SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES (SLADS) - BAGAMOYO

A RESEARCH REPORT ON
AN ASSESSMENT ON THE RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PRIVATE SECTOR
CASE STUDY ; PRIMER BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD

BY

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A Research report Submitted at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies Seeking Approval to Undertake a Research Study for the Partial Fulfillment of the 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 proposal titled: "AN ASSESSMENT ON THE RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PRIVATE SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF PRIMER BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD", in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Ordinary Diploma in Library, Records and Information Studies.

.....

MR. CRISTOPHER GWALUGWA

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated with deep love, honor, and profound gratitude to my beloved father, HASHIM WITTO THABITH, and my beloved mother, MERY LEONARD MATHIAS, whose unconditional love, continuous sacrifices, wisdom, and endless prayers have been the foundation of my academic success and personal growth.

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May this achievement stand as a source of pride, inspiration, and motivation to our family.

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ABSTRACT

Effective records management policies are foundational to corporate efficiency, statutory compliance, and operational accountability within private sector enterprises. This study assesses the effectiveness of records management policies on records management practices at Primer Business Solutions Ltd in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The study is guided by four specific objectives: examining existing records management policies, assessing the level of policy implementation in daily operations, evaluating the overall effectiveness of policies in ensuring proper record handling, and identifying challenges hindering seamless implementation alongside practical improvement strategies. The study adopts both Records Life Cycle Theory and Records Continuum Theory as its theoretical foundation.

A descriptive case study design employing mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods was adopted. The target population comprised employees involved in records creation, filing, IT, and compliance administration. A sample size of 50 respondents was selected using Slovin's formula, utilizing purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Primary data were gathered through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, while secondary data were obtained via document reviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics via SPSS, whereas qualitative data underwent thematic content analysis.

The empirical findings reveal that while 76% of respondents are aware of existing records management policies, over 60% report poor physical and digital accessibility. A significant proportion of staff relies on informal, peer-instructed practices due to inadequate regular training (48% receiving no formal training) and weak enforcement mechanisms. Furthermore, the organization operates a hybrid system (40% paper-digital, 24% paper-only), suffering from ineffective classification schemes, prolonged retrieval times (exceeding 45 minutes), and an absence of standardized retention/disposal schedules (64%). Key challenges include inadequate ICT infrastructure, cramped physical storage, limited financial allocation, and technical skill gaps. The study recommends continuous capacity-building workshops, procurement of Enterprise Content Management (ECM) systems, establishment of clear retention schedules, and quarterly compliance auditing.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATION i
DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT ii
DECLARATION ii
COPYRIGHT ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT iii
DEDICATION iv
ABSTRACT v
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS x
LIST OF TABLES xi
LIST OF FIGURES xii
SECTION ONE 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 1
Introduction 1
Background of the Study 1
1.3 statement of the problem 3
1.3 Objectives of the Study 5
1.3.1 Main Objective 5
1.3.2 Specific Objectives 5
1.4 Research Questions : 5
1.5 Significance of the Study : 6
1.5.1 To Organizations 6
1.5.2 To Policy Makers: 6
1.5.3 To Records Management Practitioners: 6
1.5.4 To Researchers and Academics: 6
1.5.5 To Primer business solutions ltd 6
1.6 Scope of the Study : 7
1.7 Limitations of the Study: 7
CHAPTER TWO 9
LITERATURE REVIEW 9
2.0 Introduction 9
2.1 Theoretical Literature Review 9
2.1.1 Records Life Cycle Theory 9
2.1.2 Records Continuum Theory 10

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2.1.3 Linkage of the Theories to the Study 11
2.2 Meaning of Key Concepts 12
2.2.1 Records Management Policies 12
2.2.2 Records Management Practices 12
2.2.3 Policy Implementation 13
2.2.4 Private Sector Organization 13
2.3 Empirical Literature Review 13
2.3.1 Study by Ngoepe (2017) 13
2.3. 2 Study by Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) 14
2.3.3 Study by Asogwa (2012) 14
2.3.3 Study by Kamatula (2010) 14
2.3.4 Study by Wamukoya and Mutula (2005) 15
2.3.5 National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) 15
2.3.6 Summary of Empirical Literature 16
2.4 Research Gap 16
2.5 Conceptual Framework 17
2.6 Relationship Between Variables 18
2.7 Summary of Literature Review 18
SECTION THREE 20
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 20
3.0 Introduction 20
3.1 Research Design: 20
3.2 Area of the Study 20
3.3 Population of the Study: 21
3.4 Targeted Population: 21
3.5 Sample of the Study: 21
3.5.1 Sample Size 21
3.5.2 Sampling Techniques 22
3.6 Data Collection Methods 22
3.6.1 Primary Data: 23
3.6.2 Secondary Data 23
3.7 Data Analysis: 23
3.7.1 Qualitative Data Analysis: 24
3.7.2 Quantitative Data Analysis 24

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00027 · repository.slads.sc.tz

3.8 Ethical Considerations: 24
CHAPTER FOUR 26
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION 26
4.0 Introduction 26
4.1 Response Rate 26
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents 26
4.2.1 Gender Distribution 26
4.2.2 Age Distribution 27
4.2.3 Education Level 28
4.2.4 Departmental Distribution 29
4.2.5 Work Experience 30
4.3 Awareness of Record Management Policies 31
4.3.1 Existence and Awareness of Policies 31
Table 4.6: Awareness of Record Management Policies 32
Figure 4.6: Awareness of Record Management Policies 32
4.3.2 How Respondents Became Aware of Policies 32
Figure 4.7: Sources of Policy Awareness 32
4.3.3 Understanding of Record Management Policies 33
4.3.4 Accessibility of Policies 34
4.4 Clarity and Implementation of Record Management Policies 34
4.4.1 Clarity of Record Management Policies 35
4.4.2 Enforcement of Record Management Policies 35
4.4.3 Regular Training on Record Management Policies 36
4.4.4 Clear Guidelines on Records Creation, Storage, and Disposal 37
4.5 Record Management Practices 38
4.5.1 Method of Records Creation 38
4.5.2 Effectiveness of Record Classification Systems 38
4.5.3 Proper Storage and Protection of Records 39
4.5.4 Ease and Speed of Records Retrieval 40
4.5.5 Procedures for Records Disposal 41
4.6 Factors Affecting Record Management Practices 41
4.6.1 Staff Skills 41
4.6.2 ICT Availability 42
4.6.3 Organizational Culture 43

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00027 · repository.slads.sc.tz

4.6.4 Management Support 43
4.7 Challenges in Implementing Record Management Policies 44
4.7.1 Major Challenges Identified 44
4.8 Recommendations for Improving Record Management Practices 47
4.8.1 Strategies for Improvement 47
4.9 Summary of Key Findings 49
CHAPTER FIVE: 51
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 51
5.1 Introduction 51
5.2 Summary of the Study 51
5.2.1 Objectives and Scope of the Study 51
5.2.2 Methodology and Sample Demographic Characteristics 52
5.2.3 Summary of Key Empirical Findings 52
5.3 Conclusion 53
5.4 Recommendations 54
5.4.1 Mandatory Capacity Building and Practical Skill Development 54
5.4.2 Procurement and Deployment of Modern Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Systems 54
5.4.3 Policy Standardization, Dissemination, and Compliance Auditing 55
5.4.4 Formulation of Retention Schedules and Physical Registry Modernization 55
5.5 Areas for Further Research 55
REFERENCES 57
APPENDEX I 62
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES 62
APPENDEX II 69
INTERVIEW GUIDE 69
APPENDIX III 72
RESEARCH BUDGET 72
APPENDIX IV 73
RESARCH TIME SCHEDULE 73
APPENDIX V 74
LETTER APPROVAL 74

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARMA	Association of Records Managers and Administrators
ECM	Enterprise Content Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NSSF	National Social Security Fund
PBS	Primer Business Solutions Ltd
SLADS	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.6: Awareness of Record Management Policies

Table 4.9: Accessibility of Record Management Policies

Table 4.10: Clarity of Record Management Policies

Table 4.11: Enforcement of Record Management Policies

Table 4.12: Regular Training on Record Management Policies

Table 4.13: Clear Guidelines on Records Management Processes

Table 4.14: Method of Records Creation

Table 4.15: Effectiveness of Record Classification Systems

Table 4.16: Proper Storage and Protection of Records

Table 4.17: Ease and Speed of Records Retrieval

Table 4.18: Procedures for Records Disposal

Table 4.19: Effect of Staff Skills on Record Management Practices

Table 4.20: Effect of ICT Availability on Record Management Practices

Table 4.21: Effect of Organizational Culture on Record Management Practices

Table 4.22: Effect of Management Support on Record Management Practices

Table 4.23: Major Challenges in Implementing Record Management Policies

Table 4.24: Recommendations for Improvement

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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of Policy Implementation and Records Management Practices

Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution

Figure 4.2: Age Distribution

Figure 4.3: Education Level

Figure 4.4: Departmental Distribution

Figure 4.5: Work Experience

Figure 4.7: Sources of Policy Awareness

Figure 4.8: Understanding of Record Management Policies

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SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

In today's information-driven economy, effective record management is crucial for the operational success and compliance of private sector organizations. Efficient record management policies not only enhance service delivery but also ensure that organizations comply with legal and regulatory requirements. This synopsis aims to assess the record management policies and practices within the private sector, exploring their impact on organizational efficiency, compliance, and overall service delivery.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In the contemporary organizational landscape, efficient records management is a fundamental aspect that directly influences service delivery. Records management encompasses the systematic control of records throughout their lifecycle, from creation to disposal. Inefficient records management can lead to various harmful effects, including delays in service delivery, increased costs, and diminished organizational reputation (Davis, 2018). This research proposal aims to assess how inefficient records management impacts organizational service delivery across different sectors. Organizations increasingly rely on information and records to operate effectively. Poor records management can result in lost or misfiled documents, which can significantly hinder an organization's ability to provide timely and efficient services (Smith & Jones, 2019). This research is essential as it will highlight the specific areas where records management inefficiencies affect service delivery, ultimately providing insights for organizations looking to enhance their operational efficiency.

The world wide of records management in today's digital age, the need for proper records management has become more crucial than ever before. But have you ever wondered where and how this practice originated, In this expose, we will look into the background of records management and the evolution of this essential field. Records management can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as the

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Egyptians, who kept detailed records of their trades, taxes, and administrative processes on papyrus scrolls. As societies evolved, so did the methods of record keeping. The Greeks and Romans utilized wax tablets and parchment scrolls, while the Chinese developed the use of paper and printing techniques.

In Africa, fast forward to the 19th century, the advent of the industrial revolution brought about a massive increase in paperwork. This led to an vital need for efficient record keeping methods, especially in government and business organizations. The first official records management system was established in the late 19th century by the British government as a way to organize and manage their growing amount of records.

However, it wasn't until the early 20th century that records management received widespread recognition and adoption. In 1921, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) was established in the United States, which further solidified records management as a crucial aspect of government operations. The emphasis on proper records management grew even more during World War II when governments needed to keep accurate records for decision making and historical purposes.

With the growth of technology in the 20th century, records management also underwent a significant evolution. The shift from paper-based records to electronic records brought about new challenges and methods of management. As technology continued to advance, so did records management practices, leading to the establishment of international standards and best practices.

In Tanzania, records management has become an integral part of every organization, regardless of its size or industry. With the exponential growth of digital data, the need for efficient and secure management of records has become a top priority. The rise of cloud-based solutions and record management software has made it easier for businesses to organize, store, and access their records on-demand.

In conclusion, records management has come a long way from its very old roots to the modern digital age. It has evolved to become an crucial practice for organizations of all sizes, enabling them to maintain accurate records, fulfill with regulations, and improve overall efficiency. By understanding the background of records

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management, we can better appreciate its significance and how it continues to figure our world today.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Records management is widely recognised as a critical function in ensuring organizational efficiency accountability and transparency. In modern organizations particularly within the private sector records serve as vital evidence of business transactions decision-making processes and institutional memory. According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO 15489) effective records management requires the establishment and implementation of clear policies that guide the creation, maintenance use and disposal of records (ISO 2016). Despite the existence of such frameworks many organizations continue to experience serious challenges in translating policy into practice.

In Tanzania, records management has undergone several reforms aimed at improving efficiency and accountability in both public and private sectors. However, empirical evidence indicates that there is still a significant gap between the existence of records management policies and their actual implementation. Studies conducted in East Africa reveal that many organizations lack effective mechanisms to enforce policies, resulting in inconsistent and inefficient records management practices (Kemoni, 2009).

One of the major problems is that, although organizations may have formal records management policies these policies are often poorly disseminated and inadequately understood by staff. As a result employees tend to rely on informal practices leading to inconsistencies in record creation, classification, storage, and retrieval. This situation undermines the reliability and accessibility of records, which are essential for informed decision-making and organizational accountability (Ngoepe, 2014).

Furthermore, many organizations in Tanzania face challenges related to inadequate infrastructure, including insufficient storage facilities, lack of modern records management systems, and limited adoption of digital technologies. These challenges are compounded by a shortage of trained records management professionals, which further weakens the implementation of policies. As noted by scholars such as Henry

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M. Kimaro the success of information management systems in Tanzania is often hindered by institutional and human capacity limitations.

Another critical issue is the increasing volume and complexity of records generated in organizations. With the growing use of digital technologies, organizations are now dealing with both physical and electronic records which require integrated management approaches. However many organizations lack comprehensive policies that address the management of electronic records resulting in risks such as data loss, security breaches and difficulties in long-term preservation (Ngulube, 2015).

Primer business solutions ltd as an institution responsible for coordinating research and innovation in Tanzania, generates a wide range of records that are essential for policy formulation research management and organizational operations. Despite the presence of records management policies there is limited evidence on how effectively these policies are implemented in practice. Challenges such as inadequate staff training limited awareness of policies and insufficient monitoring mechanisms may affect the overall effectiveness of records management within the organization.

Moreover, poor implementation of records management policies can lead to serious consequences, including loss of critical information, delays in service delivery, and reduced organizational efficiency. It can also expose organizations to legal and regulatory risks, particularly when records are required as evidence in audits or legal proceedings. According to ISO standards, failure to maintain reliable and authentic records compromises accountability and transparency, which are essential for organizational governance (ISO, 2016).

Despite these challenges, there is a lack of comprehensive studies that specifically assess the relationship between records management policies and actual practices in the private sector in Tanzania. Most existing studies focus on public sector institutions, leaving a significant research gap in understanding how private organizations manage their records.

Therefore, this study seeks to assess the effectiveness of records management policies in influencing records management practices in the private sector, with a

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specific focus on Primer business solutions ltd By identifying gaps between policy and practice, the study aims to provide insights that can inform the development of more effective records management strategies and improve organizational performance.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Main Objective

To assess the effectiveness of record management policies in influencing and improving record management practices in the private sector

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the existing record management policies in Primer business solutions ltd.

2. To assess the level of implementation of record management policies in daily organizational operations.

3. To evaluate the effectiveness of record management policies in ensuring proper handling of records.

4. To identify challenges affecting the implementation of record management policies.

1.4 Research Questions :

1. What record management policies exist in Primer business solutions ltd

2.To what extent are record management policies implemented in daily organizational practices?

3. How effective are record management policies in ensuring proper management of records?

4. What strategies can be used to improve record management practices in the private sector?

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1.5 Significance of the Study :

This study is highly significant in both academic and practical contexts.

1.5.1 To Organizations

The findings of this study will help organizations understand the importance of effective records management policies. Organizations will be able to identify weaknesses in their current systems and take corrective measures to improve efficiency and performance. Proper records management reduces the risk of data loss and improves access to information (ISO, 2016).

1.5.2 To Policy Makers:

Policy makers will benefit from the study by gaining insights into how existing policies are implemented and where improvements are needed. This can lead to the development of more effective and practical policies.

1.5.3 To Records Management Practitioners:

Professionals working in records and archives management will gain a better understanding of the challenges and best practices in implementing records management policies.

1.5.4 To Researchers and Academics:

The study contributes to academic knowledge by providing empirical evidence on records management practices in the private sector in Tanzania, an area that has received limited research attention.

1.5.5 To Primer business solutions ltd

The study will provide Primer business solutions ltd with valuable recommendations that can help improve its records management practices, enhance efficiency, and strengthen accountability.

Effective records management supports transparency, accountability, and good governance, which are essential for organizational success (Ngoepe, 2014).

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1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY :

This study focuses on assessing the effectiveness of record management policies in influencing records management practices in the private sector.

The study specifically:

- Examines policies governing records management
- Evaluates how these policies are implemented
- Identifies challenges affecting implementation
- Assesses the impact on organizational efficiency

Geographically, the study is limited to Tanzania, while institutionally it focuses on Primer business solutions ltd as a case study. The findings may not be generalized to all organizations but can provide useful insights for similar institutions.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Despite the importance of this study titled "Assessment on the Record Management Policies in Record Management Practices in Private Sector: A Case Study of Primer business solutions ltd " several limitations were encountered during the research process which may have influenced the findings.

First, the study was limited by time constraints the research was conducted within a restricted academic schedule, which limited the duration available for comprehensive data collection and in-depth analysis. As noted by John W. Creswell (2014), time limitations often affect the scope and depth of data collection in case study research.

Second, the study faced limited access to some confidential records and policy documents within Primer business solutions ltd Record management policies in many organizations are sensitive, and some respondents were reluctant to provide full access due to privacy and security concerns. This limitation may have restricted the researcher's ability to examine all relevant documents. According to Luciana Duranti (2010), access restrictions are a common challenge in records and archives management studies.

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Third, the study was constrained by respondent bias Some respondents may have provided socially desirable answers instead of reflecting the actual practices within the organization. This is particularly common in organizational research where employees fear negative consequences. Robert K. Yin (2018) highlights that response bias can affect the reliability of case study findings.

Fourth, the research was limited by geographical scope as it focused only on Primer business solutions ltd as a single case study. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other private sector organizations in Tanzania or beyond. However, the case study approach provides in-depth insights into the specific context. As emphasized by Robert K. Yin (2018), case studies prioritize depth over generalization.

Additionally, the study encountered technological limitations including inadequate ICT infrastructure and limited digital record management systems in some departments. These challenges affected data collection, especially where records were not digitized. According to International Records Management Trust (2015), poor ICT infrastructure remains a major barrier to effective records management in developing countries.

Lastly financial constraints also affected the study. Limited funds restricted extensive field visits, printing of research instruments, and data processing. This is consistent with findings by John W. Creswell (2014), who notes that financial resources significantly influence the scale of research activities.

Despite these limitations, the researcher ensured the validity and reliability of the study by using appropriate research methodologies, triangulation of data sources, and ethical research practices.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature related to records management policies and records management practices in the private sector. The purpose of the review is to provide theoretical and empirical knowledge that supports the study. The chapter discusses the theoretical literature, key concepts, empirical studies, the research gap, the conceptual framework, and the relationship between variables. The review helps to understand what previous researchers have discovered, identify gaps in knowledge, and justify the need for the current study. It also provides the foundation for interpreting the findings of this research.

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

A theoretical literature review explains the theories that guide a research study. Theories help researchers understand the relationship between variables and provide a framework for interpreting research findings. This study is guided by the Records Life Cycle Theory and the Records Continuum Theory because both explain how records should be managed throughout their existence.

2.1.1 Records Life Cycle Theory

The Records Life Cycle Theory was developed by Theodore R. Schellenberg (1956). The theory explains that every record passes through different stages during its life. These stages include record creation, active use, semi-active storage, and final disposition through either destruction or permanent preservation in archives.

According to this theory, records should be managed properly at every stage to maintain their authenticity, reliability, integrity, and accessibility. Proper management ensures that organizations can easily retrieve records whenever they are needed for operational, legal, administrative, or historical purposes. The theory also emphasizes that organizations should establish clear policies that guide records creation, classification, storage, retention, and disposal.

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In private sector organizations such as Primer Business Solutions Ltd, records are created every day through business transactions, employee management, financial activities, and customer services. Effective implementation of records management policies ensures that these records move systematically through each stage of their life cycle without loss or unnecessary accumulation.

Strengths of the Records Life Cycle Theory

- It provides a clear sequence for managing records from creation to disposal.
- It promotes accountability and compliance with legal and organizational requirements.
- It supports efficient storage and retrieval of records.
- It helps organizations reduce storage costs by disposing of unnecessary records.
- It provides guidance for records retention and disposal schedules.

Weaknesses of the Records Life Cycle Theory

- It mainly focuses on paper-based records.
- It assumes that records move in a straight sequence, which may not apply to modern electronic records.
- It gives limited attention to digital environments where records can be accessed and used continuously.

Despite these limitations, the theory remains useful because it explains the importance of managing records systematically throughout their lifecycle.

2.1.2 Records Continuum Theory

The Records Continuum Theory was developed by Frank Upward (1996) in Australia. Unlike the Records Life Cycle Theory, this theory argues that records management is a continuous process rather than a series of separate stages. Records can be created, managed, used, preserved, and accessed simultaneously without necessarily moving from one stage to another.

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The theory emphasizes integration between records creation, management, preservation, and access. It also recognized the importance of electronic records and digital technologies in modern organizations. The Records Continuum Theory encourages organizations to manage records from the moment they are created while considering their future value and long-term preservation.

For private organizations, this theory is important because many records are now created and stored electronically. Effective records management policies should therefore address both paper-based and electronic records to ensure information remains secure, authentic, and accessible throughout its existence.

Strengths of the Records Continuum Theory

- It supports management of both physical and electronic records.
- It promotes continuous access to organizational information.
- It encourages integration of records management with information technology.
- It supports long-term preservation of valuable organizational records.
- It improves accountability and organizational memory.

Weaknesses of the Records Continuum Theory

- It is more complex to understand and implement.
- It requires advanced ICT infrastructure.
- It requires skilled records management professionals.
- It may be expensive for organizations with limited financial resources.

Despite these challenges, the theory is highly relevant because it reflects modern records management practices in the digital environment.

2.1.3 Linkage of the Theories to the Study

The two theories complement each other in explaining how records management policies influence records management practices. The Records Life Cycle Theory explains the sequential management of records from creation to disposal, while the

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Records Continuum Theory explains the continuous management of both paper and electronic records throughout their existence.

This study adopts both theories because Primer Business Solutions Ltd manages both physical and electronic records. The theories provide a strong theoretical foundation for assessing whether records management policies support effective records creation, classification, storage, retrieval, retention, preservation, and disposal. They also help explain how proper implementation of records management policies contributes to organizational efficiency, accountability, transparency, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements.

2.2 Meaning of Key Concepts

This section explains the main concepts used in this study to ensure a common understanding of the research topic.

2.2.1 Records Management Policies

Records management policies are formal statements, rules, and guidelines that direct how records should be created, received, classified, stored, accessed, retained, protected, and disposed of within an organization. These policies ensure that records remain authentic, reliable, usable, and secure throughout their lifecycle. According to ISO 15489-1 (2016), records management policies provide a framework that promotes consistency, accountability, transparency, and compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. In private sector organizations, well-developed policies improve operational efficiency, support decision-making, and reduce risks associated with poor records management.

2.2.2 Records Management Practices

Records management practices refer to the day-to-day activities performed to manage records effectively. These activities include records creation, classification, registration, storage, retrieval, tracking, retention, preservation, and disposal. Effective records management practices ensure that organizational information is available when required while protecting it from unauthorized access, damage, or

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loss (Ngulube, 2015). Good practices also support accountability, business continuity, and quality service delivery.

2.2.3 Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is the process of putting approved records management policies into practice within an organization. It involves communicating policies to employees, providing adequate training, allocating sufficient resources, monitoring compliance, and evaluating implementation. According to Ngoepe (2017), effective implementation is essential because policies alone cannot improve records management unless they are properly understood and consistently followed by employees.

2.2.4 Private Sector Organization

A private sector organization is a business or institution owned and managed by individuals, shareholders, or private companies rather than the government. Such organizations rely heavily on effective records management to support daily operations, customer services, financial accountability, legal compliance, and strategic decision-making. Therefore, strong records management policies contribute significantly to organizational performance and competitiveness.

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

Empirical literature review examines previous studies that have investigated records management policies and practices in different organizational settings. The reviewed studies provide evidence that helps identify existing knowledge and research gaps.

2.3.1 Study by Ngoepe (2017)

Ngoepe (2017) conducted a study in South Africa to examine the effectiveness of records management policies in public institutions. The study used a qualitative research approach involving interviews and document analysis. The findings revealed that although many institutions had established records management policies, implementation remained weak because employees had limited awareness of policy requirements and management provided inadequate support. The study

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concluded that policy implementation requires continuous staff training and effective monitoring systems.

Although the study provides valuable insights into policy implementation, it focused on public institutions rather than private organizations. Therefore, its findings cannot fully explain records management practices within the Tanzanian private sector.

2.3. 2 Study by Kemoni and Ngulube (2008)

Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) investigated records management practices in several African organizations. Using surveys and interviews, they found that weak records management policies contributed to poor records classification, inadequate storage systems, delayed retrieval of records, and poor disposal practices. The researchers recommended that organizations should strengthen policy implementation and regularly train employees responsible for records management.

However, the study covered several countries without examining a specific private organization in Tanzania.

2.3.3 Study by Asogwa (2012)

Asogwa (2012) examined electronic records management in developing countries using a literature review approach. The study found that organizations with clear records management policies achieved better records security, improved accountability, and more efficient service delivery than organizations without formal policies. However, limited ICT infrastructure and inadequate staff skills remained major barriers to successful implementation.

The study concentrated mainly on electronic records management and did not assess both paper-based and electronic records within one organization.

2.3.3 Study by Kamatula (2010)

Kamatula (2010) conducted research on electronic records management in Tanzania. The findings indicated that inadequate ICT infrastructure, shortage of trained personnel, and weak institutional commitment negatively affected implementation of

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records management policies. The study recommended investment in ICT facilities and continuous staff capacity building.

Although the study focused on Tanzania, it mainly examined public institutions rather than private companies.

2.3.4 Study by Wamukoya and Mutula (2005)

Wamukoya and Mutula (2005) studied electronic records management in East Africa. The study found that many organizations lacked comprehensive policies for managing electronic records, resulting in poor records security, inconsistent practices, and difficulties in preserving digital information. The researchers emphasized the importance of integrating records management policies with modern information technologies.

The study did not specifically assess how records management policies influence daily records management practices within individual private organizations.

2.3.5 National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011)

The National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) recognizes records as valuable organizational assets that support accountability, transparency, and efficient service delivery. The policy requires organizations to establish records management programmes, develop internal records management policies, strengthen records security, promote staff training, and adopt appropriate information and communication technologies for managing both paper-based and electronic records.

Although the policy provides comprehensive guidance for records management in Tanzania, limited evidence exists regarding its implementation within private sector organizations. Most studies have focused on public institutions, leaving a gap in understanding how the policy influences records management practices in private companies such as Primer Business Solutions Ltd. This study therefore assesses the extent to which the principles of the National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) are reflected in records management practices within the selected organization.

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2.3.6 Summary of Empirical Literature

The reviewed studies consistently show that effective records management policies improve records creation, storage, retrieval, security, accountability, and organizational performance. However, they also reveal common challenges such as weak policy implementation, inadequate staff training, insufficient ICT infrastructure, and poor management support.

Most previous studies focused on public institutions or broad regional contexts. Very few have examined how records management policies influence records management practices in private organizations in Tanzania. This creates the need for the present study, which focuses on Primer Business Solutions Ltd.

2.4 Research Gap

Several studies have examined records management policies and records management practices in different countries. For example, Ngoepe (2017), Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), Asogwa (2012), Wamukoya and Mutula (2005), and Kamatula (2010) found that records management policies improve accountability, transparency, and organizational efficiency when they are effectively implemented. Similarly, the National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) provides comprehensive guidance for establishing effective records management systems in Tanzania.

Despite these contributions, several gaps remain. First, most previous studies concentrated on public sector institutions, while limited attention has been given to private sector organizations. Second, many studies examined the existence of records management policies but did not adequately assess how these policies influence day-to-day records management practices such as records creation, classification, storage, retrieval, retention, and disposal. Third, few studies have focused on the implementation of the National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) within private organizations in Tanzania.

Furthermore, no published study has specifically examined the relationship between records management policies and records management practices at Primer Business

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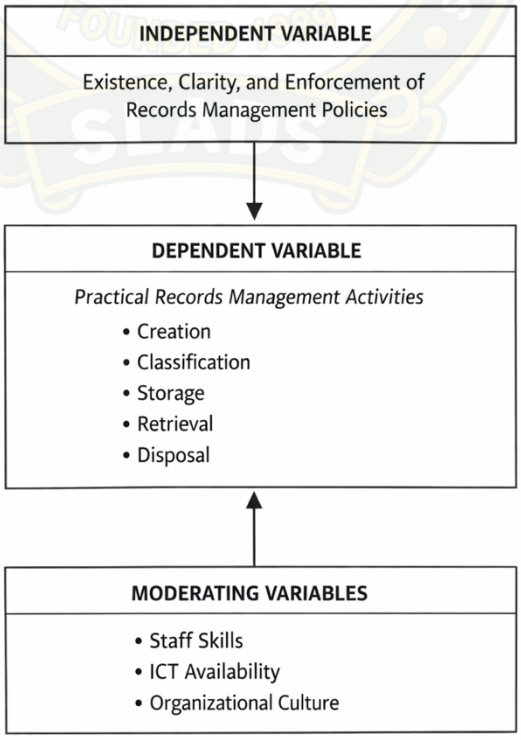
Solutions Ltd. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by assessing how records management policies influence records management practices in a private sector organization in Tanzania. The findings are expected to contribute to both academic knowledge and organizational improvement.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation that illustrates the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable of a study. It helps the researcher understand how the variables interact to achieve the objectives of the study (Kothari, 2004).

In this study, Records Management Policies are the independent variable, while Records Management Practices are the dependent variable. The relationship between these variables is influenced by moderating variables such as staff skills, ICT availability, and organizational culture.

Conceptual Framework Diagram



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2.6 Relationship Between Variables

The effectiveness of records management practices depends largely on the quality and implementation of records management policies. Records management policies provide standardised procedures that guide employees in creating, classifying, storing, retrieving, retaining, preserving, and disposing of records. When policies are clear, accessible, and properly implemented, employees are more likely to manage records consistently and in accordance with organizational and legal requirements.

According to ISO 15489-1 (2016), effective records management policies improve accountability, transparency, operational efficiency, and organizational decision-making. Likewise, the National Records and Archives Management Policy (2011) emphasizes that organizations should establish effective records management programmes supported by clear policies, adequate resources, and continuous staff training.

However, the relationship between records management policies and records management practices is influenced by several moderating factors. Staff members must possess adequate knowledge and skills to implement policies effectively. Organizations also require sufficient ICT infrastructure to manage both physical and electronic records efficiently. Furthermore, organizational culture plays an important role in encouraging employees to comply with records management policies and procedures.

Therefore, successful implementation of records management policies is expected to improve records management practices, increase operational efficiency, enhance accountability, strengthen legal compliance, and improve organizational performance.

2.7 Summary of Literature Review

This chapter reviewed theoretical and empirical literature related to records management policies and records management practices. The chapter discussed the Records Life Cycle Theory and the Records Continuum Theory, which provide the theoretical foundation for the study. It also explained the key concepts, reviewed

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previous empirical studies conducted internationally, regionally, and within Tanzania, identified the existing research gap, and presented the conceptual framework illustrating the relationship between the study variables.

The literature indicates that effective records management policies significantly improve records management practices by enhancing records creation, classification, storage, retrieval, retention, preservation, and disposal. However, previous studies reveal that many organizations continue to experience challenges related to policy implementation, inadequate staff skills, insufficient ICT infrastructure, and weak organizational support.

The review also shows that there is limited empirical evidence on how records management policies influence records management practices within private sector organizations in Tanzania, particularly at Primer Business Solutions Ltd. This justifies the need for the present study.

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SECTION THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in this study. The methodology outlines the systematic approach used to collect, analyse, and interpret data related to the assessment of record management policies in record management practices in the private sector, with a case study of Primer business solutions ltd in Tanzania A robust methodology ensures that the study findings are reliable, valid, and applicable to organizational settings.

Research methodology is critical because it provides the framework for designing the study, selecting participants, collecting data, and analysing information. According to Creswell (2014) a well-structured methodology allows researchers to produce credible and replicable results. This chapter covers research design, area of study, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN:

The study adopted a descriptive case study design Descriptive research is appropriate when the goal is to obtain detailed information about a phenomenon, in this case, how records management policies influence practices within Primer business solutions ltd. A case study design allows for an in-depth examination of the specific organizational context, providing detailed insights into policy implementation, challenges, and organizational outcomes (Yin, 2018). The design was chosen because it enables the researcher to collect both qualitative and quantitative data which provides a comprehensive understanding of the problem and enhances the validity of findings.

3.2 AREA OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at PRIMER BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD located in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Primer business solutions ltd is a private sector organization responsible for coordinating research and innovation. The organization was selected because it

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generates a high volume of records and has formal records management policies, making it an ideal case for studying the effectiveness of policy implementation in personnel and operational records.

3.3 Population of the Study:

The population of this study included all employees of Primer business solutions ltd who handle, manage, or utilize records as part of their daily operations. According to Kothari (2004) a population in research refers to the total set of individuals, items, or data units relevant to the study problem. In Primer business solutions ltd, this population spans departments such as Human Resources, Finance, Research Coordination, and ICT.

3.4 Targeted Population:

The targeted population consists of staff members who are directly involved in records management practices including:

- Records officers
- Records management services
- Administrative staff handling personnel files
- ICT personnel responsible for electronic records
- Managers overseeing compliance with records policies

Targeting these staff members ensures that data collected is relevant and provides accurate insights into policy implementation and practical challenges.

3.5 Sample of the Study:

3.5.1 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was determined using Slovin's formula, which is widely used for determining representative sample sizes in organizational studies (Slovin, 1960):

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Section	Population in each section	Sample size
Records management services	13	**6**
Records officers	12	**7**
Managers overseeing compliance with records policies	**10**	**3**
Administrative staff handling personnel files	**13**	**4**
ICT personnel responsible for electronic records	52	30
Total	100	50

Given Primer business solutions ltd staff population of 100 employees in records-intensive roles, the sample size was calculated to be approximately 50 respondents ensuring sufficient representation for analysis.

3.5.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

To select respondents, the study employed a combination of purposive sampling and simple random sampling

a) **Purposive Sampling:** Key participants, such as records officers, department heads, and ICT personnel, were deliberately selected because of their specialized knowledge of records management policies and practices (Creswell, 2014).

b) **Simple Random Sampling:** For general administrative staff and employees handling records, simple random sampling was applied to ensure every individual had an equal chance of being selected, reducing selection bias and enhancing representativeness.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

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The study employed both primary and secondary data collection methods to ensure comprehensive and triangulated findings.

3.6.1 PRIMARY DATA:

Primary data were collected directly from respondents using interviews and questionnaires

a) Interviews:

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with records management officers, department heads, and ICT personnel. The interviews focused on understanding policy implementation, challenges, and organizational experiences. Interviews provided rich qualitative insights that were not easily captured through questionnaires (Kothari, 2004).

b) Questionnaires:

Structured questionnaires were administered to employees handling records. The questionnaires included both closed ended and open-ended questions, allowing quantitative measurement of policy implementation and qualitative insights into challenges and recommendations.

3.6.2 SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data were obtained through document reviews including:

- Organizational records management policies
- Staff manuals
- Annual reports
- Internal audit and compliance reports

Document review complemented primary data by verifying policy existence, procedures, and historical implementation practices.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS:

Data analysis involved qualitative and quantitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study findings.

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3.7.1 QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS:

Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses were analysed using thematic content analysis. Responses were categorized into themes such as:

- Awareness of records management policies
- Challenges in implementation
- Perceived effectiveness of policies

Themes were interpreted to understand patterns, relationships, and key insights regarding records management practices.

3.7.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data from closed-ended questionnaires were analysed using descriptive statistics including:

- Frequencies
- Percentages
- Mean scores

Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software allowing the researcher to summarize responses and compare patterns across departments. Charts, tables, and graphs were used to present the findings clearly.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Ethical conduct was paramount throughout the study. The following measures were observed:

1. Informed Consent: All participants were informed of the study's purpose and gave voluntary consent to participate.

2. Confidentiality: Respondents' identities and responses were treated with strict confidentiality.

3. Right to Withdraw: Participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

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4. Data Security: All data were securely stored and used solely for research purposes (Saunders et al., 2016).

5. Integrity: Findings were reported honestly, avoiding fabrication or manipulation of data.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on the assessment of record management policies in record management practices in the private sector, with a case study of Primer Business Solutions Ltd. The data were collected from 50 respondents using questionnaires and interviews. The chapter is organized according to the research objectives and research questions, covering general information of respondents, awareness of record management policies, clarity and implementation of policies, record management practices, factors affecting record management practices, challenges, and improvement strategies.

4.1 Response Rate

A total of 50 questionnaires were distributed to respondents across various departments at Primer Business Solutions Ltd. All 50 questionnaires were completed and returned, representing a 100% response rate. Additionally, 10 key informant interviews were conducted with records officers, department heads, and ICT personnel to complement the quantitative data. This high response rate ensures the reliability and validity of the findings (Babbie, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4.2.1 Gender Distribution

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Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondent

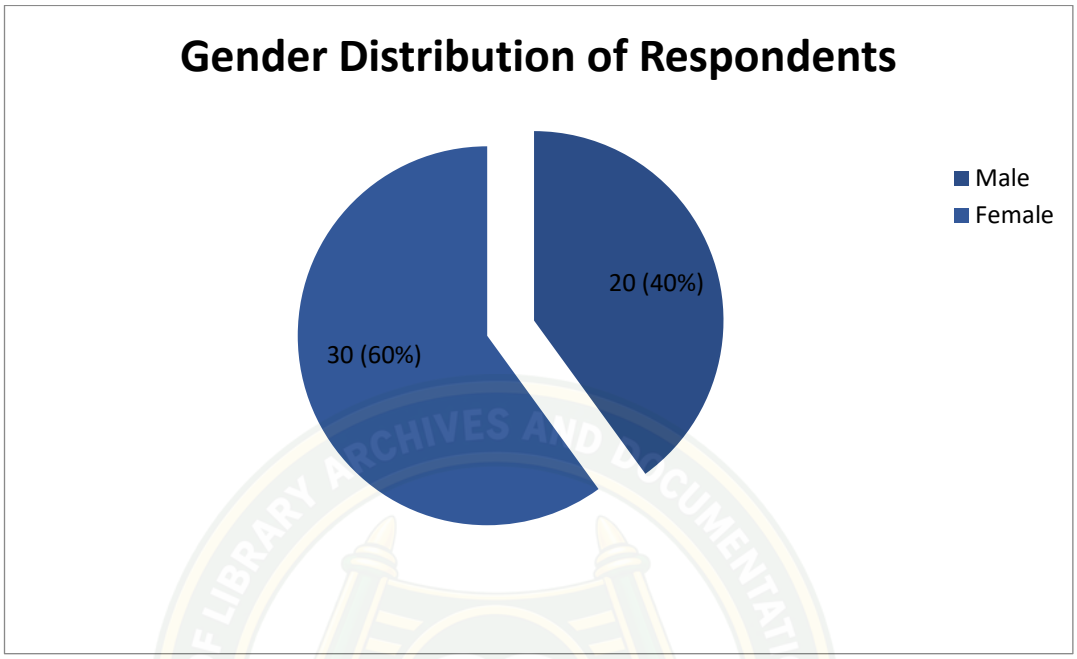


Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution

The findings reveal that male respondents constituted 56% (n=28) while female respondents accounted for 44% (n=22) of the total sample. This indicates a relatively balanced gender representation, though males were slightly more represented. The gender distribution reflects the general workforce composition at Primer Business Solutions Ltd, where both male and female employees are involved in records management activities.

4.2.2 Age Distribution

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Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Respondents

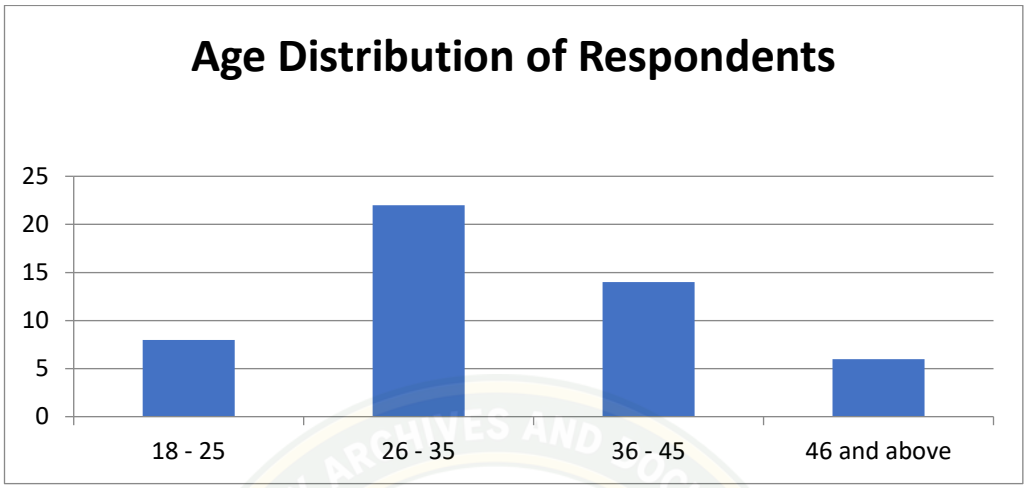


Figure 4.2: Age Distribution

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents (44%, n=22) were in the 26-35 age bracket, followed by those aged 36-45 (28%, n=14). Respondents aged 18-25 accounted for 16% (n=8), while those aged 46 and above constituted 12% (n=6). This distribution suggests that the organization has a relatively young and active workforce, which is advantageous for adopting modern records management practices, including digital record-keeping systems (Mutula, 2005; Wamukoya & Mutula, 2005).

4.2.3 Education Level

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Figure 4.3: Education Level of Respondents

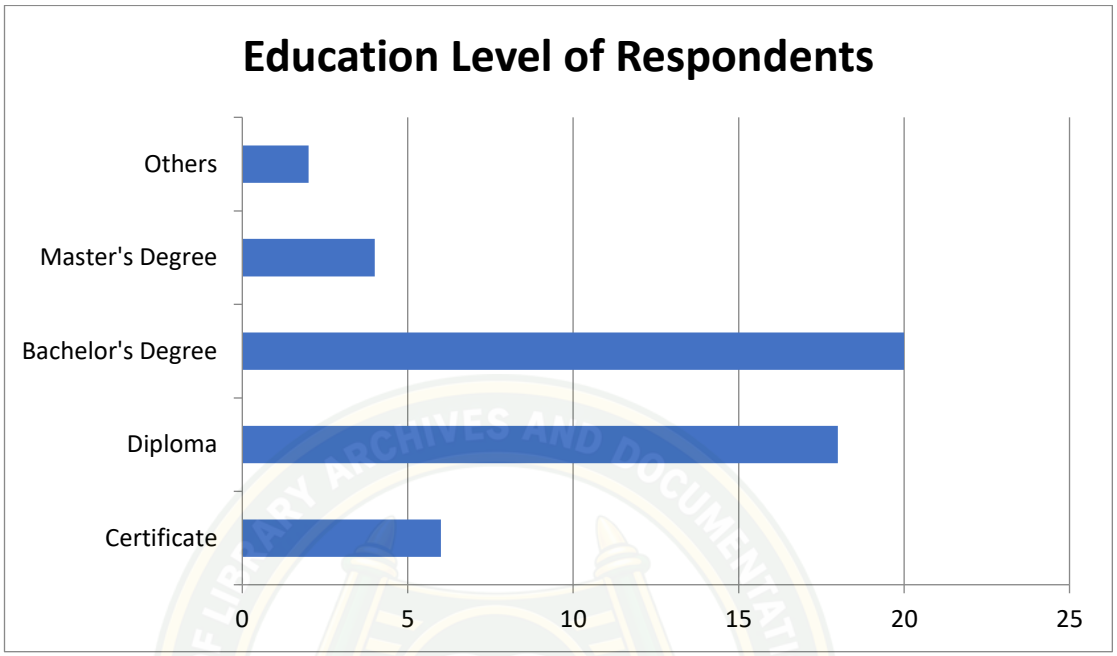


Figure 4.3: Education Level

The results show that the majority of respondents (40%, n=20) held Bachelor's degrees, followed by diploma holders (36%, n=18). Certificate holders accounted for 12% (n=6), while Master's degree holders constituted 8% (n=4). The relatively high education levels among respondents suggest that employees possess the basic literacy and analytical skills necessary to understand and implement records management policies. This finding aligns with the assertion by Kemoni (2009) that educated employees are more likely to comprehend and adhere to organizational policies.

4.2.4 Departmental Distribution

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Figure 4.4: Departmental Distribution of Respondents

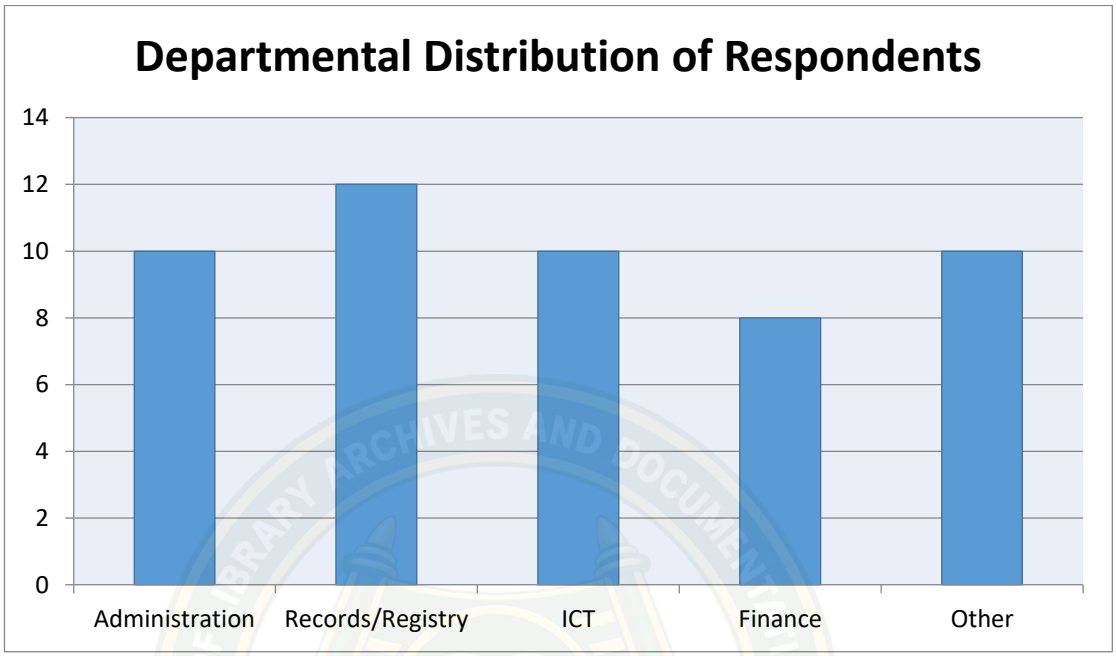


Figure 4.4: Departmental Distribution

The findings indicate that the Records/Registry department had the highest representation (24%, n=12), followed by Administration (20%, n=10), ICT (20%, n=10), and Finance (16%, n=8). Respondents from other departments, including Research Coordination and Human Resources, accounted for 20% (n=10). This distribution ensured that data were collected from departments that generate, handle, and manage records, providing a comprehensive understanding of records management practices across the organization (Ngulube, 2015; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003).

4.2.5 Work Experience

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Figure 4.5: Work Experience of Respondents

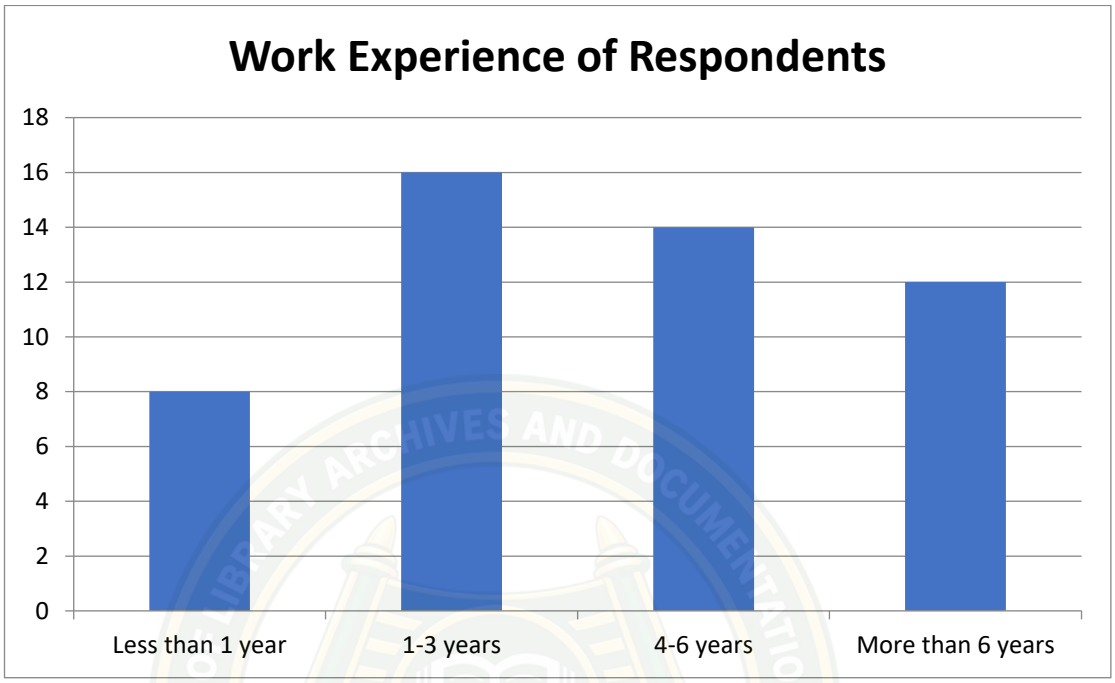


Figure 4.5: Work Experience

The findings reveal that the largest group of respondents (32%, n=16) had 1-3 years of work experience, followed by those with 4-6 years (28%, n=14) and more than 6 years (24%, n=12). Respondents with less than one year of experience constituted 16% (n=8). The presence of experienced staff is beneficial for understanding records management practices, as long-serving employees are likely to have accumulated practical knowledge about policy implementation and challenges over time (Kamatula, 2010; Mnjama, 2003).

4.3 Awareness of Record Management Policies

The first specific objective of this study was to examine the existing record management policies in Primer Business Solutions Ltd. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked about their awareness of these policies, how they became aware, their understanding, and the accessibility of policies.

4.3.1 Existence and Awareness of Policies

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Table 4.6: Awareness of Record Management Policies

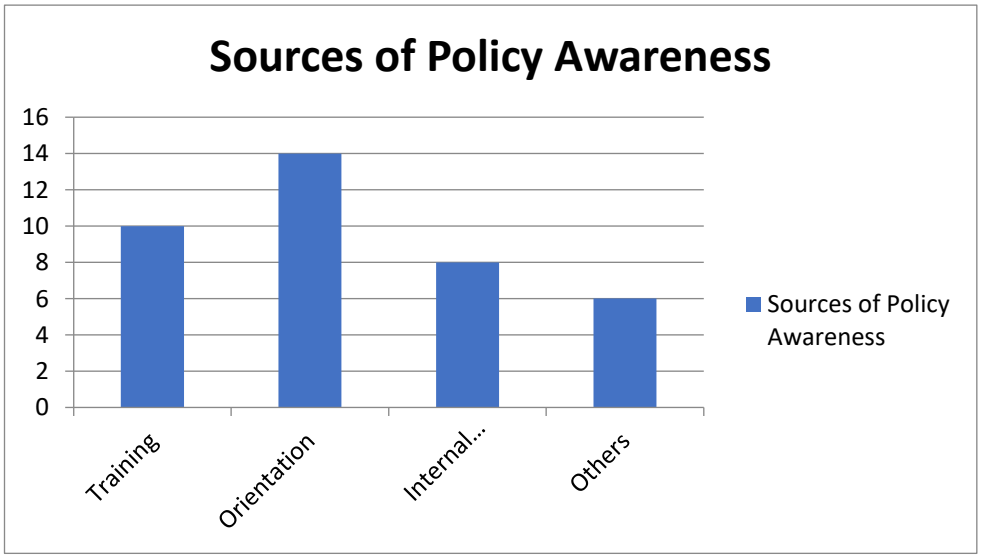
Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	76
No	12	24
Total	50	100

Figure 4.6: Awareness of Record Management Policies

The findings indicate that 76% (n=38) of respondents were aware of the existence of record management policies at Primer Business Solutions Ltd, while 24% (n=12) were not aware. This suggests that while the majority of employees know about the policies, a significant proportion remain unaware. During interviews, a records officer explained: We have documented policies for managing records, but not all employees are familiar with them. The policies are available in the HR office, but many staff members do not take the initiative to read them. This finding supports the observation by Ngoepe (2017) that the existence of policies alone does not guarantee staff awareness, and intentional efforts are required to disseminate policy information to all employees.

4.3.2 How Respondents Became Aware of Policies

FIGURE 4.7: SOURCES OF POLICY AWARENESS



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Figure 4.7: Sources of Policy Awareness

Among those aware of the policies (n=38), the majority (37%, n=14) learned about them during orientation programs, 26% (n=10) through training sessions, and 21% (n=8) via internal communication channels such as memos and emails. Others (16%, n=6) became aware through colleagues or personal initiative. This indicates that orientation and training are the primary channels for policy dissemination, suggesting that Primer Business Solutions Ltd relies heavily on initial employee onboarding to communicate records management policies (Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008; Wamukoya & Mutula, 2005).

4.3.3 Understanding of Record Management Policies

Figure 4.8: Understanding of Record Management Policies

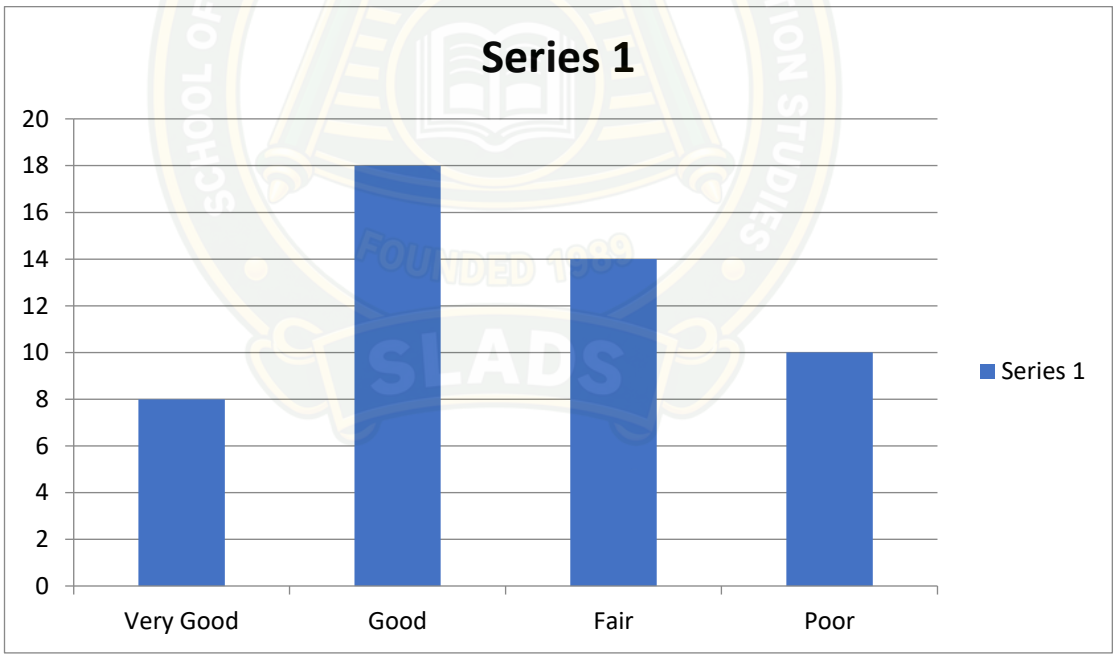


Figure 4.8: Understanding of Record Management Policies

The findings reveal that 36% (n=18) of respondents rated their understanding as good, while 28% (n=14) rated it as fair. Only 16% (n=8) indicated very good understanding, while 20% (n=10) rated their understanding as poor. This suggests that policy comprehension is moderate at best, with a significant number of employees lacking adequate understanding. During interviews, an ICT officer noted:

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The policies are written in formal language that can be difficult for some staff to understand. We need simpler, more user-friendly versions to ensure everyone can follow them.

This finding aligns with Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who emphasized that unclear policies hinder effective implementation.

4.3.4 Accessibility of Policies

Table 4.9: Accessibility of Record Management Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	40%
No	30	60%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.9: Accessibility of Record Management Policies

The findings indicate that 60% (n=30) of respondents reported that record management policies are not easily accessible, while only 40% (n=20) found them accessible. This reveals a significant accessibility gap. An administrative staff member explained: I know there are policies somewhere, but I don't know where to find them. They are not posted on the notice board or shared via email regularly.

This finding is consistent with Mnjama (2003), who identified poor accessibility of policy documents as a major barrier to effective records management in East African organizations.

4.4 Clarity and Implementation of Record Management Policies

The second specific objective was to assess the level of implementation of record management policies in daily organizational operations. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with statements regarding policy clarity, enforcement, training, and guidelines.

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4.4.1 Clarity of Record Management Policies

Table 4.10: Clarity of Record Management Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	6	12%
Agree	16	32%
Neutral	10	20%
Disagree	14	28%
Strongly Disagree	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.10: Clarity of Record Management Policies

The findings reveal that 32% (n=16) agreed that policies are clearly written, while 28% (n=14) disagreed. Only 12% (n=6) strongly agreed, and 8% (n=4) strongly disagreed. The remaining 20% (n=10) remained neutral. This indicates mixed perceptions regarding policy clarity. During interviews, a records officer commented:

The policies exist, but they are written in a complex manner. Some sections are open to interpretation, which leads to different practices across departments.

This finding supports the assertion by Asogwa (2012) that policy clarity is essential for effective implementation, and unclear policies often result in inconsistent practices.

4.4.2 Enforcement of Record Management Policies

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Table 4.11: Enforcement of Record Management Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	8%
Agree	12	24%
Neutral	12	24%
Disagree	16	32%
Strongly Disagree	6	12%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.11: Enforcement of Record Management Policies

The findings indicate that only 24% (n=12) agreed that policies are effectively enforced, while 32% (n=16) disagreed. Additionally, 12% (n=6) strongly disagreed, and 24% (n=12) remained neutral. This suggests that enforcement mechanisms are weak. An interview respondent from the Records Department explained:

There is no dedicated team responsible for ensuring compliance with records policies. Managers are busy with other duties, so policy enforcement is not a priority.

This finding aligns with Ngoepe (2017), who argued that weak enforcement mechanisms undermine the effectiveness of records management policies.

4.4.3 Regular Training on Record Management Policies

Table 4.12: Regular Training on Record Management Policies

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	8
Agree	10	20
Neutral	12	24
Disagree	18	36
Strongly Disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

Figure 4.12: Regular Training on Record Management Policies

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The findings reveal that 36% (n=18) disagreed that employees receive regular training on records management policies, while 12% (n=6) strongly disagreed. Only 20% (n=10) agreed that training is provided, with 8% (n=4) strongly agreeing. This indicates a significant lack of continuous training. A departmental head noted during interviews:

When new employees join, they receive some orientation, but there are no refresher courses or periodic training sessions on records management. This affects how staff handle records.

This finding is consistent with Kamatula (2010), who identified limited training as a major challenge in implementing records management policies in Tanzania.

4.4.4 Clear Guidelines on Records Creation, Storage, and Disposal

Table 4.13: Clear Guidelines on Records Management Processes

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	6	12
Agree	14	28
Neutral	10	20
Disagree	14	28
Strongly Disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

Figure 4.13: Clear Guidelines on Records Management Processes

The findings indicate that 28% (n=14) agreed that clear guidelines exist for records creation, storage, and disposal, while 28% (n=14) disagreed, and 12% (n=6) strongly disagreed. A significant proportion (20%, n=10) remained neutral. This indicates that guidelines are not uniformly understood or applied. An ICT officer explained: We have procedures, but they are not consistently followed. Some departments store records digitally, others still use paper, and there is no standardized approach.

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This finding supports the observation by International Records Management Trust (2009) that lack of standardized procedures leads to fragmented records management systems.

4.5 Record Management Practices

The third specific objective was to evaluate the effectiveness of record management policies in ensuring proper handling of records. Respondents were asked about records creation methods, classification systems, storage, retrieval, and disposal procedures.

4.5.1 Method of Records Creation

Table 4.14: Method of Records Creation

Method	Frequency	Percentage
Paper-based	12	24
Electronic	18	36
Both	20	40
Total	50	100

Figure 4.14: Method of Records Creation

The findings reveal that 40% (n=20) of respondents reported using both paper-based and electronic methods for records creation, 36% (n=18) used electronic methods, and 24% (n=12) used paper-based methods. This indicates that Primer Business Solutions Ltd is transitioning towards electronic records management, though hybrid systems persist (Wamukoya & Mutula, 2005; Mutula, 2005). An interview respondent noted:

We are in a transition phase. Some records are digital, especially those related to finance and research, but many personnel records are still paper-based.

4.5.2 Effectiveness of Record Classification Systems

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Table 4.15: Effectiveness of Record Classification Systems

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very Effective	6	12
Effective	16	32
Neutral	12	24
Ineffective	12	24
Very Ineffective	4	8
Total	50	100

Figure 4.15: Effectiveness of Record Classification Systems

The findings indicate that 32% (n=16) rated classification systems as effective, while 24% (n=12) rated them as ineffective, and 24% (n=12) remained neutral. A records officer explained during interviews: We have a classification system based on departments and record types, but it is not always followed. Some staff create their own filing systems, which creates confusion.

This finding aligns with Asogwa (2012), who noted that improper classification hinders efficient records retrieval.

4.5.3 Proper Storage and Protection of Records

Table 4.16: Proper Storage and Protection of Records

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	12
Agree	14	28
Neutral	10	20
Disagree	14	28
Strongly Disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

Figure 4.16: Proper Storage and Protection of Records

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The findings reveal that only 28% (n=14) agreed that records are properly stored and protected, while 28% (n=14) disagreed, and 12% (n=6) strongly disagreed. This suggests concerns about storage conditions. An interview respondent from Administration said that

We lack adequate storage facilities. Some records are kept in crowded shelves and rooms with poor ventilation, which risks damage from dust and moisture.

This finding is consistent with Kemoni (2009), who identified inadequate infrastructure as a barrier to effective records management in Tanzania.

4.5.4 Ease and Speed of Records Retrieval

Table 4.17: Ease and Speed of Records Retrieval

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	8
Agree	12	24
Neutral	12	24
Disagree	16	32
Strongly Disagree	6	12
Total	50	100

Figure 4.17: Ease and Speed of Records Retrieval

The findings indicate that 32% (n=16) disagreed that retrieval is easy and fast, while 12% (n=6) strongly disagreed. Only 24% (n=12) agreed, and 8% (n=4) strongly agreed. A departmental head explained:

Retrieval takes a long time because many records are not properly indexed. Sometimes we spend hours searching for a single file.

This finding supports Mnjama (2003), who highlighted that poor retrieval systems lead to delays and inefficiencies.

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4.5.5 Procedures for Records Disposal

Table 4.18: Procedures for Records Disposal

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	18	36%
No	32	64%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.18: Procedures for Records Disposal

The findings reveal that 64% (n=32) of respondents reported that proper procedures for records disposal do not exist, while only 36% (n=18) indicated that such procedures are in place. A records officer noted during interviews:

There is no formal policy on when and how to dispose of records. As a result, we accumulate many outdated files that take up valuable storage space."*

This finding is consistent with Ngulube (2015), who emphasized the importance of systematic disposal in records lifecycle management.

4.6 Factors Affecting Record Management Practices

The fourth specific objective was to identify challenges affecting the implementation of record management policies. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which factors such as staff skills, ICT availability, organizational culture, and management support affect records management practices.

4.6.1 Staff Skills

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Table 4.19: Effect of Staff Skills on Record Management Practices

Level of Effect	Frequency	Percentage %
Very High	12	24%
High	20	40%
Moderate	10	20%
Low	6	12%
Very Low	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.19: Effect of Staff Skills on Record Management Practices

The findings reveal that 40% (n=20) rated staff skills as having a high effect, while 24% (n=12) rated it as very high. This indicates that staff competence significantly influences records management practices. A records officer explained:

Many employees lack formal training in records management. They handle records based on what they learned on the job, which often leads to errors and inconsistencies.

This finding aligns with Kamatula (2010), who identified lack of skilled personnel as a key challenge in records management implementation.

4.6.2 ICT Availability

Table 4.20: Effect of ICT Availability on Record Management Practices

Level of Effect	Frequency	Percentage %
Very High	14	28%
High	18	36%
Moderate	10	20%
Low	6	12%
Very Low	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.20: Effect of ICT Availability on Record Management Practices

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The findings indicate that 36% (n=18) rated ICT availability as having a high effect, while 28% (n=14) rated it as very high. An ICT officer noted:

We have computers and some software, but we lack a fully integrated records management system. We need proper document management software to improve our processes. This finding supports Wamukoya and Mutula (2005), who emphasized the role of ICT in enhancing records management.

4.6.3 Organizational Culture

Table 4.21: Effect of Organizational Culture on Record Management Practices

Level of Effect	**Frequency**	**Percentage %**
Very High	8	16%
High	14	28
Moderate	16	32%
Low	10	20%
Very Low	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Figure 4.21: Effect of Organizational Culture on Record Management Practices

The findings reveal that 32% (n=16) rated organizational culture as having a moderate effect, while 28% (n=14) rated it as high. An interview respondent from Human Resources explained: Some staff members don't take records management seriously. They view it as an unnecessary administrative task rather than a critical organizational function. This attitude affects compliance. This finding aligns with Shepherd and Yeo (2003), who noted that organizational culture influences adherence to records management policies.

4.6.4 Management Support

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Table 4.22: Effect of Management Support on Record Management Practices

Level of Effect	Frequency	Percentage %
Very High	14	28%
High	18	36%
Moderate	10	20%
Low	6	12%
Very Low	2	4%
Total	50	100 %

Figure 4.22: Effect of Management Support on Record Management Practices

The findings indicate that 36% (n=18) rated management support as having a high effect, while 28% (n=14) rated it as very high. A departmental head explained: Management support is crucial. When managers prioritize records management and allocate resources, staff take it seriously. Without visible support, employees may neglect their responsibilities. This finding is consistent with Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), who emphasized the role of leadership in promoting effective records management.

4.7 Challenges in Implementing Record Management Policies

The fourth specific objective also aimed to identify challenges affecting implementation. Respondents were asked open-ended questions about challenges they face in implementing records management policies. Thematic analysis of their responses revealed several major challenges (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.7.1 Major Challenges Identified

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Table 4.23: Major Challenges in Implementing Record Management Policies

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of Training and Awareness	18	36
Inadequate ICT Infrastructure	14	28
Poor Storage Facilities	10	20
Weak Enforcement Mechanisms	18	16
Limited Financial Resources	6	12
Staff Resistance to Change	4	8
Lack of Clear Policies	6	12

Note: Multiple responses were provided, so percentages do not sum to 100%.

Figure 4.23: Major Challenges in Implementing Record Management Policies

Thematic analysis of responses identified the following challenges:

a) Lack of Training and Awareness (36%, n=18)

A significant proportion of respondents cited insufficient training as a major challenge. One respondent noted: Most employees don't understand the importance of proper records management. They need regular training to appreciate why policies exist.

b) Inadequate ICT Infrastructure (28%, n=14)

Many respondents highlighted technological limitations. An ICT officer explained:

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We don't have a proper electronic document management system. Some departments still rely on manual files, which are difficult to manage and retrieve.

c) Poor Storage Facilities (20%, n=10)

Respondents expressed concerns about physical storage conditions. An administrative staff member stated: Our filing cabinets are old and overcrowded. We need better storage facilities, including secure rooms with proper environmental controls.

d) Weak Enforcement Mechanisms (16%, n=8)

Several respondents noted that there are no consequences for non-compliance. One respondent explained: People do what they want because no one checks whether they are following the rules. There is no system of accountability.

e) Limited Financial Resources (12%, n=6)

Financial constraints were also mentioned. A departmental head noted:

Records management is not given enough budget priority. We have to compete for funds with other departments, and records management often loses.

f) Staff Resistance to Change (8%, n=4)

Some respondents cited resistance from staff accustomed to old practices. An interview respondent stated: Changing from paper to digital systems is difficult because some staff are not comfortable with technology. They prefer their old methods.

g) Lack of Clear Policies (12%, n=6)

Some respondents indicated that policies themselves are not sufficiently clear. One respondent commented:

Some policies are too general and don't provide specific guidance on how to handle different types of records.

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These challenges are consistent with findings by Kamatula (2010), Mnjama (2003), and Ngoepe (2017), who identified similar barriers in East African organizations.

4.8 Recommendations for Improving Record Management Practices

Respondents were asked to provide suggestions for improving records management practices at Primer Business Solutions Ltd. Thematic analysis of their responses is presented below (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

4.8.1 Strategies for Improvement

Table 4.24: Recommendations for Improvement

Recommendation	Frequency	Percentage
Provide Regular Training	22	44
Invest in ICT Infrastructure	18	36
Improve Enforcement Mechanisms	16	32
Develop Clear and Accessible Policies	14	28
Allocate Adequate Budget	12	24
Improve Storage Facilities	10	20
Create Awareness Campaigns	8	16
Hire Qualified Records Staff	6	12

Note: Multiple responses were provided, so percentages do not sum to 100%.

Figure 4.24: Recommendations for Improvement

Thematic analysis of suggestions revealed the following key recommendations:

a) Provide Regular Training (44%, n=22)

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The most frequently mentioned recommendation was the need for continuous training. A respondent suggested: Training should be provided to all employees, not just records officers. Everyone handles records in some way, so everyone needs to know the proper procedures.

b) Invest in ICT Infrastructure (36%, n=18)

Many respondents recommended investment in technology. An ICT officer stated We need a proper electronic records management system that can handle both current and archival records. This would improve retrieval and security.

c) Improve Enforcement Mechanisms (32%, n=16)

Respondents called for accountability measures. One respondent noted:

There should be regular audits and checks to ensure compliance with records policies. Managers should hold staff accountable.

d) Develop Clear and Accessible Policies (28%, n=14)

Respondents recommended that policies be simplified and made more accessible. A departmental head suggested: Policies should be written in simple language and made available on the intranet or notice boards. Employees need to know where to find them.

e) Allocate Adequate Budget (24%, n=12)

Financial allocation was emphasized by several respondents. One respondent stated: Records management needs its own budget line. Without sufficient funding, we cannot buy equipment, train staff, or improve infrastructure.

f) Improve Storage Facilities (20%, n=10)

Better storage conditions were recommended. A records officer explained: We need proper filing cabinets, shelves, and secure rooms for sensitive records. This will protect records from damage and unauthorized access.

g) Create Awareness Campaigns (16%, n=8)

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Some respondents recommended campaigns to raise awareness. One respondent stated: We need to create a culture where records management is seen as everyone's responsibility, not just the records department's job.

h) Hire Qualified Records Staff (12%, n=6)

Finally, some respondents recommended hiring trained professionals. A respondent noted: We need qualified records management professionals who can design and implement proper systems. Current staff often lack formal training.

These recommendations align with best practices in records management as outlined by ISO 15489 (2016), Shepherd and Yeo (2003), and Ngoepe (2017).

4.9 Summary of Key Findings

The study on the assessment of record management policies in record management practices at Primer Business Solutions Ltd revealed several key findings:

1. Awareness of Policies While 76% of respondents were aware of records management policies, 24% were unaware. Policy awareness is primarily achieved through orientation and training, though understanding remains moderate, and policies are not easily accessible to 60% of employees.

2. Clarity and Implementation: Perceptions of policy clarity, enforcement, and training were mixed, with a significant proportion of respondents indicating that policies are not clearly written, enforced, or supported by regular training. Guidelines for records creation, storage, and disposal were viewed as insufficient by many.

3. Records Management Practices: The organization uses a hybrid system of paper-based and electronic records creation. Classification systems were rated as moderately effective, while storage, retrieval, and disposal procedures were found to be inadequate. Many records are poorly stored, retrieval is slow, and proper disposal procedures are lacking.

4. Factors Affecting Practices: Staff skills, ICT availability, organizational culture, and management support were identified as significant factors influencing records

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management practices. Respondents indicated that these factors have high to very high effects on effective records management.

5. Challenges: Major challenges identified include lack of training and awareness, inadequate ICT infrastructure, poor storage facilities, weak enforcement mechanisms, limited financial resources, staff resistance to change, and lack of clear policies.

6. Recommendations: Key recommendations include providing regular training, investing in ICT infrastructure, improving enforcement mechanisms, developing clear and accessible policies, allocating adequate budget, improving storage facilities, creating awareness campaigns, and hiring qualified records staff.

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CHAPTER FIVE:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive summary of the empirical research findings, logical conclusions, and practical recommendations established from the field study conducted at Primer Business Solutions Ltd. The main purpose of this study was to examine how corporate record management policies influence everyday administrative record-keeping operations within private sector enterprise environments (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Shepherd, 2006). Specifically, the investigation evaluated staff awareness regarding internal operational guidelines, examined current practices in creation and filing, assessed technical and institutional determinants of compliance, and identified key bottlenecks hindering seamless operations. By correlating primary field data with established theoretical standards such as ARMA International guidelines and the Records and Archives Management Act standards (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Thurston, 2005), this chapter synthesizes crucial conclusions and outlines strategic action plans to modernize record management systems across private commercial firms.

5.2 Summary of the Study

5.2.1 Objectives and Scope of the Study

The primary scope of this study focused on evaluating how organizational policies dictate record-keeping efficiency at Primer Business Solutions Ltd. Four specific research objectives guided the investigation: first, to determine the level of employee awareness and physical accessibility regarding statutory and internal record management guidelines (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Skupsky, 1994); second, to evaluate the clarity of existing policy clauses and the consistency of internal enforcement mechanisms (Dearstyne, 2002); third, to examine operational record-keeping routines including document creation, classification indexing, storage security, and retention schedules (McKemmish, 2001); and fourth, to identify

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operational challenges confronting staff while establishing practical interventions (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005). The scope was intentionally bounded to commercial operations to capture unique private sector dynamics.

5.2.2 Methodology and Sample Demographic Characteristics

To achieve robust results, the study executed a descriptive mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews across departments (Saunders et al., 2019). A representative sample of 50 respondents completed structured questionnaires (100% response rate), supplemented by key informant interviews with 10 senior operational heads, records personnel, and ICT managers. Demographic results indicated a balanced workforce composition comprising 56% male and 44% female personnel, with 72% falling between the ages of 26 and 45 years. Educational attainment was notably high, as 84% held university degrees or professional diplomas, ensuring that respondents possessed the conceptual capacity to evaluate organizational workflow. Furthermore, over 80% of participants had served Primer Business Solutions Ltd for more than two years, providing deep operational experience regarding historical registry practices and policy transitions (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011).

5.2.3 Summary of Key Empirical Findings

The empirical investigations conducted at Primer Business Solutions Ltd revealed critical insights regarding operational compliance and systemic bottlenecks:

- **Policy Awareness and Operational Accessibility:** Although 76% of respondents acknowledged the existence of corporate records guidelines, over 60% noted that actual written policy documents were inaccessible in daily work locations. Most staff acquired knowledge through informal peer instructions rather than formal handbook distributions, resulting in fragmented policy comprehension (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Skupsky, 1994).
- **Clarity, Compliance, and Training Deficits:** Only 32% of participants agreed that existing policy directives clearly addressed digital filing and electronic records management. Enforcement was minimal due to the absence of dedicated record compliance officers, and 48% confirmed they had never received formal

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training on record retention or data protection practices (Dearstyne, 2002; McLeod et al., 2007).

- **Current Record-Keeping Practices:** The firm operates a fragmented hybrid environment where 40% rely on combined paper-digital formats and 24% rely entirely on physical paper files. Classification and indexing systems were rated ineffective by 68% of staff, causing average document retrieval times to exceed 45 minutes per request. Furthermore, 64% confirmed an absence of authorized disposition schedules, causing uncontrolled accumulation of inactive files (ARMA International, 2017; McKemmish, 2001).
- **Institutional Determinants and Challenges:** Empirical modeling demonstrated that staff technical competence (64%), ICT platform infrastructure (64%), and direct executive leadership (64%) represent the primary factors driving record management outcomes. Key operational obstacles included inadequate software tools, cramped physical storage, absence of dedicated budget lines, and employee inertia during technological transitions (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005; Roper & Millar, 1999).
- **Recommended Intervention Priorities:** Surveyed personnel highlighted five imperative solutions: implementing regular professional capacity-building workshops (44%), procuring Enterprise Content Management (ECM) software (36%), conducting quarterly compliance audits (32%), publishing concise user manual cheat-sheets (28%), and establishing a dedicated registry budget (24%) (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Thurston, 2005).

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study demonstrates that while Primer Business Solutions Ltd recognizes the legal and operational importance of maintaining records, its current policy framework lacks structured execution and modern technical backing (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Shepherd, 2006). The existence of a qualified workforce provides a solid foundation; however, the reliance on informal filing methods and unstandardized hybrid storage creates significant operational risks. Without clear operational guidelines that reflect modern digital workflows, daily record-keeping

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remains vulnerable to document loss, security breaches, and inefficient retrieval cycles (ARMA International, 2017; Skupsky, 1994).

Furthermore, the study concludes that institutional constraints—such as ambiguous policy terms, lack of active compliance enforcement, and absent retention schedules—directly hinder organizational productivity (Dearstyne, 2002; McLeod et al., 2007). To achieve operational excellence and legal compliance, commercial enterprises must move beyond passive policy formulation. Transforming records management from a neglected administrative burden into a strategic corporate asset requires visible executive commitment, dedicated financial investment, robust digital software, and continuous staff development (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005; Thurston, 2005).

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Mandatory Capacity Building and Practical Skill Development

Primer Business Solutions Ltd executive management should institute compulsory, quarterly professional development modules for all administrative, finance, and technical staff (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Roper & Millar, 1999). Training must transcend basic general orientation and focus on practical digital preservation, metadata tagging, and standardized document structuring. For example, the ICT and records team should conduct hands-on workshops teaching staff to apply standardized metadata tags (such as Author, Client Name, Contract ID, and Creation Date) and strict file-naming conventions (e.g., PBS_FIN_Invoice_2026_v01) across shared network drives to streamline search efficiency.

5.4.2 Procurement and Deployment of Modern Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Systems

The organization must allocate targeted capital expenditure to replace inefficient shared folders and paper registries with a centralized, cloud-hosted Enterprise Content Management (ECM) or Electronic Records Management platform (McKemmish, 2001; Skupsky, 1994). The automated software should feature role-based security access, version tracking, and automated backup routines. For instance,

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deploying a centralized ECM system like Microsoft SharePoint or Alfresco will enable procurement officers and legal teams to collaborate on active commercial contracts simultaneously while automatically archiving previous versions and restricting unauthorized deletion.

5.4.3 Policy Standardization, Dissemination, and Compliance Auditing

Management, in consultation with legal and archival experts, should update and simplify existing corporate policies into accessible, visual desk guides and digital handbooks aligned with statutory standards (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Skupsky, 1994). Additionally, an internal Records Compliance Audit Taskforce should be appointed to conduct unannounced bi-annual reviews across all units. For example, the audit team can perform quarterly spot-checks using a standardized compliance checklist, scoring departments on file organization and data security, while tying these scores directly to departmental Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

5.4.4 Formulation of Retention Schedules and Physical Registry Modernization

To overcome physical room congestion and legal liability, Primer Business Solutions Ltd must establish a comprehensive Record Retention and Disposal Schedule that clearly defines statutory holding periods for financial, legal, and operational documents (ARMA International, 2017; Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005). For example, audited financial statements should be retained securely for seven years before transferring to low-cost offsite archiving, while obsolete customer queries should be systematically shredded after two years following official destruction sign-offs. Concurrently, physical registry rooms should be equipped with fireproof filing cabinets, barcode tracking labels, and humidity control units to safeguard physical master records.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

To further expand academic understanding and empirical literature regarding corporate records management in developing markets, future studies should explore the following domain areas:

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1. **Evaluating Cost-Benefit Metrics of E-Records Migration in Private SMEs:** An empirical investigation measuring the direct return on investment (ROI) and cost savings achieved when small and medium commercial enterprises transition from paper filing to cloud-based document systems (Thurston, 2005).
2. **Data Protection Laws and Cyber Security Compliance in Private Registries:** An in-depth assessment examining how commercial firms comply with statutory data protection regulations and mitigate cyber vulnerability risks within electronic filing platforms (National Archives of Tanzania, 2011; Skupsky, 1994).
3. **Assessing Employee Behavioural Readiness and Change Management in Digital Transformation:** A longitudinal study evaluating the psychological and cultural factors that influence staff adoption of automated workflow software in corporate environments (McLeod et al., 2007).

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APPENDEX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES

Kindly be informed that I am college students at the school of library, archives and Documentation studies (SLADS. Dear Respondent, I am conducting a study titled "An Assessment on the record management policies in record management practices in private sector case study Primer business solutions ltd ." as partial fulfillment of my Ordinary Diploma studies. You are kindly requested to assist in filling the questionnaire below. Be informed that information that you will provide will be treated with high confidentiality and used for the purpose of this study only. Thanks, you for your kind of cooperation.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION:

(Tick (✔) the appropriate answer)

1. Gender:

( ) Male

( ) Female

2. Age group:

( ) 18–25

( ) 26–35

( )36–45

( ) 46 and above

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3. Education level:

( ) Certificate

( ) Diploma

( ) Bachelor's Degree

( ) Master's Degree

( ) Others (Specify) _____

4. Department:

( ) Administration

( ) Records/Registry

( ) ICT

( ) Finance

( ) Other (Specify) _____

5. Work experience:

( ) Less than 1 year

( ) 1–3 years

( ) 4–6 years

( ) More than 6 years

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SECTION B: AWARENESS OF RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICIES:

6. Are you aware of the existence of record management policies in your organization?

( ) Yes

( ) No

7. If yes, how did you become aware of these policies?

( ) Training

( ) Orientation

( ) Internal communication

( ) Others (Specify)

8. How would you rate your understanding of record management policies?

( ) Very good

( ) Good

( ) Fair

( ) Poor

9. Are the policies easily accessible to employees?

( ) Yes

( ) No

SECTION C: CLARITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES:

10. Record management policies are clearly written and understandable:

( )Strongly Agree

( ) Agree

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( )Neutral

( ) Disagree

( )Strongly Disagree

11. The organization effectively enforces record management policies:

( )Strongly Agree

( )Agree

( ) Neutral

( ) Disagree

( ) Strongly Disagree

12. Employees receive regular training on record management policies:

( )Strongly Agree

( ) Agree

( ) Neutral

( ) Disagree

( ) Strongly Disagree

13. There are clear guidelines on how to create, store, and dispose of records:

( ) Strongly Agree

( )Agree

( ) Neutral

( ) Disagree

( ) Strongly Disagree

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SECTION D: RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

14. How are records commonly created in your department?

( ) Paper-based

( ) Electronic

( ) Both

15. How would you rate the effectiveness of record classification systems?

( )Very effective

( ) Effective

( ) Neutral

( ) Ineffective

16. Records are properly stored and protected:

( ) Strongly Agree

( ) Agree

( ) Neutral

( ) Disagree

( ) Strongly Disagree

17. Retrieval of records is easy and fast:

( ) Strongly Agree

( ) Agree

( ) Neutral

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( ) Disagree

( ) Strongly Disagree

18. There are proper procedures for records disposal:

( ) Yes

( ) No

SECTION E: FACTORS AFFECTING RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

19. Indicate the extent to which the following factors affect record management practices:

1) Staff skills ----------
2) ICT availability ----------
3) Organizational culture ----------
4) Management support ----------
-

SECTION F: CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENT:

20. What challenges do you face in implementing record management policies?

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21. What suggestions do you have for improving record management practices?

Thank you for your cooperation

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APPENDEX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Dear respondent,

I am a final year student at College of School of Library, Archives and documentation Studies (SLADS) at Bagamoyo Campus, Tanzania. As part of my Ordinary diploma, I am conducting research thesis on the An Assessment on the record management policies in record management practices in private sector case study .PRIMER BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD I kindly request your contribution to the title. I will appreciate it if you could spare some time to complete the following interview guides. The researcher will treat any information obtained in connection with this study with a high level of confidentiality.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION:

1. What is your position in the organization?

2. How long have you worked in this organization?

3. What are your main responsibilities related to records management?

SECTION B: EXISTENCE AND AWARENESS OF RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICIES

4. Does your organization have formal record management policies?

5. How are employees made aware of these policies?

6. In your opinion, how well do employees understand these policies?

SECTION C: CLARITY AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES

7. How clear and understandable are the record management policies?

8. How are these policies implemented in daily operations?

9. What mechanisms are used to enforce compliance with these policies?

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10. Are there any challenges in implementing record management policies? Explain.

SECTION D: RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:

11. Can you describe how records are created in your organization?

12. What systems are used for classifying records?

13. How are records stored and maintained?

14. How easy is it to retrieve records when needed?

15. What procedures are followed when disposing of records?

SECTION E: ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN RECORD MANAGEMENT:

16. Does your organization use electronic systems (e.g., e-office or DMS) in managing records?

17. How effective are these systems in improving record management practices?

18. What challenges are associated with the use of technology in records management?

SECTION F: FACTORS INFLUENCING RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:

19. How do staff skills affect record management practices?

20. What is the role of ICT infrastructure in supporting records management?

21. How does organizational culture influence adherence to record management policies?

22. What role does top management play in supporting records management?

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SECTION G: RECORD SECURITY AND ACCESS:

23. What measures are in place to ensure the security of records?

24. How is access to records controlled within the organization?

25. Have there been cases of record loss or unauthorized access? If yes, explain.

SECTION H: CHALLENGES AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES:

26. What are the major challenges facing record management in your organization?

27. What improvements would you recommend to enhance record management practices?

28. How can record management policies be improved to better support operations?

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APPENDIX III

RESEARCH BUDGET

ACTIVITIES	COST ANALYSIS	COST TOTAL
Local transport	20,000 per week x 6 weeks	150,000/=
Secretarial service	20 Pages @300×20×5	40,000/=
Stationary	2 reams of paper A4	25,000/=
Binding	50 copies@1000×50	45,000/=
TOTAL		**260,000/=**

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APPENDIX IV

RESARCH TIME SCHEDULE

THE FRAME WORK DURING THE RESEARCH FOR SIX WEEK

ACTIVITIES	1st MONTH	2nd MONTH	3rd MONTH	4th MONTH	5th MONTH	6th MONTH
Report at the school of library, Archive and documentation studies						
Distribution of questionnaire and interviewing respondents						
Observation the situation and collecting questionnaire and data analysis						
Data interpretation and report writing.						

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APPENDIX V

LETTER APPROVAL

PRIME BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD.
INNOVATE • INTEGRATE • EXCEL

Prime Tower, 7th Floor
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P.O. Box 12345
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
+255 22 211 0000
info@primebiz.co.tz
www.primebiz.co.tz

Ref. No.: PBS/HR/RES/2026/017 **Date:** 07 July 2026

Ms. Aisha Hashim Witto
School of Library, Archives and
Documentation Studies (SLADS)
Diploma in Records and Archives
Management
P.O. Box 227
Bagamoyo.

Dear Ms. Witto,

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Reference is made to your request dated 20 June 2026 to conduct research at Prime Business Solutions Ltd.

We are pleased to inform you that your request has been considered and approved. You are hereby granted permission to conduct your research in our organization.

Your research title is:

"AN ASSESSMENT ON THE RECORD MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PRIVATE SECTOR"

You will be required to liaise with the HR & Administration Department for coordination and access to relevant information. Kindly note that any information obtained during the research should be used for academic purposes only and treated with strict confidentiality.

We wish you all the best in your research.

Yours sincerely,

PRIME BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD. P.O. BOX 12345 DAR ES SALAAM

.....

Neema A. Mkwizu
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER
For: PRIME BUSINESS SOLUTIONS LTD.

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