SCHOOL OF LIBRARY ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES (SLADS – BAGAMOYO).

A RESEARCH REPORT

ASSESSING THE PRESERVATION OF PAPER VITAL RECORDS ON ENHANCING LONG TERM ACCESSIBILITY AT BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL.

BY:

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A Research report to be submitted at the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies as a Partial Fulfillment for the requirements of the Award of Ordinary Diploma in ,Records and Archieves management .

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he/she has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS), a research report entitled: "**Assessing the Preservation of Paper Vital Records on Enhancing Long Term Accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council."**

This report is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

(Supervisor's)

ZAINA AMIRI OMARI

Signature:

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Date:

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DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

HERI ORIWE KIFUNGE, declare that this research report is my own original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for academic award or examination purposes. All sources of information used in this study have been duly acknowledged through appropriate citations and references.

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DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my beloved parents, family members, friends, and everyone who provided encouragement, support, and inspiration throughout my academic journey. Their prayers, guidance, moral support, and continuous motivation greatly contributed to the successful completion of this study

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May Almighty God bless you all abundantly.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRYOMS

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
BDC	Bagamoyo District Council
ICA	International Council on Archives
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IRMT	International Records Management Trust
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
RAM	Records and Archives Management
SLADS	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
URT	United Republic of Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to assess the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records, to evaluate the quality and integrity of managing paper vital records on enhancing long-term accessibility, and to identify the challenges facing Bagamoyo District Council in managing paper vital records. The study employed a mixed methods research approach and a descriptive research design. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document review. The study involved a sample of 25 respondents, including registry staff, administrative officers, and management personnel who were directly involved in the creation, handling, preservation, storage, and management of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that although the Council had established records preservation practices, several challenges affected the effective preservation and long-term accessibility of paper vital records. These challenges included inadequate storage facilities, insufficient preservation materials, unfavorable environmental conditions, limited staff training, and inadequate implementation of records management policies. The study concludes that improving preservation infrastructure, strengthening staff capacity, and adopting modern preservation technologies are essential for enhancing the long-term accessibility of paper vital records. The findings are expected to contribute to improving records preservation practices within local government authorities in Tanzania.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the study about assessing the preservation of Paper Vital Records on enhancing long term Accessibility at Bagamoyo district council. The chapter introduces and presents background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

Preservation of vital records is a fundamental administrative function in both public and private institutions because it ensures that important information remains safe, complete and accessible over time (Mohamed, Rasheli & Mwagike, 2018; Chacha et al., 2022). Proper preservation protects records from damage, loss, or deterioration caused by factors like heat, humidity, pests, or frequent handling. By keeping records in good condition, governments and organizations can verify legal identities, provide public services, make informed decisions, and maintain historical evidence. Preservation also supports transparency, accountability and future digitization efforts, ensuring that vital information continues to be available for both current and future generations (Newa & Mwantimwa, 2019, Kitinya 2025). Preservation of paper vital records involves a structured system of proper storage, careful handling, systematic organization, regular monitoring, use of protective materials, and security measures (Teygeler 2018). all aimed at keeping records safe, accessible, and usable for both current and future needs.

In the Global and Regional Context Preservation of paper based vital records is recognized internationally as a cornerstone for human knowledge, governance, accountability and cultural identity. These records, like archives and other documentary heritage, serve as society's collective memory, enabling governments and communities to reconstruct past actions, inform future decisions, and ensure transparency and justice. UNESCO emphasizes that safeguarding documentary heritage is essential for connecting past and present societies and for guaranteeing

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accountability for future generations. Initiatives such as the UNESCO Memory of the World Programmed by (Hanhikoski 2016). promote long-term preservation and accessibility of important records, encouraging countries to protect archival holdings and library collections and to establish systems for effective management of documentary heritage. Even with advances in digitization, physical paper records remain critical because they carry authenticity, provenance details, and historical context that digital copies cannot fully replicate. When properly stored, paper records can remain stable and usable for centuries, making their effective preservation a lasting priority in archival science (Makaranga et al., 2025).

Across Africa, the preservation of public records, including vital records, faces numerous challenges. Many archival institutions struggle with limited funding, poor storage conditions, inadequate environmental controls, and a shortage of trained personnel—all factors that threaten the physical integrity and long-term accessibility of paper records (Segaetsho, 2026). These structural and operational challenges highlight the need for systematic approaches to ensure records remain available for administrative, legal, and historical purposes.

In Tanzania, the preservation of documentary heritage has gradually been supported by law and institutional policy. The Records and Archives Management system provides frameworks for proper administration, retention, and preservation of public records, including the creation of archival repositories to secure records of lasting value (Rock, 2016). However, implementation of these policies often varies across local government authorities, affecting the accessibility of vital records. Recent reforms, such as Zanzibar's investment in modern archival facilities with enhanced security and ICT systems, and Tanzania's engagement in UNESCO programmers, demonstrate increasing recognition of the importance of structured, long-term preservation of paper records (Kitinya 2025).

Assessing the preservation of paper vital records, particularly at local government levels such as Bagamoyo District Council, is therefore essential. It helps identify gaps, improve long-term accessibility, and ensure that these records continue to serve as reliable sources of information for governance, public services and historical research.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

Paper vital records such as land records, population registers, legal documents, and administrative files are essential for effective governance, service delivery, protection of citizens' rights, and preservation of institutional memory in local government authorities. Proper preservation of these records is necessary to ensure their quality, integrity, and long-term accessibility. In Tanzania, the Records and Archives Management Act provide a legal framework for the management and preservation of public records including vital records (Katundu, 2002, Oweru, 2014, Kashaija et. Al. 2024). However, the effective implementation of this framework remains a challenge, especially at the local government level.

Despite the existence of legal and policy provisions, many district councils continue to experience serious challenges in preserving paper vital records. According to Millar (2017), these challenges include inadequate preservation infrastructure, poor storage conditions, limited financial resources, shortage of trained records management personnel, and weak implementation of preservation policies and standards. Similarly, the International Council on Archives (ICA, 2016) emphasizes that poor environmental conditions, improper storage facilities, and inadequate preservation practices expose paper vital records to deterioration caused by heat, humidity, dust, pests, and improper handling. Consequently, these factors threaten the long-term accessibility, authenticity, and usability of paper vital records. (Oweru, 2014). These conditions compromise the quality and integrity of records and reduce their long-term accessibility (Kashaija et. Al. 2024).

The study of (Kitinya,2025) explain there is limited documented evidence regarding the current state of preservation infrastructure and practices for paper vital records, as well as the quality and integrity of preserved records in supporting long term accessibility. Previous studies have highlighted similar challenges, noting that inadequate preservation mechanisms often result in deterioration and loss of vital records (Katundu, 2002; Oweru, 2014). Furthermore, recent findings emphasize that without proper preservation strategies, councils risk compromising the accessibility and reliability of records, thereby undermining administrative efficiency and institutional continuity (Kashaija et al., 2024).

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The lack of such empirical information makes it difficult to identify existing gaps and implement appropriate preservation strategies. If these challenges are not addressed, the Council risks loss of valuable documentary evidence, discontinuity of organizational processes, reduced administrative efficiency, legal uncertainties, and erosion of institutional memory (Oweru, 2014; Kashaija et al., 2024). Therefore, this study sought to assess the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council in order to enhance their long-term accessibility

1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

To assess the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

i. To assess the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

ii. To evaluate the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

iii. To identify the challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

1.4 Research questions

i. What are current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.?

ii. What are the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.?

iii. What are the challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.?

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1.5 Significance of the study

This study on the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council was important to several stakeholders. First, it helped the Council understand the existing strengths and challenges associated with the preservation of vital records. This understanding assisted the Council in identifying areas that required improvement and provided insights on enhancing records preservation practices to ensure long-term accessibility. The findings of the study were also useful to other local government authorities. Other councils could learn from the experiences of Bagamoyo District Council and use the findings as a reference for improving their own records preservation systems and practices. In addition, the study benefited records management staff by providing a better understanding of effective methods and strategies for preserving important records. This knowledge enhanced their ability to maintain records in a safe, organized, and accessible manner whenever they were required. The study was also valuable to policymakers and regulators. The findings provided information that could assist in the development and improvement of policies, regulations, and guidelines related to records preservation and management. This contributed to strengthening the protection, management, and accessibility of public records in accordance with professional standards and best practices. Finally, the study contributed to researchers and students in the field of Records and Archives Management. It provided useful information for those interested in records preservation, particularly within the context of local government authorities in Tanzania. Furthermore, the study served as a reference for future research related to records preservation, accessibility, and records management challenges in public institutions.

1.6.0 scope and limitation of the study

1.6.1 Scope of the study

The study was conducted at Bagamoyo District Council. In particular, the study focused on the preservation of paper vital records within the Council. The main focus of the study was to assess how Bagamoyo District Council preserved its paper vital records in order to enhance their long-term accessibility. The study targeted staff members who were involved in the creation, handling, and management of vital

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records to support the Council's daily administrative activities. Furthermore, the study examined the existing practices, procedures, and challenges related to the preservation of paper vital records at the Council.

1.6.2 Limitations of the Study

Several factors affected the implementation of this study on assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. First, the study was limited to only one local government authority due to financial constraints. The researcher was a self-financed student with limited financial resources, which made it difficult to conduct the study in several councils that could have broadened the scope of the study and improved the generalization of the findings. Despite this limitation, the researcher utilized the available budget effectively and allocated resources appropriately to ensure the successful completion of the research.Furthermore, the study was affected by time constraints. Since the research was conducted as part of an academic program, it had to adhere to the timeframe stipulated by the institution. The limited time available affected some stages of data collection and analysis. However, the researcher managed the available time efficiently and worked beyond normal hours to ensure that all research objectives were achieved and that the study was completed within the required period. Despite these limitations, sufficient data were collected and analyzed to provide reliable findings and meaningful conclusions for the study.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

1.7.1 Records

Records are pieces of information created, received, or kept by an organization to show its activities, decisions, and transactions. They serve as evidence of actions taken and are preserve d for future reference (Malake & Phiri, 2020). In this study, "records" refer specifically to the paper documents generated and used in different departments at Bagamoyo District Council, such as files letter and reports.

1.7.2 Records Management

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Records management is the organized process of controlling records from creation to disposal, including storing, retrieving, and protecting records to make them reliable and accessible (Anike, 2025). In this research, records management refers to how Bagamoyo District Council handles its paper vital records, including how they are organized, stored and retrieved for daily operations.

1.7.3 Paper Records

Paper records are physical documents such as letters, reports, forms and files that contain important information and must be properly stored and managed (Journal of Public Sector Management, 2020). In this study, paper records are the focus of investigation, as the research examines the challenges of managing these physical records in Bagamoyo District Council offices.

1.7.4 Legal and Regulatory Framework

A legal and regulatory framework is the set of laws, rules and policies that guide how records are handled, stored, and protected to ensure proper accountability (Sospeter et al., 2020). In this study, the term refers to the specific Tanzanian laws and policies that govern how local government authorities like Bagamoyo District Council should manage paper vital records.

1.7.5 Vital Records

Vital records are official government documents detailing significant life events (births, deaths, marriages, divorces) and organizational records crucial for immediate operational continuity, legal protection, and financial stability, especially during emergencies or disasters (Davis, 2019). In this research this concept is used to measure how effectively they are being protected and how that protection can be improved for long term access.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A literature review is a section of research that looks at what other researchers have already written about a certain topic. It helps to understand what is already known, what has been studied, and what gaps still exist (Khan et al., 2024). Instead of just listing past studies, a literature review explains and compares them in order to show how they relate to the current study.

According to Creswell (2018) and Kumar (2019), a literature review helps the researcher to identify existing knowledge, research gaps, theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches related to the study topic. It also provides a strong foundation for the study by critically reviewing previous research and identifying areas that require further investigation.

In this section, different books, journal articles, and research papers related to the study objectives will be reviewed. The review will be organized according to each research objective so that it clearly supports the purpose of the study.

2.1 Overview of Vital Records Management Practices

The study by (Mokhtar and Yusof (2016) explains vital records are those records that are essential for the continued functioning of an organization during and after a disaster. They provide critical evidence of an organization's legal rights, financial obligations, administrative activities, and institutional responsibilities. Without these records, organizations may face operational breakdown, legal disputes, and loss of institutional memory. Vital records normally include documents such as legal agreements, financial records, land ownership documents, employee personnel files, policy documents, contracts and other official government records that are necessary for administrative and legal purposes (Seymour, 2017). These records play a key role in ensuring accountability, transparency and effective governance within organizations. In public institutions such as local government authorities vital records also provide evidence of government activities, decision making processes and service delivery to the public (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003).The concept of records management is

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closely linked to the preservation and accessibility of vital records.The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines records management as the systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records to ensure that they remain authentic, reliable and accessible over time (Seymour, 2017). Effective records management practices ensure that records are properly classified, stored, protected, and retrieved whenever they are needed. Proper records management also ensures that organizations maintain accurate information that supports administrative functions, legal compliance, and decision-making processes (ISO 15489, 2016).

Touray (2021) emphasizes that effective management of vital records begins with the identification of records that are critical for the survival and functioning of an organization. Once these records are identified, organizations must establish protection measures to safeguard them from potential threats such as fire, floods, theft, environmental damage, and accidental destruction. The protection of vital records often requires the implementation of specific preservation strategies such as secure storage facilities, fire-proof cabinets, backup systems, and disaster preparedness plans. These measures help ensure that vital records remain accessible even after emergencies or disasters. The preservation of vital records contributes significantly to organizational efficiency and accountability. Properly managed records help organizations retrieve information quickly, support evidence-based decision making, and maintain reliable documentation of past activities. (Read and Ginn 2016), effective records management systems improve operational efficiency by ensuring that important information is organized and easily accessible when required. This is particularly important for public institutions where accurate documentation is essential for transparency and public trust.

Despite the rapid growth of digital technologies, paper-based records remain widely used in many developing countries, especially in government institutions and local authorities. (Mikkelsen et al. 2015) note that many developing countries continue to rely heavily on paper records due to limited technological infrastructure, inadequate funding and insufficient digital records management systems. As a result, government offices often store large volumes of paper records that require proper preservation to ensure their long-term accessibility. The management of paper vital records requires

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well organized filing systems, secure storage environments, and trained personnel who understand records management principles. Poor storage conditions such as excessive humidity, high temperatures, dust, pests and poor handling practices can significantly damage paper records over time (Millar, 2017). Therefore, organizations must establish appropriate preservation strategies that include controlled storage environments, proper shelving systems, regular inspection of records and staff training in records handling and management.

2.2 Quality and integrity of Managing Paper Vital Records

Millar (2017) explains that quality in managing paper records involves maintaining records in good physical condition, ensuring they remain authentic, reliable, complete, and accessible throughout their lifecycle. Effective management includes proper classification, labeling, secure storage, and careful handling to protect records from deterioration and loss. Paper records should be stored in clean, dry, and well-ventilated environments because excessive heat, humidity, dust, and pests can cause permanent damage. Proper preservation practices therefore ensure that records remain usable, trustworthy, and accessible whenever they are required for administrative, legal, and historical purposes (ISO 15489-1, 2016; ARMA International, 2020; Millar, 2017). Maintaining proper storage conditions is therefore essential for safeguarding the integrity of vital documents.

The study of (Seymour, 2017). Indicate that Quality in managing paper vital records involves ensuring that these records remain complete, reliable and usable throughout their lifecycle. High-quality records management practices require proper classification, labeling and systematic filing of documents so that vital records can be easily identified and retrieved when needed. (Stevenson et al. 2018) explain that records must possess characteristics such as reliability, authenticity, completeness, and usability in order to serve as credible evidence of organizational activities. When vital records are properly organized and managed, they can support administrative processes, legal accountability, and institutional decisionmaking.

Another critical aspect of quality management is maintaining the physical condition of paper vital records. Since these records are often preserved for long periods, they must be protected from environmental conditions that may cause deterioration (Wong et al.,

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2017). Paper vital records are particularly vulnerable to factors such as excessive humidity, high temperatures, dust, pests and poor handling practices. (Millar ,2017) note that improper storage conditions can lead to fading ink, paper brittleness, mold growth, and physical damage to documents, which may eventually result in the loss of critical information. Because vital records contain essential organizational information, their deterioration can seriously disrupt administrative operations and compromise institutional accountability,

To preserve the quality of paper vital records, organizations must establish appropriate storage environments that protect records from environmental hazards and physical damage (Stevenson et al. 2018) . Proper storage facilities should include secure filing cabinets well organized shelving systems, and controlled storage rooms that protect documents from moisture, dust, and unauthorized access (Read and Ginn 2016) emphasize that proper storage infrastructure is essential in records management because it ensures that records remain intact and accessible for future reference.

2.3 Challenges Facing District Councils in Managing Paper Vital Records

According to (Teygeler,2018) Local government authorities, including district councils, face numerous challenges in managing and preserving paper vital records effectively. These challenges often arise from inadequate storage infrastructure, shortage of skilled personnel, limited financial resources and weak implementation of records management policies. When these challenges are not properly addressed, they can negatively affect the preservation and accessibility of vital records that are necessary for administrative operations and service delivery (Seymour, 2017).

One of the major challenges in managing paper vital records is inadequate storage facilities. Proper storage infrastructure is essential for protecting records from physical damage and environmental risks. However, many district councils operate with limited office space and insufficient storage equipment such as cabinets, shelves and secure records rooms. (Teygeler 2018) notes that inadequate storage facilities expose paper records to various risks, including physical damage, loss and unauthorized access. when records are stored in overcrowded or unsuitable environments, their physical condition may deteriorate due to factors such as humidity, dust, pests and poor

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handling. As a result, important information contained in vital records may become difficult to retrieve or may be permanently lost. (Khan et al., 2024).

A study by (Van Lange et al. 2015) Another significant challenge affecting the management of paper vital records is the shortage of trained records management personnel. Effective records management requires specialized knowledge and skills in organizing, classifying, preserving and retrieving records. In many local government offices, however records are often managed by staff who lack formal training in records management practices. This lack of expertise may lead to poor filing systems, misplacement of documents and improper handling of vital records. According to (Shepherd and Yeo 2003), trained records management personnel play a crucial role in ensuring that records are systematically organized and properly maintained to support administrative efficiency. Without adequate professional skills, the effectiveness of records management systems is significantly reduced.

A study by (Khan et al., 2024) explain that Limited financial resources also contribute to poor management of paper vital records in many local government authorities. Records management requires financial investment in storage infrastructure, preservation materials, and training of staff. However, district councils often operate with restricted budgets that prioritize other administrative functions over records management activities. (Turton and Watkinson 2017) observe that inadequate funding prevents many public institutions from acquiring essential records management equipment such as filing cabinets, shelving systems, and fireproof storage facilities. As a result, vital records may be stored in unsuitable environments that expose them to risks such as fire, floods, pests and dust.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Records Life Cycle Theory

This study is guided by the Records Life Cycle Theory. This theory explains that records pass through different stages from the time they are created until they are destroyed or kept permanently. It shows that records have a life, and each stage is important. The theory was developed by the National Archives and Records

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Administration (NARA). According to this theory, records move through four main stages: creation, use, maintenance, and disposition.

In the creation stage, records are produced or received during daily activities. In Tanzania District Councils, records are created when officers write letters, prepare reports, record financial transactions, register land information, or keep employee files. At this stage, important details such as the date, subject, and reference number are written on the document. If records are not properly created or recorded, they may cause confusion later (Matlala and Maphoto ,2020). Therefore, proper recording at this stage is very important for good administration in District Councils.

The next stage is use. After records are created, they are used for daily work. In Tanzania District Councils, officers use records to make decisions, provide services to citizens, solve land disputes, manage finances, and support development projects. During this stage, records must be easy to find and should only be accessed by authorized staff (Lawan and Henttonen,2026). If records are poorly arranged, officers may waste time searching for files, and service delivery may be delayed. Good management at this stage helps improve efficiency and accountability in local government offices.

The third stage is maintenance. In this stage, records are kept safely while they are still needed. Some records may not be used every day, but they are still important for legal or administrative reasons (Tayfun and Gibson ,1996). In many Tanzania District Councils, paper records are stored in cabinets, shelves, or record rooms. Proper maintenance means protecting records from fire, water, dust, insects, and theft. It also means following retention schedules to know how long records should be kept. Poor storage conditions can damage paper records and lead to loss of important information.

The final stage is disposition. This is the stage where a final decision is made about the records. Some records that are no longer useful are destroyed in a proper and approved way (Kim ,2021). Other records that have long-term value are kept permanently in archives for future reference. In Tanzania, important government records may be transferred to the national archives for preservation. This stage helps reduce overcrowding in offices and ensures that only important records are kept.

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Figure 2:1 Record life cycle



Retrieved from Mikkelsen, S., et al. (2015).

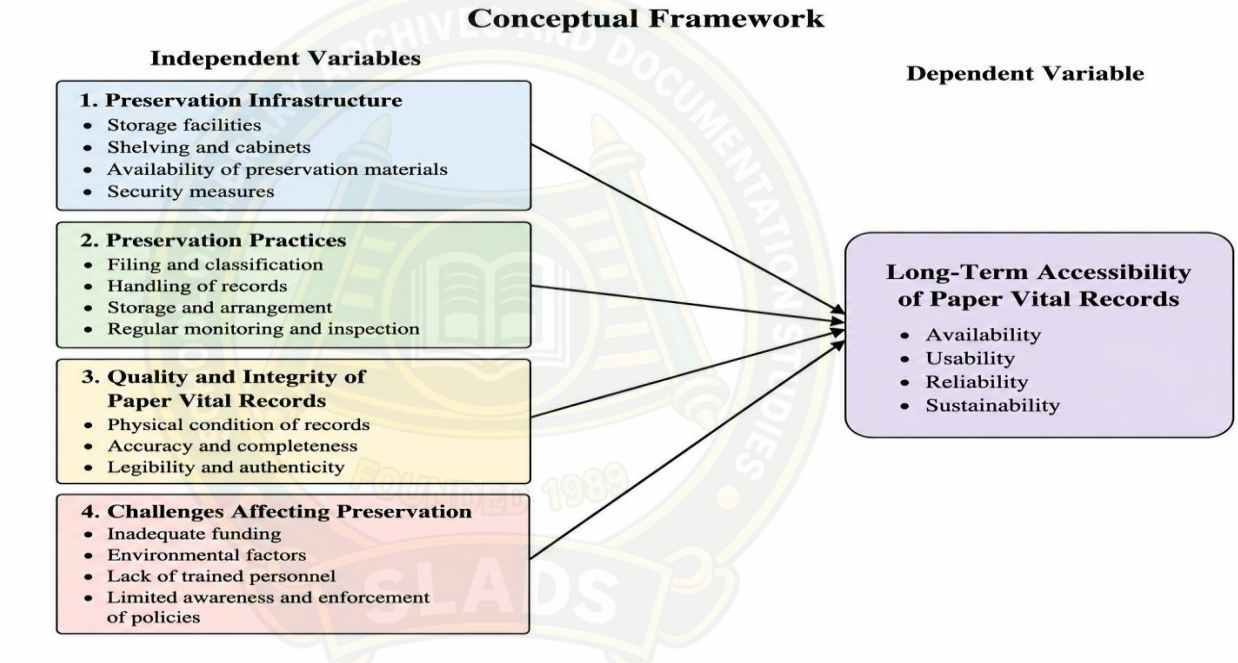
The Records Life Cycle Theory is important to this study because it explains how paper vital records should be created, maintained, stored, used, and disposed of throughout their lifecycle to ensure their long-term accessibility. The theory supports the first objective by emphasizing the importance of adequate preservation infrastructure and proper preservation practices in protecting paper vital records. It also supports the second objective by explaining that effective management at every stage of the records life cycle helps maintain the quality, integrity, authenticity, and usability of paper vital records for future access. Furthermore, the theory supports the third objective by demonstrating that weaknesses in records preservation, such as inadequate storage facilities, poor environmental conditions, limited preservation materials, and insufficient financial resources, can negatively affect the long-term accessibility of paper vital records. Therefore, the Records Life Cycle Theory provides a suitable framework for understanding how effective preservation practices contribute

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to enhancing the long-term accessibility of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2:2 Conceptual Framework



Retrieved from (Miles,2020)

Conceptual framework refers to a structure that shows the relationship between the variables being studied. It explains how different factors are connected and how they influence the outcome of the study. In research, a conceptual framework helps the researcher identify the independent and dependent variables and understand how these variables interact within the context of the study. It therefore provides a clear guide for examining the relationships among the main concepts of the research.

In this study, the conceptual framework explains how preservation practices of paper vital records influence the long-term accessibility of records at Bagamoyo District

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Council. The independent variables include preservation infrastructure and facilities such as storage rooms, cabinets, and shelves; records preservation practices such as proper filing, labeling, and handling procedures; environmental control measures including temperature, humidity, and pest control and the availability of trained records management personnel.

These factors influence the dependent variable, which is the long-term accessibility of paper vital records. When proper preservation infrastructure, appropriate handling practices, suitable environmental conditions, and skilled personnel are available, records are more likely to remain safe, well organized, and accessible for future use. However, inadequate storage conditions, lack of trained staff and weak preservation practices may negatively affect the quality, integrity, and accessibility of vital records. Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study illustrates how effective preservation practices contribute to improving the long-term accessibility of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.6 Research Gap

Several studies have examined records management practices and the importance of preserving organizational records for administrative efficiency and accountability. (Ajemba and Arene 2022) examined records management practices in public sector organizations and found that proper organization, storage, and control of records are essential for ensuring accessibility and reliability of organizational information. However, their study focused on general records management practices and did not specifically address the preservation of paper vital records that are critical for organizational continuity.

Similarly to (Agu et al. 2022) also examined the challenges affecting records management in public sector organizations and found that factors such as inadequate storage facilities, shortage of trained personnel and limited financial resources negatively affect the effectiveness of records management systems. While the study identified important challenges affecting records management, it did not specifically analyze how these challenges influence the preservation and accessibility of paper vital records in district councils.

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Also (Franks, 2025) analysed and discussed the importance of proper records preservation practices in ensuring that organizational records remain accessible and reliable over time. The study emphasized the need for organizations to establish appropriate storage environments and management procedures to protect records from deterioration and loss. However, the study focused on general records preservation practices and did not specifically examine how local government authorities preserve paper vital records that support administrative operations and public service delivery Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by assessing the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council with particular focus on the preservation practices used and the challenges affecting the long-term accessibility of these records.

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CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 introduction

This chapter described the methodology that was used to conduct the study on assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. The chapter presented the research approach, research design, area of the study, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, data collection methods, data quality control, as well as the data analysis and presentation plan.

3.1 Research Approach

A research approach refers to the systematic plan and procedure used to conduct a study, including the methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation in order to achieve the research objectives (Creswell , 2018). This study adopted a mixed methods research approach in assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. The mixed methods approach involved the integration of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in a single study to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The quantitative approach was used to collect numerical data through structured questionnaires administered to staff involved in records management, enabling the researcher to quantify the extent of preservation practices, availability of preservation facilities, and the condition of paper vital records. The qualitative approach was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of preservation practices and challenges through observation and interviews, allowing exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and opinions. The combination of both approaches ensured the validity and reliability of the findings through triangulation of data, making the mixed methods approach appropriate for providing a complete and balanced understanding of the preservation of paper vital records and their long-term accessibility.

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3.2 Research Design

According to Babbie (2015), research design refers to the plan or structure used to obtain evidence in order to answer research questions. This study adopted a descriptive research design using both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a case study framework. The design helped the researcher assess existing preservation practices of paper vital records and examine factors affecting long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.3 Area of the Study

Area of study refers to the geographical location where the research was conducted (Creswell, 2017). This study was conducted at Bagamoyo District Council located in Bagamoyo District, Tanzania. The Council was selected because it manages paper-based vital records, including administrative, financial, legal, and personnel records, which require proper preservation for long-term accessibility. The choice of Bagamoyo District Council as a case study was justified by several factors. Firstly, the Council provided a suitable environment for examining the preservation of paper vital records due to the volume and nature of records it maintained. Secondly, the findings from the study generated insights that can be applied to other local government authorities in Tanzania facing similar challenges in preserving paper vital records for long-term accessibility. Furthermore, the accessibility of the study area and the availability of relevant data from staff and records facilitated effective data collection and contributed to the successful completion of the study.

3.4 Population of the Study

(Smith 2018) defines population as the entire group from which a researcher selects a sample for study. In this study, the population consisted of records management staff, registry officers, administrative officers, and other employees involved in handling paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The total population involved in records handling activities was estimated to be 27 staff members.

3.5 Sample Size and sampling techniques

This section described the sample size and sampling procedures used in the study.

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3.5.1 sample size

Sample size is defined as the number of respondents selected from the total population to represent the entire group (Ran, 2020). In this study, the total population consisted of 27 staff members involved in handling and preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula:

n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}

Where

N = 27 (population)

e = 0.05 (margin of error)

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

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

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

n = \frac{27}{1.0675}

n ≈ 25.3 ≈ 25

Therefore, the calculated sample size was 25 respondents. This sample included 10 registry staff, 10 administrative officers, and 5 management personnel. The sample was considered adequate to provide reliable and representative information regarding preservation practices and long-term accessibility of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.5.2 Sampling techniques

A sampling technique is a method used by a researcher to select a representative sample from a population that can be used to make inferences or generalizations about the entire population concerning an existing theory (Kromrey, 2016). In this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to select the sample required for the study.

3.5.2.1 Simple Random Technique

Simple random sampling technique is a method of selecting a sample from a population where each individual has an equal chance of being chosen, and the selection of one individual does not affect the selection of others (Van & Le, 2021).

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This method was used to select administrative staff involved in handling paper vital records from the study area. The simple random sampling technique was important because it provided an equal chance for every individual in the population to be selected, thereby reducing selection bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample.

3.5.2.2 Purposive Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique is a non-probability sampling method where researchers select specific individuals or groups based on certain characteristics or qualities that are relevant to the research objectives (Wang, Q., 2020). In this study, purposive sampling was used to select records officers and management staff from Bagamoyo District Council who were directly involved in handling and preserving paper vital records. This technique enabled the researcher to obtain detailed and relevant information from respondents with sufficient knowledge and experience regarding preservation practices and long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

3.6 Data collection method

Data collection methods in research were the techniques or procedures that a researcher used to gather information (data) needed to answer research questions or achieve research objectives (Van Le, 2021). For the purpose of this study, both primary and secondary data sources were used in order to obtain comprehensive and reliable information.

3.6.1 Secondary data

Secondary data refers to information that had already been collected, documented, and published by other researchers, organizations, or institutions for purposes other than the current study (Kothari, 2004). For this study, secondary data were obtained from existing documents such as policy manuals, reports, official records, previous research studies, and relevant literature. Printed sources including journals, books, reports, regulations, policies, and other relevant documents were reviewed to gather secondary data for this study on assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

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3.6.1.1 Document Review

Document review, also referred to as document analysis, was a method of collecting secondary data by systematically examining existing written materials such as reports, policy documents, manuals, official records, and previous research studies that were relevant to the research topic (Bowen, 2009). In this study, document review was used to gather information on the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Through document review, the researcher examined administrative records, financial and legal documents, staff manuals, and past research findings to understand existing preservation practices, challenges, and policies. This method provided background information and historical context, complementing primary data collected through questionnaires, interviews, and observation. By analyzing these documents, the researcher verified and triangulated findings, identified gaps in record management practices, and enhanced the credibility and reliability of the study.

3.6.2 Primary Data

According to Mugenda (2019), primary data refers to data from sources that the researcher directly collected through interviews, observation, and questionnaires. Primary data were those which were collected for the first time and were original in nature. In this study, primary data were collected from the selected sample population at Bagamoyo District Council using questionnaires, observation, and interview methods. These methods enabled the researcher to obtain firsthand information regarding the preservation practices, storage conditions, handling procedures, and challenges affecting the long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

3.6.2.1Questionnaires

According to Park (2015), a questionnaire was a form or set of forms consisting of a number of printed or typed questions which respondents were required to answer and return to the researcher within a specified period of time. In this study, questionnaires were used to collect data from selected staff members at Bagamoyo District Council who were involved in handling and preserving paper vital records. The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions focusing on preservation practices, storage conditions, and challenges affecting long-term accessibility. The advantages of

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questionnaires were that respondents had the right to answer freely and openly without fear since the researcher was not physically present, the method helped to reach respondents who were not easily accessible, and respondents had sufficient time to complete the questions, making the method cost effective.

3.6.2.2 Interview

Babbie (2015) defined an interview as a method of obtaining data by talking directly to the subject. In this study, interviews were conducted to obtain information from records officers and management staff at Bagamoyo District Council who were directly involved in the preservation of paper vital records. The interviews were conducted through face-to-face interaction in order to obtain more detailed and in-depth information. This instrument contained structured and semi-structured questions which were carefully administered to the respondents. The advantages of interviews were that access to information and speed of data collection were higher compared to questionnaires, the response rate was high, and the method provided greater flexibility than other data collection methods.

3.6.2.3 Observation

According to Creswell (2014), observation was defined as a qualitative research method that involved systematically watching, recording, and analyzing practices and conditions in their natural setting. This study employed the observation method as a primary data collection technique to assess the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Observation allowed the researcher to collect firsthand information, providing objective insights into real-life procedures and environmental conditions that may have affected the long-term accessibility of records.

3.7 Instrumentation

Instrumentation in research referred to the tools or instruments that a researcher used to collect data systematically from respondents or sources, ensuring the data was accurate, reliable, and relevant to the study objectives (Kothari, 2004). In this study, instrumentation involved a combination of tools to collect both primary and secondary data on the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

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3.7.1 Questionnaire Guide

A questionnaire was a written set of structured questions that respondents answered in order to provide information on a specific topic (Kothari, 2004). In this study, questionnaires were designed and administered to staff involved in records management and other relevant departments. The questionnaire guide contained close-ended questions to collect quantitative data on the extent of preservation practices, availability of storage facilities, and the condition of paper vital records. This instrument allowed the researcher to gather standardized information from a larger number of respondents efficiently, which helped in assessing how well records were preserved for long-term accessibility.

3.7.2 Interview Guide

An interview guide was a pre-designed set of open-ended questions used to conduct oral discussions with selected respondents in order to obtain detailed and in-depth information on a topic (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from key informants such as records officers and administrative staff at Bagamoyo District Council. The interviews explored preservation strategies, challenges, experiences, and perceptions of staff, providing insights that could not be obtained through questionnaires alone.

3.7.3 Observation Checklist

An observation checklist was a structured tool used to systematically record and assess behaviors, activities, or conditions observed in the research environment (Creswell, 2018). In this study, observation checklists were employed to assess the actual condition of paper records, storage facilities, and preservation activities at Bagamoyo District Council. This instrument enabled the researcher to gather direct evidence on practices, environmental conditions, and risks that affected long-term accessibility.

3.7.4 Document Review Protocols

Document review, also known as document analysis, was a method of collecting secondary data by examining existing written records, reports, manuals, policy documents, and previous studies relevant to the research topic (Bowen, 2009). For this study, document review protocols were used to analyze administrative records, policy

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manuals, reports, and previous studies on records management at Bagamoyo District Council. This instrument provided historical context, verified primary data, and highlighted gaps, trends, and best practices in preservation.

3.8 Data quality control

Data quality control referred to the procedures and strategies that were applied to ensure that all data collected were accurate, complete, consistent, and reliable (Smith, 2018). In this study, which aimed at assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council, data quality control was implemented at all stages of data collection to guarantee that findings accurately reflected the current preservation practices, challenges, and storage conditions. For primary data, quality control involved pre-testing questionnaires to identify unclear questions, ensuring interviews with key staff were conducted systematically, and recording observations accurately during field visits. Responses were checked for completeness, and any inconsistencies were clarified with respondents to minimize errors. For secondary data, quality control involved selecting credible documents such as policy manuals, administrative records, and previous studies, verifying their authenticity, and cross-checking information across multiple sources. This process ensured that secondary data complemented primary data and provided reliable evidence on preservation practices.

3.9 Data Analysis Plan and Presentation

Data analysis refers to the process of organizing, summarizing and interpreting collected data to answer the research objectives and draw meaningful conclusion (kothari,2004). since this study adopted a mixed methods research approach both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed

Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics. specifically, frequencies and percentages. the results were organized and presented in tables and figures to facilitate interpretation and comparison of the findings in relation to the study objectives

Qualitative data obtained through interviews, observations and document review were analyzed using content analysis. the responses were grouped into themes according to

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the study objectives, interpreted and supported by relevant quotations from respondents where necessary. the findings from both quantitative and qualitative data were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo district council.

3.9.1 Ethical Issues

The researcher ensured that the information provided by respondents was used strictly for research purposes and was not subject to leakage into other objectives (Zhang, 2019). The researcher obtained permission from the relevant authorities at Bagamoyo District Council before conducting the study and sought informed consent from all participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the study in order to protect respondents and encourage them to provide sufficient and honest information regarding the preservation and accessibility of paper vital records

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CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study investigated and assessed the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council in Pwani Region, Tanzania. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to assess the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council; to evaluate the quality and integrity of managing paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility; and to identify the challenges facing the Council in managing paper vital records. The study was conducted in response to the persistent challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records, despite the existence of records management policies and preservation guidelines in public institutions. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document review from a sample of twenty-five (25) respondents, including registry staff, administrative officers, and management personnel who were directly involved in the creation, handling, storage, and preservation of paper vital records. Quantitative data collected through questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly frequencies and percentages, while qualitative data obtained through interviews, observation, and document review were analyzed using thematic analysis. This arrangement provides a clear presentation of the findings and facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

4.1Response Rates

A total of 25 responses were received from the target of 25 respondents, which constituted a 100% response rate for the study. This high response rate was achieved because the researcher made close follow-ups to ensure that all selected respondents participated fully in the study.

4.2Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic characteristics are the personal and social attributes of respondents that are used to describe the study population and assist in the interpretation of research findings (Kothari, 2004). In this study, the demographic characteristics included

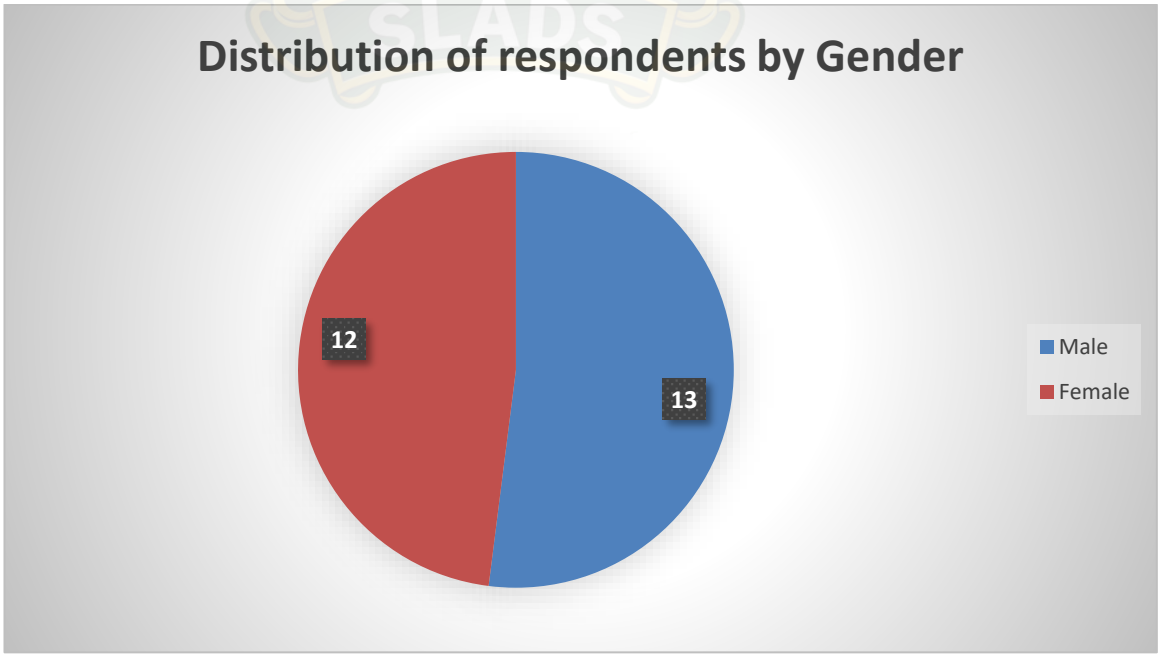
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respondents' gender, age, and level of education. These characteristics were important because they provided a clear description of the respondents who participated in the study and helped the researcher understand the background of individuals involved in the preservation and management of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The information also enhanced the interpretation of the study findings by showing that the respondents represented different demographic groups. The following subsections present the findings on the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

4.2.1 Distribution of respondents by Gender

Gender refers to the social classification of individuals as male or female within a study population and is commonly used as a demographic characteristic in research (Kumar, 2019). Gender information helps researchers determine whether the study includes balanced participation from both male and female respondents, thereby improving the credibility and representativeness of the findings. In this study, respondents were asked to indicate their gender in order to determine the level of participation of male and female staff involved in the preservation and management of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings are presented in Figure 4.3

Figure 4:3 Distribution of respondents by Gender



Source: Field Data, 2026

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The gender distribution of respondents, as shown in figure 4.3, indicates a fair representation of both male and female participants in the study. Out of the 25 respondents, 13 respondents (52%) were male, while 12 respondents (48%) were female. This balanced participation of both genders suggests that the study managed to capture views and opinions from both male and female respondents regarding the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

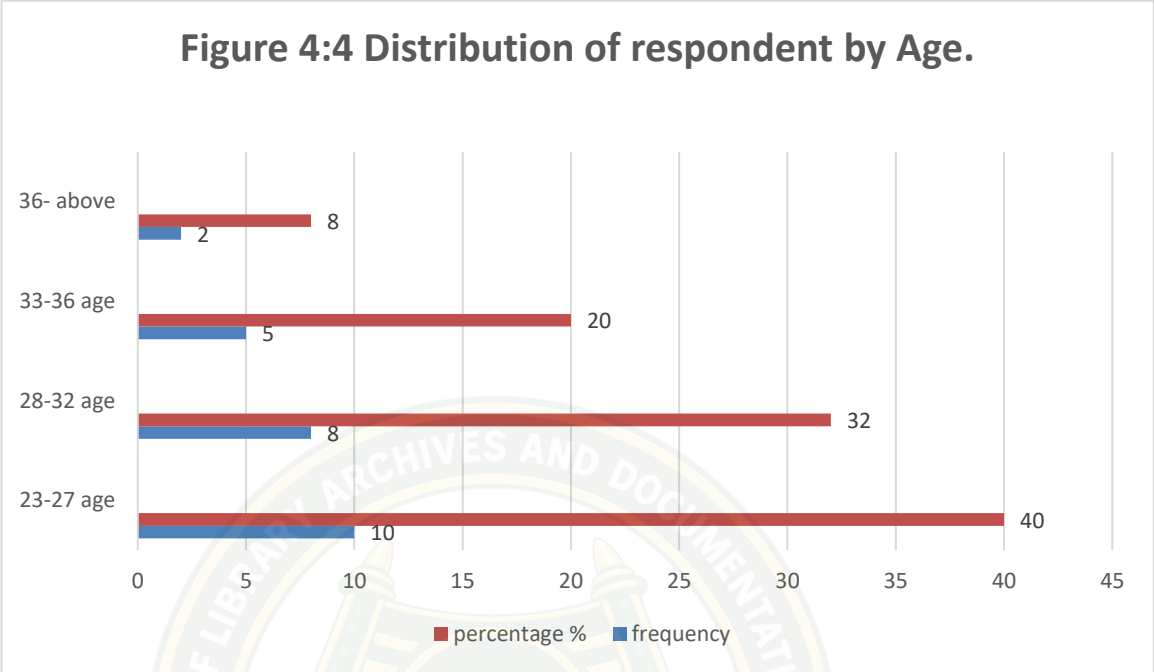
The findings further imply that gender differences did not significantly influence the responses provided by participants, since both groups participated almost equally in the study. The involvement of respondents from both genders enhanced the reliability of the findings by ensuring that the information collected reflected diverse perspectives and experiences related to records preservation practices, storage conditions, accessibility of records, and challenges affecting long term preservation. Therefore, the balanced gender distribution reduced the possibility of bias and contributed to obtaining comprehensive and representative findings for the study.

4.2.2 Distribution of respondent by Age.

Age refers to the number of years that a person has lived since birth. According to Saunders et al. (2019), age is an important demographic characteristic because it influences individuals' knowledge, experience, skills, and ability to adapt to technological changes. Age distribution helps researchers understand whether respondents possess sufficient maturity and experience to provide reliable information. In this study, respondents were categorized according to their age groups in order to determine the distribution of staff involved in the preservation and management of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings are presented in figure 4.4

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Figure 4:4 Distribution of respondent by Age.



Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings presented in figure 4.4 show the age distribution of respondents who participated in the study on assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. The majority of respondents, 10 (40%), were aged between 23 and 27 years, followed by 8 respondents (32%) who were aged between 28 and 32 years. Respondents aged between 33 and 36 years accounted for 5 respondents (20%), while only 2 respondents (8%) were aged 36 years and above. The findings indicate that most respondents were within the active working age group, which implies that they were actively involved in records management activities and other administrative responsibilities within the Council.The distribution further suggests that respondents from different age categories participated in the study, enabling the researcher to gather diverse views, experiences, and perceptions regarding the preservation of paper vital records and challenges affecting their long-term accessibility. The higher number of younger respondents may indicate that younger employees are more engaged in day-to-day records management activities and are more familiar with modern preservation practices and accessibility

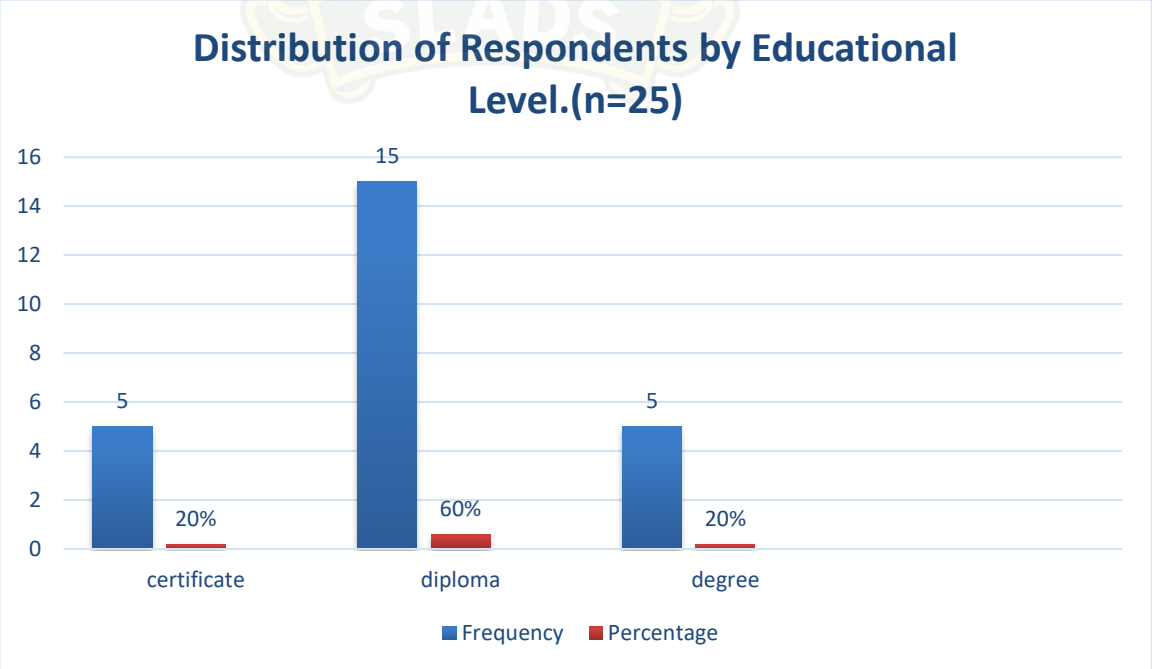
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procedures. On the other hand, the inclusion of older respondents was important because they provided additional experience and institutional knowledge concerning traditional records preservation methods and long-term management practices at Bagamoyo District Council. Therefore, the varied age distribution enhanced the reliability and comprehensiveness of the findings obtained in this study.

4.2.3 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level.

Educational level refers to the highest academic qualification attained by an individual. According to Kothari (2004), educational background is important in research because it influences respondents' knowledge, competence, understanding, and ability to perform professional duties effectively. Higher educational attainment often equips individuals with specialized skills and knowledge relevant to their work. In this study, educational level was examined to determine whether respondents possessed the academic qualifications necessary for preserving and managing paper vital records and enhancing their long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings are presented in Figure 4.5

Figure 4:5 Distribution of Respondents by Educational Level.



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Source:(Field data 2026)

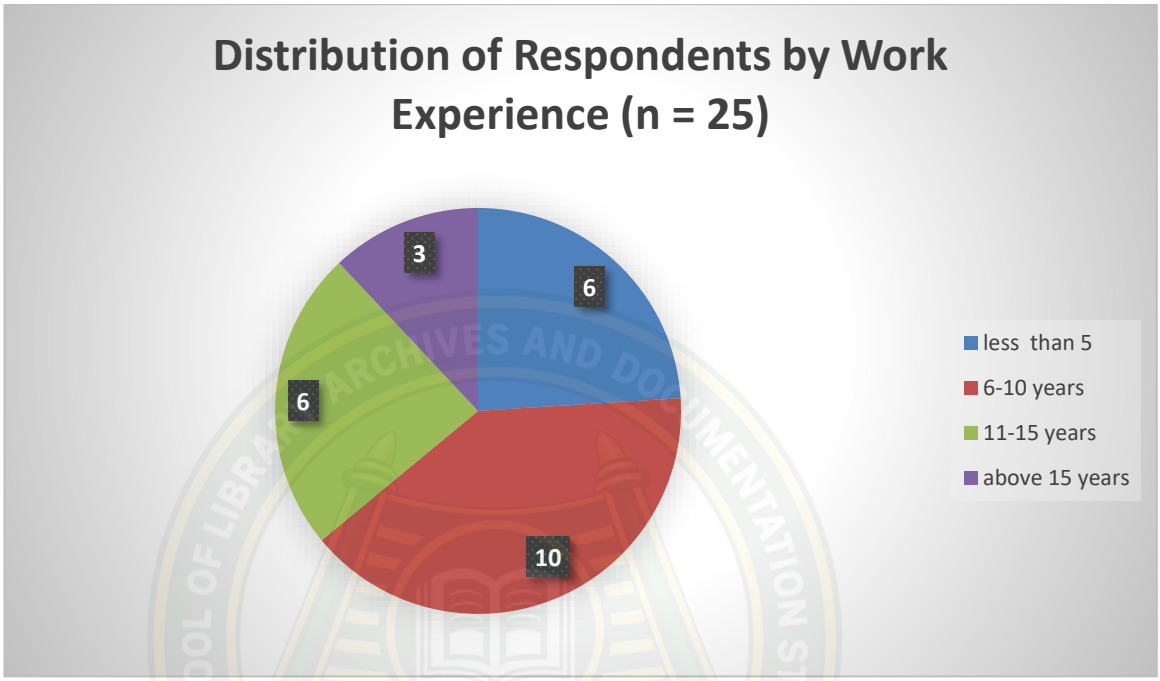
Regarding educational qualifications, Figure 4.5 shows that the majority of respondents, 15 (60%), held a diploma, making it the most common level of education among participants. This was followed by 5 (20%) respondents who had a degree, while only 5 (20%) possessed a certificate qualification. These findings indicate that the respondents of this study were generally well educated, with all of them having attained at least a certificate level of education. The dominance of diploma holders suggests that a large proportion of participants had moderate professional and academic training relevant to records management and related administrative functions. The presence of degree holders further indicates a group with advanced academic exposure, while the smaller proportion of certificate holders reflects respondents with basic tertiary education. Overall, this educational distribution shows that the respondents were adequately qualified to provide reliable information on the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. Their educational background is therefore considered sufficient for understanding issues related to records management practices, preservation strategies and accessibility of paper vital records within the institution.

4.2.4 Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience

Work experience refers to the length of time an individual has spent performing duties within a particular profession or organization. According (Mugenda ,2003), work experience is important because it enhances employees' knowledge, skills, and understanding of organizational operations. Employees with longer work experience are often better positioned to provide reliable information regarding workplace practices and challenges. In this study, work experience was analyzed to determine the extent of respondents' exposure to the preservation and management of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings are presented in Figure 4:6

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Figure 4:6 Distribution of Respondents by Work Experience



Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings in figure 4.6 indicate that 6 respondents (24.0%) had work experience of less than 5 years, 10 respondents (40.0%) had work experience ranging from 6 to 10 years, 6 respondents (24.0%) had work experience between 11 and 15 years, while 3 respondents (12.0%) had more than 15 years of work experience. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents had work experience ranging from 6 to 10 years. This suggests that most respondents had sufficient practical exposure to records management activities within Bagamoyo District Council and were therefore capable of providing reliable information concerning the preservation and management of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility. The findings further imply that respondents possessed adequate familiarity with records handling procedures, storage systems, and preservation challenges within the Council.In addition, employees with considerable work experience are more likely to understand changes and improvements in records management practices over time, particularly issues

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related to the organization, storage, and accessibility of paper vital records. Therefore, the work experience profile of respondents enhanced the credibility and reliability of the information collected during the study.

4.3 Current State of Infrastructure and Practices for Preserving Paper Vital Records

This was the first objective of the study, which sought to assess the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Specifically, the objective aimed to examine whether the Council has adequate preservation infrastructure, appropriate storage facilities, environmental controls, preservation materials, and proper records management practices to ensure the long-term accessibility of paper vital records. According to ISO 15489-1 (2016), effective records preservation requires appropriate storage facilities, proper environmental conditions, systematic handling procedures, and adequate preservation resources to maintain the authenticity, reliability, integrity, and accessibility of records throughout their lifecycle. During the field study conducted at Bagamoyo District Council, the researcher observed that the Council relies heavily on paper vital records for administrative, legal, and operational activities. Therefore, the availability of appropriate preservation infrastructure and sound preservation practices is essential for protecting these records against deterioration and ensuring their long-term accessibility.

4.3.1 Availability of Adequate Preservation Infrastructure

The study sought to determine the availability of preservation infrastructure for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Preservation infrastructure includes records storage rooms, filing cabinets, metal shelves, fire protection equipment, and environmental control facilities that protect paper vital records from physical damage and environmental deterioration. According to ARMA International (2020), adequate preservation infrastructure is essential for ensuring the safety, integrity, and long-term accessibility of paper records. Similarly, Millar (2017) argues that proper preservation infrastructure enables organizations to protect records against environmental hazards and physical deterioration. During the field study,

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respondents were asked to identify the preservation infrastructure available at Bagamoyo District Council. Their responses are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Availability of Preservation Infrastructure (n = 25)

PRESERVATION INFRASTRUCTURE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Records storage room	5	20%
Filling cabinet	6	24%
Metal shelves	5	20%
Fire protection equipment	4	16%
Environmental control facilities	5	20%
TOTAL	25	100%

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings presented in Table 4.1 indicate that 6 respondents (24%) reported the availability of filing cabinets, making them the most commonly available preservation infrastructure at Bagamoyo District Council. This was followed by records storage rooms, metal shelves, and environmental control facilities, each mentioned by 5 respondents (20%). In addition, 4 respondents (16%) identified fire protection equipment as part of the preservation infrastructure available within the Council. These findings suggest that Bagamoyo District Council possesses different types of preservation infrastructure that support the preservation of paper vital records. However, some important facilities remain limited and require improvement to strengthen the long-term preservation and accessibility of vital records.

During the interview, one respondent stated:

"The Council has storage rooms, filing cabinets, and shelves for preserving paper records. However, there is still a shortage of storage space and modern preservation facilities, particularly environmental control systems and fire protection equipment."

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These findings are consistent with Millar (2017), who argues that adequate preservation infrastructure is essential for protecting paper records against deterioration and ensuring their long-term accessibility. Likewise, ARMA International (2020) emphasizes that organizations should provide suitable storage facilities, preservation equipment, and environmental controls to safeguard valuable records. International Council on Archives (2016) also stresses that appropriate preservation infrastructure contributes significantly to maintaining the authenticity, integrity, and usability of records over time.

The researcher's observation further confirmed that paper vital records were stored in designated registry rooms using filing cabinets and metal shelves. However, some storage facilities were overcrowded, and environmental control measures together with fire protection equipment were inadequate. Therefore, the Council should invest in improving preservation infrastructure to enhance the long-term accessibility and protection of paper vital records.

4.3.2 Preservation Practices Used for Paper Vital Records

The study also sought to examine the preservation practices employed by Bagamoyo District Council in maintaining paper vital records. Preservation practices refer to the procedures and activities undertaken to protect records against deterioration, physical damage, pests, dust, humidity, fire, and unauthorized access (ARMA International, 2020). According to ISO 15489-1 (2016), effective preservation practices involve proper filing, systematic handling, regular inspection, secure storage, and controlled access to ensure that records remain authentic, reliable, and accessible throughout their lifecycle. During the field study, respondents were asked to identify the preservation practices commonly applied at Bagamoyo District Council. Their responses are presented in Table 4.2.

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Table 4.2: Preservation Practices Used for Paper Vital Records (n = 25)

PRESERVATION PRACTICES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Filing of records	6	24%
Cleaning of storage rooms	5	20%
Handling of records	5	20%
Access to registry rooms	4	16%
Inspection of records	5	20%
TOTAL	25	100%

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings presented in Table 4.2 indicate that proper filing of records was the most commonly practiced preservation activity, reported by 6 respondents (24%). This was followed by regular cleaning of storage rooms, careful handling of records, and routine inspection of records, each reported by 5 respondents (20%). In addition, 4 respondents (16%) identified restricted access to registry rooms as an important preservation practice. These findings suggest that Bagamoyo District Council has adopted several preservation practices aimed at protecting paper vital records and enhancing their long-term accessibility. However, continuous improvement of these practices is necessary to strengthen records preservation.

During the interview, one respondent commented:
"We regularly arrange files according to the filing system, clean the registry rooms, inspect records, and ensure that only authorized staff access the storage area to protect important documents from damage or loss."

These findings are consistent with ISO 15489-1 (2016), which emphasizes that effective records preservation requires systematic storage, proper handling, regular monitoring, and controlled access to maintain the authenticity and usability of records. Similarly, Read and Ginn (2016) argue that appropriate preservation practices improve

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the quality, integrity, and long-term accessibility of paper records. Millar (2017) also notes that routine preservation activities reduce the risk of deterioration and ensure that records remain available for administrative, legal, and historical purposes.

The researcher's observation further confirmed that registry personnel followed established filing procedures, regularly cleaned storage areas, handled records carefully, and restricted access to authorized staff only. Nevertheless, some preservation materials and storage equipment require upgrading to improve the effectiveness of preservation activities and ensure the long-term accessibility of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

4.4 Quality and Integrity of Preserved Paper Vital Records

This study also sought to evaluate the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. Specifically, the objective intended to determine whether the preservation methods adopted by the Council maintain the physical condition, authenticity, completeness, and usability of paper vital records over time. According to ISO 15489-1 (2016), records should maintain their authenticity, reliability, integrity, and usability throughout their lifecycle in order to support organizational accountability and decision-making. Similarly, Millar (2017) argues that preserving the quality and integrity of records ensures that they remain reliable and accessible for administrative, legal, and historical purposes. During the field study, respondents were asked to identify the aspects that reflected the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Their responses are presented in Table 4.3.

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Table 4.3: Quality and Integrity of Preserved Paper Vital Records (n = 25)

QUALITY AND INTEGRITY INDICATORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Physical condition	6	24%
Complete and authentic	5	20%
Filed and organized	5	20%
Retrieval of record	5	20%
Readibility and usability	4	16%
TOTAL	25	100%

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings presented in Table 4.3 indicate that 6 respondents (24%) reported that the preserved paper vital records were physically in good condition. Furthermore, 5 respondents (20%) indicated that the records were complete and authentic, another 5 respondents (20%) stated that the records were properly filed and organized, while 5 respondents (20%) reported that the records were easily retrievable whenever required. In addition, 4 respondents (16%) indicated that the records remained readable and usable despite their age. These findings suggest that Bagamoyo District Council has generally maintained the quality and integrity of its preserved paper vital records, although some improvements are still required to ensure their long-term accessibility.

During the interview, one respondent stated:

"Most records are still readable and accessible because they are properly filed, well organized, and protected, although some old files have started showing signs of deterioration due to aging and frequent use."

These findings are consistent with Millar (2017), who emphasizes that proper preservation practices maintain the authenticity, integrity, and usability of records for

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future administrative, legal, and historical purposes. Similarly, ARMA International (2020) states that maintaining the quality of records requires appropriate storage conditions, systematic preservation procedures, and continuous monitoring of storage facilities. Likewise, ISO 15489-1 (2016) emphasizes that records should remain authentic, reliable, complete, and usable throughout their lifecycle.

The researcher's observation further confirmed that many files were properly arranged, clearly labeled, and easily retrievable whenever information was required. However, a few older files showed signs of deterioration, including faded ink, torn covers, and fragile paper caused by aging and repeated handling. Therefore, additional preservation measures and improved storage conditions are necessary to strengthen the quality, integrity, and long-term accessibility of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

4.5 Challenges Affecting the Preservation of Paper Vital Records for Enhancing Long-Term Accessibility

This was the third and final objective of the study, which sought to identify the challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. Specifically, the objective intended to determine the major factors limiting the effective preservation of paper vital records and their long-term accessibility. According to ARMA International (2020), effective preservation of paper records requires adequate storage facilities, sufficient preservation materials, proper environmental conditions, and adequate financial and human resources. Similarly, ICA (2016) emphasizes that organizations should establish effective preservation programmes to protect records against deterioration, loss, and unauthorized access. During the field study, respondents were asked to identify the major challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Their responses are presented in Table 4.4

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Table 4.4: Challenges Affecting the Preservation of Paper Vital Records (n = 25)

CHALLENGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Storage facilities	8	32%
Preservation materials	7	28%
Environmental factors	6	24%
Financial resources	4	16%
TOTAL	25	100%

Source: Field Data (2026)

The findings in Table 4.4 indicate that 8 respondents (32%) identified inadequate storage facilities as the major challenge affecting the preservation of paper vital records. Seven respondents (28%) reported limited preservation materials, while 6 respondents (24%) identified environmental factors such as humidity, dust, and pests as major threats to the preservation of records. Furthermore, 4 respondents (16%) indicated that inadequate financial resources affected the implementation of effective preservation programmes.

These findings suggest that although Bagamoyo District Council has established records preservation practices, several operational challenges continue to affect the quality, integrity, and long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

During interview one respondent explained:

"The number of records continues to increase every year, but the available storage space and preservation materials are insufficient to accommodate all records properly."

These findings are consistent with Mohamed, Rasheli and Mwagike (2018), who observed that inadequate storage facilities and limited preservation resources reduce the effectiveness of records preservation programmes and increase the risk of records deterioration. Likewise, Chacha et al. (2022) reported that poor environmental conditions and shortages of preservation materials threaten the physical condition and accessibility of paper records in public institutions. Similarly, Kitinya (2025)

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emphasized that improving preservation infrastructure and environmental management is essential for ensuring the long-term accessibility of paper vital records. The researcher's observation further confirmed that although registry staff made considerable efforts to preserve paper records through systematic filing and regular cleaning of storage rooms, the shortage of storage space and preservation materials limited the effectiveness of preservation activities. Therefore, improving preservation infrastructure, providing adequate preservation materials, and allocating sufficient financial resources are essential for strengthening the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

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CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations based on the study entitled "Assessing the Preservation of Paper Vital Records on Enhancing Long-Term Accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council." The study was conducted to assess how paper vital records are preserved in order to enhance their long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

i. To assess the existing preservation infrastructure on paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

ii. To evaluate the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

iii. To identify the challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

The study successfully achieved these objectives through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and documentary review. Primary and secondary data were collected from respondents working in records management and administrative offices at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings formed the basis for the summary, conclusions, and recommendations presented in this chapter.

5.1 Summary

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

5.1.1 Existing Preservation Infrastructure for Paper Vital Records at Bagamoyo District Council

The first objective assessed the existing preservation infrastructure for paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings revealed that the council possesses

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basic preservation facilities such as storage rooms, filing cabinets, shelves, and record files used to preserve paper vital records. However, the available infrastructure was found to be inadequate to meet the growing volume of records. Some storage rooms experienced congestion, limited shelving space, and insufficient preservation equipment. The study further established that although preservation facilities exist, they require improvement to ensure safe storage and long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

5.1.2 Quality and Integrity of Preserved Paper Vital Records for Enhancing Long-Term Accessibility

The second objective evaluated the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records. The findings indicated that most records remained authentic, reliable, and accessible because records officers followed established filing and classification procedures. However, some records had deteriorated due to poor environmental conditions, dust, humidity, aging paper, and inadequate preservation materials. The study further found that proper labeling, classification, and secure storage contributed significantly to maintaining the integrity and long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

5.1.3 Challenges Affecting the Preservation of Paper Vital Records

The third objective identified the major challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records. The study established that inadequate funding, shortage of preservation materials, limited storage space, poor environmental conditions, inadequate staff training, and pest infestation were the major challenges affecting preservation activities. These challenges reduced the effectiveness of preservation practices and threatened the long-term accessibility of valuable records. The findings suggest that unless these challenges are addressed, the risk of deterioration, damage, and loss of paper vital records will continue to increase.

5.2 Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the preservation of paper vital records plays a fundamental role in ensuring long-term accessibility and effective service delivery

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at Bagamoyo District Council. The study established that although the council has adopted several preservation practices, including proper filing, classification, labeling, and the use of storage rooms, shelves, and filing cabinets, the available preservation infrastructure is still inadequate to fully support the growing volume of paper vital records.The study further revealed that the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records largely depend on appropriate preservation practices, trained personnel, and suitable environmental conditions. However, several records were found to be at risk of deterioration due to inadequate storage facilities, limited preservation materials, environmental factors such as humidity and dust, pest infestation, and insufficient staff training on records preservation.Furthermore, the study identified inadequate funding, shortage of preservation equipment, limited storage space, and poor environmental control as the major challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. These challenges threaten the authenticity, reliability, and long-term accessibility of vital records required for administrative, legal, and historical purposes. Therefore, the management of Bagamoyo District Council should strengthen preservation infrastructure, allocate adequate financial resources, provide continuous staff training, and improve environmental control measures to ensure the effective preservation and long-term accessibility of paper vital records.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations presented below are based on the findings of this study and are intended to improve the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council.

5.3.1 Improvement of Preservation Infrastructure

Bagamoyo District Council should invest in modern preservation infrastructure by expanding storage facilities, providing adequate shelving systems, metal cabinets, archival boxes, and other preservation equipment. This will improve the safety, organization, and accessibility of paper vital records while minimizing the risk of deterioration and physical damage.

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5.3.2 Capacity Building and Staff Training

The council should organize regular training programmes, workshops, and seminars for records management personnel to improve their knowledge and practical skills in paper records preservation. Continuous professional development will enable staff to apply appropriate preservation techniques and comply with national records management standards and policies.

5.3.3 Provision of Adequate Financial Resources

The management of Bagamoyo District Council should allocate sufficient financial resources specifically for records preservation activities. Adequate funding will facilitate the purchase of preservation materials, maintenance of storage facilities, implementation of environmental control measures, and capacity building for records management personnel.

5.3.4 Strengthening Environmental Control Measures

The council should establish appropriate environmental conditions within records storage areas by controlling temperature, humidity, dust, pests, and water leakage. Proper environmental monitoring will reduce deterioration of paper records and enhance their long-term preservation and accessibility.

5.3.5 Adoption of Modern Preservation Equipment

Bagamoyo District Council should gradually replace outdated wooden shelves and cabinets with modern metal shelves, fire-resistant cabinets, archival storage boxes, and other preservation equipment recommended by the National Records and Archives Management Policy. Modern preservation equipment will improve the protection of paper vital records against fire, pests, moisture, and other environmental hazards.

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5.4 Areas for Further Studies

This study focused on assessing the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council. However, the study did not cover all aspects of records management. Therefore, future researchers are encouraged to conduct studies in the following areas:

i. Assessment of electronic records preservation and long-term accessibility in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania.

ii. Evaluation of the effectiveness of records management policies in improving preservation of paper vital records in public institutions.

iii. Assessment of the effectiveness of staff training on the preservation of paper vital records for enhancing long-term accessibility in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania.

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APPENDIX I

I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAFF/RESPONDENTS

Dear Respondent,

My name is **HERI ORIWE KIFUNG**E a Diploma student from the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS). I am conducting research titled "**Assessing the Preservation of Paper Vital Records on Enhancing Long Term Accessibility at Bagamoyo District Council."**

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

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

Please you're kindly requested to answers these questions.

PART A. CLOSED QUESTIONS

1. What is your gender?
   a) Male ( )
   b) Female

2. What is your age?
   a) 23–27
   b) 28–32
   c) 33–37 ( )
   d) 38 and Above

3. What is your level of education?
   a) Certificate
   b) Diploma ( )
   c) Degree
   d) Postgraduate

4.What is the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council?

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a) Adequate Storage Facilities
b) Proper Filing Systems ( )
c) Use of Archival Standards
d) Limited Infrastructure and Practices

5. What is the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records in enhancing long term accessibility?

a) Records are Well-Maintained and Accessible
b) Records Partially Preserved but Accessible. ( )
c) Records Poorly Preserved and Difficult to Access
d) Records at Risk of Deterioration

6. What are the challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council?

a) Poor Storage Facilities
b) Inadequate Resources and Budget
c) Lack of Skilled Personnel ( )
d) Environmental Factors (eg .Humidity, Pests)
e) Limited Awareness and Training

7. Are there formal policies or procedures guiding the preservation of paper vital records your department?

a) Yes, and they are followed
b) Yes, but they are not followed consistently ( )
c) No, there are no formal policies

8.How would you rate the overall condition of paper vital records in your department?

a) Excellent
b) Good
c) Fair ( )
d) Poor

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PART B. OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

1. What strategies can be implemented to ensure long-term accessibility of records?
2. Based on your experience, how would you evaluate the overall condition of paper vital?
3. What skills or training do staff need to improve record preservation?
4. Can you provide examples where poor preservation has affected access to records?
5. In what ways do preservation practices influence the long-term accessibility of records?
6. What practices or methods are currently used in your department to preserve paper vital records?

Thank you in advance

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APPENDIX II

II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RECORDS/ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Dear Respondent,

My name is **HERI ORIWE KIFUNGE,** a Diploma student from the school of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS). I am conducting research titled **'Assessing the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo district council.'**

1. What is the current state of infrastructure and practices for preserving paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council?
2. How would you describe the quality and integrity of preserved paper vital records in enhancing long-term accessibility?
3. What are the major challenges affecting the preservation of paper vital records at Bagamoyo District Council?
4. Are there any formal policies, guidelines, or procedures that govern the preservation of paper vital records in your department? If yes, please explain.
5. Do you experience any difficulties when retrieving vital records? If yes, what are the main causes of these difficulties?
6. Can you describe the storage facilities used for preserving paper vital records in your department?
7. Can you share an experience where access to paper vital records was delayed or difficult? What caused the problem, and how was it resolved?
8. How do environmental factors such as humidity, dust, pests, temperature, or poor ventilation affect the preservation of paper vital records in your department?

Kindly assist by providing relevant answers.

Thank you in advance

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APPENDIX III

III.OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

OBSERVER INFORMATION

Observer Name: _____Date: _____

Location: _____Time: _____

Instructions

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

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

S/N	ITEM TO BE OBSERVED	YES	NO	COMMENTS/NOTES
1	Availability of proper storage facilities (files, cabinets, shelves)			
2	Condition of paper vital records (e.g., torn, faded, damaged)			
3	Proper arrangement and classification of records			
4	Presence of labeling/indexing system for easy retrieval			
5	Cleanliness of storage environment			
6	Adequate ventilation and lighting in storage area			
7	Protection from environmental hazards (moisture, dust, pests)			
8	Availability of disaster preparedness measures (e.g., fire protection)			
9	Evidence of preservation practices (e.g., repair, binding, covering)			
10	Storage space adequacy (no overcrowding of records)			
11	Availability of security measures (locks, restricted access)			

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APPENDIX IV

IV. TIME SCHEDULE SHOWING.

DURING RESEARCH WORK

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

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APPENDIX V

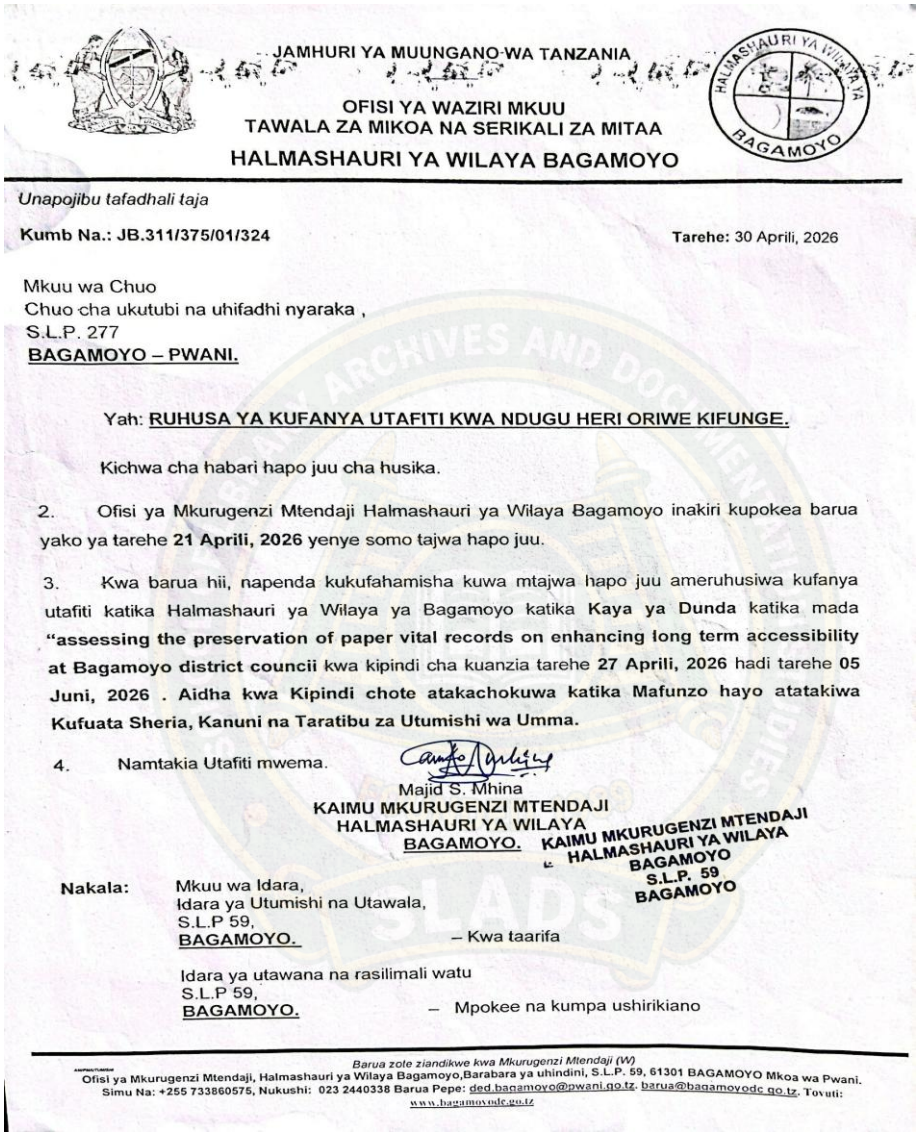
V.RESEARCH BUDGETING.

TOTAL COST	COST ANALYSIS	TOTAL COST
a. College-Field Area	3000 X 10	30,000
b. Breakfast and meal allowance	5000 x10	50,000
c. STATIONARY 1. Ruled paper 2 reams	8000 x 2	16,000
2. Typing paper 2 reams	10,000 x2	20,000
d . SECTRETARIAL SERVICES 3. Computer typing 150 pages.	1000 x50	50,000
4. Photocopying services 4 copies	50 x50=2500x4 copies	10,000
5. Binding 4 copies	25000x2	50,000
6. Telephone and internet service	2500 x4	10,000
	TOTAL	**236,000/=**

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APPENDIX VI

VI.APPROVAL LETTER.



JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

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

Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb Na.: JB.311/375/01/324 **Tarehe:** 30 Aprili, 2026

Mkuu wa Chuo
Chuo cha ukutubi na uhifadhi nyaraka ,
S.L.P. 277
BAGAMOYO – PWANI.

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI KWA NDUGU HERI ORIWE KIFUNGE.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yako ya tarehe **21 Aprili, 2026** yenye somo tajwa hapo juu.

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kuwa mtajwa hapo juu ameruhusiwa kufanya utafiti katika Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Kaya ya Dunda** katika mada **"assessing the preservation of paper vital records on enhancing long term accessibility at Bagamoyo district councii** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **27 Aprili, 2026** hadi tarehe **05 Juni, 2026 . Aidha kwa Kipindi chote atakachokuwa katika Mafunzo hayo atatakiwa Kufuata Sheria, Kanuni na Taratibu za Utumishi wa Umma.**

4. Namtakia Utafiti mwema.

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

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

Nakala: Mkuu wa Idara,
Idara ya Utumishi na Utawala,
S.L.P 59,
BAGAMOYO. – Kwa taarifa

Idara ya utawana na rasilimali watu
S.L.P 59,
BAGAMOYO. – Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano

Barua zote ziandikwe kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji (W)
Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji, Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo,Barabara ya uhindini, S.L.P. 59, 61301 BAGAMOYO Mkoa wa Pwani.
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