SCHOOL OF LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND DOCUMENTATION STUDIES (SLADS)

AN ASSESSMENT OF VITAL RECORDS PROTECTION AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC OFFICES: A CASE STUDY OF BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL

PREPARED

BY

KALISTO AIDAN MLOWE

A research report submitted to the School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of an Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

AUGUST 2026.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that he has read and hereby recommend for the acceptance by the School of Library, Archives and Documentation studies a research report entitled **"**An assessment of vital records protection and its contribution to organizational performance in public offices: A case study of Bagamoyo District Council" as a partial fulfillment of requirements for the award of Ordinary Diploma in Records and Archives Management.

Supervisor name

Amiri Juma

Signature

…….

Date

…….

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

I, Kalisto Aidan Mlowe, declare that this research report is my own original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other university/college for a similar or any other award.

Signature

……

Date

……

Copyright ©Mlowe A. K. (2026)

This report is a copyright material protected under Berne convention, the copyright Act 1999 and other international and national enactments, in that behalf, on the intellectual property. It may not be reproduced by any means in full or in part, except for short extracts in fair dealings, for research or private study, critical scholarly review or discourse with acknowledgement, without written permission of the School of Library, Archives and Documentation studies (SLADS) on behalf of the author.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research report would not have been possible without the cooperation and help of many people. Firstly, I would like to thank Almighty GOD for his creation and survival in the world, and giving us this opportunity to get Education in this college.

Also, I would like to convey my sincere to the school of library, archive and documentation studies (SLADS), Administration and other stakeholder for making sure that I conduct this study well.

Special thank and honor goes to my research report supervisor for using his time to lead guide, supervise and orient me in the proposal writing. (college and other teacher) who played a role in providing the instructions in the class on how to write the research report.

Thank you a lot and God bless both of you a lot.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loved parents for their advice, support of materials and prayers during the whole process of pursuing my Diploma. Thank you so much may God be with you always.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARMA	–	Association of Records Managers and Administrators
ASA	–	American Society of Archivists (Society of American Archivists)
BDC	–	Bagamoyo District Council
ICT	–	Information and Communication Technology
IRMT	–	International Records Management Trust
ISO	–	International Organization for Standardization
NBS	–	National Bureau of Statistics
SLADS	–	School of Library, Archives and Documentation Studies
URT	–	United Republic of Tanzania
(RO1)	-	Records Officer 1
(RO2)	-	Records Officer 2
(HOD)	-	Head of Department

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

ABSTRACT

This study assessed the protection of vital records and respondents' perceived contribution of that protection to organizational performance in public offices, using Bagamoyo District Council as a case study. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine existing vital records protection practices, identify challenges affecting vital records protection, and assess respondents' perceived relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance. A descriptive research design with a mixed-methods approach was employed. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires were distributed to all 25 employees forming the target population, of which 25 were fully completed and returned, giving a response rate of 100%. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that access control measures and secure storage were the most commonly used practices for protecting vital records, whereas digitization was minimally practiced. The study further found that poor storage facilities, inadequate funding, lack of trained staff, and limited ICT infrastructure were the major challenges affecting vital records protection. The findings revealed that respondents perceived a strong relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance, particularly in ensuring business continuity, supporting decision-making, and enhancing accountability. The study concludes that strengthening vital records protection through improved storage facilities, digitization, staff training, and enhanced ICT infrastructure is essential for improving organizational performance in public offices. It recommended that the Council and similar public offices invest in improved storage facilities, accelerate digitization of vital records, and train staff in records management, Keywords: vital records, records protection, organizational performance, public offices, Bagamoyo District Council.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Table of Contents

CERTIFICATION i
DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS iii
DEDICATION iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS v
ABSTRACT vi
LIST OF TABLES xi
LIST OF FIGURES xii
CHAPTER ONE. 1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 1
1.0 INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY 1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM 2
1.3 GENERAL OBJECTIVE. 3
1.4 THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES 3
1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS 3
1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 3
1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY 3
1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY 4
1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS 4
1.9.1 vital records 4
1.9.2 Vital records protection 4
1.9.3 Organizational performance 4
1.9.4 Public offices 4
1.9.5 Protection 4
1.9.6 Records management 5
CHAPTER TWO 6
LITERATURE REVIEW 6

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

2.0 Introduction 6
2.1 To Examine Existing Vital Records Protection Practices 6
2.2To Identify Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection 7
2.3 To Assess respondents' perceived contribution of Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance 8
2.4 Theoretical Framework 9
2.4.1 The Records Life Cycle Theory 9
2.4.2 The Three-Phase Life Cycle Model 10
2.5 Conceptual Framework 12
2.5.1 The Independent Variable: Vital Records Protection Practices 13
2.5.2 The Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance 14
2.6 Empirical Review 14
2.7 Research Gap 15
CHAPTER THREE 16
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 16
3.0 Introduction 16
3.1 Research Type 16
3.2 Research Design 16
3.3 Research Approach 17
3.4 Study Area 17
3.5 Sampling Technique 18
3.5.1 Purposive Sampling 18
3.6 Population 18
3.7 Sample 19
3.8 Data Collection Methods 19
3.8.1 Questionnaires 19
3.8.2 Interviews. 20
3.9 Data Analysis Plan 20
3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis 20

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis 20
3.10 Validity and Reliability of Data. 21
3.11 Ethical Considerations 22
CHAPTER FOUR 23
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS 23
4.1 Introduction 23
4.1.1 Response Rate of Respondents 23
4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents 24
4.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents 25
4.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents 26
4.2.3 Education Level of Respondents 26
4.2.4 Position of Respondents in the Institution 27
4.2.5 Work Experience of Respondents 28
4.3 Presentation and Discussion of Findings According to Research Objectives 28
4.3.1 Objective One: Vital Records Protection Practices 29
4.3.1.1 Practices Used to Protect Vital Records 29
4.3.1.2 How Vital Records Are Stored and Maintained 30
4.3.2 Objective Two: Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection 32
4.3.2.1 Challenges Affecting the Protection of Vital Records 32
4.3.2.2 Influence of the Challenges on Effective Protection of Vital Records 33
Table 4.7 presents how the identified challenges influence the effective protection of vital records. 33
4.3.3 Objective Three: Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance 34
4.3.3.1 Respondents' Perceived Contribution of Vital Records Protection to Organizational Performance 34
4.3.3.2 Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance 35
4.4 Summary of the Chapter 36
CHAPTER FIVE 38

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 38
5.1 Introduction 38
5.2 Summary of the Study 38
5.3 Summary of Major Findings 38
5.3.1 Vital Records Protection Practices 38
5.3.2 Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection 39
5.3.3 Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance. 39
5.4 Conclusion 39
5.5 Recommendations 40
5.5.1 To Bagamoyo District Council 40
5.5.2 On Capacity Building 40
5.5.3 On ICT Infrastructure 40
5.5.4 On Policy 41
5.6 Areas for Further Research 41
REFERENCES 42
APPENDIX I 45
QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS 45
SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION 45
APPENDIX II 49
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESPONDENT'S 49
APPENDIX III 50
VERIFICATION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION AT BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL. 50

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1: Response Rate of the Study……..……19

Table 4.2: Education Level of Respondents……...…21

Table 4.3: Position of Respondents in the Institution……..….22

Table 4.4: Work Experience of Respondents…….…..….23

Table 4.5: How Vital Records Are Stored and Maintained…..……..…..…25

Table 4.6: Challenges Affecting the Protection of Vital Records…….……...….26

Table 4.7: Influence of Challenges on Effective Protection of Vital Records……..….27

Table 4.8: Respondents' Perceived Contribution of Vital Records Protection to Organizational Performance…….
…….28

Table 4.9: Respondents' Rated Perception of the Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance……...…29

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: The IRMT Records Life Cycle Model……9

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Vital Records Protection Practices and Organizational Performance.....10

Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents (N = 25…….20

Figure 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents (N = 25) ..……21

Figure 4.3: Vital Records Protection Practices Used (N = 25) ……..……24

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CHAPTER ONE.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Vital records were documents essential to an organization's continued operation or survival during or after an emergency (Saffady, 2021). In public offices like the Bagamoyo District Council (BDC), these included land registries, financial ledgers, legal contracts, and historical minutes. The protection of these records involved identification, duplication, and secure storage to ensure business continuity. It is widely recognized that the effectiveness of public offices depends heavily on the availability of reliable records. Without specialized protection for vital documents, public institutions risked losing their institutional memory and legal standing in the event of disasters such as fire, floods, or cyber-attacks.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Globally, vital records protection had become a central concern for public organizations because records served as evidence of transactions, legal rights, and administrative actions. Effective protection of vital records enhanced organizational continuity, accountability, and decision-making processes (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013). Many governments had adopted records management standards, digital preservation systems, and disaster preparedness strategies to safeguard critical information and improve institutional performance (Smallwood, 2014).

In Africa, public sector organizations depended heavily on records to support governance, transparency, and service delivery. Many institutions still relied on manual and paper-based recordkeeping systems, making vital records vulnerable to loss, damage, and unauthorized access (Mnjama, 2016). Weak protection mechanisms have been linked to administrative inefficiencies, corruption risks, and poor organizational performance across several African countries.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

In Tanzania, the government recognized the importance of proper records management through policies and legislation such as the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002. These frameworks emphasized the protection, preservation, and accessibility of public records to enhance accountability and efficient public administration (Tanzania National Archives, 2018). Despite these efforts, many public institutions continued to experience challenges such as inadequate storage facilities, limited ICT adoption, and a lack of disaster preparedness plans for vital records (Mushi, 2018).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Vital records were essential for maintaining institutional memory, ensuring legal compliance, and supporting effective organizational performance in public offices. Proper protection of these records ensured continuity of operations, efficient service delivery, and improved transparency and accountability (ISO 15489, 2016). Without reliable records, public organizations faced difficulties in planning, monitoring, and evaluating development activities.

Despite their importance, many public offices in Tanzania still faced significant challenges in protecting vital records. Inadequate storage systems, limited security measures, insufficient staff training, and poor technological infrastructure continued to expose records to risks such as deterioration, loss, and unauthorized access (Asogwa, 2016). These weaknesses negatively affected decision-making processes, delay service delivery, and reduced organizational efficiency and performance (Kemoni, 2019).

Although several studies had explored records management practices in public institutions, limited research had specifically assessed how the protection of vital records influenced organizational performance at the district council level. Most existing studies focused on general records management or central government institutions, leaving a gap in empirical knowledge regarding local government authorities such as the Bagamoyo District Council(Kamatula, 2011). This study sought to address this gap.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

1.3 GENERAL OBJECTIVE.

The general objective of this study was to assess the protection of vital records and respondents' perceived contribution of that protection to organizational performance in public offices, with specific reference to the Bagamoyo District Council.

1.4 THE SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

i. To examine existing vital records protection practices
ii. To identify challenges affecting vital records protection
iii. To assess respondents' perceived contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance.

1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

i. What practices were used to protect vital records?
ii. What challenges affected vital records protection?
iii. What is respondents' perceived contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was significant to policymakers, records managers, and public administrators by providing insights into effective strategies for protecting vital records in public offices. The findings were expected to help improve records management practices, enhance organizational performance, and support transparency and accountability in local government authorities (Tanzania National Archives, 2018). The study contributed to academic knowledge in library, records, and information studies.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focused on assessing vital records protection and its perceived contribution to organizational performance within the Bagamoyo District Council. It covered records management practices, security measures, storage systems, and staff awareness related to vital records

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Limitations included limited access to confidential records, time constraints, financial limitations, and potential reluctance of staff to provide detailed information (Mushi, 2018).

1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Definition of key term and concept

1.9.1 vital records

Vital records are documents that are essential for the continued operation of an organization and for the protection of its legal rights and those of its stakeholders, and which cannot be readily replaced if lost or destroyed (Saffady, 2021).

1.9.2 Vital records protection

Vital records protection refers to the deliberate measures, procedures, and systems put in place to identify, duplicate, store, and safeguard vital records against loss, damage, or unauthorized access (Smallwood, 2014).

1.9.3 Organizational performance

Organizational performance refers to the effectiveness and efficiency with which an organization achieves its goals, including its ability to deliver services, make decisions, and remain accountable to its stakeholders (Mutula, 2018).

1.9.4 Public offices

Public offices are government institutions established to deliver public services and implement government policies on behalf of the state (United Republic of Tanzania, 2002).

1.9.5 Protection

Protection refers to the set of actions taken to prevent records, information, or assets from being lost, damaged, altered, or accessed by unauthorized persons (Smallwood, 2014).

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

1.9.6 Records management

Records management refers to the systematic control of records throughout their life cycle, from creation through maintenance and use to eventual disposal or permanent preservation (ISO 15489, 2016).

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

A literature review is a section of a research study where the researcher examines and discusses different ideas, theories, and findings from previous studies related to the research topic. It helps the researcher understand what other scholars have written about the topic and identify gaps that still need to be studied.

2.1 To Examine Existing Vital Records Protection Practices

One common practice used to protect vital records was proper storage of records. Organizations stored important records in secure places such as locked cabinets, fireproof safes, or well-controlled record rooms. Proper storage helped to protect records from physical damage caused by fire, water, dust, insects, or other environmental factors. Good storage conditions also helped maintain the quality and durability of records over a long period (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013).

Another important practice was the digitization of records. Digitization involved converting paper records into electronic format so that they could be stored and accessed through computer systems. Digital records can be backed up in different locations, which reduced the risk of losing important information. Digitization also improved efficiency by making it easier for staff to retrieve records as needed (ARMA International, 2016).

Organizations also used backup systems to protect vital records. Backup systems ensured that copies of important records were stored in separate locations or digital storage devices. In case the original records were damaged or lost, the backup copies could be used to recover the information. Backup was done through external hard drives, cloud storage systems, or secure data servers (ISO 15489, 2016). Another vital records protection practice was the development of disaster preparedness and recovery plans. These plans helped organizations prepare for emergencies such as fires, floods, system

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

failures, or other unexpected disasters. Disaster plans included procedures for protecting records, recovering lost information, and ensuring that organizational activities continued without major interruptions.

Furthermore, regular monitoring and maintenance of records was another important practice**.** Records managers and administrative staff conducted regular inspections to ensure that records were properly arranged, stored safely, and maintained in good condition. This helped identify potential risks and take corrective measures early before serious damage occurs (Ngulube, 2015).

2.2To Identify Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection

One of the major challenges affecting the protection of vital records was a lack of adequate financial resources. Many public institutions operated with limited budgets, which made it difficult to purchase proper storage equipment, fireproof cabinets, digital systems, and backup facilities needed for protecting vital records. Without sufficient funds, organizations may fail to implement effective records protection strategies (Ngulube, 2015).

Another challenge was the lack of trained personnel in records management. Proper protection of vital records required skilled staff who understood records management principles, preservation techniques, and security procedures. In many organizations, records were managed by staff who had not received professional training in records management. This situation could lead to poor handling, misplacement, or loss of important records (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013).

Poor storage facilities also presented a significant challenge to vital records protection. In some offices, records were stored in overcrowded rooms, wooden shelves, or boxes that did not provide adequate protection from environmental hazards such as humidity, dust, pests, or fire. Poor storage conditions can cause records to deteriorate or become damaged over time (Kennedy & Schauder, 1998)

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Another challenge was a lack of effective policies and procedures for records management, which can also affect vital records protection. Some organizations did not have clear guidelines on how records should be created, stored, accessed, and disposed of. Without proper policies, staff did not follow standardized procedures for protecting important records, which increased the risk of information loss (ARMA International, 2016). Another challenge was limited awareness of the importance of vital records among staff members. Some employees did not fully understand the value of records in supporting organizational activities and decision-making. As a result, they may handle records carelessly or fail to follow proper procedures for protecting them.

2.3 To Assess respondents' perceived contribution of Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance

One of the ways vital records protection contributed to organizational performance was through improving efficiency in accessing information. When records were well organized and securely stored, employees could easily retrieve the information they needed to perform their duties. Easy access to accurate information helped staff make timely decisions and complete tasks efficiently, which enhanced organizational productivity (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013).

Vital records protection also supported accountability and transparency in organizations. Protected and well-managed records provided reliable evidence of organizational activities and decisions. This helped organizations demonstrate accountability to stakeholders, government authorities, and the public. When records were properly maintained, organizations could easily respond to audits, legal requirements, and public inquiries (ISO, 2016).

Another important relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance was supporting continuity of operations. Organizations may face unexpected events such as fires, floods, or system failures that could disrupt their activities. When vital records were properly protected through backup systems, secure

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

storage, and disaster preparedness plans, organizations could quickly recover important information and continue their operations without major interruptions (ARMA International, 2016).

Furthermore, effective protection of vital records improved decision-making within organizations. Managers and administrators relied on accurate information when making policies, planning activities, and solving problems. When records were protected and easily accessible, decision-makers can obtain reliable data that supports informed decisions and strategic planning (Ngulube, 2015). Vital records protection also contributed to improving service delivery in public institutions. When records were safe and well managed, employees could provide services to clients quickly and accurately. This increased customer satisfaction and enhanced the reputation of the organization.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework was the set of ideas and theories that a researcher uses to make sense of what they were studying. It acted like a lens that helped you focus on the most important things and understand how they related to each other (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). For this study, the main theory used was the records life cycle theory.

2.4.1 The Records Life Cycle Theory

The Records Life Cycle Theory is one of the oldest and most widely used theories in records and archives management. It was developed mainly by American records managers and archivists in the twentieth century, and it is built on a simple but powerful idea: records have a life, just like living things. They are born (created), they grow and are used (active stage), they age and are used less (semi-active stage), and eventually they either die (are destroyed) or are preserved forever (archived) (Penn et al., 1994).

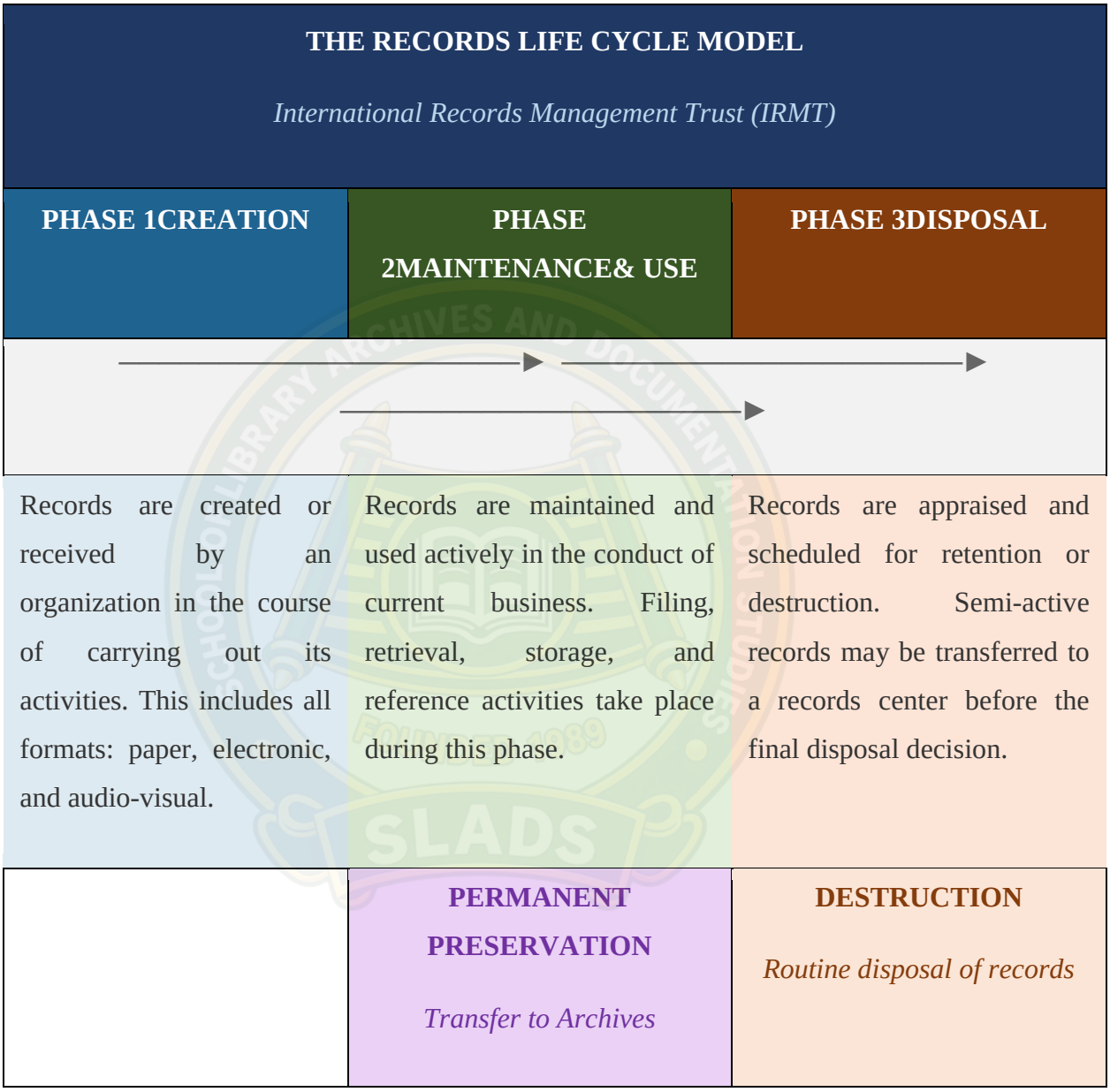
SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

2.4.2 The Three-Phase Life Cycle Model

According to the IRMT 1999, the IRMT records life cycle model comprises three interconnected phases, each demanding specific management protocols and institutional capacities. The diagram below illustrates the IRMT Records Life Cycle Model as adapted from the Trust's core curriculum materials:

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Figure 2.1: The IRMT Records Life Cycle Model



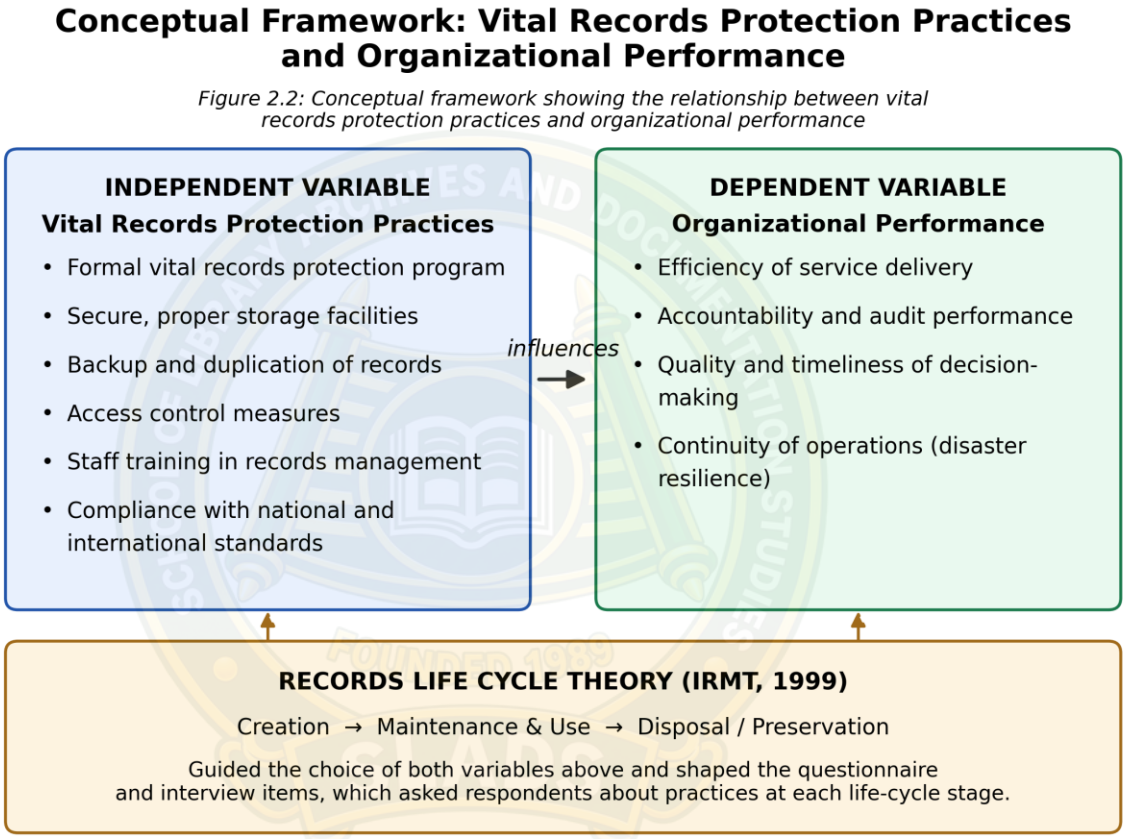
SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

2.5 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic and narrative explanation of the main variables in a study and the relationships that were presumed to exist between them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It functions as a researcher-generated map that clarifies the logical connections among the concepts being investigated and guides what data should be collected and how it should be interpreted (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). For this research, the conceptual framework was built on the Records Life Cycle Theory discussed in Section 2.4 (IRMT, 1999), and it illustrates how vital records protection practices (the independent variable) were expected to influence organizational performance (the dependent variable) at Bagamoyo District Council, as summarised in Figure 2.2 below.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework Showing the Relationship Between Vital Records Protection Practices and Organizational Performance



2.5.1 The Independent Variable: Vital Records Protection Practices

The independent variable in this study was vital records protection practices. This means all the things an organization used to keep its vital records safe, included having a formal protection program, using proper storage facilities, making backup copies, controlling who can access records, training staff in records management, and following national and international standards such as ISO 15489 (ISO, 2016) and the recordkeeping principles issued by ARMA International (2016). When these practices

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

are strong, empirical evidence suggests that organizational performance is expected to improve (Ngulube, 2015).

2.5.2 The Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

The dependent variable in this study was organizational performance at the Bagamoyo District Council. Performance was measured through indicators such as how well the Council delivers services to citizens, how it performs in government audits, how well it makes decisions, and whether it can keep running smoothly when problems occur, that is, its ability to sustain business continuity (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013). When vital records were well protected, the Council was expected to perform better in these areas, a pattern consistent with findings that effective records protection strengthens institutional performance (Mutula, 2018).

2.6 Empirical Review

The study by Ngulube (2015), titled "Records Management Practices in Public Institutions in South Africa", examined records management practices in public institutions using a descriptive research design. However, the study focused on general records management practices and did not specifically examine the contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance. The study by Mushi (2018), titled Records Management Practices in Tanzanian Public Institutions, recommended strengthening records management policies and adopting electronic records systems. However, it did not examine how vital records protection contributes to organizational performance in local government authorities. Similarly, the study by Mutula (2018), titled Information Management Practices and Organizational Performance in African Public Institutions, focused on information management in general and did not specifically assess the contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance in Tanzanian public offices.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

2.7 Research Gap

The study by Mwita (2020), titled "Management Practices on Organizational Performance in Public Institutions," highlighted general management practices in public offices but did not specifically focus on how the protection of vital records affected organizational performance. The study by Ndunguru (2019), titled "An Evaluation of Document Preservation Strategies on Service Delivery in Government Offices," examined document preservation strategies but mainly emphasized service delivery outcomes; it did not assess the link between vital records protection and overall organizational performance. Taken together, the reviewed studies addressed general records and information management practices, document preservation, and organizational performance in isolation, but none specifically examined respondents' perceived contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance within a district council setting. This study therefore addressed that gap by assessing vital records protection practices, the challenges affecting them, and respondents' perceived contribution of that protection to organizational performance at Bagamoyo District Council.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presented a comprehensive and systematic framework governing the methodological approach that adopted in conducting the study. The chapter articulated the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection method, ethical considerations, and data analysis plan that were employed throughout the study.

3.1 Research Type

This study was designed as a case study, focusing specifically on Bagamoyo District Council as a single local government authority selected to represent the broader challenges facing public offices in the protection of vital records. A case study type of research was considered appropriate because it allowed the researcher to conduct an in-depth and detailed investigation of vital records protection practices, challenges, and their contribution to organizational performance within a real institutional setting (Kothari, 2004). This research type enabled the use of multiple sources of evidence, including questionnaires and interviews, so that the phenomenon under study could be understood comprehensively and from different perspectives.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design to assess the protection of vital records and their contribution to organizational performance in public offices, with specific reference to the Bagamoyo District Council. A descriptive research design was deemed appropriate because it enables the researcher to gather information about the current status of phenomena without manipulating variables. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive research is concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or group of variables and is used widely in studies involving social sciences and public administration.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

The design allowed the researcher to collect, analyze, and interpret data relating to the current practices, challenges, and mechanisms of vital records protection at Bagamoyo District Council. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were employed under this design (mixed-method approach) to ensure comprehensive and well-rounded findings. The quantitative component provided measurable data on records management practices, while the qualitative component offered an in-depth understanding of contextual factors influencing organizational performance.

3.3 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather comprehensive data on vital records protection and its perceived contribution to organizational performance at Bagamoyo District Council. The mixed-methods approach is justified by the complex nature of the research problem, which requires both numerical data and narrative explanations to fully understand the phenomena under study (Creswell, 2014).

The quantitative approach was used to collect numerical data through structured questionnaires administered to staff at the Bagamoyo District Council. This enabled the researcher to measure the extent to which vital records protection practices influence organizational performance. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, was used to collect data through interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the strategies, challenges, and administrative policies governing vital records protection in the institution.

3.4 Study Area

The study was conducted at the Bagamoyo District Council, located in Bagamoyo District. The researcher selected Bagamoyo District Council because it offered a simple and accessible environment that facilitated data collection. Bagamoyo District Council serves as the local government authority responsible for the administrative, developmental, and social service delivery functions within the district. According to the

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

2022 Population and Housing Census, Bagamoyo District had a total population of 205,478 (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2022). Preliminary observations suggested that there are challenges in records protection at the institution, making it an appropriate site for this investigation.

3.5 Sampling Technique

The study employed purposive sampling to select key informants for interviews. For the questionnaire component, a census approach was used, whereby all members of the target population were included rather than a sample being drawn through random selection.

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to select key informants who were deemed to have specialized knowledge and experience relevant to the study topic. Specifically, this technique was applied to select Records Management Officers, Heads of Departments, and ICT Officers. These individuals were selected based on their roles, expertise, and direct involvement in managing vital records at Bagamoyo District Council. Purposive sampling is appropriate when the researcher requires information-rich cases that can provide in-depth and specialized data (Patton, 2002).

3.6 Population

Population, in research, refers to the entire group of people, items, or elements that share common characteristics relevant to a study and about which the researcher seeks to draw conclusions. It represents the complete set from which a smaller, more manageable group is later drawn for actual data collection. In this study, the population consisted of 80 employees of Bagamoyo District Council who are involved, directly or indirectly, in the creation, management, storage, and use of vital records.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

3.7 Sample

Sample refers to a smaller subset selected from the population, which is used to represent the characteristics of the entire population and from which data is actually collected, since studying every member of a large population is often impractical in terms of time, cost, and resources. In this study, a sample of 25 employees was drawn from the target population of 80 employees, based on their direct involvement in vital records activities, to participate in the questionnaire survey.

In addition to the questionnaire census, four key informants were purposively selected for in-depth interviews: two Records Officers (RO1 and RO2), one Head of Department (HOD1), and one ICT Officer (ICT1). These four informants were drawn from within the 25-member target population and also completed questionnaires, so that their interview responses could be triangulated with their own questionnaire responses as well as with those of other respondents.

3.8 Data Collection Methods

The study used two primary data collection methods: questionnaires and interviews. These methods were chosen to ensure triangulation and to capture both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.8.1 Questionnaires

The researcher first obtained an introductory letter from the college and sought permission from the management of Bagamoyo District Council before commencing data collection. After permission was granted, questionnaires were personally distributed to all 25 employees who formed the target population. Before completing the questionnaires, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that the information they provided would be treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes. The respondents were given adequate time to complete the questionnaires, after which the researcher personally collected them. Out of the 25 questionnaires distributed, 25 were completed and returned, representing a response rate of 100%.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

3.8.2 Interviews.

The study involved four (4) interview participants, who were purposively selected because of their responsibilities and experience in records management. The participants were: Records Officer 1 (RO1), Records Officer 2 (RO2), Head of Department 1 (HOD1), and ICT Officer 1 (ICT1). These key informants were selected because they possessed specialized knowledge on the protection of vital records and organizational performance at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.9 Data Analysis Plan

Data collected through questionnaires and interviews were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative techniques.

3.9.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data obtained from closed-ended questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The results were presented in tables, charts, and graphs to facilitate clear interpretation and comparison. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the extent of vital records protection practices and their relationship to organizational performance at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.9.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data obtained from interviews and open-ended questionnaire responses were analyzed using thematic analysis. This involved identifying, coding, and categorizing recurring themes and patterns in the data related to vital records protection, challenges, and organizational performance. The thematic analysis process followed the six phases proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing a report.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings was done through triangulation, where results from different methods were compared and synthesized to arrive at

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

comprehensive conclusions about the assessment of vital records protection and its contribution to organizational performance at Bagamoyo District Council.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of Data.

Validity and reliability are essential criteria used to assess the quality and trustworthiness of research instruments (Creswell, 2014). Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument, such as a questionnaire or interview guide, accurately measures what it is intended to measure, ensuring that the data collected genuinely reflects the study objectives (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the consistency and stability of the research instrument, that is, the extent to which it produces similar results when applied repeatedly under similar conditions or across different data sources (Bowen, 2009). In this study, both validity and reliability were addressed to ensure that the findings obtained were accurate, dependable, and trustworthy.

Content validity of the research instruments was enhanced through two main strategies. First, the questionnaire and interview guide were reviewed by the research supervisor before administration, and the wording of each item was checked against the study's specific objectives to confirm that it measured what it was intended to measure (Kothari, 2004). Second, the instruments were pre-tested with three respondents drawn from outside the study sample at Bagamoyo District Hospital, an institution with administrative characteristics similar to those of Bagamoyo District Council, a pretesting procedure recommended for detecting ambiguity and improving instrument clarity before full administration (Creswell, 2014). The pretest showed that some questions were ambiguously worded and open to more than one interpretation, and that a few closed-ended items did not have sufficiently distinct response categories. Based on this feedback, the ambiguous questions were reworded in simpler and more precise language, the affected response options were revised to make them mutually exclusive, and the section instructions were clarified to reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation before the final instruments were administered to the actual respondents.

Reliability was assessed through methodological triangulation rather than a statistical reliability coefficient, in line with the mixed-methods design of the study, an approach recommended for establishing dependability by systematically comparing responses from different sources and instruments (Patton, 2002). Specifically, four of the twenty-seven questionnaire respondents were also purposively selected as key informants for the interviews (two Records Officers, one Head of Department, and one ICT Officer),

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

and each of them completed both the questionnaire and the interview. This design allowed the researcher to compare each informant's questionnaire responses with their own interview responses, as well as with the responses of the other participants, to check whether consistent patterns emerged across the two instruments and across respondents. Because the questionnaire and interview data converged on similar findings regarding vital records protection practices, the challenges affecting them, and their perceived contribution to organizational performance, the data collected were considered dependable and stable, consistent with the principle that convergence across independent data sources strengthens the trustworthiness of qualitative findings (Bowen, 2009).

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were observed throughout the study to protect the rights and dignity of the participants. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the relevant college authorities and the management of Bagamoyo District Council before data collection commenced. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the objectives of the research before giving their consent to participate. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by ensuring that respondents' names did not appear in the questionnaires, interview transcripts, or research report. Information collected was used exclusively for academic purposes and stored securely to prevent unauthorized access.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis, presentation, interpretation and discussion of data collected on the assessment of vital records protection towards organizational performance in public offices, with specific reference to Bagamoyo District Council. The chapter is organized into four main sections. The first section presents the response rate of the study and a description of the study area. The second section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The third section presents and discusses the findings in line with the three specific objectives of the study, namely: to examine existing vital records protection practices; to identify challenges affecting vital records protection; and to assess the relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance. Quantitative data obtained through questionnaires are presented using tables, bar charts, and a pie chart, while qualitative data obtained through the interview guide are used to substantiate and enrich the quantitative findings.

4.1.1 Response Rate of Respondents

The sample size for this study was 25 employees of Bagamoyo District Council, drawn from a target population of 80 employees who are directly or indirectly involved in the creation, management, storage, and use of vital records. Out of the 25 questionnaires that were distributed to the sampled respondents, 25 were duly completed and returned, giving a response rate of 100%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), a response rate of 70% and above is considered excellent for analysis and reporting. Therefore, the response rate obtained in this study was adequate and sufficient to represent the views of the target population and to proceed with data analysis.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Table 4.1: Response Rate of the Study

Category	**Frequency(f)**	**Percentage (%)**
Targeted Respondents	25	100
Returned Questionnaires	25	100
Unreturned Questionnaires	0	0

Source: Field Data (2026)

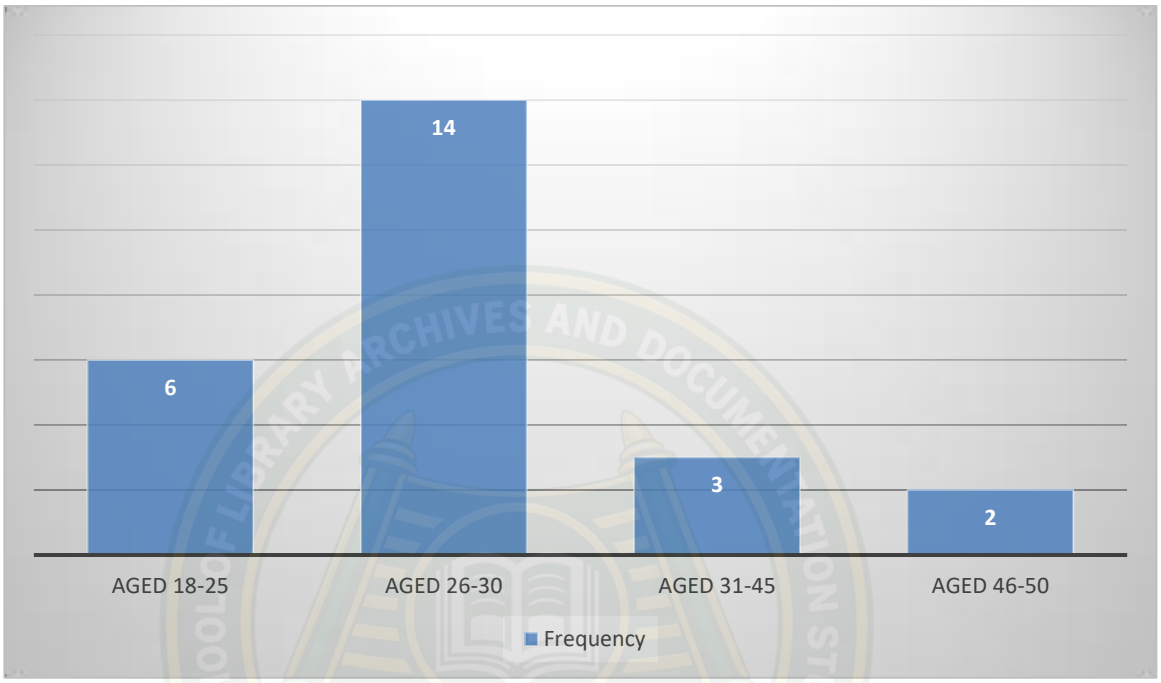
4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study, namely age, gender, education level, position held in the institution and work experience. Understanding these characteristics helps to establish the suitability and competence of the respondents in providing reliable information on vital records protection.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

4.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Figure 4.1: Age Distribution of Respondents (N = 25)

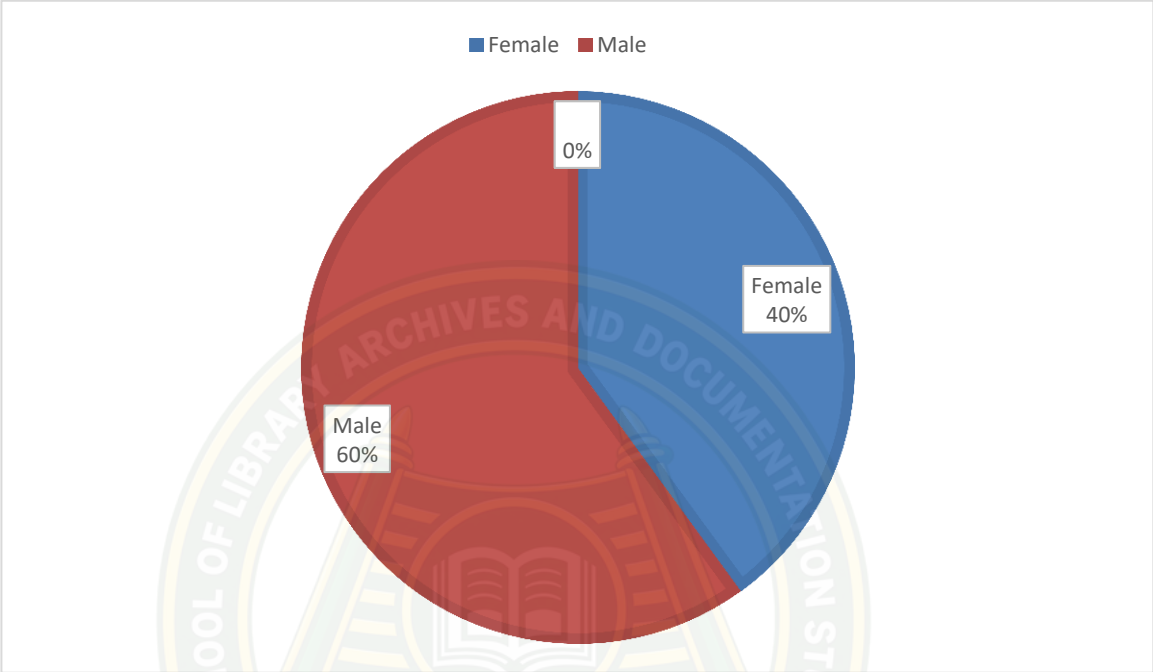


The findings show that the majority of respondents, 14 were aged between 26 and 30 years, followed by 6 aged between 18 and 25 years. Only 3 respondents were aged between 31 and 45 years, while 2 were aged between 46 and 50 years.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

4.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Figure 4.2: Gender Distribution of Respondents (N = 25)



The results indicate that the majority of respondents, 15 (60%), were male, while 10 (40%) were female. Both genders were represented among the respondents who took part in the study.

4.2.3 Education Level of Respondents

Table 4.2 presents the education level of the respondents.

Education Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Certificate	5	20
Diploma	10	40
Bachelor Degree	7	28
Master's Degree	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

The majority of respondents, 10 (40%), held a Diploma qualification, followed by 7 (28%) with a Bachelor Degree, 5 (20%) with a Certificate, and 3 (12%) with a Master's Degree.

4.2.4 Position of Respondents in the Institution

Table 4.3 presents the distribution of respondents according to their positions in the institution.

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

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents, 10 (40%), were Registry Staff, followed by 8 (32%) Administrative Staff, 5 (20%) Records Officers and 2 (8%) Managers. This distribution shows that the study captured views from respondents directly and indirectly involved in the day-to-day handling and protection of vital records.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

4.2.5 Work Experience of Respondents

Table 4.4 presents the work experience of the respondents.

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

Source: Field Data, 2026

The majority of respondents, 10 (40%), had worked at the council for above 15 years, followed by 8 (32%) with 6 to 10 years of experience. This implies that most respondents had accumulated substantial institutional experience at the council.

4.3 Presentation and Discussion of Findings According to Research Objectives

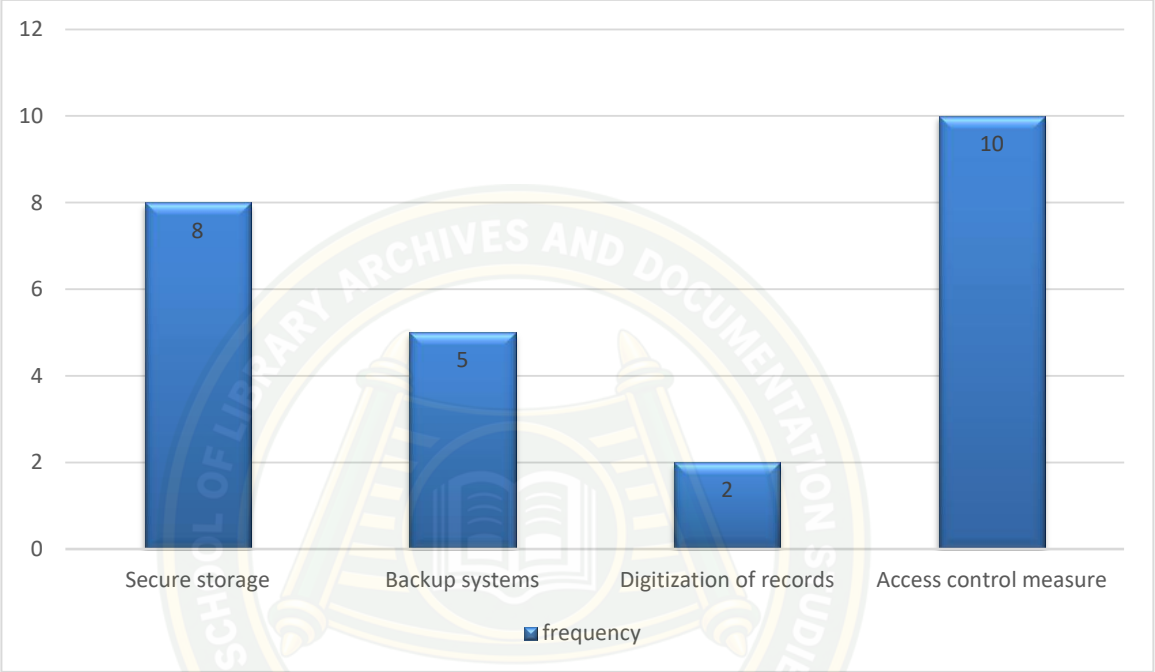
This section presents, interprets, and discusses the findings of the study in relation to the three specific objectives that guided the research. Quantitative data from the questionnaires are presented in tables and charts, while qualitative data obtained through the interview guide administered to Records Management Officers, Heads of Department and ICT Officers are used to complement and validate the quantitative findings. Each set of findings is further discussed in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two of this report.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

4.3.1 Objective One: Vital Records Protection Practices

4.3.1.1 Practices Used to Protect Vital Records

Figure 4.3: Vital Records Protection Practices Used (N = 25)



The findings show that access control measures were the most cited practice, mentioned by 10 respondents, followed by secure storage 8 and backup systems 5. Digitization of records was the least cited practice, mentioned by only 2 respondents. This implies that the council's approach to protecting vital records relies mainly on procedural and physical safeguards, particularly restricting access and physically securing records, while modern technological safeguards such as digitization remain minimally applied.

In response to the interview question on how vital records are stored and protected within the organization, Records Officer 1 (RO1) explained that access to the registry was restricted to authorized personnel only, thereby minimizing unauthorized handling or retrieval of files. The respondent noted that although a few records had been digitized, the majority were still maintained in paper-based form.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

This finding is consistent with ARMA International (2016), which identifies access control as one of the generally accepted recordkeeping principles that organizations use to safeguard the integrity of records. The limited uptake of digitization also confirms Mnjama (2016), who observed that many public institutions in Africa continue to rely heavily on manual and paper-based recordkeeping systems, leaving vital records vulnerable to loss, damage and unauthorized access due to slow adoption of digital preservation technologies. This suggests that while Bagamoyo District Council has fairly reasonable procedural controls in place, it has not yet fully embraced the technological practices recommended in the literature, such as digitization and systematic backup, which are considered essential for long-term preservation (Shepherd & Yeo, 2013).

4.3.1.2 How Vital Records Are Stored and Maintained

Table 4.5 presents how vital records are stored and maintained at the council.

Storage and Maintenance	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Paper-based only	20	80
Electronic records only	2	8
Both paper-based and electronic	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

The findings indicate that the majority of records, 20 (80%), were stored and maintained in paper-based form only, while a small proportion, 2 (8%), were maintained electronically only, and 3 (12%) used both paper-based and electronic systems. This confirms that the council's recordkeeping remains predominantly manual, with minimal integration of electronic or hybrid systems.

Regarding the storage and maintenance of vital records, Records Officer 2 (RO2) explained that most vital records were stored in paper files kept in filing cabinets and were inspected periodically to ensure their safety. However, the respondent noted that the Council had not yet implemented a comprehensive electronic records management system to facilitate continuous monitoring and protection of records.

This finding agrees with Smallwood (2014), who noted that electronic records management systems improve the efficiency and security of recordkeeping, yet many public organizations still lag in adopting them. It further supports Mnjama (2016), whose observation that African public institutions remain predominantly paper-based due to limited resources and infrastructure applies directly to the situation observed at Bagamoyo District Council, exposing the council's records to a higher risk of loss through fire, water damage or pests in the absence of adequate electronic backup.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

4.3.2 Objective Two: Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection

4.3.2.1 Challenges Affecting the Protection of Vital Records

Table 4.6 presents the challenges affecting the protection of vital records at Bagamoyo District Council.

Challenge	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Inadequate funding	9	36
Lack of trained staff	4	16
Poor storage facilities	10	40
Inadequate ICT infrastructure	2	8
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

The results show that poor storage facilities were the most cited challenge, mentioned by 10 (40%) respondents, followed by inadequate funding, 9 (36%), and lack of trained staff, 4 (16%). Inadequate ICT infrastructure was cited by only 2 (8%) respondents. These findings imply that the protection of vital records at the council is undermined mainly by physical infrastructural gaps and limited financial resources, rather than by ICT infrastructure alone.

When asked about the challenges affecting the protection of vital records, Head of Department 1 (HOD1) explained that the Council lacked a dedicated records storage facility. Consequently, many files were stored in ordinary office rooms that were not designed to protect records from dust, pests, humidity, or fire hazards.

This finding is in line with Kennedy and Schauder (1998), who identified poor storage facilities such as overcrowded rooms and inadequate shelving as a major cause of record deterioration and damage in organizations. The finding on inadequate funding also

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

confirms Ngulube (2015), who observed that limited budgets constrain many public institutions from purchasing appropriate storage equipment, fireproof cabinets, and backup facilities needed for effective records protection.

4.3.2.2 Influence of the Challenges on Effective Protection of Vital Records

Table 4.7 presents how the identified challenges influence the effective protection of vital records.

Influence	**Frequency (f)**	Percentage (%)
Delay access to records	7	28
Cause loss or damage of records	10	40
Reduce service efficiency	5	20
Increase operational costs	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings show that the challenges mostly caused loss or damage of records, as cited by 10 (40%) respondents, followed by delay in accessing records 7 (28%) and reduced service efficiency 5 (20%). Increased operational costs were cited by 3 (12%) respondents. This implies that the existing challenges primarily threaten the physical survival of records at the council, with knock-on effects on timely access and service efficiency.

Commenting on the influence of these challenges on daily operations, Records Officer 2 (RO2) stated that whenever important files could not be located promptly, employees spent considerable time searching through manual filing systems, resulting in delays in service delivery and reduced organizational efficiency.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

This finding resonates with Asogwa (2016), who established that weaknesses in records management in developing countries directly reduce institutional efficiency and complicate day-to-day administrative operations. It is further supported by Mushi (2018), whose study on challenges of records management in Tanzanian public institutions found that poor recordkeeping practices routinely disrupt service delivery and increase the workload of staff responsible for retrieving information.

4.3.3 Objective Three: Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance

4.3.3.1 Respondents' Perceived Contribution of Vital Records Protection to Organizational Performance

Table 4.8 presents respondents' perceived contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance.

Contribution	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Improves service delivery	2	8
Enhances accountability	5	20
Supports decision making	8	32
Ensures business continuity	10	40
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings reveal that the majority of respondents, 10 (40%), felt that protection of vital records mainly ensures business continuity, followed by 8 (32%) who felt it supports decision-making. In addition, 5 (20%) respondents indicated that it enhances accountability, while only 2 (8%) indicated that it improves service delivery directly. This underscores that respondents primarily associate vital records protection with organizational resilience and informed decision-making rather than with day-to-day service delivery.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

When asked how protected records contribute to organizational performance, ICT Officer 1 (ICT1) explained that properly protected records enable the Council to continue its operations during emergencies because backup information remains available for audits, decision-making, and responding to public inquiries.

These findings affirm ARMA International (2016), which emphasizes that protected vital records enable organizations to recover quickly and continue operations following unexpected disruptions such as fires or system failures. They further support the argument by ISO (2016) that well-protected and properly maintained records provide reliable evidence that helps organizations demonstrate accountability to stakeholders and respond effectively to audits and public inquiries, as well as Ngulube (2015), who noted that accessible and protected records give managers reliable information for informed decision-making and strategic planning.

4.3.3.2 Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance

Table 4.9: Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance

Relationship	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Very strong	10	40
Strong	9	36
Moderate	4	16
Weak	2	8
Total	25	100

Source: Field Data, 2026

The findings show that a cumulative majority of 19 (76%) respondents rated the relationship

between vital records protection and organizational performance as either very strong 10 (40%) or strong 9 (36%). Only 4 (16%) rated it as moderate, while 2 (8%) rated it as

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

weak. This implies that respondents overwhelmingly perceive an effective, positive relationship between the two variables.

Regarding the relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance, Head of Department 1 (HOD1) stated that when records are properly protected and easily retrievable, employees are able to provide timely services to citizens, support informed decision-making, and improve overall organizational efficiency.

This finding corroborates Kamatula (2011), who established a positive link between sound records management and accountability in Tanzanian public institutions, and Tanzania National Archives (2018), which emphasizes that the protection, preservation, and accessibility of public records enhance accountability and efficient public administration. It is informed by the records life cycle theory, that when vital records are properly created, maintained, and protected throughout their life cycle, organizations such as Bagamoyo District Council are better positioned to perform efficiently, remain accountable, and sustain public trust.

4.4 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter has presented, analyzed, and discussed the findings of the study in relation to the demographic characteristics of respondents and the specific objectives of the study. The findings show that the institution employs several vital records protection practices, dominated by access control and secure storage, although digitization remains limited. Records are predominantly stored in paper-based form, and their protection is constrained by challenges such as poor storage facilities, inadequate funding, lack of trained staff, and inadequate ICT infrastructure. These challenges were most frequently associated by respondents with delays in accessing records, loss or damage of records, reduced service efficiency and increased operational costs. Nevertheless, the majority of respondents perceived that protection of vital records contributes to organizational performance, particularly in ensuring business continuity and supporting decision-

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

making, and respondents perceived a strong relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion, and recommendations based on the findings presented and discussed in Chapter Four. The chapter is organized into five sections: summary of the study, summary of major findings, conclusion, recommendations, and suggested areas for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study assessed the protection of vital records and its influence on organizational performance in public offices, with specific reference to Bagamoyo District Council. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine existing vital records protection practices; to identify challenges affecting vital records protection; and to assess the relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance. The study adopted a descriptive research design and a mixed-methods approach, using questionnaires and interviews to collect data from a sample of 25 employees, drawn from a target population of 80 employees involved in the creation, management, storage, and use of vital records. A total of 25 respondents returned duly completed questionnaires, representing a response rate of 100 percent. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented through tables, bar charts and a pie chart, while qualitative data from interviews with Records Management Officers, Heads of Department and ICT Officers were analyzed thematically to substantiate and enrich the quantitative findings.

5.3 Summary of Major Findings

5.3.1 Vital Records Protection Practices

The study found that access control measures (40%) and secure storage (32%) were the most widely used vital records protection practices at Bagamoyo District Council, followed by backup systems (20%), while digitization of records (8%) was the least

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

applied practice. The study further found that the majority of records (80%) were stored and maintained in paper-based form only, with a small proportion maintained electronically (8%) or through both paper-based and electronic systems (12%), confirming that the council's recordkeeping remains largely manual with minimal integration of digital systems.

5.3.2 Challenges Affecting Vital Records Protection

The study established that the protection of vital records at the council was mainly affected by poor storage facilities (40%) and inadequate funding (36%), while lack of trained staff (16%) and inadequate ICT infrastructure (8%) were comparatively less cited. These challenges were most frequently associated by respondents with loss or damage of records (40%), delay in accessing records (28%), reduced service efficiency (20%) and increased operational costs (12%), suggesting a perceived link between infrastructural and financial gaps and the safety and usability of vital records.

5.3.3 Respondents' Perceived Relationship Between Vital Records Protection and Organizational Performance.

The study found that protection of vital records was perceived to contribute mainly to business continuity (40%) and decision-making support (32%), followed by enhanced accountability (20%) and improved service delivery (8%). In addition, a cumulative 76% of respondents rated the perceived relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance as either strong or very strong. As the study measured respondents' perceptions only, and did not conduct a correlation or other statistical relationship analysis, this finding should be read as a perceived rather than statistically confirmed relationship.

5.4 Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is concluded that Bagamoyo District Council relies mainly on procedural and physical safeguards, particularly access control and secure storage, to protect its vital records, but has not sufficiently embraced digitization and electronic recordkeeping, leaving records predominantly paper-based and vulnerable to physical

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

risks. It is further concluded that respondents identified poor storage facilities and inadequate funding as the main challenges affecting the protection of vital records at the council, and associated these challenges with loss or damage of records, delays in access, and reduced service efficiency. Finally, it is concluded that respondents perceived a strong contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance, particularly in ensuring business continuity, supporting decision-making and enhancing accountability, thereby suggesting that vital records protection is a strategic function rather than a mere administrative or custodial obligation at Bagamoyo District Council.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 To Bagamoyo District Council

The council should improve its storage facilities, including acquisition of fire-proof cabinets and a dedicated, well-ventilated records store, and should allocate adequate funds specifically for records management activities. The council should also invest gradually in the digitization of vital records and adopt an electronic records management system to complement the existing paper-based system and reduce reliance on manual storage.

5.5.2 On Capacity Building

The council should organize regular training and capacity building programs for records officers, registry staff and other personnel handling vital records, to equip them with modern skills in records protection, digitization and disaster preparedness.

5.5.3 On ICT Infrastructure

The council, in collaboration with relevant government bodies, should strengthen its ICT infrastructure to support electronic backup, retrieval and security of vital records, including reliable power supply and data protection systems.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

5.5.4 On Policy

The council should develop and enforce a clear vital records protection policy, including a disaster preparedness and recovery plan, to safeguard records against loss, damage and unauthorized access, and to guide staff on records retention, backup and disposal procedures.

5.6 Areas for Further Research

i. This study focused on vital records protection and organizational performance within a single local government authority, Bagamoyo District Council.

ii. Future studies could undertake a comparative analysis of vital records protection practices across multiple district councils, to establish whether the findings of this study can be generalized more broadly.

iii. Further research could also examine the specific role of electronic records management systems and digitization in enhancing organizational performance in local government authorities in Tanzania.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

REFERENCES

ARMA International. (2016). *Generally accepted recordkeeping principles*. ARMA International.

Asogwa, B. E. (2016). Records management in developing countries. *Information Development*.

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal, 9(2),* 27–40.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3(2),* 77–101.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Grant, C., & Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research. *Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice, and Research, 4(2),* 12–26.

International Records Management Trust (IRMT). (1999). *Managing records as the basis for effective service delivery and public accountability in development: An introduction to core principles for staff of the World Bank and its partners*. IRMT.

ISO. (2016). *ISO 15489: Information and documentation — Records management*. International Organization for Standardization.

Kamatula, G. A. (2011). Records management and accountability in Tanzania. *Journal of the Society of Archivists*.

Kemoni, H. (2019). *Management of records and archives in Africa*. University of Nairobi Press.

Kennedy, J., & Schauder, C. (1998). *Records management: A guide to corporate record keeping*.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques* (2nd ed.). New Age International Publishers.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Mnjama, N. (2016). *Archival and records management in Africa*.

Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (1999). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Acts Press.

Mushi, S. (2018). *Challenges of records management in Tanzanian public institutions*.

Mutula, S. (2018). *Information management practices and organizational performance in African public institutions*.

Mwita, (2020). *Management practices on organizational performance in public institutions*. [publisher/journal name and page numbers needed].

National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). (2022). *Population and housing census: Administrative units population distribution report, Tanzania, Volume 1A*. NBS.

Ndunguru, (2019). *An evaluation of document preservation strategies on service delivery in government offices*. [publisher/journal name and page numbers needed].

Ngulube, P. (2015). *Managing records in the African public sector*.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Penn, I. A., Pennix, G. B., & Coulson, J. (1994). *Records management handbook* (2nd ed.). Gower Publishing.

Saffady, W. (2021). *Records and information management: Fundamentals of professional practice*. Rowman & Littlefield.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Shepherd, E., & Yeo, G. (2013). *Managing records: A handbook of principles and practice*. Facet Publishing.

Smallwood, R. (2014). *Managing electronic records*.

Tanzania National Archives. (2018). *Records management guidelines for public offices*.

United Republic of Tanzania (URT). (2002). *Records and Archives Management Act No. 3*. Government Printer.

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESPONDENTS

Your responses will be treated with confidentiality and used strictly for academic purposes.

Instruction:

Do not write your name

Circle ( ) the correct answer. Please select ONE answer only for each question.

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Age of the respondent

A. 18–25 ( )

B. 26–30 ( )

C. 31–45 ( )

D. 46–50 ( )

Sex of respondent

A. Male ( )

B. Female ( )

Level of Education

A. Certificate ( )

B. Diploma ( )

C. Bachelor Degree ( )

D. Master's Degree ( )

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Position of respondent

A. Records officer ( )

B. Registry staff ( )

C. Administrative staff ( )

D. Manager ( )

How long have you been working at Bagamoyo district council?

A. Less than 1 year ( )

B. 1–5 years ( )

C. 6–10 years ( )

D. 11–14 years ( )

E. 15 years and above ( )

SECTION:B

1. What vital records protection practices are used in your organization? (Tick one only)

a) Secure storage ( )

b) Digitization of records ( )

c) Backup systems ( )

d) Access control measures ( )

2. How are vital records stored and maintained in your organization? (Tick one only)

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

a) Paper-based only ( )

b) Electronic records only ( )

C) Both paper-based and electronic records ( )

d) Other (Specify): _____ ( )

Objective 2: To identify challenges affecting vital records protection

1. What challenges affect the protection of vital records in your organization? (Tick one only)

a) Inadequate funding ( )

b) Lack of trained staff ( )

c) Poor storage facilities ( )

d) Inadequate ICT infrastructure ( )

2. How do these challenges influence the effective protection of vital records? (Tick one only)

a) Delay access to records ( )

b) Cause loss or damage of records ( )

c) Reduce service efficiency ( )

d) Increase operational costs ( )

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

Objective 3: To assess respondents' perceived contribution of vital records protection to organizational performance

1. In your view, how does vital records protection contribute to organizational performance? (Tick one only)

a) Improves service delivery ( )

b) Enhances accountability ( )

c) Supports decision-making ( )

d) Ensures business continuity ( )

2. In your view, what is the relationship between vital records protection and organizational performance? (Tick one only)

a) Very strong ( )

b) Strong ( )

c) Moderate ( )

d) Weak ( )

e) No relationship ( )

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESPONDENT'S

How are vital records stored and protected in this organization……..……
……?

How often are records inspected or maintained to ensure safety……
……?

What challenges does the organization face in protecting vital records……
……?

How does proper records protection influence daily work efficiency……
…….?

In what ways do protected records support accountability and transparency in the Council.....?

How does records protection help the organization continue operations during emergencies.....,...?

How does records protection affect service delivery to citizens.....

.....?

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

APPENDIX III

VERIFICATION LETTER FOR DATA COLLECTION AT BAGAMOYO DISTRICT COUNCIL.

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

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

Unapojibu tafadhali taja

Kumb Na. JB.311/375/01/201 Tarehe: 12 Machi, 2026

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

Yah: **RUHUSA YA KUFANYA UTAFITI NDUGU KALISTO AIDAN MLOWE.**

Kichwa cha habari hapo juu cha husika.

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

3. Kwa barua hii, napenda kukufahamisha kuwa mtajwa hapo juu ameruhusiwa kufanya utafiti katika Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Bagamoyo katika **Kata ya Dunda** katika mada **"An Assessment of Vital Record protection towards Organization performance in Public Office"** kwa kipindi cha kuanzia tarehe **01 Aprili, 2026** hadi tarehe **01 Mei, 2026.**

4. Namtakia Utafiti mwema.

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

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

Nakala: Mtendaji kata,
Kata ya Dunda,
Halmashauri ya Wilaya,
S.L.P. 59,
BAGAMOYO - PWANI. - Mpokee na kumpa ushirikiano

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

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000

SLADS Research Hub · SLADS/2026/00101 · localhost:3000