

**ROLE OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES IN PROMOTING SOUND  
RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN THE NAMIBIAN  
PUBLIC SERVICE**

**BY**

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**DECLARATION**

**DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE:**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented to any university or college for academic purposes or any other purposes.

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## ABSTRACT

Archival institutions worldwide are charged with the responsibility of preserving records and archives of the state. They are also responsible for providing leadership, guidance and expertise in records management in public institutions. This mandate has earned them the name, national documentary heritage institutions. However, the National Archives of Namibia has not been able to live up to this expectation because of the low staffing capacity, a meagre budget and an out-dated public archives act, among many other challenges. The aim of this study was to evaluate the contribution of the National Archives of Namibia towards the promotion of records management in the Namibian public service with a view to proposing a framework to enhance sound management of public sector records. The study was guided by the following objectives, namely, to: determine existence, adequacy and appropriateness of the laws and regulations that guide the National Archives of Namibia in the execution of its mandate; determine interventions provided by the National Archives on records and archives management in ministries and departments; investigate challenges encountered by the National Archives in the execution of its mandate; and proposed a framework to enhance sound management of records in the Namibian Public Service. The study was largely qualitative in design complemented by some quantitative aspects. Out of a study population of 238, the study did not have a fixed sample size because the researcher collected data from the various groups until a saturation point was reached. Data collection was through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis using identified themes, while analysis and presentation of quantitative data was through the use of charts and tables. The findings of the study were that records management across the public service in Namibia faced a number of challenges including: low standing in the public service; lack of policies and procedures; absence of retention and disposal schedules; absence of budgetary allocation for records and archives management programmes; inadequate trained records and archives personnel; and more importantly, lack of top management support. The study concluded that although records management was considered a prime driver in facilitating government transactions it generally received very low priority hampering the promotion of sound records management. The key recommendations are that: the government should review laws pertaining to records and archives management; the National Archives should formulate and implement a national records management policy; and all ministries should commit themselves to supporting records and archives management at the highest level possible. Furthermore, the study has developed a records management framework which if adopted by the National Archives should go a long way in promoting sound records and archives management in the Namibian Public Service.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ICT-</b>	-	Information and Communication Technology
<b>ISO</b>	-	International Standard Organization
<b>GIPF</b>	-	Government Institution Pension Fund
<b>IRMT</b>	-	International Records Management Trust
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
<b>MDGs</b>	-	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MoE</b>	-	Ministry of Education
<b>NAN</b>	-	National Archives of Namibia
<b>NLAS</b>	-	Namibia Library and Archives Service
<b>OPM</b>	-	Office of the Prime Minister
<b>ORG</b>	-	Organisation
<b>RM</b>	-	Records Management
<b>TB</b>	-	Tuberculosis
<b>TRC</b>	-	Truth and Reconciliation Commissions
<b>UNEP</b>	-	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNDP</b>	-	United Nations Development Programme
<b>WASCOM</b>	-	Wage and Salary Commission

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses background information to the study. It provides an overview of archives, records, records management, background information on Namibia, and National archives, and the Namibian public service. This chapter also provides information on the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study and assumptions as well as the scope and limitation of study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Archival institutions worldwide are charged with the responsibility of preserving records and archives of the state. They are also responsible for providing leadership, guidance and expertise in records management and archiving in public sector institutions. This has earned them the name of national documentary heritage institutions. Archival institutions also exist to champion the efficient, effective and economic creation, maintenance, use and disposal of public records.

According to Phumzile and Wamukoya (2007, p. 87) “the primary responsibility of archival institutions is not only to collect, organise and preserve archival information but also to make the information easily available and accessible to researchers and the public at large”. Kemoni & Ngulube (2007) observe that through the use of records,

administrators learn from the past to make present decisions and plan for the future. Records constitute the documentary evidence that manifest past efforts, accomplishments, aspirations and failures. Records preserve the memory of the nation and document activities and transactions of government. The absence of well-established archival institutions will not only result in loss of vital information but also loss of official memory of the state as well as the overall national identity. Similarly, the absence of well-managed records and archives has consequences not only for the government but also the citizens, especially the poorest who are less able to defend themselves.

The concept of recordkeeping and archiving is not a new phenomenon. Studies by Jackson, W (n.d); Holmes, O, W. (n.d) points out that this concept was adopted by the Catholic Church and perfected in modern times, particularly after the French Revolution. From then on most governments have had a system of public administration which resulted into the establishment of national archival institutions. Jackson (n.d); Holmes (n.d) further explained that in Africa, most countries established their archival institutions prior to or soon after independence as were the case in Namibia.

Namibia, one of the worlds' most sparsely populated countries with a population of just over two million people, is situated in Southern Africa, bordering the Atlantic Ocean in the west, Botswana and Zimbabwe in the east, by South Africa in the south and by Angola and Zambia in the north (Isaacs, 2007). The country went through two colonial administrations. First was the German colonial administration from 1883-1915 and the second was the South African administration from 17th December, 1920- 1989. The

South African administration was under the term of article 22 of the covenant of the League of Nations with a mandate agreement by the League Council. During the 1960s when the European powers granted independence to their colonies and territories in Africa, independence pressure also arose in the South African administration. In 1966, Namibia led by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) held a protracted armed struggle against their colonisers to gain their independence as in other African territories, for example Zambia, Ghana and others. The independence was achieved on 21st March 1990 (Riruako, 2007; Keyter, 2007; Nengomasha, 2009).

Namibia's political history contributed to the development of records and archive services within the public sector. Archiving history dates back to 1939 when the leaders started to correspond and keep records of their activities (Ministry of Education, 2004). The National Archives took a responsibility to preserve and care for the records of the Namibian Public Service and it was earlier called the Archive Depot of the Territory. The records preserved by the National Archives begin with the records of the German colonial administration, including early records of the Hoachanas Treaty of 1858, and the World famous diary of Hendrik Witbooi of 1880- 1893. Other records which are in great details are those which captured government actions on aspects such as the 1904 war of anticolonial resistance (Central bureau of Kaiser's government, 1904-1905).

From 1969, the archive was controlled by South African Director of Archives. The control remained until September 1979 when it was placed under the newly established Directorate of National Education of South West Africa (Namibia). The National

Archives functioned under the Archives Act of South Africa (Act 4 of 1987). After independence in 1990, the newly established Government of Namibia recognized the importance of records as a key factor in accountability, good governance and protection of human rights. It further recognized that records were the memory of the nation. It is for this reason that the government enacted the National Archives Act of 1992, which entrusts the custody and care of records to the National Archives of Namibia, a division in the Ministry of Education.

The custody and care of records includes all documents in any medium, created or received in any office of a ministry, regional council, local authority, or parastatal throughout the entire lifecycle of a document, from its creation or receipt, to its eventual authorization for destruction or transfer to the National Archives (Republic of Namibia, 1992). The National Archives of Namibia was established by the government in recognition of the important role it ought to play in safeguarding the national heritage as well as providing advisory services to all government offices including parastatals on the care and protection of records generated by their agencies.

## **1.2 Namibia Archives Act and the institutional mandate**

Prior to independence, the National Archives of Namibia functioned under the Archives Act of South Africa (Act 4 of 1987). Namibia got independence in 1990. In 1992 the newly established government of Namibia enacted the National Archives Act (Act 12 of 1992), which entrusts the custody and care of archives to the Minister of Education. This custody and care includes all documents created or received in any office of a ministry,

regional council, local authority or parastatals and encompasses the entire life cycle of a document from its creation or receipt, to its eventual authorized destruction or transfer to the National Archives. In practice, the minister's authority is exercised by the Head of the National Archives, known as the chief archivist. Through this mandate that the National Archives was give it provided registries of the public sector institution with an Archives Code, an instruction for managing records.

However, both the Archives Act and Archives Code were promulgated in 1992. Considering the developments in records management brought about by the increasing use of ICTs, these laws were long overdue for review. This concur with Baratta (2001) who points out that although the legal and regulatory framework of records and archives in Namibia is fairly comprehensive, it has not kept up with emerging trends which put emphasis on managing electronic records. There is no legal provision in the Act for electronic records including their admissibility in courts of law except that Section 12 (b) of the Act points out that the head of archives may in any manner which he or she deems proper issue a directive regarding computing or microfilm projects in respect of archives. There is no manual to translate procedures of managing electronic records under the act.

Beside the fact that the Archives Act was due for review, it states the functions of the National archives and they can broadly be divided into three areas: Records management function; Holding management function; and Research services.



### **1.2.1 Records management function in the public service**

Under this function, the National Archives of Namibia established a records management programme with the aim to provide the nation with well-documented and well-preserved records which reflect the history and the aspirations of the Namibian people. The programme was developed between 1978 and 1990. The records management programme consists of the following components;

- i) Compilation and approval of filing systems;
- ii) Issue of disposal guidelines/ authorities;
- iii) Records management surveys and inspections;
- iv) Training of officials in records management; and
- v) Approval of the transfer of records to archives

#### **1.2.1.1 Compilation and approval of filing systems**

Public service institutions are expected to implement an approved classification scheme based on the functions of their respective organisations. The filing system should be compiled by individual organisation and approved by the National Archives. However, for a number of years the National Archives did not have qualified staff to advice on the issues on compilation of finding aid. According to the National Archives of Namibia (NAN) Annual report (2010) among government ministries and parastatals that are under the records management supervision of NAN, the Namibian Police were the only Ministry having functional filing systems in place. Currently, with the recruitment of additional staffs, the National Archives has been working closely with public service ministries, departments and parastatals to develop functional filing file plan.

The most common file plan used in the Namibian public service was numeric classification scheme. It has been adopted across government as a model although there may be exceptions. In conducting this activity the National Archives faces some challenges among them, lack of adequate expertise to advise on classification and indexing. Also, inadequate staff capacity in ministries, departments and parastatals adds to the challenges. According to Nengomasha (2009) the adoption of computerisation which has resulted in the generation of electronic records also pose some challenges with regards to lack of policies on how records should be created and managed.

#### **1.2.1.2 Issuance of disposal guidelines/ authorities**

The Archives Act of 1992 states that no record may be destroyed by institutions without permission or approval by NAN. There are two types of permission issued by NAN; the disposal guideline and the disposal authority. Based on the Act the disposal guideline gives a provision that, 3 years after the approval of the filing system, institutions are expected to draw retention and disposal schedules to determine the future of their records. The guidelines indicate how long a record should be kept in the office of origin before it is either destroyed or transferred to NAN for permanent preservation. Although the Act makes a provision that 3 years after the approval of the filing system institutions are expected to draw retention and disposal schedules, it is important to note that a very small number of institutions have approved retention and disposal schedule in place.

Ministries and Parastatals with approved retention and disposal schedules are:

- Ministry of Veterans Affairs September 2010
- National Planning Commission September 2010
- Anti-Corruption Commission October 2010

The disposal guideline should be issued for specific items. This includes records of discontinued classification schemes. The office lists the items and makes suggestions as to the nature of items to be disposed of either by destruction or permanent preservation. An archivist then appraises the items and determines if the records have future value or not. The Head of the NAN is then requested to issue disposal authority, after which the items are transferred to NAN or destroyed. According to the Act, records should be transferred to NAN 20 years the closure of records. The master films are transferred immediately after being closed (NAN Annual report, 2010).

### **1.2.1.3 Office inspections**

In archival terms, office inspections mean the same thing as records surveys. The Archives Act of 1992, in particular Article 3, authorizes the Head of Archives to inspect any registry and to advise any person charged with custody or control over records and archives (The Archives Act, 1992). This means that registries of the Namibian Public Service should be inspected by the Head of Archives at least once a year and a report including recommendations compiled and sent to the office that was visited which should then provide a date when the recommendations will be implemented. The National Archives thereafter expects progress reports on implementations.

According to NAN Annual report (2010) the National Archives has been conducting some survey although at a slower pace. Records surveys is an exercise that is in line with the Archives Act (Act of 1992) in particular Article 3 which authorizes the Head of Archives to inspect archives and accessions and advise any person charged with custody or control over public records. In 2010, a total of 109 institutions were inspected. The following records surveys were conducted by the National Archives in 2010:

- Roads Construction Company (RCC) 26 February – 05 March 2010
- Erongo Region 08 – 19 March 2010
- Omaheke Region 10 – 21 May 2010
- Otjozondjupa Region 09 – 20 August 2010

Although records surveys were conducted as indicated above there is a lot that the National Archives still needs to do to ensure competences in areas such as filing systems, retention schedules and transferring of records to National Archives because most institution do not have approved filing systems and retentions schedules that should be used to control amount of records accumulated.

#### **1.2.1.4 Training of officials in records management**

Training in records management is important as it ensures that people are enabled to execute their records management tasks to the highest standards possible. It ensures effective, efficient and systematic control of records from their creation to disposition. Trained records personnel have a good appreciation of the importance of records management. The National Archives of Namibia conducts records management induction

training courses through workshops in the public sector institutions and 172 people from 9 institutions were trained in 2010. (NAN Annual report, 2010).

Although attempts are being made by the National Archives of Namibia to improve recordkeeping across the public sector, a snap survey of the existing recordkeeping situation in Namibia indicates that there are a lot of disparities that inhibit the discharge of its mandate to the full. The challenges include inadequate staff capacity and shortage of space. These consequences include inadequate support to government offices in regard to the development and implementation of proper filing systems and retention schedule, just to mention a few (The Ministry of Education, 2004).

Reports by Nengomasha (2009) also observed poor records management practices in the Namibian public service. These include an absence of classification scheme, retention and disposal schedule. A study by Keakopa (2007) pointed out that Namibia faces challenges in managing records of public institutions. The challenges include lack of policies and procedures for the management of electronic records. It is further explained that most departments are following guidelines from their parent ministries for the management of different classes of records. The researcher gave an example of financial records management where departments are following treasury instructions issued by the Ministry of Finance. In addition to lack of policies and procedures, the researcher also decried that the National Archives of Namibia and the other government agencies had little emphasis placed on skills development. There is a bulk of professional employees who are not proficient in electronic records management. This constrains them from

providing proper guidance on implementation of electronic records management systems to their clientele.

The International Records Management Trust (IRMT, 2000) argues that poor management of records and archives makes it impossible to determine and benchmark future actions and to hold individuals accountable for past decisions. This has consequences for all beneficiaries, especially the poorest who are not able to defend themselves since relevant and accurate public records are essential for preserving the rule of law and demonstrates fair, equal, and consistent treatment of people.

### **1.2.2 Holding management function**

The National Archives of Namibia houses over 7 km government and court records, over 40,000 photos, over 6,000 maps and building plans, over 30,000 audio-visual media. The National Archives does not have records centres where documents that are no longer needed for frequent reference by ministries and department can be kept. Some public institutions now entrust the management of their records to private institutions. This is in contravention of the archives act which requires public records to be in the custody of the National Archives.

### **1.2.3 Research Services**

The National Archives provides its research services to the public in three ways: through its reading room, and through its source-research and source-publications programmes.

Users gain access to the holdings of the Archives through finding aids, computer-based searches, and discussions with a reference archivist. According to MoE (2004) due to lack of professional staff, finding aids were not up to date, there were no clear representation of what records are actually in the Archives. This shows that certain records may not be accessible due to shortage of updated finding aid.

Phumzile and Wamukoya (2007, p. 87) points out that “if information is stored and not made accessible, it is as good as being non-existent”. This is because records and archives are indisputable working tools or instruments of government administration without them government will not function properly. Thurston and Cain (1997) pointed out that Archival institutions should spearhead the establishment of sound records management systems in public institutions as a cornerstone for achieving efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery for organisations to achieve their objectives in a timely manner.

### **1.3 Electronic records management systems**

The government of Namibia have shown to have a big influence over the use of information and communication technology (ICT) leading to the creation of electronic records in the public service. According to Heimstädt (2006) in 2006 the government spent an average of USD 4 million on IT. The budget was mainly used to serve 80 000 employees with computers (including laptops). Heimstädt (2006) pointed out that most offices and Ministries had been installed with Local Area Networks (LANS), fitted with an assortment of various types of servers. Therefore government is required to have

systems for managing records created through the use of IT. Baratta (2011) observed that the strongest system for managing electronic records in the Namibian public service were found in the Ministry of Finance in revenue generating areas, in particular the Directorates of Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise.

However, according to Baratta (2001) the treasury systems were less successful. Its fundamental weakness was lack of security during data transferred from one system to another. Baratta (2001) noted that the particular areas of concern were the cheque printing and data transfers process from the Central Bank to the Bank Reconciliation System via the internet. The process can easily be intercepted by anyone when data is transferred from the Central Bank by obtaining details of government's daily bank balance and details of cheque numbers, amounts, and others.

Poor systems for managing electronic records in public service was also observed by Auditor General (2012) during its audit in the Ministry of Education's Namibia Students Financial Assistance Funds (NSFAF) where it was discovered that some staff members in NSFAF department were keeping records to their personal email accounts such as yahoo as a backup. According to Baratta (2001) this comes due to a number of problems including; weaknesses of policies and procedures, documentation standards, organisational behaviour and staff capacity to manage electronic records.

Baratta was of the opinion that one of the challenges affecting records management was lack of policies and procedures and best practice and adequate staff capacity. Ngulube



(2007) argues that in a society where information is generated mostly in digital format, records keeping and archiving of records face huge challenges because technology was introduced at the time when records managers and archivists were not ready to manage electronic records.

#### **1.4 The Namibian Public Service**

According to Simataa (2001) following independence in 1990 public sector reform was undertaken. The public sector reform program was intended to promote the welfare of citizens by redefining the role of the state, introducing new measures to enhance public service management performance and to ensure government adheres to the principles of good corporate governance through increased transparency, openness, accountability and increased citizen participation.

Simataa (2001) further explained that through the introduction of the reform programme the new government brought on board people who were left out of the public service because of their colour, gender or political affiliation. One major challenge that was experienced by the new government was the huge number of civil servants. The government was required to down-size or reduce number of civil servants. However, this task was made difficult by Article 141 of the Namibian Constitution that does not allow for the removal of any of the inherited civil servants (Republic of Namibia, 2010).

The only alternative to downsize the civil service and bringing efficiencies was commercialization of some government services. Simataa (2001) explains that

government started off by commercializing some of its services, for example, telecommunication services and postal services. These units were allowed to operate as commercial entities giving them more freedom of deciding on how their business is conducted. Similarly, bodies like the Road Transport Authority, the Airport Company, Port Authorities, Water Utilities, Power Utilities and Wildlife and Resorts were commercialized. The work force was transferred, retrained and retained by these agencies. To do this the government embarked on a number of public service reform programmes, including;

- i) Rationalization, and
- ii) Wage and Salary Commission (WASCOM).

The above mentioned reforms were undertaken, with a view of rationalising the 11 ethnic administrations adopted from colonial period into national public service with a view of enhancing the legitimacy of new institutions, improving performance of public service, inculcating ethics and professionalism in the public service, and improving service delivery to users (Keyter, 2007).

To explain the impact of the reforms on records management in the Namibian public service, the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2004) reported that when the public service reforms were undertaken the public service expanded, the whole administration was restructured, new ministries, regional and local authorities and parastatals were created. For instance, before the implementation of public service reform in 1987 there were 66 registries under the records management advisory of the National Archives of Namibia. The numbers of registries under the supervision of the national archives have since

increased to 150 registries distributed within 23 government ministries and 200 parastatals. All these ministries and parastatals generate massive records which should be well managed to ensure timely decision-making, accountability and good public service delivery.

The public service consists of government ministries and parastatals. The government ministries includes; the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Gender Equality & Child Welfare, Ministry of Health, Home Affairs, Ministry of Environment & Tourism, Ministry of Information Communication and Technology, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Lands and resettlement, Ministry of Labour & Social Welfare, Ministry of Mines & Energy, Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Prisons and Correctional Services, Ministry of Regional and Local government and Housing, Ministry of Safety and Security, Ministry of Trade and Industries, Ministry of War Veterans, Ministry of Works and Transport, Ministry of Youth, National Services, Sport & Culture. The parastatals includes among others; Agriculture Bank of Namibia, Air Namibia, Bank of Namibia, Government Institution Pension Fund (GIPF), Namibia Broadcasting Corporation, Namibia Ports Authority, Namibia Post Ltd, Namibia Tourism Board, Namibia Water Corporation, Nampower, National Housing Enterprise, National Institute of Pathology, Roads Authority, Social Security Commission, Telecom Namibia, University of Namibia.

Ministries have been distributed within the central government, regional governments and local governments. The Central government consist of ministries, offices and agencies, whereas regional government consists of Regional Councils, and constituencies. Central government is charged with the responsibility of providing services to the public and ensure democratic governance and economic development. Although central government carries most responsibilities of public service, it relies on the other two levels of governments (regional and local) to execute certain functions which includes taking government closer to the people in all the regions of the country (Simataa, 2001; Keyter, 2007; the Republic of Namibia Cabinet, 2013; Office of the Prime minister, 2013).

Simataa (2001) noted that the Namibian government proposed a decentralisation system, as a vehicle towards achieving administrative reform. Ministries have being consulted to indicate services which could be decentralised to regional and local authorities to ensure that the necessary resources and capacity are transferred and subsequently built at local level to relieve the central government from the burden of having to deal with activities of people at local and regional levels as well as to improve public service delivery.

Thurston & Cain (1997) argues that governments' ability to provide good service delivery and achieve strategic priorities for economic and social development depend upon the availability of records. The records often speed up decision making, facilitate efficient and effective services delivery and ensure timely achievement of the public service reform objectives. Thurston & Cain (1997) further says that, in many countries

where records management was not a component of public sector reform, the programmes failed because without good records management which ensures that records are readily available, decisions cannot be made and this hampers the process towards achieving the objectives of the reform.

### **1.5 Statement of the problem**

Archival institutions, as the official custodians of the national documentary heritage of their respective countries play key roles in promoting records management in the public service. They serve as the official memory of the nation and key source of information. Their responsibilities include; providing leadership, guidance and expertise in records management in public sector institutions. This mandate has earned them the name, national documentary heritage institutions.

The National Archives of Namibia was mandated by the Archives Act of 1992 for custody and care of records in the public service. However, the National Archives of Namibia has not been able to live up to this expectation. The state of records management still remains a challenge thereby massive accumulation of records occupies a lot of office space and causes delays in the retrieval of information. This has been supported by reports of various authors, for instance Nengomasha (2009) points out that most institutions in the Namibian Public Service are congested with piles of unorganised records. The MoE (2004) has also decried the poor state of records management in public institutions. It has further noted that some public institutions now entrust the management of their records to private institutions. This is in contravention of the archives act which

requires that public records be preserved in the National Archives of Namibia. This clearly shows that the National Archives of Namibia has many issues that need to be assessed, clearly understood and solutions identified and recommended for implementation.

### **1.6 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study was to investigate the contribution of the National Archives of Namibia towards the promotion of records management with a view to proposing a framework to enhance sound management of public sector records.

### **1.7 Objectives of the study**

This study was guided by a number of objectives, namely to:

- i) Determine the existence, adequacy and appropriateness of the laws and regulations which guide records management in the public service;
- ii) Assess records management practices and the interventions of the National Archives in promoting records management in ministries and departments;
- iii) Determine resource requirements for sound records management;
- iv) Investigate challenges encountered and the opportunities which could be exploited by the National Archives in promoting records management in the Namibian public service;
- v) Propose a framework to promote sound management of records in the Namibian Public Service.

## **1.8 Research questions**

The study is guided by the following research question;

- i) How adequate and appropriate are the laws and regulations that guide the National Archives in the execution of its mandate?
- ii) What is the current state of records management and what role does the National Archives of Namibia play in promoting records management in ministries and departments?
- iii) What are the resource requirements for sound records management in the Namibian Public Service?
- iv) What strategies could be used to overcome challenges faced, and what opportunities could be exploited by the National Archives to promote sound management of records in the Namibian public service?
- v) What best practices could be used to promote sound management of records in the Namibian public service?

## **1.9 Study Assumptions**

This study will be guided by the following assumptions:

- i) The Archives Act of 1992 of Namibia is outdated and therefore inadequate to provide a sound basis for records management in the Namibian Public Service;
- ii) The National Archives of Namibia is under resourced making it difficult for it to make positive contribution in promoting sound records management in the Namibian Public Service;

- iii) The National Archives of Namibia is yet to adopt international best practices and this continues to undermine the way records are managed in the public service;
- iv) The current state of records management in the Namibian Public Service highlights the need for the National Archives of Namibia to do more towards the promotion of sound records management.

### **1.10 Significance of the study**

This study is significant in the following ways:

#### **1.10.1 Practical Significance**

The study has revealed that records management across public institutions in Namibia was given low priority, despite the need for the National Archives to promote sound records management. This is due to inadequate policies, filing systems, retention and disposal schedules which led to congestion of records in registries, lack of specific budget allocated to registries, low support from top management, low level of training for registry clerks, shortage of qualified and experienced archivists to promote records management, inadequate space for the preservation of semi-current records, among others.

#### **1.10.2 Policy-related Significance**

The study recommends the government to review laws pertaining to records and archives management; the National Archives should formulate and implement a national records management policy; and all ministries should commit themselves to supporting records and archives management at the highest level possible. Furthermore, the study has developed a records management framework which if adopted by the National Archives



should go a long way in promoting sound records management in the Namibian Public Service.

### **1.10.3 Theoretical Significance**

The study findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of records management as it has provided a framework for sound management of records in the public service.

## **1.11 Scope and limitation of the study**

### **1.11.1 Scope of the study**

This study was conducted in registries within the Khomas region in Windhoek where the headquarters of public service institutions in Namibia are located. The registries were selected from 3 ministries these includes; the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). The choice of the registries in Khomas region was informed by the fact that the administration of the Namibian public service is central, therefore registries in Khomas should serve as a model for registries in other regions.

### **1.11.2 Justification of the Selected Ministries and Departments**

The chosen ministries and departments can be justified in view of the fact that two of them, namely Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health represent the key sectors of education and health, while the Prime Minister's Office co-ordinates all functions, projects and programmes undertaken by various ministries and departments. The Office of the Prime minister also coordinates formulation of government policies across sectors.

Meanwhile, the National Archives has the core mandate and responsibility to advise ministries and departments on recordkeeping best practices. The National Archives falls under the Ministry of Education, which provides another reason for the inclusion of the Ministry of education in the study. All in all, the two ministries selected together with the Office of the Prime Minister represent sectors which bring government in greater contact with citizens and members of the public. The National Archives is also the custodian of all records and archives generated by public institutions, as decreed by the Archives Act of 1992.

#### **1.11.2 Limitations of the study**

The research faced some limitations. Some interviewees were unwilling to disclose information due to the code of conduct for public service which prohibits public officers from disclosing information to the public without official authorization; this made some respondents reluctant to provide information to the researcher.

#### **1.12 Summary**

This chapter has provided background information to the study, statement of the problem, the aim and objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study. The chapter specifically discussed the concept; archival institutions and the role they play in promoting records management in public institutions.

### 1.13 Definition of Terms

**Accountability:** an aspect of governance which acknowledges responsibility for actions and decision taken (Thurston & Cain, 1997).

**Appraisal:** The act of assessing the worth of archives as documentary evidence or as information in order to confirm if the entire archival unit or portions of it ought to be acquired and preserved (IRMT, 1999).

**Archives:** An institution responsible for permanent preservation of records of enduring value or records that are preserved permanently because they have historical value (Shepherd & Yeo (2003)).

**Best Practices:** Standards which all those involved in managing records can adopt (ISO 15489-1).

**Document:** Information fixed in some medium, such as paper, film or digital bits and bytes (Republic of South Africa, 2006).

**Documentary evidence:** A record that is deemed to be an objective representation of actual decisions, opinions or ideas and so provides confirmation of proof (Millar, 2010).

**Electronic Record:** A record that is maintained in a coded format and so can only be accessed using a computer system that converts the codes or numbers into text, images or sounds that can be processed by the human eye or ear. It can also be referred to as a digital record (Republic of South Africa, 2006).

**Evidence:** Is an item or information that proves a fact and is admitted into judicial proceedings to a specific case to establish disputed fact (Millar, 2010).

**Filing system:** Is a classification scheme which provides for the systematic framework within which the records are managed (the National Archives of Scotland, 2003).

**Finding Aid:** Any descriptive tool created by an archival institution or by the agency that created the archival materials in question, that identifies the content, context and structure of archives, as well as their significance scope, nature and or purpose (the National Archives of Scotland, 2003).

**Good Governance:** is a process whereby citizens participate in decision making process (Thurston & Cain, 1997).

**Good Service Delivery:** Is a process by which organizations delivers their services to the public in a way that allows the public to access services in the most efficient and effective manner possible (IRMT, 2008).

**Legal and Regulatory Framework:** Is a system of rules and regulations established by government to regulate specific activities (Suderman, J. et. al, 2005).

**Preservation:** Is the total sum of processes and tasks performed in order to protect records and archives against damage or deterioration (Miller, 2010).

**Public Servants:** These are government employees who provide services to the public (Namibian Public Service Act, No 13 of 1995).

**Public Service:** Is a service which is provided by government to people living within its jurisdiction (Thurston & Cain, 1997).

**Public Service Reforms:** Is an attempt by government to change ways of managing the public sector (Thurston & Cain, 1997).

**Records:** A records is any recorded information, created, received, and maintained as evidence by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in transaction of business (the National Archives of Scotland, 2003).

**Records Management:** Records management is the application of policies, practices, technologies and other management controls related to information which support business operations and process and protect legal interests and respond to regulators (the National Archives of Scotland, 2003).

**Records Retention Schedules:** are the official guide for the management of the Organization's records. They provide mandatory instructions for the disposition of records no longer needed for current official business (Fischer, 2006).

**Registry:** Is a subunit of a records management unit responsible for the receipt, control and maintenance of current records (IRMT, 1999).

**Region:** geographical division of city within a country (the Namibian Constitution, Act No. 7 of 2010).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework and reviews literature related to the study. The study specifically, reviews literature of the concepts of archives, records, records management, best practices and standards, public service, electronic records, service delivery as well as legal and regulatory frameworks. In this context a study by Saunders (2003) confirms that the main purpose of a literature review is to help the researcher to develop a good understanding and insight into relevant previous research or any related emerging trends.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

Newman (2003) observes that theories are propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena and specify relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting occurrences. Thus in this regard a theoretical framework examines existing theories in relation to the research objectives of a study. It is assumed that theories enable researchers to draw new conclusions, improve action and generate new theories that appropriately explain the subject.

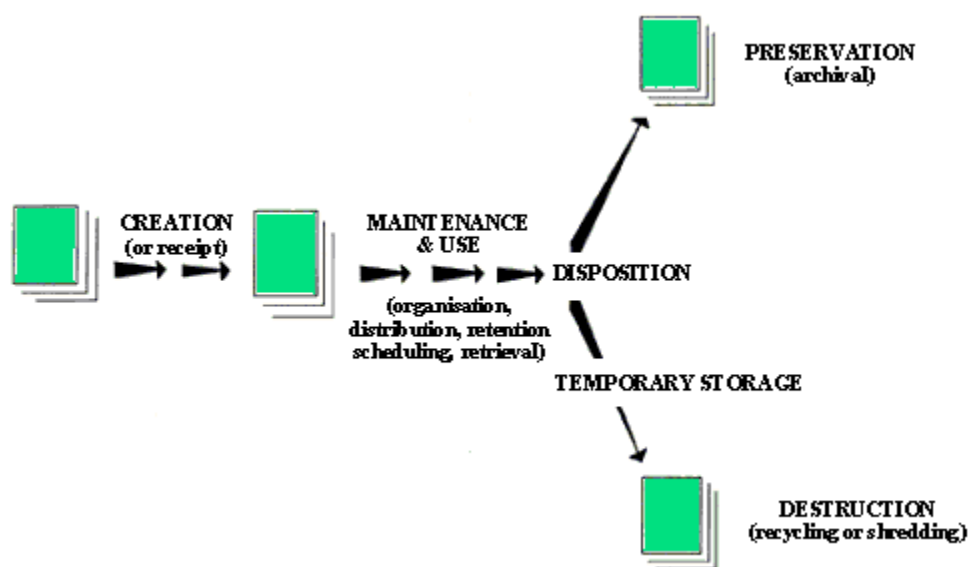
### **2.1.1 Theories of records management**

Since 1950 many theories have been advanced to support the management of records. Kemoni (2008) noted that many records management models have been developed by national institutions, archive schools and international professional and records and archives management scholars. Literature by (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; IRMT, 1999; Mckemmish, 1997; Xiaomi, 2003 explains that most theories of records management originate from the records life cycle model. The records life cycle model seems to provide the basis of all other models. These include models such as the International Council on Archives (ICA) (2005) model; National Archives of Australia (2002) records management model; the records continuum model and the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (1999) integrated model for records management. Among the above mentioned models the researcher chose to interrogate three models which seemed to be closely related to this study before selecting one suitable model. This include: the records lifecycle model, the records continuum model and the integrated model for records management;

### **2.1.2 The Records lifecycle model**

According to Shepherd & Yeo (2003); Millar (1997) the lifecycle model originated from the USA and it was developed in the 1930s. The model was made popular by Schellenberg in 1956 and it was used by the National Archives of USA (NARA) for the operation of records management programs in response to the ever increasing volumes of records produced by organization. In this model the life of a record goes through phases starting from when it is created or received by the Agency, through to its use,

maintenance and temporary storage before finally being destroyed or archived permanently. According to Roper and Millar (1999) the concept is an analogy of the life of a biological organism which is born, lives and ultimately dies. In the same manner, a record is created, used while it still has value and is then disposed of by destruction or by transfer to an archival institution for permanent preservation. The separate elements within these phases cover aspects of the life of a hard copy document as shown in figure 2.1.



*Figure 2.1: Records Life Cycle diagram by Government of South Australia (2014)*

- **Creation:** The first phase of the Records Life Cycle involves records being created, collected or received through the daily transactions of the Business and can include printed reports, emails or even phone messages, documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of the agency.



- **Maintenance & Use:** The next phase of the life cycle is the maintenance and use of the record. This can include filing, retrieving, use, duplication, printing, dissemination, release or exchange of the information in the record.
- **Disposition:** At the disposition phase records are assessed to determine their retention value using Retention and Disposal Schedules. This leads to either the preservation or destruction of the record.
- **Temporary Storage & Destruction:** If a record still has ongoing value to the Agency it will be temporarily stored at the record centre either onsite at the Agency or offsite. When the retention date of these records is reached, permission will be sought from the Agency and State Records for their destruction.
- **Preservation:** When a record has been determined to be of enduring historical or other value will never be destroyed, they need to be transferred to archival storage for permanent preservation for current and future use (Government of South Australia, 2014).

However, according to Gibson (2011); Mckemmish (2002) the records life cycle model has a problem, the concept is task centred, it represents the records management tasks as occurring in sequence of stages, which demarcates the work of records managers and archivists and therefore disconnects archivists from current recordkeeping practices. This makes it unsuitable for this study because the Archives Act of 1992 entrust care and custody of all records of government and private sector institutions to the National Archives and it does not give room for the demarcation of responsibility. Section 3 (2) (d) of the Act states that “the head of archives may advise any person charged with the

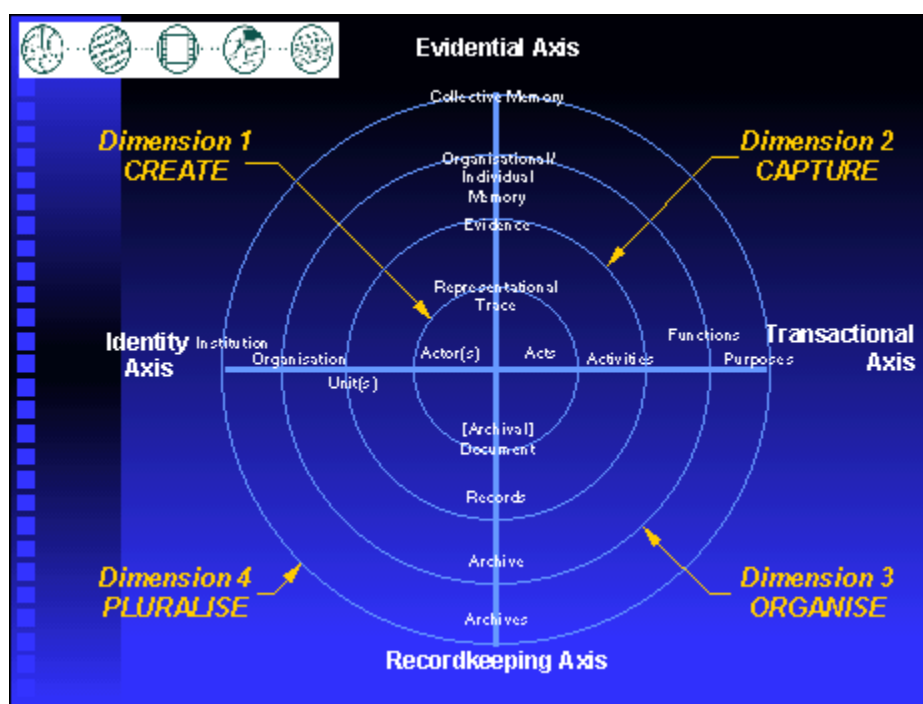
custody or care of or control over any documents”. This shows that the work of the head of archives (archivist) and records officer cannot be demarcated; these two professionals ought to work in collaboration as required by the Act.

In terms of the evolution of the digital record, the records lifecycle is again not flexible; it is too focused on records as physical entities rather than logical entities which excludes electronic records. This model can be successfully applied to a hard copy system of records only. The records life cycle model was therefore not found appropriate for the present study due to the fact that it disconnects archivists from current recordkeeping practices and also lack mechanism for managing electronic records. The Namibian public service not only creates paper but also electronic records. This study therefore seeks to adopt a model that emphasises the management of both paper and electronic records. The model should also provide a framework for records keeping which integrate the work of records managers and archivists.

### **2.1.3 The records continuum model**

The records continuum model was developed in the 1990s by Australian archival theorist Frank Upward (Mckemmish, 1997). Like the records lifecycle model, the records continuum model, acknowledges that records have a lifecycle. However, the lifecycle stages in a continuum are not rigid since they can be extended. Xiaomi (2003) acknowledges that in a continuum the care of records follow through a consistent continuum of actions from the development of records management systems, to the creation, preservation and to their use as archives.

The continuum concept promotes a coherent process of records management from the development of recordkeeping systems through to the creation and preservation of records, to their retention and use as archives. There are four actions which continue to recur throughout the life of a record. These include identification, intellectual control, provision of access, and physical control of records. According to McKemmish (1997) Frank Upward's records continuum model consists of the four dimensions of records which are explained below in figure 2.2.



*Figure 2.2: Records Continuum Diagram by McKemmish (1997)*

- The first dimension is identification or creation. This dimension puts emphasis on the process of records creation. The purpose of creating records is to provide evidence of the business operations which have been completed.

- The second dimension is intellectual control and capturing. This dimension ensures that records are captured into an effective records management system that governs its arrangement and facilitates its retrieval throughout its life or for as long as they are needed.
- The third dimension is organizes or provision of access. This dimension is concerned with retention and disposal scheduling which is an important aspect of establishing and maintaining control of corporate information. This dimension helps organisation to establish disposal periods. In the form of records retention and disposal schedules.
- The fourth dimension is about ensuring physical control of societal memory. This dimension checks whether records are maintained in the creating office, a records office, a records centre or an archival repository or whether the use is by its creator or a successor in function or by a third party, such as a researcher or other persons.

While the continuum model does promote the management of records in all formats, it falls short of addressing the various aspects that are anticipated in this study. For instance, it does not put more emphasis on the development of policies and procedures, security of records and skill development among recordkeeping staff and archivists.

#### **2.1.4 The Integrated Model of Records Management**

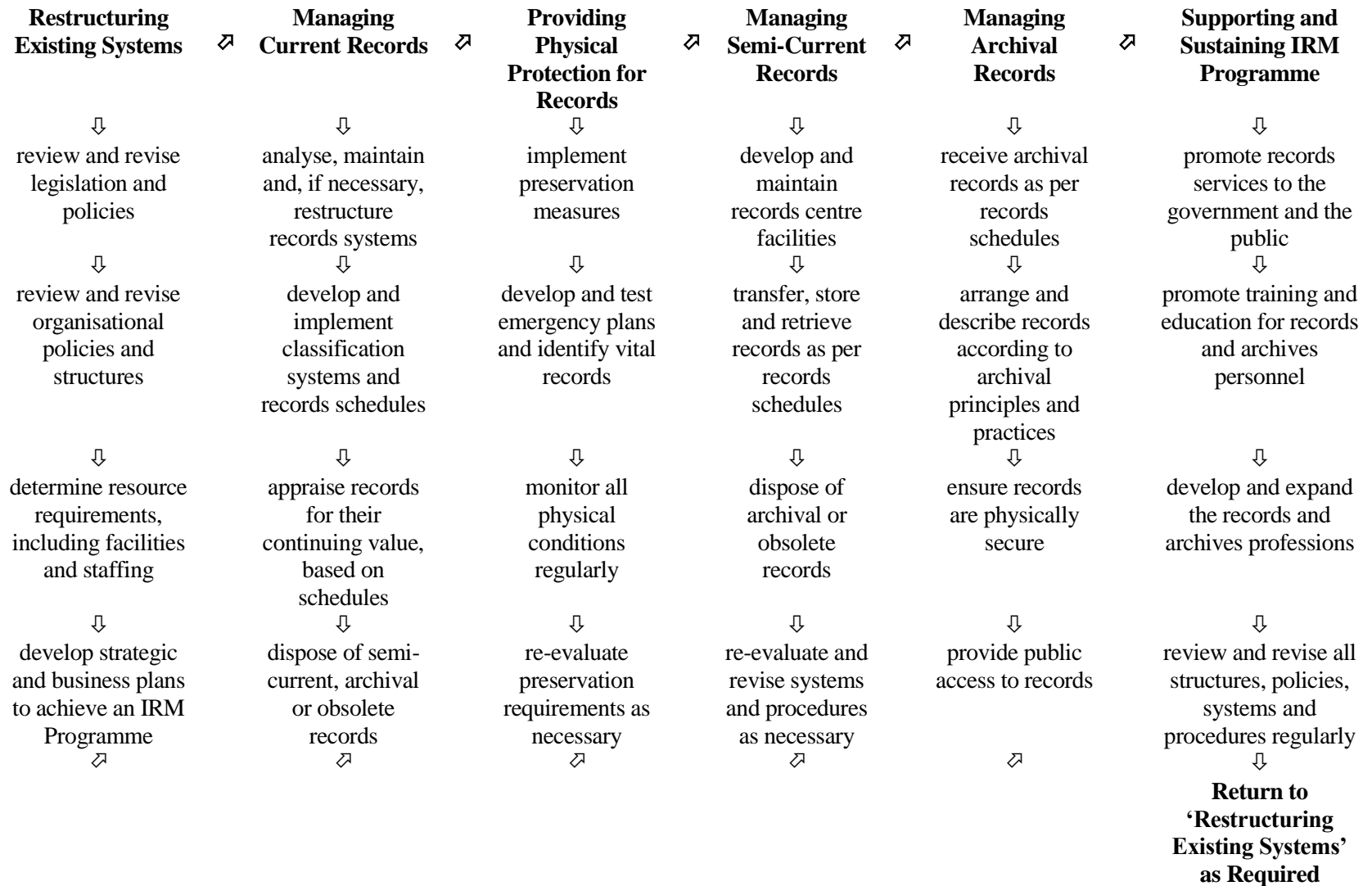
The model was advanced by International Records Management Trust (IRMT) in 1999. The model sees the management of records as an archival business geared towards customer satisfaction, service delivery, cost effective management and best value.

According to Mckemmish (2001) the goal of an integrated approach is to develop collaborative ways of thinking between archivists and records managers in order to guarantee a reliable, authentic and integrated memory for the organization and society, provide consistent and sustainable recordkeeping services to meet societal needs, and promote professional commitments and value added contributions for best practice.

The integrated model for records management recognizes that records, their format notwithstanding, should follow a life cycle through a continuum of care. Based on these points, the integrated model of records management was selected over the life cycle model based on the arguments that the life cycle model's suitability in managing records and archives particularly in electronic formats was questionable. While the continuum model does promote the integration of archivist and records managers under an integrated recordkeeping frame work with the goal to guarantee the reliability, authenticity and completeness of records and supports the management of records in all formats, it falls short of addressing the various aspects that are anticipated in this study. For instance, it does not put emphasis on the development of policies and procedures that guide the management of records, security of records and skill development among recordkeeping staff and archivists. This gives the integrated model a positive advantage for this study as

it discusses elements that are related to the research question in 1.8. IRMT's model has over the years undergone modifications by other researchers such as Xiaomi (2003). However, Xiaomi's model focuses on managing records in electronic form. It is for this reason that this study has chosen to adopt IRMT's model (1999) which is shown in figure 2.3.

The integrated records management model by IRMT, 1999 observes six stages of records management program that include; supporting and sustaining the integrated records management programme, restructuring existing systems, organising and controlling records, providing physical protection for records, managing records in records centres and managing archives. The six stages of records management by IRMT model are presented in figure 2.3 below.



**Figure 2.3 Integrated Records Management Model**

*Source: International Records Management Trust, 1999.*

#### **2.1.4.1 Stages of the integrated model of records management programme**

##### **i) Supporting and sustaining the integration of records management programme**

This stage is about developing collaborative ways between records managers and archivists in order to guarantee care and custody of reliable and authentic memory of governments, organizations and the public. When the integrated model is adopted, this stage will ensure that the National Archives of Namibia as custodians of records and archives spearhead the promotion of skills development programs among recordkeeping staff, and sustain collaboration with ministries and department to ensure that the records officers are provided with the necessary support through training on records management courses to help them improve skills and build their competencies in serving the public.

##### **ii) Restructuring of existing systems**

This stage ensures the use of the best practices in the following activities: development and review policies and procedures in ministries and department, classification schemes; retention and disposal schedule and appraisals of records. This stage could contribute positively, if the model can be adopted by the National Archives of Namibia it will remodel the records management programs in the public service as required by the Archive Act of 1992.

The absence of records management policies and procedures in the Namibia Public Service was noted by Keakopa (2007) who observed lack of policies and



procedures for the management of electronic records. The integrated records management model will ensure that archivists work in collaboration with records managers in the Namibian Public Service to review and revise policies that guide the management of records, as well as determine resources required for the successful management of records.

### **iii) Organising and controlling records**

This stage sees the management of records as an archival business geared towards customer satisfaction, service delivery and cost effective management and best value. It further ensures that records despite their format are managed in an integrated recordkeeping system. This facilitates provision of effective and efficient access to information supporting decision making.

The integrated records management model will assist in ensuring that records and archives are managed in a sound recordkeeping system that facilitates effective and efficient retrieval of information. The Ministry of Education (MoE, 2004) in previous studies confirms that the current recordkeeping systems in ministries are out of date. There is no clear representation of what records are actually in registries.

**v) Providing physical protection for records**

This stage ensures the implementation and maintenance of preservation measures. This is done because records are usually at risk from deterioration caused by various factors namely:

- Unsuitable environmental conditions;
- Physical damage as a result of lack of care which may result in their being exposed to fire, water, excessive light, insects, pests and mishandling.

There are three pronged approaches which are needed to ensure the care of records.

These include:

- Good housekeeping. The building in which records are stored should be kept clean and in good condition. Any structural damage should be repaired as quickly as possible.
- Boxing of records. This is the most effective way of providing a reasonable measure of protection against unsuitable environmental conditions, light, fire, water, insects and mishandling.
- Environmental conditions. The temperature and relative humidity levels in the repository should be checked regularly to ensure the seasonal changes do not affect records over time.

**vi) Managing records in records centres**

This stage ensures the development of records centre facilities, transfer and storage of records that are no longer needed for frequent use by the creating

agencies. This stage also ensures that records are disposed of according to approved retention and disposal schedules so as to avoid congestion of records in departments and offices. In the event that the National Archives of Namibia cannot transfer all none current records from ministries and departments into its custody it should encourage individual organisations to set up their own in-house records centres. This will ensure that records are not maintained in costly office space.

#### vii) **Managing Archives**

This stage ensures that archives are transferred to repositories such the National Archives of Namibia. This enables records to be arranged and described according to archival principles in order to facilitate access by various users including researchers and members of the public.

The integrated records management model is more applicable to this study as it shows aspects that are linked to the research questions that were investigated in 1.8. The study assessed the contribution of the National Archives of Namibia in promoting efficient records management in the Namibian Public Services and explored strategies that can be adopted by the state archives in order to achieve efficient and effective management of public sector records. The adoption of the integrated model of records management in this study enabled the documentation of records management activities in the public service thus exposing areas of deficiency that requires intervention of the National Archives. An introduction of the integrated model of records management in the

Namibian Public Service will with no doubt, have a positive impact in the promotion of records management as required by the Archive Act.

## **2.2 The concept of Records Management**

Barata, Cain and Routledge (2001, p. 13) defines records management as “that area of general management responsible for maintaining records. It includes the management of records from creation and capture, through to maintenance and use and their ultimate transfer to an archives or destruction”. The motive behind records management’s existence is for the National Archives to assist organisations in making the right decision about which records to keep and how to keep them.

The National Archives of Australia (2010) defines records management as a process of controlling records within a comprehensive regime made up of policies, procedures, systems, processes and behaviors. Together these processes ensures that reliable evidence of actions and decisions are kept and remain available for reference and use when needed, and that the organizations benefits from effective management of their records. The National Archives of Australia further points out that records management operates at different levels. At a personal and local level it concentrate on individuals keeping adequate records of their daily work by filing correspondences, policies, and other key documents, managing their emails, keeping notes of meetings, and so on in such a way that the records they keep can be found and used when needed by themselves or others.

The National Archives of Scotland (2003) defines records management as a systematic control of an organisation’s records, throughout their life cycle, in order to meet

operational business needs, statutory and fiscal requirements and community expectations. This definition is shared by a number of authors who says that records management exists with the aim to systematically control the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records for easy access. It is usually driven by a number of factors such as responsibility, accountability through submission of records such as annual reports, business plans, and financial statements and many more (Roper and Millar, 1999; Ngulube, 2003; Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).

Based on the above definitions, the concept of record management can be defined as the process that ensures proper management of the product (records) of the business activity through which the performance of employees can be measured. Thus no government body or business can survive or operate successful without properly managed records. A study by Kemoni, Ngulube and Stilwell (2007) points out that, records are a vital source of information which enables public officers to render efficient and effective services to the public and government. This shows that there is need for the National Archives of Namibia as the custodian of records of the public service to come up with mechanisms for sound records management to ensure that records are well managed to retain its integrity and assists in keeping track of every transaction and thus enforce accountability and good service delivery.

When records are well managed, mismanagement of resources and corruption is easily picked up. Marutha (2011) states that a sound records management programme should therefore include the following elements;

- Formulation of policies, procedures and standards for handling records;
- Development of classification systems and retention schedules;
- Creation, usage and preservations of records in a safe place;
- Finding ways to store records as cheaply and efficiently as possible;
- Appraise records to identify records that need to be kept and disposed of those records that are no longer of value to the organisation. The World Health Organisation (2008) identifies benefits of records management as discussed below.

### **2.3 Benefits of records management in the public service**

Organizations or government bodies that manage their records properly are awarded with several benefits. The World Health Organisation (2008) observes several benefits that organisations and government bodies that manage their records properly are rewarded with: among others including;

- a) Competitive performance
- b) good service delivery
- c) protection of human rights
- d) accountability
- e) prevention of fraud and corruption.

The following discussions present various cases which highlight how well managed records have been useful to governments and the public:

### **2.3.1 Competitive performance**

According to Mampe and Kalusopa (2012) competitive performance stems from many discrete of business activities that organizations perform in producing, marketing and distributing its products and services. These activities contribute to the relative cost position of organizations and create a big difference between competitors. Mampe and Kalusopa (2012) further points out that, organizations compete with an advantage when they perform important activities more effectively than its competitors. This was confirmed by Grant (2001) that organisations' competitive advantages depends on their ability to access records, and this is the key resource that differentiate them as it enable competitors to excel in their business endeavors. Grant (2001) attributes much on the success of the Japanese economy which excelled positively in the supply of natural resources due to business organisation's ability to access information on sales, profit, loss and types of resources on demand by their clientele. This indicates that successful organizations appreciate the value of records and therefore, manage it efficiently and effectively for good service delivery resulting in competitive advantage. They understand that, to be assured of their future, records should receive the same level of attention and commitment as any other corporate assets. The effective handling of records can make all the differences in organization's survival against aggressive competitors. It is therefore argued that poor records management is risky in a competitive environment whereby rivals utilize records and gain the opportunity to survive the competition. Constructive decisions are based on previous actions whether positive or negative. Organization without records cannot know its history or predict its future.

### **2.3.2 Good service delivery**

Various studies acknowledge that records management has had an impact on service delivery in Africa (IRMT, 2008; Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008; Mampe & Kalusopa, 2012). Kemoni & Ngulube (2008) points out that when officials have access to information, they will have the ability to provide the public with good service delivery, for instance in areas of illiteracy, and the burden to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB), child mortality and malaria. Without well managed records it will be difficult for the government to intervene in the mentioned issues and achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs).

The important role that records management play in service delivery was also articulated by IRMT (2008) on the issue surround the acquisition and ownership of land in Botswana. According to IRMT (2008) lack of transparency and consistency on land ownership including unfair practices with respect to compensation on land acquired from people for reallocation resulted in poor service delivery. IRMT further noted that due to such problems the government of Botswana set a presidential commission of enquiry. The commission discovered that there were corrupt and non transparent procedures in the practices which had led to poor service delivery that, even the process for pre election of land board members was questionable. The commission noted various other issues surrounded land speculation that Batswanas who afforded to pay for land had acquired more than one plot, living those who cannot afford with nothing. According to IRMT, 2008 this problems were compounded by poor records management as there was lack of data networks among land boards, therefore officials were not able to check any records to verify whether applicants have plots elsewhere in the country or not. This shows that



poor records management not only have negative impact on service delivery but also encourages inequalities among communities

### **2.3.3 Human Rights**

On human rights, records have been useful in highlighting human right abuses by former colonial masters. For example, in South Africa records were used to reveal the abuses that people went through during the colonial regime. The efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) would not have been possible if the commission had not reviewed records. According to Montgomey in Kemoni, Ngulube & Stilwell (2007) in Iraqi many people were abused and many others lost their lives. In 1990-1991 during the Gulf War Kurdish soldiers seized the secret police station, prisons and torture centres. Many records that were managed in those places were discovered and taken to the National Archives in Washington and later to the Institute of Human Rights Initiative at the University of Colorado. The records revealed several human rights abuse perpetrated by the Iraqi police against the Kurds during an uprising in the late 1980s. The records had great international significance, they comprised of the evidentiary centerpiece used for international campaign by human rights groups and the United States Government to prosecute Saddam Hussein and his top leadership to justice before the international tribunal.

In Namibia, records have been useful in revealing the past experience of the Namibian people including human rights abuses by former Germany and South African colonial administrations. Records which are in great details preserved by the National Archives of

Namibia are those which captured government actions on aspects such as the 1904 war of anticolonial resistance and the Herero genocide (Central bureau of Kaiser's government, 1904-1906).

Millar (2010) acknowledge that records serve as evidence: to prove rights, confirm obligations, verify events, and substantiate claims. Millar (2010) further points out that records also help individuals, society and organizations to remember their past, and safeguard them against inaccurate recollection. Millar (2010) gave an example of a written contract which reminds two parties of their agreement, the agreement also may prevent one or the other party from avoiding their obligations. According to Millar (2010) if either party fails to meet those obligations, the contract can be held up as objective proof of the original accord. Millar (2010) is of the opinion that one of the reasons why ministries and departments should manage records properly is because they have potential value as proof of evidence of key actions, decisions or communications. When records are properly managed they will help the nation, individuals and societies to understand who they are, where they came from and perhaps, where they are going.

Kemoni, Ngulube & Stilwell (2007) opine that for records to be properly managed and remain authentic and reliable there should be collaboration and partnership in records management programmes between recordkeeping professionals and archivists. A sound integrated strategy between the two professional groups will, with no doubt have a positive impact in ensuring the establishment of a good recordkeeping system which could capture, document and preserve records and archives properly throughout their life

span. This concurs with a (IRMT, 1999); Xiaomi (2003) that when records management and archive programmes are not integrated, records managers and archivists may duplicate each other's work or, even undoing tasks that could have been completed more efficiently had the two phases been considered part of a unified whole. It is further explained that electronic records management system has even made records management practices better as it enables faster and cheap documents compilation, audit trails and information retrieval.

Sound records management assists organisations to properly preserve information about their business activities. Well managed records are fundamental to democracy. They also underpin the protection of people by providing information on citizen's rights such as fair and equal treatment, and also provide information on land ownership. According to Kemoni, Ngulube & Stilwell (2007) records and archives are a form of social glue which holds officials, governments, organization, individuals, communities and societies accountable for past actions or decision made.

#### **2.3.4 Governance and accountability**

On the role of records management on good governance and accountability, Thurston & Cain (1997) points out that good governance is broadly synonymous to sound development management. It encompasses a wide range of elements which includes political legitimacy, accountability and official competence. Thurston and Cain (1997) therefore, explain that good governance is closely aligned to public sector accountability, which in turn requires measurement and verification of government performance. The

verification or audit of government performance relies upon availability of authentic and reliable records. Public service institutions through the help from the National Archives should therefore strive for the development and implementation of viable mechanisms that will enhance proper use and control of records in order to survive in today's competitive world and be able to prosper, demonstrate financial viability, transparency and accountability. When there is good record management practices the public service are able to properly account for past decisions. For that it is upon archival institutions to promote sound management of records so as to enable governments and individuals to account for their actions.

### **2.3.5 Prevention of fraud and corruption**

According to Kemoni & Ngulube (2008) Anticorruption is one of government's initiatives which is aimed at enhancing economic performance, increase accountability and strengthen civil society. The success of the effort of Anti corruption commission depends upon accessing reliable and authentic information. When the Anti corruption commission have access to such information they can use it to investigate and prove fraud and corruption among officials and individual and also carry meaningful audits and review individuals and government actions. Without well managed records that provide evidence of corrupt practices it is difficult to hold or charge anyone accountable for activities considered as fraud and corrupt. For example, Sierra Leone has had a significant percentage of ghost workers. Workers did either not exist or were receiving salaries for positions of whom there were not occupying. IRMT (2008) opine that to resolve such a problem organisations requires proof in a form of records or information

about who is actually employed on what terms. This makes it possible to identify ghost workers and even workers' retirement age before decisions can be taken about their nature of the salary system needed to attract, retain and motivate staff with appropriate skill.

## **2.4 Introducing Information Technology in Organisations**

Pigato (2001) points out that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have brought remarkable success in Africa. It has led to an ever-growing number of businesses connected digitally, ready to participate and contribute to the knowledge economy. Pigat assert that the use of the Internet empowers weak players in the global economy, such as small business owners and rural farmers, by providing them with information and knowledge they could not access before. Pigato explains that due to technology, the qualities of services nowadays have gone up and the cost has gone down. He further states that, since 1990s mobile network coverage rose from 16% to 90% of the urban population. This shows that ICTs are creating supporting innovative systems and networks that individuals, organisations, and governments around the world consider to be the solution to information management problems. Griffin, 2009; Saffady, 1998 observes benefits associated with the use of ICTs such as; widespread access, flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness, economic benefits, general business opportunities and auditing capabilities for regulatory compliance.

With the use of ICTs, information can be shared widely and be accessed and be used by several people at the same time, even if the users are in different places. McKinnon,

(2004) observes that with the introduction of ICTs, even in environments where distances are greater, people have access to information without the boundaries of time or space. This shows that ICTs have enhanced information sharing and business operations. Unlike the traditional communication, which requires the user to mail documents across thousands of miles by post whereby it even became expensive and can slow down operations and delay decisions making.

The International Records Management Trust (IRMT, 2009) acknowledges that the use of information technologies has improved service delivery positively by allowing easy retrieval of records and information through electronic search facilities. As a result, policy makers and officials can make informed decisions without delay and be able to contributing to the effective business transactions in organisations. When there is easy retrieval of records, decisions are made on time and the image of the organisation improves as it will be seen to be reliable, capable and responsive to the needs of its clients or the public.

IRMT (2009) further noted that due to the benefits introduced by information and communication technologies governments around the world have moved towards embracing online service delivery. For instance, the internet is revolutionizing the way governments work and deliver services to the public. It has made possible for the public to access government services within the shortest time possible. It has encouraged Governments to build interactive, web-based applications designed for delivering services to the citizen. This has culminated into E- government platforms which includes;

- a) E- Services
- b) E- Democracy
- c) E- Commerce
- d) E- Management

These services have been introduced to promote and facilitate efficient and effective government services and allow greater public access to records and make governments more accountable to citizens. The E- government platform has transformed the delivery of services to the people. For example, there are new government services such as the electronic delivery of government information, programs and services over the internet, and the exchange of money for goods and other services by electronic means. For instance nowadays citizens are able to pay taxes utility bills, renew licenses, purchasing property online and pay for services (The National Electronic Commerce Coordinating Council, 2002).

#### **2.4.1 Challenges of records management**

Although information technologies have improved business transactions positively by allowing easy retrieval of records and information through electronic search facilities for quick decision making and service delivery. It has also brought challenges as it has increased the amount of records being created electronically. Ngulube (2007) points out that the advent of information technologies has brought about a paradigm shift in the production and preservation of information. Records can no longer be created only on paper but also electronically. This has brought great professional challenges to records

managers and archivists who, for many years were content to managing records in paper environment and do not have the necessary skills to deal with digital records. This constrains them from providing proper guidance on implementation of electronic records management systems to their clientele. Reports of various researchers (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2007; Keakopa, 2007; Marutha, 2011) observed that most Archival institutions and other government agencies have shortages of qualified archivists. Most professional employees in the field of archives and records management do not have basic skills pertaining to electronic records and archives preservation.

A study by Wamukoya & Mutula (2005) observes factors which affects the management of electronic records in eastern and southern African countries. The factors include; the absence of organisational plans for managing records; low awareness of the role of records management in support of organisational efficiency and accountability; lack of stewardship and coordination in handling records; absence of legislation; policies and procedures to guide the management of records; absence of core competencies in records and archives management ; absence of budgets dedicated for records management; poor security and confidentiality control; lack of records retention and disposal policies; and absence of migration strategies for electronic records.

Griffin (2009) also outlines a number of challenges brought about by Information technologies, including;

- a) Technological obsolescence;
- b) Risks to reliability and authenticity.



#### **2.4.1.1 Technological Obsolescence**

Rapid changes in software applications and computer hardware have led to what is referred to as technological obsolescence. When new innovations in computer technology appear, old systems become out of date and are no longer produced by the computer industries. Some examples of this obsolescence include Commodore 64 and WANG computers which were first introduced in the 1970s and 1980s and are no longer produced. Records stored in certain devices which were supported by computers that are no longer manufactured need to be migrated to new hardware and software platforms so that they can remain accessible. Otherwise, the formats in which records exist are incompatible and the records are increasingly inaccessible (Griffin, 2009). For instance the 8 inch, 5¼ inch and 3½ inch floppy disks are now rarely and replay machines are no longer produced, so records that are stored in these devices if not migrated they will be lost completely (National Archives of South Africa, 2006).

#### **2.4.1.2 Risks to Reliability and Authenticity**

The process of migrating records to new hardware and software platforms to enable them to remain accessible can affect the authenticity and reliability of the record. During the process of migrating records from one format to the other, the process itself can change the content or structure of the records. Unlike paper records, which can be moved, filed, and otherwise used and reused without change, electronic records need to be managed and preserved in such a way as to secure their authenticity as evidence. For example, computerized electronic mail (email) systems do not always capture accurate information about the author of the original email message. Further, as email messages are forwarded,

copied, replied to, they may be edited or altered, and the integrity of the original message may be lost as the email communication progresses (Griffin, 2009).

To establish the uniqueness and integrity of a record in an electronic environment, one has to know which system was used, who sent the message, who received it, and when it was sent, replied to, forwarded or otherwise acted upon because the email software might not have the ability to capture all the necessary attributes that gives records documentary objective and evidentially quality, which are the structure, content and context. Therefore without these three characteristics a record cannot qualify as authentic and reliable especially if there are no functional government legislations in place to ensure that records and archives in all formats are appropriately managed and preserved overtime for accountability and historical reasons. In some countries there are legal and regulatory frameworks which can be used to mitigate potential risks of records and archives management, including:

- a) Access to information;
- b) Archives and historical records;
- c) Freedom of Information;
- e) Computer use and misuse;
- f) Human rights, copyright, designs and patents;
- g) Identity theft and identity protection;
- h) Data protection and information security;
- i) Records and document management;
- j) Electronic transactions;

k) Evidence and privacy

Governments need such legislations to ensure that records and archives of public service are appropriately managed and preserved over time for current use and future generations (Parer, 2002).

## **2.5 Legal and regulatory framework for records and archives management**

Suderman (2005) observes that laws and regulations for records and archives exist in many countries in the form of National Archives Acts. Suderman further explains that legislations can make a significant contribution to the objectives of records and archives services. This has been supported by Parer (2002) who points out that legislations provide the essential framework that enables archival institutions to operate with authority in managing records and archives of public and private sector institutions. They ensure that information is managed properly and made available for decision making and protection of the rights of the state and of individuals.

Countries such as Australia, Canada and Scotland have enacted records and archives legislations devoted to the management and preservation of records in different formats for examples, the Canadian National Archives Act of August 2004 and Electronic Documents Act of April 2000. The Acts provide mandatory power to the National Archives to preserve and care for records of the public service (Miller, 2004).

In Swaziland the records and archive legislation of 1971 provides custody and maintenance of records of government ministries and public sector to the National

Archives. The aim is to enable the state and individuals access well-preserved and protected cultural heritage and fully participate in their country's social, political and economic life (Tsabedze, 2011).

In South Africa, the National Archives is guided by Act No 43 of 1996, to manage and improve the methods by which Government bodies and other organisations preserved and access the records. The act was amended by the Cultural (Amendment) Act 36 of 2001 with the aim of strengthening the management of records, including records in electronic formats. The National Archives also established a National records management policy which government bodies are using as a standard to formulate policies for the management of different types of records for example, the Cogta Traditional Affairs Policy 2012/13, this policy requires the Department of Cooperative and Traditional Affairs to manage its records in a well-structured record keeping system and procedures (Cogta, 2012).

In Kenya, besides the enactment of Cap 19 for the management of records and archives, there are policies implemented to cater for the management of different types of records, for example, there is a policy for the management of personnel records established by the Directorate of Personnel Management, Policy No 1/2008 (ref. No. DPM.12/6A VOL.I 71) which outlines four broad categories of personnel records, providing the retention period for records; on recruitment, selection for training, promotions and appointments and personal files. Other policies include;

- (a) The Chief Secretary Circular established for the destruction of non-current records, Circular No. 48A/66/1998. This policy reminds the public service of their responsibility in the management and disposal of public records.
- (b) Circular, DPM.4/10A(9) 2003 is a policy that provides for stream lining of performance of registries and examination of records management systems and practices with a view to enhancing service delivery in Government Ministries, Departments, Local Authorities, Provinces and Districts.
- (c) Procurement records management manual specifies the length of time each type of record shall be retained, and the applicable disposal action. The popular view is that records management program should be supported by policies based on clear guidelines (CAP 412C, Public Procurement and Disposal Act).

## **2.6 Best practice and records management standards**

Beside the implementation of legal and regulatory framework for records and archive management, there is also a need for archival institutions adopt and implement records management standards for best practices for example, the ISO15489. Macintosh, S. & Real, L. (2007) points out that although records management standards are not perceived positively by records managers and archivists around the world as such, it is one of the main concepts underlying developments within ISO and it is the only paradigm that allows the comprehensive, multidimensional view and approach that is needed in managing both paper and records in digital environment. The standards provide guidance on developing policies, procedures and processes to support records management practices within organizations.

Macintosh, S. & Real, L. (2007) further discusses that records management standards do not only provide guidance on the design and implementation of records management system, but also serves as a benchmark on best practices which all those involved with records should adopt for instance, managers of organisations, records managers and archivists, and all those who create, keep and manage records.

The ISO 15489 was developed from the Australian standard (AS 4390.1-1996). The ISO 15489 (information and documentation records management standard) became the first international standard for managing records in 2001, and has been accepted by many countries, to mention a few these includes the United States, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, and in Kenya by the Public Archives and Documentation Service.

The standard provides a framework for planning and implementing records management programs in organisations. The comprehensive nature of the standard with regards to current and non-current records is clear. The guidance that this standard provides is applicable to records management for any organization and covers the management of records in all formats. It is the first international standard devoted to records management (Macintosh, S & Real, L, 2007).

### **2.6.1 Benefits of ISO 15489 records management standards**

Crockett, M and Foster, J. (2004) points out the benefit of ISO 15489 which includes faster retrieval of information, space savings, fewer lost or misfiled records, and

reduction of expenditures for records filing equipment. ISO 15489 records management standards consist of two components, namely;

- i) The Standard, ISO 15489-1
- ii) The Technical Report, ISO 15489-2

#### **2.6.1.1 The Standard ISO 15489-1**

The first part of the Standard is the ISO 15489-1. This standard provides a framework of principles and policy for records management and also describes the principles, benefits, legal considerations and responsibilities of records management as well as the design of a system that will be appropriate for the management of records, processes, auditing and even training of the staff so that when a new system has been implemented the staff will be able to manage records effectively.

#### **2.6.1.2 Technical Report ISO 15489-2**

The technical report ISO 15489-2, is a manual which provides details and guidelines on how the advice provided in ISO 15489-1 is put into practice. This includes the steps that should be followed when managing records. The international standard should be used to support legislation and other normative and procedural records management guidelines and instructions (Suderman, 2005; Machintosh & Real, 2007).

## **2.7 Summary**

This chapter has reviewed literature relevant to the study and presented the theoretical framework upon which the study is based namely, the Integrated Model of Records Management and its relevant to the study. The study also discussed issues related to concepts of archives, records, records management, best practices, as well as legal and regulatory frameworks. The key themes which emerged from literature were that records play a critical role in every sphere of public life. For instance, well-managed records are essential for the effective and productive functioning of public and private sector institutions. Records document decisions and activities of institutions, and serve as a benchmark by which future activities and decisions are measured. They document fundamental rights and obligations, and differentiate the rule of law from arbitrary actions. Without records, there would be no rule of law and accountability. Officials are forced to take decisions on an ad hoc basis without the benefit of an institutional memory. Additionally, people cannot make informed contribution to the governance process or claim their rights.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology and the techniques used in conducting the study. It also explains the research instruments and the procedures that will be used during data collection, analysis and presentation. According to Haralambos (1990) methodology is concerned with the detailed research methods through which data is collected, and the more general philosophies upon which the collection and analysis of data are based so that theories can be tested.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design provides an outline of the plan that a researcher will follow to carry out the study (Kumar, 2005). Kothari (2011, p.32) points out that a “research design is needed because it facilitates the smooth sailing of the research operations, thereby making research as efficient as possible to yield maximal information with minimal expenditure and time”. Kothari (2011) compares a research design to the construction of a house which requires a map (house plan) that is well prepared by an expert architect for better, economical and attractive construction of a house. The research design for this study was actualized using a survey approach because it allows the collection of data from a much large number of people and when the research is done properly, it can give a reasonably accurate estimate of the thoughts of the people under study. The aim was to explore information regarding recordkeeping infrastructure including policies,

procedures, practices, facilities, staffing and best practices among others, in selected ministries and departments within the Namibian public service.

This study was largely qualitative with some elements of quantitative approach as well as observation. Qualitative approach was preferred as it provides rich data of how people experience a given research issue. It enabled the researcher to collect data using interviews and analyze data using thematic analysis in which the main themes that emerged from the responses were identified and compared, to determine patterns of association. Quantitative approach enabled the researcher to collect data using questionnaires and analyse data through the use of charts and tables to depict values, preferences, and trends.

Observations were done to supplement information gained from interview and questionnaires. Under the observation method, the researcher observed conditions of registries without asking questions from the respondent. This was based on Kothari (2011) that if observation is done accurately subjective bias is eliminated because the researcher observes without questioning the respondents.

### **3.2 Study Population**

According to Babbie (2004) the study population is a set of objects or a group of people which are the specified target of investigation and from which a unit of representatives or sample is actually selected. The study population for this research comprised of top management staff, action officers, potential users of archives, registry staff and archivists

from the 3 ministries. Purposive sampling was used to select three ministries of the Namibian Public Service. The selected ministries included Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Health and National Archives. The study population comprised 238 people distributed as follows: 21 registry staff, 3 archivists, 38 members of management and 176 action officers. The target population was chosen because it was believed that the respondents would be able to give the right information on archives and records management in the public service. The decision was made based on the fact that the members of management were involved in formulating policies and procedures which guides the management of records, records managers were responsible for managing records in registries, and action officers were involved in the creation of records and they were also potential users of records, whereas archivist were responsible for promoting good records management in public service institutions.

### **3.4 Sampling and sample size**

The study population consisted of 238 people and did not have a fixed sample size because the researcher collected data from the various groups until a saturation point was reached. The researcher purposively sampled three ministries and again purposively selected respondents from three ministries. The researcher used stratified sampling technique to divide the population into four sub populations (strata) that are individually more similar than the total population. This was supported by Kothari (2011) that if a population from which a sample is to be drawn does not constitute a homogeneous group, stratified sampling technique can be applied to divide respondents into groups that have similar characteristics. Thereafter, the researcher used convenience sampling to select

individuals from the strata. The respondents included; action officers, members of management, registry clerks, archivists and action officers. The distribution of the population is shown in table 2.3.

**Table 3.1 Distribution of the Population**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Population</b>
Members of Management	38
Archivist	3
Registry Clerks	21
Action Officers	176
Total	238

### **3.5 Data collection instruments**

The following discussion presents the data collection instrument used.

The study employed the use of both questionnaires and interview guides towards data collection. This was supplemented by the observation method.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

The questionnaires were administered on action officers while members of management comprising of the Directors or their Deputies in the selected ministries, Staff of the national archives and registry staffs were interviewed using a structured interview guide.

The use of questionnaires was based on Kothari (2011) who observes that questionnaires allow data collection from a larger number of people in a short period of time and in relatively cost effective way. Since action officers are many the researcher chose to use questionnaires so that she can gather enough information within the estimated period. Since the study was a survey approach the researcher able to use a variety of question types such as closed and open ended questions. Closed questions were used because they are easy to analyse and give respondents the chance of choosing from two or more fixed alternatives. Open ended questions on the other hand provide an opportunity for the respondents to answer without restrictions. In other words open ended questions allowed the respondents to explain their responses without being limited by present categories of responses. Their inclusion in a questionnaire was very critical because they catered for any lack of exhaustiveness and bias that are characteristic of closed questions. The questionnaire for action officers had 5 open ended questions and 4 closed ended questions.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

Members of management, archivists and records officers were interviewed. The choice of interview was based on (Kumar, 2005) who opines that the interviews are useful to obtain detailed information about personal feelings and opinions of people.

### **3.5.3 Observation Method**

In this study observation was used to supplement information gained from interviews and questionnaires. Under the observation method, the researcher observed storage space, security control, procedures for requesting documents and availability of records management standards.

### **3.6 Reliability and Validity of research instruments**

There are two measuring criteria which researchers use to assess the appropriateness of the research instruments, which are reliability and validity. Reliability is the degree of consistent of the results produced by the research instrument when the measurements are repeated. Validity refers to the degree to which the researcher has measured what he has set out to measure (Wisker, 2001).

Validity focuses on whether a research instrument truly measures what is expected and not something else (Wisker, 2001). In view of the above statement, a pilot study was conducted on a small group of people similar to the intended participants before conducting the main research project to check the content validity and reliability of the questionnaire, to assess the interview guide and find out if participant will understand the questions and to find out if it will provide the data needed and improve the question format when necessary.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

Before going to collect the data, the researcher requested permission from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister through the department of finance, examination and general services explaining the researcher's intention to carry out the study including the purpose of the study. The researcher introduced herself to the respondents and enquired from the respondents their convenient time for interviews to avoid inconveniences.

The researcher started data collection in October, 2013 and ended in February, 2014. The researcher used questionnaires to collect data from action officers; she distributed questionnaires to different departments within the MoE, OPM and Ministry of Health. Thereafter, the research collected questionnaires from each department and analysed before going to the next department until she reached a saturation point. The researcher also conducted interviews with members of management, registry clerks, and archivists as well as observed the registries using a structured observation checklist. The researcher also used a tape recorder for respondents who agreed to be recorded for the respondents who did not want to be records with a voice recorder the researcher took notes.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

Qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis in which the main themes that emerge from the responses was identified and compared, to determine patterns of association. To analyse quantitative data, the researcher presented in form of charts, graphs, and tables to depict values, preferences, and trends that emerged from the responses.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

There is high value of knowledge which is gained through research; however knowledge cannot be persuaded at the expense of human dignity. Thus the issues of ethics are very important in any research. The major ethical issues considered in this study were that respondents were given an opportunity to withdraw from the study at any given point when they felt uncomfortable with the questions. Privacy and confidentiality, anonymity was also taken into consideration, and it was the researcher's responsibility to respects the values and beliefs of the respondents. The researcher kept secret the identity of the participants and efforts were made so that no subject knew the responses of other subjects. The data that was collected about individuals was kept confidential to conceal the identities of respondents. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and the nature of questions involved.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter presented the methodology used in the study. It provided the research design and described the study settings. It also discussed the study population and sampling procedures and data collection methods. This study collected data using methodological tools of interviews, questionnaires and observations. Approach to the analysis of data is also discussed. Finally, ethical issues relating to this study were discussed.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data gathered through questionnaires, interview and observation in three government entities, namely the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister. Data is presented in the form of descriptive narratives, figures and graphs. The findings of the study address the research objectives with a view to:

- (i) Determine existence, adequacy and appropriateness of the laws and regulations which guide the National Archives of Namibia in the execution of its mandate;
- (ii) To assess records management practices and the interventions of the National Archives in promoting records management in ministries and departments;
- (iii) To determine resource requirements for sound records management;
- (iv) Investigate challenges encountered and the opportunities which could be exploited by the National Archives in promoting records management in the Namibian Public Service;
- (v) Propose a framework to promote sound management of records in the Namibian Public Service.

#### **4.1 Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of Data from Research Instruments**

This section presents analysed and interpreted data that was collected by the researcher through interviews, questionnaires and observation. Three interview guides were designed for records keeping staff in registries, members of management and archivists from the National Archives of Namibia, while questionnaires were used to obtain data from action officers. Observations were done to supplement information obtained from interviews and questionnaires. The questions were designed in such a way that they addressed the study objectives highlighted above. The issues were addressed from various dimension, for instance; the interview guide for NAN staff and registry staff looked at issues of promoting sound records management in ministries and departments and the related policies and procedures. The questionnaire for action officers addressed issues from the records creation and users' point of view.

#### **4.2 Characteristics of Respondents and Response Rates**

Out of the study population of 238, the study did not have a fixed sample size because the researcher collected data from the various groups until a saturation point was reached. The total saturation level was 151 (63.44%) which was considered adequate. The distribution of respondents and their responses rate is presented in table 4.1 below.

**Table. 4.1 Distribution of Respondents**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Population Size</b>	<b>Saturation level</b>	<b>%</b>
Members of Management	38	38	100
Archivist	3	3	100
Registry Clerks	21	21	100
Action Officers	176	89	51%
Total	238	151	63.44

Respondents were from three ministries. Since the population from which a sample was drawn did not have similar characteristics, the researcher divided the population into four sub populations (strata), namely; Members of Management, Archivists, Action Officers, and Registry clerks from ministries and departments. Interviews were conducted and questionnaires were distributed according to the groups (table 4.2).

#### **4.2.1 Educational Background of Respondents (N=151)**

Out of 151 respondents, 114 (75.49%) had attained BA degrees; they included all 3 (1.98%) archivists, 22 (14.56%) members of management and 89 (58.94%) action officers drawn from human resource, procurement, salaries and finance. This conforms to government regulations that the posts of archivist and action officers should be held by people who hold a university bachelor's degree and above. The second highest category of respondents was for those who had junior certificates totaling 19 (12.58%), another 2 (1.32%) had senior certificate (grade 12). The other category was for those who had a master's degree totaling 16 (10.59%) respondents all being members of management.

Most registry clerks had a junior certificate (grade 10). This shows that junior secondary certificate (grade 10) is an entry requirement for the post of registry clerks.

The academic qualifications of most respondents were not directly related to records management even though some of them were involved in the creation and use of records. Out of 151 only 3 (1.98%) respondents had degrees related to archives and records management such as library science, archives and records management. Figure 4.3 below shows the distribution of respondents by level of education.

**Table 4.2 Educational background of respondents**

<b>EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS</b>		
<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Level of Education</b>
Management	16	Masters Degree
Management	22	Bachelor of Art Degree
Action Officers	89	Bachelor of Art Degree
Archivists	3	Bachelor of Art Degree
Registry Clerks	19	Junior certificates
Registry Clerks	2	Senior certificates

Table 4.3 reveals that most respondents have tertiary qualifications ranging from undergraduate to masters degrees. However, the registry clerks were the one with only secondary certificates.

#### 4.2.2 Work Experience of Respondents (N=151)

The data collected indicated that most respondents had served in public service for a period ranging from less than a year to 30 years. Table 4.2 shows that most staff members had worked for over 10 years in the civil service. Thus most respondents had wide experience and knowledge on the types of records generated. Consequently, the knowledge gain through experience should have a positive contribution to records management practices.

**Table 4.2 Work Experience of Respondents (N=151)**

<b>Years of experience</b>	<b>No. Respondents</b>	<b>%</b>
0-9 years	20	13.24
10-20 years	74	49
21-30 years	57	37.74
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.3 reveals the years of experience of the respondents

#### 4.3 Laws and regulations which guide records management in public institutions

The first objective of the study was to determine the existence and adequacy of laws and regulation that guide the management of records in the Namibian Public Service. Records management is regulated by seven major laws and regulations. This information was considered important in understanding the role of laws and regulations in the promotion of records management. The information was critical in exploring the need for a sound

records management system as a tool for the creation and maintenance of authentic and reliable evidence of business activities carried out in ministries and departments.

**Table 4.3 Laws and regulations for records management (N=151)**

<b>What law and regulations support the creation and management of records</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>%</b>
The Archives Act 12 of 1992 which entrust the National Archives custody and care over records of public service	51	34
Namibian Constitution article 127 (2) which provide for supervision and Audit for public accounts and forbid destruction of records after audit for a set number of years based on the value of records	40	26.49
State Finance Act 31 of 1991 which requires proper keeping of accounts of all transactions in relation to State moneys by means of a system of account-books and registers approved by the Treasury after consultation with the Auditor-General.	12	8
Public Service Act 13 of 1995 which requires “the keeping of records of staff members employed in posts on or additional to the establishment”	10	13
Anti-corruption Act 8 of 2003, section 30 (1) (a, d) which imposes obligations on any other person in relation to; Keeping of a register for the recording of assets and information, maintain records of the Commission or any other matter which is necessary in order to promote the efficiency of the Commission.	5	3.31
Archives Code provided by the National Archives, it guides all registries to manage records	24	16
Treasury instruction, provided by Ministry of Finance for the management of financial records	9	6

Table 4.4 clearly reveals that although there were a number of other laws and regulations which made reference to record keeping, only a few were known by most respondents, these include the Namibian Constitutions, the Archives Act and the Archives Code. This could mean much awareness has not been made concerning the importance of the other laws and procedures, especially the treasury instruction which is suppose to guide ministries and departments on how to manage financial records.

### **4.3.1 Adequacy of Laws and Regulations for Records Management**

Laws and regulations enable the National Archives to operate with authority in its dealings with other agencies of the public service. It should set out the respective responsibility of the head of archives for managing public records and archives at every stage of their life, for example, current records, semi current records and archives. It should also define clearly what constitutes a public office and what a public record is? Suderman (2005) points out that most laws which exist in some countries mainly focus on the preservation of archives and not the broader issues that involve the management of records (throughout the continuum) from the time they are created up to the time they are used as archives. The study revealed that the National Archives of Namibia was mandated to provide custody and care of records of the public service by the Archive Act No 12 of 1992. The National Archives also provides the Archives Code which serves as a guidance as regards to the management of records. There is also a Treasury Instruction provided by the Ministry of Finance for the management of financial records.

#### **4.3.1.1 Responses from Members of Management (N=38)**

Nineteen (100%) respondents stated that the laws and regulations were intended to contribute to the management of records in the Namibia Public Service; however, they considered them inadequate and unsatisfactory since public institutions still experienced problems. The respondents further stated that due to lack of effective laws, volumes of records had piled up in registries making it difficult for the retrieval of information. Figure 4.1 show records piled up in one of the registries that were visited during data collection.



*Figure 4.1: Records piled up in one of the registries (photo captured by the researcher)*

Figure 4.1 shows records fully parked on the floor instead of being kept on shelves. This could mean that such records are not easily accessible and there are also at a risk of being destroyed in case of water leakage in the building.

#### **4.3.1.2 Responses from Action Officers (N=89)**

On whether, laws and regulations for records management were satisfactory. Out of 89 respondents a majority of 67 (75.28%) respondents said that there were no mechanisms in place under the law for identifying records which did not have any value. As a result, volumes of records had piled up in registries. They further explained that the filing



system for records had not been revised for years. One of action officers said “sometimes we make decisions based on our experience because new functions are not incorporated in the existing filing system”. They were of the opinion that unclear policies and procedures were the major contributing factor to some of the difficulties experienced in preservation and accession of records. This could mean that there were no clear policies and procedures for the creation and disposal of different types of records.

#### **4.3.1.3 Responses from Registry Clerks (N=21)**

All 21 (100%) respondents concurred with the members of management and action officers that the laws and regulations for managing records were inadequate and unsatisfactory. Thirteen (61.90%) respondents said some of the instructions in the Archives Code were written in Afrikaans instead of English. For that reason it was difficult for records management procedures to be consistently followed as Afrikaans was not an official language spoken by everyone. This confirmed the views of members of management and action officers that the Archives Code was outdated as it did not incorporate details of new functions that had been introduced by ministries and departments. One of the respondents said “we often manage records based on our experience and on instructions of our supervisors”.

#### **4.3.1.4 Responses from Archivists from the National Archives (N=3)**

All 3 archivists said the Archives Act of 1992 gives mandate to the National Archives for custody and care of records of the public service. One of the respondents further stated

that “the National Archives provide registries of the public service with a manual, the Archives Code to guide records officers on how to manage records in registries”.

#### **4.3.2 Interpretation of Data**

The study findings showed that most respondents consider the Archives Act outdated, even though all three archivists said the National Archives also provides registries in the public service with a manual, i.e. the Archives Code to guide records officers on how to manage records. The findings revealed that the Archives Code was also outdated; furthermore, it did not have details geared to managing different types of records. These findings could imply that sound management of records was hampered by unclear policies and procedures. This is different in countries such as Australia, Canada and Scotland where legal frameworks are amended to embrace modern trends in records and archives management (Australian Acts of 1983 and 2011; Canadian Acts of April 2000 and August 2004; Scottish Act of 2011). The Acts of these countries provide mandatory power to the National Archives to manage both public and private records. The Acts also provide the regulatory framework that facilitates the management and preservation of records as well as use of electronic communications (Miller, 2004).

Similarly, the South African Act No 43 of 1996 aims to improve the methods by which Government bodies and other organisations preserve and maintain records and how they are accessed by the public. The act was amended by the Cultural (Amendment) Act 36 of 2001 with the aim of strengthening the management of records, including records in electronic formats.

#### **4.4 Records Management practices and the interventions of the National Archives in promotion Sound Records Management in the Public Service**

The second objective of the study was to assess the current records management practices and intervention provided by the National Archives of Namibia in promoting sound records management in the public service.

##### **4.4.1 Responses from Members of Management (N=38)**

The study sought to find out from members of management their awareness of the significance of records management to business transactions, existence of filing systems, retention and disposal guidelines / authorities

##### **Significance of records management to Business transactions**

On whether, members of management were convinced that records management contributed positively to the business transactions of the ministries and departments. All respondents acknowledged that records management has significance to business transactions and activities. They further acknowledged that well managed records are the source of information for performing government functions and activities. One respondent said that “I do not make decisions without records because I do not want to commit myself on something that have no evidence, at the end of the day I could put myself in trouble”.

### **Filing systems retention and disposal guidelines**

On whether ministries and departments had approved filing system for sound records management, 9 (23.68%) members of management replied positively. They said their ministries and departments had functional filing systems with retention and disposal schedules. On the other hand 29 (76.31%) respondents said their ministries and departments did not have approved filing systems or retention and disposal schedules. The respondents did not have answers as to why their ministries did not have approved filing systems. This can be explained that most members of management had no knowledge of the importance filing systems to records management.

### **Training of officials in records management and inspections**

On whether, the National Archives offered any assistance to ministries and departments in the areas of records management. All 38 (100%) members of management said the National Archives of Namibia provided some assistance in records management. One respondent said “the National Archives offered training through workshops to improve competencies of officials in handling records”. Members of management explained that although the National Archives conducted workshop, they rarely visited ministries and departments to evaluate and assess records management practices.

#### **4.4.2 Responses from Action Officers (N=89)**

The study sought to find out from action officers whether they were aware of the significance of records management to business transactions.

**Significance of records management to Business transactions**

On whether, action officers were convinced that records management contributed positively to the business transactions of the ministries and departments. All respondents acknowledged that records management has significance to business transactions and activities. One respondent said that “without records which can prove that officials have been invited to attend a workshop we cannot process a claim for travelling allowance, therefore records are important for timely decision making”.

**Filing systems, retention and disposal guidelines**

On whether ministries and departments had filing systems, retention and disposal schedules, and whether the National Archives assisted them in terms of training of officials in records management, approval of the transfer of records to archives.

In response, 23 (25.84%) of the 89 action officers said the National Archives offered assistance in formulating filing systems and retention and disposal schedules. The respondents further explained that their ministries and departments had functional filing systems. Thirty five (39.32%) respondents said their ministries and departments did not have approved filing systems and that they were not aware whether the National Archives were responsible for approving filing systems. Thirty one (34.83%) respondents said they did not know whether their ministries had approved filing systems.

### **Training of officials in records management**

Twenty three (25.84%) action officers said they had attended a workshop on records management, while 66 (74.15%) had not had an opportunity to attend any workshop or training.

### **Records management surveys and inspections**

Nineteen (21.34) respondents said the National Archives had visited their ministries and departments particularly the registries to assess how records are being managed and give guidance, while 48(53.93%) said the National Archives had not inspected their ministries and departments. Twenty two (24.71%) respondents said they did not know whether the inspection of records management practices had been carried out in ministries and departments by the National Archives.

### **Transfer of records to archives**

All respondents (89) were not sure whether semi-current records had been transferred to the National Archives for preservation. One respondent said “the records could have been kept in a store room”. Action officers said they were not involved in the management of records as this was the work of registry clerks.

#### **4.4.3 Responses from Registry Clerks (N=21)**

The study sought to find out from registry clerks about the existence of records management guidelines such the Archives Code, filing systems, retention and disposal schedules in ministries and departments.

**Records management procedures**

The Archives Code, a manual that the National Archives provides to assist in the management of records. Fifteen (71.42%) respondents said they had an Archives Code in their registries and were convinced that it positively contributed to the management of records. Six respondents said they did not have a copy and they managed the records based on their experience. All 21 respondents said they were aware that to manage records properly ministries and departments were expected to formulate a classification scheme (filing system) based on the functions of their respective organisations; this would assist in organising and controlling the accumulation of records.

**Filing systems, retention and disposal guidelines**

Respondents were asked whether their ministries had filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. Only 3 (20%) respondents said that their ministries had approved filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. One respondent said “OPM had a functional filing system and a retention and disposal schedule which indicated what to retain, what to destroy, when to destroy and or what to transfer to the National Archives”. Eighteen (85.71%) respondents said their ministries did not have approved or functional filing systems. The respondents further stated that the filing systems that were in use were formulated before independence. When the new government came into power in 1990 functions and activities were rearranged and some new programmes were introduced. This could mean that if ministries and departments were still using old filing systems, procedures were not constantly followed as some instructions of new functions

could be missing from the schedule, while old series of functions that were removed still existed.

### **Training of registry clerks and inspections**

On whether there received any support in terms of training and workshops, 6 (40%) respondents reported that management was supportive in terms of workshops and training. One respondent said “in 2011 we attended a workshops conducted by the National Archives, while in 2013 we attended another training in China and in Kenya”. Fifteen (71.42%) respondents said they had not been trained as there was no support from senior management with regard to records management programs. One respondent said that “our supervisors do not regard our work as important; and we no longer ask to be released for training or workshops because we know it’s impossible”. The respondents were of the view that their work was not appreciated and therefore felt discouraged and even demoralized for lack of opportunities for training.

On whether the National Archives evaluates records management practices in ministries and departments, all respondents said the National Archives did not pay visits. This confirms the response of members of management who stated that the National Archives mostly focused on conducting workshops and rarely visited registries to assess records management practices and assist where necessary.

The respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with the assistance received from the National Archives. Four (26.66%) respondents were satisfied with the support



given by the National Archives. The respondents said that due to the help they received from the National Archives, their ministries now had functional filing systems as well as retention and disposal schedules. Seventeen respondents said the National Archives made efforts in terms of encouraging them to finalise the compilation of filing systems, retention and disposal schedule of which they have started but not yet approved. The respondents said that due to lack of a filing system, retention and disposal schedule, volumes of paper records had continued piling, causing congestion in registries and making it difficult to retrieve information.

#### **Transfer of records to archives**

On whether ministries and departments transferred records to the National Archives, all 21 registry clerks said they could not transfer semi-current records to the National Archives as the National Archives did not have space anymore. Seven respondents said that the National Archives advised them to transfer their records to commercial private institutions. It can be explained that lack of record centres in ministries, departments and the National Archives has resulted into piles and piles of paper records in registries.

#### **4.4.4 Responses from Archivists (N=3)**

The study sought to find out from archivists about the existence of records management programmes, guidelines such the Archives Code, filing systems, retention and disposal schedules in ministries and departments.

### **Filing systems, retention and disposal guidelines**

All archivists said ministries and departments had not been quick to embrace records management and were only recently awakened to this realization through presentations and workshops conducted by the National Archives which emphasizes on good records management practices. Respondents further said that ministries and departments were encouraged to practice good records management by abiding by the procedures and instructions of the Archives Act 12 of 1992 and Archives Code, a manual which guides registries on how to manage records, and also to formulate and implement filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. All three archivists said the National Archives had provided records management assistance to the Namibian Public Service through records surveys to identify records created and how they were managed in order to provide guidance. One respondent said “we have been providing guidance to ministries and departments on good records management practices, including how to formulate filing system, retention and disposal schedule; how to open new files using record series”.

The respondents also said that the National Archives was responsible for approval of filing systems and retention schedules as well as facilitating training and awareness raising on issues of records management. Respondents said most ministries lack functional filing systems but they were still being encouraged to formulate their own for organizing their records and use in controlling accumulation of records. All respondent said they had not conducted appraisals, due to lack of retention and disposal schedules in ministries and department and also shortage of qualified and experienced archivists.

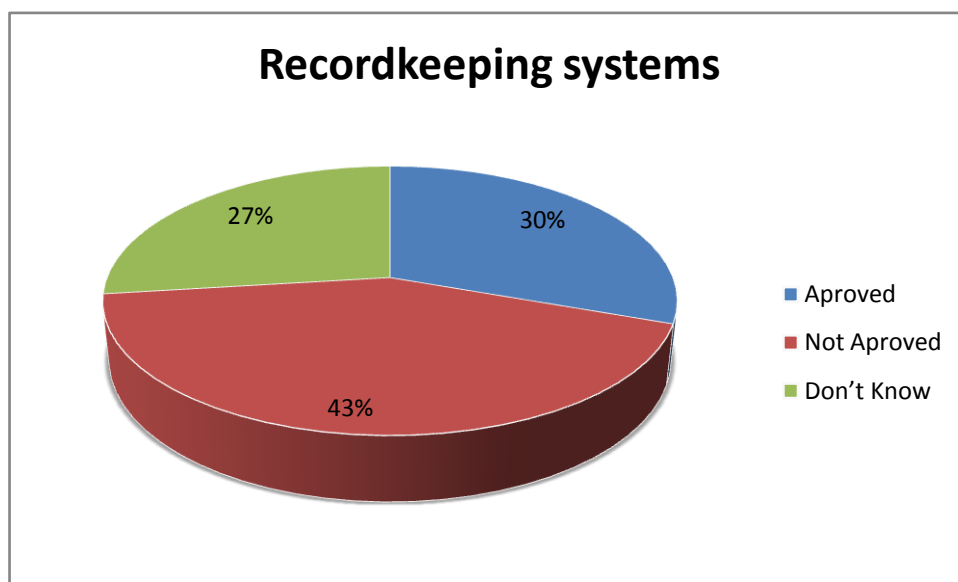
### **Training of officials and inspections**

All 3 (100%) archivists said training was important as it ensures that officials are empowered with relevant knowledge to execute their records management tasks to the highest standards possible. They further explained that trained officials had a good appreciation of the importance of records management. Regarding training of staff in records management, respondents said most ministries had not created a platform for records officials to further their studies and consequently registries are managed by officials who only attained secondary education. However, all respondents stated that the National Archives continually facilitates training workshops and said in 2012, 172 officials were trained.

On whether the National Archives conducted inspections to evaluate and assess records management practice, all respondents agreed that the National Archives made efforts to assess records management practices through conducting records surveys. One respondent said “although records surveys were conducted it was not possible to inspect registries throughout all ministries and departments in the Namibian public service because the National Archives was understaffed, there were only 4 archivists”. The respondent further noted that due to such problems the National Archives did not conduct records surveys in 2013. This confirms the responses of most registry clerks and top management of ministries and departments that the National Archives was not able to visit registries to assess records management practices and provide guidance.

#### 4.4.5 Interpretation of Data

Though archivists in the National Archives said they had provided records management assistance to institutions in the Namibian Public Service through records surveys, approval of filing systems and retention schedules; facilitation of training and awareness raising. However, most action officers and members of management in ministries and departments dispute this. Most action officers still do not know what role to play in managing the records that they created and used. This had resulted in poor management of records in the public service. The study also revealed that most ministries and departments did not have filing systems or retention and disposal schedules. It is clear that the National Archives has not been able to create much awareness on the value of records for purposes of accountability and service delivery in the public service. Figure 4.2 below presents results of institutions that have functional and approved filing systems.



*Figure 4.2: Record keeping systems*

Figure 4.2 reveals the responses of 151 respondents who participated in the study. On whether ministries and departments had approved and functional filing systems, 35 (30%) respondents said their institutions had functional and approved filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. While thirty one (27%) respondents said they were not aware whether the filing system used by their ministries and department was approved or not. However, 49 (43%) respondents said filing systems in their ministries had not been approved by the National Archives. They further said that the manual that they were using when filing the records had been in use since independence. Many years have passed, government structures have changed and new functions have been introduced; but the existing filing systems do not cover all details of their new functions. This has implications in the way records are managed. From the findings it is evident that records as the source of information were neglected and managed by registry clerks with low qualifications and lack proper training in records management. It also emerged that there are no control measures for ensuring care and safe custody of records. Similarly, filing systems and retention and disposal schedules did not exist in most ministries and departments. And there were no procedures to ensure proper and effective control of records. This concurs with a study by the IRMT (1999) which states that lack of filing systems, retention and disposal schedules has a negative impact on records management because it is a tool that is supposed to list all records in an organisation and describe how they should be maintained and organized.

IRMT (1999) further explains that if institutions do not have control over their records at its point of creation or receipt it is not possible to decide how long the records need to be

used, disposed of or sent to the National Archives for permanent preservation. Filing systems reveal the functions and activities that gave rise to the creation of records, the context in which they were created and the nature and essential characteristics of the record itself. Therefore “effective systems control both the individual records and bodies of related records and also the ‘metadata’ or information about the records themselves, who created them, when, where and for what purpose” (IRMT 1999. p. 29). Lack of functional filing systems to control the processes of records management could lead to unorganized and misfiled records making it difficult to retrieve information

The findings of the study also reveals that the National Archives ought to put more effort in preserving archives and conducting workshops than paying visits to ministries and departments to assess how records are managed. This is contrary to what the Archives Act 12 of 1992 requires. Section 3 (2) (b) of the Act requires the Head of Archives to inspect or cause to be inspected any archive and accessions in so far as such inspection may be necessary for the performance of his or her functions under this Act; however, this is rarely implemented.

#### **4.5 Resource requirements for sound records management**

The third objective was to determine resource requirements for records management in the public service. The effectiveness of any records management programme is directly related to the level of resource provision available for records management programmes.

#### **4.5.1 Responses from Members of Management (N=38)**

The study sought to find out from members of management about the current level of resource provision for records management programmes in ministries and departments. These includes, space, staffing and funds.

##### **Space for the preservation of records**

Nine (23.68) out of 38 respondents said their ministries did avail adequate space for records management. They were concerned that continual accumulation of paper records they may encounter problems in future as there are no record centres where semi-current records could be transferred to. Twenty nine (76.31) respondents said there is limited space for the preservation of records. All 38 members of management said there had been no transfer of records to the National Archives. Seven (18.41%) respondents said the National Archives no longer had space to receive records from ministries and departments. They further said due to lack of space at the National Archives, they had been advised by the National Archives to preserve their records at private commercial archival institutions while awaiting their disposal period.

##### **Staffing capacities**

The study sought to determine management's role in ensuring adequate staffing for records management function in ministries and departments. The respondents were therefore asked whether ministries and departments had employed qualified records officers to manage records. All members of management said ministries and departments did not employ records officers at professional level. The respondents further explained that registries were managed by officials who only obtained junior and senior secondary

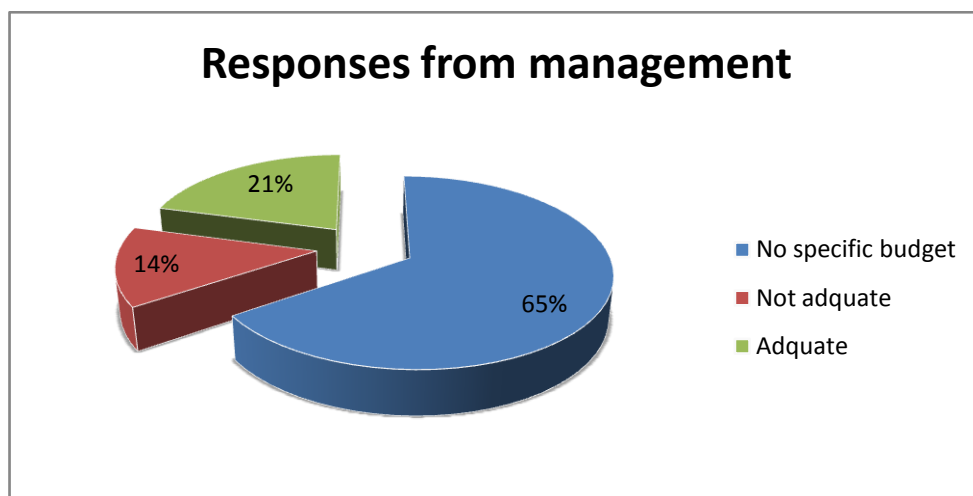
certificates. The respondents were asked to explain why they did not employ officials with tertiary level of qualifications in records management units. The respondents said that the entry requirement for the post of a registry clerk was low, therefore it was impossible to attract people with tertiary level of education qualification to want to occupy such positions. One respondent said that “most people with tertiary qualifications are always taken by other institutions who can offer them better positions”. Respondents were asked whether ministries and department have adequate number of staff to manage records. Twenty one (55.26%) respondents said there the number of registry officials in ministries and department was adequate, while 12 (31.57%) respondents said the number of registry staff was not adequate as certain registries were managed by one person. The other 5 (13.15%) respondents said they are not sure about it as there were not aware of any complains about shortage of official from registry clerks.

### **Budgets for records management programs**

Twenty five (65.78%) respondents said their ministries and departments did not have specific budgets for records management programs. However, they said that records management units were utilizing funds from other programmes within their departments. Fourteen (36.84%) respondents said their departments had specific budgets for records management. Among the 14 (36.84%) respondents 10 (26.35%) said the budgets were not adequate, could not cater for all records management activities, while 4 (11%) respondents said their ministries and departments had adequate budgets. They further stated that their budgets had created a platform for staff to further their studies. Two respondents also said that the National Archives also continually facilitates training



seminars for records management. Figure 4.3 below presents responses of members of management concerning budget allocation for records management programmes.



**Figure 4.3: Budgets for records management**

Figure 4.3 shows that in most ministries there were no specific budgets for records management programmes. In the few ministries and departments which had budgets for records management programs, the budgets were inadequate and could not be used for all records management activities such as training and workshops, records surveys as well as the establishment of records centres. The absence of specific budgets for records management had resulted to inadequate space for the preservation of records and lack of trained and qualified staff to manage registries.

#### **4.5.2 Responses from Action Officers (N=89)**

##### **Space for the preservation of records**

Out of 89 respondents, 15 (16.85%) said their ministries had adequate space for the preservation of current records, while 74 (76.31%) said space for the preservation of records was inadequate as records were piled up in registries. Thirty two (35.95%)

respondents said they were not sure about the transfers of records, while 57 (64.04%) said there had been no transfers of records to the National Archives as the National Archives had informed them that they no longer had space to receive records from ministries and departments.

### **Staffing capacity**

All action officers said that registries were managed by officials who only obtained secondary school education certificates. The respondent further said that, this was due to the entry requirement for the post of a registry clerk. On staffing capacity, 26 (29.21%) respondents said the number of officials who manages registries in ministries and department was adequate, while 63 (70.78%) respondents said the staffing capacity is not adequate. The action officers stated that in an event where a registry cler did not report for work, they are forced to request another person from a different registry to assist or they are forced to do the work themselves.

### **Budgets for records management programs**

On whether ministries and departments had budgets for records management programmes, Action officers gave varied responses. Twenty seven (30.33%) respondents said their ministries and departments did not have specific budgets for records management programs; 34 (38.20%) said they did not know whether there were specific budgets for records management, while 7 (8%) said there were adequate budgets for records management. Twenty one (24%) respondents said although budgets for records management existed they were inadequate. The respondents further explained that the

records management units relied on funds of other programmes to carry out their certain activities.

#### **4.5.3 Responses from Registry Clerks (N=21)**

##### **Space for the preservation of records**

Out of 21 respondents, 6 (28.57%) respondents said there was adequate space for the preservation of records, while 15 (71.42%) said the space for the preservation of records was inadequate, and that records were piled up in offices causing difficulties to retrieve. Like members of management and action officers, all registry clerks said there had been no transfers of records to the National Archives, since the National Archives no longer had space to receive records from ministries and departments. They further said records were kept in store rooms in a manner that they cannot even be easily retrieved. The respondents also said they were hoping that ministries were going to avail space or transfer semi-current records to commercial records centres.

##### **Staffing capacity**

All registry clerks said officials who were managing registries did not have tertiary level qualifications for records management. The respondents explained that officials were doing their work based on experience and instructions from their superiors. The respondents said registries were under staffed and that certain registries were managed by one person. The respondent further stated that in an event where an officer did not report for work, action officers usually retrieves files for themselves. The respondents said that the situation can contribute to missing files since sometimes people retrieve records

without registering them, and the registry officer may not be able to keep track as there will be no recorded information concerning the movement of a file.

### **Budgets for records management programs**

On whether ministries and departments had budgets for records management programmes, registry clerks gave varied responses. Seven (33%) respondents said there were no specific budgets for records management programs, while five respondents said their ministries and departments had adequate budgets for records management programs. The five said their ministries provided financial support for training and further studies. Nine (42.85%) respondents said that although budgets for records management programs existed they were not adequate because there were always no funds available. A respondent said “we were supposed to attend a workshop facilitated by the National Archives in 2013 but things did not materialize as there were no funds available”.

#### **4.5.4 Responses from Archivists (N=3)**

##### **Space for the preservation of records**

All respondents said ministries and departments did not have adequate space for the preservation of record; this is due to the fact that government had not availed space for record centres where semi-current records could be kept while awaiting disposal period and the National Archives also no longer had space to receive records. Therefore, institutions were forced to keep both current and semi-current records and this has resulted into the accumulation of huge piles of records congested in registries. The respondents also said that ministries and departments with a backlog of records were

therefore encouraged to preserve their records at private commercial records centres that have been recognized to meet the standard of being a purpose building by the National Archives.

### **Staff Capacity**

All archivists said ministries and department did not employ qualified officials. The respondents further said that registries were managed by officials who only had secondary school certificates. All respondents said although more registries were understaffed there were a good number of departments that had adequate staff capacity.

The respondents said the National Archives was understaffed; there was a shortage of qualified and experienced archivist. One respondent said “out of 8 professional posts of archivists only 4 were filled”. The shortage of officials has resulted the National Archives not being able to execute some of its mandate as expected by the Archives Act. One respondent said “there was also no qualified and experienced archivists who could undertake the responsibility of restoration to repair the records that were damaged”.

### **Budgets for records management programs**

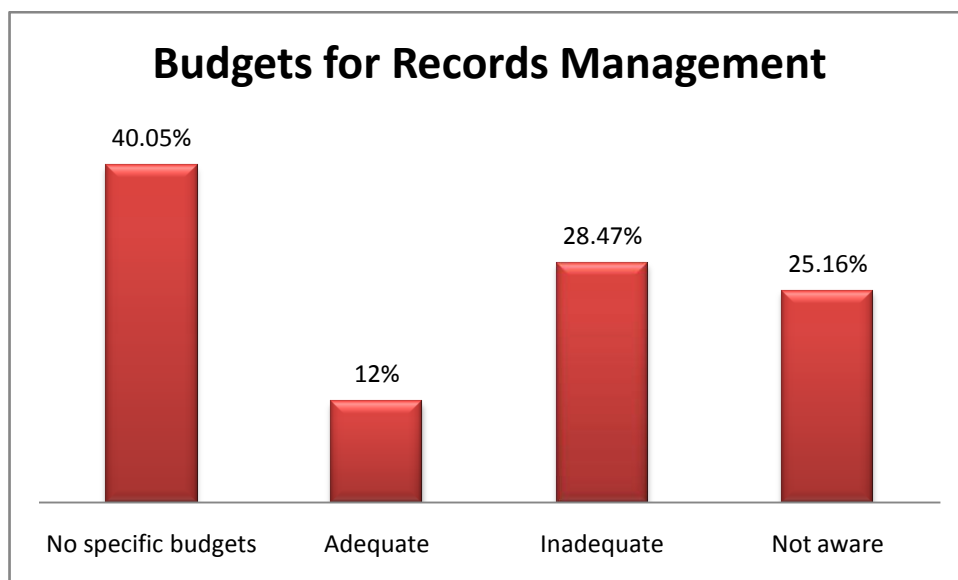
All respondents said the National Archives had a specific budget for records management, but was not adequate for all records management exercises throughout public service institutions. One respondents said “in the event where the National Archives is requested by ministries to conduct workshops, the concerned ministries and

departments usually carter for the expenses involved, while the directorate of Namibia Library and Archives Service took care of the transportation expenses”.

All respondent said the Ministry of Education through the directorate of Namibia Library and Archives Service (NLAS) provided financial support for training. One respondent said “the funds for training archivists were allocated to NLAS’ capacity building programme aimed at equipping Archivist and Librarians with knowledge to enable them render effective and efficient service delivery. So far five Librarians have completed their Master’s Degree Studies since 2007”.

#### **4.5.4.1 Interpretation of data**

The study revealed that there were no specific budgets for records management programmes in most ministries and departments as confirmed by 62 (42%) respondents. In the few departments which had budgets for records management programs, the budgets were inadequate and could not be used for training staff. Therefore the records management units relied on funds allocated for other programmes within their departments. Figure 4.4 present responses of 151 respondents from 3 ministries, namely the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Office of the Prime Minister concerning budget allocation for records management programmes.



***Figure 4.4: Budgets for Records Management***

Figure 4.4 shows that most ministries and departments did not have specific budgets for records management programmes. The absence of specific budgets for records management had resulted in the neglect of registries in ministries and departments. The study also revealed that ministries and departments did not employ qualified officials to manage records. Registries were managed by officials who only have secondary school education certificates and lack proper training in records management. The study further revealed that the National Archives of Namibia was also under staffed. It had a shortage of qualified and experienced archivist who are suppose to promote records management in the public sector institutions. According to the United Nations Development Programme (2009), inadequate budgetary allocation leads to poor performance and results. It is therefore critical for the government and its agencies to set aside adequate financial resources to ensure that their records management mandate is successfully implemented. The study revealed that ministries and department did not avail adequate

space for the preservation of semi-current records. This has resulted in accumulation of piles of records in registries.

#### **4.6 Promotion of sound records management in the Namibian public service: challenges and opportunities**

The fourth objective was to investigate challenges encountered and the opportunities to be exploited by the National Archives in promoting records management in the Namibian public service.

##### **4.6.1 Challenges and opportunities reported by Members of Management (N=38)**

On challenges affecting records management in ministries and departments, members of management were concerned that entry qualifications for registry/ records officers were too low. One respondent said “we would like the National Archives to finalize the New Job Category for registry clerks so that Ministries can employ qualified officers to manage registries”. However, among 38 members of management, only 7 (18.42%) respondents said their ministries provided motivational assistance for records officers to go for training and improve their skills for example, one respondent stated that “OPM was providing opportunities for the records officials to attend training and also provided financial assistance to enable them pursue studies in records management”. On the other hand, 31 (81.57%) respondents said that they don’t offer such opportunities as sometimes the budget is not adequate and sometimes there is nothing at all. The study revealed that there was very little support given to records management staff and only 7(36.84%)



respondents said they encouraged officers by sponsoring them to study and improve their skills.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, 2002) argues that training and education should be central to the sustainable development agenda of organisations, which consists of three pillars namely, social progress, economic growth, and environmental protection. UNEP (2002) further points out that without the necessary capacity and skills, developing countries and countries with economies in transition will not be able to identify and solve their own developmental problems. This explains that organizations need qualified and trained personnel to achieve their objectives.

#### **4.6.2 Challenges and opportunities reported by Action Officers (N=89)**

All 89 respondents said the most serious challenges that affect records management were lack of knowledge in records management and unclear policies and guidelines for the creation and use of records. One respondent said “registry clerks are not competent, sometimes it takes time for a records that has been delivered at a registry to be forwarded to the officer in charge; a requested personnel file from registry may take days to be found”. Five respondents said that sometime files go missing and this delays them to execute their duties as it puts their work on standstill. The action officers further said that such delays were sometimes putting the beneficiaries at a disadvantaged side as decisions could not be made until the record was found or until a copy (dummy file) was created. This shows that action officers experienced delays in retrieval of records which could be

a result of ignorance or lack of knowledge on how urgently records may be needed by decision makers.

A study by Phumzile and Wamukoya (2007, P. 87) argues that “if information is stored and not made accessible, it is as good as being non-existent”. This is because records and archives are indisputable working tools or instruments of government administration without them government will not function properly. All respondents said the lack of competencies among registry clerks was brought about lack of training in customer care and records management courses.

#### **4.6.3 Challenges and opportunities reported by Registry Clerks (N=21)**

Registry clerks were concerned with challenges they faced in ensuring proper management of records. The respondents said they did not get enough support from top management. One registry clerk said “there is no program for capacity building or skills development; we also don’t attend most workshops so that we can learn and get some skills”. This can be explained that most registry clerks felt discouraged and demotivated due to lack of opportunities to acquire skill motivated to acquire skills. The respondents also said ministries had not provided sufficient space for records, and there were no proper security systems to prevent records from being tampered with or stolen. This means some registries do not have access restrictions, meaning, everyone can walk in and out of the registries. This may pose a threat to records especially if people can enter without been noticed by registry clerks. Ministries and departments should get advice

from the National Archives on how registries should be designed to ensure that records are secured.

Other challenges reported by registry clerks were that there are many small registries created by individuals in their offices yet there is no register to indicate which records are in those offices. One registry clerk cited that “most of these records were only discovered or realized when an officer who created the records retires, resigned or was transferred”. Another challenge reported by respondents was that registries were under staffed. Some registries were managed by one registry clerk and in the event of an emergency, action officers would be forced to serve or retrieve records for themselves. This often resulted in misfiling or loss of files, as some officers take files without recording in a circulation register and fail to return them.

#### **4.6.4 Challenges and opportunities reported by Archivists (N=3)**

The staffs from the National Archives of Namibia were asked to report the challenges faced in the promotion of records management in the Namibian Public Service. All archivists reported the following challenges:

- (a) All respondents said that there were understaffed; there was a shortage of experienced and qualified Archivists who are supposed to assist with the promotion of records management in all the 13 regions of the country. The respondents said there were only 4 archivists, two of them were junior. One respondent said “the Ministry of Education had made a provision to employ archivists in each region mainly to oversee the records management in regional

government offices and local governments. Once all the regions employ archivists, they will help improve records management”.

- (b) One archivist said the major challenge in most ministries was shortage of well-trained registry clerks. Most people who are managing registries have only attained junior secondary certificate (grade 10), so they have little knowledge on matters pertaining to records management. One respondent cited that “there was very little support from top management in ministries and departments in terms of implementing capacity building programmes and motivating registry officers to go for training on skills development. The Archivist further said “most ministries did not provide financial support for such programmes”.
- (c) All respondent said members of management were encouraged to consider availing specific budgets for records management programmes, this includes funds for workshops and training so as to improve skill and competencies of registry clerks.
- (d) All respondents said that there was limited space to accommodate records. Ministries and departments did not have records centres where semi-current records can be stored while awaiting disposal. They further noted that some ministries now entrust the preservation of their records to private commercial records centres as the National Archives also no longer had space to keep records.
- (e) One archivist said there was lack of awareness among officials in ministries and departments on the legal and regulatory frameworks that covers them. The archivist further noted that “most official did not know that the records that they create and use are guided by the Archives Act of 1992, so they fail to abide by the

instructions of the National Archives”. The archivist was of the opinion that lack of knowledge on laws and regulations for records management led officials not to comply with the Archives Act and Archives Code regulations.

- (f) All archivists said most ministries did not have functional filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. Archivists further said there was lack of support from top management in terms of development of filing systems, retention and disposal schedules. According to the archivists, the absence of these regulatory instruments has led to lack of appraisal causing piling of unorganized records.

#### **4.6.5 Interpretation of Data**

The findings revealed that although the National Archives of Namibia was making an effort to promote record keeping in the public service, there were a lot of disparities that inhibited the discharge of its functions fully. The challenges include inadequate staff capacity, the National Archives was understaffed and did not have experienced and qualified staff, there was also lack of qualified registry clerks in the ministries and departments; and further challenges cited by respondents were shortage of space and shelves; storage of records on the floor in some registries. And lack of functional filing systems in most ministries and departments, most ministries and departments did not have functional filing systems. From the findings of the study, the responsibility to formulate filing systems in ministries was a concern of registry clerks. However, most registry clerks had lower level of education such that such a task would be a challenge.

## **4.7 Participant Observation**

One of the key tools used for data collection in this study was participant observation. The observation technique is the primary method for collecting data when one wants to study in detail the behaviour that occurs in some particular settings. It involves seeing and recording people's actions to certain situations. According to Kathari (2011) observation is a scientific inquiry method of data collection in which the researcher observe the events in question. In other words, it entails seeking information by way of witnessing what is happening in organizations. In this study the researcher observed by making herself a member of the group she was observing so that she can experience what the registry official experienced. The researcher collected data using the structured observation checklist. A checklist was developed based on the issues listed below:

- (a) Storage space in ministries and departments;
- (b) Security control;
- (c) Procedures for requesting documents
- (d) Procedural standards and best practices.

### **4.7.1 Storage space in ministries and departments (N=9)**

In this item the researcher wanted to find out whether ministries and departments had designated places for the preservation of records. Nine registries from 3 ministries were observed namely; the Ministry of Education, Office of the Prime minister and Ministry of Health. The researcher observed that some departments had not provided adequate and appropriate space for keeping records. The research also noted that most registries were congested with files placed on floors and not kept in a safe environment. The most

affected registries were the main registries and registries for human resource. Figure 4.5 shows the state of records management practices in a certain registry.



*Figure 4.5: Records management in one of the observed registries (researcher captured the photo)*

It can be seen in figure 4.2 that some records were kept on chairs and on the floor due to lack of space and shelves. This put records at risk of being destroyed in case of floods water leakage in the building.

#### **4.6.2 Security control measures (N=9)**

Regarding security, the researcher wanted to establish if ministries and departments had any control measures in place for access to records. Items on the checklist sought to establish the existence of counters placed across the registry entrance to control entry into

the registries; and availability of entrance signs indicating prohibition of unauthorized access and user access to records. Out of 9 registries that were observed 5 (56%) had counters access at the point of entry into the registry. In terms of protecting records from theft and vandalism most registries had lockable doors and security officers at the gate. Seven (78%) registries had lockable doors. However, registries were sections within a building in ministries and departments, therefore, some registries did not have direct lockable doors. They relied on the main doors of entry into the building. In terms of fire protection all buildings had fire extinguishers, however, when records officers were asked whether they knew how to operate them, they all said they did not know and they also did not know whether extinguishers were regularly serviced.

#### **4.6.3 Air conditioning and temperature (N=9)**

In terms of controlling the temperature in registries, 3 (33.33%) registries had working air conditioning, while 2 (22.22%) had air conditioning that were out of order. Four (44.44%) registries did not have air conditioning at all, thus illustrating that preventive measures were not taken seriously by ministries and departments as hot temperature can put records into a delicate state whereby the lifespan of paper record can be shortened as they may begin to brittle.

#### **4.6.4 Users access to records (N=9)**

The observation showed that access to records was controlled by records officers. Out of 9 registries observed 4 (44.44%) were managed by one person. In the remaining 5(56%) registries the staffing varied between 2-4 officers. In view of the small number of registry



staff in all three ministries, it was reported that from time to time, staff from other registries would be asked to assist, in the event that some registry staff did not report to work sometimes even action officials would step in to assist.

#### **4.6.5 Procedural standards (N=9)**

On procedural standards, records were filed using numerical numbers generated by the filing system. Four registries were using newly approved filing systems by the National Archives, on the other hand 5 registries did not have a functional filing system in place. The researcher further observed that 3 (33.33%) out of 9 registries had an Archives Code or Treasury Instructions. On the other hand, 6 registries did not have either of the two. This could mean most registry staff was operating without procedural manual for reference purposes.

#### **4.6.6 Interpretation of data**

The study observation revealed that ministries had not provided sufficient space for keeping records. Most registries were congested; some files were on floors and not kept in a safe environment. The observation results also revealed that most registries had counters to control entry into the registries, however, there were no signs indicating prohibition of entry into registries meaning that action officers and other staff could enter the registries if records officers were not available at the counters to serve. In terms of protecting records from theft and vandalism, most registries had lockable doors and security officers at the gate. However, some registries did not have direct lockable doors

they depended on the lockable door of the main entrance of the building. Most registries also lacked an Archives Code manual or Treasury Instructions. Last but not list, environmental control was a challenge as most ministries did not consider hot temperature to be a serious threat to records and most registries did not have air conditionings to regulate temperature and humidity.

#### **4.7 Recommendations by respondents to improve records management in the Namibian Public Service**

The respondents were asked to propose or make recommendations towards the improvement of records management in the Namibian Public Service. The 151 respondents gave multiple suggestions to promote sound records management in ministries and departments. Their responses are given in table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4 Strategies for improving record management in public institutions N = 151**

<b>Strategies for improving records management</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Percentages %</b>
The job category of records officers should be improved so that Ministries could employ qualified staff to manage records in registries	151	100
The National Archives should spearhead the establishment of a National Policy for records management with clear instructions	151	100
The National Archives should encourage ministries and departments to establish record centers for preservation of semi current records	151	100
The Archives Act and Archives Code should be reviewed so that they can cater for the management of different types of records including those in electronic formats	151	100
The National Archives should visit registries to assess the records management practices in ministries and departments	151	100
Ministries should provide support in terms of funds and adequate manpower to the records and archives units to ensure sound management of records for good service delivery	98	64.90
Ministries and departments should establish filing systems, retention and disposal schedules so as to regulate the accumulation of records in registries	151	100
Filing systems and retention and disposal schedules should be reviewed regularly to incorporate new functions as well as removal of defunct functions	151	100
Induction programs and refresher courses for records officers be arranged to enable them gain good records management skills and competencies	151	100
Ministries management should avail adequate funds for records management programs	151	100
National Archives to take a leading role in sensitizing all officers in the public service on proper record keeping	151	100
Top management need to appreciate the important role that records play in decision making and offer total support towards records management improvement programs	151	100
Management should ensure safety and security of records by establishing restricted registries for sensitive records	151	100

#### **4.8 Summary**

This chapter presented, analysed and interpreted the findings from the data collected in accordance with the research objectives and questions. Data was collected using interviews, questionnaires and observation. The major findings of the research were that there were problems that hinder sound management of records in the Namibian public service. These challenges included lack of support from top management in regard to records management programmes, lack of functional filing systems, retention and disposal schedules; absence of specific budgets for records management and, lack of proper training for records officers. The study also revealed that the National Archives had inadequate staff capacity to promote records management in the Namibian public service. Ministries and departments did not provide sufficient space for registries. Some of the registries did not have access restrictions. Various strategies to overcome above challenges for records management were proposed.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of study findings in line with the objectives of the study. It also presents the conclusion and the study recommendations as well as suggestions for further research. The aim of the study was to evaluate the contribution of the National Archives towards the promotion of efficient and effective management of records in the Namibian public service with a view to proposing a framework to enhance sound management of public sector records. The recommendations address the key issues raised by the research findings.

#### 5.1 Summary of the findings

Below is a summary of study findings based on research questions.

##### **5.1.1 Existence, adequacy and appropriateness of the laws and regulations that guide the National Archives in the execution of its mandate**

On whether laws and regulations guiding the National Archives in the execution of its mandate existed and whether they were adequate and appropriate, the study came up with various findings as follows:

1. Records management was regulated by the Archives Act no 12 of 1992;

2. The Act was complimented by 6 other laws and regulations including the Namibian Constitution, State Finance Act, Public Service Act, the Anti-Corruption Act, the Archives Code and Treasury Instructions;
3. Among the six laws listed above five were not the responsibilities of the National Archives meaning that the National Archives had no control over their implementation or contribution towards their amendment;
4. The laws on records and archives management were outdated and therefore not adequate.
5. There existed a records management manual developed by the National Archives which provided guidance to ministries and department on how to manage records.

### **5.1.2 Records management practices and the role played by the National Archives of Namibia in promoting records management in ministries and departments**

On what role the National Archives of Namibia played in promoting records management in the Namibian public service, the study findings indicated that the National Archives was responsible for:

1. Provision of guidance and approval of filing systems for ministries and departments;
2. Issuance of retention and disposal guidelines and / or authority;
3. Conducting records surveys and inspections;
4. Training of staff on records management;
5. Approval of transfers of records to the National Archives.

### **5.1.3 Resource requirements for sound records management**

With regard to resource requirements for sound records management in the Namibian Public Service the study highlighted various findings as follows;

1. That most ministries and departments did not have specific budgets for records management programmes. The absence of specific budgets for records management had resulted in the neglect of registries in ministries and departments;
2. That there was a shortage of qualified and experienced archivists to promote records management in the Namibian public service;
3. That the National Archives seldom visited and assessed the state of records management practices in ministries and departments;
4. That there was also lack of qualified records officers to manage registries as most officials had junior secondary certificate (grade 10);
5. That there was limited space to accommodate records since ministries and departments did not have record centres for storing semi-current records. Consequently, some ministries used private commercial records centers to store their records contrary to the Archives Act;
6. It is therefore critical for the government and its agencies to set aside adequate financial resources to ensure that their records management mandate is successfully implemented.

#### **5.1.4 Challenges and opportunities affecting promotion of efficient records management in the Namibian public service**

With regard to the promotion of records management in the Namibian public service the study made the following major findings:

1. A national records management policy to guide ministries and departments in formulating records management practices did not exist; therefore, they relied on the Archives Code and Treasury Instructions which were also outdated and did not have clear instructions for the management of different types of records;
2. Most ministries lack filing systems, retention and disposal schedules;
3. There was very little support from top management in terms of budget allocation for records management programmes and little motivation given to registry officers in terms of training and financial support for skills development.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

It is evident that records are a by-products of ministries and departments' business transactions. This corresponds with a report by the International Records Management Trust (IRMT: 1999) which states that records play a crucial role in every sphere of public life and are essential to all business and social interaction. Clearly, therefore, records should be properly managed to ensure that they are readily available in a timely and useable manner and this means implementing sound records management strategies to safeguard them from been inaccessible, misfiled and being lost or destroyed. The study therefore concludes that government transactions and projects depend upon properly managed records for efficiency and timely decision making. Without well managed



records, ministries and departments cannot function properly and would be exposed to various business risks such as inefficiencies, corruption, poor service delivery, injustice, etc. The study showed that although records management was considered a prime driver in facilitating government transactions it generally received very low priority in the public service. This corresponds with views provided in the literature by various researchers and scholars that despite the crucial role played by records, many organizations including governments pay little attention to records management (Baratta, 2000; IRMT 1999)

Though members of management were aware of the significance of good records management to business transactions, records management was given minimal support. This is attributed to inadequate policies, laws and regulations, as well as procedures for records management. This finding concurred with the Auditor General's Report (2012) and Baratta (2001) both of which noted that the Archives Act and Archives Code were outdated. The findings of the study further revealed that ministries and departments did not avail adequate space for the preservation of records leading to the piling of records in registries.

There was also lack of filing systems and records retention and disposal schedules. As noted by IRMT (1999, p. 29) institutions without filing systems are not able to exercise control over their records and are not in a position to decide how long the records need be returned before being disposed of. The study revealed that the National Archives was under-staffed and had inadequate qualified and experienced archivists to effectively

promote records management in the entire public service. In all ministries and departments registry clerks and the staff performing records management duties did not have any formal training in records management. Ministries and department have not been active in supporting continuous training for the records management staff, this undermined the manner in which records and archives were managed. It also undermined the conduct of business activities and transactions in government. Ngulube (2007) emphasizes the need for organizations to have sufficient and well trained archivists and records management officials who are kept up-to-date with modern ways of managing records. Therefore there is need to have records management officials and archivists who are well-versed in records management.

The study concludes that the poor state of records management practices in ministries and department may result in inefficiencies in business transaction of organizations and government. According to IRMT (1999), poor records management results in a lot of challenges such as delay in retrieval and access of information, leading to delays in decision making. A solution to these challenges lies in the International Standard, ISO 15489-2 Information and Documentation-Records Management Part II, which emphasizes the importance of the formulation and implementation of the records management policies and support for records management from senior managers in organizations.

### **5.3 Study Recommendations**

In view of the findings of the study which are presented and discussed above, a number of recommendations have been made. The recommendations if implemented should ensure the promotion of sound management of records in the Namibian public service.

#### **5.3.1 Review of Legislation**

The study established that both the Archives Act and Archives Code were promulgated in 1992. Considering the developments in records and archives management brought about by the increasing use of information and communication technologies, these laws were long overdue for review. It is therefore recommended that the National Archives of Namibia liaises with the Ministry of Education and the Attorney General's Office concerning the review of the Archives Act and Archives Code. The Head of the National Archives will need to urgently set this process in motion since most other proposed changes depend on the viability of the Archives Act and Archives Code.

#### **5.3.2 Formulation and Implementation of Records Management Policies, Procedures and Standards**

Another key finding of the study was that the National Archives of Namibia was not providing adequate guidance to ministries and departments in the public service on the management of records and archives because of lack of records management policies, procedures and standards. It is recommended that the National Archives of Namibia urgently embarks on the formulation of a national records management policy to guide all

programmes on records management in the public service. Such a policy should clearly outline the significance of records management and should clearly give guidance on the relevant standards and best practices to be adopted. Records management procedure should similarly be formulated and implemented.

### **5.3.3 Review of the National Archives Staff Establishment and Scheme of Service**

The findings of the study were that the National Archives was understaffed and had inadequate qualified archivists to promote records management in the Namibian public service. The study also revealed that there were inadequate qualified records officers to manage registries in ministries and departments. The Ministry of Education in consultation with the Office of the Prime Minister should immediately embark on review of the establishment and scheme of service of records and archives personnel with a view to creating more positions of archivists and records managers at professional level. The scheme should create the position of records managers who should be in-charge of the records management unit in the ministries and departments. Immediately under the records manager there should be the position of records officers as the head of the registry. Under the records officers should be the position of registry clerks.

### **5.3.4 Determine Resources Requirements**

The records management programmes in the public service were found to be grossly under-funded making it difficult for ministries and departments to have meaningful records management programmes. Similarly, the National Archives of Namibia received inadequate budget to promote and implement sound records management programmes in

the public service. It is therefore recommended that the government through the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance allocate more funds to the National Archives to enable it carry out its mandate of promoting sound records management in the public service.

### **5.3.5 Capacity Building**

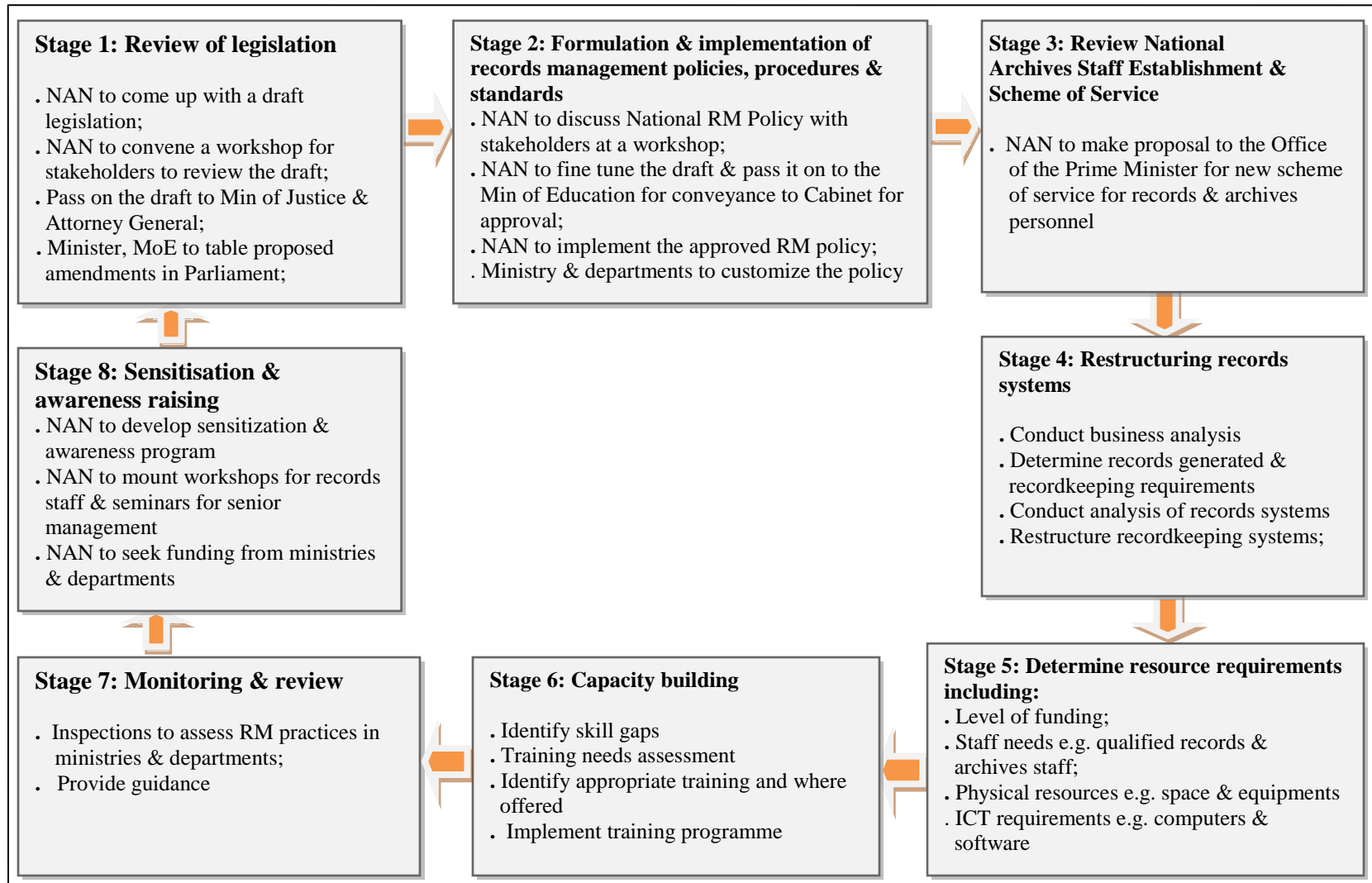
Another important finding was that most staff working in registries lacked professional skills in areas of records and archives management. In order to ensure sound records management in the public service, the National Archives, ministries and departments should endeavour to identify skills gaps in records management, and mount regular training programmes that will help strengthen the skills and competencies of records staff especially the clerical cadre.

### **5.3.6 Monitoring and Review**

The findings of the study further established that the National Archives has not been carrying out one of its key mandates of inspecting registries as provided for in the Archives Act No 12 of 1992. This has undermined the management of records in all ministries and departments. There is need therefore for the National Archives to fulfill its mandate by deploying more staff to its records management division to monitor and review records management practices in ministries and department. The additional staff should have clearly defined duties that should include conducting of regular records surveys and / or inspections; records appraisal; records transfer; and implementation of records retention and disposal schedules.

#### **5.4 Proposed Framework for Records Management**

One of the key objectives of the study was to propose a framework to enhance sound management of records in the Namibian Public Service. The proposed framework below has been customized from the Integrated Records Management (IRMT, 1999) model for Public Sector Records which consists of six components. Out of the six components in the IRMT model, only three elements were in line with the findings of the current study. These include review of legislation; determining resource requirements; and last but not least restructuring of records systems. The proposed framework adopted the three elements from the IRMT model and five others which were proposed by the researcher namely; formulation and implementation of records management policies and procedures; review of the National Archives staff establishment and scheme of service; capacity building; monitoring and review; and sensitization and awareness raising. The framework therefore contains eight components which if adopted have the potential to effectively promote sound management of records throughout government.



*Figure 5.1: Proposed Framework for records management*

The proposed framework is aimed at promoting collaborative ways between the National Archives, ministries and departments in order to guarantee the preservation of a reliable and authentic memory of the nation.

#### **5.4.1 Key stages of the Proposed Model**

The proposed framework observes eight stages that the National Archives could consider in order to strengthen sound records management in the public service. The eight stages are; review of legislation, review of organizational policies, determining resource requirements, restructuring of records systems, capacity building programme; review of the National Archives staff establishment and scheme of service, monitoring and review; and sensitisation and awareness raising.

##### **Stage 1: Review of Legislation**

The framework proposes a review of the Archives Act to determine whether it provides sufficient authority to the National Archives in its dealings with ministries and departments. Considering the new developments in records and archives management brought about by the increasing use of information and communication technologies the review of the Archives Act will also determine whether the law is relevant for managing records and archives in different formats. It's the belief of the researcher that a review of the legislation will not only strengthen the National Archives in its dealings with ministries and departments, it will at the same time seek ways of enhancing skills and competencies of National Archives staff in managing of records in electronic formats.



## **Stage 2: Formulation and Implementation of Records Management Policies, Procedures and Standards**

Once the review of the legislation has been considered in stage 1, the framework proposes the development and implementation of a national records management policy to give guidance on the relevant standards, procedures, and best practices to be adopted by ministries and departments. Once implemented, the policies, procedures and best practices will no doubt provide a solid foundation for sound records management within the ministries and departments.

## **Stage 3: Review of the National Archives Establishment and Scheme of Service**

The framework proposes that the ministry of education in consultation with Office of the Prime Minister embarks upon a review of the establishment and scheme of service of records officers and archivists as a motivation for staff retention in the public service. The review will no doubt create a career path for records managers and archivists besides creating more positions in the National Archives, the ministries and departments.

## **Stage 4: Restructuring of Records Management Systems and Procedures**

The framework provides for the restructuring of records management systems and procedures such as the Archives Code, filing systems, and retention and disposal schedules in ministries and departments. In order to do this, it will be necessary to conduct business analysis to understand the nature of records generated and the manner in which they were created and used. Such an analysis will determine the factors influencing records creation and understanding of the systems put in place to manage

these records. The information from the analysis will be useful in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the existing records management systems and procedures. This will serve as a guide for restructuring the existing systems and procedures and / or to develop new systems.

### **Stage 5: Determine Resource Requirements**

The effectiveness of any records management programme is directly linked to the level of resource provision. These include the skills of the staff that manage records, adequate space and funds. Without these resources all the other stages of the programme may not be adequately executed. The framework therefore proposes that ministries and departments hire qualified and experienced personnel to carry out the records management mandate.

Sound management of records will also require adequate space in registries and records centres for the storage of records. The framework therefore proposes that ministries and departments allocate adequate space for the maintenance of records in registries and records centres. The framework further proposes that there should be proper coordination between the National Archives, ministries and departments.

**Stage 6: Capacity Building**

The framework further proposes capacity building for records and archives personnel. Training and education is the key component towards achieving competencies and good service delivery. A lot of attention therefore needs to be drawn towards assessment of skill gaps in records management, and other related areas.

**Stage 7: Monitoring and Review**

The framework further proposes that the National Archives of Namibia should endeavour to fully discharge its mandate by carrying out periodic records management inspections and / or record surveys in ministries and departments to monitor records management practices for the purpose of providing guidance and ensuring best practices in ministries and departments.

**Stage 8: Sensitization and Awareness Raising**

Finally, the framework proposes that the National Archives as the official custodian of records and archives be pro-active in carrying out awareness campaigns among all staff in ministries and departments through management meeting, seminars and workshops with the aim of strengthening collective responsibility in handling records. This will also encourage members of management to appreciate the value of records.

## **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

Although the study investigated the role of the National Archives in promoting sound records management in the Namibia Public Service it focused more on paper base records systems rather electronic records, however, with the growing increasing adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) applications in government, the study recommends that studies be conducted on the preparedness of the National Archives to receive electronic records and to find out whether they have necessary knowledge to advice ministries and department on the management of electronic records.

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**APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER**

Dear Respondents

**Requesting for participating in the study**

I am a Master student in Library Science, Records and Archive Management at Moi University, School of Information Sciences. I am currently carrying out a study on role of the National Archives in promoting efficient records management in the Namibian public service. I have selected you as a key person who can help me in gathering the information that is relevant in the stated area. Your input is very important in this study and I would like to assure you that the findings of this research will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated

Kind Regards

.....

Beauty Matongo

**APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT  
IN MINISTRIES/ DEPARTMENTS**

**Division/ department:**.....

**Years of Service:**.....

**Level of education**.....

**Designation:**.....

1. What law and regulations support the creation and management of records in your ministry/ department/Division?
2. If there are policies and regulations are there adequate or satisfactory?
3. What support does the Ministry/Department/Division receive from the National Archives of Namibia with regard to the management of records, eg assessing registries; establish filing system, retention and disposal schedule, etc?
4. If there is support from the National Archives, is the Ministry/Department/Division satisfied with it?
5. What support does senior management give to records staff in the Ministry/Department/Division?
6. Are there any challenges that your Ministry/Department/Division experience, eg, skills and level of training of registry staff, limited space in registry, security of record etc?
- 13 Are there any recommendations that you would want to make concerning the assistance that your Ministry receives from the National Archives?

### **APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RECORDS OFFICERS IN MINISTRIES/ DEPARTMENTS**

**Division/ department:**.....

**Years of Service:**.....

**Designation:**.....

**Level of education:**.....

#### **QUESTIONS**

1. What policies and regulation guide the creation and management of records in your ministry/ department?
2. What support do you receive from the National Archives towards records management?
3. In what specific areas do you receive support from the National Archives ( eg file classification, retention scheduling)?
4. Are you satisfied with the support received from National Archives regarding management of records?
5. What support do you receive from Senior Management towards records management?
6. Does the Ministry/Department have a budget for records management?
7. If there is a budget for records management, is it adequate?
8. Are there policies in the Ministry/Department to manage records in the form of classification and retention schedules?
9. Who are the regular users of your records?
10. How long does it take to retrieve or avail a record to a user?
11. How do you control the movement of records within the Ministry/Department?
12. (a) Do you have cases of missing files and how do you address such cases?

- (b) How often do incidents of missing files occur?
  - (c) What factors contribute to missing files?
13. What measures do you use to ensure that records are protected from destruction?
  14. What strategy has been adopted by your Ministry/Department to enhance the management of records?
  15. What challenges does the Ministry/Department/Division face in relation to records management?
  16. What measures or strategies can you recommend to improve records management in the Ministry/Department?

**APPENDIX 4: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACTION OFFICERS IN MINISTRIES/  
DEPARTMENTS****Division/ Department:**.....**Years of Service:**.....**Level of education**.....**Designation:**.....**INSTRUCTION**

This questionnaire is part of the research being undertaken by Beauty Matongo, a student studying towards a Master of Philosophy Degree in Information Science at Moi University in Kenya. The topic of research is: Role of the National Archives in promoting efficient records management in the Namibian public service. I have identified you as one of my respondents and do kindly request you to help complete this questionnaire. I would like to assure you that all the information collected in this questionnaire will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Write your answer on the place provided by placing a cross (x) in the appropriate box.



**QUESTIONS**

1. Are there policies and regulations in place to support the creation and management of records in your ministry/ department/Division

.....  
 .....

2. (a) How effective are existing policies and regulations

	Adequate
	Not adequate

(b) Support your answer in 3

(a).....

3. (a) Does your Ministry/Department/Division receive from the National Archives of Namibia support with regards to records management?

	Yes
	No
	No idea

(b) If the above answer is yes, what support does the Ministry/ Department/Division receive from the National Archives.....

.....  
 .....

4. (a) Are you satisfied with the support that the Ministry get from the National Archives

Yes

No

(b) If the answer for (a) is No, suggest/ recommend ways in which the National Archives could be involved, if

necessary.....

.....

.....

5. Does your ministry have a filing system approved by the National Archives

Yes

No

6. What challenges affects records management in your ministry/ department?

.....

.....

7. Recommend ways in which challenge may be addressed to ensure efficient records management in your Ministry/Department/Division

.....

.....

.....

## **APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ARCHIVISTS AT NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

**Division/Department:**.....

**Years of Service:**.....

**Level of education:**.....

**Designation:**.....

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Does the National Archives provide any form of support or advice to Ministries and Departments on the management of records?
  - (a) If advice on records management is provided is there any follow up to ensure institutions in the public service heed the advice?
2. What policies and regulation support the National Archives of Namibia to promote records management in the Namibian public service?
3. If there are policies and regulations in terms of activities, what exactly does the policies and regulations entails?
4. How effective are existing policies and regulations with regard to promoting the management of records in all formats?
5. Does the National Archives have any guide and procedures on the management of records in Public Institutions?
6. If the National Archives has a guide and procedure for managing records, how effective are the guidelines and procedures?
7. Does the National Archives experience any challenges in executing their duties?
8. Does the National Archives have a budget for its records management activities?
  - (a) If the National Archives has a budget for records management, is it adequate?
9. What do you think should be done to ensure efficient records management in ministries and departments?

## **APPENDIX 6: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST SCHEDULE**

### **THINGS TO BE OBSERVED**

#### **1. Storage space in Ministries and National Archives**

- (a) Conditions of the records;
- (b) Environmental condition, eg. Temperature;
- (c) State of the registries;
- (d) Good housekeeping;

#### **2. Facilities, eg tables, chairs, shelves;**

- (a) Security control;

#### **3. Procedures for requesting documents;**

- (a) Availability of finding aid;
- (b) Time taken between requesting for records and delivery in registries

#### **4. Availability of policies, procedural standards and best practices;**

## APPENDIX 7: LETTER TO CONDUCT RESEARCH



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
 DIRECTORATE: NAMIBIA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES SERVICE  
 Private Bag 13186, Windhoek, Namibia

Tel: 264 61 293 1182  
 Fax: 264 61 293 1186  
 Enquiries: Mr. E.M Manga

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2013

### INTERNAL MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mr. B. Khama  
 Director, General Service  
  
 Mr. Beylefeld  
 Director, Finance  
  
 Mr. C. Nyambe  
 Director, National Examinations & Assessment  
 Ministry of Education

**FROM:** Mr. E.M. Manga, Deputy Director Namibia Library and Archives Service

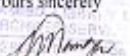
Dear Colleagues

**RE: REQUEST FOR MS BEAUTY MATONGO, NLAS STAFF MEMBER AND POST GRADUATE STUDENT AT MOI UNIVERSITY TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH IN YOUR RESPECTIVE DIRECTORATES.**

The above named is a staff member of Namibia Library and Archives Service and a student pursuing a Master of Philosophy degree in Records and Archives Management at Moi University in Kenya. She is carrying out a research entitled "Role of National Archives in Promoting Efficient Records Management in the Namibian Public Service".

The purpose of writing is to request you kindly to allow Ms. Beauty to conduct the research in the registry and request your staff to assist her in collecting the necessary data. Her study is not looking at the content of the records in the registry rather its management. The information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used only for the purpose of her academic.

We kindly look forward to your support and co-operation.

Yours sincerely  
  
 E.M. Manga  
 Deputy Director  
 Namibia Library and Archives Service

APPENDIX 8: STRUCTURE OF THE DIRECTORATE OF LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

