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Research paper

Records Surveys and the Management of Public Registry

***Zakira Imana Harun[1], Saiful Farik Mat Yatin[1], Noor Syahirah Mohamad Mobin[1], Nurzeelawati Norolazmi[1], Nur Atiqaf Mahathir[1], Mohd Nazir Ahmad[1], and Jannatul Iza Ahmad Kamal**

[1]Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Puncak Perdana, Selangor, Malaysia
**Corresponding author: *Zakira Imana Harun: Faculty of Information Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Puncak Perdana, Selangor, Malaysia*
E-mail:zakiraimanaharun@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigates the role of records surveys in the management of public registry. The ultimate goal was to know how effective records surveys in enhancing records management practices in organizations. This study uses interview as an instrument to achieve the desired goals, to inculcate a sound record management practice in the public registry. Records surveys are a critical exercise aimed at achieving proper records management practices. This is because the amount of records in an organization is growing rapidly. Managing growth and the variety of content and location is a complex process. Records surveys are indispensable as a benchmark to make an effective records management practice.

Keywords: *Records surveys, record management, Good Governance, Accountability*

1. Introduction

Records are evidence and valuable to the organization that created which can prove all actions that have been made; records will capture all activities and transactions, such as personnel files or confidential files, business negotiations and financial statement. "Record is defined as a document despite of form or medium created, received, maintained and used by an organization (public or private) or an individual in engagement of legal obligations or in the transaction of business, which it forms a part or provides evidence" [1]. Records will help organizations make decisions based on evidence. Record management is vital in managing an organization. Records management includes those precise control about an organization's record that from the creation or receipt through those processing, distribution, organization, storage and the retrieval to final disposition [2]. A good records management program will result in the control over the creation and growth of records. Good record management practices will protect the whole operational and an asset in an organization. Proper records management practices are not fully implemented in some of the organization and not followed the life cycle of record from creation until disposal. To know the status and circumstances of records management in organization, records surveys was utilized. Records surveys are a crucial exercise went for accomplishing legitimate records management practices rehearses in light of the fact that the measure of information/data in an organization is growing rapidly. Managing growth and the variety of content and location is a complex process. Records surveys are indispensable as a benchmark to make an effective records management practice. The normal issues that happen in any organization due to improper record management practices is that a lot of documents of files were misplaced, mishandling or lost.

2. Problem Statement

The problem statement is a brief overview of the issues, and issues that need to be resolved by the problem solvers team. The problem statement is the claim of one or two long sentences that describe the problem dealt with by a study. There are a lot of issues that occurs due to improper record management practices, but in this study, only several issues are being focused, which is:

Delay and failure to access document

The delay due to missing, misplaced and the loss of records may influence the accessibility of the records in an organization. There also no proper or adequate way to keep the incoming records. The record was heaped on the floor and a few records were torn and tied in bundles in an institution becomes commonplace if it relates to delays and failures in service caused by absent or lost records [3]. The delay and failure to access to the records also may lead to the failure in the delivery information. In this regard, lack of records may not only delay, but also lead to miscarriage in the delivery of justice [4-5]. Abioye also stated one other factor that constitutes the bedrock upon which a justice system in any country can be built, which is often overlooked, is record.

The proper allocation of records management to government agencies in South Africa takes a long time due to weakness of records management [6]. Ngulube also added this has resulted in delays access to the records. Besides that, the poor records management can influence the organization of equity, and effective organization of equity cannot be normal in a domain where records are hard to recover or are helpless to misfortune [7]. The postponement of availability that has added to lose or losing records, this because the officers would not know whether that specific document is still with the activity officer or not. When a lawyer demands for a trial date, a case cannot be set for trial, because of the disappointment of the registry staff to find a lost record [8].

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This is caused by the recording of approaching reports which is hard to adapt to, bringing about the heap ups of unfiled archives in all registries.

Lack of skills

In an organization, the staff that manages records in an organization, the staff that manages records in public registry was not familiar with record management practices and lack with the skills. The unskilled registry personnel have jeopardized the security of the records in public registries [9-10]. During the records survey was conducted, the researcher found that records management was lacking with professionalism in records management because of lack of skilled staff [11-12]. There also included inadequate staff may lead records could not be acknowledged through lawful and managerial necessities as a result of invalid applications, deficiency of legitimate directions, absence of value based regulatory structure, incapable records management system [13].

Without skilled and experienced personnel in managing public records in Nambia may lead to collapse of the programme records management practices [14]. Nengosmasha also added that proficient records managers are required in an institution. In producing their skilled record managers should work with various parties, for example, in reviewing the law, making policies and developing and analyzing procedures and standards and conducting training.

Lack of ethics

Ethical in records management is crucial in determining how good the profession of is records management and ensures that employees complete work with honesty and integrity, for example, if some vital record or information was leaked, thus it will affect and threatened the confidentiality and the individual's privacy. Previous study revealed that public records are mishandled and abused due to lack of ethics [7]. In the same study, the researcher also observed that some public registry personnel smoke and eat in their working area that also contributing to ethical problems in the organization. He also confirms that professionalism and ethics in records management in the public sector in Zimbabwe lack of training have definitely implicated on ethical issues.

Media exposures of poor practice by individuals, for example, email from Jo Moore of the UK Department of Trade and Industry proposing the covering of terrible news in the outcome of the 11th September 2001 disaster and the outrage of Enron/Arthur Andersen's that charged destroying of records have brought about loss of face, believability and image, also the occupations of specific individuals [15-16].

3. Research Objectives

The objective of the research is dense, clear statement of declaration, which provides direction for investigating variables. The objective of the study is the findings of the researcher the end of the research process. The objective of the research project is to summarize what the study is about to achieve. This study attempts:

- To measure the effectiveness of records accessibility in the public registry.
- To identify the skills needed in managing record in the public registry.
- To address the professional ethical needed in managing record in the public registry.

Research Questions

Research questions are one of the fundamental thrusts in research, study or literature review. It involves in guiding all levels of investigation, analysis and reporting. Research questions are an investigation into certain issues and this is the first step in a research project. This research questions will help to guide the problems or issues raised:

- How effectiveness is the accessibility of the records in public registry?
- What are the skills needed in managing record in public registry?
- What is professional ethical needed in managing record in public registry?

4. Literature Review

Literature review created by researchers, scholars and practitioners for identifying, evaluating and synthesizing the current group of completed and recorded work where it is a systematic, explicit and reproducible strategy and not an annotated bibliography which briefly summarize every article that been reviewed. Record survey provided reviews that collect basic information about quantity, type, function, location and the planning of records management in organization [17]. Records survey is important to determine how effective records surveys instruments in nurturing proper records management practices, accountability and good governance.

The concepts of records surveys

Record surveys are the key to reviewing records management activities as they have the potential to categorize interests for further improvements [18]. Records surveys were clarified as a training including the accumulation of far reaching data on records held by the workplace [19-20]. Records survey is a technique for analyzing business system; it involves gathering basic information such as quantity, shape and physical type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, the collection, use and record data about an organization [21]. In enhancing access to records in developing records management programs, information collected through surveys will be used. Even collecting such information will be helpful in making the disposal schedule, motivate staff training and registration for mobilizing savings among other records management activities.

The significance of records survey

Records surveys are essential in sorting out on the grounds that is a target evaluation of a foundation's record keeping activities [20, 22]. The importance of record surveys in the organization will help over the top duplication of record is distinguished, the records that being kept for a really long time will be uncovered, the territories of shortcomings that require momentary consideration are distinguished, key records are perceived and can be intentionally shielded from conceivable dangers and protection necessities are resolved. The recognizable proof of such data can conceivably get positive change the profitability of an organization. Records surveys can help to shape how satisfactorily the record keeping necessities of the organization are being met and to direct if any advances are basic [23]. Accordingly, record surveys is essential since it assumes a part a vital part in planning different records management exercises, for example, security of records, transfer methods, retention schedules, vital record management programs, appraisal, storage and access.

There was demonstrating that the motivation behind why the significance of records surveys was to guarantee that records were overseen for the duration of their life cycle [24-25]. In the event that records are not expert or are under-executed, the records of the organization's transfer will not be composed and chaotic. The significant office space will be possessed with fractional and non-smooth records that should have been destroyed or transferred to the record center if the record surveys are done correctly and its recommendations are considered serious.

The accessibility of the records

The importance record management in ensuring the accessibility cannot be overemphasized. Records surveys influence the key

records in accessibility and are regarded as the key mechanism towards adopting acceptable records management practices [26-27]. The adequate records management in organizations is because security and the accessibility of the records [28]. State records of South Australia expressed the organizations ought to guarantee that official records are shielded from unapproved get to or infringement of the law, and that measure assumed to anticipate misfortune, harm and pulverization. This must be adjusted with the requirement for official records to be effortlessly gotten to by an approved individual.

Records surveys are the key in records management in an organization, policy can determine who has access to the organization's records responsible for making decisions about access or restrictions on access to records, and how decisions are made. Alternatively, there are separate references to access policy or security information that can be more practical than the entire record management policy and will be identified as a subsidiary or related policy as possible [29].

Besides that record survey also has been used to create record inventories [30]. Records inventory is very important in ensuring good record management this is because record inventories contain relevant information about the good records management. The right inventory of recordkeeping manufactures a strong establishment for a decent record management program while horrible record surveys are performed to settle persistent management issues. This makes accessibility of records was controlled by using records surveys [31]. Besides that, through records surveys it also can help how suitable records keeping requirement of the organization is being met and to determine if any improvements are requisite. Records surveys had an essential part in arranging a scope of records management exercises, for example, the security of the records, disposal procedures, retention schedules, vital records management, appraisal, storage and the availability of the records.

Skills needed

For becoming a professional record manager is required to undergo special training to acquire the necessary skills [7]. Moreover, records managers must have a dynamic influence, for the duration of the life of a record [32]. That should be possible through records surveys among different exercises. The adequate training is important in the success of records surveys [33]. Trained and skilled staff is important in managing records such as integrity, protection, availability, compliance, disposition, transparency, retention of the record and information in principles of records and information management (RIM) [34]. As stated that knowledge and skills are acquired in managing records and also be confident in everything what they do. Wamukoya emphasized that training is a critical part of modern management [35].

As suggested in the websites from Docufile (Pty) Ltd. (2016), The Record Manager must have the ability to do the following [36]:

- Make Records Management Programs and Services accessible all through the organization.
- Have the capacity to catch records of numerous types.
- Intelligently arranged and precisely portray records.
- Give records access to approved people.
- Store all records and keep up security over them.
- Deal with the destruction of records according to a retention schedule.
- Make accessible electronic records and information management services.

Professional Ethics

Professional ethics include the individual, authoritative, and corporate benchmarks of conduct anticipated that would be practiced and execute by experts. The professionals is those working in acknowledging professions exercise specialist knowledge and skill [37]. Attention should be given to the use of knowledge and it should be controlled when it involves the provision of services to the public can be considered a moral issue and is termed professional ethics. Ethics are defines as values of behavior of a particular group of people in society [38]. In elaborating this point, Pojman states that ethics explain how things should be done and deliver explanations for actions by providing the rationale involved. Professional ethics is essential to ensuring quality in managing records within the organization. Ethics also is about honesty, accountability, pursuit of excellence, loyalty, integrity and responsible citizenship [39]. Meanwhile, professional ethics as the standard of conduct used for the person who occupies a professional role [40]. Professional ethics is essential to ensuring quality in managing records within the organization. Asserted by Jackling et.al [41] in Australia, dramatically demonstrates how financial market efficiency is based on assumptions of corporate faith and ethical behavior of corporate managers. That has been describe the use of the code of ethics will help record managers to overwhelm most of the problems they face [7]. The increase in training and education for record managers will lead to the professionalization of practice.

The General Assembly of the ICA (International Council of Archives) held in Beijing, China, formally adopted the ICA Code of Ethics on 6 September 1996. The ICA Code (1996) is available in 24 languages. The ICA Code has been adopted since by many member institutions (archivists and records manager) and member associations worldwide either in full or in adapted form [41]. Among the professional Code of Ethics been emphasized for archivist and record professionals are that they should:

- Secure the trustworthiness of archival material and in this manner ensure that it keeps on being solid confirmation of the past.
- Appraise, select and maintain archival material in its historical, legal and administrative context, thus retaining the principle of provenance, preserving and making evident the original relationships of documents.
- Secure the authenticity of documents during archival processing, preservation and use.
- Protect the proceeding accessibility and intelligibility of archival materials.
- Record, and have the capacity to legitimize, their activities on archival material.
- Advance the largest conceivable access to documented material and give a fair-minded support of all clients.
- Regard both get to and protection, and act inside the limits of pertinent enactment.
- Utilize the unique trust given to them in the general intrigue and abstain from utilizing their position to unjustifiably profit themselves or others.
- Seek professional excellence by systematically and continuously updating their archival knowledge, and sharing the results of their research and experience.
- Promote the preservation and use of the world's documentary heritage, through working cooperatively with the members and other professions.

5. Methodology

Methodology is one of the theoretical analyzes that have been used in the field of study, but it is a theoretical analysis that involves the methods and principles related to the branch of knowledge. Applied survey is used as a research instrument and face to face interview is the main part in this study to get the findings. In this study, the population was more targeted to the staff or employee in the public registry. The population comprises of 19 staffs under administration, including the assistant registrar. Therefore, the interview will focus on the potential informants, which competent in their field and job scope. The questions comprised of two sections which are structured and semi structured questions. Before the interview conducted, the pilot study will be conducted by an executive officer in order to observe and analyze the records management practices as well to determine the potential informant which suitable to answer the research objectives.

The assistant registrar intended to analyze and address on how they manage all the records in an organization.

In the sampling technique, data analyses are samples that denoted to as respondents. There are two methods used by social science researchers, random sampling and non- random sampling. For this study, non- random sampling will be selected. The non-random sampling refers to the situation where not everyone has an equal opportunity to be selected as samples. The purposive sampling was included in this research, that mean only selective respondent was used during the research was conducted.

Having considered the objective of the study, qualitative methods are the best way and will be used to obtain the data through interviews.

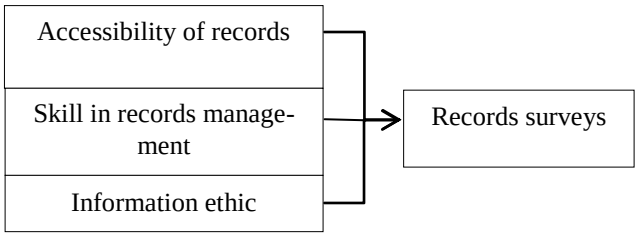


Figure 1: Conceptual Frameworks for Records Surveys and the Management of Public Registry.

Data Collection and Analysis

In ensuring the information gathering and variable measuring process is in a systematic and robust form, data collection has been used. Data collection will enable someone to answer relevant questions and evaluate the results. Data collection consists of structured and semi-structured questions. The assistant registrar will answer the entire question through face to face interview. Besides that, a simple questionnaire also will distribute to them in order to achieve the target of a research objective. In this study, the researcher proposes to collect data through a semi-structured interview with selected informants.

Data analysis is a process that conducts checking, cleaning, transacting and data modeling with the goal of finding useful information, giving conclusions and supporting decision making. Data will be analyzed using ATLAS.ti Version 8 software to generate the finding and the results.

6. Conclusion

This proposal is the preliminary investigation to know about records surveys and the management of public registry and the importance of records management practices. From this study, the researcher can analyze the significance of records surveys and determine how effective is this records surveys in nurturing proper records management practices, thereby improving public service delivery, accountability and good governance.

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