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Effects of Electronic Records Management Best Practices and Records Professionals in Malaysia

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Abstract
Records management operation is vital as it can protect the organization and also helps in achieving its goal. Proper record keeping is critical to ensuring the administration's successful and productive record management. A wide range of records management difficulties and problems in dealing with electronic records, requires a qualified records manager in an organization to implement records management best practices, including how records are kept and maintained. This paper suggests a qualitative study on records managers to find a solution to the problems mentioned. The findings can benefit organizations dealing with electronic records, thus contributing to the body of knowledge.

Keywords: Records Management, Records Officer (Pegawai Rekod Jabatan)

1.0 Introduction
Many in the record profession often need to pay more attention to the proper standard of records in a company because of a need for more information about documents viewed from the viewpoint of record management. Apart from simply understanding roles and responsibilities, the record manager creates, manages, and accesses documents and introduces best practices for proactive and progressive management of all data and information within the state ministry that other record managers in the state could adopt. Record managers possess specialized expertise, abilities, and qualities, where knowledge is the underlying philosophy and values that should be gained in their careers. Countless disputes arising in a day's work are considered the best practice for decision-making activities. Electronic records are a precious asset that needs to be handled with care and an excellent system to decrease the risk of any issues affecting the records' contents, such as

loss, manipulation, or damage. When using an electronic records management system, the vital administrative duties of this kind of system include categorizing the documents, locating them, and designating them for destruction. These are the functions that an electronic records management system is intended to do. Therefore, using an electronic records management system can enhance not only the quality of the records but also their efficiency and fairness. The objective of this article is to identify electronic records management practices and records professionals in Malaysia, to analyze the possible solutions to solving issues of current electronic records management practices and records professionals in Malaysia, and to verify the roles of records professionals as the solution in solving problems of current electronic records management practices in Malaysia.

The organization relies heavily on information. Record managers take responsibility and commitment to developing methods for paper storage, organization, and information security. The designated record manager is to track, preserve, update, and improve the classification system while ensuring its compliance with governance. Electronic records in the organization are critical to achieving their goals and assist in problem-solving and decision-making activities. Therefore, the record manager's role should be emphasized and maintained because they are the ones who help provide evidence for organizational activities. According to Ondieki (2017), the company relies heavily on records, so record-keeping aids in holding the ministries responsible for its forms. Recordkeeping is essential to regular day-to-day business operations. According to Seniwoliba, Mahama, and Abilla (2017), records play crucial roles in creating, executing, tracking, and evaluating an organization's program; information is critical to the institution's survival. Since records are essential to controlling organizational operations, organizations should recognize documents as vital to ensuring organizational performance.

2.0 Record Management Practices

Efficient records management operations are essential in every business to protect the firm and aid the organization in achieving its goals. According to Nakaweesa (2019), an efficient records management activity is crucial to an organization's governance structure. To succeed, extensive records management procedures for good governance, accountability, openness, rights security, and corporate memory (Matina & Ngubule, 2019). Besides having strong decision-making and problem-solving abilities, managing large amounts of data is necessary. Shepherd (2006) wrote that records could help organizations support accountability besides facilitating decision-making and actions. Shepherd further wrote that records could also help in cultural research and understanding corporate history. Records management is the word used for the professional activity of managing documents, and it refers to the procedures for creating, capturing, and maintaining records inside an organization to support its operations (McLeod & Lomas, 2015). Companies should examine the many best practices to ensure their records management system is as efficient as possible.

Aside from that, records management refers to keeping a company's records from when they were produced until records were destroyed. Crockett (2016) claims that these documents concerned papers highlighting the organization's operations and records held for their importance. The structure of an entity is subject to change, and records management activities must be consistent with that structure, or else the record management system will become redundant. The record policies based on a function review and systemic adjustments have a different effect on measures intended to ensure the integrity of organizational records and the processes used to maintain records. The practical review method and the necessary arrangement of record management policy are recognized as the best practice (Cheng, 2018). Integration of record schedules and information management procedures is a strength. According to Malak (2022), records management best practices are vital for firms to preserve legal and regulatory compliance. In addition, they assist companies in better managing their records by organizing, categorizing, storing, and removing them.

3.0 Challenges In Implementing Records Management Practices

There is a wide range of records management difficulties and problems that organizations must deal with nowadays. Because electronic information has become more prevalent and less expensive than paper-based information during the past decade or two, many of these issues have become more serious. Many records management issues include using many records management systems, a need for integration or coordination between the various available information management systems, direct competition between records management systems, and work habits. Among the most challenging issues are the lack of a clear strategic direction for the overall technology environment, the limited and irregular adoption of existing information systems by staff, the poor quality of information, the lack of consistency, duplication, and out-of-date information, and the lack of recognition and support for records management by senior management. Involvement in a records management program should be mandatory for all employees. If records are handled effectively from the beginning of their life cycle, the smoother process is more successful and needs far less effort in the future to keep

it safe (Strawser, 2021). Most businesses have yet to inform their workers of their responsibilities in sharing the organization's common duty to follow and strengthen information management standards (Balk, 2020).

Apart from that, there is a lack of resources for implementing, managing, and improving information systems, as well as difficulties in changing the working practices and processes of employees, as well as internal politics that impede the ability to coordinate activities across the entire organization, among other issues. According to Chute and Swift (2020), adequate tools, institutional policies, and standards for filing and maintaining documents must be implemented to ensure proper management. Reitz (2022) states that complying with the vast quantity of papers and files that take up (sometimes costly) space is a significant challenge for an organization. It is relevant now since many companies are shifting to more remote work practices that are here to stay. All information technology resources inside the business should consider records management when they are being planned, designed, and developed. Lack of expertise, awareness of information ethics, and poor professional practices are all issues that contribute to the challenges involved with implementing records management regulations. Records managers need to gain knowledge to deliver high-quality service in their organizations. It needs to be made clear from the currently available material the problems that record managers have in complying with ethical norms. Records managers in most government agencies face a completely different reality since they need more training in any professional code of behavior. Records professionals must forsake conventional information technologies by being knowledgeable about recent advancements and ensuring that their records are compatible with new technology (Cumming and Villata, 2015). The records manager's responsibilities include gaining, receiving, preserving, accessing, and recording materials to create a knowledge base supporting organizational management (Yeo, 2018).

4.0 Electronic Records Management

Nowadays, most transactions and work done in an organization involve using technology. This, in turn, resulted in the creation of electronic records. Read-Smith and Ginn (2015) identified that records could be in traditional or non-traditional formats. Classic records can be in the form of paper, while non-traditional forms can be in the form of electronic documents. For example, communications between organizations may be via electronic mail or live audio and video, such as online meetings via Webex, Zoom, Teams, or Google Meet.

Franks (2018) wrote that electronic records reside in various devices and locations depending on how they are created and by whom. An example is when an electronic document is made in the office. It is then uploaded to the cloud drive for later use at another location. It may be updated by the user and synced to the cloud drive. It would then later be downloaded back to the computer at the office. There are also cases where electronic records are stored in the cloud drive.

Better retrieval and availability can be achieved by using electronic records. Users can simultaneously retrieve and view electronic records without any geographical constraint. However, a good network connection must be in place so that data downloading will not be interrupted.

According to Raja Abdullah, Abdul Rahman, and Ahmad Zam Hariro (2022), there are five phases in electronic records management. Those five phases are creation and capture, registration, access, maintenance, and disposal. The phases described are similar to physical records management, where Franks (2018) also included archival preservation.

5.0 Effective Records Management Practices

Effective records management is associated with the achievement of advantageous business results. Thus, the organization must adequately manage recorded knowledge, which has become valuable. Efficient record administration is critical for ensuring easy access to information and eliminating redundant data (Danso, 2015). Additionally, it enables businesses to comply with financial and regulatory obligations. In addition, preserving records in public institutions ensures that this organization can be held accountable for its activities and that the public may follow the development of policy initiatives. Critical, valuable information in future decision-making is available through record management software and procedures. According to Scott (2019), the records management program of an organization should be by policies and procedures that handle each component of the records management program in line with operational and legal requirements. Lian, Wang, and Oliver (2021) discussed the importance of good records management practices in an organization. Good records and information governance should be in place for the organization to remain competitive.

Creating enormous volumes of information in electronic and print media is common among public and private organizations. Therefore, organized information storage systems are essential to ensure the authenticity and integrity of these organizations' information collected, managed, and stored. Using good records management techniques, an organization may have greater control over the number of documents they create by implementing disposal schedules, which establish the time a company should keep particular data types. This was demonstrated by Lian, Wang, and Oliver (2021), who suggested that recordkeeping should consistently manage data, e-documents, and records.

Effective records management practices are essential for supporting company operations and assuming responsibility for business processes and decisions in the workplace. An organization's capacity to do business in a practically ordered and accountable manner depends on the company's ability to maintain well-organized records. Creating and correctly documenting an organization's records and information management processes and procedures is essential to ensure all employees can access this material. The corporation should clearly define the responsibilities of individuals who manage records, as well as how this approach will fit into the overall strategic business plan of the organization before proceeding (Bennett, 2019). They can assist the company in providing services consistently and helping with administrative decision-making and policy formulation. Establishing best practices for successful records management by all organizations is a technique of demonstrating good intentions and demonstrating plans to adhere to best practices accurately and consistently. National Archives (2020) stated that it is essential for an organization to keep accurate, trustworthy records and to keep them in an easily accessible, intelligent, and helpful format so that they can meet their business and accountability needs. Businesses must demonstrate best practices in records management via consistent implementation and continually assess their records management. A report from the World Bank (2020) states that recordkeeping promotes public accountability while increasing organizational efficiency, public access to information and transparency, and efficient work practices.

6.0 Role Of Records Manager

The technologies and methods are growing for a records manager who controls and takes charge of records. Besides that, this is how the technologies will still affect the organization—the role of the records manager in the company is to care for all documents and records. In addition, record managers would consider how the technology develops and what requirements are needed in the future, ensuring that the record management process is smoother than ever. According to Graves (2015), the career records manager in the production practices, procedures, standards, and structural control of effective electronic recording systems. Reshwan (2022) stated that records managers manage the production, upkeep, and management of records inside an organization. With the help of an assistant, they guarantee that all documents are appropriately handled and structured in compliance with business rules and procedures. Liang, Wan, and Oliver (2021) suggest that a records manager should play a vital role in managing records, actively formulating policies, regulations, rules, and standards of recordkeeping, and developing information infrastructure in the organization.

A records manager is responsible for efficiently keeping an organization gained and created documents. An organization's most valuable asset is its information. Records managers understand how to process records, which can immediately impact their ability to perform effectively. Furthermore, a records manager organizes, maintains, and protects the organization's documents in paper and electronic form. Records managers aim to achieve a structured, reliable, user-friendly framework and accurate and cost-effective management of the organization's activities. Efficient data-keeping ensures that the information required is retrievable, genuine, and reliable. According to Yeo (2018), records maintenance professionals are essential in maintaining records to benefit the organization. The role of the records manager entails gathering, receiving, maintaining, accessing, and documenting resources to provide a knowledge base to assist organizational management.

Records managers contribute to the larger meta-skills of working with quality, making meaning, and informing progress. Therefore, the records manager must have a variety of positions, qualifications, and experience (Bhaskar, 2016). In Shao's (2022) opinion, the records manager oversees record development, storage, and disposal. As well as creating new systems, they must ensure that existing systems are maintained, verified, and evaluated. Therefore, technical and analytical abilities and high honesty will be necessary.

The record managers are also in charge of overseeing the organization's record disposal. Much of the time, as documents meet the cap value, records administrators decide if the records can be passed to a national archive or disposed of by removing old documents from the library or redundant records that need long-term maintenance. That may have ramifications for the information units; the records manager helps the department's everyday operations work more smoothly. With the advancement in information and communication technology, the role of records managers is becoming increasingly crucial in compiling, organizing, preserving, and retrieving vast amounts of data in electronic format (Lappin, 2015). The primary role of a records manager is the production, protection, recovery, utilization, and final disposal of records and data when no longer required by an entity (Parapadakis, 2018). According to Petrick (2018), records management is critical in ensuring that the company's information as an asset is protected and well-managed.

7.0 Research Methodology

This research will be a qualitative study. It also encompassed a structured interview, which will be conducted with 11 record managers experts in a particular field from an organization where those persons to be interviewed are related to the scope

of the study. This research process component provides an overall of the process this study will implement to achieve its objective. Therefore, selecting an accurate method that suits the research objective is vital. In this section, the researcher will use the data analysis method: content analysis. The content analysis method is one of the most often used approaches for analyzing qualitative data. It examines documented information in writings, media, or even physical objects. When to use this approach depends on the research issues being investigated. Content analysis is typically employed to examine their replies when interviewees respond to questions.

8.0 Research Design

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative research method. Qualitative data sources include observation and participation observation, interviews and questionnaires, documents, and texts. The researcher will collect qualitative data from the Sarawak State Ministry's focus group records manager for this study. Primary resources are the sources of information that will be consulted in this research. A primary resource is anything that a specific group of people has created for a particular purpose. Interviewing is the main method of gathering data from a primary resource.

9.0 Findings

Obligatory to an organization's records management is having a well-implemented records management that enables the organization to proactively and gradually manage all data, media, and information. Although several statutes and other regulatory elements will rise in usage, an organization must stand by the best practices to stay ahead of the competition. This is to help management maintain excellent records management practices in the organization. The other important thing is to clarify that the organization wants to adopt excellent practices to implement the best practices more accurately.

There are several advantages that a unit of records and registry in an organization might get regarding implementing policy. First, it satisfies the legal need more quickly and cheaply. This is because the organization follows the standards and procedures that the National Archives of Malaysia set down. This is a universal action applicable to all organizations that keep track of electronic records. It has proven to be very pricey because it comes from the National Archives of Malaysia. According to Information and Data Manager (2021), companies must develop and meticulously record their papers, processes, and procedures for administering information and guarantee that all personnel have access to this documentation. All criteria that govern the use of recordkeeping systems must be followed. This means legal and institutional rules, national and international standards, and best practices for electronic recordkeeping (Brown University Library, 2020). Second, managing records must be carried out under the record retention schedule, which requires the records manager to watch over them and ensure they are saved and stored only for as long as necessary. All outdated records will be discarded in a controlled and organized method. As specified by Iron Mountain (2020), records managers are instructed to destroy documents that meet their retention criteria by judges taking part in discovery cases, and records managers are required to place destruction orders through Records Retention Schedules, which are used to help with records retention. The record retention schedule allows an organization to pursue the goal of administering intellectual property. Also, records managers may reduce the cost of information storage by managing that. In this manner, he can help to save funds in supplying and extending the space for the record room. Organizations have lengthened the time they keep all of their information in response to their worries about becoming the target of a lawsuit (KM World,2020). Do away with the records when they are no longer beneficial to the firm at the period when they were due for disposal. According to Archive Vault (2019), the average time for restoration is around four days. One strategy to standardize the document destruction process and guarantee due care in determining which documents should be destroyed is to follow the record retention life cycle and destroy only copies when they become obsolete.

10.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential to record managers setting and enforcing the personnel accountable for observing the records' management procedures. Records management has such continuing programs for training because they are still active, and it is time to follow the rules and procedures. An organization should create contingency plans to limit the risk of data loss or damage because of recordkeeping errors. By making everyone in the organization aware of the records management fundamentals, the records will be more organized, will not be redundant, and will burden the organization. The organization should be diligent in creating and regularly maintaining written policies and procedures that carefully document the general management of their local system and the exact management requirements for electronic documents. For recommendations, an adequate file system should be used for storing records so that they may be easily accessible. In most organizations, poor records management can be linked to personnel incompetence in successfully completing their

tasks. As a result, staff capacity building must begin. Staff in records management must be trained and retained, particularly in ICT applications. Seminars, conferences, short courses, and workshops could be used to increase staff skills. This will assist personnel in learning new skills related to proper documentation and file storage. An adequate infrastructure must also be in place for effective document-keeping.

Acknowledgement

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