SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES

(SLADS – BAGAMOYO)

RESEARCH REPORT

AN INVESTIGATION OF EFFECTIVE PAPER RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN ENHANCING SERVICE DELIVERY AT BAGAMOYO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

BY

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A Research report Submitted at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) as a Partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Award of ordinary diploma in Records and archives management

2026

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CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have supervised and reviewed this piece of work and find it satisfactory in fulfilling the requirements set out for a research report titled "An Investigation of Effective Paper Records Management Practices in Enhancing Service Delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council," and I recommend it to the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) for examination.

This work has been carried out in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Diploma in school of library , archives and Documentation studies (SLADS).

Supervisor name

ZAINA AMIRI OMARI

Signature

……..

Date

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I thank God for the strength, protection, and clarity of mind that carried me through every stage of this study. Special recognition goes to my supervisor, Madam ZAINA AMIRI OMARI, whose patient guidance, constructive feedback, and willingness to correct me where I went wrong shaped this report into what it has become.

I am equally grateful to the leadership and staff of Bagamoyo Municipal Council for opening their doors to me during data collection and for answering my questions with honesty and patience.

My appreciation also goes to the teaching staff at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) for the foundation of knowledge they built in me over the course of my studies, and to my fellow students who shared ideas, resources, and encouragement along the way.

To everyone else, named or unnamed, who played a part in bringing this work to completion, I extend my heartfelt thanks.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my parents and family, whose sacrifices, love, and unwavering belief in me have shaped every step of my academic path. I also extend this dedication to my friends and well-wishers whose words of encouragement kept me going even when the workload felt heaviest.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, guided by three objectives: to identify existing records management practices, to examine the effectiveness of existing records management systems, and to establish the challenges facing effective records management at the Council. A mixed methods design was adopted, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The target population was 27 administrative officers and department heads, from which a sample of 25 respondents was drawn using the Yamane formula, through simple random and purposive sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and observation, and analysed using SPSS. Findings showed that records creation and registration, storage and filing, classification and indexing, retrieval and access, and disposal and archiving were the main practices applied, with creation and registration the most consistently practiced while classification, retrieval and disposal received less attention. Existing systems were only moderately effective, as delays in locating files and inconsistent filing reduced efficiency and accountability. Key challenges included lack of professional training, inadequate storage infrastructure, limited financial resources, absence of retention schedules, outdated filing systems, and weak policy implementation. The study concluded that the Council has not fully adopted a comprehensive records lifecycle approach, and recommends staff training, improved storage infrastructure, retention schedules, standardized filing systems, stronger compliance monitoring, and increased budget allocation.

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LIST OF ABBREAVITIONS

ARMA	Association of Records Managers and Administrators
ICA	International Council on Archives
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
SLADS	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, providing a broad overview of records management practices at the global, African, and Tanzanian contexts. It also covers the statement of the problem, general objective, specific objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitations, and definitions of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Records management practices are applied across several institutions through the processes of creating, receiving, keeping, using, and disposing of both paper and electronic records throughout their entire life cycle. In government offices such as municipal councils, these practices ensure that information is properly collected, arranged, protected, and easily accessible. This supports accountability, transparency, and better service delivery (Sato, 2023). Good records management ensures that information remains authentic, trustworthy, and usable, helping leaders make better decisions, protecting the institutional memory, and building public trust (Limo, Kwanya & Chepchirchir, 2019). It is vital for efficient public administration and good governance. It promotes accountability because officials can be held responsible through clear documentation. It also improves transparency by giving citizens access to government information, which strengthens democracy and trust in public institutions (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2020). Well kept records make decision-making faster, improve service delivery and reduce costs by avoiding duplication and loss of information. In addition, records management ensures that laws and regulations are followed, supports auditing, and protects important historical and cultural information. This makes it a key part of effective public service (Wamukoya & Kemoni, 2021).

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Records management practices globally play a pivotal role in the efficient functioning of organizations worldwide, serving as the backbone for decision-making, accountability, and service delivery (Smith & Johnson, 2021). According to ISO (2016), records management encompasses the systematic control of records throughout their lifecycle, from creation to disposal, ensuring authenticity, reliability, and accessibility. Globally, poor records management has been linked to significant inefficiencies, such as the 2017 Equifax data breach in the United States, where inadequate record keeping exposed the sensitive information of 147 million people (Federal Trade Commission, 2018).)

In Tanzania, records management practices are fundamental to enhancing service delivery in the public sector. According to the Tanzania Records and Archives Management Act of 2002, records are defined as information created, received, and maintained by public institutions as evidence of activities, decisions, and transactions (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002). The public service management and employment policy of 2016 further emphasizes records as essential for transparent service delivery, yet persistent challenges such as manual filing systems continue to hinder timely access to information in sectors such as health and education (United Republic of Tanzania, 2016).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Proper management of paper records is a fundamental requirement for effective public service delivery. According to ISO (2016), records must be created, maintained and made accessible throughout their lifecycle so that institutions can support accountability, transparency and informed decision making. In Tanzania, the Records and Archives Management Act (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002) requires all public institutions, including local government authorities, to establish reliable records management systems. When these requirements are met, government offices are able to respond to public needs efficiently, protect institutional information and uphold good governance (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008; Sato, 2023). However, many municipal councils in Tanzania continue to experience serious weaknesses in paper records management. Studies show that public institutions in Tanzania rely on disorganised manual filing systems, lack adequate storage

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space, do not apply retention schedules, and employ staff who have not received professional training in records management (Lugomela & Ngulube, 2022; Chachage & Ngulube, 2006). These problems are further worsened by limited financial resources and weak enforcement of records management policies (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011). As a result, many municipal councils in Tanzania frequently struggle to locate records on time, leading to delays in processing public requests, poor documentation of official decisions and reduced accountability in service delivery (Mohamed, 2022).

Despite the existence of national and international records management frameworks such as the ICA Principles (ICA, 2020) and ISO 15489-1:2016, empirical studies focusing specifically on how paper records management practices affect service delivery in Tanzanian municipal councils remain scarce (Ngoepe & Saurombe, 2020). This leads to retrieval issues that affect the quality service delivery in councils consequensly, it raise the question records management practices, in these councils , studies to inform how these councils including Bagamoyo municipal council manage their records are irretrievable , as such this make difficult to set strategies on how to improve paper records management practices that will guarantee quality service delivery, it's against this background that the present study intend to investigation of effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo municipal council.

1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To examine the effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

i. To identify the existing paper records management practices in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

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ii. To examine the effectiveness of paper records management systems in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

iii. To find out the challenges facing effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

1.4 Research Questions

i. What are the existing paper records management practices in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

ii. What are the effectiveness of paper records management systems used to manage records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

iii. What are the challenges facing Bagamoyo Municipal Council in managing their paper records?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in examining how effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council can directly improve service delivery to residents. Efficient records handling ensures timely access to critical information, reduces delays in administrative processes, and enhances accountability in public services. The study supported the council in identifying weaknesses in its existing records management systems and adopting better practices that enhanced overall service delivery to both the public and internal employees. The study also contributed to academic knowledge by adding empirical evidence to the growing body of literature on records management in local government authorities in Tanzania. Researchers and scholars in library, archival, and information studies will benefit from the findings as a reference point for future studies. Furthermore, policymakers at the national level may use the findings to formulate

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and strengthen records management policies aimed at improving public service efficiency and accountability across government institutions.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the Study

1.6.1 Scope of the study

This study focused on effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council in Bagamoyo, Pwani Region, Tanzania. The study examined key records management practices including record creation, filing, storage, retrieval, regular training, compliance checks, and preservation, and how these practices enhanced service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

1.6.2 Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted at Bagamoyo Municipal Council only; therefore, its findings may not be generalized to other local government authorities in Tanzania. The study focused exclusively on paper records management practices and did not cover electronic records management systems. Furthermore, the study was constrained by a limited time frame which restricted the depth of data collection and analysis. Financial constraints also affected the scope of the study, as limited funds made it difficult to cover transportation costs, reproduce research instruments, and access some relevant academic resources needed for a more comprehensive investigation.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Records, are defined as documented information created, received, and maintained as evidence of business activities, decisions, or transactions. They are used as evidence, for future reference, and for future generations (ISO, 2016). In this study, records refer to all documents created, received, and maintained by officers at Bagamoyo Municipal Council in the course of daily operations.

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1.7.2 Records Management, refers to the systematic control and management of records throughout their lifecycle from creation to disposal. It involves capturing, storing, retrieving, and disposing of records in a way that ensures their authenticity, reliability, and accessibility (ISO, 2016). In this study, records management includes all activities relating to receiving, creating, organizing, and utilizing records for various operations at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

1.7.3 Records Management Practices, refer to the specific activities and procedures involved in managing records throughout their lifecycle. These include creation and capture of records, classification and indexing, storage, preservation, retrieval, and access (ARMA, 2017). In this study, records management practices encompass the procedures followed for receiving, creating, classifying, preserving, and storing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

1.7.4 Service Delivery, refers to the provision of efficient and effective services to users for the purpose of ensuring timely access to records and information (ISO, 2020). In this study, service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council encompasses the provision of responses to public inquiries, processing of incoming mail, documentation of decisions, and preservation of records as evidence of official activities.

1.7.5 Paper Records, this are physical documents created or received by an organization in the course of its operations and maintained as evidence of activities, transactions, or decisions. They include correspondence, reports, forms, registers, minutes, and official files (Penn et al., 1994). In this study, paper records refer to all physical documents managed within the registry and departmental offices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature related to records management practices, records management systems for paper records, and challenges facing municipal councils in managing paper records. The review aims to establish a theoretical and empirical foundation for the study by examining what scholars and practitioners have documented regarding effective paper records management and its contribution to service delivery in public sector organizations. The chapter is organized according to the specific objectives of the study and concludes with a theoretical framework and a statement of the research gap.

2.1 Overview of Records Management Practices

Records management refers to the systematic control of records throughout their life cycle from creation and receipt to maintenance, use, and final disposition (ISO, 2016). According to Shepherd and Yeo (2003), effective records management practices ensure that organizations create authentic, reliable, and usable records that support accountability, transparency, and informed decision-making. In the public sector, records management is particularly critical because records serve as evidence of government actions and citizens' rights.

Scholars emphasize that sound records management practices include records creation, classification, filing, storage, retrieval, appraisal, retention, and disposal (Penn, Pennix & Coulson, 1994). Without proper practices, organizations risk information loss, inefficiency, and poor service delivery. McLeod and Hare (2005) argue that records management practices form the backbone of organizational memory and are essential for continuity in service provision, especially in government institutions. In municipal

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councils, records management practices support administrative, legal, and financial operations (Ngoepe, 2014). Proper filing systems enable quick retrieval of records, thereby reducing delays in responding to public inquiries and service requests. Conversely, weak practices often result in misplaced or incomplete records, which undermine accountability and public trust (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008).

Several studies conducted in African local government contexts reveal that records management practices are often informal and inconsistent (Asogwa, 2012; Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007). For instance, Asogwa (2012) notes that many public institutions lack standardized procedures for handling records, leading to duplication, congestion, and deterioration of paper files. Similarly, Mnjama (2003) observes that the absence of clear records management policies in local authorities contributes to poor documentation and inefficiencies in service delivery.

Furthermore, training and awareness among staff significantly influence records management practices. According to Thurston (2015), records are often managed by untrained personnel, which compromises their integrity and accessibility. This situation is common in municipal councils where records management is not prioritized as a strategic function (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011).

2.2 Records Management Systems for the Management of Paper Records

A records management system is a framework of policies, procedures, tools, and infrastructure used to manage records systematically (ISO, 2016). In the context of paper records, such systems include manual filing systems, registries, classification schemes, retention schedules, and physical storage facilities (Penn et al., 1994).

Manual records management systems remain dominant in many municipal councils, particularly in developing countries, due to limited financial and technological resources (Kemoni, 2007). According to Chachage and Ngulube (2006), paper-based systems rely heavily on registries, which act as central control points for records creation, filing, and

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tracking. When properly managed, registries enhance records accessibility and accountability.

Classification and filing systems are core components of paper records management systems. The use of standardized classification schemes enables logical arrangement of records and facilitates faster retrieval (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). However, studies show that many local authorities use outdated or inconsistent classification systems, resulting in misfiling and loss of records (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007).

Retention and disposal schedules are essential tools within records management systems. They guide organizations on how long records should be kept and when they should be disposed of or archived (ISO, 2016). Ngoepe (2014) notes that many municipal councils fail to implement retention schedules, resulting in overcrowded registries and storage rooms filled with obsolete records. Despite the dominance of paper records, scholars argue that hybrid systems combining paper and electronic records are increasingly emerging in public institutions (McLeod, Childs & Hardiman, 2011).

2.3 Challenges Facing Municipal Councils in Managing Paper Records

Municipal councils face numerous challenges in managing paper records effectively. One of the major challenges is inadequate infrastructure, including insufficient storage space and poorly designed records centers (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008). Overcrowded offices and poorly designed registries expose records to damage and loss.

Another significant challenge is the lack of trained records management personnel. Studies by Asogwa (2012) and Thurston (2015) reveal that records management responsibilities in local government institutions are often assigned to clerical staff without professional training. This results in improper filing, poor appraisal decisions, and weak control over records movement.

Financial constraints also hinder effective paper records management. According to Mnjama (2003), limited budgets in municipal councils affect the procurement of filing equipment, storage facilities, and preservation materials. Policy and legislative challenges

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further complicate records management. Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) argue that weak enforcement of records management laws and policies leads to non-compliance and neglect of proper procedures. Additionally, high volumes of paper records generated daily pose serious management challenges, making retrieval slow and inefficient, which negatively affects service delivery (Chachage & Ngulube, 2006). Finally, resistance to change and low management support contribute to poor records management, as senior management often underestimates the strategic value of records (McLeod & Hare, 2005).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Records lifecycle theory

This study is guided by the Records Life Cycle Theory, which provides information for understanding how paper records are created, maintained, and finally disposed of within municipal councils in Tanzania. The theory explains that records pass through distinct and sequential stages from their creation to their final disposition, and that proper management at each stage ensures efficiency, accountability, and improved service delivery (ISO, 2016). Shepherd and Yeo (2003) argue that the life cycle approach emphasizes continuous control over records from the moment of creation to their final destruction or permanent preservation. In public sector institutions, particularly municipal councils, this approach is essential because records serve as legal evidence of decisions, financial transactions, and service delivery processes (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008).

The first stage is creation, which refers to the point at which a record is generated or received by an organization in the course of its official activities (ISO, 2016). In municipal councils, paper records are created through correspondence, reports, minutes, financial documents, permits, and administrative forms. According to Penn et al. (1994), records should be created in a controlled manner to ensure completeness and accuracy. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) emphasize that capturing adequate metadata such as date, author, and subject is crucial for future retrieval and accountability.

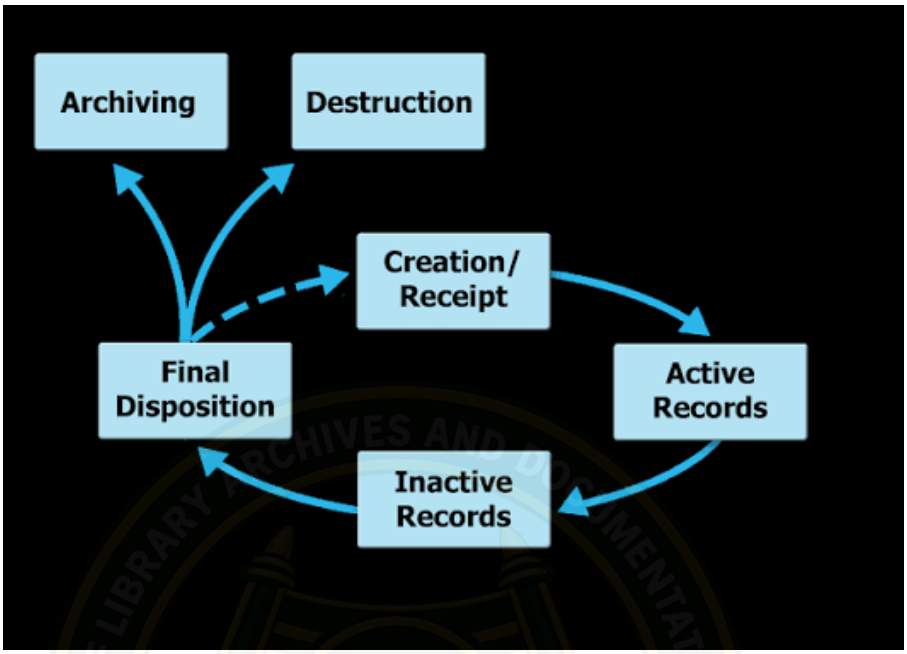
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The second stage is maintenance and use, which involves storing, organizing, protecting, and retrieving records for ongoing administrative, legal, and operational purposes (ISO, 2016). This stage is often referred to as the active or semi-active phase of records. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) explain that effective maintenance requires proper classification systems, filing procedures, tracking controls, and secure storage conditions. According to Kemoni (2007), well-maintained records ensure quick retrieval, reduce duplication, and improve workflow efficiency.

The third and final stage is disposition, which involves either the destruction of records that are no longer needed or the transfer of records with enduring value to archival custody (ISO, 2016). Disposition decisions are guided by retention schedules, which specify how long records should be kept based on their administrative, legal, fiscal, or historical value (Penn et al., 1994). Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) argue that failure to implement retention schedules results in accumulation of obsolete records. In Tanzania, compliance with the Records and Archives Management Act (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002) is essential to ensure lawful disposal and preservation of public records.

Figure 2.1: Records Lifecycle Diagram

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Retrieved from Federal Enterprise Architecture. (2005).

The Records Life Cycle Theory is important in this study because it provides a systematic framework for understanding how paper records are managed at each stage and how this management directly influences service delivery in municipal councils. By applying this theory, the study is able to assess whether records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council are properly created, systematically organized for quick retrieval, and lawfully disposed of according to retention schedules as guided by ISO (2016) and the Records and Archives Management Act (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002).

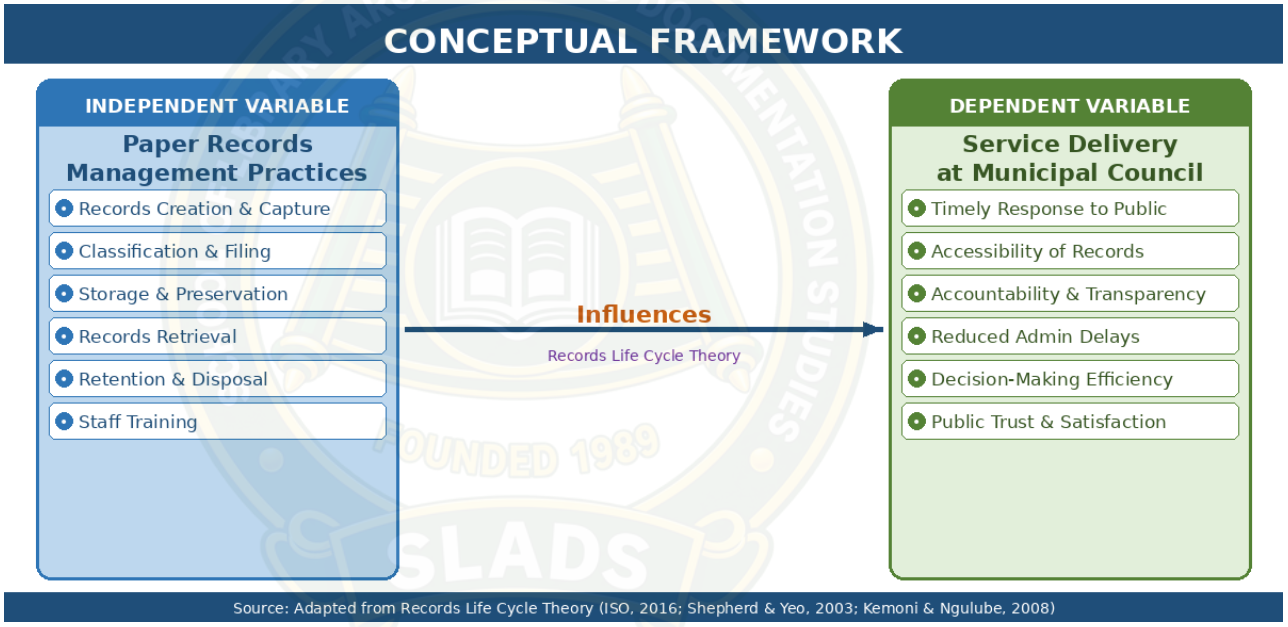
2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a structured visual or written representation that illustrates the assumed relationships between variables under investigation in a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It identifies the independent and dependent variables and shows how they are expected to interact with each other. According to Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), a

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conceptual framework serves as a map or blueprint that guides the researcher in identifying the most important variables and the nature of their relationships within the phenomenon being studied. In this study, the conceptual framework is grounded in the Records Life Cycle Theory (ISO, 2016; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003) and is supported by empirical literature on records management and service delivery in public sector organizations.

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework Diagram



The independent variable encompasses paper records management practices adopted at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. These practices directly shape the quality, accessibility, and reliability of information used to deliver services to the public. Drawing from Penn et al. (1994), ISO (2016) and Shepherd and Yeo (2003), six key dimensions constitute this variable: records creation and capture, classification and filing systems, storage and preservation, retrieval systems and procedures, retention and disposal schedules, and staff training and competency.

The dependent variable in this study is service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, referring to the provision of efficient and effective administrative services to citizens and

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internal stakeholders (ISO, 2020). It is measured through key outcomes including timely response to public inquiries, accessibility of records and information, accountability and transparency, reduction of administrative delays, decision-making efficiency, and public trust and satisfaction (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008; Sato, 2023). Timely response to public inquiries is a core indicator of service delivery quality. When records are well organized and easily retrievable, staff can respond to citizen requests promptly, reducing waiting times and improving satisfaction (Sato, 2023). Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) established a direct positive correlation between well managed records and timeliness of public service responses in African local government contexts. Accessibility of records and information is equally fundamental; when records are properly classified and indexed, they become accessible to authorized staff on demand, enabling faster service provision (ISO, 2016).

2.6 Research Gap

Despite substantial literature highlighting the importance of records management in promoting accountability, transparency, and organizational efficiency (ISO, 2016; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008), there remains a clear empirical gap concerning how paper records management practices specifically affect service delivery in municipal councils in Tanzania. Existing studies largely focus on electronic records management or examine records management in general public sector contexts without critically assessing manual systems such as registries, classification schemes, filing procedures, file movement controls, and retention schedules that continue to dominate municipal councils (Kemoni, 2007; Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007). Furthermore, limited empirical evidence demonstrates a measurable link between the effectiveness of these paper-based practices and actual service delivery performance in Tanzanian local government authorities. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by investigating the effectiveness of paper records management practices and their direct influence on service delivery within Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods and procedures that were employed to conduct the study. It describes the research design, study area, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data collection tools, ethical issues, data analysis plan, and data quality control measures. The methodology ensures that the study is systematic, reliable, and capable of addressing the research objectives.

3.1 Research Approach

Research approach refers to the overall plan and strategy that guides the entire research process, encompassing the philosophical assumptions, design, and specific methods of data collection and analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). It bridges the gap between research philosophy and the practical methods employed in the study. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019), research approaches can be broadly classified into deductive, inductive, and abductive approaches, each of which guides how a researcher moves from theory to data or vice versa. This study adopted a mixed research approach because combining quantitative and qualitative methods provided both numerical evidence and deeper contextual understanding of how effective paper records management practices influence service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council

3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan or blueprint that guides the collection, measurement, and analysis of data in a study to ensure that the research problem is systematically addressed and the objectives are achieved (Creswell, 2014). This study adopted a descriptive research design with a mixed methods research design, combining

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both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Babbie (2015) defines research design as the plan and structure of investigation to be used in obtaining evidence to answer the research questions. Both quantitative and qualitative designs were adopted because they are the most commonly applied descriptive methods in social science research.

3.3 Area of the Study

Area of the study refers to the actual place within which the research is conducted (Creswell, 2018). For the purpose of this study, the area of study is Bagamoyo Municipal Council, which is located in Bagamoyo District, within the Pwani Region of Tanzania. Bagamoyo Municipal Council is one of the local government authorities in Tanzania responsible for providing a wide range of public services to residents, including administration, health, education, and infrastructure. The council was selected for this study because it is a government institution that heavily relies on paper-based records management systems and faces documented challenges in managing its records effectively, making it a relevant and suitable setting for this investigation.

3.4 Target Population

Population of the study means the class or group of individuals from which a researcher selects a few to question in order to find the answer to the research question (Smith, 2018). In this context, the population of the study comprised all staff members at Bagamoyo Municipal Council who are involved in records management and service delivery activities. This includes records management officers, registry clerks, administrative officers and department heads. The total population of the study involved 27 respondents. This population was selected because of their direct involvement in the creation, maintenance, use, and disposal of paper records at the council.

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3.5 Sample Size

Sample size refers to the selected number of respondents from a large population representing the whole population within the study area (Ran, 2020). In this study, the sample size was determined by using the Yamane formula, which is a widely applied formula in social science research for calculating a representative sample size from a known finite population.

Formula :

N = 27 (population)

e = 0.05 (margin of error)

n = \frac{27}{1 + 27(0.05)^2}

n = \frac{27}{1 + 27(0.0025)}

n = \frac{27}{1 + 0.0675}

n = \frac{27}{1.0675}

n ≈ 25.3 ≈ 25

Therefore, the sample size was 25 respondents, which provided the information for the study, comprising administrative officers 5 records management officers 10, Department heads 05, Action officers 05

3.6 Sampling Technique

A sampling technique is a method that a researcher uses to select a representative population that can be used to make inferences or generalizations about the whole population (Kromrey, 2016). In this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select the required sample, specifically simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling technique were applied in this study.

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3.6.1 Simple Random Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling technique is a probability sampling method in which every individual in the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected into the sample (Van Le, 2021). This method eliminates bias in the selection process because the choice of one respondent does not affect the selection of another, thereby enhancing the representativeness and generalizability of the findings (McCombes, 2023). In this study, simple random sampling was used to select records management staff, administrative officers, and service delivery personnel from the general pool of council employees

3.6.2 Purposive Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique is a non-probability sampling method in which the researcher deliberately selects specific individuals or groups based on particular characteristics or qualities that are directly relevant to the research objectives (Wang, 2020). Unlike random sampling, purposive sampling targets participants who are most likely to provide rich, detailed, and relevant information about the subject under investigation. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select key informants such as senior records management officers, registry supervisors, and heads of departments who possess specialized knowledge about records management systems and service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.7 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods refer to the specific procedures and approaches that a researcher uses to gather information from the field in order to address the research questions and meet the study objectives (Creswell, 2018). According to Mugenda (2019), selecting appropriate data collection methods is essential because it directly determines the quality, accuracy, and relevance of the information obtained. For the purposes of this study, both primary and secondary data collection methods were employed to ensure that comprehensive and reliable data were gathered from Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

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3.7.1 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to data that has already been collected, processed, and published by other researchers or institutions for purposes other than the present study (Yang, 2015). Secondary data are gathered from existing sources and are used to supplement, validate, or provide background context for the primary data collected in the field. In this study, secondary data were collected through documentary review of existing institutional records and publications at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. Researcher used Documentary review for reviewing and evaluating documents as a source of data in qualitative and mixed methods research It involves the identification, selection, critical appraisal and synthesis of data contained in documents that are relevant to the research problem. According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), documents provide stable, rich and varied sources of information that can be reviewed repeatedly and serve as an important source of background and contextual data in a study. In this study, document review was used to analyses existing institutional records, policies, reports and other official documents at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.7.2 Primary Data

Primary data refers to data that is collected directly by the researcher from the original sources for the first time, specifically for the purpose of the current study (Mugenda, 2019). Primary data are original in nature and have not been previously collected, processed, or published by any other researcher. In this study, primary data were collected directly from records management officers, administrative staff, registry clerks, heads of departments, and service delivery personnel at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.7.2.1 Questionnaires

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According to Park (2015), a questionnaire is a form or set of printed or typed questions in which respondents are required to provide written answers and return to the researcher within a specified period of time. In this study, a structured questionnaire was administered to respondents selected through simple random sampling, including records management staff, administrative officers, and service delivery personnel at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.7.2.2 Interview

Babbie (2015) defines an interview as a method of obtaining data by talking directly to the research subject. In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants selected through purposive sampling, specifically records management officers, registry supervisors and senior administrative staff at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The interviews were conducted through face to face interaction, which enabled the researcher to seek clarification on responses, probe for more detailed information, and observe non-verbal cues that enriched the data collected.

3.7.2.3 Observation

Observation is a qualitative data collection tool in which the researcher directly watches, records, and interprets the behavior, activities, and conditions of participants or phenomena in their natural setting without relying solely on self-reported information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, structured observation was employed as a supplementary data collection tool to directly examine the physical state of paper records management at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.8 Data collection instruments

Data collection instruments are defined as the techniques and tools used in research to collect information systematically, whether processed quantitatively or qualitatively, to answer research questions or test hypotheses (Darmi et al., 2021). They include structured

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tools like surveys and questionnaires for quantitative data, and flexible tools like interviews and observations for qualitative insights. In this study, the data collection instruments used were questionnaires, interview guide and observation checklist.

3.8.1 Questionnaire

This is a structured data collection instrument consisting of a series of written questions designed to elicit standardized responses from a selected group of respondents. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), questionnaires are among the most widely used tools in survey research because they allow the researcher to gather data from a large number of participants simultaneously, thereby enhancing efficiency and reliability. In this study, a questionnaire was developed to collect quantitative and qualitative data from council employees who directly handle paper records in their daily administrative operations.

3.8.2 Interview guide

An interview guide is a flexible research instrument that outlines topics and questions to be explored during an in-depth conversation between the researcher and selected key informants. According to (Merriam & Tisdell 2016), semi-structured interviews are particularly appropriate in qualitative research because they allow the researcher to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and understandings in depth, . In this study, the interview guide was designed to elicit detailed responses from key informants who were among records management staff at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

3.8.3 Observation checklist

This refer to a non-reactive, systematic data collection instrument that enables the researcher to record factual information about observable phenomena in their natural setting (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the observation checklist was used to systematically assess the physical conditions, infrastructure, and operational practices

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associated with paper records management at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, thereby generating objective empirical data to triangulate with findings from other instruments.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Research ethics refer to the moral principles and standards that govern how researchers conduct their studies with integrity, respect, and responsibility towards participants and the wider community (Creswell, 2018). Adherence to ethical principles is fundamental to ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of research findings. In this study, the following ethical considerations were observed: informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection commenced; the researcher assured participants of confidentiality and anonymity; participation in the study was entirely voluntary; data collected were used solely for academic purposes; and the researcher sought official permission from Bagamoyo Municipal Council management before conducting the study.

3.10 Data Processing and Analysis

Data analysis referred to the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe, condense, evaluate, and interpret collected data in order to answer the research questions. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were used in line with the mixed methods research design adoption. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means, and presented in tables and charts. Qualitative data collected through interviews, observation, and document review were analyzed using thematic analysis, whereby responses were grouped into themes and patterns relevant to the research objectives.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses, and discusses the findings of the study on effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire, an interview guide, and an observation checklist administered to a sample of 25 respondents, comprising administrative officers, records management officers, department heads, and action officers. The chapter begins with the response rate, followed by the demographic characteristics of respondents, and thereafter presents findings organised according to the three specific objectives of the study: to identify the existing paper records management practices, to examine the effectiveness of paper records management systems, and to find out the challenges facing effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. Quantitative findings are presented using frequency tables accompanied by narrative interpretation, while qualitative findings from the interview guide and observation checklist are integrated to corroborate and enrich the quantitative results.

4.1 Response rate

The study targeted a sample of 25 respondents. Questionnaires were administered to all 25 sampled respondents, comprising 5 administrative officers, 10 records management officers, 5 department heads, and 5 action officers. All 25 questionnaires were correctly filled in and returned, yielding a response rate of 100%. In addition, interviews were successfully conducted with key informants selected through purposive sampling, and the observation checklist was completed for the registries and storage areas visited.

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4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic characteristics refer to the socio-economic and personal attributes of respondents that are used to describe the composition of the study population. These characteristics commonly include variables such as gender, age, educational level, occupation, and work experience, which are important in understanding the background of respondents and assessing the credibility and representativeness of the data collected (Kothari, 2004). This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. The characteristics examined included gender, age, level of education, and duration of employment at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. These variables were considered important because they provide a profile of the respondents and establish whether they possessed adequate knowledge and experience regarding paper records management practices. In addition, analysing respondents' demographic characteristics helps in interpreting the study findings by demonstrating that the information was obtained from participants with diverse backgrounds, qualifications, and levels of work experience relevant to the study.

4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by gender

Respondents were asked to indicate their gender. This information helps to establish whether the perspectives of both male and female staff were represented in the study.

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Table 4.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	**15**	**60.0**
Female	**10**	**40.0**
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.1 presents the distribution of respondents by gender. The results show that out of the 25 respondents who participated in the study, 15 respondents (60%) were male while 10 respondents (40%) were female. This indicates that male respondents constituted the majority of the participants involved in the study, whereas female respondents accounted for a relatively smaller proportion. The higher participation of male respondents suggests that more men were engaged in records management and administrative responsibilities at Bagamoyo Municipal Council during the period of data collection. Nevertheless, the participation of female respondents demonstrates that both genders were represented in the study, thereby providing diverse opinions and experiences regarding paper records management practices and service delivery. The involvement of respondents from both genders enhanced the quality of information collected because records management activities are performed by both male and female employees within the Council.

These findings are consistent with the study by Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who observed that records management functions in many public institutions involve employees from both genders, although the level of participation may vary depending on the staffing structure of the institution. Similarly, Ngoepe and Saurombe (2020) argued that demographic characteristics such as gender are important in ensuring that research findings reflect the views of different groups of employees involved in records management activities.Therefore, the gender composition observed in this study indicates that the findings were obtained from respondents with diverse backgrounds and

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experiences, which strengthens the credibility and reliability of the study findings regarding effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

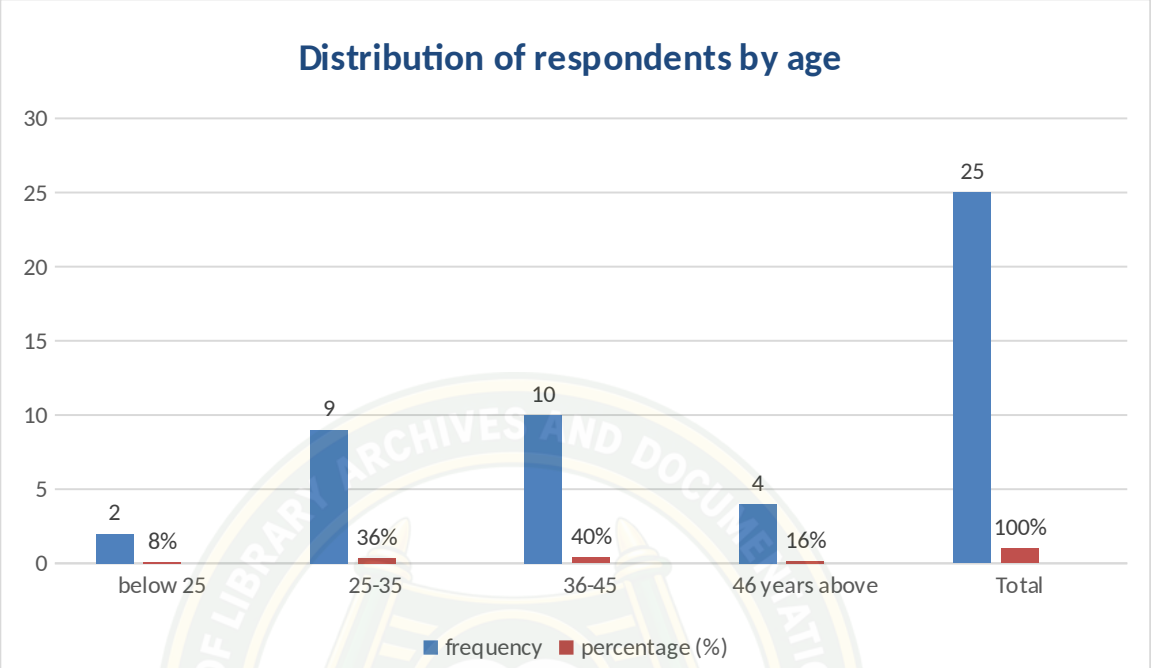
Furthermore, the gender distribution presented in Table 4.1 has practical implications for the specific objectives of this study on paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. Since records creation, classification, filing, storage, retrieval, and disposal are routine procedural tasks performed daily by registry and administrative staff, the representation of both male and female respondents in the sample suggests that the data collected reflect the operational realities experienced across different categories of staff who handle records regardless of gender. This is particularly relevant to the second and third objectives of the study, which sought to examine the effectiveness of existing records management systems and to identify the challenges affecting service delivery, since it reduces the likelihood that the findings are skewed toward the experience or perception of a single gender group. Nonetheless, the comparatively lower representation of female respondents (40%) relative to their male counterparts (60%) suggests that records management and related administrative functions at the Council may still be dominated by male staff, an observation that could be explored further in future studies examining gender distribution within records management cadres in local government authorities.

4.2.2 Distribution of respondents by age

Respondents were also asked to indicate their age category. Age is associated with experience and may influence how staff perceive and interact with records management practices.

Figure 4.3 Distribution of respondents by age

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Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.2 presents the distribution of respondents by age category. The age distribution demonstrates that the largest proportion of respondents, 10 (40%), were aged between 36 and 45 years, followed by 9 respondents (36%) who were between 25 and 35 years. Furthermore, 4 respondents (16%) were aged 46 years and above, while the smallest proportion, 2 respondents (8%), were below 25 years of age. These findings indicate that the majority of respondents were within the economically active and professionally experienced age groups of 25 to 45 years. This suggests that most respondents had accumulated sufficient work experience and practical knowledge of paper records management practices, enabling them to provide reliable information regarding records creation, classification, filing, storage, retrieval, and disposal practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.The relatively small proportion of respondents below 25 years may indicate that fewer newly employed staff were involved in records management activities compared to employees with longer working experience.

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The findings further imply that respondents within the age groups of 25–45 years are more likely to have gained practical exposure to records management systems and administrative procedures through their day-to-day responsibilities. Their participation therefore strengthened the quality of the information collected because they were familiar with the existing records management practices and the challenges affecting service delivery within the Council. The inclusion of respondents aged 46 years and above also enriched the study by incorporating views from employees with extensive institutional experience and long-term knowledge of records management practices.

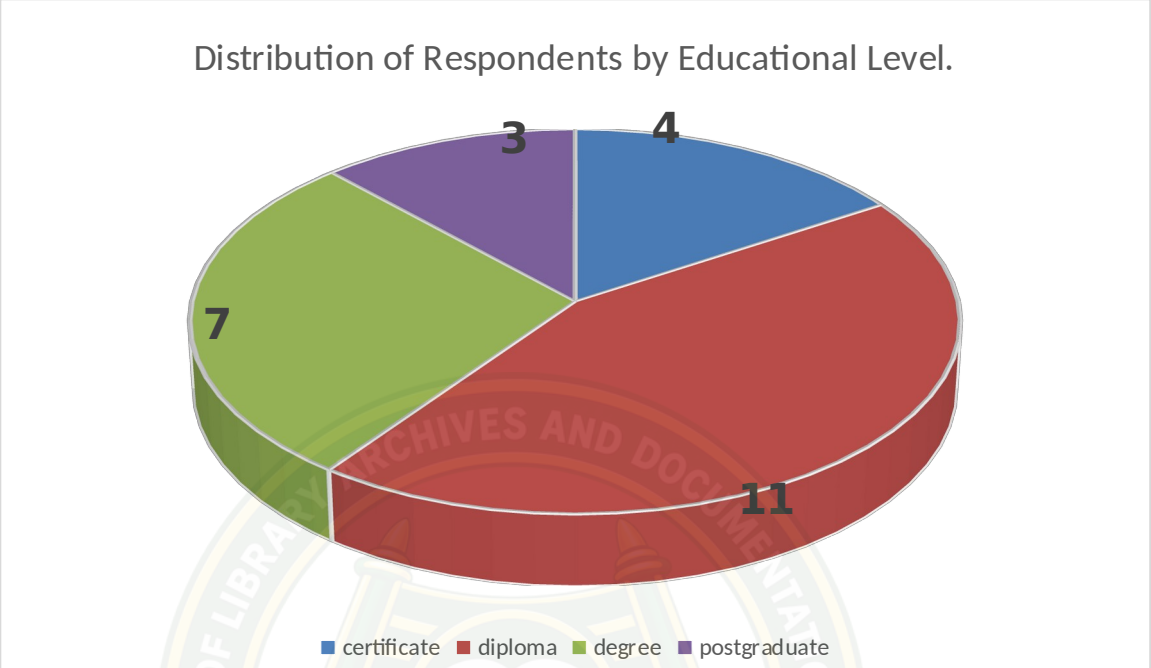
These findings are consistent with Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who observed that experienced employees play a significant role in ensuring effective records management because they possess practical knowledge acquired through continuous involvement in records creation, maintenance, retrieval, and preservation. Similarly, Ngoepe and Saurombe (2020) argued that employees with adequate work experience are better positioned to understand records management policies and procedures and are therefore able to contribute more effectively to improved service delivery.

4.2.3 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level.

Respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of education attained. This information was collected to determine the educational background of the respondents and to establish whether they possessed the necessary knowledge and competence to provide reliable information regarding paper records management practices. The results are presented in chart below

Figure 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level.

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Source: Field Data, 2026

Figure 4.4 illustrates the distribution of respondents according to their highest level of education attained. The findings indicate that the largest proportion of respondents, 11 (44%), possessed diploma qualifications, followed by 7 respondents (28%) who held degree qualifications. In addition, 4 respondents (16%) had certificate qualifications, while the smallest proportion, 3 respondents (12%), had postgraduate qualifications. These findings demonstrate that the majority of respondents had attained at least diploma level of education, indicating that they possessed the academic qualifications necessary to understand records management practices and the administrative procedures related to service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

The findings further suggest that the respondents were sufficiently educated to provide reliable and informed responses concerning the existing paper records management practices, the effectiveness of records management systems, and the challenges affecting records management within the Council. The presence of respondents with certificate, diploma, degree, and postgraduate qualifications also indicates that information was

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collected from employees with different educational backgrounds, thereby enriching the quality of the data gathered.

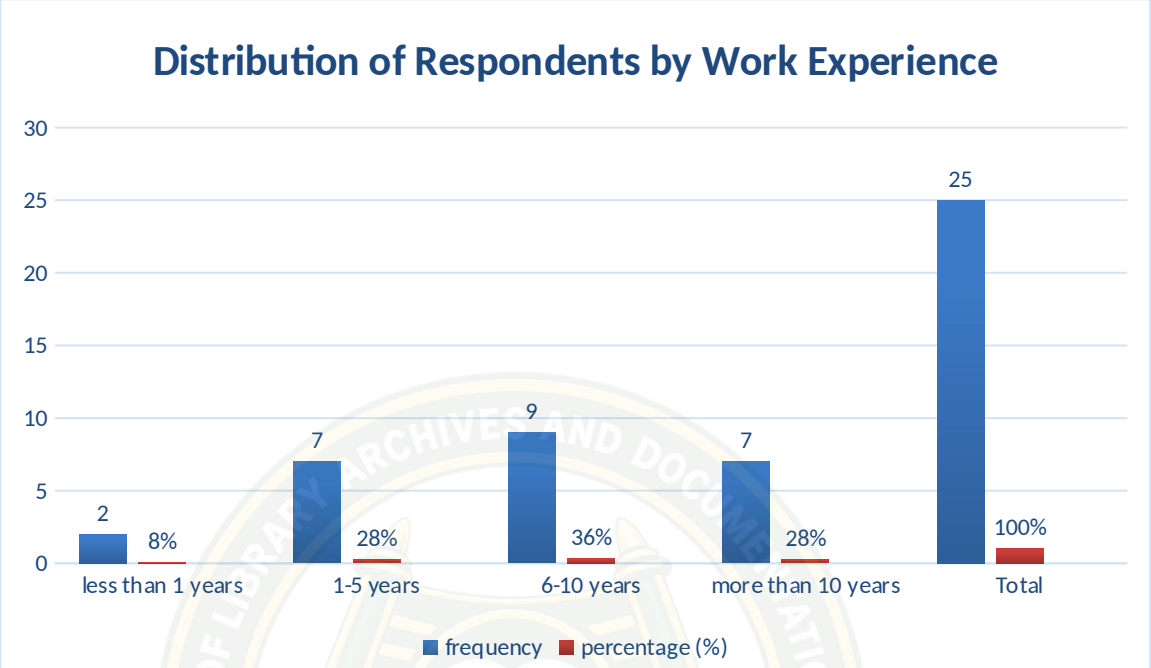
These findings are consistent with Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who observed that effective records management in public institutions depends largely on personnel with adequate educational qualifications and professional competencies.Therefore, the educational profile of respondents presented in Figure 4.4 indicates that the study obtained information from respondents with adequate academic qualifications, enhancing the credibility and reliability of the findings on effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

4.4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience

Respondents were further asked to indicate how long they had worked at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, since length of service is associated with familiarity with institutional records systems

Figure 4.5: Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience

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Source: Field Data, 2026

Figure 4.5 presents the distribution of respondents according to their length of service at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The distribution of work experience that the largest proportion of respondents, 9 (36%), had worked at the Council for a period of between 6 and 10 years, while 7 respondents (28%) had worked for 1 to 5 years and an equal number, 7 respondents (28%), had served for more than 10 years. Only 2 respondents (8%) had less than 1 year of work experience. These results indicate that the majority of respondents, accounting for 92% of the sample, had accumulated more than one year of service at the Council, suggesting that most participants possessed sufficient institutional knowledge and practical exposure to the paper records management practices under investigation.

The distribution further implies that the study benefited from the perspectives of long-serving employees who have witnessed the evolution of records management practices at the Council over time, as well as from relatively newer staff whose views provide a fresh perspective on current challenges. The substantial proportion of respondents with 6 to 10

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years and more than 10 years of experience, which together constitute 64% of the sample, suggests that the findings on existing records management practices, their effectiveness, and the challenges facing the Council are grounded in the observations of employees who are well acquainted with the day-to-day handling, storage, and retrieval of paper-based records, as well as with the historical and procedural changes that have taken place within the registry system. This depth of institutional memory strengthens the reliability of the qualitative and quantitative data collected in relation to the second and third objectives of the study.

These findings are consistent with Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who noted that length of service is a critical factor in records management research because employees with longer tenure are more familiar with the procedures, challenges, and historical development of records systems within an organization. Similarly, Ngoepe and Saurombe (2020) observed that institutional experience enhances employees' ability to identify gaps and inefficiencies in records management systems, thereby providing more credible insights into areas requiring improvement.

4.3 Existing Paper Records Management Practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council

This section addresses the first specific objective of the study, which sought to identify the existing paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. Understanding the nature and scope of current records management activities is fundamental to assessing the adequacy of the Council's information handling systems.

4.3.1 Practices Currently Used in Managing Records

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Respondents were asked to indicate which paper records management practices were currently used at the Council, with multiple responses permitted; hence percentages are computed against the sample size of 25 and totals exceed 100%.

Table 4.2: Existing Paper Records Management Practices.

Practices	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Creation and Registration of Records	**23**	**92.0**
Storage and Filing of Records	**21**	**84.0**
Classification and Indexing of Records	**18**	**72.0**
Retrieval and Access of Records	**15**	**60.0**
Disposal and Archiving of Records	**9**	**36.0**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Note: Percentages exceed 100% because respondents were allowed to provide more than one response.

Table 4.2 presents findings on the paper records management practices currently applied at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, based on multiple responses from the 25 respondents. The results show that Creation and Registration of Records was the most widely practiced activity, cited by 23 respondents (92.0%), followed closely by Storage and Filing of Records at 21 (84.0%). Classification and Indexing of Records was reported by 18 respondents (72.0%), while Retrieval and Access of Records was cited by 15 (60.0%). Disposal and Archiving of Records recorded the lowest frequency, cited by only 9 respondents (36.0%). These findings indicate that while the Council performs the early stages of the records lifecycle creation, registration, storage and filing fairly consistently,

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later-stage practices such as classification, retrieval and especially disposal receive comparatively less attention.

This pattern is consistent with the Records Life Cycle Theory (Section 2.4.1), which holds that records must be properly managed at every stage creation, maintenance and use, and disposition for an organization to realize the full benefits of an effective records management system. The relatively high emphasis on creation and storage, contrasted with the comparatively low attention to disposal and archiving (36.0%), suggests that Bagamoyo Municipal Council's records management practices are concentrated at the front end of the lifecycle, leaving records to accumulate without adequate appraisal, retention scheduling or disposal.

The Records Management Officer noted that practices such as creation and registration, classification and indexing, and filing and storage in physical cabinets were followed at the Council. However, these practices were not consistently applied across departments, sometimes resulting in misplaced or poorly organized records.

These findings are consistent with Ngoepe (2014), who observed that many municipal councils create and store paper records diligently but fail to implement corresponding retention and disposal schedules, resulting in the progressive accumulation of obsolete records. Similarly, Penn, Pennix and Coulson (1994) argue that sound records management requires equal attention to all lifecycle stages creation, classification, filing, storage, retrieval, appraisal, retention and disposal since neglect of any single stage undermines the overall integrity of the system.

4.4 Effectiveness of Paper Records Management Systems in Supporting Service Delivery

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This section addresses the second specific objective, which aimed to examine the effectiveness of paper records management systems in supporting service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The section presents findings on the types of systems in use, respondents' assessment of their overall effectiveness, and the specific ways in which records management contributes to service delivery.

4.4.1 Types of Records Management Systems Used

Respondents were asked to indicate the type(s) of records management systems used at the Council, with multiple responses permitted.

Table 4.3: Records Management Systems Used

Systems	Frequency(n)	Percentage(%)
Alphabetical	**5**	**20 .0**
Numerical	**5**	**20.0**
Alphanumerical	**10**	**40.0**
Chronological	**5**	**20.0**
Total	**25**	**100%**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.3 presents the records management systems used at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The findings show that the Alphanumerical system was the most commonly used records management system, reported by 10 respondents (40.0%). Meanwhile, the Alphabetical, Numerical, and Chronological systems were each reported by 5 respondents

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(20.0%). These findings indicate that although different records management systems are used within the Council, the alphanumerical system is the dominant approach for organizing and managing paper records.

These findings are consistent with ISO (2016), which emphasizes that records management systems should support systematic classification, organization, and timely retrieval of records throughout their lifecycle.

During the interview,

The Records Management Officer explained that the Council mainly uses the alphanumerical filing system because it facilitates systematic filing and easier retrieval of records.

It can therefore be concluded that Bagamoyo Municipal Council has established records management systems, with the alphanumerical system being the most widely used. However, greater standardization across departments would improve consistency in records management and enhance service delivery.

4.4.2 Overall Effectiveness of Records Management Systems

Respondents were asked to assess the overall effectiveness of the paper records management systems in supporting service delivery, measured on a four-point scale ranging from Very Effective to Ineffective.

Table 4.4: Effectiveness of Records Management Systems

Effectiveness	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Security	**2**	**8.0**
Accuracy	**7**	**28.0**

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Classification and organization	**11**	**44.0**
Compliance	**5**	**20.0**
Total	**25**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.4 presents respondents' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of paper records management systems in supporting service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The findings showed that classification and organization was identified by the majority of respondents, with 11 respondents (44.0%), followed by accuracy, which was reported by 7 respondents (28.0%). In addition, compliance was mentioned by 5 respondents (20.0%), while security was the least mentioned aspect, cited by only 2 respondents (8.0%).

The findings suggested that respondents perceived classification and organization as the most important aspect contributing to the effectiveness of paper records management systems. This implies that properly classified and well-organized paper records enabled employees to retrieve information quickly, reduced delays in accessing files, and improved administrative efficiency, thereby enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The relatively high percentage also indicates that respondents considered systematic organization of records to be the foundation of an effective records management system.

These findings are consistent with ISO (2016), which emphasizes that effective records management systems depend on proper classification, organization, and accurate maintenance of records to facilitate efficient retrieval, reliable information, and improved organizational performance. ISO further notes that records managed systematically throughout their lifecycle contribute significantly to accountability and effective service delivery.

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The findings imply that enhancing the effectiveness of paper records management systems at Bagamoyo Municipal Council requires greater emphasis on proper classification and organization of records while maintaining accuracy, compliance, and adequate security measures. Strengthening these aspects would improve records accessibility, support timely decision-making, and ultimately enhance the quality of service delivery.

4.5 Challenges Facing Effective Paper Records Management Practices

This section addresses the third specific objective, which sought to find out the challenges facing effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. Findings draw on the open-ended questionnaire responses, the interview guide, and the observation checklist

Table 4.5: Challenges Facing Effective Records Management

Challenges	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Lack of Professional Training	**21**	**84.0**
Poor Storage Infrastructure	**19**	**76.0**
Limited Financial Resources	**18**	**72.0**
Absence of Retention Schedules	**16**	**64.0**
Outdated Filing Systems	**15**	**60.0**
Weak Policy and Legal Implementation	**13**	**52.0**
Large Volume of Records	**11**	**44.0**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Note: Percentages exceed 100% because respondents were allowed to provide more than one response.

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Table 4. reveals a broad and interconnected set of challenges undermining effective records management at the Council. Lack of Professional Training emerged as the most significant challenge, identified by 21 (84.0%) of respondents. During interviews, several records management officers acknowledged having been assigned to registry duties without formal induction, learning procedures informally by observing colleagues who were themselves untrained, a cycle that perpetuates inconsistent practice. Poor Storage Infrastructure was the second most cited challenge at 19 (76.0%), a finding strongly corroborated by the observation checklist, which recorded overcrowded storage rooms with files stacked on floors and in corridors due to insufficient shelving. Limited Financial Resources followed at 18 (72.0%), reflecting the chronic underfunding of records functions in favour of frontline service expenditures. Absence of Retention Schedules (64.0%) and Outdated Filing Systems (60.0%) further compound the storage and retrieval problems already identified in Section 4.4.1, while Weak Policy and Legal Implementation (52.0%) and Large Volume of Records (44.0%) were reported as contributing, though comparatively less dominant, challenges.

These challenges mirror those documented extensively in the literature on records management in African public institutions. Asogwa (2012) and Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007) similarly identify inadequate training and poor storage infrastructure as the most persistent obstacles to effective records management in government institutions, arguing that without deliberate investment in staff capacity and physical facilities, registries remain vulnerable to disorganisation regardless of how well records are initially created and registered. Thurston (2015) makes a related point, observing that records personnel in many public institutions are appointed to registry duties on the basis of general administrative competence rather than specialised training, which leaves them ill-equipped to apply consistent classification, retention and disposal standards, a pattern directly reflected in the interview accounts of untrained officers learning informally from equally untrained colleagues, as discussed above.

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The Head of Department highlighted that the main challenges facing paper records management were limited storage space, damage from poor storage conditions, lack of modern technology, untrained staff, and inconsistent practices, recommending compact shelving, digitization, staff training, and enforcement of a clear records management policy.

Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) further argue that limited financial resources compound these problems by preventing institutions from acquiring adequate shelving, retention schedules and specialised staff, a pattern closely reflected in the findings of this study, where Limited Financial Resources was cited by 18 (72.0%) of respondents as a major challenge. Ngoepe (2014) similarly links weak policy and legal implementation, cited by 13 (52.0%) of respondents in this study, to the broader absence of enforced records management legislation in many local government authorities, where policies exist on paper but are rarely operationalised through binding institutional procedures or accountability mechanisms.

Overall, the findings under the third objective imply that effective paper records management at Bagamoyo Municipal Council cannot be achieved without addressing the institutional challenges identified in this study. Investing in professional training, improving storage infrastructure, providing adequate financial resources, implementing records retention schedules, and strengthening compliance with records management policies would significantly improve records management practices and contribute to more efficient, accountable, and responsive service delivery.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the study entitled "An Investigation of Effective Paper Records Management Practices in Enhancing Service Delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council." The study was conducted to examine how paper records are managed in order to enhance service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To identify the existing paper records management practices in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

ii. To examine the effectiveness of paper records management systems in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

iii. To find out the challenges facing effective paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

The study successfully achieved these objectives through questionnaires, an interview guide, and an observation checklist. Primary and secondary data were collected from administrative officers, records management officers, department heads, and action officers at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The findings formed the basis for the summary, conclusions, and recommendations presented in this chapter.

5.1 Summary

The summary of this study is presented according to the study objectives as follows:

5.1.1 Existing Paper Records Management Practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council

The first objective identified the existing paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The findings revealed that records creation and registration, records storage and filing, records classification and indexing, records

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retrieval and access, and records disposal and archiving are the major practices applied at the Council. Records creation and registration emerged as the most commonly practiced activity, indicating that the Council recognizes the importance of documenting official transactions and communications. However, the study established that while records are regularly created and stored, less emphasis is placed on classification, retrieval, and disposal, suggesting that records management activities are concentrated on the initial stages of the records lifecycle while the later stages receive insufficient attention.

5.1.2 Effectiveness of Paper Records Management Systems in Enhancing Service Delivery

The second objective examined the effectiveness of paper records management systems in supporting service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The findings indicated that the existing systems are only moderately effective. Although the systems allow staff to create, store, and retrieve records, they do not consistently support fast, accurate, and reliable access to information. Delays in locating files, inconsistencies in filing practices, and the absence of standardized retrieval procedures were found to reduce the effectiveness of service delivery, even though the Council possesses a functional records management system.

5.1.3 Challenges Facing Effective Paper Records Management Practices

The third objective established the major challenges facing effective paper records management at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The study found that inadequate professional training, poor storage infrastructure, limited financial resources, absence of retention schedules, outdated filing systems, weak implementation of records management policies, and the growing volume of records were the major challenges affecting effective records management. These challenges were found to reduce records accessibility, increase the risk of records loss, and contribute to delays in service delivery.

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5.2 Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that effective paper records management plays a fundamental role in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. The study established that although the Council has adopted basic records management practices, including records creation, registration, storage, and filing, it has not fully implemented a comprehensive records lifecycle approach, as critical functions such as classification, retrieval, retention scheduling, and disposal remain inadequately managed.

The study further concludes that the effectiveness of service delivery depends heavily on the quality of records management systems. Although the current systems support routine administrative operations, they are not sufficiently effective to guarantee timely access to information, efficient decision-making, and high-quality public service delivery. Delays in retrieval and inconsistent filing practices continue to undermine accountability and responsiveness to public needs.

Furthermore, the study concludes that the challenges affecting records management at Bagamoyo Municipal Council are largely institutional and require strategic intervention. Without adequate professional training, proper storage facilities, sufficient financial resources, and stronger policy implementation, the Council will continue to experience difficulties in managing records effectively. Therefore, the management of Bagamoyo Municipal Council should strengthen institutional capacity, allocate adequate financial resources, and enforce records management policies to ensure effective records management and improved service delivery.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are based on the findings of this study and are intended to improve paper records management practices for enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council.

5.3.1 Professional Training and Capacity Building

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Bagamoyo Municipal Council should establish continuous training programmes, workshops, and seminars for all staff involved in records management. Continuous professional development will improve staff competencies in records creation, classification, retention scheduling, retrieval, and preservation.

5.3.2 Improvement of Records Storage Facilities

The Council should invest in adequate records storage facilities by expanding storage rooms, improving ventilation, and providing appropriate shelving systems, filing cabinets, and preservation materials. This will protect records from physical deterioration and improve their accessibility.

5.3.3 Development and Implementation of Retention Schedules

The Council should develop and implement comprehensive records retention and disposal schedules. This will help reduce congestion in registries, improve records retrieval, and ensure that records of long-term value are preserved appropriately.

5.3.4 Standardization of Classification and Filing Systems

The Council should adopt a uniform records classification and filing system across all departments. Standardization will improve consistency, facilitate records retrieval, and strengthen information sharing within the institution.

5.3.5 Strengthening Policy Compliance and Financial Support

Management should ensure full compliance with records management laws, regulations, and institutional policies through regular monitoring and compliance audits. In addition, the Council should allocate adequate financial resources to support staff training, storage infrastructure, preservation materials, and modernization of records management systems.

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5.4 Areas for Further Studies

This study focused on assessing effective paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council. However, the study did not cover all aspects of records management. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct studies in the following areas:

i. Comparative studies examining paper records management practices across multiple municipal councils and Local Government Authorities in Tanzania.

ii. Assessment of the feasibility and effectiveness of transitioning from paper-based to hybrid or fully electronic records management systems in Tanzanian municipal councils.

iii. Investigation of the relationship between records management quality and specific service delivery outcomes, such as processing time for permits, licences and social welfare applications.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTINAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES AND STAFF

SECTION A

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Dear respondent

My name is Francis Ezrael Mwakasungula, I am a Diploma student from School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS), conducting a research titled "AN INVESTIGATION OF EFFECTIVE PAPER RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN ENHANCING SERVICE DELIVERY AT BAGAMOYO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL."

Kindly assist by filling this form by putting a tick in the bracket or comments in the space provided to the best of your knowledge.

After filling in the form please hand it over to the researcher after filling it.

Please you are kindly requested to answer these questions.

1. What is your gender?
    a) Male ( )
    b) Female ( )
2. What is your age?
    a) Below 25 ( )
    b) 25-35 ( )
    c) 36-45 ( )
    d) 46 and Above ( )
3. What is your level of education?
    a) Certificate ( )
    b) Diploma ( )
    c) Degree ( )

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d) Postgraduate ( )

4. How long have you been working at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

a) Less than 1 year ( )

b) 1-5 years ( )

c) 6-10 years ( )

d) More than 10 years ( )

5. What are the existing paper records management practices used at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

a) Creation and Registration of Records ( )

b) Classification and Indexing of Records ( )

c) Filing and Storage of Records ( )

d) Retrieval and Access of Records ( )

e) Disposal and Archiving of Records ( )

6. How do you rate the current paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

a) Very Good ( )

b) Good ( )

c) Fair ( )

d) Poor ( )

7. What paper records management systems are used to manage records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

a) Alphabetical ( )

b) Numerical ( )

c) alphanumerical ( )

d) chronological ( )

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8. How effective are the paper records management systems in supporting service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

   a) Very Effective ( )

   b) Effective ( )

   c) Moderately Effective ( )

   d) Ineffective ( )

9. How does effective paper records management contribute to service delivery?

   a) Faster Access to Records and Information ( )

   b) Improved Accountability and Transparency ( )

   c) Reduced Administrative Delays ( )

   d) Better Decision-Making by Management ( )

   e) Enhanced Public Trust in the Council ( )

SECTION B

OPEN ENDED QUESTION

Dear Respondent,

Kindly assist by providing detailed and honest answers to the following open-ended questions.

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Can you describe, in your own words, the paper records management practices currently in place at Bagamoyo Municipal Council — how they work, who is responsible, and how records are typically handled from creation to storage?

.....

..

.....

..

.....

What difficulties or obstacles have you personally encountered — or observed — when managing paper records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, and how have these affected the quality-of-service delivery?

.....

..

.....

..

.....

In your view, what changes or strategies would most significantly improve how paper records are managed at Bagamoyo Municipal Council, and why do you believe those approaches would be effective?

.....

.....

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT STAFF.

1. What are the existing paper records management practices used at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

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2. How effective are the paper records management systems in managing records at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

3. What are the challenges faced by Bagamoyo Municipal Council in managing paper records?

4. What are the recommended strategies for improving paper records management practices in enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

5. How does the current level of staff training and professional competency in records management affect the quality of paper records handling and service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

6. How do paper records management practices at Bagamoyo Municipal Council contribute to improving service delivery to the public?

7. In your opinion, what improvements can be made to paper records management practices to enhance service delivery at Bagamoyo Municipal Council?

APPENDIX III

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

OBSERVER INFORMATION

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Observer Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructionsi.

i.Tick YES if the condition/practice is observed and NO if not observed.

ii.Use the Comments/Notes column to record additional observations

Item to be Observed	**Yes**	**No**	**Comment**
Borrowed files are returned within an acceptable time			
Files are clearly labelled with consistent reference codes			
The storage room is clean, dry, and free from moisture			
Staff have adequate knowledge of records management procedures			
A retention schedule exists to guide how long records are kept			
Files are stored properly on shelves and not left loose on floors or desks			
Outgoing records are assigned reference numbers before dispatch			

APPENDIX IV

TIME SCHEDULE SHOWING

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Activities	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
Writing of proposal								
Submission of proposal								
Collection of data from the field the questionnaires								
Data processing and interpretation ready for report drafting								
Submission of the report at SLADS								

APPENDIX V

RESEARCH BUDGETING

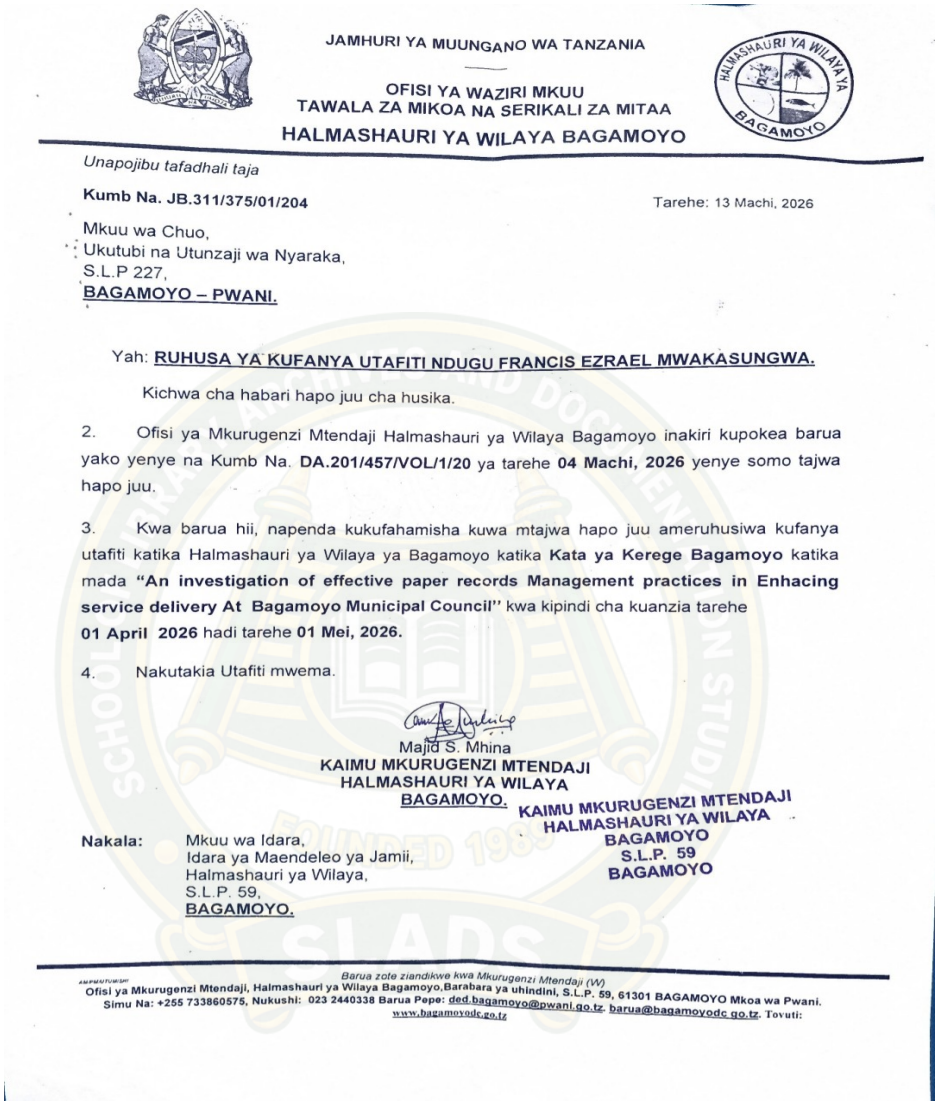
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ACTIVITIES	COST ANALYSIS	TOTAL COST
Transport	2500 × 10	25,000
Food	3000 × 10	30,000
Stationary **1.Rule paper reams** **2.typing paper**	 8000 × 2 10000 × 2	 16,000 20,000
Secretarial service **1.Computer typing 150 pages** **2.Photocopying service** **3.Binding four copies**	 1000 × 50 50 × 50 × 4 copies 25,000 × 2	 50,000 10,000 50,000
Telephone and internet service	2,500 × 4	10000
Total	**Tsh, 211,000**	

APPENDIX VI

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APPROVAL LETTER



JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

OFISI YA WAZIRI MKUU
TAWALA ZA MIKOA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA BAGAMOYO

Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb Na. JB.311/375/01/204 Tarehe: 13 Machi, 2026

Mkuu wa Chuo,
Ukutubi na Utunzaji wa Nyaraka,
S.L.P 227,
BAGAMOYO – PWANI.

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI NDUGU FRANCIS EZRAEL MWAKASUNGWA.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yako yenye na Kumb Na. **DA.201/457/VOL/1/20** ya tarehe **04 Machi, 2026** yenye somo tajwa hapo juu.

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kuwa mtajwa hapo juu ameruhusiwa kufanya utafiti katika Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Kata ya Kerege Bagamoyo** katika mada **"An investigation of effective paper records Management practices in Enhacing service delivery At Bagamoyo Municipal Council"** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **01 April 2026** hadi tarehe **01 Mei, 2026.**

4. Nakutakia Utafiti mwema.

Majid S. Mhina
KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO.

KAIMU MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO
S.L.P. 59
BAGAMOYO

Nakala: Mkuu wa Idara,
Idara ya Maendeleo ya Jamii,
Halmashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P. 59,
BAGAMOYO.

Barua zote ziandikwe kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji (W)
Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji, Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo,Barabara ya uhindini, S.L.P. 59, 61301 BAGAMOYO Mkoa wa Pwani.
Simu Na: +255 733860575, Nukushi: 023 2440338 Barua Pepe: ded.bagamoyo@pwani.go.tz, barua@bagamoyodc.go.tz. Tovuti: www.bagamoyodc.go.tz

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