APPLICATION OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES FOR SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND PETROLEUM IN KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY THE CANDIDATE

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Benedetta and our children for their invaluable support and perseverance with my coming home late during that period.

ABSTRACT

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya has a vital role in supporting the Kenya government's development agenda. Despite having records management systems in place, service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has been poor and inefficient. This state has been brought about by inadequate records management systems. Badly managed records adversely affect development agenda. Development projects are often difficult to implement and sustain effectively and efficiently in the absence of well managed records. The aim of the study was to investigate the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya and to suggest strategies for improvement. The objectives of the study were to: determine the types of records available at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, establish the application of records management best practices for service delivery, establish the adequacy of records management policies, determine the challenges encountered in the application of records management best practices, and suggest strategies appropriate to records management best practices for service delivery. The study was informed by the records continuum model and the service quality gap model. A qualitative research approach with some aspects of quantitative techniques was adopted. The study population was 500 staff from which a sample of 60 respondents was randomly selected. Interview schedules and observation checklist were used in data collection. Qualitative data was presented and analyzed thematically while quantitative data was analyzed using tables and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that daily business operations were transacted on a manual records management system which was cumbersome. The computers were networked but underutilized. A records management policy was not in place to support the records management system. The central records management unit's room was small hence difficult to accommodate the staff, equipment, furniture and the records. The study concludes that application of records management best practices for service delivery was hampered by inadequate application of contemporary records management systems and acute shortage of records management professionals. The study recommends that Ministry of Energy and Petroleum should automate its records management system through adoption of integrated records management system. Further shortage of space should be addressed by purchasing mobile compact cabinets and modern workstations. Finally, the central records management unit should be allocated a vote head to support development of a records management policy, application of integrated records management system, training of staff, and purchase of modern equipment and furniture.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AO: Action Officer

CBD: Central Business District

CRMU: Central Records Management Unit

CSRP: Civil Service Reform Programme

DPM: Directorate of Personnel Management

HODs: Head of Departments

ICTs: Information Communication Technologies

IRMS: Integrated Records Management Systems

IRMT: International Records Management Trust

ISO: International Standardization Organization

KG: Kenya Gazette

KNA&DS: Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services

MO: Marking Officer

MOE&P: Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

MSPS: Ministry of State for Public Service

MVA: Mega Volt Amperes

MW: Mega Watts

PS: Principal Secretary

PS-MOE: Permanent Secretary – ministry of energy

RMO: Records Management Officer

RMU: Records Management Unit

USA: United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1   Introduction

This chapter provides background information to the study. It presents background information about the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya; and addresses records management best practices for service delivery. Other sections covered include statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study, research questions, and assumptions, significance of the study, scope and limitations.

1.1.1   Records Management

International Standardization Organization (ISO 15489-1:2001) defines records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. Further International Standardization Organization (ISO 15489-1:2001) states that records management includes activities such as setting policies and standards; assigning responsibilities and authorities; establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines; providing a range of services relating to the management and use of records; designing, implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records; and integrating records management into business systems and processes.

Yusof and Chell (2002 state that there is no universal definition of the term "records management" suggesting that the discipline of records is dynamic. Records management is therefore one of the vital activities supporting business transactions of an organization. Musembi (2005) is of the view that records management is the application of systematic control of all recorded information in an organization which entails designing and directing a programme aimed at achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, use, maintenance and disposal of records. He observes that government creates a huge volume of records that require proper management. Records' keeping is therefore a fundamental activity in the conduct of government business.

1.1.2 Records Management in Support of Service Delivery

Roper and Millar (1999) state that in many countries of the world, public sector record-keeping systems are not just weak but have actually collapsed to the point where they do not function at all. This collapse has been particularly evident in countries that had once been part of European-dominated colonial regimes. In these countries, structured record-keeping systems were common, operating as part of a small, centralized civil service, often with a well-trained and experienced registry staff. Senior civil servants had an understanding of the importance of information management, having worked in the registries themselves early on in their careers. In the same context, Kenya adopted its records keeping system from the British on attainment of its independence in 1963 and it is evident through circulars issued since the colonial period. The records keeping system is still in application and not many changes have been made. The non-recognition of the records management units personnel, lack of trained officers, lack of office

accommodation and equipment are issues, which have not fully been addressed. This was highlighted in the Report on Streamlining the Operations of Registries in Government/Departments and Local Authorities for improved service delivery (2004).

According to Roper and Millar (1999) no government body or business could survive without making records of its daily activities to support functional operations. No office could operate successfully if it had to rely on memory alone to keep track of every transaction. Without records, all organization's administration mechanism would quickly come to a halt. Records and more specifically the information they contain, are one of the vital resources that an organization needs to conduct its operations effectively and efficiently. No organization could continue without adequate funding, personnel and materials supplies. Similarly, it could not operate if it did not keep accurate and accessible records. The Kenya constitution 2010 chapter four stresses this: The bill of rights, Access to information 35. (1) Every citizen has the right of access to- (a) information held by the state (3) The state shall publish and publicize any important information affecting the nation consumers have the right-(b) to the information necessary for them to gain full benefit from goods and services. Power to call for evidence, 125 (1) Either House of parliament, and any of its committees, has power to summon any person to appear before it for the purpose of giving or providing information. The essence is to have well developed records management systems to support information provision in government institutions, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum among them. Further Roper and Millar (1999) are of the view that records are unique, authentic, comprehensive, accurate, adequate, complete and meaningful,

understandable and usable, unaltered and compliant. Thus to hold their values records must be managed within systems that control them throughout their existence from creation to ultimate disposal.

According to Musembi (2002), the creation, management, storage, preservation and dissemination of information is faced with adverse challenges during the records management lifecycle. The creation of first-rate paper records keeping systems require the use of hardware like cabinets, open shelving, and file folders among others. Records need to be organized for efficient retrieval and secured and preserved through retention and disposition schedules. Likewise the management of electronic records is far more complex favouring the continuum approach. First and foremost, it demands the creation of electronic records keeping systems that must be designed and run not by amateurs but by specialists in the field of records management, information science and information technology. All agencies are faced with records/information explosion growth, thus a challenge in managing the records in their full life cycle and the records continuum approach. Thus, evolution of records management systems, hence the need to keep track of the records management systems to be in tandem with contemporary records management demands.

Musembi's views were further highlighted in the Report on Streamlining the Operations of Registries in Government/Departments and Local Authorities for improved service delivery (2004). The report stressed that all this was as a result of the current occupiers of the offices lacking the ability to market their records management units. At the same time there were no proper records management systems in place to capture tacit knowledge. In

this context the long serving officers were not transferring their tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, which could impact positively on records management unit's operations, good policy plans and best service delivery.

1.1.3   Records Management Best Practices

According to the Records Management Best Practices Guide (2005) a compliant records management program is necessary for organizations to proactively and progressively manage all data, media and information. As the number of laws and severity of punishment governing records management continues to increase, it becomes even more paramount that organizations follow best practices for proper records management. Organizations need to demonstrate "good faith" intentions to follow these best practices consistently and accurately. An organization with a solid foundation of proven successful records management best practices will:

i.   Preserve the right information for the correct length of time

ii.   Meet legal requirements faster and more cost effectively

iii.   Control and manage records management storage and destruction fees

iv.   Demonstrate proven practices of good faith through consistent implementation

v.   Archive vital information for business continuity and disaster recovery

vi.   Provide information in a timely and efficient manner regardless of urgency of request

vii.   Use technology to manage and improve program

viii.   Integrate policies and procedures throughout organization

ix.   Establish ownership and accountability of records management program

x.   Arrange for continuous training and communication throughout the organization

xi.   Project an image of good faith, responsiveness and consistency

xii.   Review, audit and improve program continuously.

These features must all exist as part of a compliant records management program. Independently, each represents a good practice; as a unit, they serve as a solid foundation of best practices for records management.

1.4   Service Delivery bounded by Records Management

Service delivery is a topical issue for most governments and scholars alike. It is a consensus amongst scholars that public service is critical to ensuring the national well-being and stimulation of economic development. This is because on daily basis governments carry out several regulated and unregulated activities to provide citizens with services and at the same time guarantee that these services are provided in accordance with the rule of law (Kaunda 2005; Nandain 2006; Shah 2005; Wamukoya 1995). In this context Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is prone to delivering services to stakeholders. Hence during its daily business operations records are created, received, stored, retrieved and disseminated for use. It is thus evident that the records management systems call for the application of records management best practices for service delivery.

1.5   Background Information

1.5.1   The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

According to Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's strategic plan 2008-2012, the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was formed in 1979 upon Kenya government's realization that energy was a major component in the country's development process. In 2013, the 2010 constitution paved way to creation of leaner ministries and among the eighteen new ones was Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. It continued to perform its mandate as per the sessional paper No. 4 of 2004 on energy. The ministry was assigned the following functions: Energy policy development, electricity power development, oil and other fossil fuels exploration and development, and exploration of non-convention energy sources such as wind, biogas, and solar, geothermal and wood fuel. In this context the overriding factor being ensuring electricity supply to all in Kenya which is a service delivery activity which should be backed by records management best practices.

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P) being a public entity is entrusted with the management of public records related to energy and petroleum correlated issues in support of service delivery to its stakeholders. Such services include supporting development activities of the country as may be outlined in Kenya's development agenda. This can be attributed to Kenya's Vision 2030 which is a new long-term development blueprint for the country. It is motivated by collective aspiration for a much better society than the one we have today, by the year 2030. The aim of Kenya's Vision 2030 is to transform Kenya into "a newly-industrializing, middle income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens in a clean and secure environment". In

this context information becomes a key component to support service delivery. As such need for the application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P was eminent.

During an organization's daily business functions records created need be in line with its functional activities. The records need to be well captured, organized, stored, retrieved and disseminated to those who need them for action and information. The records need to support any legal redress in future. In this context information becomes a key component in support of service delivery. It is eminent that during its daily functional activities the ministry communicates a lot to its stakeholders. Out of the communication records are created internally or received from external sources. The records created need to be supported by application of records management best practices for service delivery. Lots of records are created or received in pursuit of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's vision statement being the need to have affordable quality energy for all Kenyans. Under this circumstance the ministry's vision is backed by its mission statement which is "To facilitate provision of clean, sustainable, affordable, reliable and secure energy services at least cost while protecting the environment." Further the Vision states that energy is one of the infrastructural enablers of the three pillars of vision 2030 namely economic, social and political pillars.

The level and intensity of commercial energy use in a country is a key indicator of the degree of economic growth and development. Kenya is therefore expected to use more energy in the commercial sector on the road to 2030. As incomes increase and urbanization intensifies, household demand for energy will rise. Preparations have been

made to meet this growth in demand for energy under the vision. The success of all stated above largely depends on application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P.

In this perspective the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's records management system is entrusted with ensuring that it supports its day-to-day business activities. Thus managing the manner records are created, received, stored, retrieved and disseminated during its official business operations. Records management systems be it manual or electronic are faced with many challenges from the time a record is created up to its disposition. At MOE&P no serious studies on the application of records management best practices for service delivery have been carried out prior to this study.

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has a vital role in supporting the Kenya government's development agenda. The ministry in support of Kenya's Vision 2030 has developed its strategic plan 2013-2017. This is its third strategic plan which is guiding the delivery of energy as one of the infrastructure enablers for achievement of the objectives of Kenya's Vision 2030 and its second medium term plan 2013-2017.

According to the ministry's strategic plan, the government has embarked on an initiative to increase the national installed electricity generating capacity from 1,765MW to about 6,900MW in the five years of this strategic plan. The target is to develop 1,920MW from coal, 1,691MW from geothermal, 1,050MW from liquefied natural gas, 630.4MW from wind, 250MW from medium speed diesel, 24MW from Kindaruma hydro electricity re-development and 18MW biomass co-generation. Over the period, the existing 350MW of

thermal power plants will be switched to operate on liquefied natural gas while the 90MW emergency power plants will be phased out. The current national electricity transmission and distribution grid comprises of a total length 49,818 kilometers mostly of low voltage distribution lines, 3,076MVA (Mega Volt Amperes) and transmission sub-stations and 2,800MVA distribution sub-stations. The ministry will continue addressing the energy deficit through increasing installed electricity generation and imports from regional surplus producing countries, expansion and upgrading of the transmission and conservation. Tapping from the vast renewable energy sources is targeted from geothermal and wind, phasing out expensive diesel-based thermal generation plants with cheaper fossil fuels, such as coal and liquefied natural gas and connecting electricity to new customers. The ministry needs support from stakeholders including other government ministries and departments, semi-autonomous government agencies in the energy sector, the private sector, development partners, civil society and the larger public towards achievements of the output targets in the strategic plan 2013-2017 and contribute to the transformation and development of the economy through provision of competitive priced energy mix. All the above activities are perfected by the presence application of records management best practices for service delivery within MOE&P.

Other records are created through other activities such as monitoring, evaluation and reporting on implementation of the strategic plan which could be regularly undertaken to identify emerging issues, challenges and mitigation measures. As a result of all these activities enormous records are generated. Thus the ministry is charged with ensuring that its records management best practices fully support service delivery at MOE&P.

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is in charge of policies to create an enabling environment for efficient operation and growth of the sector. It sets the strategic direction for growth of the sector and provides a long term vision for all sector players. The ministry has four core technical departments; namely, Petroleum energy, Geo-exploration, Renewable energy, Electrical power, and additionally General administration and support services. The ministry's functions are set in line with its mission as contained in the Executive Order No. 2/2013 of May 2013 on the Organization of the Government of the Republic of Kenya they are:

i. Energy Policy and Development

ii. Hydropower Development

iii. Geothermal Exploration and Development

iv. Thermal Power Development

v. Oil and Gas Exploration

vi. Oil/Gas and Mineral sector capacity development

vii. Rural Electrification Programme

viii. Petroleum products, import/export/marketing policy management

ix. Renewable Energy Promotion and Development

x. Energy Regulation, Security and conservation

xi. Fossil Fuels Exploration and Development

The ministry's strategic plan 2013-2017 states the strategic goals/objectives of the energy and petroleum sub-sector's main goal as "To facilitate availability of sufficient, secure,

efficient and affordable clean energy by 2030", where to achieve this goal, the following objectives are set for the ministry:

1) Strengthen the policy, legal and institutional framework for the energy development and accelerating the speed of completion of projects

2) Oil/Gas and minerals sector capacity development

3) Improve access to competitive, reliable and safe supply of energy to all Kenyans

4) Promote sustainable energy self-sufficiency

5) Promote efficient utilization and conservation of energy

6) Increase access to electricity in rural areas

7) Promote exploration and development of geothermal and fossil resources

8) Promote development of new and renewable energy sources

9) Optimal utilization of both human and financial resources

10) Explore alternative financing models for energy sub-sector projects

11) Enhance public-private partnerships in the provision of energy facilities and services.

Further the ministry's four strategic programmes are outlined as:

a) National Electrification Programme with the sub-programmes:-

    i. Increasing installed electricity generation

    ii. National Transmission Grid

    iii. Rural Electrification

b) Renewable Energy Resources

c) Petroleum Exploration, Distribution and Marketing

d) Administration and support services.

National energy policy (2013), Sessional paper sets out the national policies and strategies for the energy sector that are aligned to the new constitution and are in tandem with Kenya's vision 2030. The constitution of Kenya (2010) has drastically and substantially altered the governance structure of the country. It has also enhanced participation by the citizens in decision making processes. This is noticeable in the constitution of Kenya (2010) Chapter Two: 10 (2) which states that "the national values and principles of governance include:

(a) patriotism, national unity, sharing and devolution of power, the rule of law, democracy and participation of the people;

(b) human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalized;

(c) good governance, integrity, transparency and accountability; and

(d) sustainable development".

This has necessitated the need to review the energy sector framework in order to align with the new constitution's dispensation. Successful implementation of the National energy policy (2013), require all stakeholders to play their role effectively keeping in mind the need to make the vision of affordable quality energy to all Kenyans a reality. In order to ensure timely implementation of the policies, programmes and projects of the plan, the ministry in charge of energy will put in place mechanisms to monitor progress of implementation and take any remedial measures. In particular, an integrated energy

sector management system will be set up to cover the ministry headquarters and all the parastatals under it to facilitate online transmission of information.

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is responsible for formulation and articulation of energy policies through which it provides an enabling environment for all stakeholders. Its tasks include national energy planning, training of manpower and mobilization of financial resources. The ministry of late has noticed a big growth in terms of its energy centres and parastatals not forgetting its external users. Thus the records management unit as its information nerve centre has to cope with the rising demand for information through the record management systems established. The above information thus shows a diverse increase in records hence the need for application of records management best practices at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum to enhance service delivery.

1.5.2   Records Management Unit

Establishment of records management units in ministries/departments was as per ministry of state for public service circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3/5A VOL. VIII/ (98) dated 23rd July, 2010 addressed to all permanent secretaries/ accounting officers. The circular stated that "records are critical in facilitating fast and informed decision making in the Civil Service. This was amplified in the Presidential Speech of 12th December, 2009 at the Nyayo National Stadium directing that registries be computerized in order to improve service delivery. It has been observed that currently there is lack of effective coordination and supervision of records management function in ministries and departments".

The above shortfalls were further addressed by the circular where it stated that "in this regard and in order to implement the Presidential directive, there is need to strengthen

and revitalize the records management function in ministries/departments. It has therefore, been decided that records management units be established in ministries/departments to specifically carry out the records management function. The units should be manned by qualified records management personnel with the heads of these units reporting to their respective Authorized Officers. The overall coordination of the units should be carried out by the ministry of State for Public Service". The study will try to establish if the issues addressed by the circular have been instituted to the latter.

The ministry's records management system in place was the decentralized type composed of four units namely: central records management unit, confidential records management unit, human resource records management unit and accounts records management unit. The central records management unit was responsible for controlling records created or received by the organization during the course of its daily business operations. It was also accountable for transmission of outward documented correspondence.

The records management systems in place supported the receipt, creation, storage, retrieval, dissemination and preservation of various records including plans, photographs, maps, sketch drawings, agreement documents, conferences proceedings and official letter correspondences among others. This entailed proper control to be in place to ensure adequate utilization of the records held by Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. This task was charged to the central records management unit. Thus the management of these public records had to be effected through proper established records management systems which were faced with drawbacks. In essence records received direct by the departments could not end up under the proper control of the central records management unit. Such

records included plans, drawings, and soft copy records received via the ministry or personal electronic mail system. The major concern in the records management system was to keep track of the official records which were not in the ministry's main records management systems. Another key concern with the records management systems was on the proper storage equipment as records such as maps and drawings needed special storage equipment. Electronic records management systems raised issues which needed to be addressed too. In this context the security and preservation of electronic records management systems could put the records at risk. The issue of space and adequate qualified staff was of essence here. Such resources formed part of the records management systems and their inadequacy interfered with the system. Coordinating the records created or received in other departments' raised concern as the systems in operation could not be interlinked.

The central records management unit internally served the ministry's departments namely: electrical department which dealt with records like drawings, maps and agreements. Renewable energy handled records like photographs, maps, plans, drawings, title deeds and agreements. Geothermal department was concerned with records such as maps, atlases, photographs, plans and agreements. Petroleum department had records like statistical data, plans, and agreements among others. These were the core departments of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. They handled both softcopy and hard copy records in their records keeping systems. The support departments were administration department which handled general correspondences and policy records. Human resources

department dealt with employees' related records. Planning department, finance department and accounts departments handled financial related records.

Central records management unit also served the ministry's sixteen energy centres which were situated in various counties. The energy centres were charged with the responsibility of taking energy related services closer to the people. The essence of the unit was to ensure smooth flow of information within and outside the organization. Hence it ensured timely action by action officers leading to best service delivery supported by the unit's records management best practices.

1.6   Statement of the Problem

According to the manual on managing public sector records (1999) records management is that area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of an organization throughout their entire life cycle and in making the information they contain available in support of the business of that organization. Hence, the application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P is of essence.

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is a public institution whose responsibility is to ensure adequate, quality, cost effective and affordable supply of energy, to meet national development needs while protecting and conserving the environment (Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's service charter, 2013). During the course of its business operations records are created or received. The records relate to the activities of the ministry as outlined in the sessional paper number 4 of Energy of 2004 and the Energy Act of 2006.

Thus, application of records management best practices for service delivery has to be in place to support the organization's daily activities. A management system is a manual or automated system that is able to support or accommodate the above details. Records management systems have four components namely records, people, processes, and tools. Records to any organization globally determine the organization's success. In this context, the level of success will depend on how the organization's records are kept and the performance of records management systems in place. In this case, records management activities have to be in line with the day-to-day undertakings of the organization.

Musembi (2002) states that despite having legislations and circulars to correct and improve records management systems in the public service, the state of records keeping systems has continued to deteriorate, leading to poor service delivery. Lack of policies to govern the records keeping systems and inadequate staff charged with managing records in the records management units has led to inadequate security to records and use of outdated retrieval tools, Musembi (2002). Ministry of state for public service circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3/5A vol. VIII/(98) of 23rd July, 2010 states: "it is also noted that despite the critical role of records management in facilitating senior managers in the service to make decisions, the records management function is manned at very low levels, lacks adequate/ technically qualified staff, essential equipment and working facilities".

The importance of application of best records management best practices for service delivery at government ministries has been emphasized through several circulars/reports

issued from time to time to address any records management shortcomings. These include:

a) Report on Streamlining the Operations of Registries in government operations of registries in government ministries/departments and local authorities for improved service delivery (2004), which found out that the appalling state was characterized by insufficient storage facilities, misfiling, cumbersome retrieval procedures, cases of lost/missing files and records resulting to delays in decision-making.

b) Circular from the then Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of State for Public Service (Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3.5A VOL. VIII/ (98), dated 23rd July 2010) on computerization addressed to the then permanent secretaries stated that "you are requested to ensure that the units are facilitated to computerize their operations and to spearhead the adoption of the Integrated Records Management Systems (IRMS)". Automation at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit to enhance record management systems has not been achieved in view of modern technology application.

The shortcomings on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at government ministries has been highlighted by the above report and circular. This therefore necessitated the need to research on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya.

1.7   The Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to investigate the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya and suggest strategies for improvement.

1.8   Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1) Determine the types of records available to support the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya

2) Asses the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

3) Establish the impact of records management policies to service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

4) Find out the challenges encountered in the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

5) Suggest records management strategies appropriate to support service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

1.9   Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1) What types of records are available to support the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya?

2) What contribution has the application of records management best practices made to improve service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

3) How have records management policies impacted on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

4) What challenges are encountered on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

5) What records management strategies are appropriate to support service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

1.10   Assumptions

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

1) Service delivery at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has been undermined by the poor records management practices that currently exist at the ministry.

2) It is possible to improve application of records management best practices for service delivery if better strategies are put in place.

1.11   Significance of the Study

The findings of the study are expected to:

i.   Provide solution to problems related to the application of records management best practices and therefore improve service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

ii.   Enhance addition to new knowledge on the application of records management best practices for service delivery

iii.   Inform policy formulation on issues of the application of records management best practices for service delivery

iv.   Form a basis to other researchers who may use the findings as a foundation for further study

1.12   Scope

Government of Kenya currently has eighteen ministries. The study focused on Ministry of Energy and Petroleum only. The study focused on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum only. The researcher carried out the research at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum headquarters' central records management unit situated at Nyayo House, 23rd Floor; Nairobi.

1.13   Limitations

The study was faced with the following limitations:

(1) Accessibility to some records was limited due to customary restrictions, and the issue of limited literature in the field of record management compounded reference materials.

(2) The respondents kept on being interrupted during the interviews due to urgent official business and pressure of work. The researcher attempted to minimize the bad effects of interruptions by keeping on rescheduling the interviews until adequate data was collected.

1.14   Chapter Summary

The chapter has provided the introduction necessary to support the study and given the background information of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum with special concern to its records management unit. Guided by the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's mission statement which was "To facilitate provision of clean, sustainable, affordable, reliable and secure energy services at least cost while protecting the environment," it emerged that enormous records are generated during its daily business operations. The records generated should be well managed to support service delivery. The study aimed to investigate the application of records management best practices for service delivery and suggest strategies for improvement. The significance of the study was to provide solution to problems related to the application of records management to improve service delivery. The chapter has also outlined the study objectives and research questions while also enumerating the assumptions, significance, scope and limitations of the study.

1.15   Definition of Terms and Concepts

Best practice: Commercial or professional procedures that are accepted or prescribed as being correct or most effective. *(World Bank, 2009)*

Document: Any form of recorded information, regardless of the purpose for which it was originally created or used. *(International Records Management Trust, 1999)*

Records: Records are documents regardless of form or medium created, received, maintained, and used by an organization (public or private) or an individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business, of which it forms a part or provides evidence.*(International Records Management Trust, 1999)*

Records Management: Records management is a field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.*(ISO 15498-:2001)*

Records Management Policy: An agreement across an organization on how records will be handled and the procedures that will achieve those intentions.*(ISO 15498-:2001)*

Records Management Standards: Documented agreement containing technical specifications or the precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines or definitions of characteristics to ensure that materials, processes and services conform to the desired requirements for managing records.*(ISO 15498-:2001)*

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literature as it relates to the study and also provides theoretical framework of the study. According to Kombo and Tromp (2013) literature review is the process in which the researcher consults other accredited scholars and researchers in order to understand and investigate what has been published on the topic they are interested in studying. Kothari (2006) states that literature review is very instrumental in any academic research as it enables the researcher to avoid unintentional plagiarism, position the study relative to other works, resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies, identify new ways to interpret and shed light on the gaps in the previous studies and to identify research methods that could be relative to the current study. Grey (2004) is of the view that literature review is central to the research process because it provides a general understanding of the research problems as well as serves as a benchmark against which the researcher can compare and contrast the research results.

The literature review highlights related studies that have been carried out in Kenya. It covers the records continuum model, service quality gap model, records and records management, resources available, issues on records management and strategies. The review was based on books, publications, seminar papers, newspapers, circulars, records and web based information, among others.

2.21   Theoretical Framework

Berg (2007) defines theory as a general and more or less comprehensive set of statements or prepositions that describe different aspects of some phenomenon. According to Kombo and Tromp (2013) a theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated ideas based on theories. Kumar (2011) states that theoretical framework consists of theories that the researcher's study is embedded on. Thus it is a reasoned set of prepositions, which are derived from and supported by data and evidence.

A theoretical framework assists in identifying the variables to be investigated and provide for analysis and interpretation of the findings. The term 'model' and theory is often used instead of, or interchangeably with, the term 'theory'. These two terms are used interchangeably in this study. There are theories and models that emphasize on best practices for records management in order to improve service delivery as indicated in the research.

A well-managed records management programme ensures that current records are well maintained, easily retrievable and that records needed for long-term research needs are preserved while those of ephemeral nature are periodically destroyed to facilitate economical use of office space and equipment. Records are also the tools with which government business is transacted hence the study focused on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya.

2.2.1 Theories/Models Supporting Records Management

According to International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (1999), records management is that area of administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of an organization throughout their life cycle and in making the information they contain available in support of the business of that organization. Evolution of time has seen many theories being developed by different authors on records management all aiming to support service delivery within organizations. Key to these theories is the service quality gap model and the records continuum model.

2.2.1.1 The Records Continuum Model

The Australian Standard for Records Management (AS 4390) (1996) defines the records continuum model as a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of systems), through to the preservation and use of records as archives. According to Bantin (2002) the records continuum model originated from Canada and developed and adopted in Australia. McKemmish (1998) stated that records continuum model was developed by Frank Upward. The model emphasizes the management of records through a coherent and consistent continuum of actions from the development of recordkeeping systems, through the creation and preservation of records to their use as archives (An, 2001; Millar, 1997; Upward, 1998; Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). The continuum concept suggests that four actions continue or recur throughout the life of a record: identification of records; intellectual control of them; provision of access to them; and physical control of them

(Millar, 1997). The four actions of records care by Millar (1997) are illustrated in Table 2:1.

Table 2.1: The Four Actions of Records Care

Process	Records management action	Archives management actions
1. Identification and acquisition of records	Creation of receipt	Selection or acquisition
2. Intellectual control	Classification within a logical system	Arrangement and description
3. Provision of access	Maintenance and use	Reference and use
4. Physical control	Disposal by destruction or transfer as archives	preservation

Upward (1998) pointed out that the records continuum model has been defined in ways which show it is a time/space model instead of a life of the records model. In his article 'Structuring the records continuum' Upward (1998) stated four principles of the records continuum model:

i.   A concept of records which is inclusive of records continuum value (archives), which stresses their use for transactional, evidentiary and memory purposes, and

which unifies approaches to archiving/recordkeeping whether records are kept for split second or millennium

ii.   A focus on records as logical rather than physical entities, regardless of whether they are in paper or electronic form

iii.   Institutionalization of the recordkeeping profession's role requires a particular emphasis on the need to integrate recordkeeping into business and social processes and purpose; and

iv.   Archival science which is the foundation for organizing knowledge about recordkeeping.

The records continuum concept addresses and encompasses all the aspects relating to both paper and electronic records. Since the dimensions of the continuum model are not time-based, records are both current and historical from the moment of their creation. This simply put is that frozen in time, fixed in a documentary form and linked to their context of creation. Further, International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (1999) states that the records are time and space bound, perpetually connected to events in the past and also disembodied, carried forward through time and space represented in the contexts of their use.

IRMT (1999) further states that the continuum concept is the best practice for managing both electronic and paper records when the aim is to improve responsiveness, increase efficiency, and satisfy users' requirements. As such the records continuum model's integration can be viewed as a best frame for managing records in a broader context of archival science to connect the past to the present and the present to the future.

2.2.1.2 Relevance of the Records Continuum Model to the Study

This study has adapted the theoretical model namely the records continuum model due to the fact that the records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum are basically paper based. There are isolated cases of electronic mail correspondences from external customers to the Action Officers. In this context, it implies that there is an element of managing the records in a continuous manner from creation to disposition. The records at MOE&P which appraisal had been done and found to be worth permanent preservation had been transferred to the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services (KNA&DS). Such activities are performed in consultation with the director of KNA&DS who has powers to appraise and transfer records. This is governed by the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Act Laws of Kenya Cap. 19. Thus the records which have been transferred to the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services for preservation may be retrieved for the ministry when needs arises. Such archival records assists the administrators in handling cropping cases such as audit queries, litigation issues and administrative matters thus resulting in the records being active once more. Hence, the records qualify to be active currently and in the future meaning the records possess the time/space model element found in the records continuum model.

The records continuum model easily adapts the mixed paper/electronic environment. The aspect of managing records both in paper format and electronic form at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was fully supported by the records continuum model in this study.

2.2.1.3 The Service Quality Gap Model

The service quality gap model was devised by Parasuraman, Zeithamaml, and Berry in 1988. It is good to establish what is meant by service quality before addressing the service quality gap model. Wisniewski (2001) views service as a concept that has aroused considerable interest and debate in the research literature because of the difficulties in both defining it and measuring it with no overall consensus emerging on either. Service quality has several definitions and among them one that is commonly used defines service quality as the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990; Dotchin and Oakland, 1994a; Asubonteng et al., 1996; Wisniewski and Donnelly, 1996). Thus service quality can be said to be the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occurs (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990).

According to Zithaml, and Bitner (1996) the service quality gap model offers an integrated view of the consumer-company (customer-provider) relationship as illustrated in the figure 2.1. There are seven major gaps in the service quality concept which are shown in figure 2.1 below:

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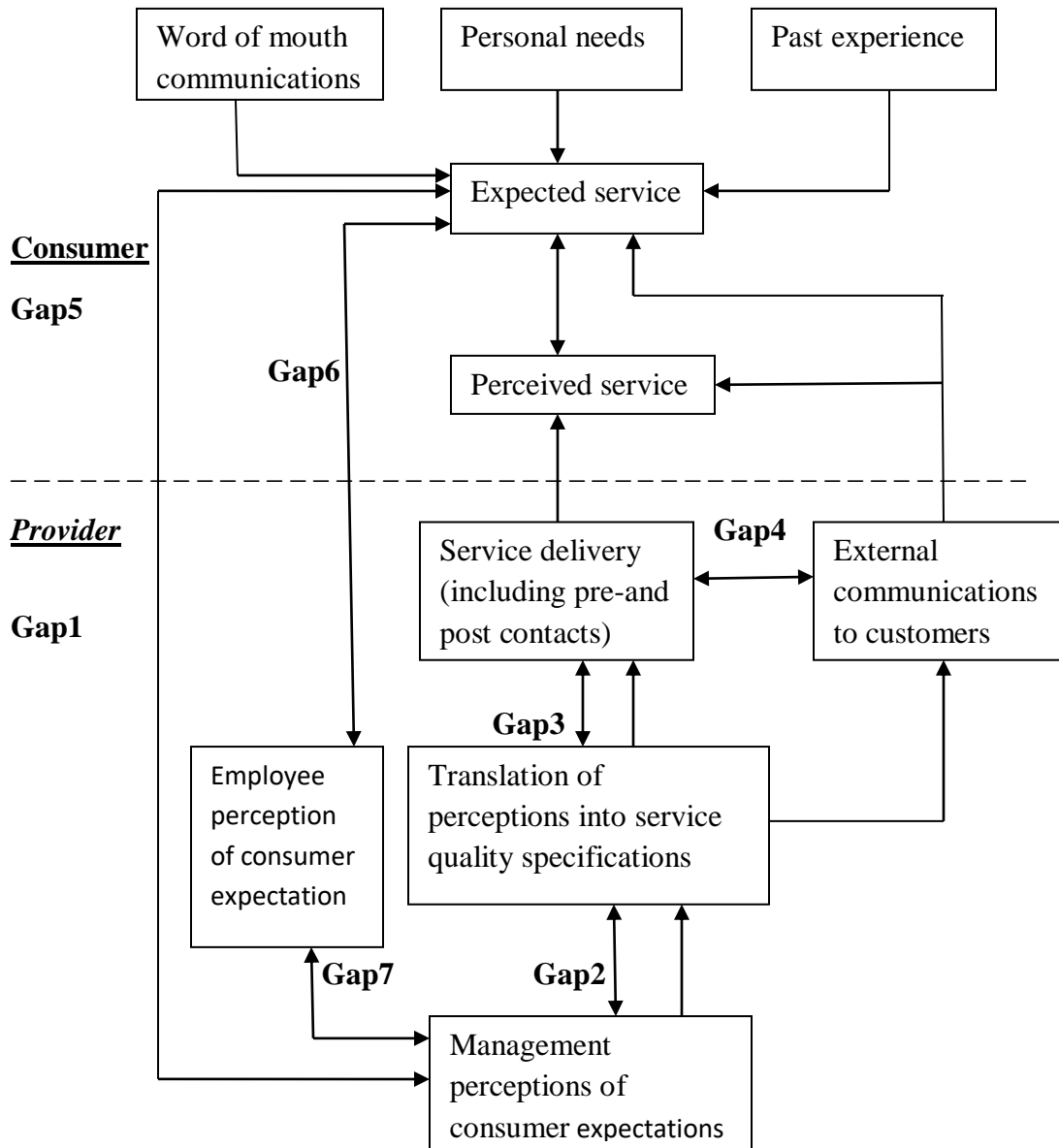
Figure 2.1: Model of Service Quality Gaps

Source: Parasuraman et al., 1985; Curry, 1999; Luk and Layton, 2002

Organizations should measure, manage and minimize the seven Gaps accordingly. Each Gap should be addressed by their roles as highlighted below:

(1) **Gap 1:** Customers' expectations versus service specifications: indicates the distance between what customers expect and what managers think they expect as a result of a marketing research orientation, inadequate upward communication and too many layers of management.

(2) **Gap 2:** Management perception versus service specifications: is on the management perception and the actual specification of customer experience as a result of inadequate commitment to service quality, a perception of unfeasibility, inadequate task standardization and an absence of goal setting.

(3) **Gap 3:** Service specifications versus service delivery: addresses the experience specification to the delivery experience as a result of role ambiguity and conflict, poor employee-job fit and poor technology-job fit, inappropriate supervisory control systems, lack of perceived control and lack of teamwork.

(4) **Gap 4:** Service delivery versus external communication: variance between the delivery of the customer experience and what is communicated as a result of inadequate horizontal communication and propensity to over-promise.

(5) **Gap 5:** The discrepancy between customer expectations and their perceptions of the service delivered: is on customer's perception of the experience in relation to the customer's expectation of the service as a result of the influence exerted from the customer side and the shortfalls (gaps) on the part of the service provider. In

this case, customer expectations are influenced by the extent of personal needs, word of mouth recommendation and past service experiences.

(6) **Gap 6:** The discrepancy between customer expectations and employees' perceptions: as a result of the differences in the understanding of customers expectations by front-line service providers.

(7) **Gap 7:** The discrepancy between employee's perception and management perceptions: as a result of the differences in the understanding of the customers' expectations between managers and service providers.

2.2.1.4 Relevance of the Model of Service Quality Gaps and Contribution to the Study

The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is customer service oriented. Its mandate as stipulated in the sessional paper No. 4 of 2004 on energy narrows down to its overriding factor of ensuring electricity supply to all in Kenya. This is a service delivery activity which should be backed by records management best practices. As such the model of service quality gaps clearly addressed the issues of records management and service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

The customer – provider relationship at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum is eminent through correspondences which for official actions should be documented. It is through such communication the customer expects an output. The action officers expect from the central records management unit timely delivery of letters for action. The ministry's central records management unit has internal and external customers thus it is bound to fulfill their service need expectations. Thus the central records management unit as the

custodian of the hard copy paper based recorded information at the ministry has the mandate to address the seven gaps for application of records management best practices. Thus the service quality gap model was relevant to the study.

2.3   Policy on Records Management

Cambridge University advanced learner's dictionary (2004) describes policy as a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government or a political party. A policy is therefore a written document, which all members of staff and relevant stakeholders should know its contents. Cook (2001) states that good records management begins with establishing policies, procedures and priorities before records are even created. In this context, Kennedy and Schauder (1998), state that a records management policy refers to an official document that guides records management function in an organization. Mampe and Kalusopa (2012), view that a records management policy is the official charter for performing all records management functions. Mampe and Kalusopa (2012), stresses that a records management policy should be clear and should outline records management functions in relation to the organization's recordkeeping requirements. All ministries and departments in Kenya are expected or should have a clear policy on the management of their records keeping systems. A policy forms a set of principles, procedures and practices according to the expectations, requirements, aims and objectives of the top management decision-making cadres of the organization.

Kenya has at the national level a Draft Policy on Records Management. The Draft Policy on Records Management (2008), states that the purpose of the policy is to provide

guidance in the management of records from creation to disposal and to facilitate standardization in the application of procedures and practices in records and archives management. The policy, on approval, will provide a basis for managing public records from creation, use, storage, maintenance, access and disposal. This will enhance service delivery to the nation.

2.4   Records and Records Management

International Standardization Organization Records Management Standard, (ISO 15489:2001) defines a record as information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. Further, International Council on Archives (1997) defines a record as recorded information that is produced or received in an institutional or individual activity and that comprises content, context and structure sufficient to provide evidence of the activity regardless of the form or medium.

Section 5 of ISO 15489-1 (2001) states that a records management policy and procedures of an organization should demonstrate the application of the regulatory environment to their business processes. Records management best practices in records management are amplified as a standard in section 6 of ISO 15489-1 (2001) which specifies that an organization should establish, document, maintain and promulgate policies and procedures to guarantee that its business need for evidence and accountability and information about activities is met.

Nationally the application of records management best practices is enforced by The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act (Cap.19), Laws of Kenya. The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act (Cap.19), Laws of Kenya empower the Director of Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service to advise on, creation, use and disposal of records. The Act also gives the director powers to examine and advise on maintenance and preservation of public records. The Act further authorizes the director to acquire, house and preserve all public archives and records which have historical value and to grant the public access to all public archives and records as well as authorize their destruction and disposal.

National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (2006), states that Governmental bodies should recognize their responsibility to the public by implementing and maintaining sound records management practices. To ensure that records management receives the attention it deserves, it should be a strategic objective in the governmental body's strategic and business plans. Heads of governmental bodies should also ensure that they budget for the records management function and that the necessary financial, human and technological resources are allocated to support the records management function.

2.5 Legislation Applicable to Records Management in Kenya

Kenya has developed several legislations which guide its ministries, state department and other government bodies on issues pertaining to records management. Among others the legislations include:

i. The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act (Cap. 19 of the Laws of Kenya). Cap. 19 give powers to the Director of the Kenya National Archives and

Documentation Services to advice on the creation, use and disposal of records. The Act mandates the director to examine and advise on the maintenance and preservation of public records. The director is empowered by the Act to acquire, house and preserve all public archives and records which have been appraised and found to be of historical value. The director has the power to grant access to public archives and records. Authority to dispose public records is also vested by the Act to the director of the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services.

ii. The Head of Public Service Circular No. OP/1/48A/66 dated 28th November, 1985; the Chief Secretary Circular on Destruction of Non-Current records Circular No. 48A/66 of 28th August, 1988 and Circular No. OP/48A/11/10 dated 7th July, 1989 gave guidance on the management and disposal of public records and archives. The guidelines showed the procedures to be followed when disposing and appraising public records which should be done in consultation with the director of the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services.

iii. Office of the President Circular No. OP/39/2A dated 14th April, 1999 on cases of missing and lost files and documents in the public service was a directive to the then permanent secretaries now the principal secretaries. The circular stated that cases of missing and lost files in the public service were caused by poor records management practices which had undermined public service delivery. The circular was to ensure good public service delivery through proper management of records and encourage members of the public to report cases where service delivery was delayed due to missing and lost files.

iv.   Circular No. DPM. 4/10A (9) dated 27ᵗʰ October, 2003 on streamlining the performance of registries in government ministries, departments, local authorities, provinces and districts. The quality of service in the government sector had lowered which led to formation of a task force under the then Civil Service Reform Programme to critically examine the records management systems and practices in government registries and make appropriate recommendations to enhance quality of service delivery.

2.6   Resources Available

2.6.1   Staffing Level at Records Management Unit

An organization's image is portrayed through its records management systems in support of its daily business operations. This to be successful has to be supported by a team from the records management unit. According to Musembi (2002) the records management unit's staff must be adequate in number and properly trained in the field of records management. We cannot talk of records management unit's staff without defining the term records management unit. Records management unit is the unit within an organization that receives, maintains, processes and controls the flow of information and other records. It is the hub/nerve center of the organization's management of records. It also controls the formal channels of recorded communication within an organization (Records management manual for public service, 2010). The staff entrusted with such an important role was expected to portray an efficient and effective service delivery.

The records management unit is an information service provider and the personnel involved in records management should be able to organize the systems in a way that meets the records management objectives. The records management principles seek to increase efficiency, economy and effective creation, maintenance, use, retrieval and disposal of records. In this context an organization should therefore keep its records management unit's staff updated through training and in this situation both long term and short term training is of essence. "All those appointed to be in charge of records management units must be trained in the relevant discipline including information technology. Other records management unit's personnel must also receive a minimum of five days training in records management's unit operations in a year. But the ultimate objective is for each records worker to receive a professional qualification in records management," (Musembi, 2002).

The Kenya government is keen on developing application of records management best practices for service delivery to attain set targets and serve its citizens better. This was stressed further by a circular from the then Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of State for Public Service (Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3.5A VOL. VIII/ (98), dated 23rd July 2010). It established records management units in ministries/departments. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum at that time was ranked as a medium sized (busy) ministry and awarded an establishment of thirteen records management officers. The records management staff in rank from highest to lowest in the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum by then as per the above quoted circular are as enumerated: Assistant director/records, principal records

management officer, chief records management officer, senior records management officer, and records management officer I/ II /III.

The circular further stated that despite the critical role of records management in facilitating senior managers in the service to make decisions, the records management function was manned at very low levels; it lacked adequate / technically qualified staff, essential equipment and working facilities. Personnel records indicated that the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit was understaffed and some of the officers were either pursuing other cadres or unqualified. It was the intention of the study to attempt to verify the claims in line with the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

2.6.2   Storage Equipment

Record storage refers to equipment and systems used to file records during their useful lifetime in an organization. Denyer (1980), was of the view that the choice of filing equipment had an effect on efficiency of a filing system. A wide selection of filing equipment was available and choice should be considered in relation to purpose, which it serves. Before deciding on the type of equipment to be used the following points should be considered:

i.   Size and number of records involved

ii.   The frequency of references

iii.   The speed of record retrieval

iv.   Method of filing

v.   Prevention and protection offered

vi.   Appearance and quality of equipment

Filing cabinets were the primary unit of records storage at the central records management unit. The filing cabinets should be arranged in the order of file classification system. Each drawer should have a label to show the contents. Some central records management units preferred using open shelving, which were able to achieve higher storage densities per given floor area. Central records management units' should be clean and properly arranged in order to reflect the importance of the service, which they provided to the rest of the organization and other stakeholders.

Penn, Pennix and Couson (1994) view that equipment must be of adequate standard, information in the registry is vital to the organization and it must be well cared for. Filing units should be made of steel, be open, compactly arranged and given due allowance for the easy extraction and replacement of files. Every organization should have equipment and facilities that suit and serve its requirements best in terms of storage, control and general management of its informal resources. The ministry's central records management unit (CRMU) had metal steel cabinets for storage of its files. Casual talk to the staff at CRMU established that the CRMU did not participate in the choice of filing equipment to suit its records management systems. The contemporary records keeping systems were in the form of electronic records. Electronic records were captured and stored in an electronic environment using computers and internal and external electronic storage media which included compact disks, films, cloud computing, computer servers among others.

2.6.3   Building and Location of Records Management Unit

The building and location of the records management unit should be especially centrally located to other related offices. The interior environment not only habitable by the manpower but also safe and secure for other resources and adequate enough to allow expansion as business increases and the volume of records rises. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit (CRMU) was centrally located on 23rd floor where it served officers from 21st to 24th floors, and also its external customers. There was no space for future expansion as the building was a rented one. It belonged to the county commissioner.

CRMUs need to store their records in various equipment and facilities for proper management of records so that they are not exposed to enemies of records such as dust, heat, harmful sunrays, water, and unauthorized access unfair wear and tear. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's CRMU was located on 23rd floor and on a busy highway. The room was fitted with large clear glass windows exposing the records to enemies of paper like fumes, dust, heat and harmful sunrays.

2.6.4   Retrieval Tools Supporting Records Management

The major reason for ideal records management is to organize, control records and to make them available to their users when they need them. To achieve this there has to be effective records retrieval tools also referred to as finding aids to promote easy identification, location, movement, storage and security within and outside the records management unit. According to Ellis (1997), finding aids are the descriptive media (such as registers, guides, inventories and indexes) that establish physical and intellectual

control over the holdings of archives and makes it possible to retrieve particular records or information from these archives. The common retrieval tools include:

(1) File Index:

This is a tool for identifying the location of the existing records. It is either a numerical or an alphabetical list of references to the files and on the volume of record specifically by their subjects. This does not help in tracing the movement of records. According to Records Management Procedures Manual for the Public Service (2010), the index is the key to efficient retrieval of files. It involves attaching searchable terms or labels, from the classification scheme, to a file, paper and/or electronic document. An index is used to provide retrieval of the information being indexed. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit had a file index in place.

(2) File movement card:

This is an effective tool for controlling file movements. For each file existence, there is a card bearing the name and the number of file. The card bears the date in column. The card is kept in the shelf or cabinet exactly the same place and order as the file. This card will help in tracing the file. There was no file movement card at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit.

(3) File movement register:

Records file moved to and from the central records management unit. It may be a lined counter book with columns, which should contain the following information: file number/title, date issued, to whom issued, issuing officer, return date and receiving

officer. There was a file movement register at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's CRMU.

(4) Bring-up diary:

Action officers sometimes request that a file be brought to them on a specified future date. This happens when an officer is not ready to deal immediately with a matter marked to him/her in a file. He/she indicates by means of date when the file will be produced in the future. Every file returned to the records management unit must be checked for bring up request before it is put away. This system avoids file retention by action officers while action is projected for a later date. The effective use of the bring-up diary is one of the most valuable contributions in records management unit. It improves efficiency and effectiveness in service provision in the organization. The use of a bring-up diary results in reduced cases of lost files and enhances prompt responses to correspondences. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's CRMU had no file bring-up diary in place.

2.6.5   Information Communication Technology Resources

Computers are becoming an integral part of organizations around the world. In spite of the challenges posed by electronic technologies for records and archives managers, the question is not whether to computerize, but when and how. The benefits of computerization can only be achieved if there is an appropriate infrastructure, including appropriate legislation, management structure and financial and technical support (Roper, 1999).

Penn et al (1994) view automation in an organization is not an overnight activity. This can be emphasized in their statement which reads "Of course an organizational manager does not simply arrive in the office one morning and say, 'The past is over and now we are doing business as the future,' since document management is critical to the health of every organization, this process has to be undertaken with care. We all need to explore along the way and to find out what works and what doesn't without costing the organization too much."

Automation leads to proper filing and classification system. Records in an organization need to be organized logically in order to speed up location and retrieval of needed files or information. Any organization without a filing and classification system is very blind in terms of effective records management unit operations.

Denyer (1980), perceived filing as a process of arranging and storing records so that they can be located when required. A file classification scheme forms the core of efficient records storage and retrieval system. It organizes all official files and documents within a filing system into an orderly and systematic manner. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's central records management unit had a manual file classification scheme in place.

Automation as an input retrieval tool: the major reason for ideal records management is to organize, control records and to make them available to their users when they need them. To achieve this, there has to be effective records retrieval tools referred to as finding aids to promote easy identification, location, movement, storage and security within and outside the records management unit.

According to Ellis (1997), aids are the descriptive media (such as registers, guides, inventories and indexes) that establish physical and intellectual control over the holdings of an archive and make it possible to retrieve particular records on information from these archives. Automation enables integration of finding aids for ease of managing public records. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's CRMU was not automated.

A circular issued from Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of State for Public Service (Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3.5A VOL. VIII/ (98), dated 23rd July 2010) which established records management units in ministries/departments refers. It requested all (by then) Permanent secretaries / Accounting officers to ensure that the units are facilitated to computerize their operations and to spread the adoption of the Integrated Records Management Systems (IRMS).

To crown it all, Musembi (2002), observed that most of the records management malpractices begin in records management units. Factors attributed to this kind of situation include:

i. Poor attitude and/or lack of understanding by top managers of the vital role played by records management units in an office. For this reason, records management units are viewed as a 'dumping ground' for untrained and undisciplined staff with little attention being paid to the problems that may face records management units operations and office. In general, when a records management unit is manned by this type of personnel the office usually ends up being the loser because untrained and undisciplined staff will not deliver services as demanded by action officers.

ii.   Lack of procedural manuals

iii.   Lack of clear development path for records personnel

iv.   Lack of records management policies; and

v.   Lack of effective supervision of records management units.

It was the intention of this study to try to establish the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya.

2.7   Issues on Records Management and Service Delivery

a) <u>Lack of sufficient qualified staff to man the central records management unit</u>: The establishment of personnel at the central records management unit (CRMU) should be as par the approved circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3/5A VOL. VIII (98) dated 23rd July 2010 from office of the Prime minister, ministry of state for Public service. The circular states "it is also noted that despite the critical role of records management in facilitating senior managers in the service to make decisions, the records management function is manned at very low levels, lacks adequate/technical qualified staff, essential equipment and working facilities."The study will try to establish the adherence of the contents of the circular to at MOE&P.

b) <u>Lack of expansion space</u>: Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was housed in a rented house owned by the county administration. It was allocated four floors only, from 21st floor to 24th floor. There was no room for expansion as the building was fully occupied.

c) <u>Automation of the central records management unit:</u> Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was yet to automate its central records management unit's services. This hampered service provision as application of modern information technology was missing. Circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3.5A VOL. VIII/ (98), dated 23rd July 2010, from Office of the Prime Minister, ministry of State for Public Service which established records management units in ministries/departments, requested (by then) all Permanent secretaries / Accounting officers to ensure that the units were facilitated to computerize their operations and to spearhead the adoption of the Integrated Records Management Systems (IRMS).

d) <u>Difficulties in tracking records:</u> It was difficult to keep track of records received direct at the departments in both soft and hard copies. Records held did not indicate correlation between records received direct by departments and those held by the central records management unit.

e) <u>Lack of suitable storage equipment:</u> Lack of suitable storage equipment for the various types of records held in an organization such as files, maps, photographs, and compact disks among others hampers service delivery. According to Roper (1999), sufficient and appropriate equipment and materials should be provided. These are for the handling, storage and preservation of records throughout their life cycle. These include:

i. file folders

ii. boxes

iii. shelving

iv. computer equipment and software programmes

v.　office furniture

f) <u>Security of records:</u> According to records management procedure manual for the Public Service (2010), security refers to measures designed to safeguard records from unauthorized access, damage and destruction. All public records shall be protected at all times against;

i.　Unauthorized access

ii.　Leakage of information

iii.　Mishandling or malicious damage, and

iv.　Fire, water, pests, light and dust among others.

Direct sunrays, dust and motor vehicle fumes were eminent at the CRMU due to its layout and location which was next to a busy highway. Sunrays, dust and fumes are harmful agents of paper, thus affected the records.

g) <u>Lack of records management policy:</u> According to Roper (1999), policies are basic guidelines that help government determine the overall course of action the government will take. This ensures the goals and objectives of an integrated records management programme are achieved. Policies provide more detailed guidelines than can be included in legislation, but they must relate directly to legislative guidelines. The issues to be addressed and the solutions chosen will naturally vary from nation to nation and, within national governments, from one organization or agency to another. Lack of records management policy therefore leads to lack of proper guidelines pertaining to record keeping activities.

It was the intention of this study to try to find out the challenges encountered on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry. The study also pointed out possible solutions to the challenges facing the ministry pertaining to the application of records management best practices for service delivery.

2.8   Strategies Supporting Records Management And Service Delivery

a) Training: Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was keen on training its members of staff on courses relating to their field of work. It had trained or was in the process of training its central records management unit's (CRMU) staff on information communication courses, certificate and diploma courses in the field of records management. It was also sponsoring records management officers on masters' degree in records management courses exempt first degrees courses which were not recognized by the regulations. According to Musembi (2002) all those appointed to be in charge of records management units must be trained in the relevant discipline including information technology and also receive a minimum of five days training in records management unit operations in a year. This narrowed down to all CRMU's staff.

b) Construction of ultra-modern building: to decongest its office operations hampered by lack of enough office space, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was to come up with an ultra-modern building to accommodate its staff.

c) Automation of records management systems: records held indicated that the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was on its way to automate its records management services. This would be in line with circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3/5A

VOL. VIII (98) dated 23rd July 2010 from office of the Prime Minister, ministry of State for Public Service. The circular requested all permanent secretaries/accounting officers to ensure that the records management units were facilitated to computerize their operations and to spearhead the adoption of the integrated records management systems (IRMS).

From the reviewed literature there was a lot of documented work on management of public records in Kenya. However, there was very little focus on challenges in management of public records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's headquarters, hence the need for this study to fill in this gap.

2.9   Conceptual Framework

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), a conceptual framework 'Lays out the factors, constructs, or variables, and presumes relationship among them'. A conceptual framework provides not knowledge of 'hard facts' but, rather 'soft interpretation of intentions' (Levering, 2002, p.38). Figure 2.2 below shows that the types of records, application of records in the records management systems and their adequacy contribute to good records management practices. The challenges faced in records management are addressed to develop strategies which give way to best practices for service delivery.
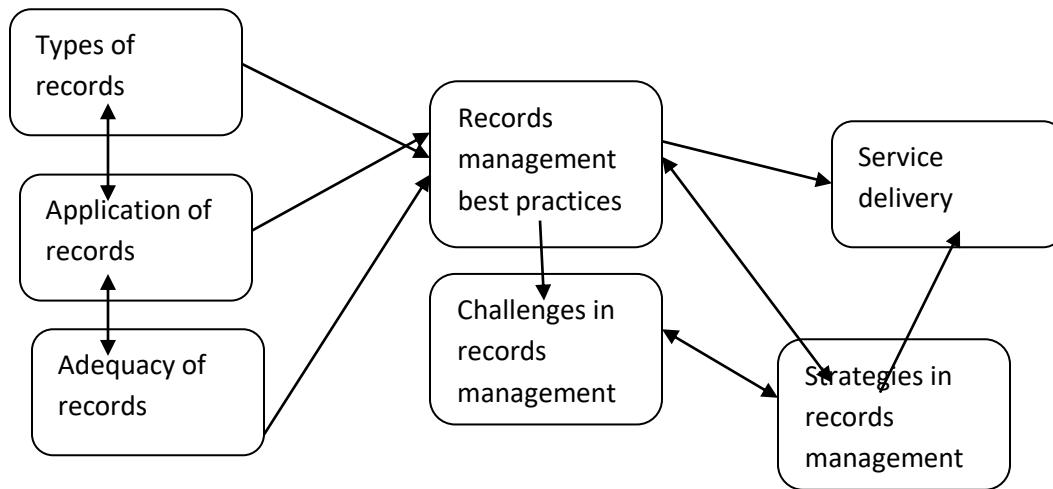
Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework

2.10   Chapter Summary

The chapter concerned itself with literature review to understand clearly the topic understudy being 'application of records management best practices for service deliveryat the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya'. The literature review illustrated the theoretical framework which informed the subject understudy covering theories in the area of records continuum model and service quality Gap model. Further the literature review instituted what a policy was and highlighted on both international and national standards concerning records management. The literature review revealed that inadequate resources among them shortage of qualified staff, lack of essential equipment and poor working facilities hampered service delivery. Thus the study sought to establish if the same was happening at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. It too wrapped up topic on issues on records management to service delivery and strategies to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The chapter also discussed the conceptual framework linking records management relations to best practices.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the techniques that were used in data collection in the study. This was done in line with research objectives and questions. It indicates the research design, study location, target population, sampling procedures, sample size, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, data presentation and analysis, and ethical issues.

3.2   Research Design

According to Orodho and Kombo (2002) a research design is the structure of research. It is the 'glue' that holds all elements in a research project together. A design is used to structure the research and to show how all major parts of a research project work together to try to address the central research questions. It is the scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems.

Kothari (2004); Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) view research design as a conceptual structure within which research is conducted. Thus it is a "blueprint" that enables the investigator to come up with solutions to the problems and guides in the various stages of the research such as collection, measurement and analysis of data. According to Kothari (2004), a study design attempts to answer the following questions:

i.   What the study is about?

ii. Why the study is being made ?

iii. What type of data is required ?

iv. Where can the data be found?

v. Periods time the study includes.

vi. Techniques of data collection.

vii. Methods of data presentation and analysis.

Research study design was a descriptive one that presupposes prior knowledge about the phenomena being studied. The objective of descriptive research is to portray an accurate profile of persons, events or situations (Robson, 2002:59). In order to obtain comprehensive data from various target groups this method was the most appropriate one to use. Participants were engaged with the researcher on one on one basis through interviews as per interview schedules for action officers (appendix II), interview schedules for central records management unit's staff (appendix III), and interview schedules for secretaries to action officers (appendix IV). Observation method was applied to enhance data collection by use of observation checklist (appendix V).

3.2.1 Qualitative Research

Punch (2005) defines qualitative research as a process of enquiry that draws data from the context in which the events occur, in an attempt to describe the occurrence. According to Kombo and Tromp (2013) qualitative research involves intensive data collection (of several variables), over an extended period of time in a natural setting (variables are studied when they naturally occur). The study used a qualitative method as the researcher was interested in a specific issue being the application of records management best practices for service delivery. Qualitative research method was used in this project because it has the ability to:

1) Use flexible and interactive methods of data collection among them face to face interviews and observation.

2) Carry out the study in a natural environment of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

3) Analyze and understand application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P.

In this context qualitative research had the benefit of engaging the study with things that mattered most.

3.3   Location of the Study

The study was conducted at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum headquarters' central records management unit situated at Nyayo House, 23rd floor, Nairobi County. The location was centrally placed within the Nairobi County's central business district with convenient means of access. All the ministry's departments were located at Nyayo house and the central records management unit was centrally located to provide them with records management related services, thus data collection was made easy.

3.4   Study Population

Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Ambira (2010) states that study population is the complete set of individuals, cases or objects with some common observable characteristics. It is a group of individual persons, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. Population therefore refers to the larger target

group to which the research seeks to focus on. The researcher targeted a population of 500 members of staff who were enlisted in the ministry's personnel compliment control section. The staff was in one way or another involved in creation, use, retrieval, dissemination and maintenance of records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Concentration was on the action officers, the secretaries attached to offices of the action officers and the central records management units' staff. This group was crucial in providing information on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya. The population was categorized in three groups being:

i. Top senior officers, twelve in number

ii. Senior officers, fourty eight in number and

iii. Support staff, four hundred and fourty making a grand total of five hundred as shown in table 3.1.

3.5   Sample Design/Techniques

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represents a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. The sample was drawn from the population of 500 employees at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Nairobi as per records at the ministry's compliment section. The employees comprised of top senior officers, senior officers, middle management officers and other support staff who included secretaries,

records management officers, clerical officers and subordinate staff who were the target population.

The researcher used random sampling in order to allow each member of the target population an equal chance of taking part in the research questions. This group was further subjected to a Stratified Random Sampling, also called proportional or quota sampling. This was necessitated by their various levels of education, management level, duties and responsibilities in the organization and gender. It involved dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a random sample in each subgroup.

Kotler (2001) argues that a well chosen sample of about 10% of population can often give good reliability. Further statistically, in order for generalization to take place, a sample of at least 30% must exist (Copper and Schindle (2006). The total sample was calculated as a percentage of the total population. For the top senior officers a sample of 50% of the population was targeted since the population was not too large. The sample for the senior officers was based on 20% proportion of the population. And for the Support staff comprising of Secretaries, Action officers and the central records management unit personnel was based on 10% proportion of the population. Thus the total sample was 60 out of 500 target group being 12% of the total population as tabulated in table 3:1 below:

Table 3.1: Sample Size

Category	Population	Sample size	Percentage of the total population (%)
Top senior officers	12	6	50
Senior officers	48	10	20
Support staff: Secretaries to action officers and CRMU personnel	440	44	10
Total	**500**	**60**	**12**

Source: Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

3.6 Data Collection Method

The researcher gathered data from primary and secondary sources while undertaking the study. The instruments used for primary data collection included:

i. Interview schedule

ii. Observation checklist

While secondary data from books, journals and online sources was obtained to confirm facts.

a) Interview Schedule:

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), an interview schedule is a set of questions that the interviewer asks when interviewing. An interview schedule makes it possible to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study. This method of collecting

data was carried out guided by the pre-arranged interview questions that were based on the objectives of the subject matter. All interview questions addressed issues relating to the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

The respondents targeted were sixteen (16) action officers (six top senior officers and ten senior officers) being at the top senior and senior level of management handling records. This group handled official correspondence relating to their field of specialization at the ministry thus they were involved in the creation and use of records. They also acted on incoming mail marked to them for action. The interview tried to establish the challenges faced while calling for files from the central records management unit among others. Other respondents targeted were the support staff being the secretaries to action officers and the central records management unit's personnel with a sample size of forty-four (44) officers. The interview was in line with the interview schedules in appendices II to IV. The advantage of the interview was that it was a face-to-face encounter, which explained the meaning of the study that was not clear in the questions. According to Mugenda (2003), the rationale why a researcher may use interview method of data collection among others is:

(1) Interviews provide in-depth data which is not possible while using other data collection tools

(2) They enhance data collection to meet specific objectives of the study

(3) Their flexibility help the interviewer adapt to the situation thus able to gather much information as possible

(4) Honesty and personal interaction between the respondent and the interviewer enables gathering of very sensitive and personal information since it is difficult for a subject to refuse to answer questions or ignore the interview.

b) Observation Checklist:

Yount (1983), states that "observation is the act of looking at something – without influencing it – and recording the scene or action for later analysis". Non-participant observation method was employed by the researcher to observe what was happening at the central records management unit. The observation targeted the speed of file retrieval by the central records management unit's staff on request by action officers and took keen interest on central records management unit's aesthetic/environmental set up.

Non-participant observation had the advantage that observers had a clear, less biased perspective on group behavior. Some of the questions were answered through observation. This was as stressed by Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2007) who stated that observation enables the researcher to see things which might otherwise be unconsciously missed, to discover things which participants might not freely talk about in interview situations and during focus group discussions and therefore to move beyond perception based data and to access personal knowledge.

The researcher limited himself to the central records management unit's operations and procedures. The observation made for instance on office layout, speed of retrieval, security issues and environmental issues relating to records at the central records

management unit were noted on an observation checklist (appendix V). This method however entailed informed consent and prior arrangement.

3.7   Validity and Reliability of the Data Collection Instruments

3.7.1   Validity of Data Collection Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) observe that validity is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the collected data actually represent the phenomenon under study. Maina (2012) states that; data is only useful if it actually measures what it is supposed to be measuring. The concept of validity, therefore, refers to the extent to which the collected data gives a true measurement / description of "social reality".

'

The researcher employed content validity in this study as a measure of degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represented a specific domain or content of a particular concept. Validity was tested by six members working at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum who were not in the targeted sample. Data collection instruments were constructed using simple language which made it easy for the respondents to answer the questions appropriately. The interview schedules were verified by the researcher's supervisors to ensure the objectives of the study were properly addressed.

3.7.2   Reliability of Data Collection Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) define reliability as a measure of degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results on data after repeated trials. On the same context Maina (2012) stresses that the idea behind reliability is that any significant results must be:

a) More than a one-off finding

b) Inherently repeatable

c) Repeatable by other researchers on the same experiment, under the same conditions and generate the same results.

The researcher conducted pilot test to check for the validity and reliability by carrying out test on small population prior to the study embarking on the above instruments. This helped the researcher to be in a position of establishing if the data collection instruments were reliable and valid.

The researcher carried out pretesting activities to make sure the data collection instruments were reliable and valid. In case of defects in the data collection instruments used the researcher revised the data collection instruments and reflected the actual changes.

3.7.3 Pretesting Data Collection Instrument

Participants were selected on the basis of their interaction with records management systems at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Reliability was enhanced through conducting similar interviews to many respondents. The targeted pilot testing group was six (6) participants from the members of staff working at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum headquarters but not in the targeted sample. The pilot study enhanced pretesting of the research instruments as it established the instrument's validity and reliability. The researcher used the results to correct variations resulting from the data collection instruments to enhance validity and reliability.

3.8   Data Collection Procedure

Primary data was gathered from the action officers, secretaries to action officers and the central records management unit's staff. This was after obtaining the permission from the head of administration at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (appendix VI). Data collection through interviews and observation was done by giving prior notice to the action officers, secretaries to the action officers and the central records management unit's staff respectively. This enabled the respondents to set aside valuable time for the interviewer.

The interview questions were prepared in line with the study objectives pegged to the level of the respondents' responsibilities. During the main data collection, the interviewer read the interview questions to the respondents and made clarifications where necessary. The interviewer used a good tone and avoided being biased. The interviewer targeted to interview five (5) respondents per day covering a period of twelve (12) working days to carter for 60 respondents. The researcher upheld high integrity and confidentiality while collecting data. Data collection was easy as all the respondents were closely located at Nyayo house 21st to 24th floors.

Other additional data collection procedures were through primary and secondary methods, the documentary sources. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) secondary sources of literature include any publication written by an author who was not a direct observer or participant in the events described. Examples of secondary sources include books, memos, journals, policy papers, circulars, annual reports, organizational

chart, and indexes. The available literature was consulted in order for the researcher to confirm facts obtained from the other methods of data collection to avoid misquotation.

3.9   Data Presentation and Analysis

Lewins, Taylor and Gibbs (2005) state that we use qualitative research techniques to obtain an insight into certain situations or problems, which we have, little knowledge. Qualitative techniques such as the use of semi-structured interview questions were used in this study to assist in gathering further information relating to the study.

The quantitative data collected was presented in the form of tables and charts. In qualitative method the data collected was presented by the researcher using words which were organized in phrases, sentences and paragraphs to explain the findings. Data presentation was done in line with the study objectives revealed by themes emanating from data analysis.

3.10   Ethical Considerations

Kombo and Tromp (2013) view that a researcher whose samples are people or animals must always consider the conduct of their research and give attention to the ethical issues associated with their research. Based on Kombo and Tromp's view the researcher:

  i.   assured the respondents of their anonymity and confidentiality

  ii.   avoided plagiarism and acknowledged sources of information

  iii.   got a research permit from the National Council of Science and Technology to conduct the research

iv. sought and was granted permission by the permanent secretary to carry out research at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

v. encouraged people to participate voluntarily in research without coercion.

3.11   Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the research methodology with emphasis on descriptive research design and taking the qualitative research approach. The study location was at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum headquarters' situated at Nyayo house, Nairobi. The study targeted a population of five hundred (500) members of staff with a sample population of sixty (60). The questionnaire was set to line with the research objectives. Test for validity and reliability of the data collection instruments was attained at this stage. Data collection was through interview schedules and observation checklist. The interviews were on one on one basis and the researcher highlighted all the issues which were not clear to the participant. Data collected was qualitative and presented using words which were organized in phrases, sentences and paragraphs to explain the findings. The information that was obtained ensured that the aim and objectives of the study were realized.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1   Introduction

This chapter concentrates on data presentation, analysis and interprets findings which address objectives. Data was collected by use of interview and observation schedules aimed at enhancing the validity and reliability of the research findings. Interview questions were used and the interviewer recorded the results (see samples of the interview questions Appendix II, III, and IV.). The interview schedules were boosted by the use of observation check list which captured the recordings of the results observed (see Appendix V.). Presentation of data was in textual and tabular form. Thematic coding and frequency response was applied. Analysis was enhanced with the aid of frequency distribution tables.

4.2   Response Rate

The interview schedules were administered to all the sixty (60) respondents targeted. These resulted in a 100% response rate being adequate for data analysis. Interviews were administered to the various categories of staff as shown in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Category (N=60)

Category	Sample size	No. of Respondents (Interviewed)	Percentage of interviewee
Top senior officers	6	6	100
Senior officers	10	10	100
Support staff: Secretaries to action officers and CRMU personnel	44	44	100
Total	**60**	**60**	**100**

In the case of observation, the researcher used the observation checklist and completed all the items under the pre-defined categories of variables observed. An observation checklist was used to verify data obtained from the central records management unit at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

Data from interviews and observation were collated during analysis and reported in aggregate. All the respondents were available at the time of data collection. This resulted in the researcher being able to collect data from all the sixty (60) targeted respondents resulting in 100% response rate.

4.3   Characteristics of Respondents Academic Qualifications, Gender and Work Experience

4.3.1   Respondents Academic Qualifications

The study also sought to establish academic qualifications of the respondents working at the central records management unit who were key respondents in the study; and the secretaries to action officers who handled records at the action officers' offices. The responses are indicated in figure 4.1 below.
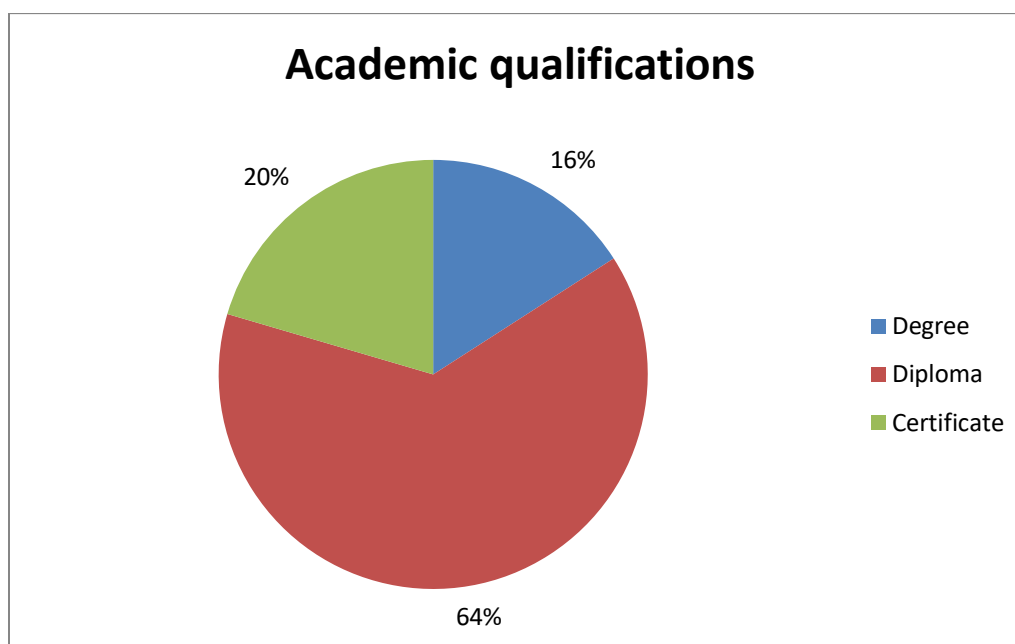
Figure 4.1: Respondents Academic Qualifications (N=60)

As shown in figure 4.1 above, 7 (16%) of the respondents were degree holders; while 28 (64%) respondents had diploma level of education and 9 (20%) had certificate level of education. The study established that at the central records management unit (CRMU) there was one records management officer (RMO) with a degree while the other records management officer had a diploma in archives and records management. The two clerical officers at the CRMU were pursuing different lines of career development being in the line of supplies chain management and human resource management. Two other officers at the CRMU were security wardens pursuing the line of security warden which was under their scheme of service. The other was a support staff with ordinary level certificate of education. All the secretaries to the action officers were pursuing their line of career development, being secretarial duties.

According to a strategy for improvement of records management in the public service (May, 2011), poor records management delays the decision making process leading to poor service delivery. It points out that records management units are sometimes used as dumping grounds for poor performers and undisciplined officers. Further: Circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1/3.5A VOL. VIII/ (98), dated 23rd July, 2010, from the former Office of the Prime Minister, ministry of State for Public Service which established records management units in ministries/ departments stated that the units will be manned by qualified records management personnel with the heads of these units reporting to their Authorized Officers.

4.3.2   Distribution of Respondents by Gender

The study attempted to establish the distribution by gender. Respondents' distribution by gender is as summarized in table 4.2 below. The gender distribution of the sample contained 18 (30%) males and 42 (70%) females.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Gender (N=60)

Value	Frequency	Percentage
Male	18	30
Female	42	70
Total	**60**	**100**

4.3.3   Respondents Work Experience

Concerning respondents work experience, the responses are tabulated in figure 4.2 below.
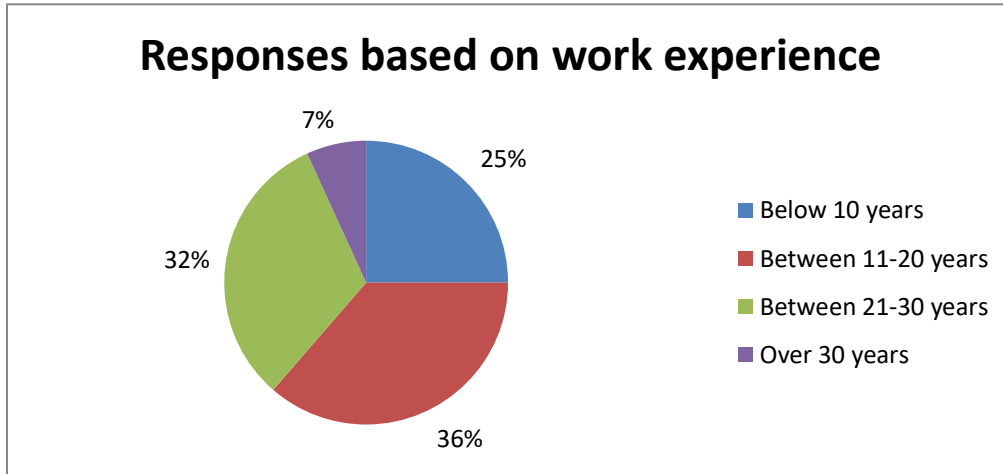
Figure 4.2: Respondents Work Experience (N=60)

Figure 4.2 revealed that 11 (25%) respondents had less than 10 years work experience; 16 (36%) respondents had between 11-20 years' work experience, while 14 (32%) of the staff had between 21-30 years' work experience and 3 (7%) had over 30 years work experience.

Data gathered from respondents work experience revealed that most of the staff had worked over ten years thus acquainted with on the job work experience. The staff had acquired tacit knowledge on application of records management best practices for service delivery. Work experience exposed an employee to prevailing policies, rules and regulations. Among the internationally acceptable standards for best practices is the International Standards Organizations (ISO) such as ISO15489 standards. The tacit knowledge was derived from the organizational culture and work exposure to the number

of years on the job experience. The staff distribution seemed to be covering succession management issues which were an attribute to service delivery.

4.4 Types of Records Available

The aim of the study was to investigate the application of records management in support of service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya. The study was guided by its objectives to be able to attain a meaningful output. According to records management procedure manual for the Public Service (2010), effective use of information results in good and consistent decision-making, efficient and effective delivery of services, transparency and accountability which cannot be achieved without proper records management in the Public Service.

The first objective of the study was to determine the types of records available to enhance the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya. The respondents views varied as indicated in the following discussions:-

4.4.1 Action Officers Sentiments on Types of Records

Interviews from the sixteen (16) action officers (AOs) who acted on records in various formats at the ministry revealed that they acted on hard copy (paper records) during their day-to-day business transactions with the central records management unit (CRMU). The paper records were classified as Administrative, Policy, Financial, Electrical, Geothermal, Renewable energy, Petroleum, Minutes, and Annual reports as per the file index available at the CRMU.

They strictly emphasized that records transaction to and from the CRMU were on hard copy (paper-based format) though they received direct communication on their emails. When asked to briefly explain what types of records they act on from the central records management unit, typical responses from the action officers were as follows:

> *"I act on paper records which are filed in folders for action or reference. Through my email I also get mail which before action I call for the related subject file from the central records management unit".*
> *(Int. No. 44 MOE&P)*

> *"I normally get files to make references to enable me act on loose letters marked to me, the central records management unit also marks files to me for action".*
> *(Int. No. 47 MOE&P)*

The action officers used paper records to correspond or reply to external and internal customers. When corresponding with the external customers the AOs channeled letters through the CRMU for dispatch. There was an exemption to mail delivery within the Central Business District (CBD). The CBD mail was hand delivered to the external customers. Mail delivery within the CBD was done by the office messengers attached to the AOs offices. They hand delivered the letters to the external customers using the mail delivery book. Hand delivery of letters was done same day it was signed by the action officer.

Observation revealed that the dispatch book at the CRMU for external hand delivery services was a register which had columns drawn by hand. Likewise the dispatch registers with the secretaries to the AOs had also columns drawn by hand.

The action officers (AOs) noted that the paper records which were filed in folders helped in making of timely and informed decisions which enhanced trust with customers. Cross referencing to earlier correspondences and related subjects helped the AOs in making of timely and informed decisions. When the action officers were asked to state in their own view how the types of records at the central records management unit supported them in decision making, the AOs commented as follows:

> *"The records at the central records management unit enable me make informed decisions on timely basis. The records also act as evidence of transactions which take place".*
> *(Int. No. 45 MOE&P)*

> *Correspondences between the companies and the government provide historical/background information on handling cases.*
> *(Int. No. 54 MOE&P)*

> *"They provide a good basis for supporting government projects through referencing".*
> *(Int. No. 58 MOE&P)*

The responses indicated paper records as the dominant carrier of documented information at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The paper records supported timely and informed decision making by the action officers.

4.4.2   Secretaries to Action Officers Sentiments on Types of Records

The secretaries to action officers stated that they handled paper based records from the central records management unit (CRMU) during their daily business operations. These were filed in file folders by the CRMU staff and marked for action to the concerned action officers (AOs). The secretaries to the action officers stated that they requisitioned subject files from the CRMU to make references. They also indicated that they received

hard and soft copy records directly from external customers. This was attributed to the secretaries to the action officers' response to the question as to what types of records they handled from and to the central records management unit on daily basis. Some of the responses were as below:

> *"I handle paper records/correspondences filed in file folders which are marked for action or we call for them to make references".*
> *(Int. No. 04 MOE&P)*

> *"Subject files which are marked for action. Also request files from central records management unit for references. Letters received direct are also directed to central records management unit for filing".*
> *(Int. No.06 MOE&P)*

The letters received directly at the action officers (AOs) offices from external customers were acted on loosely without being on file after which they were sent to the CRMU for filing to the related subject files. The secretaries to the AOs also sent copies of replies or correspondences to the CRMU for filing to the appropriate subject files.

4.4.3 Central Records Management Unit's Personnel Sentiments on Types of Records

The central records management unit's (CRMU) staff stated that they had paper records at the CRMU. The paper records were organized in file folders where they were filed. These file folders were kept in steel cabinets at the CRMU. Apart from the file folders other paper based records in the form of registers such as inward, outward and file movement were available at the central records management unit. Another type of record at the central records management unit was the file index. Of interest at the central

records management unit was the presence of paper based copies of Kenya Gazette which were filed in box files. Notably copies of the Kenya Gazette were kept on top of the metal cabinets at the CRMU. The central records management unit's staff stated that there were no electronic records at the central records management unit. Remarkably, the central records management unit had computers which were networked. The same was supported by narratives from the central records management unit's staff; some of the narratives are as below:

> *"Yes we have paper records at the central records management unit in the form of subject files, file index, and other various registers including inward, outward and file movement registers".*
> *(Int. No. 40 MOE&P)*
>
> *"Yes we have paper records at the central records management unit. I collect mail from the post office which is normally in paper form. Finally the letters after being processed are filed in file folders".*
> *(Int. No. 42 MOE&P)*

Interviews with the central records management unit's staff revealed that the types of records helped in easing retrieval and ensured safety of information contained in the file folders. The records helped in making references and informed decisions. Notably the interview revealed that records helped in keeping history of activities transacted in an organization. The interview also revealed that there were no back up records management activities to provide business continuity in case a disaster strikes. The interview indicated that records helped the organization to be acquainted with its customers and enhancing correspondence.

Observation revealed that the types of records at the central records management unit were paper records. There were registers such as inward, outward and file movement. When subject files were in other action officers offices it took time to retrieve them which led to poor service delivery. Notably there were no file requisition forms at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Subject files were requisitioned verbally by the secretaries to AOs, hence verbal communication was vibrant when requisitioning subject files from the central records management unit. On other occasions the central records management unit's staff had to embark on filing loose letters to ensure the subject file was updated before releasing it to the relevant action officer. This action led to loss of valuable time. Observation noted that the AOs wasted time in decision making as a result of subject files being taken to them without proper foliation and cross referencing. Observation revealed closed volumes which had not been appraised. This was attributed to the fact that the CRMU had no retention and disposal schedules.

Observation revealed that the file folders stored in the metal cabinets were too heavy for the metal partitions which kept on collapsing due to overweight. This led to the safety of the records being compromised as the file and its contents faced the risk of unfair wear and tear which drastically reduced the life of the file and its contents. The subject files mixed up when the partitions curved in and at times the fasteners loosened which led to mix up of the folios from different files. This action was time consuming more so when assembling the papers back to their respective subject files. This created delays in delivering files on timely basis when requested by the secretaries to the action officers.

Notably the folio mix-up delayed accessing information for reference and informed decision making which led to delays in service delivery.

Observation also revealed that the central records management unit had a franking machine which was used for franking letters which were dispatched through the post office. The franking machine was lockable but observation revealed that it was never locked. Letters were dispatched on daily basis during official working hours at eleven hours before noon.

4.4.4 Interpretation of Data

These findings clearly revealed that the types of records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum supported service delivery. This is supported by the International Organization Standardization (ISO 15489) definition of records which states records as information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. In this context records may be in any form or format for instance paper based or electronic form. The study established that there were paper based records most of them resulting from letters received from external customers and letters created within the organization. Electronic records coming to and received from the action officers (AOs) in the form of electronic mail were also another type of records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). The records from the central records management unit (CRMU) helped the AOs in making timely and informed decisions as they were easily available and they created links to the daily business operations within the organization. This as stated by the action officers, secretaries to the action officers and the central records management

unit's staff was through cross referencing and relating subjects, an effort which improved trust with customers and enhanced service delivery. The action officers corresponded to the external and internal customers through hardcopy paper records. Letters were delivered directly to external customers within central business district or posted by the CRMU staff through the post office.

The secretaries to the AOs had similar sentiments as they too acted on paper based records which were in file folders. At times they received letters directly from external customers who delivered them to their offices. They had computers which were networked and used them for typing letters and sending to printer for printing hard copies. The computers were networked and the secretaries to the AOs used the facilities to access internet among them electronic mail.

The central records management unit's staff on the other hand stated that they had paper based records which were filed in file folders and stored in metal cabinets. The CRMU staff elaborated that other than the file folders they too had paper based records like the inward, outward, and file movement registers. Additionally the presence of a file index was eminent. Notably there were publications at the central records management unit being copies of the Kenya Gazette, which were collected on weekly basis from the Government Printer.

Observation pointed out verbal communication taking control at the ministry. This was eminent as the secretaries to the action officers when requisitioning files from the central records management unit communicated verbally. Documented evidence such as file

requisition forms should have been used to support verbal communication. When the action officers were requisitioning files, there was noticeable delay in delivering them to the action officers. The central records management unit's staff had to update the files by filing the loose letters received from the AOs. At times due to urgency, a file was delivered to an AO without foliation and cross-referencing. Lack of retention and disposal schedules was an indication that there was a missing link between the CRMU staff and the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services (KNA&DS) staff. These two entities were supposed to work with each other for the betterment of the types of records at MOE&P to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery. The KNA&DS have to play their advisory role by providing advice as to which best types of records are suitable to support service delivery. The KNA&DS should provide recommendations on the closed subject files to be preserved and the ones to be destroyed. KNA&DS should too monitor the adherence to the Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, (Cap. 19, Laws of Kenya).

4.5   Application of Records Management best Practices and its Contribution to Service Delivery

The second objective of the study was to establish the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Respondents' views were as pointed hereunder.

4.5.1   Views from Action Officers

The action officers appreciated the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Among the supporting points

were that letters received from external customers were recorded in the inward register, date stamped and allocated a receipt control number. The letters were then taken to the Marking Officer (MO) at 15.00 hours in the afternoon on daily basis for action and marking to action officers (AOs). After marking of the letters by the MO they were brought back to the central records management unit (CRMU) where they were filed and marked for action to the AOs the following working day. This was evidenced when the action officers were asked if the records management practices at the ministry supported flow of information and records, whose response was as below:

> *"Yes, records management practices support flow of information and records. The incoming mail at the central records management unit is taken daily to the marking officer".*
> *(Int. No. 44 MOE&P)*

> *"Yes, the central records management unit's staff tries to bring requested files on time, but there are times when action officer may delay with file, thus delay in giving services to others".*
> *(Int. No. 48 MOE&P)*

Some of the letters with the marking officer ended not being brought back to the CRMU but were directly delivered to the AOs depending on the urgency demanded by the subject matter. Additionally the application of records management best practices for service delivery provided a window for ease of referencing and good historical back ground of daily business transactions.

The action officers indicated that they did not practice holding files in their offices as the central records management unit's staff availed them on request, this being strengthened by the fact that the central records management unit had a file tracking system. The file

tracking system was manual which relied on files movement registers. The action officers were asked whether they held files in their offices for fear of not getting them in time when requested whose response was as cited below:

> *"No, when I clear with a file I give to my secretary to*
> *return to the central records management unit".*
> *(Int. No. 53 MOE&P)*

> *"No. Obtaining files from the central records management*
> *unit is easy as they have a tracking system therefore if file*
> *not in the central records management unit then the*
> *records management officer traces it".*
> *(Int. No. 54 MOE&P)*

The respondents highlighted that they did not operate a bring-up (BU) system. The action officers recorded on diary files which will be required on a future date and also marked on loose letters as bring-up (BU) to their secretaries to avail the files and letters when the BU date became due. This was exemplified by the action officers when they were asked to state if they operated a file bring-up system, whose respond was as hereunder:

> *"No. Loose letters direct to department are acted loosely, if*
> *not acted I keep them in a loose folder".*
> *(Int. No. 51 MOE&P)*

> *"No, I do not operate a BU system but when citing on*
> *correspondence, I recall the file to link with the*
> *correspondence then release it and retain correspondence*
> *for action".*
> *(Int. No. 44 MOE&P)*

The interview revealed that the central records management unit's staff was able to retrieve subject files needed by action officers with minimal delay especially those which had overstayed with other action officers for long. This was attributed to the application

of tracking tools such as file movement registers which led to minimal loses and misplacements.

4.5.2   Views from Secretaries to Action Officers

Regarding establishment of the application of records management practices to service delivery at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum; the secretaries to the action officers pointed out that the subject files were brought to their action officers for action by the central records management unit's staff. This was as a result of letters which had been received at the central records management unit and taken to the marking officer then back to the CRMU. At the central records management unit filing and foliation took place thereafter the file was recorded in the file movement register and taken to the appropriate action officer for action.

At times the action officers received letters directly from external customers or the marking officer. To respond to the letters the secretaries to the action officers requested subject files from the CRMU for referencing. On average the action officers stayed with files for less than three (3) working days. If the file would be required on a future date the AO noted on a diary and requested their secretary to follow up. The secretaries to the AOs did not keep files for long; they extracted information needed and acted on loose letters received directly from external customers then released files back to the central records management unit. On interview as to how long the secretaries held files in their offices while awaiting action by the action officers, the secretaries to the action officers had this to state:

> *"I don't retain files, I extract the information I need to act
> and return file to the central records management unit,
> then later on take loose letters for filing at the central
> records management unit".*
> *(Int. No. 02 MOE&P)*

> *"Action officer receive letters direct from the principal
> secretary and external customers. I recall file from the
> central records management unit, act on the letter relating
> to file, return file when through".*
> *(Int. No. 08 MOE&P)*

One action officer was noted to keep files while out of office and also one secretary kept

files not acted upon in a pending tray. Other secretaries kept files till the typed letters

were signed by their AOs. Loose letters were taken to the CRMU for filing after action.

The secretaries to the action officers were not aware of any circulars supporting file

movement within the organization. There were computers at the secretaries to the action

officers' offices. The computers were used for typing purposes and sending documents to

printer to print hard copies(paper based). The computers were networked and they were

used to access internet and email services.

4.5.3   Views from Central Records Management Unit's Personnel

Interview with the central records management unit's staff revealed that there was no

budget for the central records management unit (CRMU). The CRMU's budget issues

were catered for by administration department. When asked whether the top management

accommodated the CRMU's staff in its organizational culture, the central records

management unit's staff responded as below:

> *"Yes, the central records management unit is involved in
> all issues pertaining to records management including
> sensitization and training".*
> *(Int. No. 37 MOE&P)*

> *"Yes, they always emphasize on ensuring the safety of files*
> *while moving from office to office".*
> *(Int. No. 42 MOE&P)*

Two central records management unit's staff stated that the top management did not accommodate them in the organizational culture. Observation revealed that the CRMU's staff had the habit of taking food in the room. This was eminent as tea and lunch was served at the central records management unit. The habit contributed to the attraction of cockroaches and other rodents which come to eat the droppings and eventually ended up destroying the paper based records. Observation revealed too that MOE&P lacked backup system for the subject files in case a disaster strikes.

4.5.4   Interpretation of Data

Internal memo from the principal secretary ministry of energy (by then) dated 21st December, 2006 on maintenance of mail and file movement registers indicated that "it has become necessary to make it mandatory for all officers to maintain up to date mail and file movement registers for easy tracking of necessary actions". According to the memo the registers must bear the following columns:

- Date of the letter/memo

- Date received

- Letter/memo Ref. No.

- Subject

- Signature of the recipient and action taken

The memo further stated "please note that all actions on letters and memos must be taken within two (2) working days". The memo was addressed to all heads of departments.Data collected indicated that the central records management unit (CRMU) had a records tracking system which was entrusted to the file movement registers. This meant that the CRMU complied with the memo in this respect. Notably the action officers (AOs) informed their secretaries verbally not to keep files for more than three (3) days in their offices. This was a clear indication that the action officers might have been aware of the principal secretary's memo though they had not adhered to its contents. On the same the secretaries to the action officers acted on the instructions from the action officers but were not aware of the principal secretary's memo on retention of files in offices for more than two (2) working days.

The action of the action officers calling the central records management unit's staff to indicate areas of weakness and or improvement was not documented; it was based on verbal actions. There were few instances when the action officers and secretaries to action officer kept subject files in their offices till acted upon.

The action by the central records management unit's staff of taking letters received from external customers to the marking officer on daily basis at 15.00 hours in the afternoon as observed was hampering service delivery. This act locked out any letters received past 15.00 hours in the afternoon as such letters were taken to the marking officer the next working day at 15.00 hours in the afternoon hence getting to the action officer's desk for action on the third working day. Another records management practice of concern observed was the action of the central records management unit staff's taking letters

received from the marking officer to the action officers the next working day during the morning hours. This action led to delays in responding to letters.

Notably the bring-up (BU) system was not practiced professionally by the action officers, secretaries to the action officers and the central records management unit's staff. This was clearly identified by the fact that the CRMU lacked a vibrant file bring up system. The only BU action was partially exercised by the AOs who marked letters as BU and also the secretaries marking in their diaries files required on a future date.

At times letters were received by action officers and acted upon loosely then later taken to the central records management unit for filing. The central records management unit's staff due to workload at times delayed in filing such letters thus creating a pile up which ended up with some letters being lost or misfiled.

Computers were available at the action officers, secretaries to the action officers and the central records management unit's offices. The computers were networked and they were used for typing letters and accessing the internet. The action officers occasionally received official communication in form of letters through their personal email and they acted on them loosely after printing hard copies. This indicated that the computers and the network were underutilized. This could be supported by the fact that the Government noticed the potential of the computers and the networks which could best support application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P. This was noticeable through the Integrated Records Management Systems (IRMS) which was to be applied to all Government ministries.

The system according to Integrated Records Management Systems (2012) manual has been designed to be operationalized in all Ministries/Departments and State Corporations with minor adjustments to suit the specific functions that a respective institution undertakes. The system is web based and is designed to perform the following functionalities:

i. Registration of all mail received in a ministry by assigning a serial number, date and time it is received, source of the letter and enclosures if any

ii. Directing received mail to the Permanent Secretaries (now the Principal Secretaries) and the Heads of Divisions/Departments to provide direction on the specific action to be taken by respective officers

iii. Directing the mail back to the Records Management Unit (RMU) for indexing, forwarding to action officers

iv. Indicating the action taken on every mail

v. A bring up facility to avoid officers holding files for too long

vi. Dispatching of mail indicating date, time received by RMU, date and time dispatched, by whom and to what destination

vii. Search for mail or a particular file

viii. Redirecting/re-routing of files from one action officer to another

ix. Generating reports for the authorized officers indicating the work flow in the whole ministry

x. Records daily individual officer's work

xi. Generating reports for supervisors on the workflow in their divisions

xii. Graphical representation of the work flow in the ministry

xiii.   Scanning files

xiv.   Sending memos, and

 xv.   Reducing the cost of printing, tonners and papers.

The above was further supported by circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1//3/5A VOL. VIII/ (98) dated 23rd July, 2010 addressed to (by then) all Permanent Secretaries/Accounting Officers requested them to ensure that the units were facilitated to computerize their operations and to spearhead the adoption of the Integrated Records Management Systems (IRMS). In relation to the Integrated Records Management Systems (2012) manual and circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1//3/5A VOL. VIII/(98) dated 23rd July, 2010 detailed above; it could be interpreted that the computers and the internet were used for typing letters and accessing the internet thus undermined the manual and circular quoted above.

On the issue of computers and their networks it can be interpreted that this aspect was not utilized as a best practice to enhance service delivery at MOE&P. This was not as per Mnjama and Wamukoya (2004) view that records are assets that need to be managed and protected. Likewise, the application of ISO 15489 standards was missing and this is one of the key internationally recognized standards to institute best records management practices in organizations.

The enemies of paper attracted by the food taken at the central records management unit were harmful to the paper and its contents, which hampered records management best practices for service delivery. The enemies of paper destroyed the paper and information so contained hence evidential value to support decision making and other daily business

operations lost. Observation revealed that there were large clear glass windows at the central records management unit. The large clear glass windows allowed sunlight to enter the room. Sunlight has harmful rays, which were harmful to the paper and its contents. The paper life was shortened and the information it so contained faded awaythus accessibility of the information become impossible. Observation also revealed another harmful agent to paper at the CRMU being fumes from vehicles and dust. This was attributed to the fact that the CRMU was located several floors in the building which was facing a busy highway.

On records management best practices for service delivery it can thus be interpreted that the staff at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum had no idea of any existing internationally acceptable records management standards. Such standards among others include International Standardization Organization (ISO 15489). It can also be interpreted that the staff were not sensitized on national legislations relating to records management such as The Public Archives and Documentation Act (Cap. 19 of the Laws of Kenya).

4.6 Impact of Records Management Policies

The study sought to establish the impact of records management policies at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Respondents from various categories responded as per the following discussions:

4.6.1 Action Officers Views on Records Management Policy

The action officers (AOs) were asked to state if they had a policy that guided records management best practices at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). Some of their sentiments are as below:

> *"No. But need to develop one is eminent".*
> *(Int. No. 46 MOE&P)*
>
> *"No. We need one urgently to guide us on records management issues".*
> *(Int. No. 51 MOE&P)*

The sixteen AOs stated that there was no policy that guided records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P. The action officers pointed out that there was need to have one in place as soon as possible.

4.6.2 Secretaries to Action Officers Views on Records Management Policy

The secretaries to the action officers were asked to state if they were aware of any policy relating to application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). The secretaries to the AOs responded that there was no policy that guided records management best practices for service delivery.

4.6.3 Central Records Management Unit's Personnel Views on Records Management Policy

When interviewed the central records management unit's staff were asked to state if they were aware of any policy relating to application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The CRMU's staff stated that there was no policy that guided records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P.

4.6.4 Interpretation of Data

All the respondents stated that there was no policy on records management at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The action officers affirmed the need to have one in place urgently. It appeared that the staff was not conversant with earlier circulars relating to records management policies. Such policies among others included:

a) Office of the President circular OP/39/2A dated 14th April, 1997 which tackles cases of missing/lost files in the public service that was caused by poor records management practices which in turn had undermined public service delivery.

b) Circular number DPM.4/10A (9) dated 27th October, 2003 on streamlining the performance of registries in Government ministries, Departments, Local Authorities, Provincial and Districts. A task force was constituted under the then Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) to critically examine the current records management systems and practices in Government registries and make appropriate recommendations to enhance the quality of service delivery.

According to the 'GAP' model of service quality from Parasuraman et al. (Zithaml and Bitner 1996) expected service is a function of word of mouth communication, personal need and past experience, and perceived service is a product of service delivery and external communication to customers. 'GAP' 3 addresses deficiencies of human resource policies. This component was lacking at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum as according to the respondents there was no policy on records management at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

4.7   Challenges Encountered in the Application of Records Management Best Practices

The respondents were asked to state the challenges encountered in the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The respondents were interviewed on what ways they applied to cope with the challenges and how the stated challenges affected service delivery. Respondents views varied as indicated below:

4.7.1   Response from Action Officers on Challenges in Records Management

All the action officers (AOs) when interviewed to state if they faced challenges in the application of records management best practices for service delivery unanimously stated yes except one. This was witnessed from their responses as below:

> *"Yes. Letters received direct may require urgent action, but when acted upon final authority may be needed from the principal secretary, who at times is out of country".*
> *(Int. No. 45 MOE&P)*

> *"Yes. At times one letter is photocopied to several action officers by the marking officer, thus linking subject becomes an issue".*
> *(Int. No. 51 MOE&P)*

The interview cited that letters marked to action officers for action took long before getting to their desks. This was attributed to the time taken to trace files which were in other offices and filing of loose letters and foliation. At times action officers responded very fast to letters but when the input of the principal secretary (PS) was required, then delay was eminent more so when the principal secretary was too busy or outside the duty station on other official work. Some AOs overstayed with files in their offices as they

gathered more information to respond to the letters marked to them. On other occasions the AOs might be engaged in urgent matters thus finding no time to give prompt responses to letters.

Cross referencing was noticed to be missing in some files. This made it hard to get information needed to link subjects resulting in difficulties in locating the related subject files. These resulted from letters which were delivered direct to the action officers' offices hence they were not captured in the inward register centrally. This made it hard to trace the letters when needed in future. Action officers at times received letters direct and acted on them loosely. Acting on loose letters brought problems in foliation and cross referencing. Foliation at times was missing more so if the filing was done by non records management professionals at the central records management unit.

Marking officer at times photocopied one letter and distributed to several action officers thus linking subjects became a problem. This complicated matters when responding to the letters. The manual records management system was cumbersome hence slowed response rate to letters. Misfiling of letters occasionally was of concern, as misfiled letters were equally as good as lost ones. This aspect was contributed by lack of experienced staff in the line of records management at the central records management unit.

The respondents were asked to state how the challenges they faced affected service delivery, whose response was as hereunder:

> *"If the loose letters get mislaid they create disconnect in linking subjects thus delay in decision making and reply to letters".*
> *(Int. No. 53 MOE&P)*

> *"Dealing with urgent issues mean you cannot link the subjects easily thus it affects service delivery".*
> *(Int. No. 57 MOE&P)*

Further, the respondents stated that they coped with the above quoted challenges by application of various methods as exemplified by the following statements:

> *"I request the records management officer to track the needed file and bring it for action".*
> *(Int. No. 46 MOE&P)*

> *"I call the records management officer who takes the files and makes the required transfer of letters to correct files, foliates and cross-references".*
> *(Int. No. 57 MOE&P)*

4.7.2 Response from Secretaries to Action Officers on Challenges in Records Management

The respondents were asked to state the challenges they encountered when seeking services from the central records management unit (CRMU), among others they cited the following:

> *"Occasionally, misfiling is an issue when the records management officers are not in the central records management unit, thus delays in replying to correspondences".*
> *(Int. No. 03 MOE&P)*

> *"A file needed urgently may delay in tracing. Action officer may give a file to an officer to gather information whereby the officer leaves the office with the file without recording. It becomes hard to trace".*
> *(Int. No. 08 MOE&P)*

The respondents were asked to state what ways they used to cope with the challenges and

they responded as follows:

> *"On discovering I take the file back to central records management unit and the records management officer transfers the folios to the correct subject file".*
> *(Int. No. 01 MOE&P)*

> *"Normally, I have tried to tell my action officer not to release files direct to other officers without recording".*
> *(Int. No. 08 MOE&P)*

4.7.3 Response from Central Records Management Unit's Personnel on Challenges in Records Management

The respondents were asked to state whether they faced any challenges in application of

records management best practices for service delivery and replied that they faced

challenges as attributed below:

> *"Yes. Long stay of files in one stationed office, while it's needed in another office. The record storage room is small".*
> *(Int. No. 38 MOE&P)*

> *"Yes, sometimes we have cases of wrong referencing which makes tracing of records difficult. Those doing letters do not ask for the right references from the central records management unit".*
> *(Int. No. 40 MOE&P)*

When the central records management unit's staff was asked to state what ways they used

to cope with the challenges they responded as follows:

> *"We have established a time frame for a file to stay in one action office which is not more than two days and with space the top management is doing something".*
> *(Int. No. 37 MOE&P)*

> *"We encourage the departments doing/writing letters to ask for the correct references from the central records management unit every time".*
> *(Int. No. 39 MOE&P)*

Observation revealed that the central records management unit was faced with the challenge that it was located on a busy highway and the fumes and dust found their way into the room. The windows were too large with clear glass which allowed sunrays to penetrate the room. Fumes, dust and sunrays were enemies of paper which damaged the information contained in the paper and the paper itself. This made referencing difficult hence hampered making of timely decisions which resulted in poor application of records management best practices for service delivery. Observation revealed that there were no file folio transfer slips at the CRMU.

4.7.4   Interpretation of Data

These findings revealed that most respondents faced challenges in application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). The action officers (AOs) pointed out challenges such as letters marked for action took too long before getting to their desks. At times response on letters was done promptly and when the input of the principal secretary (PS) was required, and for some reason the PS could be out of office for long this affected response time. Some AOs overstayed with files, and the manual records management system was cumbersome which affected service delivery.

The secretaries to the AOs stated that they faced various challenges among them wrong referencing/misfiling of letters more so if handled by non-records management

professionals at the central records management unit (CRMU). Notably action on loose letters by action officers contributed to delays in filing of the letters to the relevant subject files at the CRMU. In other occasions action officers gave files to other officers directly bypassing their secretaries thus such files were not recorded in the file movement registers. Such actions contributed to lose of the subject files or delayed in tracing of the subject files.

The central records management unit had no active and up-to-date bring-up system. The CRMU staff cited that some AOs overstayed with subject files. The central records management unit's room was rather small to accommodate the CRMU personnel, office equipment and the paper based records. Wrong referencing by non-records management professionals at the CRMU was making filing and cross referencing hard.

The results of this study pointed to the fact that there were a number of problems associated with the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. These problems ranged from staffs at the central records management unit who had no records management knowledge, lack of office accommodation for the CRMU activities, delays in moving files to AOs for action, lack of a vibrant bring-up system among others. The central records management unit's records management activities were hampered by the lack of CRMU's own budget.

The environment, the location of the building and security measures in place had an impact on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at MOE&P. Paper was adversely affected by fumes, dust and sunrays which destroyed its

fiber and the writings thus reducing its lifespan hence impacting negatively to service delivery.

4.8   Records Management Strategies to Support Service Delivery

The respondents were asked to state the records management strategies appropriate to support service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Their response was as below:

4.8.1   Action Officers Statement on Records Management Strategies

The action officers were asked to state records management strategies appropriate to support service delivery and replied as below:

> *"It is good to have good tracing systems in place. Officers should not stay with files for more than three days, this will enable letters be filed for action".*
> *(Int. No. 44 MOE&P)*

> *"Training central records management unit's staff and deploying competent staff at the central records management unit. Also train all other users on issues relating to records management".*
> *(Int. No. 57 MOE&P)*

4.8.2   Secretaries to Action Officers Statement on Records Management Strategies

The respondents when asked what best approaches can be put in place to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery gave the following response:

> *"It is good for all the letters received direct by action officers to be taken to the central records management unit as a bring-up with file. Acting on loose letters should be discouraged".*
> *(Int. No. 08 MOE&P)*

> *"The central records management unit should be manned by adequate and staff of the records management cadre. Circulars be issued to provide guidance on records management issues".*
> *(Int. No. 09 MOE&P)*

4.8.3 Central Records Management Unit's Personnel Statement on Records Management Strategies

When asked what strategies could be put in place to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery, the central records management unit's staff responded as follows:

> *"Computerization of the central records management unit and proper training of staff on records management will lead to quick and informed decision making".*
> *(Int. No. 37 MOE&P)*

> *"Have a keen follow up of file movement by using a file movement register and establish a complaint register for both internal and external customers".*
> *(Int. No. 38 MOE&P)*

4.8.4 Interpretation of Data

These findings revealed that most respondents had several strategies which could be put in place to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery. The action officers (AOs) pointed out strategies such as having a good tracing system in place, not overstaying with files for more than three (3) working days, to have an electronic records management system, and to train users on contemporary issues relating to records management.

The secretaries to AOs expressed their strategies as holding brainstorming sessions to develop new ideas and address developing issues, and to have a records management policy in place. and additionally to have competent qualified staff at the central records management unit (CRMU), to avoid working on loose letters by enforcing a bring-up system, to update the file index, and to have a procedure manual.

The central records management unit's staff too had their strategies such as having a computerized system, enforcing use of file movement registers, issuance of circulars on regular basis relating to records management. Another strategy by the CRMU's staff was to institute circulation movement registers for the Kenya Gazettes.

4.9   Recommendations on Enhancing the Application of Records Management to Service Delivery

The respondents were asked to provide recommendations on enhancing the application of records management best practices for service delivery. The response was as reported below:

4.9.1   Action Officers Recommendations on Enhancing the Application of Records Management to Service Delivery

The sixteen action officers gave their recommendations on how to enhance the application of records management best practices for service delivery as illustrated:

> *"Have a records management policy in place. Set up funds*
> *for training on records management issues".*
> *(Int. No. 48 MOE&P)*

> *"Implement a records management policy with a special emphasis to service delivery".*
> *(Int. No. 54 MOE&P)*

4.9.2 Secretaries to Action Officers Recommendations on Enhancing the Application of Records Management to Service Delivery

The respondents were asked to state what recommendations to be provided to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry and they had this to respond:

> *"Records are used for references current and future, thus tracking tools are essential and it is good to go digital".*
> *(Int. No. 03 MOE&P)*

> *"I suggest a policy on records management to be in place and also set a budget for training users of files on records management related issues".*
> *(Int. No. 12 MOE&P)*

4.9.3 Central Records Management Personnel Recommendations on Enhancing the Application of Records Management to Service Delivery

When asked to state on what recommendations to be provided to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry, the response were as below:

> *"The ministry should have a policy on records management and embrace use of e-records".*
> *(Int. No. 37 MOE&P)*

> *"Continuous training on the best practices to keep records. Having restricted access to records especially to those who may not have the authority for such records".*
> *(Int. No. 38 MOE&P)*

4.10   Chapter Summary

The chapter has presented, analyzed and interpreted the findings on the data collected from the action officers, secretaries to action officers; and the central records management unit's staff on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum as stipulated above. The data was collected by administering interviews to the different cadres and by use of observation checklist to verify data observed from the respondents.

From the findings of this study, it was established that Ministry of Energy and Petroleum records management system was transacted highly on paper based format (hard copy records). It was established that Ministry of Energy and Petroleum had computers which were networked but underutilized. The central records management unit was understaffed with majority of its staff pursuing different career progression lines. Policy and procedural manual on records management at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum was lacking. There was no vibrant bring-up file system at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The central records management unit lacked its own budget. At times letters were received directly by the action officers and acted on loosely. The records at the central records management unit were at risk due to the harmful sunrays and fumes from vehicles plying the busy highway. Therefore from the data interpretation it can be stated that the application of internationally acceptable records management standards among them the ISO 15489 standards were not being fully applied to manage records at MOE&P.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

The chapter provides a summary of the major findings, conclusion and recommendations. The summary of the research findings presented is based on the research questions which are discussed briefly to offer an outline of the major revelations. This chapter additionally provides suggestions for further research.

5.2   Summary of Research Findings

The study sought to provide answers to the following research questions:-

1) What types of records are available to support the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya?

2) What contribution has the application of records management best practices made to improve service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

3) How have records management policies impacted on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

4) What challenges are encountered on the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

5) What records management strategies are appropriate to support service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum?

5.2.1 Types of Records Enhancing Records Management Systems at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya

Research revealed that:

i. Paper based records dominated daily business transactions at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). The records were as a result of letters created within and received from outside MOE&P. The paper records were classified as Administrative, Policy, Financial, Electrical, Geothermal, Renewable energy, Petroleum, Minutes, and Annual reports as per the file index available at the CRMU. The paper records were filed in file folders and notably it was observed that some of the subject files were oversize.

ii. At the central records management unit there were other types of paper records in the form of registers and among them were the inward, outward, and file movement registers. The registers helped in tracing file movement thus enhanced records management best practices for service delivery.

iii. Electronic records were also eminent though not used at the central records management unit. Occasionally the action officers corresponded with their external customers through personal emails. The research revealed that MOE&P had computers which were networked and subsequently underutilized

iv. Publications in the form of copies of the Kenya Gazette were found at the central records management unit (CRMU). The copies of the Kenya Gazette (KG) were filed in box files. The presence of the copies of the KGat the CRMU was against records management best practices for service delivery as MOE&P had a functional library.

5.2.2 Application of Records Management Best Practices for Service Delivery

The research findings revealed that most of the staff was not aware of any circulars supporting files movement activities thus service delivery was affected by:

a) Action officers (AOs) who were holding files in their offices for long while out of office

b) Secretaries to AOs holding files till the associated letters were signed by their AOs

c) Letters were acted upon loosely by the AOs and the secretaries to AOs after action the letters were taken to the central records management unit (CRMU) for filing

d) Bring-up system was not vibrant at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P) which led to poor service delivery

e) The central records management unit lacked its own budget. This aspect led to the CRMU lack vital services, tools and equipment to support service delivery

f) Difficulties in tracing missing files on timely basis when required. This was occasioned by the AOs handing over files to their colleagues without recording. Likewise unfiled letters created missing links thus deterred making of timely and informed decisions

g) Circulars relating to records management functions were not circulated to the concerned staff at MOE&P as they arose.

5.2.3   Impact of Records Management Policies on Service Delivery

The findings revealed that there were no records management policies at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P). This was attributed to the respondents having said that there was no policy on records management at MOE&P. This was hampering service delivery at MOE&P as proper guidelines on records management were lacking.

Records management policies are the backbone to organizations records management systems. It is thus the role of the head of the records management unit to convince the top management of the need to develop a records management policy. In this context a records management policy should be able to support the records management programme, objectives, responsibilities and the interrelationship of the staff that perform or manage records management processes.

5.2.4   Challenges Facing the Management and Use of Records

The research established several challenges encountered in the management and use of records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum among them:

1) At the central records management unit (CRMU) only two members of staff were records management professionals. The none records management professionals should have contributed to misfiling of letters, files lacking foliation, poor cross referencing, and delays in filing thus affecting service delivery, this was highlighted by the AOs.

2) Some action officers gave subject files directly to their colleagues thus bypassing their secretaries, hence subject files ended up not being recorded in the file

movement register. This action resulted in difficulties in tracing subject files and at times led to total loss of the subject files

3) The CRMU had not embraced the use of folio transfer slips. This created gaps in a file when folios were transferred to another file. The gaps resulted in missing links which could not be easily accounted for hence one could not tell where the folios were transferred to or if they were stolen

4) At other occasions none professional staff at the central records management unit ended up giving wrong references to the secretaries to the AOs.This action led to difficulties in linking subjects when filing letters at the CRMU

5) Delays in getting files which were with other action officers and probably having locked them in their offices while out of office for long led to other AOs delaying in responding to queries from the internal and external customers

6) Some secretaries to action officers when replying to letters did not request for the correct references hence complicating the issues of filing and cross referencing at the CRMU

7) The central records management unit at times misplaced letters due to work overload. This was as a result of letters which accumulated at the AOs offices and were brought for filing at the CRMU concurrently

8) Lack of a records management policy at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum resulted in poor records service delivery

9) The CRMU lacked its own budget which resulted in difficulties in addressing its records management related financial needs

10) The CRMU office accommodation was not enough, the space being one room of approximately 15feet by 20feet. The room was cramped with four drawer metal cabinets, 3feet by 7 feet metal filing cabinets (two door type), and tables, chairs and a photocopying machine; the space thus was difficult to operate from

11) Delays in circulating letters to the action officers led to delays in making timely and informed decisions

12) Marking officer's at times photocopied letters and marked them to several action officers. This action led to delays in generating timely and informed decisions

13) The manual records management system was slow and cumbersome, which was a drawback to service delivery as it led to delays in making of timely and informed decisions.

5.2.5   Suggested Records Management Strategies to Support Service Delivery

When asked what records management strategies were appropriate to support service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P), the respondents stated that there were several strategies among them:

i. Reviewing the subject file index and distributing copies to all concerned parties. The subject file index would support referencing and filing of letters to file and filing of files to racks, thus enhancing speed of filing and retrieval. MOE&P's top management should regularly issue circulars relating to records management issues and ensure circulation was done to all the concerned stakeholders alongside the revised subject file index

ii. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's' top management to allocate the central records management unit its own vote head to enable it manage its own funds. The funds would be used for developing a records management policy, records management procedure manual and support its publicity. The direct funding would too help MOE&P's top management have enough, qualified and competent staff at the CRMU for improved service provision. The same funds would be used to train all the staffs who handle records on issues relating to records management

iii. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum should encompass electronic records management system by adopting integrated records management system(IRMS). IRMS has the capability to support service delivery as it has the ability to be accessed remotely, concurrently and has good backup systems. This component of electronic records management the Kenya government is concerned of its implementation

iv. Enhancing security level at MOE&P on the field of records management. This is a key component in promoting service delivery. This ensures that the information required will be readily available when needed hence paving way for making of timely and informed decisions

v. Ministry of Energy and Petroleum instituting brain storming sessions on the field of records management to enhance service delivery. This would develop new ideas and help address the challenges faced in the field of records management.

5.3   Conclusion

The study aimed to investigate the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya and suggest strategies for improvement. The study addressed the key objectives and determined that Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P) transacted its daily business on paper records. The paper records were not backed up in case disaster strikes. The application of records management best practices was wanting as the central records management unit lacked its own budget to address its priority needs. MOE&P lacked a records management policy which was a key component in providing vital guidelines on records management. There were several challenges on records management which hampered service delivery at the MOE&P among the key ones was shortage of professional staff in the field of records management. This aspect led to poor service delivery. In this context several records management strategies were suggested to support service delivery at the MOE&P the key one being instituting an integrated records management system.

Based on the findings of the study the researcher concludes that records management played a key role in support of service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, Kenya. However, application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry had not been fully attained due to several factors among them; first, lack of adoption of contemporary records management systems able to integrate both the manual records management system and the electronic records management systems. Second, the MOE&P's staff lacked timely information relating to records management as communication relating to records management functions and activities was poor,

especially on current updates. Third, the MOE&P's central records management unit's qualified staffs who were two in number in the field of records management were not proactive to counter any emerging issues relating to records management functions at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

Additionally, several measures need to be put in place for the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum to be of effect. Among the measures to be applied include integration of records management manual systems with the electronic records management systems. The information communication systems ought to be improved to enable timely delivery of information related to records management to the right users at the right time. Timely information to the right users at the right time will enable making of timely and informed decisions. The records management officers (RMOs) need to be trained on leadership and managerial courses such as supervisory management, senior management and skills development.

The lack of adequate and qualified staff at the CRMU contributed to poor application of records management best practices for service delivery at the MOE&P, Kenya. Notably only two of the CRMU's staff were records management professionals, the remaining members of staff added no value to the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the MOE&P's CRMU, as they had no interest on the line of records management. Finally, lack of a records management policy and acute shortage of records management professionals at the MOE&P hampered the application of records management best practices for service delivery. To attain the aim of the study the records

management officers at the central records management unit should spear head records management functions at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

5.4 Recommendations

The study findings revealed that the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum (MOE&P) encountered challenges relating to the role of records management in support of service delivery. Hence, based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made to the MOE&P on the role of records management in support of service delivery. This will be of benefit too to other government institutions who transact their daily business operations using records.

5.4.1 Staff Establishment at the Central Records Management Unit

The study findings revealed that the Central Records Management Unit (CRMU) was understaffed. To address this concern adherence to The Report on Streamlining the Operations of Registries in Government/Departments and Local Authorities for Improved Service Delivery (2004) in relation to the staffing levels should be applied. Circular Ref. No. MSPS. 1//3/5A VOL. VIII/(98) dated 23rd July, 2010 addressed to (by then) all Permanent Secretaries/Accounting Officers which gave an aggregate of approved establishment for records management personnel in ministries/departments should be enforced. The study recommends that the Human Resource Division should advertise the vacant posts at the central records management unit and be filled with qualified staff as per the approved staff establishment.

5.4.2   Best practices in Records Management

There is need to institute records management best practices through application of internationally accepted standards such as ISO 15489 standards in the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. Officers who create, use and maintain records should be involved in upholding best practices in records management associated with internationally accepted standards.

Skills development through training all users of records should be emphasized. Training will equip users of records with the capability to manage records effectively and efficiently an aspect which will make the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum achieve its goals. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum assisted by other accredited bodies such as Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services should embark on developing a records management policy. Other records management guidelines and procedures should be developed to enhance best practices in records management at the MOE&P. The top management at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum should ensure full implementation of the records management policy, guidelines and procedures. This should be followed by monitoring and evaluation to ensure the records management systems are supporting service delivery at the MOE&P. In developing a records management policy to enhance service delivery at the MOE&P, the input of internationally recognized guidelines for compilation of a records management policy is important. Among the guidelines to be consulted is the Republic of South Africa, department of arts and culture, guidelines for the compilation of a records management policy (2006). It takes account of the following national standards:

1. SANS 15489 – Information and Documentation – Records Management - Part 1: General;

2. SANS 23081 – Information and documentation – Records Management processes – Metadata for records – Part1: principles; and

3. SANS 15801: Electronic Imaging – Information stored electronically – Recommendations for trustworthiness and reliability.

The head of CRMU should spearhead the above activities by synchronizing all the departments involved. This will help them in accepting the changes done for implementation process to begin.

5.4.3   Resources for the Central Records Management Unit

The records management unit should be given its own vote head. The Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's (MOE&P's) administration department should stop catering for the central records management unit's (CRMU) annual budget. The CRMU should take charge of its vital budgeted priorities as per its scale of preferences in financial issues. The CRMU through its own budget provision should prioritize purchase of essential equipment such as the mobile compact filing cabinets. The central records management unit should also address electronic records management issues among them the installation of integrated records management system. The study recommends that the head of the CRMU should write to the Accounting Officer requesting for allocation of the CRMU's own vote head by giving full justification to support the need.

5.4.4   Equipment for the Central Records Management Unit

There is need for the central records management unit to have modern paper records (files) storage equipment preferably the high-density mobile compact cabinets. Consultation with the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services officers should be done for they have the expertise of bulk paper storage systems. It is therefore advised that the central records management unit should provision for the purchase of compact mobile cabinets.

Additionally the central records management unit would save office space through purchasing of modern office workstations, which occupy less space and accommodate more staff. The study recommends that the records management officers at CRMU should be proactive to input the application of contemporary records management tools at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. They should make a good budget and fully justify the essence of purchasing compact mobile cabinets and workstations for the CRMU. The budget should be submitted to the Accounting Officer urgently for approval.

5.4.5   Records Backup System at Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

The study noted lack of a records management continuity plan. There is need to create a backup for the vital records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum. The study recommends that the paper records at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum should be backed up for any eventuality of a disaster striking. The study recommends scanning of all the vital documents and the data stored in a remote area. When backing up data the issue of information technology communication's compatibility mode should be factored as technology is changing at a fast rate. This aspect also needs to be supported financially

hence; the head of the CRMU should prepare budget estimates to be captured in the MOE&Ps annual budget plan.

When doing the records continuity plan, the input of the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services should be sought. This is the government's authorized/approved body, which mandated with the control of all government records. KNA&DS is eventually the body, which ends up archiving vital documents for prosperity.

5.4.6 Publications at the Central Records Management Unit

The head of the central records management unit should spearhead removal of all publications in the form of copies of the Kenya Gazette (KG) from the central records management unit. This is in the view that the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum has a functional library. Under ideal circumstances, books and publications are under the docket of libraries. The study recommends that copies of the Kenya Gazette be relocated to the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's library. Time wasted in addressing the issues of copies of the KG at the CRMU, be utilized in focusing on records management matters at the ministry. Space saved after removing copies of the Kenya Gazette from the central records management unit be utilized in installing modern records storage facilities.

5.4.7 Central Records Management Unit's Environmental Impact on Records

The study recommends that the photocopying activities at the central records management unit be moved to a different office. The space created could be utilized profitably in addressing accommodation issues at the central records management unit.

Security concerns of the records at the CRMU should be addressed by stopping the eating habits at the CRMU. This will save the paper records from being destroyed by harmful insects attracted by the food drops. MOE&P's top management should set aside a room for all the staff to use for eating purposes. This action would save the records at the MOE&P from being destroyed by the harmful insects and rodents which were attracted to the records by the food drops.

There is need to save the records from being destroyed by the sunrays and dust. It is recommended that the head of the central records management unit provision for the purchase of blinds and filters to prevent the harmful sunrays and dust from entering through the large clear windows.

5.4.8 Internal Communication of Records Management Issues at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

The top management should ensure that the central records management unit's staff together with all other users of records are well informed of any circulars, policies and regulations relating to records management functions. The study recommends that the circulars should be circulated to all concerned parties through internal memos. Brain storming sessions should be instituted to address cropping issues and keep the staffs fully aware of the contemporary issues relating to records management matters. Guidelines on records management should be developed, and copies circulated to all users of records for adherence. These issues should be spearheaded by the head of the CRMU.

5.5   Suggestions for Further Research

The study proposes the following areas for further research:

5.5.1   Research on the Management of Energy and Petroleum Records in Parastatals

The study set out to establish the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum's headquarters only. There is need to conduct a similar study in all the parastatals under the MOE&P for comparison purposes. This is to be based on the fact that the MOE&P in most cases deals with policy related issues while the implementers are its parastatals. This will enhance uniformity; improve service delivery and customer satisfaction within the ministry and its parastatals. The same should be cascaded to other ministries and state departments as they too generate records and provide services to the citizen.

5.5.2   Research in Paperless Records Environment in Support of Service Delivery

The study set out to establish the application of records management best practices for service delivery. It is therefore recommended that a study be conducted to establish how a paperless environment can positively embark on service delivery in government institutions. This will be in line with the Kenya government's capitalization on the power of the computers and their networks.

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APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO RESPONDENTS

Dear respondent,

My name is Martin Munyao Mutiso. I am a master's student at Moi University and carrying out a research project entitled the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya. I have selected you as one of the key responders in this study because I strongly believe you have the necessary information I need to study.

It is my request that you answer the interview questions appropriately. Note that your answers are purely for academic purposes and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. For further information you can get in touch with me through the following contacts:

Cell phone number: 0713641115

E-mail address: munyaomutiso@gmail.com

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES FOR ACTION OFFICERS

Section A

Name of the department……………………………………………………………

Designation………………………………………………………………………….

Working experience…………………………………………………………………

Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of Interview……………………………………………………………………

Section B

1. Briefly explain what types of records you act on from the CRMU.

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

2. In your own view how do the types of records at CRMU support you in decision making?

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

3. Does the records management practices at the ministry support flow of information and records? Please explain.

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

4. Do you hold files in your cabinet for fear of not getting them from CRMU when required? Please explain.

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

   ……………………………………………………………………………………

5. Do you operate a file bring-up system? Please explain.

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6. Do you have a policy that guides records management best practices? Please explain.

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7. Does the central records management staff address your records management related queries promptly? Please explain.

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8. Do you face any challenges in records management best practices? Please explain.

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9. How do the stated challenges in 8 above affect service delivery? Please explain.

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10. What ways do you use to cope with the challenges? Please explain.

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11. What records management strategies are appropriate to support of service delivery at the ministry? Please explain.

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

12. What recommendations can you provide to enhance the application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for sparing your valuable time to respond to the interview questions.

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CENTRAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT UNIT'S STAFF

Section A

BACK GROUND INFORMATION

Name (optional)……………………………………………………………….

Department:………………………………………………………………………

Section:……………………………………………………………………………

Designation:………………………………………………………………………

Qualifications……………………………………………………………………

Duties………………………………………………………………………………

Working experience in years:…………………………………………….….

Courses attended relating to records management………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………….

Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

Date of interview:………………………………………………………………

Section B

1. Do you have paper records at CRMU? If Please explain.

   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Do you have electronic records at CRMU? Please explain.

   …………………………………………………………………………………………
   …………………………………………………………………………………………

3. In your own view how do the types of records at CRMU enhance service delivery?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Do you have a budget for the CRMU? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

5. Does the top management accommodate you in the organization's organizational culture? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Are you aware of any circulars supporting file movement within the organization? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

7. If the answer to question 6 above is yes, are the contents in the circulars adhered to? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

8. Do you have a policy that guides the application of records management best practices for service delivery? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

9. Does the top management support application of records management best practices for service delivery? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

10. Do you face any challenges in application of records management best practices for service delivery? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

11. What ways do you use to cope with the challenges? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

12. What records management strategies are appropriate to support of service delivery at the ministry? Please explain.

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

13. What recommendations can you provide to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for sparing your valuable time to respond to the interview questions.

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SECRETARIES TO ACTION OFFICERS

Section A

BACK GROUND INFORMATION

Name (optional)…………………………..…………………………………...

Department:…………………………………………………………….…

Section:………………………………………………………………….…

Designation:…………..……………………………………………...…..

Qualifications.…………………………………………………………………

Duties.…………………………………………………………………………

Working experience in years:…………………………………………….….

Courses attended relating to records management………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

Date of interview:……………………………………………………………

Section B

1. What types of records do you handle from and to CRMU on daily basis? Please explain.

   ……………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………

2. Do you have computers in your office? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

3. If yes to question 2 above, are the computers networked?

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

For how long do you hold files in your office while awaiting action by the action officer? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

4. Are you aware of any circulars supporting file movement within the organization? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

5. If the answer to question 5 above is yes, are the contents in the circulars adhered to? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

6. Are you aware of any policy relating to application of records management best practices for service delivery? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

7. What challenges do you get when seeking services from CRMU? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

8. What ways do you use to cope with the challenges? Please explain.

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

9. What best approaches can be put in place to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery? Please explain.

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

10. What recommendations can you provide to enhance application of records management best practices for service delivery at the ministry?

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for sparing your valuable time to respond to the interview questions.

APPENDIX V: OBSERVATION CHECK LIST

Date of observation: ………………………………………………………….

When carrying out the observation method the below detailed information will be observed as a guideline and results recorded in the column provided.

No.	Observation checklist	Available	Unavailable	Adequate	Inadequate	Details / comments
1.	Check on the office layout with due regard to the equipment and furniture					
2.	Check on the response to file retrieval on request by action officers					
3.	Take keen interest to the building structure and the security measures in place					

4.	Track the mail movement from recipient to the time it is acted upon and filed					
5.	Note the time taken to circulate a file and the general condition of the files					
6.	Take keen interest on the environment					
7.	Note the difference between the actual customers and the idlers and note their behaviuor					

APPENDIX VI: LETTER OF REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Martin M. Mutiso

P. O. Box 30582-00100

Nairobi.

14th July, 2014

The Principal Secretary

Ministry of Energy and Petroleum

Nyayo house

P. o. Box 30582-00100

Nairobi.

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am a student at Moi University pursuing a degree programme of Master of Science in records and archives management. As a requirement for the award of the above mentioned degree, I humbly request your office to grant me permission to collect data in your ministry. My target group is the action officers, secretaries to action officers and the central records management unit's staff. The topic is on application of records management best practices for service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya.

Your quick response to the above subject is highly welcome. Thanking you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Martin Mutiso

APPENDIX VII: PROPOSED WORK PLAN/TIME FRAMEWORK

Phase	Activities	Year 2014						Year 2015					
		July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
1	Developing research concept	■	■										
2	Developing research proposal			■	■	■	■						
3	Proposal defense and corrections						■	■					done
4	Data collection							■	■	■			
5	Data organization, analysis and interpretation									■	■		
6	Writing, typing, editing, reporting, collating chapters and submission										■	■	
7	Thesis defense											■	
8	Corrections arising from defense and final submission											■	■

APPENDIX VIII: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref No. **NACOSTI/P/16/37578/8155**

Date:
19th **February, 2016**

Martin Munyao Mutiso
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *"Application of records management best practices to service delivery at the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum in Kenya"* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for a period ending 18th **February, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the Principal Secretary, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies** and **one soft copy** in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. S. K. LANGAT, OGW
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The Principal Secretary
Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

The County Commissioner

APPENDIX IX: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. MARTIN MUNYAO MUTISO
of MOI UNIVERSITY NAIROBI,
102694-101 Nairobi,has been permitted
to conduct research in *Nairobi County*

on the topic: *APPLICATION OF RECORDS*
MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES TO
SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE MINISTRY OF
ENERGY AND PETROLEUM IN KENYA

for the period ending:
18th February,2017

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/37578/8155
Date Of Issue : 19th February,2016
Fee Recieved :Ksh 1000

....
Applicant's
Signature

....
Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation