THE SCHOOL OF LIBRARY ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES (SLADS)

A RESEARCH REPORT ON:

AN ASSESSMENT OF APPLICABILITY OF RECORD CONTROL TOOLS IN HANDLING OF RECORD IN PUBLIC ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY OF BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL.

BY:

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A Research Report Submitted at the School of Library Archives and Documentation Studies as Partial Fulfilment for Award of Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the School of Library Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) a research report titled "An Assessment of Applicability of Record Control Tools in Handling of Record in Public Organization: A Case Study of Bagamoyo District Council", This report is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

Supervisor Name, Sir Lyimo.

Signature: ……

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All Source of information used in this study have been duly acknowledged through appropriate citations and references.

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Lastly, while I have received support from many individuals, I remain solely responsible for any shortcomings that may be found in this report.

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DECLARATION.

This work is dedicated to my beloved parents, Mr. Valentino Madete and Mrs. Jerida Joseph Mbaya, whose love, prayers, sacrifice, and unwavering support have been the foundation of my academic journey. Their encouragement and belief in me have given me the strength and determination to pursue and complete this study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDC – Bagamoyo District Council

ERMS - Electronic Records Management System

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

ISO – International Organization for Standardization

LGA – Local Government Authority

EDS – Electronic Document and Records Management System

ICA – International Council on Archives

RAMD – Records and Archives Management Department

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

RIM - Records and Information Management

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ABSTRACT

Study assessed the applicability of record control tools in the handling of records at Bagamoyo District Council, a public organization in Tanzania. The study was motivated by the persistent gap between the formal adoption of manual record control tools, such as file movement registers This, tracking registers, correspondence registers, and file indexes, and their actual application in day-to-day registry operations, a gap that resulted in delayed file retrieval, weakened transparency and accountability, and wastage of organizational resources. Guided by the Records Life Cycle Theory and the Accountability Theory, the study pursued four specific objectives: to identify the types of record control tools commonly used, to examine how these tools were applied in handling records, to evaluate their effectiveness in promoting efficiency, transparency and accountability, and to identify the challenges affecting their proper application at the Council. The study adopted a case study research design and a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques. Data were collected from a sample of 27 respondents, comprising Records Officers, Registry Staff, and Administrative Staff, selected through purposive and Census (total population) technique**,** using questionnaires, interviews, 25 questionnaires were fully completed and analyzed. Findings revealed that the Incoming Correspondence Register was the most commonly used tool (40%), applied mainly through movement census and circulation audits (40%) and the tracking of file movement (32%). Record control tools were rated as very effective or effective by 76% of respondents in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability. However, their application was constrained by a shortage of storage facilities (36%), insufficient financial resources (32%), and inadequate staff training (20%). The study concludes that although record control tools were generally effective, resource-related challenges limited their full applicability, and recommends that the Council expand storage facilities, allocate adequate funds for records management, and conduct regular staff training, while policy makers strengthen national guidelines on records management in public organizations.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

1.0 Introduction

This chapter covered the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and the scope and limitations of the study. The study was concerned with the applicability of records control tools in handling public records in public organizations.

1.1 Background to the Study

Records control tools are systematic instruments and mechanisms used to regulate the creation, classification, storage, retrieval, tracking, retention, and disposal of records within an organization. These tools include file classification systems, file registers, indexing systems, retention schedules, tracking logs, file census, electronic document and records management systems (EDRMS), and disposal schedules. Their importance lies in ensuring that records remain authentic, reliable, usable, and accessible throughout their lifecycle (ISO 15489-1, 2016).

In public organizations, records are not merely administrative documents; they are evidence of decisions, policies, rights, obligations, and service delivery processes. Records control tools help maintain order and prevent chaos in records handling. Without proper control tools, records can easily be misplaced, altered, delayed, or even lost completely. Effective control tools ensure accountability, transparency, efficiency in service delivery, and protection of citizens' rights (ICA, 2020). The development of these tools has followed a distinct trajectory at the global, regional, and national levels, as presented in the following three sub-sections.

The historical development of records control tools dates back to ancient civilizations. Around 3000 BCE, Mesopotamians used clay tablets to document trade transactions and administrative activities. Similarly, by 2500 BCE, Ancient Egypt utilized papyrus to record governmental and religious matters. However, during this period, structured

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records control tools such as classification schemes or retention schedules had not yet been developed (Shepherd and Yeo, 2017). Between 1100 and 1700, European monarchies and churches began establishing centralized archives and registry systems, introducing early indexing tools and registry books to track correspondence and legal documents marking the beginning of systematic records control (Millar, 2017). The Industrial Revolution (1800–1900) significantly transformed records management, as the expansion of bureaucracy and commerce increased documentation; in 1893, the vertical filing cabinet was introduced in the United States, revolutionizing file storage and classification methods (Franks, 2018).

Following World War II (1945), governments experienced rapid growth in documentation. Between 1950 and 1970, records management emerged as a professional discipline, and structured tools such as retention schedules, classification schemes, and disposal procedures became standardized (Shepherd, and yeo 2017). A major global milestone occurred in 2001 when the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) introduced ISO 15489, the first international standard for records management, establishing principles for authenticity, reliability, usability, and lifecycle control of records. The standard was revised in 2016 (ISO 15489-1:2016) to strengthen digital records management requirements (ISO, 2016). From 2010 to 2024, digital transformation accelerated the adoption of Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS), metadata systems, cloud storage, and automated retention tools. However, these advancements also introduced challenges related to cybersecurity, authenticity, and long-term digital preservation (Duranti and Rogers, 2019)

In Africa, the development of records control tools was closely linked to colonial administration. During the colonial period (1880–1960), European powers introduced registry systems, file numbering systems, and centralized record offices to manage administrative activities. However, these systems were primarily designed for administrative control rather than citizen accountability (Ngulube, 2015).

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Following independence in the 1960s, many African governments inherited colonial record keeping systems. Between 1970 and 1990, records management in many public institutions faced serious challenges, including overcrowded registries, absence of retention schedules, and limited professional expertise (Ngoepe, 2019). Between 1990 and 2010, governance reforms across Africa emphasized accountability, transparency, and public sector efficiency. Several countries developed national records management policies and began modernizing their records control tools, with the integration of electronic systems gradually starting during this period (Ngulube, 2018). From 2010 to 2024, many African governments implemented Electronic Document and Records Management Systems (EDRMS) as part of e-government initiatives. However, studies conducted between 2015 and 2023 indicated that applicability challenges remained due to limited ICT infrastructure, financial constraints, and inadequate professional training (Ngoepe, 2019).

Records control tools in Tanzania evolved through colonial and post-independence reforms. During the German colonial period (1885–1919), basic administrative records were maintained primarily for taxation and land control, while structured records control tools were limited. Under British administration (1919–1961), centralized registry systems, subject classification methods, and file numbering systems were introduced. These systems later formed the foundation of Tanzania's current public registry structure (Ngulube, 2015).

After independence in 1961, Tanzania retained the colonial registry system. However, between 1970 and 1990, the rapid expansion of government institutions resulted in increased records accumulation, poor storage conditions, and weak retention practices. A major legal reform occurred in 2002 when the Government enacted the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002, later amended in 2007. The Act formally required public institutions to implement standardized classification systems, retention schedules, and disposal procedures under the supervision of the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD) (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002). From 2010

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onwards, Tanzania began implementing e-government systems. Between 2015 and 2024, initiatives such as the Government e-Office system were introduced to improve electronic records tracking and workflow management. Despite these reforms, challenges related to practical applicability, ICT limitations, and compliance monitoring persisted at the institutional level (Ngulube, 2015).

Bagamoyo District Council, as a Local Government Authority operating under this national legal and policy framework, was required to implement standardized records control tools, including file movement registers, tracking registers, correspondence registers, and file indexes, in accordance with the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002. Despite the existence of this national framework and the formal adoption of these tools within the Council's registry, the extent to which they were practically applied, consistently maintained, and effectively utilized in the day-to-day handling of records at Bagamoyo District Council had not been sufficiently documented, a gap consistent with similar assessment of record handling practices in other local government authorities (Malekani, 2023). Therefore, this study was conducted to assess the applicability of records control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Records management is a fundamental function in public organizations because it ensures proper documentation of decisions, transactions, and communications that support accountability, continuity of services, and compliance with regulatory frameworks (Creswell,2018). At Bagamoyo District Council, manual records control tools such as file movement registers, tracking registers, incoming and outgoing correspondence registers, file opening registers, and file indexes were formally adopted to provide structured mechanisms for managing records effectively (ISO, 2016). Ideally, these tools facilitate timely retrieval, monitor the movement of documents, prevent loss or misplacement of files, and maintain an auditable trail of correspondence and administrative actions.

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In practice, however, preliminary observations at Bagamoyo District Council indicated that registry and administrative staff experienced delays in retrieving files, difficulties in tracing the movement of documents between offices, and informal complaints regarding correspondence that was recorded late or not recorded at all. Similar to patterns reported in other Tanzanian public institutions (Mosha, 2019), registers at the Council were not consistently updated, file movements were not always adequately recorded, and tracking mechanisms were, in some cases, maintained more as a formality than as functional control systems. Despite the widespread establishment of these tools in policy and administrative manuals, it remained unclear whether they were consistently applied, correctly maintained, and effectively integrated into the daily records handling practices of the Council (Chinyio, 2017).

This gap between the intended purpose of record control tools and their actual day-to-day utilization constituted the central problem addressed by this study. In essence, the problem was not the absence of record control tools at Bagamoyo District Council, but rather the uncertainty surrounding their practical applicability and the effectiveness of their implementation in daily registry operations (ICA, 2020). Where this gap existed, several consequences followed, including delays in decision-making and service delivery as officers spent excessive time searching for misplaced documents; weakened transparency and accountability, which made it difficult for the Council to respond to audits or verify past actions; and wastage of organizational resources arising from inefficient use of registers and tracking tools (Creswell, 2018).

The consequences of ineffective application of records control tools were significant. Poor file management resulted in delays in decision-making and public service delivery because officers spent more time searching for misplaced documents. Loss or misplacement of records undermined transparency and accountability, making it difficult for organizations to respond to audits, verify previous actions, or resolve disputes (Creswell, 2018). Inefficient use of registers and tracking tools also wasted

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organizational resources, reduced staff productivity, and increased administrative costs associated with record retrieval and storage.

Ultimately, when records control tools were not practically applicable and properly utilized, the integrity of records management systems was compromised. It was against this background that this study sought to assess the applicability of record control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council. The study aimed to establish the extent to which these tools were practically applied in daily operations, evaluate their effectiveness in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability, and identify the challenges that limited their proper application within the Council.

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective is to assess the applicability of records control tools in handling of record in an organization.

I.3.2 Specific Objective

i. To identify the types of record control tools commonly used in Bagamoyo district council.

ii. To examine how record control tools are applied in handling records in Bagamoyo district council.

iii. To evaluate the effectiveness of record control tools in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability.

iv. To identify challenges that affect the proper application of record control tools in Bagamoyo district council.

1.4 Research Questions.

i. What types of record control tools are commonly used in Bagamoyo district council?

ii. How are record control tools applied in handling records in Bagamoyo district council?

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iii. How effective are record control tools in enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability?

iv. What challenges affect the proper application of record control tools in Bagamoyo district council.?

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

1.6.1 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study referred to the boundaries and focus areas that were covered by the research. The study was limited to evaluating how effectively record control tools, including rules, procedures, and systems, were applied in managing records at Bagamoyo District Council. The study focused on record handling practices within Bagamoyo District Council, which was a local government authority in Tanzania. The research assessed the applicability of record control tools in handling records within the public organization. The study involved employee from departments, including registry staff and record magement personnel of Bagamoyo District Council.

1.6.2 Limitations of the study

The study encountered several limitations that affected the research process and the extent to which the findings could be generalized. Firstly, time limitation was one of the challenges faced during the study. The research was conducted within a limited period, which made it difficult to observe the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of record control tools in records handling practices (Shepherd and yeo 2017). For example, the study might not have captured how these tools performed during different periods or over a longer duration, which could have provided more detailed information about their continuous effectiveness.

Secondly, the study was affected by resource constraints. There were limitations in terms of available resources, including time, financial resources, and access to some required information. For instance, the researcher could not involve a large number of respondents or access all necessary records, which might have limited the

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comprehensiveness of the findings. Therefore, the study was based on the available sample obtained from Bagamoyo District Council.

Thirdly, the study was conducted only at Bagamoyo District Council in Tanzania; therefore, the findings might not have been generalized to other organizations, districts, cities, or countries. This was because differences in administrative systems, organizational culture, laws, and available infrastructure could have influenced records management practices in different areas. The researcher selected Bagamoyo District Council as the study area because it was easily accessible and familiar to the researcher, which helped to reduce unnecessary research costs.

1.7 Significant of the study.

The study was beneficial in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of records management practices. The research enabled Bagamoyo District Council to understand the importance of applying effective record control tools in daily records operations. The study also benefited students, records practitioners, and other employees by improving their knowledge and understanding of challenges related to records management. Furthermore, the findings assisted the government in strengthening decision-making processes through improved access to reliable and well-managed records.

The findings of this study provided significant contributions to different stakeholders. Firstly, the study helped Bagamoyo District Council to identify strengths and weaknesses in its records management practices and provided possible measures for improving the application of record control tools. Secondly, policymakers and government authorities benefited from the findings because they gained insights into challenges affecting the implementation of record control tools and could use the information to improve policies, allocate resources, and provide training programs. Thirdly, academics and future researchers benefited from the study because it contributed to the existing knowledge and literature concerning the applicability of record control tools in Tanzanian public organizations. The study also increased awareness among public sector employees regarding the importance of effective use of

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record control tools in promoting accountability, transparency, and efficiency in public service delivery.

1.8 Definition of Key Term and Concept

1.8.1 Records

Records are documents or pieces of information created, received, and maintained by an organization in the course of its business, which serve as evidence of activities, decisions, and transactions (ISO 15489, 2016). They can be in paper, electronic, or other formats and are essential for accountability, transparency, and legal compliance within public organizations. (Matlala, 2020).

1.8.2 Control Tools

Control tools are instruments or mechanisms used to monitor, regulate, and manage the creation, Therefore handling of records within an organization (Shepherd, 2017). These tools ensure records are properly filed, tracked, retrieved, and disposed of according to organizational policies, promoting efficiency and accountability.

1.8.3 Registry

A registry is the central office, unit, or department within an organization responsible for receiving, recording, filing, and distributing incoming and outgoing documents (Ngoepe, 2019). It ensures that all records are properly documented, traceable, and directed to the appropriate officers, supporting transparency and compliance.

1.8.4 Tracking Control Tools

Tracking control tools are instruments used to monitor the location, movement, and status of files and records within an organization (Shepherd, 2017). They provide an audit trail that shows who has handled a record and when, preventing misplacement or loss and enhancing accountability.

1.8.5 File Movement Register

A file movement register is a log used to record the transfer of files between departments, offices, or officers (ISO 15489, 2016). It typically includes the file name,

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sender, receiver, date of transfer, and purpose, ensuring traceability and accountability in the handling of records.

1.8.6 Incoming Correspondence Register

An incoming correspondence register is a tool used to record all official letters, memos, or communications received by an organization (Shepherd, 2017). Each entry usually includes the date received, sender, reference number, subject, and assigned action, ensuring that all incoming communications are properly tracked and acted upon.

1.8.7 Outgoing Correspondence Register

An outgoing correspondence register records all letters or documents sent from an organization to external parties (ISO 15489, 2016). It contains details such as date sent, recipient, reference number, subject, and authorizing officer, providing evidence of dispatched communications and accountability.

1.8.8 File Census

A file census is a systematic inventory of all records or files within an organization or records office (Ngoepe, 2019). It helps to identify the number, location, condition, and retention status of records, facilitating proper storage, retrieval, and planning for transfer or disposal.

1.8.8 Transfer Slip

A transfer slip is a document used to authorize and record the movement of files or records from one office, department, or location to another (Shepherd and yeo 2017). It usually contains the file number, description, sender, receiver, date of transfer, and reason, providing proof of transfer and maintaining accountability

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW.

2.0 Introduction

A literature review is a systematic, critical, and analytical evaluation of existing scholarly works, theoretical frameworks, and empirical studies relevant to a research problem (Creswell, 2018). It involves not merely summarizing past research but also synthesizing findings, evaluating methodologies, identifying patterns, and detecting gaps in the existing body of knowledge. In this study, the focus is on the applicability of manual records control tools such as file movement registers, tracking registers, incoming and outgoing correspondence registers, file opening registers, and file indexes in Bagamoyo District Council, these tools are intended to enhance the systematic handling of records, ensure accountability, and support efficient service delivery in public organization.

2.1 Identification of Record Control Tools.

Record control tools are tangible mechanisms used to regulate, monitor and document the movement and handling of records within organizations. These tools are crucial in ensuring accountability, traceability and proper management of organizational information (Shepherd and yeo 2017). In public organizations, common record control tools include the incoming correspondence register, which documents all incoming letters and official communications including their reference numbers, dates, senders and the required actions; the outgoing correspondence register, which ensures that all dispatched documents are recorded and can be traced back, the file tracking register, which monitors the physical location of files within departments to prevent misplacement; the file movement register, which records transfers of files between offices or officers; the dispatch book, which tracks documents delivered outside the organization; and minute sheets, which capture decisions or actions taken on specific records within a file. ISO 15489 (2016) emphasizes that such tools are fundamental in

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promoting transparency, efficiency and reliability in recordkeeping practices, ensuring that records are preserved, accessible, and protected from unauthorized handling.

2.2 Extent of Application of Record Control Tools.

The applicability of record control tools is largely determined by the degree to which they are consistently implemented in daily operations. Although public organizations often have registers and tracking tools in place, studies reveal that their actual use is frequently inadequate (Ngoepe, 2014). For instance, an incoming correspondence register may exist on paper, but if staff fail to record all received documents accurately, critical files can be lost or delayed. Similarly, if a file tracking register is not regularly updated, locating physical files becomes difficult, resulting in operational inefficiencies. (Svärd 2017) highlight that effective application of record control tools requires trained personnel, management oversight, and routine supervision to ensure compliance. Therefore, understanding the extent of application is crucial in evaluating how these tools function in practice and whether they contribute to effective records handling in public institutions.

2.3 Effectiveness of Record Control Tools in Handling Records

Record control tools play an important role in improving the efficiency, security, accessibility, and accountability of records management practices in public organizations. When properly applied, these tools help organizations to maintain systematic control over records throughout their lifecycle. (Shepherd and Yeo 2017) emphasize that record control tools such as incoming and outgoing correspondence registers, file tracking registers, file movement registers, and dispatch books establish an audit trail that enables organizations to trace the location, movement, and responsibility associated with each record.

For instance, incoming correspondence registers assist records officers in recording received documents, assigning reference numbers, and ensuring that appropriate actions are taken within the required time. Similarly, file tracking and movement registers enable records personnel to identify the location of files and monitor their circulation

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among different offices, outgoing correspondence registers provide evidence of official communications sent by an organization, which supports transparency and accountability in administrative processes.

Furthermore, ISO 15489 (2016) emphasizes that effective records control systems contribute to the reliability, authenticity, integrity, and accessibility of records. These characteristics are essential in public organizations because records provide evidence for decision-making, legal compliance, and accountability. However, the effectiveness of record control tools depends on factors such as accuracy of information recorded, timely updating of registers, staff commitment, and continuous supervision. Therefore, proper utilization of record control tools is necessary to ensure effective handling and management of records in public institutions.

2.4 Challenges Affecting Applicability of Record Control Tools

Despite the importance of record control tools in ensuring effective records management, public organizations continue to experience various challenges that affect their proper application. (Ngoepe 2019) identifies inadequate training, shortage of skilled records management personnel, and limited financial resources as major factors that hinder the effective use of records control tools. Without adequate knowledge and skills, employees may fail to correctly use registers, update tracking systems, or follow established records management procedures.

Additionally, high volumes of records generated in public organizations may affect the consistency and accuracy of record control practices. When records officers and other users handle large amounts of documents, they may fail to make timely entries, update file movement information, or maintain complete tracking records, which increases the possibility of delays and loss of records. (Kemoni and ngulube 2018) further highlights that resistance to records management procedures and negligence among employees contribute to poor implementation of records control systems.

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Other challenges affecting the applicability of record control tools include inadequate supervision, limited awareness of records management procedures, insufficient storage facilities, and lack of modern information and communication technology (ICT) systems. (Pessa, 2019). These challenges reduce the reliability, accessibility, and usefulness of record control tools in organizations. Therefore, addressing these barriers through staff training, provision of adequate resources, regular supervision, and strengthening of records management policies is essential for improving the application of record control tools in public organizations.

2.5 Theoretical Framework.

This study is guided primarily by the Records Life Cycle Theory, developed by (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020) which asserts that records pass through successive stages; creation, active use, semi-active use, and final disposition. At each stage, record control tools such as incoming correspondence registers, file movement registers, and dispatch books play an integral role in managing and monitoring records. For example, incoming correspondence registers ensure documentation of newly received records at the creation stage, while file tracking registers monitor movement during active use, and file movement registers help identify records for transfer or disposal during the semi-active stage. This theoretical framework emphasizes structured control at each phase to ensure proper handling and accountability.

2.5.1 The relationship between the study title and life cycle theory.

The central focus of this study is the applicability of records control tools, while the Records Life Cycle Theory explains the stages through which records move. Records control tools such as incoming correspondence registers, file movement registers, and retention schedules are mechanisms that operationalize each stage of the life cycle (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020) The theory provides the conceptual foundation, and the study evaluates whether these record control tools are effectively applied in practice.

At the creation stage, records must be properly captured and documented at the point of origin. According to the Records Life Cycle Theory, proper documentation ensures

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authenticity and reliability of records (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020). In relation to the study title, tools such as incoming correspondence registers and dispatch books are essential in ensuring control at this stage. Assessing their applicability determined whether the council effectively captured newly created or received records.

During the active use stage, records are frequently accessed for administrative purposes. The theory emphasizes accessibility and monitoring to prevent loss or misplacement (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020). In this context, file tracking registers ensure accountability and controlled movement of files. The study examined whether these record control tools were practically implemented within Bagamoyo District Council to support active records management.

At the semi-active and disposition stages, records require controlled storage, retention scheduling, and lawful disposal. The Records Life Cycle Theory stresses the importance of systematic retention and disposal procedures to maintain efficiency and accountability (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020). In relation to this study, retention schedules and disposal registers are control tools that ensure compliance with established procedures. Evaluating their applicability directly aligns with the theoretical framework.

2.5.2 The Relationship Between the Study Title and accountability Theory.

The study is guide by accountability theory emphasizes that public institutions are required to justify their actions, decisions and use of public resources to stakeholders and oversight bodies (Svärd, 2017). The theory explains that accountability involves answerability, transparency, and enforceability in public sector governance (Farrell, 2024). Public organizations must establish systems that allow verification and evaluation of their administrative actions.

The title of this study focuses on assessing the applicability of records control tools, which are operational mechanisms that support accountability in public organizations. Records control tools ensure traceability and documentation of official activities (Matlala & Maphoto, 2020). When record control tools are properly applied, they

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enhance administrative transparency and support answerability to citizens and supervisory authorities (Farrell, 2024). Evaluating their applicability is directly linked to strengthening accountability mechanisms.

Accountability Theory asserts that public officials must be answerable for their actions and decisions (Svärd, 2017). In relation to this study, ineffective application of records control tools may lead to missing records, delays, or inability to verify decisions. Such weaknesses undermine accountability and public trust (Farrell, 2024). The assessment conducted in this study contributed to understanding whether records control tools at Bagamoyo District Council adequately supported accountability principles; these theories provided a strong framework for evaluating the applicability and effectiveness of record control tools in public organizations.

2.6 Empirical Review.

Empirical studies in public sector records management indicate that while record control tools are recognized as essential, their practical application is often inconsistent (Ngoepe 2014) observed in South African public institutions that registers such as incoming and outgoing correspondence registers were not consistently updated, leading to misplaced documents and delays in service delivery (Kemoni and Ngulube, 2018), reported that in East African public organizations, insufficient training and weak monitoring affected the proper use of file tracking and file movement registers(Oweru and Mnjama, 2016) found that in Tanzanian public offices, challenges including high records volume and limited staffing hindered the consistent use of dispatch books and minute sheets. These findings collectively indicate that the existence of control tools alone is insufficient; their effectiveness depends on disciplined application, staff competence, and management oversight.

2.7 Research Gap.

The literature reveals that while several studies have examined records management practices in public organizations, there is limited research that specifically assesses the applicability of individual record control tools such as incoming and outgoing

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correspondence registers, file tracking registers, and file movement registers. Most studies focus on general records management challenges rather than systematically evaluating how these specific tools are applied in day-to-day record handling. This research aimed to fill this gap by investigating the applicability, effectiveness, and challenges of record control tools in handling records within public organizations, providing context-specific insights that could improve recordkeeping practices.

2.8 Conceptual Framework.

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic and narrative representation of the relationship between the key variables of a study, showing how the independent variables are expected to influence the dependent variable, and how intervening variables may affect that relationship (Swaen and George, 2022). While the Theoretical Framework presented in Sections 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 explains the broad theories underpinning this study, the Conceptual Framework translates these theories into the specific variables examined in this research.

In this study, the independent variables are the types of record control tools used at Bagamoyo District Council (such as the Incoming Correspondence Register, File Census, Transit Ladder, and Dispatch Book) and the application of these tools (such as tracking movement of files, monitoring correspondence, and conducting movement census). The dependent variable is the effective handling of records, reflected through efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the Council's records management practices. The relationship between the independent and dependent variables is, however, affected by intervening variables, namely the challenges facing the application of record control tools (such as shortage of storage facilities, insufficient financial resources, inadequate staff training, and security or data privacy issues) and the measures the Council has put in place to alleviate these challenges (such as staff training and ongoing system updates). Figure 2.1 illustrates this relationship.

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Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Record Control Tools and Effective Handling of Records

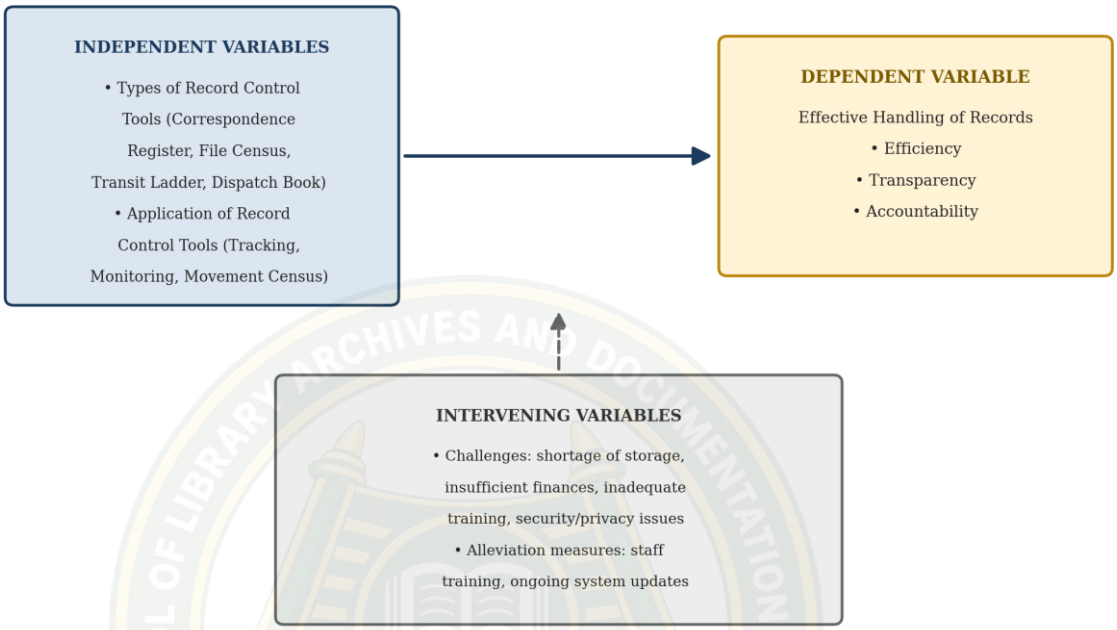


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Record Control Tools and Effective Handling of Records

As shown in Figure 2.1, the framework suggests that when appropriate record control tools are in place and properly applied, the result is efficient, transparent, and accountable handling of records, consistent with the Records Life Cycle Theory and Accountability Theory (Svärd, 2017; Farrell, 2024) Theory (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020) and Accountability Theory (Svärd, 2017; Farrell, 2024) discussed above. However, this relationship is not automatic; it is moderated by the intervening variables. Where challenges such as insufficient storage or funding are significant and are not addressed, the effectiveness of record control tools is likely to be reduced, even where the tools themselves are appropriate and well understood by staff. Conversely, where the Council puts in place alleviation measures such as regular training and system updates, the negative effect of these challenges is reduced, strengthening the link between the record control tools applied and effective records handling. This framework guided the

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formulation of the specific objectives and research questions of this study, and is revisited in Chapter Four when discussing the findings.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presented the research methodology that guided the study. It described the overall approach, design, population, sample, data collection methods, instruments, analysis techniques, validity, reliability, and ethical consideration. The design allowed the researcher to gather, process, and interpret data in a structured way. The methodology ensured that the study met its objectives, answered research questions, and generated reliable and valid findings. A well-defined methodology ensures that the research problem is investigated systematically and scientifically, allowing the researcher to generate valid and reliable findings. In this study, the methodology was designed to examine how records control tools are applied in public organizational settings and how their application influences records handling (Kumar, 2019).

3.1 Research Type

This study was descriptive in type, as it sought to describe and assess the existing applicability of record control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council as they were, without manipulating any variables. A descriptive research type was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to present an accurate picture of the types, application, effectiveness, and challenges of record control tools at the Council based on data collected directly from respondents (Kumar, 2019). This research type guided the choice of a case study design and a mixed-methods approach, discussed in the following sections.

3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2018), research design refers to the overall plan, structure, and strategy that guided the research process. It provided a blueprint for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data. The design helped the researcher to align the research objectives with appropriate methods, ensure systematic data collection, and minimize errors. The design was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to examine in detail

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the types of control tools used in records handling, how these tools were applied, and their level of effectiveness within the selected organization. The descriptive design allowed the study to present the existing situation without manipulating the research environment. This study adopted a case study research design because it focused on assessing records control tools within a single public organization. The case study design allowed an in-depth examination of practices, challenges, and institutional realities at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.3 Research Approach

Research approach refers to the logical reasoning or strategy that guided data collection, analysis, and interpretation. It provided the philosophical basis for the study and determined that the researcher used numerical measurement, thematic exploration, and a combination of both. Approaches are broadly categorized into quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, each with specific strengths and applications (Creswell, 2018).

3.3.1 Quantitative Approach

The quantitative approach involved collecting numerical data through structured questionnaires. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, to present the findings in tables and charts. This approach enabled the researcher to measure the applicability of records control tools objectively (Creswell, 2018).

3.3.2 Qualitative Approach.

The qualitative approach involved collecting descriptive information through interviews and observation. It was used to obtain participants' views and experiences regarding the application of records control tools and to support the quantitative findings (Creswell, 2018).

3.4 Study Area.

The study was conducted at Bagamoyo District Council in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The Council was selected because it is a public organization responsible for creating,

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receiving, maintaining, and using records in its daily operations, making it appropriate for assessing the applicability of records control tools.

3.5 Population of the Study.

The target population refers to the entire group from which the study data were obtained (Kumar, 2019). The target population for this study was 100 employees of Bagamoyo District Council. It included Records Management Officers, Human Resource Officers, Administrative Officers, Records Assistants, and administrative staff involved in handling records. These respondents were selected because they had direct experience with records management activities relevant to the study. The reason was that these groups interacted with records control tools at different levels and provided diverse perspectives on how records were handled in practice. The study was focused on employees of Bagamoyo District Council who were directly involved in records handling and management.

3.6 Sample Size.

Sample size refers to the number of individuals selected from the target population to participate in the study. It ensured that data collection was manageable while maintaining representativeness (Kumar, 2019). In this study, the sample size consisted of 27 respondents, comprising all 27 Registry and Administrative Staff directly involved in day-to-day records handling at Bagamoyo District Council, who were included through a census (total population) approach, together with four additional key informants purposively selected for interviews.

3.7 Sampling Techniques.

Sampling techniques refer to the procedures that were used to select a subset of individuals from the target population to participate in the study. Sampling ensured that data collection was manageable while maintaining representativeness. In this study, sampling techniques were categorized into probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling gives every member an equal chance of selection, while non-probability sampling selects respondents based on specific characteristics or expertise.

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This study used purposive sampling to select key informants for interviews, and a census (total population) technique to administer questionnaires to all 27 Registry and Administrative Staff directly involved in records handling.

3.7.1 Purposive Sampling.

Purposive sampling refers to a non-probability technique where respondents were selected based on their knowledge, expertise, and involvement in the subject matter. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select four key informants for interviews, namely one Records Officer, one Registry Staff member, one Administrative Staff member, and one Manager, because they possessed specialized knowledge regarding records control tools. Their experience provided reliable qualitative data regarding applicability challenges (Kumar, 2019).

3.7.2 Census (Total Population) Technique.

This refers to a complete enumeration technique in which every member of a defined group is included in the study rather than a subset being sampled. In this study, the Registry Staff and Administrative Staff directly involved in day-to-day records handling at Bagamoyo District Council totaled 27 employees. Because this group was small and clearly defined, all 27 employees were included in the study and administered questionnaires, rather than selecting a random subset of them. This approach ensured that the quantitative findings reflected the views of the entire relevant staff population, while purposive sampling was reserved for identifying the four key informants for in-depth interviews (Kumar, 2019).

3.8 Data Analysis Method.

According to Creswell (2018), data analysis refers to the process by which collected information was systematically examined, interpreted, and organized in order to generate meaningful insights. It involved applying logical, statistical, or thematic techniques to transform raw data into comprehensible results. In this research, data analysis ensured that findings were reliable, accurate, and aligned with the research

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objectives. It also allowed for testing hypotheses, identifying patterns, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations. In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis were used depending on the study design and research questions.

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis.

Quantitative data analysis involved the processing of numerical data collected through structured questionnaires. The researcher first coded the responses to convert them into analyzable form (Creswell, 2018). In this study, data were then entered into statistical software such as Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics were applied to summarize information, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations. The study calculated the mean score for the applicability of each records control tool to determine which tools were highly applicable, moderately applicable, or not applicable. Graphs and tables were used to present results in an easily interpretable form.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data Analysis.

Qualitative data analysis involved organizing, interpreting, and synthesizing information obtained from interviews and observation (Creswell, 2018). The researcher first transcribed all interview recordings and observation notes verbatim; coding was applied to identify recurring words, phrases, and concepts. Codes were then grouped into themes representing major patterns such as challenges, successes, compliance, or gaps in the application of records control tools. The combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of records control tool applicability at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.9 Data Collection Methods.

Data collection methods refer to the procedures used to obtain information required to answer the research questions and achieve the study objectives (Creswell, 2018). In this study, primary data were collected using questionnaires and interviews to provide comprehensive and reliable information on the applicability of records control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council.

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3.9.1 Primary Data.

Primary data are original data collected directly by the researcher from respondents or from the field for the specific purpose of a particular study (Saunders, 2019). In this study, data were obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires and interviews, about the applicability of record control tools.

Questionnaire.

A questionnaire is a structured data collection instrument consisting of a set of written questions used to collect information from respondents (Kumar, 2019). In this study, structured questionnaires containing mainly closed-ended questions with a few open-ended items were administered to employees of Bagamoyo District Council. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on the availability and applicability of records control tools, their effectiveness in records handling, and the challenges affecting their application. It also captured respondents' demographic information, including department, position, and years of work experience. The questionnaires generated quantitative data that were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques to present frequencies and percentages (Creswell, 2018). The questionnaires were self-administered: printed copies were hand-delivered to all 27 Registry and Administrative Staff at their respective work stations, accompanied by a brief explanation of the purpose of the study. Respondents were given a period of one week to complete the questionnaires at their convenience, after which the researcher collected them in person. Of the 27 questionnaires distributed, 25 were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 92.6%, while 2 were not returned within the collection period.

Interview.

An interview is a qualitative data collection method that involves direct communication between the researcher and respondents to obtain detailed information on the study topic (Bryman, 2016). This study employed semi-structured interviews with four purposively selected key informants: one Records Officer, one Registry Staff member, one Administrative Staff member, and one Manager at Bagamoyo District Council. The

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interviews focused on the implementation of records control tools, challenges affecting their application, and institutional practices for managing records. With the respondents' consent, the information obtained was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to complement the questionnaire findings and provide a deeper understanding of the study problem (Saunders, 2019).

3.10 Validity and Reliability.

Validity and reliability were ensured to enhance the quality and trustworthiness of the study findings. Content validity was achieved through consultation with the research supervisor, who reviewed the questionnaire and interview guide against the study objectives, and through review of relevant literature to ensure that the instruments measured the applicability of records control tools as intended (Taherdoost, 2016). Before the main data collection, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with three Registry Staff who were not part of the final sample, and their feedback was used to simplify unclear wording and remove ambiguous items. Reliability was established by assessing the internal consistency of responses obtained during pilot testing and by ensuring that questions were interpreted consistently across respondents. In addition, qualitative data obtained from the four key informant interviews were triangulated with the quantitative questionnaire findings, thereby cross-checking the two data sets and improving the overall consistency and credibility of the study findings.

3.11 Ethical Consideration.

The study adhered to ethical principles throughout the research process. A formal introductory letter was obtained from the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) and presented to the Bagamoyo District Council authorities to seek permission to conduct the study before data collection began. Participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, and expected duration of the study through a written statement attached to the questionnaire and a verbal explanation before each interview, and they participated voluntarily after giving informed consent, with the freedom to withdraw at any stage without any consequence. Confidentiality and

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anonymity were maintained by excluding personal identifiers, such as names, from the questionnaires and interview transcripts, and by presenting interview evidence using role-based respondent codes, for example "Records Officer 1", instead of the informants' actual names. Data collected were used strictly for academic purposes and were stored securely to prevent unauthorized access. The researcher also ensured that the study caused no harm or disruption to respondents or the normal operations of the Council (Saunders, 2019).

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CHAPTER FOUR.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING.

4.0 Introduction.

This chapter presented, analyzed, and discussed the findings obtained from the field in relation to the study objectives. The study sought to assess the applicability of record control tools in the handling of records in public organizations, using Bagamoyo District Council as a case study. The primary aim of this chapter was to address the four specific objectives of the study, namely: to identify the types of record control tools commonly used; to examine how record control tools were applied in handling records; to evaluate the effectiveness of record control tools in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability; and to identify the challenges that affected the proper application of record control tools.

Data for this study were collected through two main methods. First, questionnaires were administered to 27 sampled respondents drawn from a target population of 100 employees at Bagamoyo District Council. The questionnaires contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions designed to capture structured responses on the use and effectiveness of record control tools. Second, interviews were conducted with selected key informants, including Records Officers, Registry Staff, Administrative Staff, and Managers, to obtain in-depth qualitative information that complemented the questionnaire data. For enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings presented in this chapter.

The findings were presented in a logical sequence aligned with the specific research questions. Tables, bar charts, and pie charts were used to enhance clarity and facilitate easy interpretation of the data. The discussion of each finding was supported by relevant literature to place the results within the broader academic and professional context of records management.

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4.1 Response Rate of Respondents.

The study targeted 27 respondents drawn from the Registry and Administrative Staff of Bagamoyo District Council. Out of these, 25 respondents completed and returned their questionnaires, representing a response rate of 92.6%. The response rate obtained in this study was considered satisfactory, as it exceeded the minimum response rate generally recommended for social science research. Therefore, all analyses and interpretations presented in this chapter were based on the 25 completed questionnaires.

Table 4.1: Response Rate of Respondents (N = 25)

Category	Frequency(f)	Percentages(%)
Targeted respondents	27	100%
Returned questionnaires	25	92.6%
Unreturned questionnaires	2	7.4%

Sources: field data, 2026

4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents.

This section presents the demographic characteristics of respondents, namely age, gender, education level, position, and work experience, since these factors were likely to influence respondents' knowledge and use of record control tools.

4.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents.

Respondents were asked to indicate their age group, and the results are presented in Table 4.2.

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Table 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents (N = 25)

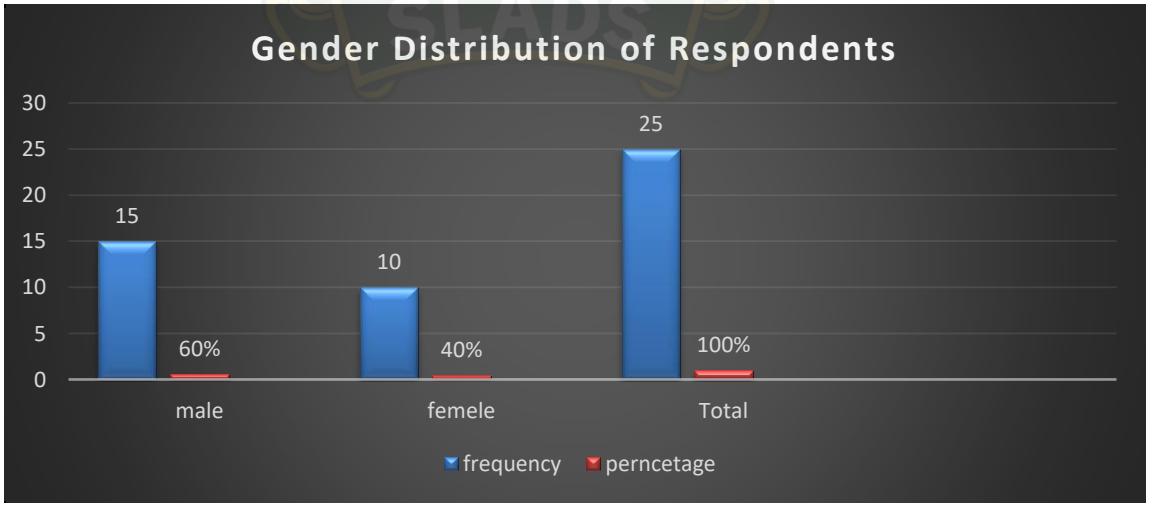
Age Group	Frequency(f)	Percentage (%)
18-25	6	24%
26-30	14	56%
31-45	3	12%
46-50	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.2 shows that most respondents (56%) were aged 26–30 years, followed by 18–25 years (24%), while those aged 31–45 and 46–50 years accounted for 12% and 8% respectively.

4.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Respondents' gender was also examined, and the findings are presented in Figure 4.1.**Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents (N = 25**



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Figure 4.1 shows that 60% of respondents were male and 40% were female, indicating that both genders participated in the study, with males forming a slightly larger share.

4.2.3 Education Level of Respondents

Respondents' education level was also examined, and the results are presented in table 4.3

Table 4.3: Education level of respondents (N = 25)

Education level	Frequency	Percentages
Diploma	10	40%
Degree	7	28%
Masters	3	12%
Certification	5	20%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.3 shows that most respondents (40%) held a Diploma, followed by Bachelor's Degree (28%), Certificate (20%), and Master's Degree (12%) holders, indicating that respondents were generally well qualified to understand and apply record control tools.

4.2.4 Position of Respondents in the Institution.

Respondents' positions in the institution were also established, and the results are presented in Table 4.4.

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Table 4.4: Position of Respondents in the Institution (N = 25)

Position	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Record officer	5	20%
Registry staff	10	40%
Administrative staff	8	32%
Manager	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.4 shows that Registry Staff formed the largest group of respondents (40%), followed by Administrative Staff (32%), Records Officers (20%), and Managers (8%), reflecting the direct involvement of Registry and Administrative Staff in day-to-day records handling.

4.2.5 Work Experience of Respondents

Respondents' length of service was also examined, and the results are presented in Table 4.5.

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Table 4.5: Work experience of respondents (N = 25)

Work experience	Frequency(f)	Percentages (%)
1-5 years	2	8%
6-10 years	8	32%
11-14 years	2	8%
Above 15 years	10	40%
Less than 1 years	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.5 shows that 40% of respondents had served for more than 15 years and 32% for 6–10 years, indicating that most respondents had considerable work experience relevant to records management.

4.3 Presentation of Findings According to Research Objectives.

The findings of this study were presented according to the four specific objectives that guided the research. Each objective was analyzed separately to determine whether it had been achieved. Quantitative data obtained through questionnaires were supported by qualitative information collected through interviews. This approach enabled the researcher to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the applicability of record control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council.

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4.3.1 Types of Record Control Tools Commonly Used at Bagamoyo District Council.

The study examined the types of record control tools commonly used at Bagamoyo District Council. Respondents were asked to identify the record control tools used in handling and managing records within the institution. The findings are presented in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Types of Record Control Tools Commonly Used in Bagamoyo District Council

Record Control Tool	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Transit Ladder	5	20%
File Census	7	28%
Incoming Correspondence Register	10	40%
Dispatch Book	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.6: shows that the Incoming Correspondence Register was the most commonly used record control tool, applied by 40% of respondents, followed by File Census (28%), Transit Ladder (20%), and Dispatch Book (12%). This indicates that the Council relied mainly on the Incoming Correspondence Register to manage the high volume of official correspondence it received daily.

> *This finding was corroborated by interview data. One respondent, a Registry Staff member, said that: "The Incoming Correspondence Register is the tool we use the most, because almost every file that comes into this office has to pass through it before it is directed to the relevant department."*

This finding supports Shepherd (2017), who observed that the incoming correspondence register is among the most widely applied record control tools in public organizations because it documents all incoming communications and assigns reference numbers that

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facilitate subsequent tracking. It is further consistent with ISO 15489 (2016), which identifies correspondence registers as fundamental tools for promoting transparency and accountability in recordkeeping.

Uses of Record Control Tools at Bagamoyo District Council.

The study examined the major uses of record control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council. Respondents were asked to identify the main purposes for which record control tools are used in handling and managing records. The findings are presented in Table 4.7.

Uses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
To prolong the life span of records	11	44
To support movement of files	10	40
To provide efficiency in performance	4	16
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.7: shows that the majority of respondents (44%) indicated that record control tools were mainly used to prolong the life span of records, while 40% used them to support the movement of files, and 16% used them to provide efficiency in performance.

This finding aligns with the Records Life Cycle Theory (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020) underpinning this study, which holds that record control tools support records at each stage of their life, including prolonging their usability at the semi-active stage and supporting their movement between offices during active use.

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4.3.2 Application of Record Control Tools in Handling Records.

The study further examined how record control tools are applied in the handling of records at Bagamoyo District Council. Respondents were asked to indicate the main ways in which the tools are applied during records handling activities. The findings are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Application of Record Control Tools in Handling Records at Bagamoyo District Council

Application	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Tracking movement of files and documents	8	32%
Monitoring receipt and dispatch of correspondence	7	28%
Conducting movement census/audit (circulation)	10	40%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.8 shows that the majority of respondents (40%) applied record control tools mainly for conducting movement census or circulation audits, followed by tracking the movement of files and documents (32%) and monitoring the receipt and dispatch of correspondence (28%).

> *During the interviews. One respondent, a Records Officer(RO1), said that: "We carry out a movement census from time to time to make sure that every file we signed out has actually come back; that is the only way we can be sure nothing has gone missing."*

This finding supports Svärd (2017), who observed that the effective application of record control tools depends on routine circulation audits and management supervision to ensure compliance. It is also consistent with Ngoepe (2014), who found that where

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registers are not regularly updated, tracing the movement of files becomes difficult, resulting in operational inefficiencies.

4.3.3 Effectiveness of Record Control Tools in Promoting Efficiency, Transparency and Accountability.

The study assessed the effectiveness of record control tools in promoting efficiency, transparency and accountability at Bagamoyo District Council. Respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of the record control tools used in the institution. The findings are presented in Table 4.9

Table 4.9: Effectiveness of Record Control Tools In Promoting Efficiency, Transparency and Accountability

Effectiveness	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very Effective	10	40%
Effective	9	36%
Less Effective	4	16%
Not Effective	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.9 shows that the majority of respondents rated record control tools as very effective (40%) or effective (36%) in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability, while 16% considered them less effective and 8% not effective. Overall, 76% of respondents viewed the tools as effective or very effective in handling records.

> *One respondent, a Manager, said that: "Since we started keeping the correspondence register up to date, it has become much easier to trace where a file is and to hold whoever is handling it accountable."*

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This finding is consistent with Shepherd (2017), who noted that record control tools establish an audit trail that enables organizations to trace the location, movement, and responsibility associated with each record. It is further supported by ISO 15489 (2016), which emphasizes that effective records control systems contribute to the reliability, authenticity, and accessibility of records in public institutions.

4.3.4 Challenges Affecting the Proper Application of Record Control Tools.

The study also examined the challenges affecting the proper application of record control tools at Bagamoyo District Council. Respondents were asked to identify the main challenges they face when using record control tools for handling records. The findings are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Challenges affecting the proper application of record control tools at Bagamoyo district council.

Challenges	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Inadequate training of staff	5	20%
Insufficient financial resources	8	32%
Shortage of storage facilities	9	36%
Security and data privacy issues	3	12%
Total	25	100%

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.9 shows that shortage of storage facilities was the most cited challenge (36%), followed by insufficient financial resources (32%), inadequate staff training (20%), and security and data privacy concerns (12%).

> *This was confirmed during the interviews, where one respondent, a Records Officer, said that: "Our registry is congested; we no longer have enough shelf space, so some files end up being stacked on the floor, which makes them difficult to trace and protect."*

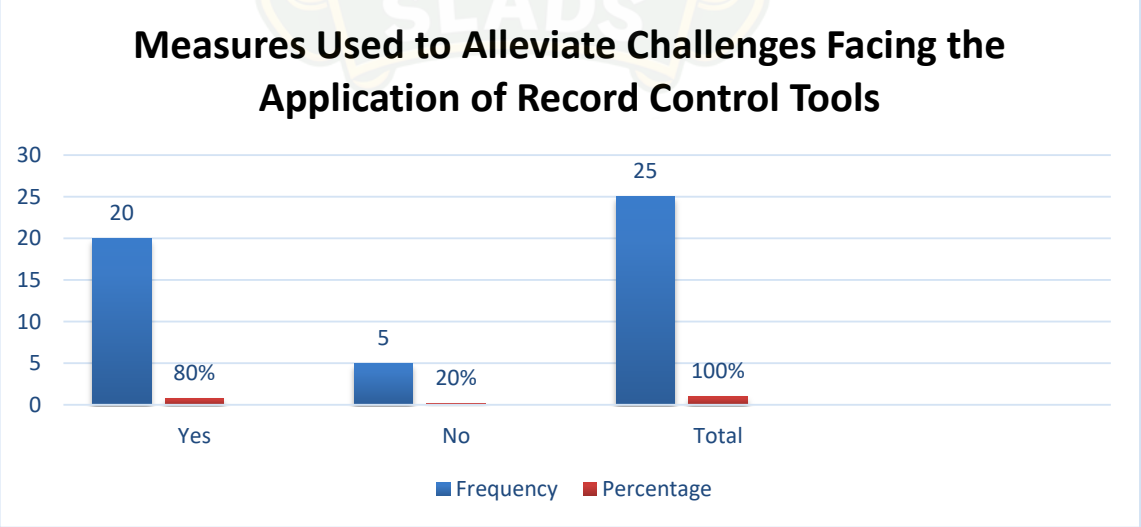
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This finding is consistent with Ngoepe (2014), who identified inadequate training, shortage of skilled personnel, and limited financial resources as major factors hindering the effective use of record control tools in public organizations. It is further supported by Oweru and Mnjama (2016), who found that high records volume, limited staffing, and inadequate storage facilities hindered the consistent use of record control tools in public offices, by Kemoni and Ngulube (2018), who reported that insufficient training and weak monitoring affected the proper use of file tracking and movement registers in East African public organizations.

4.3.5 Measures used to alleviate challenges facing the application of record control tools.

Among the respondents who indicated that measures were used to alleviate challenges, the study further examined the specific measures applied by the institution. Respondents identified training, system updates, and improvements in the user interface and workflow as measures used to address challenges in the use of record control tools. The findings are presented in figure 4.2

Figure 4.2: Whether the Council Had Measures to Alleviate Challenges Facing the Application of Record Control Tools (N = 25)

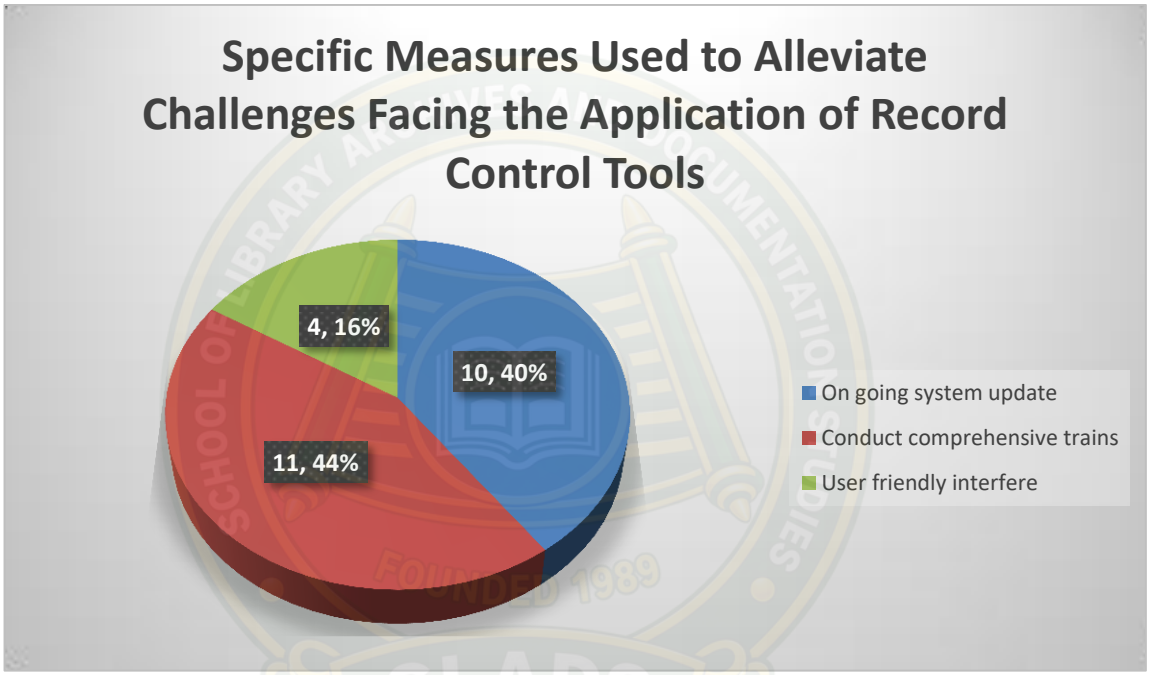


Source: Field Data, 2026

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Figures 4.2 shows that the majority of respondents (80%) confirmed that Bagamoyo District Council had put in place measures to alleviate challenges facing the application of record control tools, while 20% indicated that no such measures existed.

Figure 4.3 Specific Measures Used to Alleviate Challenges Facing the Application of Record Control Tools (N = 25)



Source: Field Data, 2026

Figure 4.3 shows that comprehensive training on the use of control tools was the most

frequently cited measure (44%), followed by ongoing system updates (40%) and the provision of a user-friendly interface with a streamlined workforce (16%).

> *This was corroborated in the interviews. One respondent, said that: "Whenever new staff join the registry, we try to take them through basic training on how to use the movement register and the correspondence register, because that is usually where the mistakes happen."*

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This finding supports by Kemoni and Ngulube (2018), who recommended continuous staff training and strengthened monitoring as measures for improving the application of record control tools in public organizations. It is also consistent with Ngoepe (2019), who emphasized that addressing training and resource gaps was central to improving records management practice in the public sector.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented, analyzed, and discussed the findings of the study in line with its four specific objectives. The findings showed that the Incoming Correspondence Register was the most commonly used record control tool, applied mainly to prolong the life span of records and support the movement of files. Record control tools were mostly applied through movement census and circulation audits, and were generally rated as effective in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability. However, their application was constrained by shortage of storage facilities, insufficient financial resources, inadequate staff training, and security and data privacy concerns. The majority of respondents nonetheless confirmed that the Council had put in place measures, particularly staff training and system updates, to alleviate these challenges. The qualitative data obtained through interviews with Records Officers, Registry Staff, Administrative Staff, and Managers reinforced and enriched the quantitative findings, while the discussion linked the results to relevant literature and the theoretical framework guiding the study.

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CHAPTER FIVE.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.0 Introduction.

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion, recommendations, and suggested areas for further research. The summary and conclusion are drawn from the findings presented and discussed in Chapter Four, in relation to the four specific objectives of the study, namely to identify the types of record control tools commonly used, to examine how record control tools were applied, to evaluate the effectiveness of record control tools, and to identify the challenges affecting their proper application at Bagamoyo District Council.

5.1 Summary of Findings.

5.1.1 Types of Record Control Tools Commonly Used.

The study found that the Incoming Correspondence Register was the most commonly used record control tool (40%), followed by File Census (28%), Transit Ladder (20%), and Dispatch Book (12%). Record control tools were mainly used to prolong the life span of records (44%) and to support the movement of files (40%).

5.1.2 Application of Record Control Tools in Handling Records.

The study established that record control tools were applied mainly through conducting movement census or circulation audits (40%), tracking the movement of files and documents (32%), and monitoring the receipt and dispatch of correspondence (28%).

5.1.3 Effectiveness of Record Control Tools.

The study revealed that record control tools were generally effective in promoting efficiency, transparency, and accountability at Bagamoyo District Council, with 76% of respondents rating them as very effective or effective, while 24% considered them less effective or not effective.

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5.1.4 Challenges Affecting the Proper Application of Record Control Tools.

The study found that shortage of storage facilities (36%), insufficient financial resources (32%), inadequate staff training (20%), and security and data privacy issues (12%) were the major challenges affecting the proper application of record control tools. The majority of respondents (80%) indicated that the Council had put in place measures to alleviate these challenges, particularly comprehensive staff training (44%) and ongoing system updates (40%).

5.2 Conclusion.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that Bagamoyo District Council applied a range of manual record control tools, particularly the Incoming Correspondence Register, to manage the creation, movement, and tracking of records, consistent with the Records Life Cycle Theory (Matlala and Maphoto, 2020) underpinning this study. The application of these tools, mainly through movement census and circulation audits, contributed to a reasonable level of efficiency, transparency, and accountability in records handling, supporting the study's Accountability Theory (Svärd, 2017and Farrell, 2024) framework. However, the effectiveness of record control tools continued to be constrained by resource-related challenges, particularly inadequate storage facilities, limited financial resources, and insufficient staff training. The study further concludes that although the Council had begun to address these challenges through training and system updates, these measures had not yet been implemented to an extent that fully eliminated the challenges facing the application of record control tools.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendations to Bagamoyo District Council

The Council should expand and upgrade its storage facilities to reduce congestion in the registry and protect records from damage and loss. It should also allocate adequate financial resources specifically for records management activities and conduct regular, comprehensive training for registry and administrative staff on the use of record control tools.

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5.3.2 Recommendations to policy makers.

Local government authorities and relevant ministries should strengthen policies and guidelines on records management in public organizations, including minimum standards for storage facilities and mandatory periodic training for records personnel, in line with the principles set out in ISO 15489 (2016).

5.3.3 Recommendations to Staff.

Records Officers, Registry Staff, and Administrative Staff should ensure the consistent and accurate use of record control tools, including timely updating of registers and adherence to established procedures, to strengthen the accountability and traceability of records.

5.4 Areas for further study.

This study focused on manual record control tools at Bagamoyo District Council. Further research could examine the applicability of electronic records management systems in local government authorities, or conduct a comparative study of record control tools across multiple district councils to establish broader patterns and challenges affecting public records management in Tanzania

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS.

Dear respondent, I Peo Valentino Madete, student of school of Library archives and documentation studies (SLADS) Carrying a study titled: An Assessment of the Applicability of Record Control Tools in Handling Records in Public Organizations: A Case Study of Bagamoyo District Council.

Dear Respondent, I am conducting this study for academic purposes. The information you provide will be treated with strict confidentiality and used only for this research.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS.

1. What is your Age? (Tick one response.)

   A. 18 – 25 years ( )

   B. 26 – 30 years ( )

   C. 31 – 45 years ( )

   D. 46 – 50 years ( )

2. What is your gender? (Tick one response.)

   A. Male ( )

   B. Female ( )

3. What is your level of education? (Tick one response.)

   A. Certificate ( )

   B. Diploma ( )

   C. Bachelor's Degree ( )

   D. Master's Degree ( )

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4. Working experience at Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response.)

A. 1 – 5 years ( )

B. 6 – 10 years ( )

C. 11 – 14 years ( )

D. 15 years and above ( )

E. Less than 1 year ( )

5. What is your position in the institution? (Tick one response.)

A. Records Officer ( )

B. Registry Staff ( )

C. Administrative Staff ( )

D. Manager ( )

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

SECTION B: CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS.

1. What are the uses of control tools in handling records at Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response.)

A. To prolong the life span of records ( )

B. To support movement of files ( )

C. To provide efficiency in performance ( )

D. Other uses (please specify): ……

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2. What types of record control tools are commonly used in Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response – the tool used most.)

a. Transit Ladder ( )

b. File Census ( )

c. Incoming Correspondence Register ( )

d. Dispatch Book ( )

3. How are record control tools applied in handling records in Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response – the main way applied.)

a. Tracking the movement of files and documents ( )

b. Monitoring the receipt and dispatch of correspondence ( )

c. Controlling the movement and circulation of files ( )

d. Facilitating easy retrieval of records ( )

4. How effective are record control tools in enhancing efficiency, transparency, and accountability in Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response.)

a. Very Effective ( )

b. Effective ( )

c. Less Effective ( )

d. Not Effective ( )

5. What challenges affect the proper application of record control tools in Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick one response.)

a. Inadequate training of staff ( )

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b. Shortage of records management personnel ( )

c. Insufficient financial resources ( )

d. Security and data privacy issues ( )

6. Do you think there are ways used by Bagamoyo District Council to alleviate the challenges facing employees when using control tools for handling records?

A. Yes ( )

B. No ( )

7. If you agree with the question above, what measures are used by Bagamoyo District Council to alleviate the challenges facing employees when using control tools for handling/managing records? (Tick one response – the main measure.)

A. Conduct comprehensive training on using control tools ( )

B. Ongoing system update ( )

C. User-friendly interface and streamlined workforce ( )

D. Any other measure (please specify): ……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

SECTION C: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS (INTERVIEW GUIDE)

The following questions are addressed to key informants through interviews and require descriptive/narrative responses.

1. What challenges affect the proper application of record control tools in Bagamoyo District Council?

.....

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.....

2. Is there any challenge facing staff in using control tools for handling records?

.....

.....

3. Does the organization allocate a budget for control tools used in managing records?

.....

.....

4. What do you think are the ways or measures used by Bagamoyo District Council to alleviate the challenges facing employees when using control tools for handling or managing records?

.....

5. What types of record control tools are commonly used in Bagamoyo District Council?

.....

.....

6. How are record control tools applied in handling records in Bagamoyo District Council?

.....

. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

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APPENDEX II

Time schedule showing.

During research work

ACTIVITIES	JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026	MARCH 2026	APRIL 2026	MAY 2026	JUNE/JULY 2026	AUGUST 2026
Writing of proposal						
Submission of proposal						
Collection of data from the field through questionnaires						
Data processing and interpretation ready for report drafting						
Preparation of the first draft report						
Submission of the report at SLADS						

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APPENDIX III:

Research budget

Item	Calculation	Amount (TZS)
College-Field Area	3,000 × 10	30,000
Breakfast & meal allowance	5,000 × 10	50,000
Ruled paper (2 reams)	8,000 × 2	16,000
Typing paper (2 reams)	10,000 × 2	20,000
Computer typing (150 pages)	1,000 × 50	50,000
Photocopying services (4 copies)	2,500 × 4	10,000
Binding (4 copies)	25,000 × 2	50,000
Telephone & internet service	2,500 × 4	10,000
TOTAL		**236,000/=**

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APPENDIX IV

RETTER OF APPROVAL

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. HA.29/183/08/90 **Tarehe:** 06 Julai, 2026

Mkuu wa Chuo,
Chuo cha Utunzaji na Uhifadhi Nyaraka,
Ukuni,
Block S,
Plot 96,
S.L.P 227,
BAGAMOYO-PWANI.

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI NDUGU PEO VALENTINO MADETE.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yenye Kumbu Na. **DA.201/457/VOL/1/20** ya tarehe **25 Februari, 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 **Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali watu** katika mada **"An Assessiment of application of record control tool in handling of record in Public Organization"** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **08 Juni,2026** hadi tarehe **06 Julai, 2026.**

4. Namtakia 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 Utawala na Rasilimali watu,
Halmashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P. 59,
BAGAMOYO - PWANI. - Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano

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:
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