SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVE AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES

(SLADS) – BAGAMOYO.

A RESEARCH REPORT

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF INFORMATION ACCESS IN IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY, A CASE STUDY OF BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL.

By:

RAHMA RASHIDI KWAJILWA

A Research Report Submitted to the School of Library, Archives, and Documentation Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management

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CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the School of Library Archives and Documentation Studies (SLADS) a research report titled **" An assessment of the role of information access in improving service delivery, a case study of bagamoyo district council".** This report is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

Supervisor Name .....

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

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DEDICATION.

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

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. The study was guided by four specific objectives: to examine the existing information access mechanisms used by the council, assess the extent to which information access influences the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, identify the challenges affecting access to information, and propose strategies for improving information access. A descriptive case study design employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches was adopted. The study involved a population of Bagamoyo municipal staff, from which a sample of 30 respondents was selected using purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, documentary review, and observation, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

The findings revealed that although information access mechanisms, including records management systems and ICT facilities, existed within the council, they were not consistently effective across all departments. Most respondents agreed that proper access to information significantly improves the efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness of service delivery. The study further identified poor records management, bureaucratic procedures, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and limited staff training as the major challenges affecting information access. Further more the study provide the solution to those challenges such as. The council should invest in modernizing its records management systems, including the adoption of standardized filing, classification, and digital archiving practices, to reduce delays in retrieving information. The council should expand and strengthen ICT infrastructure across all departments to support reliable, timely, and equitable access to information for both staff and citizens.

The study concludes that effective information access is essential for improving public service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. It recommends strengthening records management systems, investing in ICT infrastructure, providing regular staff training, simplifying bureaucratic procedures, and increasing public awareness to enhance information accessibility and service delivery. The findings contribute to improving information management practices and provide useful guidance for policymakers, local government authorities, and future researchers interested in information access and public service delivery.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BDC – Bagamoyo District Council

ERM – Electronic Records Management

ICT – Information and Communication Technology

ISO – International Organization for Standardization

LGA – Local Government Authority

RM – Records Management

RMS – Records Management System

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

URT – United Republic of Tanzania

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, research questions, the significance of the study, the scope of the study, the limitations of the study, and the definitions of key operational terms.

1.1 Background of the Problem

Access to information is a critical factor in the functioning of public sector institutions and the delivery of quality public services. Information serves as the foundation for planning, policy formulation, decision-making, coordination, and performance evaluation within government organizations. When information is accurate, complete, and easily accessible, public officials are able to make informed decisions and provide services efficiently and effectively. Conversely, limited access to information can lead to poor planning, duplication of efforts, service delays, and misuse of resources. According to UNESCO (2015), access to information enhances transparency and accountability in public institutions, thereby improving public trust and service delivery outcomes. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) further emphasize that effective access to well-managed information enables organizations to meet their objectives and respond to the needs of service users in a timely manner.

In Tanzania, local government authorities operate under a decentralized system designed to bring services closer to the people. District councils are responsible for delivering essential services such as health care, education, water supply, infrastructure development, and various administrative services. To fulfill these responsibilities, councils rely heavily on information generated through records, reports, statistics, correspondence, and digital systems. Bagamoyo District Council, as one of the local government authorities, serves a diverse and growing population with increasing expectations for quality and timely services. According to Mnjama (2015), the effectiveness of service delivery in local government institutions largely depends on how well information is created, managed, accessed, and used. Without reliable access to

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relevant information, district councils may struggle to plan effectively, allocate resources appropriately, and monitor service delivery performance.

Despite the importance of information access, the situation in many Tanzanian district councils has continued to present persistent challenges. The government has introduced several reforms and legal frameworks, including the Access to Information Act of 2016, public service reforms, and e-government initiatives, to promote transparency and improve access to information. However, research indicates that the implementation of these initiatives at the local government level has been uneven. Ngulube (2019) observes that many public institutions continue to experience weak records management systems, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and limited staff capacity, which hinder effective access to information. In some cases, information remains scattered across departments, stored in poorly maintained formats, or inaccessible to both staff and the public, reducing its usefulness for service delivery.

These challenges provide a clear indication of a problem affecting service delivery in local government authorities. Limited access to information can result in delays in processing service requests, poor coordination among departments, ineffective communication with citizens, and limited public awareness of available services and procedures. The World Bank (2017) notes that inadequate access to information often leads to inefficiencies, reduced accountability, and low levels of citizen satisfaction with public services. In the case of Bagamoyo District Council, such challenges may affect the council's ability to respond promptly to community needs, track service delivery progress, and engage citizens in decision-making processes, ultimately undermining the quality of services provided.

Although access to information is widely recognized as a key driver of improved service delivery, there is limited empirical research examining its specific role within district councils in Tanzania. Much of the existing literature focuses on national-level governance reforms or the adoption of information and communication technologies, with less attention given to how information access influences day-to-day service delivery at the local government level. This creates a knowledge gap regarding the relationship between information access and service delivery performance in specific contexts such as Bagamoyo District Council. Addressing this gap is important for

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developing evidence-based strategies to strengthen information access mechanisms and improve service delivery outcomes.

Therefore, this study was necessary to assess the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. By examining information access practices, identifying existing challenges, and analyzing their impact on service delivery, the study generated findings that inform policy implementation, improve information management systems, and enhance transparency and accountability in local government authorities. Ultimately, the study contributes to improved public service delivery and better governance at the district council level in Tanzania.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

District councils are expected to deliver essential public services efficiently, transparently, and responsively; however, weaknesses in information management systems, limited dissemination of service-related information, and delays in accessing relevant information persist.

Although the Government of Tanzania has established legal and policy frameworks, including the Access to Information Act of 2016 and e-government initiatives, effective access to information at the district council level remains Despite the recognized importance of access to information in enhancing effective service delivery, many local government authorities in Tanzania continue to experience challenges related to inadequate information accessibility.In practice, information is often fragmented, poorly organized, or not readily available to both council staff and the public, thereby undermining the intended benefits of these reforms. Consequently, service users may experience delays, lack of clarity on service procedures, and reduced satisfaction with public services. It was against this background that this study assessed the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study was to assess the role of access to information in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council, with the aim of providing evidence-based recommendations for strengthening information management and enhancing public service outcomes.

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1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

i. To examine the existing information access mechanisms used at Bagamoyo District Council in the delivery of public services.

ii. To assess the extent to which access to information influenced the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

iii. To identify the challenges affecting access to information in service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

iv. To propose strategies for improving information access to enhance service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

1.4 Research Questions

i. What were the existing information access mechanisms used at Bagamoyo District Council in delivering public services?

ii. To what extent does access to information influence the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council?

iii. What were the major challenges affecting access to information in service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council?

iv. What strategies can be implemented to improve information access and enhance service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is significant because it provides insights into the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council, which can guide policymakers, administrators, and local government officials in designing effective strategies for information management. By identifying existing information access mechanisms and the challenges affecting their use, the study helps the council improve planning, coordination, and decision-making processes, ultimately enhancing the efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of public services.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the academic body of knowledge by addressing a knowledge gap on the relationship between information access and service delivery in local government authorities in Tanzania. Researchers and students in the fields of

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records management, public administration, and information studies can use the findings as a reference for similar studies or interventions in other councils. Additionally, the study benefits citizens and service users by highlighting ways to improve access to service-related information, increasing awareness, participation, and satisfaction with local government services.

Ultimately, the study provides evidence-based recommendations that can strengthen information management practices, promote accountability, and support sustainable service delivery improvements in Bagamoyo District Council and potentially other local government authorities in Tanzania.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.6.1 Scope of the Study

This study focused on assessing the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. It explored how information accessed, shared, and utilized by council staff in planning, decision-making, and monitoring service delivery. Additionally, the study examined how service users access and use information to engage with council services. By focusing on both providers and recipients of services, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of how information access influences the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of public service delivery.

The research specifically covered key departments that directly responsible for essential public services, including health, education, water supply, and administrative services. These departments were selected because they generate and rely heavily on information for service planning, resource allocation, and operational decision-making. The study also considered relevant policy and legal frameworks, such as the Access to Information Act of 2016, to understand how these frameworks guide information access practices within the council.

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative methods such as questionnaires with qualitative methods including interviews and document analysis. This combination allowed for a detailed examination of numerical trends regarding information accessibility, as well as in-depth insights into the experiences and challenges faced by both staff and service users. The study was conducted within Bagamoyo

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District Council offices and selected service delivery points to ensure that the findings are context-specific and practically relevant.

1.6.2 Limitations of the Study

Despite careful planning, this study was subject to several limitations. First, time and resource constraints restricted the number of respondents and departments included, which limited the comprehensiveness of the findings. Second, there was a possibility of respondent bias, as council staff or service users may have provided socially desirable responses or withheld certain information due to fear of judgment or confidentiality concerns. Third, access to official records and up-to-date documents was limited by administrative delays, poor recordkeeping, and confidentiality restrictions, which may have affected the depth and accuracy of the document analysis.

Another limitation is that the study focused exclusively on Bagamoyo District Council, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Other district councils in Tanzania may have different administrative structures, resource availability, or population characteristics, meaning that the findings may not apply uniformly across all local government authorities. Additionally, technological limitations, such as limited ICT infrastructure or poor digital recordkeeping practices, affected the assessment of electronic information access and the overall data collection process.

Despite these limitations, the study makes a significant contribution by identifying practical challenges and opportunities for improving information access in service delivery. The findings provide evidence-based recommendations for strengthening information management systems, enhancing service efficiency and transparency, and improving citizen participation in local governance. Furthermore, the insights gained can serve as a reference for policymakers, researchers, and administrators seeking to improve service delivery practices in other district councils across Tanzania.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Information Access: Information access refers to the ability of individuals or organizations to obtain, use, and share relevant information when needed. It involves not only the availability of information but also its organization, retrieval, and dissemination. According to Ngulube (2019), information access is critical for effective decision-making, transparency, and accountability in public and private institutions.

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Service Delivery: Service delivery is the process through which public institutions provide goods and services to citizens, ensuring that their needs are met efficiently, effectively, and equitably. The World Bank (2017) defines service delivery as the provision of public services in a manner that is responsive, transparent, and accountable to citizens.

Records Management: Records management is the systematic control of the creation, maintenance, use, and disposition of records to ensure that information is accurate, reliable, and accessible. According to Shepherd and Yeo (2003), records management is fundamental to organizational efficiency and effective service delivery.

Transparency: Transparency refers to the openness of institutions in providing clear and accessible information to stakeholders and the public, allowing for scrutiny and accountability. UNESCO (2015) states that transparency is a key element of good governance that enables citizens to participate meaningfully in decision-making and service evaluation.

Efficiency and Effectiveness: Efficiency refers to the ability of an organization to deliver services with minimal waste of time, resources, or effort, while effectiveness refers to the degree to which services achieve their intended outcomes. According to Mnjama (2015), efficiency and effectiveness together determine how well an institution converts available information and resources into timely, high-quality services for the public.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature related to information access and service delivery in public institutions. It examines theoretical and empirical studies to provide a foundation for understanding the relationship between access to information and improved service delivery. The empirical literature is organized thematically around the four specific objectives of the study, and the chapter also identifies gaps in existing studies that justify the need for the present research.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored in the principles of Good Governance Theory, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, participation, and responsiveness in public institutions. Good Governance Theory argues that effective public administration depends on the free flow of information between government and citizens. According to UNESCO (2015), access to information is a fundamental pillar of good governance because it enhances institutional transparency and strengthens public trust. The theory suggests that when citizens have access to reliable and timely information, they are better able to participate in decision-making processes and monitor government performance, which in turn improves service delivery outcomes.

Another relevant theoretical perspective is Information Management Theory, which focuses on the systematic creation, organization, storage, retrieval, and dissemination of information within organizations. This theory posits that effective service delivery depends on how well information resources are managed and accessed. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) argue that organizations can only function efficiently when information is properly controlled and readily retrievable for operational and strategic purposes. In the context of local government authorities, this theory implies that poor records management and limited access to information may directly affect planning, coordination, and responsiveness in service delivery.

The study is also informed by the New Public Management (NPM) theory, which advocates for efficiency, performance measurement, customer orientation, and results-based management in the public sector. NPM emphasizes that public institutions should

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operate with the same efficiency principles as private sector organizations. According to Hood (1991), public sector reforms under NPM stress improved management practices, accountability mechanisms, and performance evaluation systems to enhance service delivery. Access to information is central to this theory because performance monitoring, evaluation, and decision-making require accurate and timely information.

Furthermore, the study draws on the Right to Information (RTI) framework, which asserts that citizens have a legal and moral right to access information held by public institutions. The RTI perspective views access to information as a democratic right that promotes accountability and reduces corruption. Florini (2007) argues that transparency and information disclosure are essential for improving governance and strengthening service delivery systems. In the Tanzanian context, the Access to Information Act of 2016 reflects this theoretical position by promoting openness and institutional accountability in public service provision.

Collectively, these theories provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding the relationship between information access and service delivery. Good Governance Theory explains the importance of transparency and accountability; Information Management Theory highlights the role of systematic information control; New Public Management emphasizes efficiency and performance; and the Right to Information framework underscores citizens' entitlement to access public information. Together, these theoretical perspectives support the assumption that improved access to information can enhance efficiency, transparency, and overall service delivery performance at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.3 Concept of Information Access

The concept of information access has been widely discussed in the fields of information science, public administration, and governance. Scholars argue that information access extends beyond the mere availability of information to include the ability to retrieve, interpret, and utilize information effectively. Ngulube (2019) defines information access as the process through which information is organized and made retrievable to support decision-making and institutional accountability. This definition emphasizes that access is closely linked to proper records management systems and institutional capacity. Similarly, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) contend that information must be systematically

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controlled and easily retrievable in order to support organizational efficiency and effective service delivery.

From a governance perspective, access to information is considered a fundamental principle of transparency and accountability. According to UNESCO (2015), access to public information empowers citizens to participate in governance processes and strengthens trust between governments and the public. The organization further argues that access to information enables citizens to monitor public institutions and demand better services. In line with this argument, Florini (2007) notes that transparency through information disclosure reduces corruption and enhances institutional responsiveness. These perspectives suggest that information access is not only an administrative function but also a democratic right that contributes to improved public service performance.

In the context of public sector management, scholars highlight the importance of both internal and external information access. Internal access facilitates communication and coordination among departments, while external access ensures that citizens are informed about public services and procedures. The World Bank (2017) asserts that effective information flow within and outside public institutions enhances service efficiency and accountability. When departments share accurate and timely information, duplication of tasks and delays in service delivery are minimized. Conversely, weak information-sharing mechanisms often lead to inefficiencies and reduced citizen satisfaction.

The advancement of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has also influenced the understanding of information access. Digital platforms and e-government systems are increasingly used to improve accessibility and transparency in public institutions. However, Mnjama (2015) observes that technological adoption alone does not guarantee effective information access without supportive infrastructure, trained personnel, and proper implementation strategies. This view suggests that information access is a multidimensional concept that depends on legal frameworks, organizational capacity, and technological readiness.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that information access is a critical factor in promoting transparency, accountability, and efficient service delivery. Scholars

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consistently emphasize that proper information management systems, supportive policies, and effective dissemination mechanisms are necessary to ensure that information serves its intended purpose. This conceptual understanding provides a foundation for examining how information access influences service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.4 Concept of Service Delivery in Local Government Authorities

Service delivery in public administratiss on refers to the process through which government institutions provide essential services to citizens in order to improve their welfare and living standards. According to Osborne and Gaebler (1992), effective public service delivery requires governments to shift from traditional bureaucratic approaches to results-oriented management that focuses on performance and customer satisfaction. Their argument emphasizes that citizens should be treated as clients whose needs must be met efficiently and effectively.

In the context of decentralization, local government authorities are viewed as key actors in improving service delivery because of their proximity to the people. Rondinelli (1981) argues that decentralization enhances service delivery by transferring decision-making powers to local authorities that better understand community needs. Similarly, Smoke (2003) notes that local governments are more accountable and responsive when they are given sufficient autonomy and resources to manage services at the grassroots level. These perspectives highlight the importance of institutional capacity in determining service delivery outcomes.

Scholars also link service delivery performance to governance and accountability mechanisms. Grindle (2007) emphasizes that effective service delivery depends not only on resources but also on political commitment, institutional arrangements, and administrative competence. According to her, weak institutional systems often lead to poor service quality even when policies are well designed. This suggests that improving service delivery requires strengthening management systems and ensuring proper coordination among departments.

Furthermore, empirical studies in developing countries show that inefficiencies in local government service delivery are often associated with weak information systems and limited transparency. Andrews (2010) argues that reforms in developing countries

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frequently fail because they focus on structural changes without addressing operational and information management challenges. This observation implies that effective service delivery requires reliable access to information for planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

In Tanzania, district councils are mandated to deliver services under the decentralization-by-devolution policy framework. However, challenges such as limited financial resources, inadequate administrative capacity, and weak coordination mechanisms continue to affect service delivery performance. The literature therefore suggests that improving service delivery in local government authorities requires not only decentralization and reforms but also strong institutional systems, including effective information access mechanisms. This understanding provides a foundation for examining how information access influences service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.5 Relationship Between Information Access and Service Delivery

The relationship between information access and service delivery has been widely discussed in governance and public administration literature. Scholars argue that access to accurate and timely information enhances institutional performance by supporting evidence-based decision-making and improving accountability mechanisms. Heeks (2006) asserts that effective information systems in the public sector strengthen service delivery by improving communication, coordination, and monitoring processes. He further explains that when institutions have reliable access to information, they are better positioned to reduce inefficiencies and respond promptly to citizens' needs.

From a governance perspective, transparency through information access is strongly linked to improved service outcomes. Fox (2007) argues that access to public information enables citizens to hold government institutions accountable, thereby pressuring them to improve the quality and timeliness of services. Similarly, Joshi (2013) emphasizes that information transparency enhances citizen engagement and oversight, which contributes to better performance in public service delivery. These arguments suggest that information access not only improves internal administrative processes but also strengthens external accountability relationships between institutions and the public.

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Empirical studies in developing countries further demonstrate that limited access to information negatively affects service delivery. Bovens (2007) notes that weak information-sharing systems within public institutions reduce efficiency and hinder effective policy implementation. In many cases, fragmented information systems lead to duplication of efforts, delays in service provision, and poor coordination among departments. Conversely, integrated information systems improve operational efficiency and facilitate performance monitoring, ultimately enhancing service outcomes.

The role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has also been highlighted as a critical factor linking information access to service delivery improvement. Bwalya and Mutula (2014) argue that e-government initiatives improve transparency and streamline service delivery processes by making information more accessible to both public officials and citizens. However, they caution that technological adoption must be supported by institutional capacity and proper implementation strategies to achieve meaningful improvements in service delivery.

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates a strong and positive relationship between information access and service delivery performance. Access to reliable and timely information enhances decision-making, promotes transparency, strengthens accountability, and improves coordination within public institutions. These factors collectively contribute to more efficient, effective, and citizen-centered service delivery. This relationship forms the basis for assessing how information access influences service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.6 Empirical Literature Review

Empirical studies conducted in various countries have examined the practical relationship between information access and service delivery in public institutions. To directly link the reviewed evidence to the present study, this section organizes the empirical literature according to the four specific objectives of the study: existing information access mechanisms, the influence of information access on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, the challenges affecting access to information, and strategies for improving information access.

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2.6.1 Empirical Literature on Existing Information Access Mechanisms

Studies examining the mechanisms through which public institutions provide access to information reveal a mix of manual and technological systems, with varying degrees of reliability. In Nigeria, Olatokun (2009) examined the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in improving public sector service delivery and found that ICT adoption improved information accessibility, communication, and coordination within government agencies. However, the study also noted that infrastructural limitations and a lack of technical skills reduced the full impact of ICTs as an access mechanism. This indicates that while technology expands the channels through which information can be accessed, institutional capacity remains a critical factor in determining how effective those mechanisms are in practice.

Within the Tanzanian context, Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007) observed that many local government authorities relied predominantly on manual, paper-based records systems and informal correspondence as their principal information access mechanisms, with limited integration of digital platforms. Their study highlighted those mechanisms such as registries, correspondence files, and departmental reports remained the main channels through which staff and, to a lesser extent, citizens obtained information. This suggests that the existing information access mechanisms in many Tanzanian councils are still largely traditional, underscoring the relevance of examining the specific mechanisms in place at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.6.2 Empirical Literature on the Influence of Information Access on Efficiency and Effectiveness of Service Delivery

A number of empirical studies have specifically investigated how information access shapes the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. In a study conducted in South Africa, Ngoepe (2016) found that weak records management systems in public institutions contributed significantly to poor service delivery, delays in responding to citizens, and reduced accountability. The study revealed that ineffective control and retrieval of records limited decision-making efficiency and hindered transparency, demonstrating a direct link between the quality of information access and institutional performance.

Similarly, research in Kenya by Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) established that inadequate records management practices in public sector organizations negatively affected

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operational efficiency and service provision. Their findings indicated that poor classification systems, lack of trained personnel, and limited technological support made information retrieval difficult, leading to delays and inefficiencies in service delivery. Collectively, these studies emphasize that strengthening information access can significantly enhance institutional responsiveness, efficiency, and the overall effectiveness of service delivery.

2.6.3 Empirical Literature on Challenges Affecting Access to Information

Empirical evidence also points to a range of persistent challenges that constrain effective information access in public institutions. Olatokun (2009) identified infrastructural limitations, inadequate technical skills, and unreliable ICT systems as major obstacles to effective information access in Nigerian public agencies. Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) similarly reported that poor classification systems, a shortage of trained records personnel, and limited technological support in Kenyan public organizations made information retrieval difficult and time-consuming.

In addition, Lwoga (2012) found that limited access to relevant information in Tanzanian public institutions reduced citizens' ability to participate effectively in governance and service monitoring processes, pointing to bureaucratic and structural barriers that restrict information flow between institutions and the public. These studies collectively demonstrate that challenges affecting information access are multidimensional, spanning technological, human resource, and procedural dimensions, and they justify the need to specifically identify the challenges experienced at Bagamoyo District Council.

2.6.4 Empirical Literature on Strategies for Improving Information Access

Several empirical studies propose strategies for addressing weaknesses in information access within public institutions. Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007) highlighted the need for improved records management policies, standardized filing and classification systems, and regular staff training to ensure that information effectively supports decision-making and public service provision in Tanzanian local government authorities.

In a related study, Bwalya and Mutula (2014) argue that e-government initiatives, when combined with deliberate institutional capacity building, improve transparency and

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streamline service delivery processes by making information more accessible to both public officials and citizens. They caution, however, that technology alone is insufficient; strategies must also address infrastructure, staff competence, and implementation capacity. These insights inform the strategies explored in the present study for improving information access and enhancing service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

Although these empirical studies provide important insights into the link between information access and service delivery, most of them focus broadly on public sector institutions or national-level systems. There is limited empirical evidence specifically examining how information access influences service delivery at the district council level in Tanzania, particularly in Bagamoyo District Council. Therefore, this study sought to fill this contextual and empirical gap by assessing the role of information access in improving service delivery within a specific local government authority.

2.7 Research Gap

The reviewed literature demonstrates that access to information plays a significant role in promoting transparency, accountability, and improved service delivery in public institutions. Theoretical perspectives such as Good Governance Theory and New Public Management emphasize the importance of information flow, institutional efficiency, and performance accountability. Empirical studies conducted in different countries, including those by Ngoepe (2016) and Kemoni and Ngulube (2008), reveal that weak information and records management systems negatively affect service delivery outcomes. These studies confirm that effective information access is essential for enhancing institutional performance.

However, despite the growing body of literature linking information access to service delivery, several gaps remain. First, many existing studies focus broadly on national-level reforms, ICT adoption, or general governance practices without providing detailed analysis at the local government authority level. For example, Olatokun (2009) emphasizes technological adoption but pays limited attention to how information access mechanisms function within specific district councils. Second, much of the literature is concentrated in countries outside Tanzania, making it difficult to generalize findings to the Tanzanian local government context.

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Within Tanzania, although studies such as Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007) have examined records management challenges in public institutions, limited research has specifically assessed how access to information directly influences service delivery performance at individual district councils. Furthermore, there is inadequate context-specific evidence focusing on Bagamoyo District Council. This creates a geographical and contextual gap in the literature, as the unique administrative, institutional, and resource conditions of Bagamoyo District Council have not been sufficiently explored.

Therefore, this study filled this gap by providing an in-depth assessment of the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. By generating localized empirical evidence, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge and provides practical recommendations for strengthening information access mechanisms within local government authorities in Tanzania.

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter reviewed relevant literature on the role of information access in improving service delivery, drawing from theoretical and empirical sources. The theoretical literature highlighted Good Governance Theory, Information Management Theory, New Public Management, and the Right to Information framework, all of which emphasize the importance of transparency, accountability, and systematic management of information in enhancing institutional performance. The conceptual discussions clarified the meanings of information access, service delivery, and related concepts such as transparency, efficiency, and records management, demonstrating how these elements interact to influence public sector outcomes.

The empirical literature, organized according to the study's four specific objectives, provided evidence from studies conducted in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, and Tanzania, showing that weak records management, limited ICT adoption, and poor access to information negatively affect service delivery, while effective information systems, sound strategies, and capacity building enhance efficiency, coordination, and accountability. Despite these insights, the review identified a clear research gap: limited empirical studies have specifically examined how access to information influences service delivery at the district council level in Tanzania, and no focused studies exist on Bagamoyo District Council.

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The literature review confirms the significance of investigating the link between information access and service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council to generate context-specific recommendations for improving local government services. The next chapter presents the research methodology that was used to address this gap.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to conduct the study. It outlines the research design, study area, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis, and the strategies used to ensure validity and reliability. The chapter also discusses the ethical considerations that were observed during the study. The methodology was designed to ensure that the research objectives were achieved and that the findings provide credible and useful insights into the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.2 Research Design

This study used a descriptive case study design to examine the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. The design was suitable because it allowed an in-depth, context-specific analysis of real-life institutional practices and challenges without manipulating variables (Kothari, 2004; Yin, 2018). Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, enabling the identification of patterns in information access and capturing staff and citizen experiences through interviews and document reviews. The case study approach also supported practical, evidence-based recommendations for improving information management and service delivery performance (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

3.3 Area of the Study

The study was conducted at Bagamoyo District Council, located in the Coastal Region of Tanzania. The council was selected because it is responsible for delivering essential public services such as health, education, water supply, and administrative services, making it an ideal setting for assessing the relationship between information access and service delivery. The area provides a representative context for examining local government practices, institutional capacity, and citizen interactions with service delivery systems. Focusing on this district allowed the study to generate context-specific insights and practical recommendations relevant to local governance in Tanzania.

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3.4 Study Population

The study population comprised Bagamoyo District Council staff and service users (citizens) drawn from the health, education, water, and administration departments, which are directly involved in information management and the provision of public services. Council staff were targeted because of their direct involvement in generating, managing, and disseminating information used in service delivery, while service users provided perspectives on the accessibility and effectiveness of those services. The total study population was 42 respondents, comprising council staff from the four key departments and citizens who regularly interact with council services. This population allowed the study to capture both institutional practices and citizen experiences regarding information access and its impact on service delivery.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Given the small and finite size of the study population (N = 42), the sample size for this study was determined statistically using Slovin's formula (Kothari, 2004), which is commonly applied in social science research to obtain a representative sample from a known population. The formula is expressed as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where: n = the required sample size; N = the total study population; e = the margin of error (set at 0.1, i.e., 10%, which is acceptable for small and homogeneous populations in descriptive case studies).

Substituting the values into the formula:

$$n = 42 / (1 + 42(0.1)^2)$$

$$n = 42 / (1 + 42(0.01))$$

$$n = 42 / (1 + 0.42)$$

$$n = 42 / 1.42$$

$$n = 29.58 \approx 30$$

Therefore, applying Slovin's formula at a 10 percent margin of error yielded a computed sample size of 29.58, which was rounded up to 30 respondents to ensure an adequate and conservative representation of the population, out of the total population of 42. This sample size (30) represents about 71.4 percent of the population, which is considered a

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strong and highly representative proportion for a descriptive case study of this scale (Kothari, 2004). The 30 respondents were then drawn using a combination of purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select council staff from departments directly involved in service delivery, ensuring that respondents had relevant experience and knowledge of information management practices. Simple random sampling was used to select service users, giving every member of the citizen population an equal chance of being selected and thereby minimizing selection bias. This combination of techniques ensured that the sample was both information-rich and representative of the broader population of 42. The distribution of the population and the sample size is summarized in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Population and Sample Size

Category of Respondents	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Council Staff (Health, Education, Water, Administration)	25	18	Purposive Sampling
Citizens / Service Users	17	12	Simple Random Sampling
Total	**42**	**30**	**-**

Source: Field Data, 2026

3.6 Data Collection Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to collect data, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of how information access affects service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. The following methods were used:

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Structured questionnaires were administered to both council staff and service users. The questionnaires contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions allowed for the collection of quantifiable data on issues such as the availability of records, timeliness of information, and the perceived efficiency of services. Open-ended questions enabled respondents to provide more detailed explanations of challenges and suggestions related to information access. Questionnaires were suitable because they allowed data collection from a reasonable number of respondents in a

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systematic and efficient way, generating patterns and trends that could be statistically analyzed (Kothari, 2004).

3.6.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key informants, including department heads, senior officers, and staff responsible for records management and service delivery. This method provided an opportunity to obtain in-depth qualitative information about institutional practices, challenges in accessing information, and strategies employed to improve service delivery. Interviews allowed the researcher to probe further and clarify responses, making it possible to capture detailed insights that questionnaires may not reveal (Kumar, 2011).

3.6.3 Documentary Review

Relevant documents were reviewed to triangulate data collected through questionnaires and interviews. These documents included policy guidelines, service delivery reports, records management manuals, and administrative reports. Document review helped in understanding the formal procedures and systems in place for information access, providing evidence of how information is organized, stored, and used to support service delivery (Mnjama, 2015). This method also strengthened the credibility of the findings by corroborating data from multiple sources.

3.6.4 Observations

Direct observations were conducted within council offices to understand practical workflows, the accessibility of records, and interactions between staff and citizens. Observations helped to verify the actual implementation of information access mechanisms and to identify gaps that may not have been reported in interviews or questionnaires.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically examining collected data to extract meaningful patterns, relationships, and insights that answer the research questions. This study used a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

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3.7.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected from structured questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel. This included computing frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations to summarize responses on the availability of records, the timeliness of information, and citizens' satisfaction with services. Descriptive statistics helped identify trends, patterns, and relationships between information access and service delivery. Data were presented in tables, charts, and graphs for clear visualization and easier interpretation (Kothari, 2004).

3.7.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data collected from interviews and document reviews were analyzed using thematic analysis. The process involved coding responses, identifying recurring themes, and interpreting their meanings in relation to the study objectives. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to explore perceptions, experiences, and institutional practices regarding information access and service delivery (Braun & Clarke, 2006). For example, challenges in records management, ICT adoption, and transparency practices were identified and analyzed to understand their impact on service efficiency.

3.7.3 Triangulation of Data

To ensure validity and reliability, data from questionnaires, interviews, and documentary review were triangulated. Triangulation involved comparing findings from multiple sources to confirm consistency and strengthen conclusions. This approach allowed the researcher to cross-verify quantitative and qualitative findings, identify discrepancies, and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how information access affects service delivery (Creswell, 2014).

3.7.4 Presentation of Findings

The analyzed data are presented in a structured manner in Chapter Four, combining numerical summaries, graphical illustrations, and narrative explanations. Quantitative results highlight measurable patterns in information access and service delivery, while qualitative results provide context, explanation, and insights into challenges and institutional practices. This comprehensive presentation enabled the researcher to draw conclusions and make evidence-based recommendations for improving information access mechanisms at Bagamoyo District Council.

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3.8 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring validity and reliability was critical for the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings. This section explains how these aspects were addressed in the study.

3.8.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the research instruments measure what they are intended to measure (Creswell, 2014). To ensure validity in this study, the following measures were taken:

Content Validity: The questionnaire and interview guide were reviewed by academic supervisors and experts in public administration and information management to confirm that all questions were relevant and covered the objectives of the study.

Construct Validity: Questions were designed based on the reviewed literature and the study's objectives, ensuring that the instruments accurately captured the concepts of information access and service delivery.

Pre-testing: The instruments were pre-tested on a small sample of council staff and citizens outside the main study sample. Feedback from the pre-test was used to revise unclear or ambiguous questions, enhancing clarity and appropriateness.

3.8.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of the data collection instruments over time and across different respondents (Kumar, 2011). To ensure reliability, the following measures were taken:

Standardization of Instruments: All questionnaires and interview guides followed a standard structure with clear instructions to ensure that every respondent interpreted the questions similarly.

Pilot Testing: A pilot study was conducted, and the results were analyzed to check the internal consistency of responses, ensuring that the instruments produced stable and repeatable results.

Triangulation: Data were collected from multiple sources (questionnaires, interviews, and document review) to cross-verify findings. Triangulation increased reliability by reducing the impact of biases arising from a single method (Patton, 2002).

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By applying these measures, the study ensured that the findings on the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council are both valid and reliable.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical standards to ensure the rights and safety of all participants. Informed consent was obtained from council staff and citizens before data collection, and participation was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by not disclosing personal identifiers in the research report. Approval was sought from relevant authorities at Bagamoyo District Council before data collection began. Additionally, data were reported honestly, and findings were not fabricated or misrepresented. These measures ensured that the study was conducted responsibly and ethically.

3.10 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented the methodology used to investigate the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. It outlined the research design, adopting a descriptive case study approach with a mixed-methods strategy to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The study area, population of 42, and sample size of 30 (determined using Slovin's formula) were described, highlighting purposive sampling for staff and simple random sampling for citizens to ensure representative insights. Detailed data collection methods included questionnaires, interviews, and documentary review, while data analysis involved descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and triangulation to ensure reliability and validity. Measures to ensure validity, reliability, and ethical considerations were discussed, including pre-testing, expert review, informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Overall, the chapter provided a systematic framework that ensured the research findings, presented in Chapter Four, are credible, comprehensive, and capable of generating practical recommendations for improving information access and service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and discusses the findings of the study on the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. The findings are organized according to the specific objectives of the study: the existing information access mechanisms, the extent to which information access influences the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, the challenges affecting access to information, and the strategies for improving information access. Data Ware presented using professionally formatted frequency tables, percentages, pie charts, and bar graphs, followed by a discussion that relates the findings to the reviewed literature.

4.2 Response Rate

Out of the 30 questionnaires that were distributed to the sampled respondents (council staff and citizens), all 30 were correctly filled in and returned, giving a response rate of 100 percent. This high response rate was attributed to the close follow-up made by the researcher and the willingness of respondents to participate in the study. A response rate of this magnitude is considered adequate for descriptive analysis and for drawing meaningful conclusions (Kothari, 2004).

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Response Rate. **(N=30)**

Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Distributed	30	100
Returned and usable	30	100
Not returned	0	0

Source: Field Data, 2026

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the 30 respondents who participated in the study, including gender, age, level of education, position/occupation, and years of experience or interaction with Bagamoyo District Council services.

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4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

This sub-section aims to establish the gender distribution of the respondents who took part in the study, in order to determine whether the sample achieved a fair and balanced representation of both male and female perspectives on information access and service delivery.

Table 4.2: Gender of Respondents. **(N=30)**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	17	56.7
Female	13	43.3
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

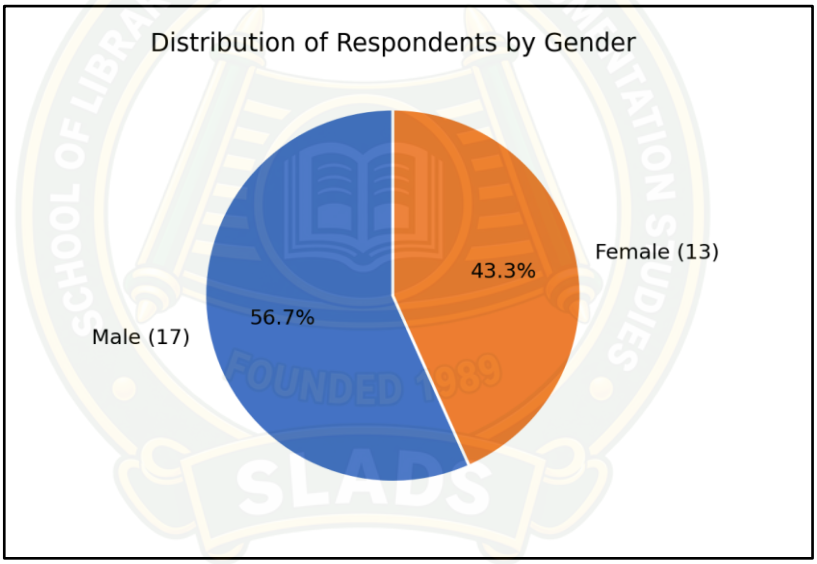


Figure 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 indicate that 17 (56.7%) of the respondents were male while 13 (43.3%) were female. This shows a fairly balanced gender representation among the respondents, which strengthens the credibility of the findings by capturing views from both male and female staff and citizens.

The slight dominance of male respondents is consistent with the general staffing pattern observed in many Tanzanian local government authorities, where technical and administrative departments such as water and works tend to be male-dominated, while sectors such as health and education tend to attract more female employees (Ngulube, 2019). Among the citizen respondents, the near-even split suggests that both men and

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women were equally willing and available to participate in the study, which reduces the likelihood that the findings on information access and service delivery are skewed toward the experience of a single gender.

This gender balance is important for the objectives of the study because access to information and satisfaction with service delivery can sometimes differ by gender, particularly in contexts where women may have less time, mobility, or confidence to seek out information from public offices. By ensuring that both male and female voices were adequately represented in the sample, the study was able to capture a more holistic picture of how different groups experience information access mechanisms, and the extent to which those mechanisms are perceived to influence the efficiency and effectiveness of services at Bagamoyo District Council.

4.3.2 Age of Respondents

This sub-section aims to present the age distribution of the respondents in order to determine the dominant age group represented in the study and to assess its implications for the reliability and depth of the responses obtained.

Table 4.3: Age of Respondents. **(N=30)**

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 25	4	13.3
25-34	11	36.7
35-44	8	26.7
45-54	5	16.7
55 and above	2	6.7
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

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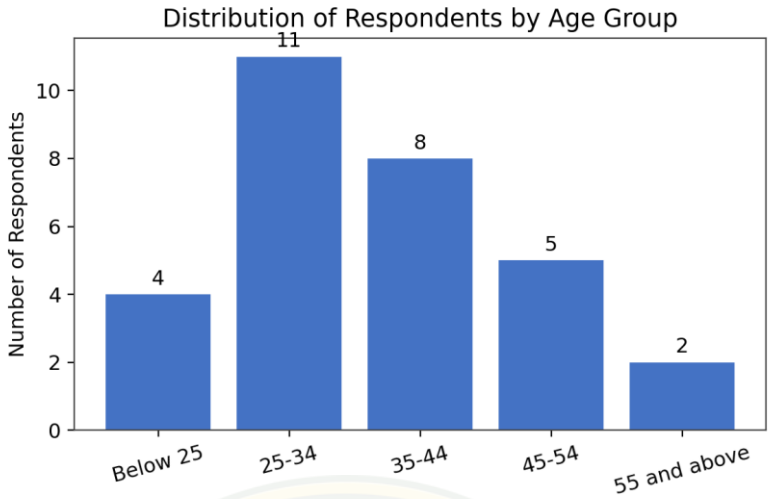


Figure 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group

The findings in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2 show that the majority of respondents, 11 (36.7%), were aged between 25 and 34 years, followed by 8 (26.7%) aged between 35 and 44 years. This indicates that most respondents were within the economically active age group, which is likely to provide reliable and informed responses regarding information access and service delivery at the council.

Cumulatively, 19 (63.4%) of the respondents were below the age of 45, indicating that the sample was dominated by a relatively youthful population. This age structure is significant for the study because younger and middle-aged respondents are generally more familiar with digital tools and information and communication technologies (ICTs), and are therefore better placed to meaningfully assess the effectiveness of ICT-based information access mechanisms discussed later in Table 4.8. Their responses on the availability and reliability of electronic information systems can be considered fairly well informed.

At the same time, the presence of respondents aged 45 years and above (7, representing 23.4%) ensured that the study also captured the views of more experienced staff and long-serving citizens, whose perspectives are useful for understanding how information access practices at the council have evolved over time. This blend of younger and older respondents strengthens the overall credibility of the findings by combining contemporary perspectives on technology with historical institutional knowledge, which is consistent with Mnjama's (2015) observation that a mixed-age workforce brings both

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adaptability and accumulated institutional memory to records and information management.

4.3.3 Level of Education

This sub-section aims to present the educational background of the respondents in order to assess their capacity to understand technical concepts relating to information access and to provide informed, reliable responses to the questionnaire.

Table 4.4: Level of Education of Respondents. **(N=30)**

Level of Education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary	1	3.3
Secondary	6	20.0
Diploma/Certificate	12	40.0
Bachelor's Degree	8	26.7
Master's Degree and above	3	10.0
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

As indicated in Table 4.4, the majority of respondents, 12 (40.0%), held a Diploma or Certificate, while 8 (26.7%) held a Bachelor's Degree. This suggests that most respondents had an adequate level of education to understand and respond meaningfully to the questionnaire items on information access and service delivery.

When the Diploma/Certificate, Bachelor's Degree, and Master's Degree categories are combined, a substantial majority of respondents, 23 (76.7%), had attained tertiary-level education. This is an important finding because the study required respondents to reflect on relatively technical concepts such as records management, ICT systems, and transparency in service delivery. A predominantly literate and educated sample increases confidence that respondents understood the questionnaire items correctly and provided informed, rather than guessed, responses, which enhances the overall validity of the findings discussed in this chapter.

However, the presence of respondents with only primary (3.3%) and secondary (20.0%) education is equally instructive. These respondents, mostly drawn from the citizen category, represent ordinary service users whose ability to access and interpret council information may be more limited than that of highly educated staff. This observation

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lends support to the challenge of limited staff training and capacity identified later in Table 4.12, and reinforces the argument advanced by Ngulube (2019) that effective information access depends not only on the availability of systems but also on the capacity of both providers and users to understand and utilize the information that is made available.

4.3.4 Position/Role of Respondents

This sub-section aims to present the distribution of respondents by category, council staff versus citizens/service users, in order to show how the study balanced internal institutional perspectives with external service-user perspectives.

Table 4.5: Position/Category of Respondents. **(N=30)**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Council Staff	18	60.0
Citizens/Service Users	12	40.0
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.5 shows that 18 (60.0%) of the respondents were council staff drawn from the health, education, water, and administration departments, while 12 (40.0%) were citizens/service users. This distribution is consistent with the sample design described in Chapter Three, which combined purposive sampling of staff with simple random sampling of citizens.

This deliberate inclusion of both categories of respondents was intended to allow triangulation between the internal (provider) and external (user) perspectives on information access and service delivery. Council staff were better positioned to comment on the internal mechanisms, systems, and institutional challenges involved in managing and disseminating information, while citizens provided an outside-in perspective on how easily they could obtain the information and services they needed. Comparing responses from these two groups throughout the chapter, for example in Tables 4.7, 4.9, and 4.11, therefore strengthens the trustworthiness of the findings by reducing the risk that the results reflect only one side of the information access relationship (Creswell, 2014).

The slightly larger proportion of staff respondents also reflects the practical reality that information access mechanisms, such as ICT systems and records offices, are primarily

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housed and operated within council departments. Staff were therefore more accessible and more directly knowledgeable about the day-to-day functioning of these mechanisms, which justified their slightly higher representation in the sample while still preserving a meaningful citizen voice in the findings.

4.3.5 Years of Experience/Interaction with Council Services

This sub-section aims to present respondents' years of experience as staff, or years of interaction as citizens, with Bagamoyo District Council, in order to assess how familiar respondents were with the council's information access mechanisms and service delivery practices.

Table 4.6: Years of Experience/Interaction with Bagamoyo District Council Services

(N=30)

Years of Experience/Interaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than 1 year	4	13.3
1-3 years	8	26.7
4-6 years	10	33.3
7-10 years	6	20.0
More than 10 years	2	6.7
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

The results in Table 4.6 indicate that the majority of respondents, 10 (33.3%), had 4 to 6 years of experience or interaction with the council's services, suggesting that most respondents were sufficiently familiar with the council's information access mechanisms and service delivery practices to provide informed responses.

When the categories are combined, 18 (60.0%) of the respondents had 4 or more years of experience or interaction with the council, meaning that the majority had been engaged with the institution long enough to observe changes in information access practices and service delivery quality over time. This is particularly valuable for the second and third objectives of the study, which examine the influence of information access on service delivery and the challenges affecting it, since respondents with longer tenure are better able to compare current practices with past experiences and to identify recurring, rather than one-off, challenges.

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At the same time, the 12 (40.0%) of respondents with less than 4 years of experience, including the 4 (13.3%) with less than one year, brought fresher, more recent impressions of the council's information systems, which helped to ensure that the findings reflect the current state of information access rather than relying solely on outdated perceptions. The combination of long-serving and newer respondents therefore provided a balanced temporal perspective that strengthens the overall reliability of the demographic profile presented in this section.

4.4 Existing Information Access Mechanisms at Bagamoyo District Council

This section addresses the first specific objective of the study, which sought to examine the existing information access mechanisms used at Bagamoyo District Council in the delivery of public services.

Table 4.7: Frequency of Access to Information Needed to Perform Duties/Access Services

(N=30)

Frequency of Access to Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	5	16.7
Often	10	33.3
Sometimes	11	36.7
Rarely	3	10.0
Never	1	3.3
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings in Table 4.7 show that only 5 (16.7%) of the respondents indicated that they always had access to the information needed to perform their duties or access services, while the majority, 11 (36.7%), reported that they only sometimes had access.

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Table 4.8: Availability of ICT Systems to Facilitate Information Access. (N=30)

Availability of ICT Systems	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	63.3
No	11	36.7
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.8 further reveals that although 19 (63.3%) of the respondents confirmed the existence of ICT systems to facilitate information access, a considerable proportion, 11 (36.7%), reported that no such systems were in place in their respective areas. These findings suggest that although some information access mechanisms, such as ICT systems, records offices, and correspondence channels, exist at Bagamoyo District Council, they are not yet consistently reliable or evenly distributed across departments and service points.

A closer examination of Table 4.7 shows that when the "Always" and "Often" categories are combined, only 15 (50.0%) of respondents could reliably obtain the information they needed, meaning that the other half of respondents experienced at least occasional difficulty in accessing information. This roughly even split points to an information access environment that is functional but inconsistent, where the mechanisms in place work reasonably well for some staff and citizens but leave a substantial proportion underserved. Such inconsistency is a practical manifestation of the mechanisms described in the empirical literature by Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007), who found that many Tanzanian local government authorities continued to rely on manual, paper-based systems that function unevenly across departments.

The finding in Table 4.8 that more than a third of respondents reported the absence of ICT systems in their areas is particularly significant for the first objective of the study, which sought to examine the existing information access mechanisms at the council. It suggests a digital divide within the institution itself, whereby some departments, such as those handling health or education records, may have benefited from earlier ICT investment or e-government pilot initiatives, while others, such as water and general administration, may still depend largely on manual registries and correspondence files. This uneven mechanization has direct implications for service delivery, since

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departments without reliable ICT support are more likely to experience delays in retrieving and sharing information, consistent with Olatokun's (2009) observation that infrastructural limitations continue to constrain the benefits of ICT adoption in African public institutions even where some technology has been introduced.

4.5 Influence of Information Access on Efficiency and Effectiveness of Service Delivery

This section presents findings related to the second specific objective, which assessed the extent to which access to information influenced the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

Table 4.9: Rating of Availability of Records and Information at the Council. (N=30)

Rating of Availability of Records and Information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	2	6.7
Good	11	36.7
Average	12	40.0
Poor	4	13.3
Very Poor	1	3.3
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

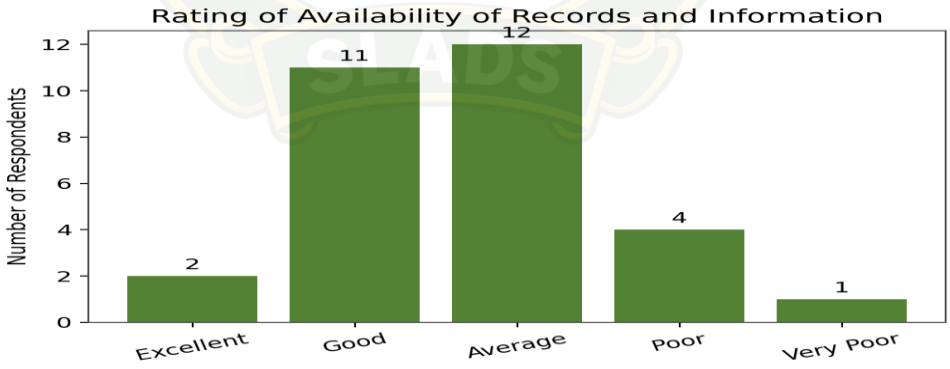


Figure 4.3: Rating of Availability of Records and Information

Table 4.9 and Figure 4.3 show that 13 (43.4%) of the respondents rated the availability of records and information at the council as either excellent or good, while 12 (40.0%) rated it as average, and 5 (16.6%) rated it as poor or very poor. This distribution indicates that although a reasonable proportion of respondents were satisfied with how readily records and information could be found, the largest single category, average, suggests

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that many respondents view the current state of records availability as merely adequate rather than strong. This moderate rating is important for the second objective of the study because it implies that the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery are not being fully supported by the underlying records and information base, even though the situation is not considered critical.

Read alongside the earlier findings in Table 4.7, where only half of the respondents said they always or often had access to needed information, the ratings in Table 4.9 reinforce the conclusion that Bagamoyo District Council's information holdings are neither entirely unavailable nor fully optimized. This finding is consistent with Ngoepe (2016), who observed that weak records management systems in public institutions do not necessarily mean a complete absence of information, but rather poor organization, retrieval, and control of the information that does exist, which limits its usefulness for timely decision-making and service provision.

Table 4.10: Overall Quality of Services Provided by Bagamoyo District Council (N=30)

Overall Quality of Services	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	2	6.7
Good	12	40.0
Average	11	36.7
Poor	4	13.3
Very Poor	1	3.3
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.10 shows that 14 (46.7%) of respondents rated the overall quality of services provided by Bagamoyo District Council as excellent or good, 11 (36.7%) rated it as average, and 5 (16.6%) rated it as poor or very poor. Notably, this pattern closely mirrors the ratings of records availability presented in Table 4.9, with both distributions clustering around the good-to-average range. This similarity is not coincidental; it suggests a close association between how accessible and well-organized information is and how respondents perceive the quality of the services they ultimately receive, lending preliminary support to the study's central assumption that information access and service delivery are closely linked at the council.

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The comparatively small proportion of respondents rating services as poor or very poor (16.6%) indicates that outright service failure is not widespread, but the substantial average rating (36.7%) shows that there remains considerable room for improvement before services can be considered consistently good or excellent. This finding aligns with Grindle's (2007) argument that service delivery outcomes in public institutions are shaped not only by the availability of resources but also by institutional arrangements and administrative competence, both of which are, in turn, dependent on how well information is managed and shared within the organization.

Table 4.11: Opinion on Whether Proper Access to Information Improves Service Delivery

(N=30)

Perception on Whether Information Access Improves Service Delivery	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Strongly Agree	12	40.0
Agree	11	36.7
Neutral	5	16.7
Disagree	1	3.3
Strongly Disagree	1	3.3
Total	**30**	**100**

Source: Field Data, 2026

Table 4.11 reveal a strong and decisive perception among respondents regarding the value of information access: 23 (76.7%) either strongly agreed or agreed that proper access to information improves service delivery, only 5 (16.7%) were neutral, and a very small proportion, 2 (6.6%), disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is the clearest and most direct evidence generated by the study in support of its second specific objective, which sought to assess the extent to which access to information influences the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. Unlike the more moderate ratings observed in Tables 4.9 and 4.10, which reflect respondents' assessment of the current state of information and services, Table 4.11 captures respondents' underlying belief about the relationship between the two variables, and that belief is overwhelmingly positive.

The near-consensus recorded in Table 4.11 is consistent with Heeks (2006), who found that reliable access to information strengthens service delivery by improving communication, coordination, and responsiveness to citizens' needs, and with Joshi

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(2013), who argues that transparency and information access enhance citizen engagement and, in turn, pressure institutions to improve performance. Taken together, Tables 4.9, 4.10, and 4.11 build a coherent picture: records and information availability is currently rated as moderate, service quality is correspondingly rated as moderate to good, and respondents strongly believe that improving information access would translate directly into improved service delivery. This progression of findings provides strong empirical justification for prioritizing investment in information and records management systems as a practical lever for improving service delivery outcomes at Bagamoyo District Council.

4.6 Challenges Affecting Access to Information in Service Delivery

This section addresses the third specific objective, which sought to identify the challenges affecting access to information in service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council.

Table 4.12: Challenges Affecting Access to Information (Multiple Responses). (N=30)

Challenge	Frequency (n = 30)	Percentage (%)
Poor records management	18	60.0
Bureaucratic procedures	17	56.7
Lack of ICT systems	14	46.7
Limited staff training	12	40.0
Other challenges	4	13.3

Source: Field Data, 2026..

The findings in Table 4.12 show that poor records management, cited by 18 (60.0%) of the respondents, was the most frequently reported challenge, followed by bureaucratic procedures, 17 (56.7%), and lack of ICT systems, 14 (46.7%). These findings are consistent with Ngulube (2019) and Ngoepe (2016), who observed that weak records management systems and inadequate ICT infrastructure are among the leading obstacles to effective information access in public institutions.

The prominence of poor records management as the leading challenge is particularly noteworthy because it directly corroborates the moderate ratings recorded earlier in Table 4.9, where only 43.4% of respondents rated the availability of records and information as good or excellent. Together, these findings suggest that the core problem

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at Bagamoyo District Council is less about a total absence of information and more about how that information is organized, filed, and made retrievable, a conclusion that aligns closely with Kemoni and Ngulube's (2008) finding that poor classification systems and inadequate technological support, rather than a lack of information itself, are what most frequently undermine access in public sector institutions.

Similarly, the fact that bureaucratic procedures were the second most cited challenge, at 56.7%, indicates that even where information physically exists, layers of approval, referral, and administrative process can delay its release to those who need it, whether staff attempting to make decisions or citizens seeking services. When combined with the 46.7% of respondents who cited a lack of ICT systems and the 40.0% who cited limited staff training, the results point to a set of interrelated, mutually reinforcing challenges rather than isolated problems: manual and poorly classified records slow down retrieval, bureaucratic layers add further delay, limited ICT capacity removes a potential shortcut, and inadequate training leaves staff without the skills to manage information more efficiently even where systems exist. This clustering of challenges is important for the fourth objective of the study, because it suggests that piecemeal interventions addressing only one factor, for example introducing computers without corresponding staff training or procedural reform, are unlikely to produce a lasting improvement in information access.

4.7 Strategies for Improving Information Access and Service Delivery

The fourth specific objective sought to propose strategies for improving information access to enhance service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. Findings from the open-ended questionnaire items, interviews, and document review were analyzed thematically, and the following strategies emerged consistently across respondents:

Strengthening records management systems: Respondents recommended the adoption of standardized records classification, filing, and retrieval systems to reduce the time taken to access information.

Investing in ICT infrastructure: Many respondents suggested equipping departments with reliable computers, network connectivity, and digital record-keeping systems to reduce dependence on manual, paper-based processes.

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Capacity building and staff training: Respondents emphasized the need for regular training of staff in records management, ICT use, and customer service to improve the handling and dissemination of information.

Simplifying bureaucratic procedures: Respondents proposed streamlining approval processes and reducing unnecessary administrative bottlenecks that delay access to information and services.

Improving public awareness: Respondents suggested that the council should use notice boards, community meetings, and digital platforms to keep citizens informed about available services and procedures.

These findings echo Bwalya and Mutula (2014), who argue that e-government initiatives and institutional capacity building together improve transparency and streamline service delivery processes.

It is notable that each of the five proposed strategies maps directly onto one of the challenges identified in Table 4.12: strengthening records management responds to the leading challenge of poor records management (60.0%); simplifying bureaucratic procedures responds directly to the second-ranked challenge (56.7%); investing in ICT infrastructure responds to the lack of ICT systems (46.7%); and capacity building responds to limited staff training (40.0%). This close correspondence between challenges and proposed strategies suggests that respondents, both staff and citizens, had a clear and realistic understanding of the practical steps needed to improve information access, rather than offering generic or idealistic suggestions.

The consistency of these recommendations across both staff and citizen respondents, obtained through the triangulated combination of questionnaires, interviews, and document review, strengthens confidence that the proposed strategies are grounded in lived institutional experience rather than isolated opinion. As Bwalya and Mutula (2014) caution, however, technology-focused solutions such as ICT investment are unlikely to succeed on their own; the findings of this study therefore support a combined, multi-pronged approach in which records management reform, ICT investment, staff training, procedural simplification, and public awareness are pursued together, in line with the recommendations presented in Chapter Five.

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4.8 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study confirm that information access plays a significant role in shaping service delivery outcomes at Bagamoyo District Council. Consistent with the Good Governance Theory and the Information Management Theory discussed in Chapter Two, the study found that where information was readily available and well managed, respondents reported higher satisfaction with service quality, responsiveness, and accountability. Conversely, challenges such as poor records management, limited ICT infrastructure, and bureaucratic bottlenecks continue to constrain effective information access, echoing the observations of Ngulube (2019) and Andrews (2010) regarding weak institutional systems in developing countries.

The strong positive perception among respondents that information access improves service delivery (76.7%, Table 4.11) directly supports the study's second objective, confirming a clear relationship between the availability of information and the quality of services delivered, while acknowledging the influence of intervening institutional factors such as staffing, infrastructure, and procedures. Overall, the findings provide empirical evidence, specific to Bagamoyo District Council, that had previously been missing from the literature, thereby addressing the contextual research gap identified in Chapter Two.

4.9 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented and analyzed data collected from 30 respondents at Bagamoyo District Council using professionally formatted tables, percentages, pie charts, and bar graphs. The findings addressed all four specific objectives of the study: the existing information access mechanisms, the influence of information access on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, the challenges affecting information access, and the strategies proposed for improvement. The results generally show a positive but constrained relationship between information access and service delivery, shaped by challenges such as poor records management, limited ICT infrastructure, and bureaucratic procedures. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions drawn from the findings presented in Chapter Four, recommendations for improving information access and service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council, and suggested areas for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This study assessed the role of information access in improving service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. The study was guided by four specific objectives: to examine the existing information access mechanisms; to assess the extent to which access to information influenced the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery; to identify the challenges affecting access to information; and to propose strategies for improving information access to enhance service delivery. A descriptive case study design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, was adopted. Data were collected from a sample of 30 respondents, drawn from a population of 42 council staff and citizens using Slovin's formula, through questionnaires, interviews, documentary review, and observation, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis.

5.2.1 Summary of Findings by Objective

- Existing information access mechanisms: The study found that Bagamoyo District Council relies on a combination of manual records systems, correspondence, and partially implemented ICT systems to facilitate information access. While 63.3% of respondents confirmed the existence of ICT systems, access to needed information was inconsistent, with only 16.7% of respondents reporting that they always had the information they needed.

- Influence of information access on service delivery: The study established a strong positive relationship between information access and service delivery, with 76.7% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that proper access to information improves service delivery, and the majority rating the overall quality of council services as good to average.

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- Challenges affecting information access: Poor records management (60.0%), bureaucratic procedures (56.7%), lack of ICT systems (46.7%), and limited staff training (40.0%) were identified as the leading challenges affecting information access at the council.

- Strategies for improvement: Respondents proposed strengthening records management systems, investing in ICT infrastructure, building staff capacity through training, simplifying bureaucratic procedures, and improving public awareness of council services.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that information access is a critical determinant of effective, efficient, and transparent service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. Where information is well managed and readily accessible, staff are better able to plan, coordinate, and respond to citizens' needs, while citizens are better able to engage with and hold the council accountable for the services they receive. However, persistent challenges, particularly weak records management systems, limited ICT infrastructure, inadequate staff training, and cumbersome bureaucratic procedures, continue to constrain the full realization of these benefits.

The study further concludes that the theoretical perspectives underpinning the research, namely Good Governance Theory, Information Management Theory, New Public Management, and the Right to Information framework, are all relevant to explaining the relationship between information access and service delivery observed at Bagamoyo District Council. Strengthening information access mechanisms is therefore not merely a technical or administrative matter but a strategic priority for improving governance and public service outcomes at the district council level.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations to Bagamoyo District Council

- The council should invest in modernizing its records management systems, including the adoption of standardized filing, classification, and digital archiving practices, to reduce delays in retrieving information.

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- The council should expand and strengthen ICT infrastructure across all departments to support reliable, timely, and equitable access to information for both staff and citizens.
- The council should institute regular capacity-building programs and training for staff in records management, ICT use, and customer service to enhance the effective handling of information.
- The council should review and simplify internal bureaucratic procedures that delay access to information and services, in order to improve responsiveness to citizens' needs.
- The council should enhance public awareness of available services and information access channels through notice boards, community meetings, and digital platforms.

5.4.2 Recommendations to Policy Makers

- The Government of Tanzania should strengthen the implementation and enforcement of the Access to Information Act of 2016 at the local government level, including providing resources and guidelines to support compliance.
- Policy makers should support local government authorities with funding and technical assistance for e-government and ICT infrastructure development to bridge the gap between policy intentions and practical implementation.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Future Researchers

- Researchers should consider conducting comparative studies across multiple district councils in Tanzania to determine whether the findings of this study are representative of local government authorities more broadly.
- Future studies could employ larger and more diverse samples, and could explore the relationship between information access and service delivery using inferential statistical techniques to test the strength and significance of the observed relationships.

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5.5 Areas for Further Research

While this study focused specifically on Bagamoyo District Council, future research could explore the role of information access in improving service delivery in other local government authorities in Tanzania, including urban and rural councils, to allow for comparative analysis. Further studies could also examine the specific impact of individual ICT interventions, such as electronic document management systems or mobile-based service platforms, on service delivery outcomes. Additionally, research employing longitudinal designs could track changes in information access and service delivery over time, providing deeper insights into the long-term impact of information management reforms.

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APPENDEX I

BUDGET

The study requires money in order to achieve the goal for data collection. It includes stationary, computer typing, printing, photocopying and transport expenses as well as daily expenses for the researcher's survival. The expenditures is as following.

S/N	Detailed budget	Cost per unit	Total
1	SLADS – Bagamoyo District council	6000 per week x 6 weeks	36000
2	Stationary For research report and report Ruled paper 3 reams Typing paper A4 2 ream Correction and Flash disk Stapler, Pencil, Pens, Rubber	90,000	90,000
3	Secretarial services Computer typing services 60 pages for research report and report Photocopying 3 questionnaires each 20 Binding service 6 report and research report Taxi charge	150,000	150,000
4	Grand total		276000

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APPENDEX II

TIME SCHEDULE SHOWING ACTIVITIES.

The research will be conducted for the period of 6 weeks as follows

ACTIVITIES	**1st Week**	**2nd Week**	**3rd Week**	**4th week**	**5thweek**	**6th week**
Reporting to the centre observing the situation						
Typing questionnaires and distributing them to respondents						
Collection of data for the field through questionnaires						
Data processing and interpretation ready for report drafting						
Preparation of the first draft						
Submission of the report to SLADS						

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APPENDEX III

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title: An Assessment on the Role of Information Access in Improving Service Delivery: A Case Study of Bagamoyo District Council

Dear Respondent

I am Rahma Rashid Kwajilwa, a student at the School of Library, Archives, and Documentation Studies (SLADS). I am conducting a study titled "An Assessment on the Role of Information Access in Improving Service Delivery: A Case Study of Bagamoyo District Council."

Instructions:

This questionnaire aims to collect information on how information access affects service delivery at Bagamoyo District Council. Your responses will be confidential and used for academic purposes only. Please answer honestly.

SECTION A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:

a) Below 25

b) 25–34 ( )

c) 35–44

d) 45–54

e) 55 and above

2. Gender:

a) Male

b) Female ( )

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3. Level of Education:

a) Primary

b) Secondary ( )

c) Diploma/Certificate

d) Bachelor's Degree

e) Master's Degree and above

4. Position/Role (for staff) / Occupation (for citizens): _____

5. Years of Experience/Interaction with Bagamoyo District Council services:

a) Less than 1 year

b) 1–3 years

c) 4–6 years ( )

d) 7–10 years

e) More than 10 years

SECTION B. INFORMATION ACCESS

6. How often do you have access to the information you need to perform your duties / access services?

a) Always

b) Often ( )

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

7. How would you rate the availability of records and information at the council?\

a) Excellent

b) Good

c) Average ( )

d) Poor

e) Very Poor

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8 Are there ICT systems in place to facilitate information access?

a) Yes ( )

b) No

9 If yes, how effective are these ICT systems in supporting service delivery?

a) Very Effective

b) Effective

c) Average ( )

d) Ineffective

e) Very Ineffective

10. Do you receive timely information about council services or decisions?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Sometimes ( )

d) Rarely

e) Never

SECTION C. SERVICE DELIVERY

11. How would you rate the overall quality of services provided by Bagamoyo District Council?

a) Excellent

b) Good

c) Average ( )

d) Poor

e) Very Poor

12. How responsive is the council in addressing service requests or complaints?

a) Very Responsive

b) Responsive

c) Neutral ( )

d) Less Responsive

e) Not Responsive

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13. In your opinion, does proper access to information improve service delivery?

a) Strongly Agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral ( )

d) Disagree

e) Strongly Disagree

14. How would you rate accountability and transparency in service provision?

a) Excellent

b) Good

c) Average ( )

d) Poor

e) Very Poor

SECTION D CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS

15. What are the main challenges in accessing information at Bagamoyo District Council? (Tick all that apply)

a) Poor records management

b) Lack of ICT systems

c) Limited staff training ( )

d) Bureaucratic procedures

e) Other (please specify): _____

16 Suggest ways to improve information access and service delivery in the council:

_____

17. Any additional comments regarding information access and service delivery:

_____

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APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Guide for Key Informants (Department Heads, Senior Officers, and Records Management Staff)

The following semi-structured interview questions were used to guide discussions with key informants at Bagamoyo District Council, following the questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents.

1. What information access mechanisms are currently used in your department to support service delivery?

2. In your opinion, how does access to information influence the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery at the Council?

3. Can you describe a situation where the availability, or lack, of information affected service delivery to citizens?

4. What are the major challenges your department faces in accessing and managing information?

5. How has the Access to Information Act (2016) been implemented within your department or the Council?

6. What strategies would you recommend to improve information access and enhance service delivery at the Council?

7. What role does staff training and capacity building play in improving information access and management within your department?

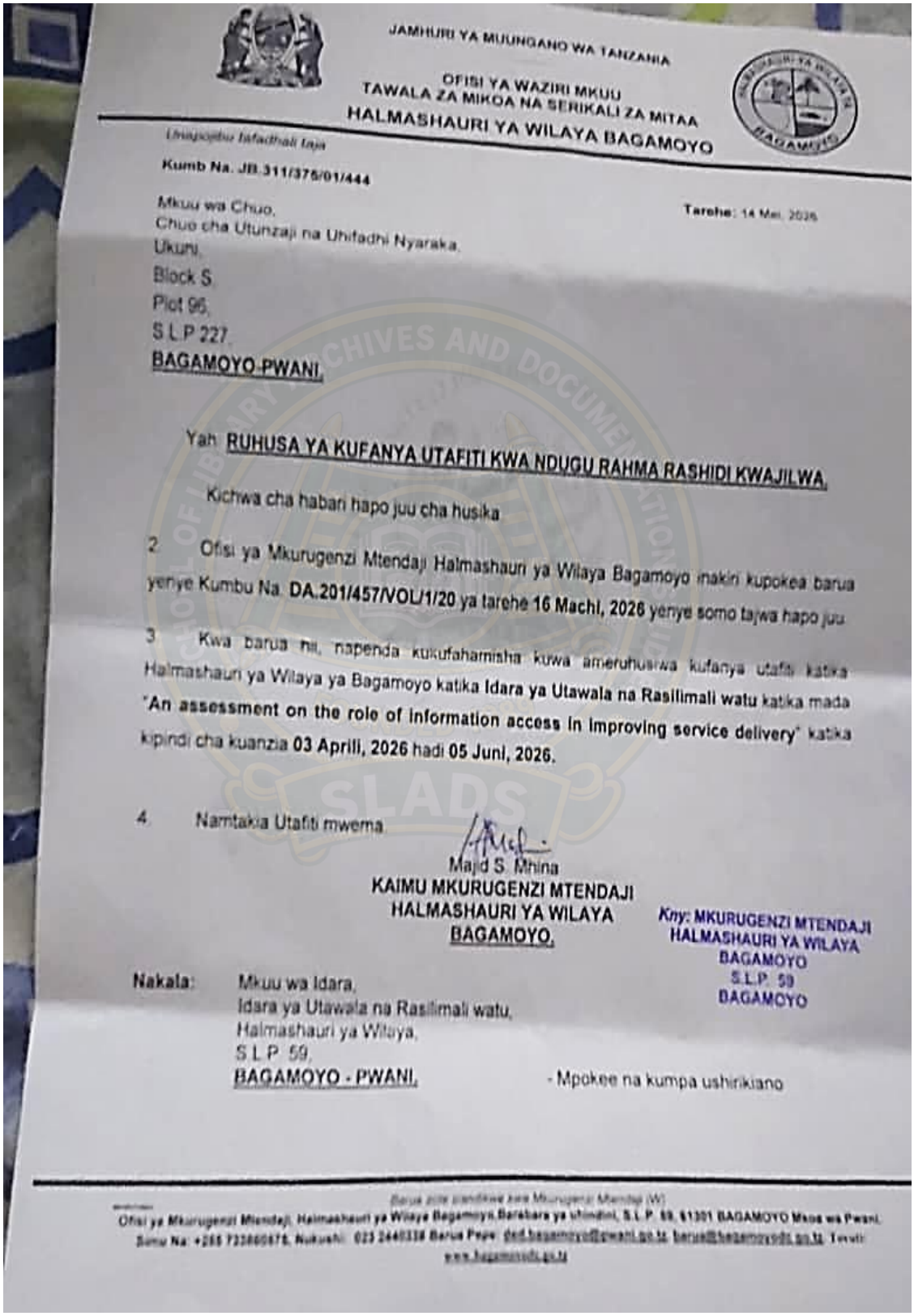
8. How does your department ensure that information is accurately recorded, stored, and retrievable when needed?

9. In your view, what role can ICT systems play in improving information access and service delivery at the Council?

10. What support or resources would your department need from the Council's leadership to improve information access and service delivery?

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APPENDEX V
INTRODUCTION 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.311/376/01/444

Tarehe: 14 Mei, 2026

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

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI KWA NDUGU RAHMA RASHIDI KWAJILWA.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika

2. Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo inakiri kupokea barua yenye Kumbu Na. **DA.201/457/VOL/1/20** ya tarehe **16 Machi, 2026** yenye somo tajwa hapo juu.

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kuwa ameruhusiwa kufanya utafiti katika Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali watu** katika mada "**An assessment on the role of information access in improving service delivery**" katika kipindi cha kuanzia **03 Aprili, 2026** hadi **05 Juni, 2026.**

4. Namtakia Utafiti mwema.

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

Kny: **MKURUGENZI MTENDAJI**
HALMASHAURI YA WILAYA
BAGAMOYO
S.L.P 59
BAGAMOYO

Nakala: Mkuu wa Idara,
Idara ya Utawala na Rasilimali watu,
Halmashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P 59,
BAGAMOYO - PWANI.

- Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano

Barua zote zianikwe kwa Mkurugenzi Mtendaji (W)
Ofisi ya Mkurugenzi Mtendaji, Halmashauri ya Wilaya Bagamoyo,Barabara ya viwandani, S.L.P. 59, 61301 BAGAMOYO Mkoa wa Pwani.
Simu Na: +255 732860875, Nukushi: 023 2440338 Barua Pepe: ded.bagamoyo@pwani.go.tz, barua@bagamoyodc.go.tz Tovuti: www.bagamoyodc.go.tz

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