of the findings.

| University | Levels of training and awareness | |
	Training	Awareness campaigns
UWC	• In-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	• Four meetings a year
UCT	• Ad hoc in-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	• Ad hoc meetings
Wits	• In-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	• Two meetings a year
UJ	• Ad hoc in-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	• Ad hoc meetings
UNIMA/Mzuni	• Short term professional training	• None

Table 19: Levels of training and awareness

(a) Levels of training and awareness at UWC

UWC had a team of seven recordkeeping staff three of whom were senior members who had undergone long-term professional training in records management, including university masters' degrees in records management. According to the Archivist/Records Manager, in-house training was also conducted to enable its members to acquire new skills in managing records and documents in the changing environment. Electronic records management was embedded in the training programmes.

DRAMS team also conducted records management awareness campaigns in different units of the University. This was done four times a year. In these meetings, members of staff were sensitised on the importance of records management and the need to manage this important resource diligently. For example, the Archivist/Records Manager made a records management presentation to two groups of audiences. One group comprised the Deputy Vice Chancellor and his Deans of Faculties. The other group comprised the members of the Finance Department.[163]

The training and awareness activities were clearly spelt out in UWC's DRAM Policy:

> Training will be a combination of methodologies ranging from formal training provided by identified higher institutions for the professional staff, targeted short courses, on the job training, awareness training and mentoring. Training will be provided by a combination of outside trainers coordinated through the office of staff development and in-house training provided by DRAMS staff (UWC DRAM Policy 2009).

An example of short-term training was when the Archivist/Records Manager attended an important records management training/workshop during the researcher's fieldwork in South Africa, as explained in the preceding chapter.

(b) Levels of training and awareness at UCT

The absence of a records management unit at UCT hampered in-house training and awareness activities at the institution. Nonetheless, information management meetings such as the Consultative Meeting on Records Management, as discussed earlier, provided an opportunity to present recordkeeping cases. As such, these meetings served the same purpose as records management awareness campaigns.

---

[163] Interview response from UWC Archivist/Records Manager held on 12th October 2012

Other members of the information management team, such as the University Archivist, usually attended short-term and long-term professional courses on records management outside their institution though they hardly applied their new gained knowledge and skills in the absence of a records management coordinating unit. For example, the UCT Archivist met regularly with other archivists and records managers from the universities in the Western Cape such as UWC and Stellenbosch. In these fora, which could be viewed as short-term courses, they discussed recordkeeping developments.[164]

(c) Levels of training and awareness at Wits

Senior members of the records management team at Wits underwent long-term records management professional training. The Archivist/Records Manager was undergoing long-term training during the researcher's data collection period.

In-house training was conducted at least once a year whilst awareness campaigns were conducted twice a year. The University's Records Management Policy was clear about the need for records management training:

  i. The Records Manager shall successfully complete the National Archives and Records Service's Records Management Course, as well as any other records management training that would equip them of their duties
 ii. The records manager shall identify such training courses that are relevant to the duties of the registry staff and shall ensure that the registry staff are trained appropriately
iii. The records manager shall conduct or arrange such training as is necessary for the delegated records staff to equip them for their records management duties in order to enable them to implement the Records Management Policy smoothly
(Wits Records Management Policy, 2012, Sections 10.1 – 10.3)

---

[164] Interview response from UCT Archivist held on 18th October 2012.

(d) Levels of training and awareness at UJ

Like UCT, UJ had ad hoc training and awareness programmes. Unlike UWC and Wits whose records management policies clearly spelled out the recordkeeping training and awareness campaigns, the records management policies of UCT and UJ did not spell out the recordkeeping training and awareness campaign aspects.

It was observed however that the records management team at UJ, which included the Director of Corporate Governance, was very active. It conducted awareness campaigns within and without their institution. One such campaign was their popular presentation "Corporate Governance and Records Management: University of Johannesburg[165]" which highlighted records management developments at their institution and the need to properly manage institutional records and documents. It was also observed that short-term and long-term professional training were undertaken at UJ.

(e) Levels of training and awareness at UNIMA and Mzuni

These two institutions did not have strong records management unit teams. No records management awareness campaigns were conducted in these universities. This was expected because these records management unit teams lacked the capacity to do so.

Records management team members from these two institutions did not undergo long term professional records management training save for short courses. There were institutions in Malawi that used to run records management short courses, though their frequency in running these courses was not reliable. They could offer the training programme in one year and fail to do so in subsequent year. Two public institutions that offered such type of courses were Staff Development Institute (SDI) and Malawi Institute of Management (MIM).

SDI used to train civil servants whilst MIM targeted those in other public service and to some extent the private sector. Figure 12 below illustrates course content of a records management short-term course offered by MIM. It was an extract that called for applications.

---

[165] This presentation was compiled by Elize de Wet, the Director of Corporate Governance, and Nicolette Olivier, the Records Manager in 2011.

HR 108 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Target Group
All personnel responsible for managing records in NGOs, private and public sectors.

Duration
1 week

Course Objectives
At the end of this course, participants will achieve the following:

- *(a) Understand the records management process*
- *(b) Understand the role of computers in records management*
- *(c) Appreciate the electronic communication as records*

Course Outline
- *Introduction to records management*
- *Records Life cycle*
- *Database management system*
- *Role of computers and Management of the Registry*

Date
3 - 7 May 2010
22 - 26 Nov 2010

Figure 12: Course content of a short-term records management course
(Source: Mathews Phiri, 2010)[166]

This was a typical short course providing good foundation in records management. However, the attendees may require additional courses to develop further the skills and knowledge in records management. Due to lack of management support for records management, members of staff responsible for records management are usually not sent to these follow-up short courses.

This research revealed that members of staff responsible for records management at the public universities in Malawi were not sent to these follow-up courses. Most had not attended a records management course.

---

[166] Paper presented by Mathews Phiri at the IFLA-ALISE-EUCLID Satellite Conference held in Boras, Sweden on 8-9 August 2010.

The National Archives of Malawi has a mandate to ensure that public institutions managed their records effectively. One way of doing this was to conduct training for members responsible for recordkeeping. However, the state of funding at the National Archives of Malawi during the time of this research was very low, making it impossible for the officers of the National Archives of Malawi to carry out the training exercises effectively, as explained earlier.

7.2.6 Management support

Records managers have limited authority to direct recordkeeping. The authority usually rests with senior management and other governance structures. Records managers, however, should not abandon their advisory role.

Management support can be shown through aspects such as provision of specific budget lines for records management activities, including records management projects, specialist recordkeeping training, and approval of policies for recordkeeping. The investigation involved assessing levels of management support for recordkeeping by the university management. Table 20 gives the results of the findings. The universities are ranked from high to low management support

University	Level of management support
UWC	High
Wits	High
UJ	High
UCT	Medium
UNIMA	Low
Mzuni	Low

Table 20: Level of management support

UWC, Wits and UJ received high management support. This was evidenced by the existence of fully functional records management units, policies for records management, and projects to improve the management of records. In his acknowledgement of the support he got from university management, the UWC Archivist/Records Manager corroborated this management support at his institution: "Records management is championed by the Registrar. The Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deans of Faculty give a lot of support; they looked at our records management policy and supported it[167]".

Wits Archivist/Records Manager also acknowledged support received from management but suggested that management needed to understand records management. This implied that management were supposed to see records management as a key business function worth undertaking rather than viewing it as merely a compliance measure. UJ management were in forefront to declare records management as part of corporate governance function.

Although UCT had a records management policy and some major records management projects, its records management function was not coherent. Management should have delegated recordkeeping functions to a records manager. This records manager could be a fulltime member, part-time member or outsourced.

There was a clear neglect of recordkeeping by management of the universities in Malawi. Both UNIMA and Mzuni lacked records management policies; they did not have major records management projects; and they did not have functional records management units.

7.2.7 Users views on how to improve recordkeeping

Users' feedback is essential to gauge how the university's recordkeeping system is perceived and utilised. Users may either spot deficiencies in the system or may not grasp well the operation of the system which would require records managers to revisit the recordkeeping systems altogether.

---

[167] Interview response from UWC Archivist/Records Manager held on 12th October 2012.

(a) Users views from UWC

Table 21 below shows users views from UWC.

Source of feedback	Feedback, that is, views from respondents
1. Archivist/Records Manager	• Incorporating records management in the job description of office managers • Appointment of records management liaison officer in each unit • More emphasis in the use of technology as in compliance
2. Procurement Manager	• Need for electronic records management systems
3. Registrar	• Changing people's attitude towards records management • Technology engagement
4. Director of Finance	• Electronic records management systems to be encouraged • Records management by functions
5. Professor	• Dedicated database system required than phoning to get records • Website needed regular updates • Decentralised recordkeeping system required
6. Faculty Manager	• More use of electronic records management systems
7. Deputy Vice Chancellor	• Research Office to be the centre of all research documents • Requirement of central business centre for commercial records

Table 21: Users views from UWC[168]

Feedback from UWC suggested need for more improvement in the use of technology to manage records and documents. 6 out of 7 (about 86 percent) of the respondents gave such a verdict. 2 out of 7 (about 29 percent) suggested decentralisation of the recordkeeping function. Other feedback included making recordkeeping an element of the office manager's job descriptions, and changing people's attitude to recordkeeping through training.

---

[168] Interview responses from UWC held between 12th – 15th October 2012

(b) Users views from UCT

Views from UCT respondents were similar to those from UWC. They suggested more use of technology to manage the University's records and documents. This was despite a big investment in ICT at UCT. About 86 percent were of this view. Other views included keeping as much information as possible. This view, emanating from the procurement office, was expected considering the tendering process which required tender documents to be kept intact throughout the tendering process. The view from the Director of Finance suggesting acquisition of a Systems Application Programming (SAP), an integrated enterprise resource planner which could effectively manage money, material, manufacturing, and machines. This was also expected considering the functions of the finance unit. Table 22 summarises the feedback from UCT staff.

Source of feedback	Feedback
1. ECM Manager	• Divorcing IT governance from information governance
2. Professor	• Records should be managed using available IT techniques
3. Faculty Manager	• Use of the top range electronic systems to manage information
4. Procurement Manager	• Keep as much information as possible
5. Deputy Vice Chancellor	• Records to be managed electronically • There should be a data collective committee
6. Director of Finance	• Acquisition of SAP system to manage UCT resources
7. Registrar	• Embracing intranet governance • University records and documents to be in electronic form

Table 22: Users views from UCT[169]

(c) Users views from Wits

Respondents from Wits had also technology in mind. For example all of the four who gave their views suggested improvement in the electronic systems used to manage records and documents.

---

[169] Interview responses from UCT held between 18th – 19th October 2012

Of particular interest was the view from the Director of Finance who wanted to see a project that would turn Wits into a paperless environment. Table 23 is an extract of the feedbacks from Wits.

Source of feedback	Summary of feedback
1. Archivist/Records Manager	• Information systems should be working at all times
2. Faculty Registrar	• Email filing system to be improved
3. Director of Finance	• Paperless environment to be established • Establishment of a data warehouse
4. Procurement Manager	• There should be electronic way of doing things

Table 23: Users views from Wits[170]

(d) Users views from UJ

Users at UJ also suggested more use of technology to manage the University's records and documents. The Director of Finance and the Deputy Vice Chancellor suggested updating of the university-wide IT system. Table 24 below provides some of the feedbacks from UJ.

Source of feedback	Summary of feedback
1. Registrar	• Information should be stored electronically
2. Faculty Manager	• Ensuring maximum security of the stored records
3. Director of Finance	• Updating the IT system
4. Lecturer	• Improvement in retrieval of financial information
5. Deputy Vice Chancellor	• The electronic system to be upgraded further

Table 24: Users views from UJ[171]

---

[170] Interview responses from Wits held between 29th – 31st October 2012
[171] Interview responses from UJ held on 31st October 2012.

(e) Users views from UNIMA and Mzuni

Like the respondents from universities in South Africa who were suggesting more technology improvements, their counterparts in Malawi were also suggesting improvements in technology. The case in Malawi was dire because the technology was in some cases not yet acquired. For instance, it was observed that the office of the Executive Officer (Documentation) did not have a working computer.[172] His suggestion for a need to acquire a computer in his unit emanated from such a need. Even his suggestion for an additional member in his unit was justified because he was the only member in the unit. If he was not around, the unit shut down.

The views from the Faculty Secretary such as the need to have a retention and disposition schedule made a lot of sense because UNIMA did not have a retention and disposition schedule. In the absence of legislation and regulations, records were disposed of in a discretionary way. Table 25 summarises users' feedback from UNIMA.

Source of feedback	Summary of feedback
1. Executive Officer (Documentation)	• Unit requires more people than the single person managing it • Need to acquire a computer for the unit
2. Registrar	• Like to have a centralised management information system rather than the current college-based system for students and staff records
3. Procurement Officer	• Automated system required
4. Faculty Secretary -	• Requiring electronic means of managing records and documents • Need for retention and disposition schedules
5. Professor /Dean	• Production of a bimonthly bulleting in his Faculty • Faculty list in electronic form

Table 25: Users views from UNIMA[173].

---

[172] Interview response from UNIMA's Executive Officer (Documentation) held on 12th December 2012; and researcher's own observation.
[173] Interview responses from UNIMA held on 12th December 2012.

As for Mzuni, establishment of a records centre and automation of the records system were amongst the suggestions put forward by a lecturer and the executive officer[174].

The feedback from respondents from all the universities was overwhelming for more investment in technology to manage the universities' records and documents. Although technology can improve the way records and documents are managed, it cannot be an answer to all the recordkeeping problems as explained earlier. Some findings in this research have confirmed this observation. For example, UCT which had its records and documents predominantly in electronic form and invested hugely in technology had no better recordkeeping system than UWC whose records and documents were mostly paper-based.

7.3 Conclusion

The research revealed variations in recordkeeping capacity. It varied between units of the same university. For example, medical schools had generally better recordkeeping than other units. Multiple regulatory bodies contributed to this scenario. Similarly, there were variations between universities within the same country. This variation was mostly as a result of management perception about recordkeeping. Then there were variations between universities from different countries. This came about as a result of the legal, regulatory, and financial environment.

All universities were affected by changes in technology and globalisation. As a result, they all acquired technology in order to be efficient and competitive. However, the technology systems in Malawi lacked structures such as policies for email, and human resources such as records managers, to ensure that systems have recordkeeping functionalities and are used to manage digital records well. Universities in South Africa attempted to use technology to manage to manage their digital records well. They had structures such as policies for records management though fell short of those concerned with social media. They also had skilled personnel including records managers, to ensure effective management of their records. However, their overall strategies to manage digital records were not adequate.

---

[174] Interview response from Mzuni lecturer and executive officer on 25th September 2012

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main findings of this research against the themes and objectives that were formulated at the beginning of the study. The contribution made by this research to the recordkeeping discipline, with particular regard to the concept of Governance Recordkeeping, is part of the discussion. The chapter will then offer recommendations, and suggest areas for further research.

8.2 Conclusions

The research problem identified by this researcher is that recordkeeping as a key aspect of governance has been neglected and is a central and unresolved issue in most of the public universities this researcher investigated. This notwithstanding the fact that some universities had improved in the way they managed their records and documents compared to what other researchers found in similar institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa a decade ago. What follows are summaries and conclusions on the main findings.

8.2.1 Recordkeeping capacity

Objective 1: Assess how records and documents are managed.

The study revealed two extreme ends of a spectrum on how records and documents were managed. On one end were public universities that strived to manage their records and documents well. These were mainly the South African cases, although they did not have adequate strategies for managing their digital records well. At the other end were public universities that largely neglected recordkeeping. These were mainly the Malawi cases. There were a number of aspects considered in reaching this conclusion, as the sections that follow show.

1. **Records management policies**

The twenty-first century is christened as an information age. Any organisation that wants to be competitive is required to use its information as a strategic resource. This means having in place information policies for effective management of this important resource. Records management policy is an example of an information policy that guides the organisation on how to effectively manage its records.

The study revealed that some universities were operating without records management policies. These were mainly in Malawi. Those in South Africa had records management policies but did not have adequate strategies to manage their digital records well. For example, most of them did not have clear email guidelines when email communication constituted the bulk of the communication process. Despite having the bulk of their records in digital form, the universities did not have in place digital repositories for records. Some universities were, however, developing the digital repositories.

It is common for institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa to operate without formal recordkeeping policies (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006), and these institutions are at a high risk of losing critical information. They will not be able to keep safely their records in the absence of the guidelines provided by records management policies. Similarly, the universities will not be in a position to demonstrate fully their commitment to meeting their legal requirements and complying with recordkeeping standards (Ndenje-Sichalwe et al, 2011).

2. **Digital records management**

Digital records present opportunities for the conduct of business. Apart from space saving, they also offer the possibility of a speed of retrieval and a range of functionality unmatched in the paper world. However, digital records present the records manager with new challenges including their dependence on computer software, hardware and operating systems and measures that are needed to ensure their continuing accessibility in a world of rapid technological change (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).

This calls for an effective recordkeeping infrastructure, with elements including policies, standards, tools and practices, as well as skilled and competent human resources. This is what was lacking in the Malawi cases. Although the Malawi universities may acquire the technologies to manage their records, it would all be in vain if they do not put in place recordkeeping infrastructure. As for South Africa universities, which this study found to have more developed recordkeeping infrastructure, they need to keep abreast of the changes in digital records management so that important information continues to be captured in the recordkeeping system and is accessible over time. As outlined earlier, some universities did not develop digital repositories for records, they did not apply records management standards for managing their digital records, and their email guidelines were not clear. This may result in the universities not fully realising returns on their technological investments. Instead, the information is at risk of being lost or being inaccessible

3. Records management process

The study established that each university had a form of classification. The South African cases had functional classification. The functional classification scheme was best suited for the South African cases because they underwent major reorganisation in the early 2000s. Thus, functional classification schemes enable the delivery of services even during periods of organisational upheaval (Tough, in Tough and Moss, 2006). The Malawi cases had departmental classification schemes. Functional classification schemes will be of real benefit as initiatives to reorganise the higher education sector are beginning to gain momentum.

Digital records can easily be organised in file plans. This has a bearing on their retrieval. It was not a surprise to find that the majority of South Africa universities, whose records were predominantly in digital form, were able to retrieve their digital records easily, unlike the Malawi universities whose records were predominantly paper based.

There was no university that was completely paperless. They were all operating in a hybrid environment. The storage space in a hybrid environment can be duplicated. That is, storing the same information in both paper and electronic media. This unplanned backup is not cost-effective considering the limited storage space organisations usually have. This study revealed that emails in the Malawi cases were usually printed and stored in hardcopies, despite the lack of storage space at the two institutions.

Universities in South Africa used university-wide retention and disposition schedules to dispose of their records and documents. This was expected as all the South African universities had records management policies with statements on disposition of their records. This was in contrast with Malawi universities, which did not have retention and disposition schedules. The universities in Malawi did not have records management policies to guide them on the disposition of their recorded information, except where legislation provided explicit guidelines on when to dispose of certain records and documents. The universities which lacked records retention and disposition schedules were at a high risk of destroying their records and documents haphazardly. This could result in losing their vital records and documents which would subsequently expose them to both legal and other business costs.

4. Records management unit

Although all members of staff are responsible for keeping records of the work they do, someone within the institution needs to manage the records systems on a day-to-day basis (PARBICA, 2007). This close and constant supervision of the recordkeeping system ensures that organisations are not at risk of failures emanating from poor recordkeeping. Universities in Malawi, which did not have records management units, faced higher risks for their records than did the universities with records management units in South Africa.

5. Records management training and staffing

This study revealed that most South African universities studied had qualified staff to manage the recordkeeping functions despite shortfalls in digital records management, whilst those managing the records and documents in the Malawi cases lacked the core competencies. Members of staff who have skills and knowledge on how to manage records and documents are essential to ensuring that universities' recordkeeping systems are working well.

From the same perspective, universities in South Africa had both short-term and long-term professional training programmes and have conducted awareness campaigns. In the Malawi cases, only short-term training was available and only sporadically. No awareness campaigns were conducted.

As indicated earlier, it is essential for recordkeeping staff to undergo training programmes to remain relevant in the changing world, more so, in this era where digital records are increasing becoming the predominant medium of information. Recordkeeping members of staff are required to have the basic level of skills and knowledge on how to effectively manage digital records. The awareness campaigns help creators and users of records and documents to appreciate the importance of managing these information assets well.

6. Senior management support

Nathan Mnjama (2002) had no kind words for senior managers who neglect good records management. He attributed lack of seriousness in the management of records and documents to bad management. However, this researcher might call such a scenario an oversight, as management might not have been presented with the business case for recordkeeping.

Senior management support may be evidenced by the existence of, amongst others:

    i. Functioning records management units
    ii. Standard records management policies
    iii. Well trained recordkeeping staff
    iv. Training and awareness campaign programmes
    v. Records management projects

These require senior management interventions, such as providing financial resources and making recordkeeping declarations. South Africa universities received senior management support. There was a clear neglect of recordkeeping by senior management of the universities in Malawi.

8.2.2 Recordkeeping environment

Object 2: Analyse factors impacting on recordkeeping

The study identified a number of factors impacting on recordkeeping. They included legal and regulatory demands, university strategies, reforms, technology, workplace culture, governing bodies, audit, and risk management.

1. **Legal and regulatory demands**

The study established that universities in both South Africa and Malawi operated in an environment with a number of laws and regulations, which if implemented effectively could bolster recordkeeping. Some of these laws and regulations contained explicit recordkeeping requirements, whilst others contained implicit recordkeeping requirements.

The national archives legislation was a good example of an explicit law. It provided the mandate of ensuring that public records were well maintained. However, the research revealed that despite having these laws, recordkeeping in universities in Malawi was largely ineffective. This confirmed an earlier assertion by Ngulube and Tafor (2006). They argued that the existence of progressive and comprehensive legislation was not likely to bring about any positive changes in the management of public records unless resources to implement the laws were made available. This brings back to the argument that management support is essential for the implementation of records management programmes; and in this context, the implementation of records management laws.

2. **University strategies**

The intention to compete internationally should require universities to manage their records properly so that their claims about student and staff numbers, research activities, and other parameters used in assessing them are easily accessed, verified, and can be shown to be trustworthy. Audited records are best suited to achieve this. Universities should therefore consider sound recordkeeping as a means to achieving their strategies effectively.

3. **University reforms**

A reform programme usually aims to transform the public service into an efficient, effective, and outcome based institution offering improved service delivery (Ndenje-Sichalwe et al, 2011). It is usually accompanied by improvements in recordkeeping as shown in the case of Tanzania where the government recognised the need to incorporate records management in the design of information and communication technology systems so that they were capable of managing, protecting and providing reliable information over time (IRMT, 2007).

Similarly, when universities are being reformed, their governance improves. Subsequently, their recordkeeping is also improved. Therefore, those universities resisting reforms are missing out the opportunity to improve their governance and recordkeeping.

4. Technology

Acquiring technology and using it effectively to manage information can help an organisation to have a competitive edge. The study established that South African universities invested hugely in technology. As explained earlier, one of their strategies was to be competitive in the global market, including being among the top universities in leading rankings such as QS and THE. Those in Malawi were also investing in technology though not at the same pace as their South African counterparts. The technological gap is not only between regions or continents. It is also between organisations within the same region.

Digital records and social media are amongst the products of technology evolution. Their management presents a challenge to a records manager. As for digital records, they require digital repositories for their storage; they require metadata to be captured together with them in the recordkeeping system; and they require records management standards for their proper maintenance. It was on this basis that the universities in South Africa lacked the capacity to manage their digital records well. Similarly the Malawi cases lacked the capacity to effectively manage their digital records.

Use of social media is common in organisations. In fact, it has skyrocketed over the past several years (Smallwood, 2013). Institutions use it to connect people to their organisations, and to share information. Universities in South Africa were using social media for business purposes, and as a result created records in the process. Facebook and Twitter were the mostly used social media platforms.

Social media content is usually not managed by recordkeeping policies nor monitored with controls that ensure protection of critical information assets and preservation of business records. This was revealed in the South Africa universities. Their recordkeeping policies did not extend to records generated by the new technologies. Therefore, the universities risked losing their critical records generated by social media.

5. Workplace culture

Use of personal email accounts and telephone communication to conduct official business persisted after Tough (2011) reported similar occurrences in Malawi. This shows that these cultural issues are well established in some societies in Malawi. There is a risk of missing records as they may not be captured in the recordkeeping system. Digital records management training and awareness campaigns can be a remedy to this culture. However, training and awareness programmes are only part of the package. Appropriate technology, and appropriate rules and guidance are also necessary. Unfortunately, recordkeeping trainings were not forthcoming in Malawi unlike South Africa which already had a better recordkeeping infrastructure than Malawi.

6. Governing bodies

The university council delegated the academic oversight of the university to senate whilst the day-to-day running of the university was delegated to the executive management team. However, it was the executive management team which made the difference in recordkeeping. Their support, as established in the example of South Africa universities, can improve recordkeeping. Their neglect, as established in the Malawi universities, can condemn recordkeeping to the periphery of the organisation's strategy.

7. Audit

The overwhelming support given to the audit function in all the cases did not reflect similar support for recordkeeping. Although the South African cases showed some form of improvements in recordkeeping, as explained earlier, it was not in the same measure or proportionality as that of audit. The Malawi cases had well-articulated audit functions whilst at the same time lacking effective recordkeeping.

This finding confirmed the statement of the problem which asserted that greater attention was usually given to other governance functions such as audit and that recordkeeping was persistently neglected. This was against the backdrop of viewing recordkeeping as an essential underpinning of audit

8. Risk management

Sound recordkeeping mitigates risks. Accordingly, universities ought to review recordkeeping so that their recordkeeping priorities did not pose any risk (Bhana, 2008), as explained earlier. This was overlooked in the Malawi cases as a result the universities were at risk of losing their records and documents unlike their South African counterparts where recordkeeping risks were lower than Malawi cases.

8.2.3 Recordkeeping and governance nexus

Object 3: Explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance

The third objective of the study was to explore the relationship between recordkeeping and governance, audit, and risk management. The use of the term governance in the analysis of this relationship inherently incorporated audit and risk as the three terms overlap as explained in Chapter 5.

1. Relationship between governance and recordkeeping

A positive correlation between effective governance and recordkeeping was more clearly evident in the South African cases than the Malawian ones. Concrete instances may help to explain this. The King III code of governance principles in South Africa was amongst the tools used to improve university governance. Although it was not designed to promote improvements in recordkeeping, its application resulted in a boost for recordkeeping (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2013). Likewise, whilst the Promotion of Access to Information Act aimed to promote transparency, accountability, and effective governance in the public institutions, good recordkeeping ensured its effective implementation.

Although the study established that governance was a key driver for recordkeeping, it was not possible to conclude that a university with good governance structures would have sound recordkeeping. Other factors, such as a reliance on oral communication and other cultural practices at the workplace, can be an impediment to sound recordkeeping. Similarly, a university with sound recordkeeping may not necessarily have good governance.

This corroborated Chris Hurley's (2005) contention. He argued that effective recordkeeping was a necessary but not a sufficient condition for governance.

In the same context, Azman Mat Isa (2009) argued that recordkeeping was just a tool that ensured the availability of evidence for accountability which in turn relied on the ethical standards of those involved. The equation of good governance equals good recordkeeping (and vice versa) works only when: the executive management teams buy in to the business case for recordkeeping and are able to provide resources including financial and human resources; they maintain ethical standards; and recordkeeping becomes embedded in business processes and governance structures.

The study established that the universities in Malawi had adequate governance structures to mandate improved recordkeeping, though further reforms might have made a big difference. They had, amongst others, well-functioning finance, internal audit, and quality assurance units. Nonetheless, the aggregate record keeping capacity of the universities in Malawi was unsatisfactory. Arguably, the Malawian universities require more corporatisation to further improve governance. In particular, Malawi's legislation on universities still gives a great deal of power to the head of state in the governance of the universities, including appointing chairpersons and other council members. It can be argued that in practice the universities are state controlled rather than being under state supervision and that this needs to be changed.

A central contention of this study has been that an organisation's governance agenda would not effectively be fulfilled if its recordkeeping was side-lined. At first sight, the Malawian cases seem to contradict this contention. The universities were operating without sound recordkeeping. However, the researcher's argument is that if the Malawian universities put in place sound recordkeeping, they would be able to meet their objectives in a much more efficient manner. Of course, putting in place sound recordkeeping would depend on senior management support, a condition which has been lacking in Malawi. A sound business case for improved recordkeeping, supplemented by a stronger regulatory and legislative regime, is essential to change the way of doing things in Malawi. The South African case studies, on the other hand, supported the original contention. Their universities had, to a considerable extent, sound recordkeeping, despite lacking adequate strategies for managing digital records.

The study therefore established that recordkeeping and governance were closely related. This agreed with a number of authors who have expressed similar opinions. For example, Willis (2005) asserted that record keeping was a vital element of governance, and that governance was a vital ingredient to the survival of an organisation. PARBICA (2005) went further to make a "Declaration on Recordkeeping for Good Governance" in which it asserted in the strongest terms that recordkeeping was fundamental for an organisation to achieve good governance.

2. Web of relationships between recordkeeping and governance functions and drivers

Figure 13 summarises the web of relationships between recordkeeping and governance functions and drivers.
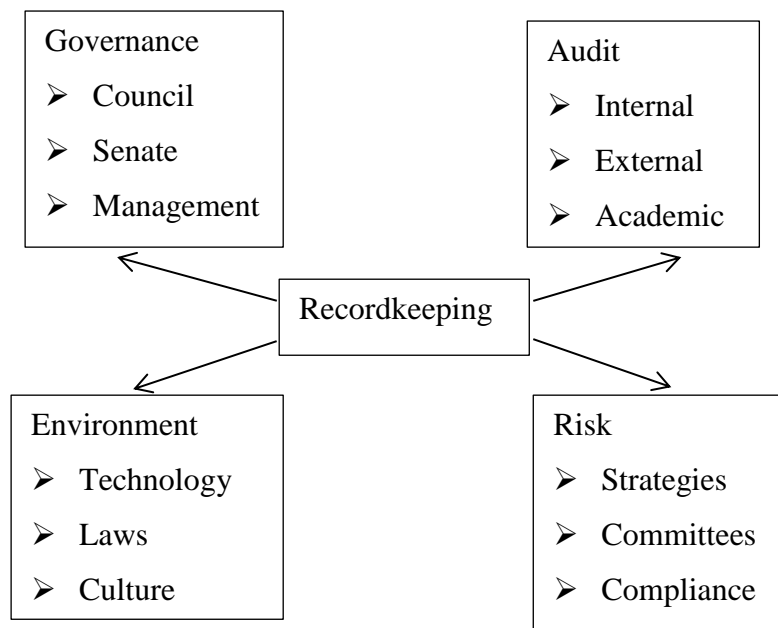

Figure 13: Web of relationships between recordkeeping and governance functions and drivers

Figure 13 is a simplified illustration of the web of relationships between recordkeeping and governance functions and drivers. Governance is necessary for recordkeeping (recordkeeping $\Rightarrow$ governance). In this context, governance structures such as council, senate and executive management team have an impact on recordkeeping. They ensure that the university has a working recordkeeping system. Similarly, audit is necessary for recordkeeping (record keeping $\Rightarrow$ audit). Internal, external, and academic audit are key drivers for recordkeeping. Risk management is also necessary for recordkeeping (recordkeeping $\Rightarrow$ risk). Universities' strategic aims such as performing well in league tables can be jeopardised if their claims are not supported by authentic records. Similarly, business risks are unlikely to be properly mitigated through effective management of vital records if there are no units or bodies or persons responsible for risk management. Finally, the environment is also a key driver for effective recordkeeping (recordkeeping $\Rightarrow$ environment). In this context, factors such as technology, laws, and culture have a major impact on recordkeeping.

8.2.4 Proposed model

Objective 4: Develop a recordkeeping and governance relationship model

The fourth objective of the study was to propose a recordkeeping model that can foster governance, audit and risk management.

The study proposes *governance recordkeeping* as an approach to managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk. What follows is an explanation of the *governance recordkeeping* concept.

The *governance recordkeeping* viewpoint considers recordkeeping as a governance function, viewed in a similar manner to other governance functions such as audit, and risk management. Its activities include managing governance records, and governing the organisation's recorded information as a strategic resource. When information is managed as a strategic resource, clear policies and procedures are put in place to specify what information is stored; where it resides; who has access to it; how to protect it; and when to get rid of it. Figure 14 is an illustration of a *governance recordkeeping* hierarchy which is an initial stage of a *governance recordkeeping model*.
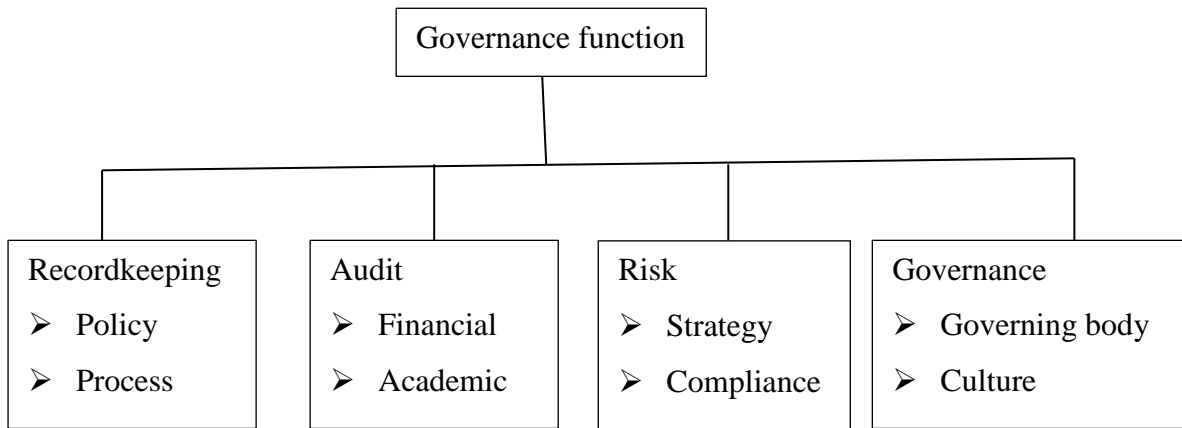
Figure 14: Governance recordkeeping hierarchy

In Figure 14 above, recordkeeping occupies the same position as the other governance functions, vis-à-vis audit, risk and governance. It would therefore require the same attention as that given to the other governance functions. This being the case, the world of governance, audit and risk presents an opportunity to manage records and documents effectively. Figure 14 is further developed into the Governance Recordkeeping Model in which the governance functions consolidate to achieve good governance as shown in Figure 15 below.
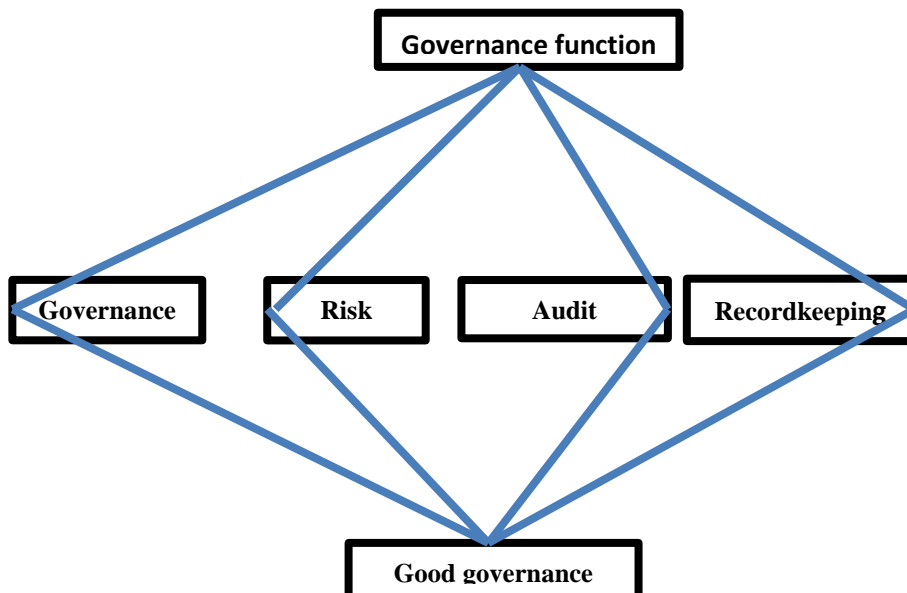
Figure 15: Governance Recordkeeping Model

Figure 15 is a three-dimension figure with six symmetrical pointed edges. At the top is the governance function; and on the sides are the elements of the governance function such as recordkeeping, audit, risk, and governance. The tendency with most organisations is to promote the governance edge or its associate such as audit and risk. It should be noted that governance and recordkeeping are symbiotic elements of an organisation's strategy. Excluding the recordkeeping edge damages the whole figure and may not stand effectively on the good governance base. Therefore, recordkeeping is an essential underpinning of governance, and forms the basis of the good governance agenda of an organisation such as the university.

8.3 Recommendations

In order to manage records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk management, five recommendations have been identified:

1. Initiate and develop awareness of the importance of sound recordkeeping in fostering the governance agenda of modern organisations

Senior management sometimes fails to support records management programmes because they simply do not grasp the business case for sound recordkeeping. It is essential to make senior management aware that recordkeeping is the life-blood of their organisation.

Recordkeeping is not about keeping everything and piling it up; it is about maintaining the ideals of transparency, accountability, and due process. Senior management need to be brought to understand that recordkeeping is not just a filing exercise; rather, it is a key player in the survival of their organisations. It was evident in this extensive research that half of the executive management teams did not fully appreciate the role of recordkeeping in fostering their institutions' governance, audit and risk management. It is only with good recordkeeping practices that good practices, including good governance practices, will follow and the organisation will be healthy.

It was encouraging to note that some universities were already carrying out this exercise through their records management units albeit intermittent frequencies. They need to continue and be steady until management buys in the business case for recordkeeping. After taking management aboard, then all other staff members should be sensitised on the importance of recordkeeping until they also buy in the business case for recordkeeping. When management buys in the business case for records management, they will be able to support recordkeeping and can easily influence other staff to follow suit.

The records management community in the jurisdiction of those universities without formal records management systems should develop records management projects whose objectives should include engaging senior management of the universities to sensitise them on the importance of records management in fostering the governance agenda of their universities.

2. Provide vocational and professional training in records management for recordkeeping staff, including digital records management

The study established that digital records were becoming the predominant records in the universities. However, the capacity to manage them was inadequate in both South Africa and Malawi. Relying on systems staff to manage digital records may not be the solution because they may not have the knowledge and skills to manage records. Therefore, recordkeeping members of staff are required to undergo training in digital records management.

Universities and other institutions of higher learning offer professional qualifications in records management. Similarly, colleges and other training institutions offer vocational training in records management. Other forms of training include short-term courses and in-house training. These short-term and in-house training programmes usually cover an aspect of recordkeeping such as digital records management.

Those universities with unskilled recordkeeping staff may start with in-house and short-term training programmes in records management to their recordkeeping staff. The study revealed that the levels of recordkeeping expertise in the universities in Malawi were very low and required urgent attention. These universities were the candidates for the in-house and short-term training programmes in the interim.

Although South Africa universities had some of their recordkeeping staff with professional training, the numbers were not encouraging as they were very small. More are required to go for further training in records management. They also did not have adequate capacity to manage digital records effectively.

Well trained recordkeeping staff would ensure that the university's recordkeeping system is working well. They would also be able to lobby confidently for sound recordkeeping from university management. Additionally, they would also be able to collaborate effectively with other professionals dealing with the university's information systems.

3. Embedding sound recordkeeping practices into business processes

Recordkeeping should not be practiced in isolation but integrated into the business processes. Priority should not only be given to governance but to recordkeeping too. Both recordkeeping and governance should be viewed as symbiotic elements of a strategy hence embedded into the business processes of the organisation.

This would, however, require a records manager who can convince management to buy in the business case for recordkeeping. When records management is well understood and has the support of senior management, it would be easy for it to form part of the business processes.

Records management is usually misunderstood by top management. Some look at it as extra expense to the organisation whilst others only embrace it for fear of the law. The study revealed that some universities neglected recordkeeping whilst others were trying to appreciate the importance of recordkeeping.

4. Establishment and consolidation of records management units

Universities without records management units should establish such units in order to coordinate the records management functions effectively. Those already having such units should consolidate their existence by, amongst others, promoting their services so that they do not become first victims of closure in times of economic downturn. It is also important to ensure that records management units are being manned by qualified staff in records management, including digital records management.

This study established that half of the institutions studied had no records management units. Recordkeeping in the universities with records management units was better that recordkeeping in universities without records management units.

5. Recordkeeping to be treated as a governance function

Recordkeeping is a key function in the operation of a business activity. All the governance elements such a transparency, accountability, due process, compliance, and laws are recordkeeping dependant (Willis, 2005).

Therefore, if recordkeeping is treated as one of the governance functions, it would form a fundamental pillar for the attainment of the other governance functions. This, again, brings us to the symbiotic nature of governance and recordkeeping. The recordkeeping function should be treated in the same manner as audit function, risk management function, or any other governance function.

Most universities studied did not treat recordkeeping as a governance function. They treated audit and risk management as governance functions. This lack of appreciation of recordkeeping was a missed opportunity to achieve the organisations' goals and objectives effectively.

8.4 Areas for further research

Having explored how to manage university records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk in the context of South Africa and Malawi, the following areas are recommended for further research:

1. Recordkeeping and the fight against corruption in Malawi

The fight against corruption is another global agenda. In Sub-Saharan Africa it is a widespread phenomenon. In Malawi, the donor community suspended aid as a result of corruption in the public service in which millions of British donor funding went missing.

Some put the blame on the poor information systems whilst others blame the general recordkeeping system in the public service. In the same manner that recordkeeping was explored to see how it can foster governance, it may be worthwhile to explore how the same recordkeeping can be a tool to fight against corruption in the public service in Malawi.

2. Recordkeeping and information culture in the digital era: The Malawi experience

Public offices are increasingly becoming digital in Malawi. This was supposed to present an opportunity for enhanced recordkeeping. However, this seemingly beneficial development is encountering cultural obstacles such as use of the office systems for personal matters. Members of staff usually download personal photos, music, and other entertainment, from the office systems and in the processes slowing down the already narrow-band-width internet connectivity (Tough, 2012).

As established in the study, public universities in Malawi had poor recordkeeping and such abuse of office computers would exacerbate the already dire recordkeeping. It would be worthwhile to explore how best to optimise the technology to improve recordkeeping.

References

1. Aghion, Philippe, "The governance and performance of universities: evidence from Europe and the US", *Economic Policy*, January 2010, pp. 7-59.

2. Aina, Lenrie, "Introduction to research", in Aina, Lenrie (ed.), *Research in Information Sciences: An African Perspective*. Ibadan: Stirling-Horden Publishers (Nig.) Ltd, 2002; pp. 1-31.

3. Akotia, Pino, "Public Sector Records Systems in Ghana: Some Lessons in Development Management", *African Journal of Library, Archives & Information Science*, Vol. 13, No. 2, October 2003, pp. 107-117.

4. Allan, Alex "Government digital records and archives review", *Independent report*. London: UK Government, 2015. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486418/Report_-_Digital_Records_Review.pdf; accessed on 31st January 2016

5. Allan, Alex, "Records review", *Independent report*. London: UK Government, 2014. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/370930/RECORDS_REVIEW_-_Sir_Allex_Allan.pdf; accessed on 20th September 2015.

6. Altbach, Philip, *Comparative Higher Education: Research trends and bibliography*. London: Mansell Publishing, 1979.

7. An, Xiaomi and Hongyan Jiao, "Assessing records management in China against ISO 15489 and the implications", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 14 No. 1, 2004, pp. 33-39.

8. An, Xiaomi, "An Integrated Approach to Records Management", *The Information Management Journal*, July/August, 2003.

9. Anderson, Ian and Lucy Tedd, "Editorial: digital histories", *Program: electronic library and information systems,* Vol. 39 No. 4, 2005, pp. 293-296.

10. ARMA International, "All About ARMA International", online; available at: http://www.arma.org/r2/who-we-are; accessed on 10th April 2014.

11. AS 4390 – 1996, *Records Management*. Standards Australia, 1996.

12. Ashe, Carolyn and Chynette Nealy, *Records Management: Effective Information Systems*. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004.

13. Asogwa, Brendan, "The challenges of managing electronic records in developing countries: Implications for records managers in Sub-Saharan Africa", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 22 No. 3, 2012, pp. 198-211.

14. Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM): The Global Community of Information Professional, 2014. Available at: http://www.aiim.org/; accessed on 7th January 2014.

15. Atherton, Jay, "From Life Cycle to Continuum: Some Thought on the Records Management - Archives Relationship", Archivaria, Winter 1985-86, pp. 43- 51.

16. Bailey, Steve, "Measuring the impact of records management: Data and discussion from the UK higher education sector", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 21 No. 1, 2011, pp. 46-68.

17. Bailey, Steve, Managing the crowd: rethinking records management for the web 2.0 world. London: Facet Publishing, 2008.

18. Bakan, Joel, *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power*. London: Constable & Robinson Ltd, 2004.

19. Bantin, Philip, *Understanding data and information systems for recordkeeping*. London: Neal-Schuman Publishers, Inc., 2008.

20. Barker, Chris, *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2000.

21. Barry, Richard, "Technology and the Transformation of the Workplace: Lessons Learned Travelling Down the Garden Path", in Dearstyne, Bruce (ed.), *Effective Approaches for Managing Electronic Records and Archives*. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002.

22. Bearman, David, "Towards a Reference Model for Business Acceptable Communications", *Second Pittsburgh Research Report*. Pittsburgg: University of Pittsburgh, 1995.

23. Bhana, Pramesh, "The Contribution of Proper Record Keeping Towards Auditing and Risk Management: Auditor General's Perspective", paper presented to the South African Records Management Forum on 8th November 2008.

24. Bingham, Tom. *The Rule of Law*. London: Penguin Group, 2010.

25. Bothwell, Ismail, "Top 30 African universities: Times Higher Education reveals snapshot university ranking", *THE* 31st July 2015. Available at https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/top-30-african-universities-times-higher-education-reveals-snapshot-university-ranking; accessed on 10th August 2015.

26. Bradshaw, Patricia and Christopher Fredette "Academic Governance of Universities: Reflections of a Senate Chair on Moving from Theory to Practice and Back", *Journal of Management Inquiry*, Vol. 18 Number 2, June 2009, pp. 123-133.

27. Brooks, Charmaine, "Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles" in Smallwood, Robert, *Managing Electronic Records: Methods, Best Practices, and Technologies*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013.

28. Brown, A.L. and Michael Moss (1996), *The University of Glasgow: 1451 – 1996*. Edinburg: Edinburgh University Press, 1996.

29. Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods*, 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

30. Bryson, Jo, *Managing Information Services: A Sustainable Approach* 3rd ed. Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011.

31. Buchanan, David and Andrzej Huczynski. *Organisational behaviour* 7th ed. Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2010.

32. Cain, Piers and Anne Thurston, *Personnel Records: A Strategic Resource for Public Sector Management*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1998.

33. Carlisle, Diane, "Records Management Standards" in Dearstyne, Bruce (ed.), *Leading and Managing Archives and Records Programs: Strategies for Success*. London: Facet Publishing, 2008.

34. Carnegie, Garry and Jacqueline Tuck, "Understanding the ABC of University Governance", *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 69, no. 4, 2010, pp. 431-441.

35. Chanie, Paulos and Pascal Mihyo (eds), *Thirty Years of Public Sector Reforms in Africa: Selected Country Experiences*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2013.

36. Chaputula, Aubrey and Felix Majawa (2013), "Use of social network sites by mass media organisations in Malawi", *Aslib Proceedings: New Information Perspectives* Vol. 65 no. 5, 2013, pp. 534-557.

37. Checkland, Peter, *System Thinking, System Practice*, Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 1999. In Oliver, Gillian, and Fiorella Foscarini, *Records Management and Information Culture: Tackling the People Problem*, London: Facet Publishing, 2014.

38. Chhokar, Jagdeep et al, "Introduction", in Chhokar et al, (eds.), *Culture and Leadership Across the World: The Globe Book of In-Depth Studies of 25 Societies.* New York: Taylor and Francis Group, 2008.

39. Chinyemba, Ashabai and Patrick Ngulube, "Managing Records at Higher Education Institutions: A Case Study of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus", *South African Journal of Information Management* Vol. 7 (1), March 2005.

40. Choo, Chun, et al, "Information Culture and Information Use: An Exploratory Study of Three Organisations", *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 59(5), 2008, pp. 792-804.

41. Cobban, Allan, *The Medieval Universities: their development and organisation*. London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1975.

42. Cochran, Craig, "Document Control Made Easy", 2009. Available at: http://www.qualitydigest.com/june02/html/doccontrol.html; accessed 20th June 2013.

43. Coughlan, Sean "left out of the loop", BBC News Education, 2011. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-12671197; accessed on 23rd May 2013.

44. Coughlan, Sean, "What makes a global top university?", 2014. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-29086590; accessed on 20th November 2014.

45. Coughlan, Sean, "UK enters global online university race", 2013b. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-24109190; accessed on 20th January 2014.

46. Coughlan, Sean, "UK university face online threat", 2013a. Available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-21670959; accessed on 11th March 2013.

47. Complete Discovery Source (CDS), "The Basics: What is eDiscovery?" Available at: http://cdslegal.com/knowledge/the-basics-what-is-e-discovery/; accessed on 31st January 2016.

48. Cox, Douglas, "How serious is the Clinton email controversy?" *CNN*, 27th July 2015. Available at: http://edition.cnn.com/2015/07/27/opinions/cox-clinton-email-controversy/; accessed on 17th August 2015.

49. Cox, Richard, *Closing an Era: Historical Perspectives on Modern Archives and Records Management*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000.

50. Craig, Barbara, "The Anchors of Community Trust and Academic Liberty: The Fabrikant Affair", in Cox, Richard and David Wallace (eds.), *Archives and the Public Good: Accountability and Records in Modern Society*. Westport: Quorum Books, 2002.

51. Currall, James and Michael Moss, "We are archivists, but are we OK?" *Records Management Journal* Vol. 18 No. 1, 2008, pp. 69-91.

52. Currall, James, Claire Johnson, Pete Johnston, Michael Moss and Lesley Richmond, "No Going Back? The Final Report of the Effective Records Management Project", University of Glasgow ERM Project, 2002. Available at: https://dspace.gla.ac.uk/bitstream/1905/19/1/ERM-Final.pdf; accessed on 25th May 2013.

53. D.Andrea, Vaneeta-marie and David Gosling, "University Education" in Gearon, Liam (ed.), *Education in the United Kingdom: Structures and Organisation*. London: David Fulton Publishers, 2002.

54. De Wet, Elize and Nicolette Olivier, "Corporate Governance and Records Management: University of Johannesburg", paper presented at the CPUT ECM Conference on 31st March 2011, Cape Town, South Africa.

55. Denscombe, Martyn, *Ground Rules for Social Research: Guidelines for Good Practice*, 2nd ed. Berkshire: Open University Press, 2010.

56. Duranti, Luciana, "Concepts and principles for the management of electronic records, or records management theory is archival diplomatics", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 20 No. 1, 2010, pp. 78-95.

57. Duranti, Luciana, and Heather MacNeil, "The Protection of the Integrity of Electronic Records: An Overview of the UBC-MAS Research Project", *Archivaria* 42, Fall 1996, pp. 46-67.

58. Eisenhardt, Kathleen "Building Theories from Case Study Research." *The Academy of Management Review* 14, 4 (October 1989): 532-50.

59. Erlandsson, Alf, "Electronic Records: Literature Review", *ICA Study 10*. Paris: ICA Committee on Electronic Records, 1996.

60. Ferrie, Jo, and Jonathan Oldfield, "Qualitative Methods Course: Urban 5035". Glasgow: University of Glasgow, 2012.

61. Financial Reporting Council, *The UK Corporate Governance Code*. London: The Financial Reporting Council Limited, 2012. Available at: https://www.frc.org.uk/Our-Work/Publications/Corporate-Governance/UK-Corporate-Governance-Code-September-2012.pdf; accessed on 15th March 2014.

62. Finnell, Joshua, "Records Management Theory's Dilemma: What Is a Record?", *Library Philosophy and Practice*, June 2011.

63. Flyvberg, Bent, in Denzin, Norman and Yvonna Lincoln (eds). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research.* London, SAGE, 2011.

64. Foscarini, Fiorella, "Function-based records classification systems: An exploratory study of records management practices in central banks", PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 2009.

65. Gollins, Tim, "Parsimonious preservation: Preventing pointless processes!", *Online Information*, 2009. Online; available at: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/parsimonious-preservation.pdf; accessed on 30th December, 2013.

66. Gough, Roger (ed.), "An End to Sofa Government: Better working of Prime Minister and Cabinet", Conservative Democracy Task Force, 2007. Available at http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Politics/documents/2007/03/27/DemocracyTaskForce.pdf; accessed on 20th May 2014.

67. Hagmann, Juerg, "Information governance – beyond the buzz", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 23 No. 3, 2013, pp. 228-240.

68. Harding, April and Alexander Preker, "Understanding Organisational Reforms: The Corporatisation of Public Hospitals", in The World Bank, *Health, Nutrition and Population (HNP) Discussion Paper*. Washington, D.C: The Work Bank, 2000.

69. Hare, Catherine and Graham Southwood, "Getting the records straight: developments in records management", *New Library World*, Vol. 1118, 1995, pp. 5-12.

70. Hare, Catherine, "Big government, big solution: could there be a message for all?" *Records Management Journal* Vol. 23 No. 1, 2013, pp. 8-13.

71. Health Professions of South Africa, "Overview"; available at: http://www.hpcsa.co.za/About; accessed on 20th January 2015.

72. Healy, Susan, "ISO 15489 Records Management: its development and significance," *Records Management Journal, Vol. 20 No. 1*, 2010, pp. 96-103.

73. Hill, Brian, "Forrester Research / ARMA International Records Management Survey", in *Information Management September/October 2012*, ARMA International. Online; available at: http://content.arma.org/IMM/images/September-October%202012/IMM_0912_full%20issue.pdf; accessed on 20th November 2013.

74. Hofman, Hans, "The archive", in McKemmish, Sue et al. (eds.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*. Wagga Wagga: Charles Sturt University, 2005, pp. 131-158.

75. Holfman, Hans, "The use of standards and models" in McLeod, Julie and Catherine Hare (eds.), *Managing Electronic Records*. London: Facet Publishing, 2005.

76. Holm, John, "When family ties bind African universities", *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 19th August 2010. Available at: http://chronicle.com/article/When-Family-Ties-Bind-Afric/124011/; accessed on 21st October 2013.

77. Hurley, Chris, "Recordkeeping and accountability" in McKemmish, Sue et al (eds.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*. Wagga Wagga: Charles Sturt University, 2005.

78. Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, *King Report on Governance for South Africa*. Cape Town: Institute of Directors in Southern Africa, 2009. Online. Available at: http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iodsa.co.za/resource/collection/94445006-4F18-4335-B7FB-7F5A8B23FB3F/King_Code_of_Governance_for_SA_2009_Updated_June_2012.pdf; accessed on 15th March, 2014.

79. International Records Management Trust (IRMT), "Consultancy Projects". Available at: http://irmt.org/consultancy-services/consultancy-projects-2; accessed on 20th January 2014.

80. IRMT, "Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance: Investigating and Addressing the Requirements for Building Integrity in Public Sector Information Systems in the ICT Environment", *Final Report February 2006 – October 2008*. London: IRMT, 2009. Available at: http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/PDF/Outputs/ICT/IRMT_Final_Report_Version2.pdf; accessed on 10th March, 2014.

81. IRMT, "The creation of HRMO and Implementation of a Records Management Improvment Programe", *Inception Visit*, February 2005.

82. Isa, Azman Mat, "Records management and the accountability of governance", PhD Thesis, University of Glasgow, 2009.

83. Isa, Azman Mat, "Risk Management and managing records", in Tough, Alistair and Michael Moss (eds.), *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment: Managing the creation, use, preservation and disposal of unpublished information objects in context*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2006.

84. ISO 15489-1, *Information and Documentation – Records Management – Part 1: General*. Geneva: International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO), 2001.

85. Iwhiwhu, Enemute, "Management of records in Nigerian universities: Problems and prospects", *The Electronic Library* Vol. 23 No. 3, 2005, pp. 345-355.

86. Jisc infoNet, "Guidance notes for the Records Management Maturity Model." Available at: www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/records-management/measuring-impact/maturity-model; accessed on 25th February 2014.

87. Jisc infoNet, "Risk Management." Available at: http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/risk-management/; accessed on 17th June 2014.

88. Jisc infoNet, "Records management." Available at: http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/records-management; accessed on 14th July 2014.

89. Kargbo, John, "The Connection between Good Governance and Record Keeping: The Sierra Leone Experience", *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, Vol. 30 No. 2, 2009, pp. 249-260.

90. Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Steve (ed.), *Reforming Africa's Institutions: Ownership, Incentives, and Capabilities*. Tokyo: United Nations University, 2003.

91. Kayizzi-Mugerwa, Steve, "Globalisation, Growth and Income Inequality: The Africa Experience", in Organisation for Economic Corporation and Development (OECD), *Woking Paper No. 186*. Paris: OECD, 2001.

92. Kemoni, Henry and Justus Wamukoya, "Preparing for the Management of Electronic Records at Moi University Kenya: A Case Study", *African Journal of Library, Archive and Information Science* 10 (2), 2000, pp. 125-138.

93. Kemoni, Henry, "Management of electronic records: Review of empirical studies from the Eastern, Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 19 No. 3, 2009, pp. 190-203.

94. Kemoni, Henry, Patrick Ngulube and Christine Stilwell, "Public Records and Archives as Tools for Good Governance: Reflections within the Recordkeeping Scholarly and Practitioner Communities", *ESARBICA Journal*, Vol 26, 2007.

95. Kennedy, Jay and Cherryl Schauder, *Records Management: A Guide for Students and Practitioners of Records Management*. Melbourne: Addison Wesley Pty Ltd, 1994.

96. Kerr, David, and Jack Mapanje, "Academic Freedom and the University of Malawi", *African Studies Review*, Vol. 45 No. 2, September 2002, pp. 73-91.

97. Ketelaar, Eric, "Archivistics Research Saving the Profession", *The American Archivist*, Vol. 63 (Fall/Winter 2000): 322-340.

98. Khomba, James, et al, "Shaping Business Ethics and Corporate Governance: An Inclusive Africa Ubuntu Philosophy", *Global Journal of Management and Business Research and Administration and Management* Vol. 13 Issue 5, 2013. Online; available at: http://journalofbusiness.org/index.php/GJMBR/article/view/963/874; source of Ubuntu article; accessed on 9th June 2014.

99. Kilelo, Hellen, "Pubic Sector Reforms in Africa: Focus, Challenges and Lessons Learnt", *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, Vol 4 Issue 7, July 2015, pp. 19-27.
.
100. King, Anthony and Ivor Crewe, *The Blunders of our Governments*. London: Oneworld Publications, 2013.

101. Kyobe, Michael eta al, "Investigating electronic records management and compliance with regulatory requirements in a South African university", *South African Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 11(1), March 2009, pp. 1-16.

102. Lee, Richard, "Victory for academic freedom in Malawi", *Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA) Online* 27 October 2011. Available at http://www.osisa.org/users/richard-lee; accessed on 7th July 2013.

103.   Lemieux, Victoria, "The Jamaican Financial Crisis: Accounting for the collapse of Jamaica's indigenous commercial banks", in Cox, Richard and Davis Wallace (eds.), *Archives and the public good: Accountability and records in modern society*". Westport: Quorum Books, 2002.

104.   Lemieux, Victoria, "The records-risk nexus: exploring the relationship between records and risk", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 20 No. 2, 2010, pp. 199-216.

105.   Lemieux, Victoria. *Managing Risks for Records and Information*. Lenexa: ARMA Internationals, 2004.

106.   Lemieux, Victoria, "One step forward, two steps backward? Does e-government make governments in developing countries more transparent and accountable?" Washington DC: World Bank – Right to Information Working Paper Series, February 2016.   Available   at: http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/pubdocs/publicdoc/2016/1/287051452529902818/WDR16-BP-One-Step-Forward-Lemieux.pdf; accessed on 15th April2016.

107.   Levy, David, *Scrolling Forward: Making Sense of Documents in the Digital Age*. New York: Arcade Publishing, 2001.

108.   Lewins, Frank, *Social Science Methodology: A brief but critical introduction*. Melbourne: Macmillan, 1992.

109.   Lihoma, Paul and Stanley Gondwe, *Wonderful Treasure: A Case of the National Archives of Malaw*i. Zomba: National Archives of Malawi, 2006.

110.   Lipchak, Andrew, "Information management to support evidence-based governance in the electronic age", a Public Policy Forum Discussion Paper, November 2002; avaialable at: https://www.ppforum.ca/sites/default/files/record-keeping.pdf; accessed on 20th January 2015.

111. Lundgren, Terry, "Document Management", *Journal of Education for Business*, 69:3, 1994, pp. 178-182.

112. Makhura, Mphalane, "The importance of records management towards auditing process: South African perspective", 2008.

113. Malawi Government, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, *National Education Sector Plan 2008 – 2017: A Statement*. Lilongwe: Government of Malawi, 2008.

114. Malawi Government, Office of the Director of Public Procurement (ODPP*), Draft Audit Report: Procurement Review/Audit of Selected Procuring Entities in the Public Service.* ODPP, 2011.

115. Mapanje, Jack, "Afterword. The Orality of Dictatorship: In Defence of My Country", in Englund, Harri (ed). *A Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi*. Stockholm: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002.

116. McKemmish, Sue, "Traces: Document, record, archive, archives", in McKemmish, Sue et al. (eds.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*. Wagga Wagga: Charles Sturt University, 2005, pp. 1-20.

117. McLeod, Julie and Catherine Hare (eds.), *Managing Electronic Records*. London: Facet Publication, 2005.

118. McLeod, Julie and Catherine Hare, *How to manage records in the e-environment*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006.

119. McLeod, Julie et al, "A Critical Assessment of Records Management Capacity and Compliance Toolkits", *Final Research Project Report*. Newcastle: Northumbria University, 2006. Available at: http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/5007/2008pdf/tlkitrep.pdf; accessed on 20th March 2014.

120. McLeod, Julie, "Editorial", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 23 Iss: 3, 2013.

121. McLeod, Julie, "On being part of the solution, not the problem: Taking a proportionate approach to maintaining records", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 22 No. 3, 2012, pp. 186-197.

122. McLeod, Julie, „Assessing the impact of Iso 15489 – a pliminary investigation", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 13 No. 2, 2003, pp. 70-82.

123. McLeod, Julie, Sue Childs and Rachel Hardiman, "AC$^+$erm – Accelerating positive change in electronic records management", *Final Research Project Report*. Newcastle: Northumbria University, 2010. Available at: http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/5007/ceispdf/final.pdf; accessed on 20th March 2014.

124. McLeod, Julie, Sue Childs and Susan Heaford, "A Critical Assessment of Records Management Capacity and Compliance Toolkits", *Final Research Project Report*. Newcastle: Northumbria University, 2006. Available at: http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/static/5007/2008pdf/tlkitrep.pdf; accessed on 20th March 2014.

125. McLeod, Julie, Sue Childs, James Lappin, and Gavin Siggers, "Investigation into the use of Microsoft SharePoint in HEIs", University of Northumbria, 2009.

126. McLeod, Saul, "The Interview Method", 2014. Available at: www.simplypsychology.org/interviews.html; accessed on 20th July 2015.

127. Medical Council of Malawi, "About us"; available at: http://medicalcouncilmw.org/about.htm; accessed on 5th January 2015.

128. Megill, K.A, and H.F Schantz, *Document Management: New Technologies for the Information Services Manager*. London: Bowker Saur, 1998.

129. Meijer, Albert, "Accountability in an Information Age: Opportunities and Risks for Records Management", *Archival Science 1*, 2001, pp. 361-372.

130.   Meredith, Martin, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence*. London: The Free Press, 2006.

131.   Mnjama, Nathan, "Archival landscape in Eastern and Southern Africa", *Library Management*, Vol. 26 No. 8/9, pp. 457-470.

132.   Mnjama, Nathan, "Managing University Records." *ESARBICA Journal 21*, 2002, pp. 32-40.

133.   Moloi, Julie, "E-Records Readiness in the Public Sector in Botswana", *ESARBICA Journal* Vol. 28, 2009, pp. 105-127.

134.   Moss, Michael "The Hutton Inquiry, the President of Nigeria and what the Butler hoped to see", *English Historical Review*, Vol. CXX (487), June 2005, pp 576-92.

135.   Moss, Michael et al, *University, City and State: The University of Glasgow since 1870.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

136.   Moss, Michael, "Is it a question of trust or why are we afraid to go to Nineveh? " *Springer*, 2011.

137.   Moss, Michael, "The function of the archive", in Tough, Alistair and Michael Moss (eds.), *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment: Managing the creation, use, preservation and disposal of unpublished information objects in contex*t.   Oxford: Chandos Publishing (Oxford) Limited, 2006, pp. 227-243.

138.   Moss, Michael, "Where Have All the Files Gone? Lost in Action Points Every One?" *Journal of Contemporary History*, 47(4) 860-875, 2012.

139.   Mthembu, Thandwa, *University governance and the knowledge economy: Reconditioning the engine of development*. Midrand: Development Bank of South Africa, 2009.

140.   Mwanakatwe, John, *End of Kaunda Era*. Lusaka: Multimedia Publications, 1994.

141. National Archives, "About the National Archives – National Archives History". Washington: National Archives and Records Administration. Available at: http://www.archives.gov/about/history/index.html; accessed on 10th March 2014.

142. National Archives of Australia, "Digital Records". Available at: http://naa.gov.au/records-management/agency/digital/; accessed on 10th October 2015.

143. National Archives of Norway, "Noark", 2015. Available at: http://www.arkivverket.no/eng/Public-Sector/Noark; accessed on 28th March 2016.

144. National Records of Scotland, "Implementation of the Public Records (Scotland) Act". Edinburgh: Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 Implementation Team, 2012.

145. Ndenje-Sichalwe, Esther et al, "Managing records as a strategic resource in the government ministries of Tanzania", *Information Development*, Vol. 27 No. 4, 2011, pp. 264-279.

146. Neville, Colin, "Introduction to Research and Research Methods". Bradford: University of Bradford Business School, 2007.

147. Newby, Mike, "Foreword", in Gearon, Liam (ed,), *Education in the United Kingdom: Structures and Organisation*. London: David Fulton Publishers Limited, 2002.

148. Ngoepe, Mpha and Patrick Ngulube, "An Exploration of the role of records management in corporate governance in South Africa", *SA Journal of Information Management*, Art. No. 575, 2013, pp. 1-8.

149. Ngulube, Patrick & Vivan Tafor, 'An overview of the management of public records and archives in the member countries of the East and Southern Africa regional branch of the international council on archives (ESARBICA)', *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 27(1), (2006), pp. 57–83.

150. Nigatu, Tilahum, "Qualitative Data Analysis" presentation, March 2009; available at: http://www.slideshare.net/tilahunigatu/qualitative-data-analysis-11895136; accessed on 20th May 2015.

151. Ninth Level Ireland: Irish University News, Politics and Law, "The word university"; available at http://9thlevel.ie/history-of-irish-universities/the-word-%E2%80%9Cuniversity%E2%80%9D/; accessed on 13th June 2013.

152. Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi, "About us"; available at: http://www.nmcm.org.mw/index.html; accessed on 5th January 2015.

153. Oliver, Gillian, "Investigating Information Culture: A Comparative Case Study Research Design and Methods," *Archival Science* 4 (2004): 287-314.

154. O'Neill, Onora, *A Question of Trust: The BBC Reith Lectures 2002*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

155. Okonjo-Iweala, Ngozi and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "The Role of Civil Society Organisations in Supporting Fiscal Transparency in African Countries", Results for Development. Washington DC: Results for Development, 2009. Online. Available at: http://r4d.org/sites/resultsfordevelopment.org/files/resources/Ngozi-CSO_Paper_Revised_Version.pdf; accessed on 1st July 2014.

156. Oliver, Gillian and Fiorella Foscarini, *Records Management and Information Culture: Tackling the People Problem*. London: Facet Publishing, 2014.

157. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Principles of Corporate Governance*. Paris: OECD Publication Service, 2004. Online; available at: http://www.oecd.org/corporate/ca/corporategovernanceprinciples/31557724.pdf; accessed on 6th May 2014.

158.   Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA), *Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit*, 2007.   Available at http://www.parbica.org/sharing/publications/recordkeeping-for-good-governance/index.aspx; accessed on 2nd June 2012.

159.   Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA), "Declaration on recordkeeping for good governance", *11th General Conference, Nadi, Fiji: September 19-23, 2005*. Nadi: PARBICA, 2005.

160.   Palmer, Marlize, "Records management and accountability versus corruption, fraud and maladministration", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 10 Iss: 2, 2000, pp. 61-72.

161.   Parker, Elizabeth, *Managing Your Organisation's Records*. London: Library Association Publishing, 1999.

162.   Pember, Margaret, "Sorting out the standards: what every records and information professional should know." *Records Management Journal Vol. 16 No. 1*, 2006, pp. 21-33.

163.   Perkin, Harold, "History of universities", in Forest, James, and Philip Altbach (eds.), *International Handbook of Higher Education*. London: Springer, 2007, pp. 159-205.

164.   Perkins, Eric, "Records Management Training: Introduction to Records Management". Chester: Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA), 2010. Available   at: http://www.vita.virginia.gov/uploadedfiles/vita_main_public/unmanaged/vita_rm_training_2010v2.pdf; accessed on 9th January 2014.

165.   Phiri, Mathews Joseph, "Records Management: To What Extent is it Practiced at Mzuzu University?" MSc Econ Records Management Dissertation, Aberystwyth University, 2007.

166.   Pickard, Alison Jane, *Research Methods in Information*, 2nd ed. London: Facet Publishing, 2013.

167.   Poore, Megan, *Using Social Media in the Classroom: A Best Practice Guide*. London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2013.

168.   Power, Michael, *Organised Uncertainty: Designing a World of Risk Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

169.   Power, Michael. *The Risk Management of Everything: Rethinking the Politics of Uncertainty*. London: Demos, 2004.

170.   Queensland State Archives, *Recordkeeping and Web 2.0 Survey Report*. Sunnybank Hills: The state of Queensland, 2010.

171.   Rabovsky, Thomas, "Accountability in Higher Education: Exploring Impacts on State Budgets and Institutional Spending Pattern*", Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory 22*, 2012, pp. 675 – 700.

172.   Rankin, Frank, "Implementing EDRMS and shaping the record" in Tough, Alistair and Michael Moss (eds.), *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment: Managing the creation, use, preservation and disposal of unpublished information objects in contex*t. Oxford: Chandos Publishing (Oxford) Limited, 2006.

173.   Reed, Barbara, in First Northumbria University International Witness Seminar Conference, "Exploring the Essence of Records Management: Engaging with Experts", 4-5 May 2006. Newcastle upon Tyne, United Kingdom.

174.   Republic of South Africa, "About South Africa: History", online; available at: http://www.gov.za/aboutsa/history.htm; accessed on 20th March 2014.

175.   Saint, William, "Guiding Universities: Governance and Management Arrangements around the Globe", *Human Development Network*. Washington: World Bank, 2009.

176.   Samuels, Helen, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities*. Metuchen, New Jersey: The Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, 1992.

177.   Savenije, Davide, "4 ways universities can survive extinction", *Education Drive*; available at: http://www.educationdive.com/news/4-ways-universities-can-survive-extinction/148644/; accessed on 3rd January 2014.

178.   Savenije, David, "12 tech trends higher education cannot afford to ignore", *Education Drive.*   Available at: http://www.educationdive.com/news/12-tech-trends-higher-education-cannot-afford-to-ignore/156188/?goback=.gde_129709_member_5823852189054943235#!; accessed on 3rd January 2014.

179.   Selepe, Sydney, "The Role of Records Management in Statutory, Regulatory and Corporate Governance Compliance – A Case Study". Paper presented at the Archives and Records Management Conference, *Managing the Past! Accounting for the Present! Predicting the Future!*, in Sun City, South Africa, on 8-10 September, 2009.

180.   Share, Felex. "Education Records Management in Shambles." *The Herald*, 13th January, 2012. Online. Accessed on 13th January, 2012. http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=31343:education-record-management-in-shambles&catid=37:top-stories&Itemid=130.

181.   Sharra, Steve "university education and the crisis of leadership in Malawi", 2013. Available at http://mlauzi.blogspot.co.uk; accessed on 11th June 2013.

182.   Shepherd, Elizabeth and Geoffrey Yeo, "Managing Records – A Handbook of Principles and Practice", *Library Review*, Vol. 53 Iss: 3, 2004, pp.188 – 188.

183.   Shepherd, Elizabeth and Geoffrey Yeo.   *Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice*. London: Facet Publishing, 2003.

184. Shore, Cris and Susan Wright, "Coercive accountability: The rise of audit culture in higher education", in Strathern, Marilyn (ed.), *Audit Cultures: Anthropological Studies in Accountability, Ethics and the Academy*. London: Routledge, 2000.

185. Smallwood, Robert, *Managing Electronic Records: Methods, Best Practices, and Technologies*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013.

186. Smith, David, "South Africa secrecy law surprise as Zuma rejects controversial bill", *The Guardian* 12th September, 2013. Available at: http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/12/south-africa-zuma-secrecy-bill; accessed on 27 February 2014.

187. Solomon, Jill. *Corporate Governance and Accountability*. 3rd ed. Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd, 2010.

188. South Africa Department of Arts and Culture, "The demand for and supply of skills in library and information services, archival services and records management", *Final Report*, 2010

189. South African Human Rights Commission, "Compliance for Public Bodies: An Information Officer's Understanding of PAIA; available at: http://www.sahrc.org.za/home/index.php?ipkContentID=124&ipkMenuID=10; accessed on 20th May 2015.

190. South African Nursing Council, "Nursing education and training standards"; available at:
http://www.sanc.co.za/pdf/Nursing%20Education%20and%20Training%20Standards.pdf; accessed on 20th January 2015.

191. State Records Authority, "Guideline 24: Records Management and Web 2.0". Kingswood: State of New South Wales, 2009.

192. State Records NSW, "Introduction No. 3: Introducing records, recordkeeping and records management". Sydney: Government of NSW, 2004.

193. Stephens, David, "The Sarbanes-Oxley Act: Records Management Implications" *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 15 No. 2, 2005, pp. 98-103.

194. Strathern, Marilyn ed. *Audit Cultures: Anthropological Studies in Accountability, Ethics and the Academy*. London: Routledge, 2000.

195. Stuart, Katharine and David Bromage, "Current state of play: records management and the cloud", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 20 No. 2, 2010, pp. 217-225.

196. Sturges, Paul, "Records Management in Africa: Three Case Studies and a Proposal", in Chisenga, Justin et al (eds.), *Information 2000: A Vision for the SCECSAL Region*. Windhoek: Namibian Information Workers Association, 2000.

197. The National Archives, "Who are we", online. Available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/who-we-are.htm; accessed on 10th March, 2014.

198. The National Archives, Guide 3: Records Management Policy. Kew, Richmond, Surrey: TNA Information Policy Team, 2010. Online; available at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/rm-code-guide3.pdf; accessed on 15th July 2014.

199. The Official Secrets Act 1989, Ch. 6, London: HMSO, 1989.

200. Thurston, Anne, "Managing Records and Information for Transparent, Accountable, and Inclusive Government in the Digital Environment: Lessons from Nordic Countries", in *Right to Information Series*. Washington DC: World Bank, 2015a

201. Thurston, Anne, "Managing records as the evidence base for development", *African Policy Review*, 2015, pp. 31-34.

202.   Thurston, Anne, "Records Management in Africa: Old Problems, Dynamic New Solutions", *Records Management Journal*, vol. 6, no. 3, December 1996, pp. 187-199.

203.   Tough, Alistair and Paul Lihoma, "The development of recordkeeping systems in the British Empire and the Commonwealth, 1870s – 1960s, *Archives and Manuscripts*, 40:3, 2012, 191-216.

204.   Tough, Alistair, "Accountability, open government and record keeping: time to think again?", *Records Management Journal*, Vol 21 Iss: 3, 2011, pp. 225-236.

205.   Tough, Alistair, "Archives in Sub-Saharan Africa half a century after independence" *Arch Sci* (2009) 9: 187-201.

206.   Tough, Alistair, "Oral culture, written records and understanding the twentieth-century colonial archive: The significance of understanding from within", *Archival Science* 12, 2012, pp. 245 – 265.

207.   Tough, Alistair, "Record keeping and accountability: Why the distinction between probity and responsibility", *Archives and Social Studies: Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, Vol. 1 No. 1, September 2007, pp. 1-20.

208.   Tough, Alistair, "Records and the transition to the digital", in Tough, Alistair and Michael Moss (eds.), *Record Keeping in a Hybrid Environment: Managing the creation, use, preservation and disposal of unpublished information objects in contex*t. Oxford: Chandos Publishing (Oxford) Limited, 2006.

209.   Tough, Alistair, "Records managements and good governance agenda in Commonwealth Africa", *Archives and Manuscripts*, 32(2), Nov. 2004.

210.   Tough, Alistair, "Tanzania records management project", University of Glasgow Archive Services, 2002. Available at: http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/archives/news/dunaskinnews200207/tanzaniarecordsmanagementproject/; accessed on 11th September 2013.

211.   Tough, Alistair, and Michael Moss, "Metadata, controlled vocabulary and directories: electronic document management and standard for records management", *Records Management Journal* Vol 13 No 1, 2003, pp 24-31.

212.   Tough, Alistair, *Electronic Records Management (E-RM) in Malawi: An Introduction*. Zomba: National Archives of Malawi, 2012.

213.   Turnbaugh, Roy, "What Is an Electronic Record?", in Dearstyne, Bruce (ed.), *Effective Approaches for Managing Electronic Records and Archives*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002.

214.   UK Government - The Insolvency Service, "History of Companies in the British Isles".   Online;   available   at: http://www.insolvencydirect.bis.gov.uk/technicalmanual/Ch73-84/Chapter%2075/Part%202/Part%202.htm; accessed on 16th June 2014.

215.   United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), "What is Good Governance?", *United Nations ESCAP Manuals, Guidelines, Training Materials.* Bangkok: United Nations ESCAP, 2009. Online. Available at http://www.unescap.org/resources/what-good-governance#; accessed on 19th May 2014.

216.   University College London, "University College London Records Management Policy". London: University College London Library Services, 2011. Online; available at: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/records-office/policy.shtml; accessed on 15th July 2014.

217.   University of Adelaide, ""The University of Adelaide Records Management Handbook". Available at: http://www.adelaide.edu.au/records/handbook/Records_Management_Handbook.pdf; accessed on 5th October 2015.

218. University of Cambridge, "The Medieval University". Available at: http://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/history/the-medieval-university; accessed on 15th May 2013.

219. University of Glasgow, "Data Protection and Freedom of Information Office", 2006. Available at: http://www.gla.ac.uk/services/dpfoioffice/policiesandprocedures/rmstrategy/; accessed on 20th July 2015.

220. University of Glasgow, "MyCampus", available at: https://sharepoint.gla.ac.uk/students/myglasgow/Pages/usingmycampus.aspx; accessed on 15th May 2013.

221. University of Johannesburg, "Fast facts about University of Johannesburg", 2011. Available at: http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/AboutUJ/Documents/UJ%20fast%20facts.pdf; accessed on 2nd December 2013.

222. University of Malawi, *Report of the Quality Assurance Workshop and Dissemination Meeting, Zomba, Malawi: 1-2 October 2012*. Available at http://www.unima.mw/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/QA-dissemination-meeting.pdf; accessed on 20th May 2013.

223. University World News, "Malawi: Higher education council finally gets going"; Issue No 107, 30 March 2013; available at: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130329105258983; accessed on 30th March 2015.

224. Upward, Frank, "Modelling the continuum as paradigm shift in recordkeeping and archiving processes, and beyond: a personal reflection", *Records Management Journal* 10(3), 2000, pp. 115-139.

225. Upward, Frank, "Structuring the Records Continuum – Part One: Postcustodial Principles and Properties", *Archives and Manuscripts*, 24(2), 1996.

226. Upward, Frank, "The records continuum", in McKemmish, Sue et al. (eds.), *Archives: Recordkeeping in Society*. Wagga Wagga: Charles Sturt University, 2005, pp. 7197-222.

227. van Harmelen, Mark, "Briefing paper on Web 2.0 Technologies for Content Sharing: Web 2.0 – An introduction", Manchester, 2008. Available at: http://franklin-consulting.co.uk/LinkedDocuments/Introduction%20to%20Web%202.doc; accessed on 25th February 2014.

228. Walsham, Geoffrey "Interpretive Case Studies in IS Research: Nature and Method," *European Journal of Information Systems* 4 (1995): 74-81.

229. Wickman, Danielle, "Measuring performance or performance measurement? Measuring the impact and sustainability of the PARBICA Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit" *The Journal of the Australian Society of Archivists*, Vol. 37 No. 2, 2009, pp. 113-126.

230. Williamson, Kirsty, (ed.), *Research Methods for Students, Academics and Professionals: Information Management and Systems*, 2nd ed. (Wagga Wagga, New South Wales: Centre for Information Studies Charles Sturt University, (2002), 26-32.

231. Willis, Anthony, "Corporate governance and management of information and records", *Records Management Journal,* Vol. 15 No. 2, 2005, pp. 86 – 97.

232. Wilson, Steve (ed.) "Bernard Madoff accountant arrested for abetting Ponzi scheme", *The Telegrap*h, Friday 27th September 2013. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/northamerica/usa/10338393/Bernard-Madoff-accountant-arrested-for-abetting-Ponzi-scheme.html; accessed on 2nd February, 2014.

233. World Bank, *Universities through the looking glass: Benchmarking university governance to enable higher education modernisation in MENA*. The World Bank: Washington D.C., 2012. Available at: *https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/12535;* accessed on 20th May 2014.

234. Yeo, Geoffrey, "Concepts of Records (1): Evidence, Information, and Persistent Representation", *The American Archivist*, Vol. 70, Fall/Winter 2007, pp. 315-342.

235. Yeo, Geoffrey, Rising to the level of a record? Some thoughts on records and documents", *Records Management Journal*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 8-27, 2011.

236. Yin, Robert, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2003.

237. Yusof Zawiyah and Robert Chell. "The Eluding Definitions of Records and Records Management: Is a Universally Acceptable Definition Possible? Part 1: Defining the Records." *Records Management Journal* 8.2, 1998, pp. 95-112.

238. Yusof, Zawiyah and Robert Chell, "Records Management Education and Training World-Wide: A General Overview of the Current Situation", *Records Management Journal* Vol. 8 No. 1, 1998, pp. 25-54.

239. Zeleza, Paul "Beyond Afropessimism: Historical accounting of African universities", *Pambadzuka News: Pan-African Voices for Freedom and Justice*, Issue 263, 30th August 2006, available at: http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/media/35832, accessed on 31st May 2013.

Legislation, annual reports and records management policies

Legislation

18. Malawi Government, *Mzuzu University Act No 12 of 1997*

19. Malawi Government, *National Archives Act of 1975*

20. Malawi Government, *National Council for Higher Education Act No 15 of 2011*

21. Malawi Government, *Public Audit Act No 6 of 2003*

22. Malawi Government, *Public Finance Management Act No 7 of 2003*

23. Malawi Government, *Public Procurement Act No 8 of 2003*

24. Malawi Government, *University of Malawi Act of 1974 as amended*

25. Republic of South Africa, *Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended*

26. Republic of South Africa, *National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act No 43 of 1996 as amended*

27. Republic of South Africa, *Promotion of Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000*

28. Republic of South Africa, *Public Audit Act No 25 of 2004*

29. Republic of South Africa, *Public Finance Management Act No 1 of 1999*

Annual reports

30. University of Cape Town Annual Report, 2011

31. University of Cape Town Annual Report, 2012

32. University of Western Cape Annual Report, 2011

33. University of Western Cape Annual Report, 2012

34. University of Witwatersrand Annual Report, 2012

35. University of Witwatersrand Annual Report, 2013

36. University of Johannesburg Annual Report, 2013

Records management policies

37. University of Cape Town Records Management Policy, 2012

38. University of Western Cape Document, Records and Archives Management Policy, 2010

39. University of Witwatersrand Records Management Policy 2012

40. University of Johannesburg Records Management Policy, 2009

Appendices

Appendix 1: Governance Recordkeeping Toolkit

i.   **Questions to the records manager**

A. Record and document management

_____

Medium of records and documents

1. In what medium are your records and documents? If in both paper and electronic media, which medium is predominant?

_____

Records management policy

2. Does the university have a records management policy?

If yes (there is a records management policy):
    (a) Is it signed by a senior manager?
    (b) Is it issued to all staff?
    (c) Does it describe responsibilities that all staff have for managing records?
    (d) Does it include email/electronic records in its definition of records?
    (e) Does it allow for penalties for staff who do not comply with the policy?

I will be grateful to have a look at the records management policy.

If no (there is no records management policy):
    (f) What is your guiding principle in managing the records and documents?

_____

Support from senior managers

3. Do senior managers of your university support good records management?

If yes (senior managers support good records management):

    (a) Have they assigned overall responsibility for records management to someone on the senior management team?

    (b) Do they provide adequate resources for records management?

    (c) Do they ensure that breaches of the organisation's records management policy are properly investigated and appropriate penalties applied?

If no (senior managers do no support good records management):

    (d) What justification do they give for not supporting good records management?

_____

Specific unit for records management function

4. Is responsibility for records management tasks assigned to a specific unit or department in your university?

If yes (responsibility for records management tasks assigned to a specific unit):

    (a) What is the name of the unit responsible for records management?

    (b) What is the designation of the officer in charge of this unit?

If no (responsibility for recordkeeping tasks is not assigned to a specific unit):

    (c) How are the records management functions supervised?

_____

Training of records management staff

5. Do the university's records management members of staff have enough training to do their jobs effectively?

If yes (records management staff have enough training to do their jobs effectively):

    (a) What types of training did they undergo?

If no (records management staff not having enough training to do their jobs):

    (b) Are there training plans in place? If yes, what types of training?

_____

Records management guidelines/procedures

6. Does your university have documented procedures for managing its records and documents?

If yes (there are documented procedures for managing the records and documents):
  (a) Do they state clearly who is responsible for carrying out the work described in the procedures?

I will be grateful to have a look at the guidelines/procedures.

If no (there are no documented procedures for managing the records and documents):
  (b) What guiding principles does your university use to manage the records and documents?
_____

Records management awareness campaigns

7. Do you conduct records management awareness campaigns to members of staff in your university? If so, how often do you conduct the awareness campaigns?
_____

Versions control

8. How do you manage different versions of the same record? E.g. versions of research records; versions of application forms; etc.
_____

Access to information

9. What strategies have you put in place in order to comply with access to information requirements?
_____

Semi-active records storage

10. How do you keep semi-active records? That is, how paper and electronic records that are not frequently being used by the university stored?

Classification schemes

11. Do you use classification schemes to organise the records in your care? If so, what classification schemes do you use?

_____

University wide retention/disposition schedule

12. Do you have a university-wide retention/disposition schedule? If so, I will be grateful to have a look at your university-wide retention/disposition schedule.

_____

Records management programmes/projects

13. What records management programmes/projects have you implemented in the last three years, and what do you envisage for the next three years?

_____

B. External factors affecting records management

   Political, economic, social, technological, legal, and ecological (PESTLE) influences

_____

Political influence

14. Identify any political influence (e.g. government agenda to promote information services, etc.) and explain how it has affected records management at your university.

_____

Economic influence

15. Identify any economic influence (e.g. downsizing on institutional operations because of a slump in the economy, etc.) and explain how it has affected recordkeeping at your university.

_____

Social influence

16. Identify any social influence (e.g. pressure from the society to preserve their heritage, etc.) and explain how it has affected recordkeeping at your university.

_____

Technological influence

17. Identify any technological influence (e.g. the need to adopt the new information and communication technologies for efficiency and competitive service delivery, etc.) and explain how it has affected recordkeeping at your university.

_____

Legal influence

18. Identify any law having an influence on records management (e.g. access to information) and explain how it has affected recordkeeping at your university.

_____

Ecological influence

19. Identify environmental influence (e.g. environmental pressure groups against use of paper to protect the earth from pollution; health and safety pressures, etc.) and explain how it has affected recordkeeping at your university?

_____

C. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

20. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?

_____

ii. Questions to the registrar

A. Governance structures

These questions explore the impact of governance structures on recordkeeping.

_____

Management of documented procedures for the appointment of university council

21. How do you keep documented procedures for the appointment of university council? You may wish to indicate storage, medium and accessibility of the documents.

_____

Council size

22. How many members does university council have? How many council members are from within the university?

_____

Committees of Council

23. What committees does the university council have? What is the composition of each committee by member's designation?

_____

Council meetings

24. How many times does the council meet in a year? Who sets the agenda of meetings? Who circulates the agenda? Is the agenda circulated manually or electronically? How are the meetings conducted?

_____

External auditors

25. Who are the external auditors of your university? What is their role and responsibilities?

_____

Senate

26. Who are members of the university senate? Which members of senate are also members of council? Who chairs senate? What are the committees of senate?

_____

Management team

27. Who are members of the university management team? Which members in the management team are also members of council and senate?
Are there any informal or formal arrangements for rapid decision making? If so, I will be grateful to be provided with an example.

_____

Constituents of governance structure

28. What is the overall governance structure of your university? You may wish to list structures that form the university governance.

_____

Basic facts

29. How many students enrolled at the beginning of the last academic year? How many students dropped out in the last academic year? What was the number of staff, faculties, academic departments, and service departments in the last academic year? Do you have strategies in place to maintain high retention rate for students and staff members? If so, I will be grateful to be provided with an example.

_____

Embedding records management in a strategic plan

30. Is records management embedded in any strategic plan? If so, identify the strategic plan. You may wish to refer to strategic plans spanning from the past and coming ten years.

_____

B. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

31. What do you think could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?

_____

Questions to the deputy vice chancellor

A. Audit culture

Question to explore audit culture and its impact on recordkeeping

Academic audit

32. Do you audit the teaching and learning activities at your university? If so, you may wish to include the frequency of the audit; availability of documented procedures; and unit responsible for the audit exercise.

_____

B. Risk management

Risk management strategy

33. What are your strategies to manage risks? You may wish to include the availability of a risk management committee, its composition and frequency of meetings. Is risk register kept?

_____

Vital records/documents

34. What do you consider to be vital records/documents that require great care for the continued functioning of your university? How do you keep them? You may consider treating paper and electronic records/documents separately.

_____

C. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

35. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?

_____

iv.   **Questions to the director of finance**

A. Sources of university finances

 Question to explore sources of funding and how they drive recordkeeping
_____

Major sources of university finances

36. What are the major sources of your university's finances? You may wish to indicate the proportions of, if any, government subvention, tuition fees, research projects and consultancies, companies and investments, commercialised intellectual property, etc.
_____

B. Internal financial audit

Questions to explore the impact of internal audit on recordkeeping

Internal financial audit unit

37. What is the name of your internal financial audit unit? Who is the officer in charge of the internal financial audit unit?
_____

Frequency of internal financial audit

38. How often is an internal financial audit conducted?
_____

C. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

39. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?
_____

v.   **Questions to the procurement manager**

A. Procurement function

Questions to explore how the procurement function impact on recordkeeping Procurement committee

40. What is the composition of the procurement committee? You may wish to list members by their designations, including the chairperson of the committee.

_____

Winning bid

41. What constitutes a winning bid? E.g. parameters used to evaluate a bid, etc. Do you have documented guidelines/procedures for the procurement process? If so, I will be grateful to have a look at it.

_____

B. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

42. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?

_____

vi.   **Questions to the faculty administrator**

A. Record and document management

_____

Storage of records

43. How are the records your office creates stored? You may wish to separate your treatment of paper and electronic record.

_____

Security of records

44. Are the records created by your office stored securely so that they cannot be stolen, damaged or altered?

If yes (records are being protected from loss, damage and destruction):
   (a) Do you keep files in a secure area that only the records management staff enter?
   (b) Do you make sure staff in different departments under your faculty return files to your faculty office when they are not using them?
   (c) Do you keep records storage areas clean so that they do not attract rats and other pests that can destroy records?
   (d) Do you have back-up systems for any computers that keep electronic records?
   (e) Do you make sure staff understand that they cannot take papers from institutions files, and punitive measures are in place for staff who do this?
   (f) Do you have a written plan for salvaging important records if there is a disaster?

If no (records are not being protected from loss, damage and destruction):
   (g) Has there been any effect in the operation of your institution?
   _____

Disposition of records

45. How do you dispose of records? You may wish to explain what you do with a record that you no longer want in your faculty.
   _____

B. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

46. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?
   _____

vii.   Questions to the lecturer

A. Record and document management

_____

Retrieval of records/documents

47. How accessible are the university records/documents such as correspondence and reports? You may wish to focus on the amount of time it can take to retrieve your desired record/document. You may also wish to treat paper and electronic records/documents separately.

_____

Storage of student continuous assessment grades

48. How do you keep records of student continuous assessment grades?

_____

Institutional repository

49. Do you deposit your research papers or publications in your university's institutional repository? If so, how many times have you deposited the materials in the past three years?

_____

B. Managing records and documents to foster governance, audit and risk management

Suggested areas for improvement

50. What could be done to improve the way records and documents are managed at your university? What drivers do you have in mind that can facilitate this change?

_____

Appendix 2: Formal request letter

University of Glasgow | Humanities Advanced Technology & Information Institute

The Registrar
University of the Western Cape
South Africa

George Service House
11 University Gardens
University of Glasgow
Glasgow
G12 8QH

13th August, 2012

Dear Sir or Madam,

This letter is to introduce Mr Mathews Phiri who is in the second year of his PhD studies in the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute at the University of Glasgow.

Mr Phiri is researching the role of document and record keeping in public organisations, with a particular interest in issues of governance, audit and risk. The main part of his research is a series of case studies of Higher Education Institutions in Malawi and South Africa, conducted through interviews with key stakeholders in each institution and analysis of policy and documentation. To this end, we would be most grateful if you could assist Mr Phiri in obtaining access to the people and information he requires. The issues Mr Phiri is researching are both important and timely and your help will make a valuable contribution to this study.

Mr Phiri's research questions have been approved by the University's Ethics Committee and you can be assured confidentiality will be preserved. We would like to thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ian G Anderson
pp
Prof Michael Moss
Alistair Tough
Phd Supervisors.

Dr Ian G Anderson
MA, MPhil, PhD
Senior Lecturer and Director of Museum Studies

HATII, 11 University Gardens, Glasgow G12 8QH, Scotland
Ian.G.Anderson@glasgow.ac.uk

The University of Glasgow, charity number SC004401

Appendix 3: Introductory letter

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE
PRIVATE BAG X17
BELLVILLE
7535
Tel: +27 (0) 21 959 2623/2814
Fax: +27(0) 21 959 3428
UWC Call Centre: +27 (0) 21 959 3900/1/2
Website: www.uwc.ac.za

Office of the Deputy Registrar

UNIVERSITY *of the* WESTERN CAPE

A place of quality, a place to grow, from hope to action through knowledge

11 October 2012

TO: Mr. J. Thampi
        Finance Director

Dear Mr. J. Thampi

This letter is to introduce Mr. Mathews Phiri who is in the second year of his PhD studies in the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute at the University of Glasgow.

Mr. Phiri is researching the role of document and record keeping in public organizations, with a particular interest in issues of governance, audit and risk. The main part of his research is a series of case studies of Higher Education Institutions in Malawi and South-Africa, conducted through interviews with key stakeholders in each institution and analysis of policy and documentation. I hereby request if you could grant him an interview to gather his data.

Mr.Phiri's research questions have been approved by the University's Ethics Committee and you can be assured confidentiality will be preserved. We would like to thank you in advance for any assistance you can provide.

Yours Faithfully,

Prof. JJ Cornelissen

Acting Registrar

Appendix 4: Ethical approval

Sent:10 August 2012 14:12

To: Mathews Phiri

Cc: arts-ethics

College of Arts

Research Ethics Committee

10 August 2012

56 PG Phiri

Dear Mathews,

Ethical approval is given for your research.

Please note that an end of project report is required by the Ethics Committee. A brief report should be provided within one month of the completion of the research, giving details of any ethical issues which have arisen (a copy of the report to the funder, or a paragraph or two will usually be sufficient). This is a condition of approval and in line with the committee's need to monitor research. Further, it is your responsibility to inform, as appropriate, your supervisor, advisor or funding body of the outcome of your Ethics application.

In addition, any unforeseen events which might affect the ethical conduct of the research, or which might provide grounds for discontinuing the study, must be reported immediately in writing to the Ethics Committee. The Committee will examine the circumstances and advise you of its decision, which may include referral of the matter to the central University Ethics Committee or a requirement that the research be terminated. Information on the College of Arts Ethics policy and procedures is at http://www.gla.ac.uk/colleges/arts/research/ethics

Best wishes,

Dr. Maud Anne Bracke

Ethics Officer, College of Arts

University of Glasgow

G12 8QQ, Glasgow, United Kingdom, +44 0141 330 5908

Appendix 5: Study Furth of Glasgow

University of Glasgow | College of Arts

Student no. 1100850

9th November 2012

Mr Mathews Joseph Phiri

By email to: m.phiri.1@research.gla.ac.uk

Dear Mathews

Study Furth of Glasgow – Degree of PhD – Information Studies

I am writing to confirm that the Convener of the Graduate School Committee has agreed to permit a temporary period of study furth of Glasgow, 1st October 2012 to 31st December 2012.

Please note that you must remain in regular contact with your supervisor while you are away from Glasgow.

I must draw your attention to the fact that study furth does contain a greater element of risk than study on campus and that any student who does not follow the guidelines can have no grounds for appeal on that basis.

Yours sincerely

Susan Howel
College of Arts Administrator

cc   Supv.

Appendix 6: Consent from respondent

University of Glasgow

College of Arts Ethics Committee

CONSENT TO THE USE OF DATA

I understand that **Mathews Joseph Phiri** is collecting data in the form of **completed questionnaires, note-taking interviews** and **process/practice observations** for use in an academic research project at the University of Glasgow.

The aim of the research is to explore the relationship of records and documents management with governance, audit and risk management in public organisations. It focuses on public universities in developing countries. The researcher has purposively chosen the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region universities in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Malawi as case studies. He will use questionnaires, interviews and observations to collect data. Collected data will be analysed manually and using computer applications.

I give my consent to the use of data for this purpose on the understanding that:

- All names and other material likely to identify individuals will be anonymised.
- Respondents will have an opportunity to check factual accuracy
- The data will be treated as confidential and kept in secure storage at all times.
- The data will be destroyed once the research project is completed.
- The results will be used for academic purposes only.
- Prior consent will be required before publishing the results

Signed by the contributor: _____

Date: _15 October 2012_

Researcher's name and email contact:	Mathews Joseph Phiri Email: m.phiri.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Supervisor's name and email contact:	Professor Michael Moss Email: Michael.Moss@glasgow.ac.uk

Department address:

Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute (HATII)
George Service House
11 University Gardens
University of Glasgow
Glasgow
G12 8QH
Scotland
United Kingdom