Managing Electronic Records at the University of Fort Hare

By

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Abstract

The study's goal was to examine the electronic records management practices at the University of Fort Hare's Alice location. The topic under investigation was the management of electronic records and the infrastructure that was available to handle them. The aim of the study was to understand the infrastructure for handling electronic documents at the University of Fort Hare and to gain more knowledge about how electronic records are managed there. To create staff competencies and skills for managing electronic records at the University of Fort Hare and to research the applicable laws and statutes. The records continuum model supported the positivist and interpretive perspectives of the research. The respondents for the study were selected using methods for purposeful sampling. A sample of 25 respondents were drawn from faculty administrators, examination unit workers, workers in the registrar's office, researcher and research assistants, finance officials and human resource department officials. Qualitative data was used with basic descriptive data, mainly for demographic data, coded and analysed using Office Microsoft Excel 2022. This study's major finding indicated that there were ongoing electronic records management (ERM), but it management is not hope to expected professional standard and which might affect service delivery in the university. There seems to be no coherent ERM policy due to some respondents' views. Because poor records management will lead to data loss, negatively impacting the institution. Furthermore, the study indicated that some of the people handling electronic records (ER) did not receive training and lack of unprofessional handling of records due to incompetent workers might increase lack of service delivery or poor decision-making. The conclusion was that mobile phone, laptops, desktops and other smart devices were used to create and manage records at the institution. Most of the predominant storage systems were cloud-based. A cloud-based storage system implies that it enhances the accessibility of records and exposes vital records to attack. The study also concluded that most of the staff handling ERM should endeavour to receive professional certification in record management. The study recommended appropriate infrastructure for electronic records management. The study already encourages each unit to enlist their staff in professional records management training.

Key words: Alice campus, electronic records, management, ERM, ICT, Records Continuum, University of Fort Hare,

Declaration

I, Mnguni Zandiswa (Student No. 200332899), declare that this research project titled: ***"Managing Electronic Records at the University of Fort Hare"*** is a result of my work. It has never before been turned in for any exams or degree-related purposes at another institution. It is being presented in part fulfillment of the University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus requirements for the Master of Library and Information Science degree.

Signature……

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my son Msimelelo Likamva Mnguni, even though I'm far from flawless, when I look at my son, I can tell that something in my life is exactly right.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude to the Almighty for his protection and guidance throughout the study process.

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LIST OF TABLES

Table of Content

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Electronic records are vital to any organisation, including the university (Chaputula, 2022). In a recent study, blockchain technology is being used as innovative technology to facilitate efficient electronic records management (ERM) in South Africa (Ajibade and Mutula, 2021). Electronic records management (ERM) helps universities to handle electronic information efficiently and effectively. Higher learning institutions, such as universities, collect and retain massive amounts of electronic data, including student, research, and administrative records. Effective ERM procedures allow institutions to safely store these data, conveniently access and retrieve information when needed, and comply with legal and regulatory obligations. An efficient ERM system can improve university decision-making, prevent data loss, and boost transparency and accountability.

Globally, governments, organizations, and academic institutions such as universities use electronic records extensively. The role that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have in socioeconomic growth. ICTs are necessary for the effective handling of electronic documents. Records management is a component of an organization's larger governance, risk management, and compliance responsibilities. Its main goals are to manage the evidence of any organization's operations and to mitigate and lower the risks that go along with them. ICTs are utilized in universities to support data management, teaching and learning, as well as the management of electronic records created by the university's everyday activities. Regardless of the format, records management is the process of monitoring and

managing information that is produced, received, maintained, stored, and disposed of. In other words, managing organizational information throughout its lifecycle is what records management entails. (2017) Ju and Yim. Nonetheless, when generating, preserving, and disseminating information, institutions should adhere to established rules, practices, and retention cycles. Regarding the significance of records management in every organization, the information revolution and the rapid increase in the dissemination of knowledge have ushered in a new era of information and knowledge that has a direct impact on the social, economic, political, and cultural activities of the entire world (Hamade 2017). In the 1990s, the revolution began with the introduction of electronic records, new information systems, and the growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs). E-records depend on machines, such as computers, which are components of ICTs. In light of this continuous technological advancement, this study on electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare was inspired. Electronic records, which are typically digitized equivalents of traditional paper records, constitute proof of organizational activity, according to Kuligowski (2020). Electronic records are sometimes called digital records, as stated by Kuteesa and Kyotalimye (2019). Electronic records can come from a variety of places, including desktop apps like Word, Excel, and email as well as corporate databases, financial systems, and human resource management systems (Johnston 2017). In contrast, Kuteesa and Kyotalimye (2019) define electronic records management as the administration of records utilizing electronic systems to apply records management principles to physical records including paper, CDs/DVDs, magnetic tape, audio-visual, and other records. Thus, the management of these records is different from the traditional methods of keeping records in hard copies because of the lack of technology such as computers and the internet.

Cummings (2019: 16) asserts that “electronic records are currently attracting relatively more attention than paper-based records because of rapidly growing and changing technology used to create and manage records”. Cummings (2019) further asserts that electronic records are important in that if they are well managed, they are cost-saving, efficient, save space and are easily accessible and manageable. According to a study by Somniso (2019) titled " Financial records, committee section minutes, legal records, employee records, and student records like academic records, certificates, etc. are just a few of the records that universities produce, acquire, and maintain. A case study of the University of Fort Hare and Rhodes University's archives and document management programs in particular South African universities.

Additionally, this accumulation of records contains data from websites, Word/Excel documents, databases, text messages, social media posts, and electronic receipts from purchases. These data sources include SharePoint sites and content management systems. As a consequence, a legally valid schedule for the retention of electronic records must be observed. Electronic records have the same record class (type of record) and retention period as paper records. This holds true for information generated on privately owned devices as well as information stored in email, network drives, the cloud, laptops, and mobile devices. They are also used to keep track of pupil records like academic records and grades.

However, a few challenges concerning electronic records management have been identified. A recent study on integrated records management practices discovered that some institutions have not really understood the importance of records RM (Ajibade and Mutula, 2019). Other problems include, but are not limited to, technological obsolescence, reliability and authenticity risks, loss of security and privacy,

dependence on technology, information decentralization, increased security risk of data and records in electronic format, inadequacy of e-records management specialists, rising costs, a shaky and out-of-date legal framework, and inadequate infrastructure systems (Ambira 2016).

Franks (2018) noted that the production and upkeep of trustworthy records and the preservation of their authenticity throughout time provide the biggest challenge to digital systems. Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016) determined that even though many countries are converting to digital systems from paper-based ones through the use of ICTs, this has led to a decline in the quality, management, and accessibility of recorded information. Read and Ginn (2016) noted that many information technology systems utilized in many universities disregard electronic records management features, which contributes to the difficulties of e-records management.

Cummings (2019) observes that university records are prone to many dangers, including random or arbitrary destruction, improper file management and unprotected from disaster. They also lack effective management principles which safeguard them from creation to final disposition. This call for all universities in the country to adopt electronic records management system that provides backup system for all the records. The lack of electronic records management principles in the university give more scepticism on how the university management and administration as well as professionals, can handle and take administrative decisions (Cummings 2019). It is, therefore imperative to give attention to the management of electronic university records.

1.2 Background of the study

Records management in different sectors either private or public has been dramatically changing. Jeong and Kim (2018) indicated that this is due to development in Information Technology (IT) worldwide. The modern records management has seen dynamism as records move from traditional paper records to more sophisticated electronic records, which have changed the way organisations are supposed to manage records.

Developed nations like the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia are examples of nations that have successfully integrated electronic records management, according to De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martnez (2018). The major proponents of creating, creating, and offering authoritative counsel on all facets of electronic records management are universities in these industrialized nations (Cummings 2019)

Cross and Nye (2017) also found that developed countries like the USA, UK, Germany, and France have been able to use technology to streamline workflow and improve service delivery due to their effective electronic records management due to their high levels of education and computer literacy. Vimalachandran, Wang, Zhang, Heyward, and Whittaker (2018) found that how documents are created, recorded, and maintained affects their accessibility and efficiency when archived and disposed of electronically.

Technological developments in many institutions of higher learning in South Africa have ushered in new media on which new records are held. Recently, the adoption and use of blockchain technology in managing electronic records in South Africa (Ajibade and Mutula, 2022). Ju and Yim (2017: 23) noted that “electronic records are easy to locate and identify due to the new technology used in the records management

system”. Like all other institutions, tertiary institutions must set up records administration programs for their records. This is done in order to handle the creation, acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposal of records in an efficient and organized manner. This includes the processes for compiling and keeping track of university-related data (Ju and Yim 2017).

In addition, researchers like Ambira (2016) have suggested that efficient electronic records management is crucial to the smooth operation of a university's information systems. According to Nyampong (2015: 12), "academic institutions face concerns linked to virus attacks, cyber-attacks, loss of privacy, and enormous commercial data mining," all of which constitute a serious danger to the security of electronic records management. Providing insight into the issue of security risks in ERM. The biggest problems with the management of electronic data in eastern and southern African educational institutions include insufficient security and confidentiality measures, according to a study conducted by Vimalachandran, Wang, Zhang, Heyward, and Whittaker (2018). Kuteesa and Kyotalimye's (2019) research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal confirms this; they discovered that the vast majority of the institutions they studied did not take sufficient measures to safeguard their electronic data. In addition, effective electronic records management has been forestalled by the incompetence of staff employed in these regions such as in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape (Johnston 2017). Ju and Yim (2017) indicated that records managers’ and archivists’ lack of knowledge, skills, and abilities in managing electronic records are some of the major challenges universities encounter.

Records keepers' lack of knowledge about electronic records management, inadequate record keeping equipment, supervisor interference, and low morale as a result of inadequate pay were identified as challenges in the Azameti and Adjei (2013)

study "Challenges in Academic records management in Tertiary Institutions in Ghana." The frequent crashes of hard drivers resulting in the loss of records, the lack of technical assistance for efficient record keeping, and the frequency (2013). Additionally, the study done by Somniso (2019) on “Archives and record management programmes in selected universities in South Africa: a case of University of Fort Hare and Rhodes University” revealed the lack of education of those people who mage records at the university.

Khayundi (2011), Ajibade and Khayundi (2017) and Ajibade and Mutula (2019) have all recommended that training and skills development for records managers should be done continually in tandem with technological innovation and advancement in records management. Furthermore, Johnston (2017) postulated that there is an increase in poor electronic records management in universities, which it is argued could result in many liabilities and problems. However, when it comes to public institutions like universities, evidence seems to suggest that many challenges are incurred in the management of electronic records and negatively impact service delivery and academic excellence (Griffin 2018). Electronic records management has a positive implication in properly safeguarding public records in the universities. This is because records can be safely stored with backup systems. Records can be easily accessed by all the staff members who could need them faster and easily.

1.3 Contextual setting

In Alice, Eastern Cape, South Africa, there is a public institution called the University of Fort Hare. There are three campuses: East London, Bisho, and Alice. The University of Fort Hare was founded in 1916 on the site of the old British military outpost. Since

the researcher already worked for UFH at the Alice campus, she was able to acquire all of the necessary data with relative ease. Electronic records at the University of Fort Hare must be securely managed if the institution is to realize its goal of academic excellence. The university employs personnel who are responsible for the electronic administration of records. The institution provides training to workers in records management so that they can maintain electronic records. This is because most of the records management team lacks the required capabilities to manage electronic records.. Finance, bursary, student records, examinations, central services, information computer technology, university clinic, central services, and registrar are the primary areas at the University of Fort Hare that make use of electronic records.

However, empirical data gathered by the researcher showed that the aforementioned departments had issues with file tracking and inventory, were unable to produce reports from record software that could be put to use, lacked statistics on file usage, had ineffective e-records disposition, and lacked a suitable system for managing electronic records. As a result, the researcher decided it would be beneficial to look into this subject to learn more about the problems with electronic records.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The records continuum paradigm was used in the study to manage electronic documents. The Records Continuum Model emphasizes the ways that record-keeping, evidence, transactions, and creator identification are all related. It serves as an example for recordkeeping and archival research (Atherton, 1985:48). According to the model, keeping documents is a continuous process (Upward 2000:118). According to Atherton (1985), who asserts that the various stages of records are interconnected and form a continuum, records managers and archivists both handle recorded material. Atherton (1985) asserts that the continuum concept places a strong

emphasis on efficient administration. Records are not preserved for later use to guide decisions, ensure accountability, or help future users; instead, they are only kept for current operational needs before being sent to the archives.

The records continuum model, according to Ngoepe (2008:10), does not distinguish between archives and records management duties because current records can be archived as soon as they are created rather than having to wait until they are disposed of. Records life cycle and continuum models, according to Ajibade and Khayundi (2017: 176), "depict the life of a record during its current, semi-current, and non-current phases," though. The model shows how records, including archives, are produced and kept for use and processing as opposed to as ends in and of themselves, according to McKemmish (2001). Under the records continuum paradigm, records managers and archive specialists are in charge of regulating each stage of a record's existence, claims Kemoni (2008:5).

The records continuum approach, according to Upward (2005), represents a significant shift in archive practice that requires breaking with a lengthy history in which continuity was a matter of sequential control. The fundamental nature of record-keeping systems and the longevity of documents within those systems must be integrated into electronic record-keeping processes. Administrative efficiency, according to Atherton (1985), is one of the records continuum model's main concerns. As was previously said, records are not produced to forward the goals of an archivist or even to preserve an important action or decision. They are developed and run to meet urgent operational needs (Atherton 1985). The continuum approach is helpful for keeping track of records in an electronic setting.

The collaborative nature of the design process, where records experts and system designers work together to design the system, is another crucial component of the

Records Continuum Model. Typically, the Records Continuum Model's design process is referred to as the prenatal phase (Ambira 2016: 23). Luthuli and Kalusopa (2017) observed that crucial practices in the electronic environment, as indicated by the life cycle approach, are still applicable despite the records continuum model's generally acknowledged success in describing the life of records. The study into the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare was thus guided by the records continuum paradigm.

1.5 Statement of the problem

Modern computerized record management plays a crucial role in the successful and efficient administration of university records. Electronic records management is essential for the administration of institutions of higher education because it provides documentation of the planning and delivery of relevant course services, allowing for accurate monitoring of activities (Luthuli and Kalusopa 2017: 12). Duranti and Rogers (2016) noted that electronic records, unlike paper records, are physically and mentally costly to manage. This necessitates the allocation of additional resources to the management of electronic records management initiatives. However, in underdeveloped nations, a lack of resources results in unsatisfactory or inadequate electronic records management schemes (Ambira 2017: 12). The major administrative and technical obstacles to electronic records management in Africa, according to Ambira (2016), are these. Only if the necessary infrastructures, effective legal and regulatory frameworks, adequate funding, and skilled ICT employees are in place will Africa be able to reap the benefits of managing hybrid records. According to Cross and Nye, without tackling these prerequisites, implementing technological solutions for electronic records management in Africa will make public records more vulnerable and jeopardize the region's public services (2017). According to Cook's study from

2017, Africa's administrative problems with electronic records can only be resolved if the necessary infrastructures, workplace laws, regulatory frameworks, sufficient funding, and qualified ICT employees are in place. According to Cummings (2019), records in South African colleges are vulnerable to a number of risks, including arbitrary or random destruction, poor file management, and lack of disaster protection. Additionally, they lack sound administration practices that protect them from conception to disposal

However, empirical evidence gathered by the researcher revealed poor management of electronic records at the university, particularly in the registry office, a lack of infrastructure and resources to support electronic records management, and poor service delivery as a result of unprofessional and incompetent personnel within the records management section. In addition, the researcher's empirical findings revealed a shortage of tools, such as PCs and tablets, to maintain electronic documents properly and efficiently. In the absence of adequate tools, institutional policies, and procedures for filing and managing electronic documents, the records' usability, discoverability, and accessibility may be impaired.empiricalempiricalWith regard to the above sentiments, numerous studies on electronic records management have been conducted worldwide including South Africa. The studies pointed to the major problems of electronic records management in government institutions such as courts, tertiary education institutions, police stations and municipalities (Vimalachandran *et al* 2018). Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the role of managing electronic records at the university.

1.6 Research Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the study was to investigate the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare, Alice campus.

1.6.1 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Find out how the electronic records are managed at the University of Fort Hare
2. Find out the available infrastructure for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare
3. Establish staff competencies and skills for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare.
4. Examine the legal and statutory requirements in place for the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare

1.6.2. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. How are the electronic records are managed at the University of Fort Hare?
2. What infrastructure is available for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
3. What are the staff competencies and skills for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
4. What are the legal and statutory requirements in place for the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare?

1.7 Significance of the study

The research is vital as it added knowledge within the management of electronic records at the university of Fort Hare. The study investigated the management of electronic records in the University of Fort Hare and proposed strategies that helped provide solutions to e-records mismanagement and improved service delivery at the University of Fort Hare. This study was significant both theoretically and in policy

formulation as Records Continuum model for electronic records management guided it. Theoretically, it provided a valuable contribution to the scholarly work that has been done on the issue of university record management. Practically, the study may help in the generation of policies to promote the proper management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. The study results are useful for understanding the various ways research is used in policymaking. The study results could influence the decision makers in formulating policy that guides electronic records management. Moreover, the results of the research were used to find the areas that need training in the electronic records management section so that the right on the job training programs can be offered.

1.8 Scope and limitations of the study

The research explores electronic records management with a particular focus on the University of Fort Hare. The study was only limited to the University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus because of the limited time frame and resources available to conduct the study. Moreover, the study was conducted only at the University of Fort Hare, Alice Campus, because the researcher is a university employee. Because the researcher was aware of e-records management issues that posed a danger to university service delivery, the study was limited to electronic records exclusively and did not include paper-based data. There were obstacles that were causing the study to be delayed. The processing was difficult because of Covid 19, yet the researcher followed Covid 19 norms for social distance and masking during data collection. However, some participants were unwilling to participate because they feared direct interaction during the interviews, but the researcher reassured them that safety precautions would be used. Where it became impossible to contact respondents, online platform was used to collect data.

1.9 Definition of Terms

1.9.1 Electronic records According to De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martnez (2018), an electronic record is any sort of information that is created electronically and stored using computer technology.

1.9.2 Electronic records management

Electronic records management is the administration of records in an electronic frame (De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martínez 2018:13).

1.9.3 Records management

Records management is defined as the function of management that is in charge of the efficient and organized supervision of the production, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposal of records, as well as the protocols for gathering and preserving data on and proof of business activities. This meaning was made public by the ISO 15489 standard in 2016.

1.9.4 University

An educational institution that grants degrees and offers instruction and study facilities in a variety of fields of advanced learning (De Mingo and Cerrillo-i-Martnez 2018:12).

1.10. Research Methodology

This study was based upon the positivist paradigm and the interpretive paradigm. The study used both qualitative research approaches. The qualitative research method used was in-depth interviews and descriptive qualitative questions with key respondents in the study area. There are three types of triangulation, philosophical, theoretical and method triangulation (Ajibade, 2018). Triangulation is the measurement of a notion using two or more different approaches. Studies that can

make conceptual or propositional comparisons between quantitative and qualitative findings as opposed to those that only do statistical comparisons are more appropriately referred to as mixed methods studies (Neuman 2007) This means that the design was explorative as well as descriptive in nature (Gary, Boema and Rod 2010: 45)

The investigation's technique of inquiry was a case study. A case study is a type of research methodology used to develop in-depth, multifaceted understanding of a difficult topic in its actual context. Case study research is widely used across academic fields, especially in the social sciences (Babbie 2010). According to Gary et al. (2010), case studies are a sort of research done to address an ambiguous problem. It aids in choosing the most effective technique for data gathering and subject pool. The study population included all the workers in records management and finance sections of University of Fort Hare.

The study respondents were selected from staff the faculty, faculty administrators, exams workers, workers in the registry office, researcher and research assistants, finance officials and human resource department officials. The researcher arrived at the above-mentioned sample size by using purposive sampling for selecting sample for qualitative research. The study qualitative questions main data collection methods were descriptive data from the study population. Respondents for the study were selected using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a part of the sampling technique in which the researcher uses her knowledge to locate people who are suitable to provide needed information regarding a subject. This study adopted purposive sampling for the selection of participants for qualitative data based on the characteristics of the study population. A similar study had adopted this type of sampling technique in a similar study (Ajibade 2018).

In addition, the study employed qualitative questions, interviews, and document analysis for data collection. The qualitative data was evaluated by analysing themes from the coded data based on the study objective. The study topic and objectives are instrumental in determining the broader thematic categories. Detailed evaluation of the data and identification of recurring or noteworthy themes led to the development of certain categories. Categories were provided labels to distinguish their substance and significance. During data analysis, some of the data were presented in descriptive formats. It was displayed in a bar chart, tables, and pie charts so that all comparisons and conclusions could be reached.

1.11. Ethical consideration

The participants taking part in the study gave their informed consent. Prior to their involvement, the subjects were informed of the goals and details of the study. To make sure that participants were interviewed voluntarily and with a sufficient awareness of what the study comprises, the informed consent procedure was carried out.

The researcher gave the subjects the reassurance that their information would remain private and would not be connected to them at the conclusion of the study. The participants were given the assurance that taking part in the research would not have any negative effects and that they could leave at any moment.

According to Neuman (2014), confidentiality is a promise made by a researcher to a respondent in social research that the information they provide to the researcher cannot be used to identify them specifically. This means that no one will be given access to the data that a person provides during data gathering without the informant's permission. The use of pseudonyms during the study procedure helped to ensure anonymity. In order to prevent the information from being used to identify the

respondents, respondents were given a thorough explanation of how it will be handled, including the coding system.

1.12. Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 1: **Introduction and background of the study**

Gave a basic overview of the study, including its background and justification, problem statement, research questions and objectives, and definitions of key words.

Chapter 2: Literature review

It includes a review of the literature on electronic record management, the theoretical framework on which the study is based, the justification for that decision, and criticisms of the theoretical premise.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter described the methods used for the data gathering exercise as well as the research tools selected for the study.

Chapter 4: Data interpretation and analysis

Chapter 4 was based on the interpretation and presentation of findings

Chapter 5: Data interpretation and discussion of the findings

This chapter interprets and discusses the findings obtained from the field

Chapter 6: Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations

Chapter 5 was based on the summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendations and future areas of study.

1.13. Chapter Summary

This chapter gave a summary of the dissertation. It also defines the key terms that were used, as well as the problem, goals, and objectives of the research. It also explains the context in which the choice to conduct the research was made. Additionally, the chapter provides a preview of the other parts that make up the dissertation. In the following chapter, the literature on electronic records in general and academic institutions in particular is examined.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Background information, an explanation of the situation, a theoretical framework, a statement of the problem, goals and questions for the research, a justification for the study, and definitions of key terms were all given in the previous chapter. This chapter aims to broaden the review of the literature on the theoretical foundations underlying the administration of electronic records around the globe. The chapter will also examine the theoretical foundation, the legal framework for records management in the setting of South Africa, and the significance of records management in tertiary institutions of higher learning.

2.2. Literature review

The literature review is a crucial stage in the research process. It aids in clarifying ideas, establishing the study's academic foundations, and developing a research methodology. The literature review helps to integrate findings with the available data later on in the process, as well as to improve and consolidate one's own knowledge base (Boote and Beile 2005). The literature that was consulted for this research is presented in the sections that follow. The objectives outlined in Chapter 1 were used to structure the study. The literature survey is divided into the following topics: the idea of records management, its significance, the handling of electronic records, the conversion of paper records to electronic formats, the infrastructure for information and communication technology, the availability of qualified personnel, and the legal framework that governs records management in South Africa.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

According to Franks (2018: 29), the theoretical framework helps the reader comprehend the suggested type of investigation so that it is informed by established theory and empirical data gathered from credible studies rather than simply being based on intuition or educated guesses. It also offers a convincing justification for carrying out the research. According to Ngulube (2020), study without theory is subpar and lacks a solid foundation. Organizations frequently "do not base their records management methods on existing theories or records management principles" (Ngoepe (2017).

However, in records management, records management theories and methods decide the guidelines that direct researchers' investigations into issues, problems, or concepts. Records management, according to Ambira (2016: 23), has been centered around a particular body of knowledge and is firmly supported by its own theory. The Records Continuum Model provided guidance for the present study.

2.3.1 Records Continuum Model

The study was based upon the records continuum model. The Records Continuum Model's participatory design process, in which records experts and system designers work together to create the system, is its most important characteristic. Usually referred to as the pre-natal period, the Records Continuum Model's design phase (Ambira 2016: 23).Luthuli and Kalusopa (2017) stated that the records continuum model has been successful in explaining the life of records, but that the life cycle approach still represents key activities in the electronic world. The Records Continuum Model emphasizes the overlapping aspects of record-keeping, evidence, transaction, and the creator's identity. It is a model for records administration and archival science

(Atherton, 1985:48). According to the model, maintaining records is a never-ending procedure (Upward 2000:118). Records managers and archivists are both involved in the management of the recorded data, according to Atherton (1985), who asserts that the various stages of records are interconnected and form a continuum. Atherton (1985) asserts that the continuum concept puts a strong emphasis on effective management. Instead of being preserved for later use to guide decisions, ensure accountability, and help future users, records are only kept for current operational needs and then sent to the archives.

Ngoepe (2008:10) attested that the records continuum model lacks "boundaries between archives and records management duties, as current records can also become archives," but instead determines this at the time of creation rather than waiting until the end of the life cycle. According to McKemmish's observation, the model shows that records, including archives, are made and kept for use and procedure rather than as a means in and of themselves (2001). Under the records continuum model, records managers and archival experts are in charge of supervising each stage of a record's existence, according to Kemoni (2008:5).

The records continuum model, according to Upward (2005), represents a major shift in archival practice and calls into question a long-standing convention that viewed continuity as a matter of sequential control. The foundation of record-keeping systems and the lifespan of documents within them must be maintained as part of electronic record-keeping procedures. According to Atherton (1985), the records continuum model's primary focus is administrative effectiveness. Records are not created, as was previously stated, to advance the objectives of an archivist or even to keep a significant event or choice for future generations. They are created and operated to satisfy

pressing business needs (Atherton 1985). The continuum model is helpful for keeping track of data in an electronic setting. The records continuum model served as the theoretical foundation for the research, which examined the management of electronic records.

2.4. The concept of Records management

The term "record management" refers to the branch of management concerned with the orderly and timely handling of records, such as documents containing proof of past activities and dealings in a company (ISO 15489: 2016). Furthermore, record management is described as the process by which an organization controls all aspects of records, from their inception/receipt through their disposal, regardless of whether they were created internally or externally and regardless of the format or media type (Ambira 2016: 23). Ngoepe (2017), on the other hand, defines records management as a "process of controlling organizational information from creation through to its ultimate disposition"

The term "records management" refers to the practice of overseeing and managing a company's archival data via a system of rules and regulations covering anything from organizational structure to employee conduct. This helps the company make the most of one of its most valuable resources by preserving and making easily accessible the records that attest to past actions and choices (Ab Aziz et al 2018).

Managing records entails many different jobs and responsibilities. Many of these tasks are routinely performed by employees and need little more than some basic common sense and adherence to established protocols (Ngoepe 2017). The organization may need to call on external expertise, such as employing a records management consultancy, if the organization's internal knowledge and expertise are insufficient to

make strategic decisions (Ab Aziz et al 2018). Records management is entwined with the management of personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act, information security, and information assurance; neither function can work independently of the other. Records management thrives whenever these connections are recognized within the institutions (Ab Aziz et al 2018).

The term "records management" was used by Franks (2018:19) to describe the process of organizing data so that it may be quickly retrieved when needed, safely stored until its disposal is necessary, and otherwise handled with minimal risk to the organization. Consequently, records management regulates and monitors the record-keeping processes (including creation, upkeep, use, and destruction). The term "records management" refers to the process through which paper and digital documents are overseen from the moment they are created, through their storage and eventual destruction (Ngoepe 2017).

According to Ambira (2016), implementing systematic controls at each stage of the records lifecycle in accordance with accepted records management models and guiding principles is necessary for successful records management. Because university activities rely on access to information in records, good management results from good records administration (Vimalachandran et al 2018).

In terms of identifying the organizational regulatory processes and how records management responsibilities are distributed, Luthuli and Kalusopa (2017) offer a framework for records management. According to Ngoepe, the field of records management is focused on achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, upkeep, use, and disposal of an organization's records throughout their entire life cycle as well as making the information they contain accessible to support an organization's business (2017). 2018 (Ab Aziz et al).

Records management, which Jeong and Kim (2018) define as the branch of management responsible for efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records, includes the processes of gathering and keeping track of evidence and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. The definition emphasizes the evidential nature of records and places records management within the context of the records life-cycle idea. The processes of gathering and keeping track of evidence and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records are included in records management, which Jeong and Kim (2018) define as the branch of management responsible for efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records. Records management is positioned within the context of the concept of the records life-cycle, and the definition emphasizes the evidential character of records. The achievement of the university's vision and purpose, which include teaching, research, consulting, and innovation, depends on competent recordkeeping.

2.4.1. The importance of records management

Records management is done for a variety of purposes. Jeong and Kim (2018) emphasize the following reasons for managing records: A good records management program can ensure that the work, research, and information a worker collects while employed there is documented and managed properly even after the worker has gone. Records management aids in the preservation of corporate memory. (2018) Vimalachandran and others. Records are readily lost once someone leaves a company because most companies frequently hire new employees. This is particularly true if no method, such as a records management system, is in place to assist with recording if the institution had a decent records management program in place, it

would be easy to store every type of record that has been created over a certain amount of time. Additionally, if this occurred, it would be simpler for the institution to have any records created while the previous employee worked there.

Better decision-making is encouraged by record management in a company. A good records management software makes sure that decisions are made using written evidence rather than frequently unreliable memory. Policies and protocols must be put in place to regulate the creation, retention, and disposal of records in order to control their creation and disposal (Vimalachandran et al 2018). A good records management system would make it easier to organize, identify, and dispose of the records that must be kept for ongoing company operations. By improving the administration of an organization's information resources, a good records management system can help cut down on unnecessary expenses by reducing the amount of money spent on supplies and equipment.

Records management is becoming more and more of a priority in businesses, as noted by Franks (2018: 29). Thus, it is the duty of records managers to ensure that their efforts are noticed by those in authority inside their respective businesses. If records management is to be recognized for the value it adds to a business, it must be able to persuade upper-level management that it serves as (Crockett 2016: 56). In order to carry out their official duties and responsibilities in an open and honest fashion, employees need access to relevant information. Organizational records are the primary resources for gathering information and the only source of information that may be used as proof of decisions, activities, and transactions in a court of law. Records management, as argued by Ambira (2016: 86), guarantees that all employees involved in any given process have access to relevant data whenever they need it.

Internal and external audits are just two examples of control systems that can be bolstered by a good records management system, as stated by Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016: 23). Record management in a business fosters better decision-making. Decisions are made using written evidence rather than frequently unreliable memory thanks to excellent records management software. Policies and protocols governing their creation, retention, and disposal must be implemented in order to manage the creation and disposal of records (Vimalachandran et al 2018). The organization, identification, and disposal of the records that must be retained for ongoing business operations would be made simpler by a sound records management system. An effective records management system can assist in reducing unnecessary costs by lowering the amount of money spent on supplies and tools by improving the management of an organization's information resources.

According to Ambira (2016:86), the government will be able to uphold the six essential government requirements of transparency, accountability, due process, administrative compliance, statutory and common law, as well as information security, if it has a sound and suitable information and records management system. All of these government business requirements should be almost entirely satisfied by organizational records management procedures, which will increase the department's or organization's ability to provide services.

According to Hamade, an initiative involving organizational accountability needs to be supported by the availability of reliable and applicable data (2017: 3). The only way the government body will be able to provide an accurate accounting supported by readily available and accessible records is through proper, effective, and efficient records administration in the public sector. This is because the accounting officer can plan and be ready to account quickly and easily thanks to properly managed records.

Records of administrative actions, such as resources acquired, committed, or spent, should be provided in a timely manner and be easily accessible (Luthuli & Kalusopa, 2017). When records are maintained properly, they are filed in accordance with the filing plan or system, making them easy to find when needed. If the filing system is organized, there won't be any misfiling, and documents can be easily retrieved from filing cabinets or shelves by looking up their file or reference number on the filing plan. An easy search can be conducted on the e-records management system for all of the digital files that have been organized and stored in a way that prevents data entry mistakes. Reference numbers, subjects, keywords, and other options for retrieving records that have been programmed into the system can be punched in on the keyboard to bring up the corresponding electronic document.

According to Vimalachandran et al. (2018), poor records administration causes files to accumulate in various offices and hallways. Nyampong (2015: 4) emphasized that thorough document keeping saves time because it is easier to find information. In order to improve administration, the company must also develop a system to monitor its adherence to policies and procedures. To hold non-compliant members accountable, this method should include the records management system audit (Vimalachandran et al. 2018). Since information gives direction for decision-making and accountability, it is essential for the organization to manage its business effectively. This is due to the fact that documents offer a corporate memory to rely on. Given that it records decisions and organizational activities, effective records management practices will guarantee long-term sustainability and good governance of the organization (Vimalachandran et al 2018).

Furthermore, according to Ambira (2016), effective recordkeeping facilitates administrative control within the organization. This is because there are records that

can be found that track and evaluate performance across different organizational divisions. It makes it easy for management and executives to identify oversights, below-par performance, outstanding performance, and improved performance of prior administrative tasks. This might eventually lead to modifications and improvements.

Records can be investigated and used to demonstrate fraud and corruption, as well as to conduct thorough audits and evaluate governmental actions, if they are managed correctly. The institution can trace down and prosecute someone for actions deemed to be fraud and corruption primarily through reliable, authentic, and accurate records. However, without full records, everything could be viewed as incorrect, and it would be challenging to prove. The potential for fraud and corruption is increased by sloppy record keeping. Therefore, effective record keeping is crucial for eliminating corrupt practices (Franks 2018: 73).

2.5. Management of electronic records

Electronic records management is the administration of records in an electronic frame. This includes the creation, use, maintenance, and transfer of electronically made records for the purposes of providing evidence of business activities, according to Franks (2018:132). The word "record" refers to a specific type of data that reflects and provides proof of business processes or individual activities, as noted by Read and Ginn (2016). It does not simply refer to an accumulation of information.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 15489 (2016) defines records management (RM) as the "field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition of records," which includes the processes for recording and maintaining documentation of business activities and transactions. All essential records can be quickly accessed

with ERM whenever they are required. The processes involved in keeping track of the paper and digital documents that serve as evidence of previous actions in an organization are referred to as "records management" (ISO standard 15489: 2016).

For accountability purposes, creating an unbreakable audit trail, assigning unique IDs to individual documents, and offering safeguards against unauthorized changes to those records are all crucial records management capabilities, as mentioned by Ambira (2016). Management of digital data and documents for archival purposes is what's known as electronic records management (ERM). Electronic Records Management (ERM) is a record-keeping system that is used in conjunction with other digital business procedures. ERM makes it possible to increase efficiency by automating more organizational tasks, offering precise auditing, and consistently implementing your records schedules (Ambira 2016).

ERM is a crucial component of every information governance and digital transformation plan, according to Franks (2018: 118). Because ERM initiatives have a history of increasing risk and overhead to projects, many colleges have a strong aversion to them. ERM has a lot to offer the company when it's used in information management initiatives. By automatically capturing document data, electronic record management (ERM) can recognize documents, categorize them, and make it simpler to access them.

According to Franks (2018:132), digital records management makes it easier for records staff to locate the appropriate information when they need it, ensure information is captured, and older copies are deleted. Understanding previous judgments, responding to requests, and finding all pertinent evidence swiftly are all made easier. ERM also assists in achieving and quickly demonstrating compliance

with internal policies and outside requirements, allowing an organization to resume fulfilling its purpose.

2.6. Change of paper records to electronic format

As the world keep on changing, also there is transformation of paper records to electronic shape. Such changes are frequently performed with the purpose of sparing stockpiling costs, storage room and with expectations of decreasing records recovery time (International Organization for Standardization – ISO 15489-2016). Therefore, devices such as report scanners, optical character acknowledgment programming and electronic archive administration frameworks are utilized to encourage such transformations.

Computerization of records is used to lessen record loss and misplacement, claim Ab Aziz et al. (2018). Ab Aziz et al. (2018) found that electronic records management makes it easier to retrieve file records in their research on the management of university records. He added that information is accessible more swiftly and conveniently through remote electronic access to student files. Information that would typically take days or weeks to obtain if only paper files were available can now be retrieved in a matter of minutes with a remote electronic system.

Franks (2018) contends that electronic records have many benefits over paper ones as a paperless option. Such a text can be viewed concurrently by multiple people. The computer file room system has connections accessible for the electronic papers. The expensive paper processing stages are eliminated. Records in computerized form are said to be lost very infrequently, if at all. According to Wang (2015), computerization in an organization helps to lower storage costs, improve record retrieval, access, and reaction times.

Developed nations like the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia are examples of nations that have effectively implemented computerization in the majority of their institutions, according to Franks (2018: 11). They stated that the use of the electronic filing system helps to lessen the significant workload associated with managing physical files and the ongoing expenses associated with keeping official records. According to Franks (2018), these developed countries' archival institutions are the main proponents of creating, establishing, and offering authoritative advice on all facets of ERM.

According to a study by Ambira (2016), Asian nations have succeeded in using technology to improve service delivery and streamline workflow thanks to their high levels of education and computer literacy. This is something that many governments and organizations around the globe aspire to. Whether they are in paper or electronic form, papers, in the opinion of Hamade (2017), must adhere to a number of requirements. For users to feel confident that records are genuine and reliable, Hamade. (2017) note out that the authenticity and integrity of records must be guaranteed. According to Vimalachandran et al (2018: 45), staff members occasionally had to spend more time searching for documents and information because they might have been incorrectly categorized and filed. Nothing is more annoying, according to Ambira (2016), than trying to locate a record. Franks (2018) argued in favor of this point by pointing out how time-consuming it can be to look for lost records and how efficient tracking procedures, like the use of bar codes and radio frequency identification devices, can save staff members' time.

The aim of tracking records, according to Ambira (2016), is to capture their movement so that the organization can always know where its records are. They further contend that tracking can be used to keep track of how data are being used and to keep a system's audit trail. They think that using tracking will guarantee that a specific document is handled by the designated person by a particular date.

2.7. Information and Communication Technology infrastructure

Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016: 25) claim that an organization needs information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in order to manage its records effectively. Ngoepe (2017) noted the need for amenities like internet-connected computers, fax machines, photocopiers, and phones. According to the author, such systems should be implemented to guarantee coordination among all the important parties involved in the life of a record. Therefore, offices must build up strategies and systems to guarantee that electronic records and their documentation are held in a safe manner. Offices are required to incorporate electronic records administration goals, obligations, and experts in office mandates or principles as pertinent (Crockett 2016: 12).

ICT has been adopted by many nations worldwide, according to the research done by Franks (2018). They point out that many institutions, particularly colleges, have adopted digital recording devices and transcription systems in African nations like South Africa and Rwanda.

Electronic documents are stored in a wide range of hardware and geographical locations. Out-of-office updates to electronic files can be made on any device with a USB port, including laptops, tablets, and smartphones. Additionally, staff members

can keep files on CDs, floppy disks, and the hard drives of their personal computers. Control mechanisms, such as access monitoring, user verification, and authorized security, must be put in place to safeguard electronic records at universities (ISO 15489-1: 2016).

A great opportunity to improve business operations in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in business transactions at the individual and governmental levels is provided by the use of electronic communication between universities and their stakeholders, which will improve management of universities and organizations (Ambira 2016). In an electronic setting, the ISO 15489-1: (2016) allows for record-keeping systems can be programmed to automatically register new records, complete with any necessary metadata and a brief description of the record. The assistance of experts in records management is essential for this to happen. University systems would thus produce enormous quantities of electronic documents that would be extremely difficult to manage, secure, retrieve, and disseminate for decision making purposes.

2.8. Knowledge, skills and competencies of records personnel

Effective management of records in electronic or manual bases requires the skilled personnel (Read and Ginn 2016). Thus, organizations require the skill of the workers and other records management (RM) staff, IT staff, lawful staff, and records overseers. IT assumes a crucial part in keeping up electronic records as they make and keep up the foundation on which the records dwell and it is critical for key staff to cooperate to guarantee that electronic data is accessible, safeguarded, and discarded by appropriate laws and guidelines.

ISO 15489-1: (2016) pointed out that there are skills that should be possessed by electronic records manager. One of the skills is information management skills. These competencies are required to handle information as a valuable asset. Regardless of their position, information professionals must have a deeper awareness of information management issues and views that extends beyond the restricted boundaries of their function and role. The second skill is privacy and data protection. The success of an organization's information governance relies heavily on how well they handle this aspect of the process. Numerous rules and regulations have already been implemented, and more appear to be published daily. There are technological aspects and local rules to consider, but the basics can be used universally (ISO 15489-1: 2016). The third skill is domain skills. Depending on the type of company, domain skills vary, but different industries employ various technologies, employ various business procedures, and function in various regulatory environments. Professional abilities come last. Generally speaking, these abilities are applicable regardless of the position or function. They can greatly advance the success of that position, and their absence will result in subpar service delivery (ISO 15489-1: 2016)

2.9. Legislative Framework for Records Management in South Africa.

The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa is mandated by law to supervise the government's general records management strategy, as stated in the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act of 1996. The South African Constitution's Section 195 (1) (b), (f), and (g) mandates, among other things, the effective, economical, and efficient use of resources, the supply of timely, accessible, and accurate information, and the accountability of public administration (Ab Aziz et al

2018: 56). To give effect to the provisions in this section, national law must be passed, according to the constitution.

In this situation, effective records management enables government organizations to adhere to the good governance principles set forth in Section 195 of the South African Constitution. To ensure proper administration and care of all public documents, the National Archives and Record Service of South Africa Act (No.43 of 1996) as amended was specifically created with this goal in mind. It seeks to advance effective leadership and efficiency by ensuring good records management (Wang 2015: 21). Furthermore, it seeks to ensure the long-term preservation of records that have long-term value for the government and society as a whole as a significant component of national archival heritage.

According to Wang (2015: 59), the National Archivist is tasked by the Act with ensuring the proper management and care of public documents held by government entities. It states that without the explicit written consent of the National Archivist, no governmental agency may move public records to a storage facility, destroy them, delete them, or otherwise dispose of them. The National Archivist is in charge of all electronic records under the Act (Ab Aziz et al 2018: 56). This gives the National Archives the ability to require the implementation of procedures and systems that will ensure that archival records are located while still being usable and are then correctly preserved. The National Archivist must make decisions regarding the classification of records to be used by government agencies, the conditions under which records may be microfilmed or electronically reproduced, and the standards for managing electronic records systems, as per Section 13(b)(i)-(ii) of the Act.

According to Aziz et al. (2018), the National Archives of South Africa's purpose, established in 2005, is to preserve a national archival heritage for use by the country's government and citizens while supporting efficient, responsible, and open government. Record-creating organizations, record users, and the National Archives and Records Service should all share accountability for managing records, according to the National Archives of South Africa (2005). (Ab Aziz et al 2018: 56).

2.9.1. Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) No. 1 of 1999

Public Finance Management Act No. 1 0f 1999 (PFMA) was enacted to regulate financial management in the public service and to prevent corruption (Read and Ginn 2016: 23). Franks (2018) claims that the PFMA is used to ensure that financial resources are properly managed in governmental organizations. Proper records management is used to determine whether proper or improper resource management has occurred in order to eventually maintain or correct the status..

The primary goal of this law is to guarantee efficient, responsible, and ethical resource administration within governmental institutions (Aziz et al 2018: 56). Additionally, it is used to direct public institutions to maintain complete and accurate financial records for the accounting officer of that government entity to review. The HOD of a constitutional organization is an accounting officer, according to Section 36(2) of the PFMA, whose responsibility it is to maintain accurate records of the department's financial information in accordance with established norms and standards (Franks 2018: 52). According to Franks (2018), top managers can provide the Auditor-General with trustworthy and accurate financial statements when they maintain complete and sound records.

2.9.2. The Promotion of Access to Information Act (ACT. NO. 2 OF 2000)

According to Crockett (2016: 56), the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) highlights the significance of effective recordkeeping. The PAIA was enacted in order to promote and enforce public access to data held by organizations or government entities. The PAIA was put into place, in accordance with the South African National Archives and Records Service (2006: 3), to promote "transparency, accountability, and effective governance by empowering and educating the public to understand and exercise their rights," as well as to efficiently examine and participate in public bodies' decision-making that affects their rights. The information officer of any university must, however, reply to information requests within 30 days of receiving them, according to Section 25 of the act. This holds true whether or not the material is approved. As the requester must wait 30 days for a response, Ambira (2016:10) claimed that this may lead to a complaint from the requester. To guarantee a timely and speedier retrieval of records sought in universities, proper records management must be practiced.

This will help to prevent records management obstacles like incorrect file filing and lost files. An organization's file-tracking system will be proper as a result of proper document keeping. Furthermore, it is unacceptable for governmental organizations to restrict public access to information or documents just because they are in an electronic format. The governing authority is in charge of making sure those records are consistently accessible, complete, and available. With the knowledge that their institution is using appropriate management of electronic records, this is feasible. It is recommended that appropriate record keeping procedures and disposal documentation be followed in electronic records management (Vimalachandran et al 2018)

2.9.3. The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (ACT. NO. 3 OF 2000)

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act (PAJA) was created to make sure that administrative actions were fair, reasonable, and legal as well as that they were accurately documented in accordance with section 33 of the South African Constitution of 1996. According to Section 5, any person whose rights have been significantly and adversely affected by an administrative action may ask the administrator to provide written justification. 2018 (Vimalachandran et al). Administrative actions must provide justification for their decisions within 90 days of receiving the request in order to prevent the perception that they were made arbitrarily.

However, the act also grants the right to request written justifications for these actions to anyone who has been the target of public administrative actions. If the administrative official or organization doesn't give written justification, it may be determined that the administrative actions weren't fair, reasonable, or legal, and they could face legal repercussions. Let's say the citizen does not get a favorable or

satisfactory answer. In that situation, he or she may decide to sue the relevant administrator or governmental agency (Ambira 2016: 25). The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa must give a written disposal permission before any record, including an email, is destroyed, so that the heads of colleges can avoid this scenario. When records are properly destroyed with permission, this protects the government body in case it is necessary for them to defend or prove administrative decisions (National Archives and Records Service of South Africa 2006:3).

There is a focus on the requirement for appropriate records management policies and laws. Nengomasha (2018) claims that developing policies and strategies for dealing with electronic documents is one of the main ways to handle them. In this regard, it has been claimed that the failure to capture and maintain electronic records in higher education schools in eastern and southern Africa is due, among other things, to a lack of policies and procedures. A lot of universities don't adhere to the right rules, and some don't even have plans for implementing the right electronic records administration.

2.9.4. Electronic Communications and Transactions Act (No. 25 of 2002)

Data communications that can be proven to be valid and reliable as factual proof of a transaction beyond a reasonable question are legally admissible documents under the ECTA (No. 25 of 2002). The Act's goal is to increase confidence in electronic records by making electronic conversations and transactions legitimate. Thus, the credibility of electronic documents, such as emails, would depend on factors such as how well the sender and the recipient handled the information. Therefore, government organizations run the risk of having the weight of their electronic records, including

emails, reduced if they lack a records management and email plan as well as a trustworthy and secure record keeping system (NARSSA 2007).

2.10. Challenges of managing electronic records

Using electronic means of communication between colleges and their stakeholders presents a significant opportunity to improve business operations in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in business transactions at the individual and governmental levels. This will enhance how groups and universities are run (Ambira 2016).Despite the obvious advantages of electronic document keeping, there are some challenges to overcome. Obsolescence of technology, risks to authenticity and reliability, loss of security and privacy, reliance on technology, decentralization of information, increased security risk of data and records in electronic format, insufficient e-records management specialists, higher costs, a lax and antiquated legal framework, and inadequate infrastructure systems are just a few of the challenges. Ambira (2016). Franks (2018) claims that creating and maintaining reliable records and preserving their authenticity over time is the biggest challenge confronting digital systems. Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016) found that although many countries are converting to digital systems from paper-based ones through the use of ICTs, this has led to a decline in the quality, administration, and accessibility of stored information. According to Read and Ginn (2016), the problems with electronic records management are made worse by the reality that many information technology systems developed by organizations and governments ignore electronic records management considerations. Cummings (2019) asserts that records in universities are prone to many dangers including random or arbitrary destruction, improper file management and unprotected from disaster. They also lack effective management principles which safeguard them from creation to final disposition. This call for all universities in the

country to adopt electronic records management system that provides backup system for all the records. Lack of electronic records management principles in the university give more scepticism on how the university management and administration as well as professionals can handle and take administrative decisions (Cummings 2019: 2). It is therefore imperative to give attention to the management of electronic university records.

Furthermore, academics like Ambira (2016: 56) have argued that effective management of an institution's data and information can be greatly improved with appropriate electronic records management. Nyampong (2015: 12) opined that "academic institutions such as South African universities have problems relating to virus attacks, cyber-attacks, lack of privacy and immense commercial data mining and these challenges pose a major threat to electronic records management". Vimalachandran et al. (2018) noted that inadequate security and confidentiality controls are the main drawbacks in the management of electronic documents in eastern and southern African educational institutions when commenting on the issue of security threats on that management. This is also supported by Kuteesa and Kyotalimye (2019) whose study in the University of KwaZulu-Natal found out that most of the institutions they surveyed did not adequately protect and secure their electronic records.

2.11. Research gap

A study gap regarding the use of electronic records in public institutions, like universities, has been identified by the researcher. Using the Records Continuum Model, this chapter investigated the significance of managing electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. The study proposal included a review of the empirical literature on managing electronic records. The analysis of empirical literature has

amply demonstrated the significance of electronic records management, particularly with regard to how records are handled to enhance university service delivery. When managing electronic documents, records officers must surmount challenges. The review went on to discuss the importance of electronic records management policies, standards, protocols, and best practices for maintaining an organization's viability and efficiency. In light of this, the purpose of this study was to identify strategies for enhancing the administration of electronic records in universities.

2.12. Chapter Summary

The chapter looked into the records administration literature. The management of electronic records has received significant consideration in a critical review of the local and international records management literature. Additionally, the theoretical framework for this research has been discussed. More specifically, the South African legal framework for records administration has been discussed. The study methodology and design are covered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The literature pertaining to this study was reviewed in the prior chapter. The research methodology and techniques used to carry out this study are covered in this part. This research looked into the University of Fort Hare's Alice Campus's electronic records management. The objectives of the study were:

- Find out how the electronic records are managed at the University of Fort Hare
- Find out the available infrastructure for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare
- Establish staff competencies and skills for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare.
- Examine the legal and statutory requirements in place for the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare

This chapter covers a variety of subjects, such as research methodology, sample approaches, data gathering techniques, data analysis, and the reliability and validity of the methodologies employed in the study. In addition to describing and defending each methodology, the chapter also looked into the philosophical underpinnings of the research approaches used. This included sample techniques, data gathering tools, and the justifications for choosing those methodologies over alternatives. In this study, the researcher combined qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.2 Philosophies/paradigms

The term "research paradigm" refers to the core ideas and theoretical foundations that support research and advancement in a given field of study. (Neuman 2006; Ajibade 2018). According to Parahoo (2006), a research paradigm is a method for taking a broad view of the world or for dissecting the complexities of the real world in order to make ideas more understandable. In this sense, a research paradigm is a set of presumptions that, generally speaking, guide behavior, particularly in the context of systematic inquiry in a wider sense, defining how a specific problem should be investigated and understood (Creswell 2013). Explaining how the world functions, how information is gathered from this environment, and how to think, write, and talk about this knowledge are the main duties of a paradigm (Neuman 2007).

For its part, the positivist paradigm is a different idea that yields beneficial outcomes; specifically, it relies on empirical evidence gleaned from experiments and tests (Creswell 2013). With data from in-depth narratives gathered from first-hand observation, in-depth open-ended interviews, and case studies, the interpretive research paradigm seeks to understand human potential through empathetic introspection and reflection (Cooper and Schindler 2003). The critical paradigm attempts to strengthen democracy with a focus on oppression by altering a set of

predetermined attitudes and systems that are political, cultural, economic, ethical, and other societally-oriented (Creswell 2013). This study was built on the positivist paradigm (quantitative research) and the interpretive paradigm in this respect (qualitative research). Therefore, both paradigms helped to contextualize the methodological frameworks of the study under investigation.

3.3 Qualitative and quantitative research approaches

In-depth interviews were used as a qualitative research approach, and qualitative questions were employed as a quantitative research method, with important respondents in the study region. Because of this, we can infer that triangulation was employed. Triangulation is the process of combining data from several sources to increase the reliability and accuracy of a study's conclusions. The term "triangulation" refers to the process of comparing results from multiple studies that measure the same variable. The phrase "mixed methods study" should actually be used to describe studies that contrast quantitative and qualitative data conceptually or propositionally rather than statistically (Neuman 2007). We triangulated our data since each source complements the others, yielding more reliable results. The design was exploratory and descriptive in character (Gary, Boema, and Rod 2010: 45), and the respondents provided qualitative information.

3.3.1 Qualitative research approach

Qualitative research methodology is an approach of inquiry that aims to provide a complete, largely textual description of a social or societal phenomenon to inform the researcher's understanding of it (Hall 2008). By pointing out that qualitative research is frequently connected with the idea that social life is the outcome of social interactions, connections, and acts that describe the social world, Babbie (2010)

reinforced the concept of the qualitative approach. This suggests that qualitative researchers look at things in their original contexts and try to understand or interpret events based on the meanings that people give to them. For this reason, a qualitative research approach was deemed appropriate because it emphasizes the significance of the social context for comprehending the social world. This is because the study was conducted in a natural setting with the interviewed respondents to provide insight on records management.

Qualitative method helped to explore the underpinning factors associated with the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. Thus according to Holloway and According to Wheeler (2013), qualitative research is a method of social inquiry that focuses on how individuals understand and make sense of their surroundings and the environment they inhabit. The approach is important to explore people's behaviour, perspectives, experiences and feelings and emphasise the understanding of these elements. In addition, qualitative research is defined by Hall (2008) as a system of inquiry that tries to construct a holistic, mostly narrative account in order to inform the researcher's comprehension of a social phenomenon.

The researcher contends that the concept of social context is of more significance while conducting qualitative research since pertinent data can be collected directly and accurately from the context of the phenomenon being studied. Silverman (2005) suggested that "the methodologies used by qualitative researchers reflect a prevalent conviction that they might offer a deeper comprehension of social phenomena."

3.3.2 Quantitative research approach

A survey was employed in this study to determine the relationships between the variables. According to Baker and Edwards (2012), a survey is the process of

gathering data from a sample of people via their answers to queries. Since the research is partly quantitative in nature, numerical data were produced using the survey design. The survey method was chosen by the researcher because it is less expensive, simpler, and allows interviewees to self-administer the qualitative questions. The survey's quality was appropriate for the kind of knowledge that the study aimed to create because the respondents honestly expressed their viewpoints and filled out the questionnaire without the researcher's influence.

Neuman (2014) indicated that quantitative research deals with an abstraction of reality rather than with everyday life. This implies that observation of what can be measured objectively is the focus of quantitative research. Hard data or data that takes the shape of numbers is used in quantitative research. The data collected for this dissertation was expressed numerically and was the result of a quantitative research strategy. The University of Fort Hare used the quantitative study design to collect data on how electronic records are managed there.

3.4 Research design

In order to ensure that the research topic is addressed, the various components of a study must be integrated in a cohesive and logical manner. This is known as the research design. It provides the framework for data gathering, measurement, and analysis (Neuman 2014: 25). This study utilized a case study methodology. A case study is a type of research design that is employed to create a thorough, multifaceted understanding of a challenging topic in its practical setting. Case study research methodologies are widely used in many academic disciplines, particularly the social sciences (Babbie 2010) According to Gary et al. (2010), case studies are a sort of

research done on a problem that hasn't been precisely described. It aids in choosing the most effective approach for gathering data and topic

3.4.1 Population

The group of the study consists of everyone who might be selected as a research sample. According to Hair, Wolfinbarger, Ortinau, and Bush, a population is a group of people whose interests can be determined by the researcher and are connected to the phenomenon under study (2008). It involves defining the group being studied, outlining the components that apply to the target group and those that are not (Hansen, 2006). All employees of the finance and registry departments at the University of Fort Hare as well as all other workers whose occupations entail dealing with records made up the study's population.

3.4.2 Sample and sampling procedures

A sample is a portion of the population that can be generalized to the entire population and is representative of the community that is being studied as a whole, according to Gall (2007: 22). The primary requirement for a sample is that it must be representative of the community being studied (Braxton and McClendon, 2001: 02).The study draw it sample from respondents from faculty staff, faculty administrators, exams workers, workers in the registrar office, researcher and research assistants, finance officials and human resource department officials. In a qualitative study, context is more important than statistical analysis, hence, it is not important to have a large sample (Ajibade, 2018). The researcher arrived at the above-mentioned sample size by using purposive sampling for qualitative research and purposive sampling for selecting sample for qualitative research. The study sample size was 25 to elicit responses for the qualitative questions through interviews with employees who daily routine entails

dealing with records management within the University of Fort Hare. Respondents for quantitative research were selected using random sampling. The researcher can choose respondents using the purposeful sampling method without having to worry about everyone having an equal chance of being selected (Ajibade, 2018). A randomly selected sample is intended to be a fair representation of the entire community (Neuman, 2006). This study adopted purposive sampling for selection of participants for qualitative data based on the characteristics of the study population. The decision to select samples with the most pertinent or typical characteristics of the population is made entirely by the researcher using the principles of purposeful sampling (Flick 2007). Purposive sampling has the benefit of increasing the possibility that any common variability in social phenomena will be shown in the data (Creswell 2009).

3.5 Data collection procedures

The data sources, also known as data collecting methods, are the means by which data is gathered. For qualitative data, this often takes the form of observation, surveys, interviews, and examinations of artifacts and documents (Recker 2013).

3.5.1 Qualitative questions

A questionnaire was employed in this investigation. A questionnaire or social survey is a common research technique that entails a list of questions, according to Baker and Edwards (2012). The questionnaire was broken up into thematic areas, such as demographic information about respondents (mostly closed-ended questions, with a few open-ended ones); awareness and knowledge of electronic records management (closed-ended questions); compliances and good records practices (mostly closed-ended questions, with a few open-ended ones); and difficulties and recommendations with records management (all open-ended questions).

3.5.2 Interviews

The researcher conducted semi structured face to face interviews with the participants and the questions were open ended questions to gather data on e-records at UFH. According to Baker and Edwards (2012), conducting in-depth individual interviews with 10 or less participants is a qualitative research technique that entails learning about participants' opinions on a certain concept, initiative, or circumstance. In the current study, the interview guide made up of different questions that are demographic characteristics of the participants and questions based on electronic records management. In the process of data collection based on electronic records management, the study purposively selected 10 employees, three from each department that are records management, operations, and information management and 1 was the registrar. The interviews lasted for 15 to 30 minutes, and the researcher was using tape recorder to record audio responses from the interviewees. The interviewer got consent from all participants before data collection process.

3.5.3 Document analysis

When conducting a document analysis, the researcher reads and explains papers to shed light on the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell 2009). Like the study of focus group or interview transcripts, document analysis uses content coding to group material into themes (Braun and Clarke 2013). The documents that were reviewed during the current study are records management policy, information technology policy, service delivery charter, annual reports, performance management plan and strategic plans. The researcher obtained the information from University of Fort Hare website that is free platform for all.

3.6 Data analysis

Data analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2013), entails dissecting the information into digestible themes, patterns, trends, and linkages. The two main objectives of data analysis are to comprehend the various elements that make up one's data and to ascertain whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified, isolated, or grouped into topics for interpretation. The researcher had to categorize, arrange, change, and summarize the data in order to respond to research questions.

In order to create themes from qualitative data, the researcher coded the information, dividing it into general and detailed categories. The broad categories are based on the study topic and goal. Particular categories were created after a thorough analysis of the data and the discovery of recurring or noteworthy themes. Labels were used to make the categories' substance and meaning more clear. This indicates that the interviewees provided information that was quite detailed. The information gathered was utilized to find themes in interviewees' responses.

On the other hand, during data analysis, descriptive data took the form of statistical and tabular modes. Pie charts, tables, and bar charts were used to convey descriptive data so that comparisons could be made and conclusions could be reached. Microsoft Excel 2016 was used to analyze demographic data.

3.7 Trustworthiness and credibility

Babbie and Mouton (2005: 277) also concur that the concept of the objectivity and dependability of a study's conclusions may be found to be the basic standard or guideline of sound research. Flick (2007) argues that qualitative researchers must exercise caution as positivists to ensure the validity and reliability of their studies, even

if they use alternative terminology like credibility and authenticity to describe the qualities that establish the trustworthiness of their investigations. There are four criteria that help determine whether something is reliable: dependability (which reassures the public that the action will be appropriate and not biased), credibility (which considers the relationship between findings and data gathered), transferability, and conformability (Lee and Lings 2008). The study maintained its credibility and trustworthiness by ensuring that the research tools can measure what is intended to be evaluated even if it can be repeated numerous times.

3.8 Reliability and validity

Whether an item measures or describes what it is intended to measure or describe depends on the idea validity. While reliability is the consistency and dependability of a study instrument in measuring a particular variable, validity is the ability of an instrument to measure the variables that it is meant to measure (Flick 2007). Before data collection began, the researcher's supervisor had access to the study's instruments. Additionally, Creswell (2003) defined a research instrument's validity as having the capacity and range to quantify the variables that the instrument was designed to evaluate during the research process. Regarding the reliability of the instruments, there are three basic concerns. The population to be tested, the test's format, and the goal of the study are the three considerations. Thus, a valid instrument should assess all the desired parameters and provide the appropriate response to the questions (Creswell 2003) To attain validity of the instruments, the researcher consulted the supervisor in the construction of the questions.

The consistency and repeatability of a research instrument's measurements is referred to as reliability (Maxwell 2005: 254). According to Flick (2007: 25), proving validity is sufficient to demonstrate reliability because there can be no dependability without it. Hence, consistent results when conducted on a same sample of respondents in a consistent setting describe reliable research. The researcher provided the respondents with qualitative questions to respond to in order to assure reliability in this study. The researcher also took into account all pertinent information that could lead to favorable results. There were just two possible responses on the questionnaire: yes or no. In order to ensure the validity of the study, the respondents were given the opportunity to support their selection of responses.

3.9 Ethical considerations.

Ethical considerations are very important in any study. The researcher before collecting data from the participants, applied for an Ethical Clearance Certificate which the High Degrees Committee at the institution issues. This certificate enables the researcher to gather data in accordance with research ethics. Those taking part in the study also provided their informed consent. Prior to their involvement, the subjects were informed of the goals and details of the study. To make sure that participants were interviewed voluntarily and with a sufficient awareness of what the study comprises, the informed consent procedure was carried out.

The researcher gave the participants assurances that the data's anonymity was upheld. Additionally, the entire set of data was only used for academic reasons before being destroyed at the end of the investigation. The participants were informed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw their consent at any time.

According to Neuman (2014), confidentiality refers to the assurance given by a researcher to a respondent in social research that no information provided by the respondent can be used to identify that respondent. This means that no one else will be given access to the information a person provides during data collection without the informant's consent. The use of pseudonyms during the study procedure helped to ensure anonymity. In order to prevent the information from being used to identify the respondents, respondents were given a thorough explanation of how it will be handled, including the coding system.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has covered the broad overview of the methods used in this study. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative research techniques, which fall under the positivist and interpretive paradigms. This enables the researcher to gather both subjective and objectively logical viewpoints on the phenomenon under study. In-depth interviews and survey qualitative questions were the research tools used. Discussions included the study's population, sample size, sampling method, as well as the ethical issues that needed to be addressed. The part also focused on the approaches taken to address the validity, reliability, and trustworthiness issues. The next chapter presents the results of the participant data's evaluation and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

The research technique and the rationale for the methods employed in this study were covered in the preceding chapter. The empirical conclusions that were derived from the study's results are presented in this chapter. The study's results will be presented in this chapter, and the presentation will be done in the same way that the goals of the study were described.

This study aimed to investigate the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How are electronic records managed at the University of Fort Hare?
2. What infrastructure is available for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
3. What are the staff competencies and skills for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
4. What are the legal and statutory requirements in place for the management of electronic records at University of Fort Hare?

4.2 Response rate

In this study, 40 individuals comprised of 17 males and 23 females from human resource department, examinations department, registrar's office, research, finance and student affairs department participated in the study. The qualitative descriptive questions were purposively issued to collect data from 30 respondents. As ealier reiterated, this measure was important due to Covid-19 strict lockdown of all universities in South Africa. Also, there was an active no-contact, social distancing rules, which makes it practically impossible to meet respondents. For this reason, part of the interview used online tools for the interview data gathering. A total of 25 (83%) qualitative questions were completed and returned, while all 10 (100%) participants were interviewed. Using Microsoft Excel 2016, the qualitative data was thematically analyzed, and the descriptive data was categorized and examined.

4.3 Section A: Demographic information

The traits of the respondents who took part in responding to the study's qualitative questions are described in this portion. Respondents were questioned about personal information including their job title, time spent in the role, educational background, and university departments.

4.3.1. Department

The respondents were requested to identify their departments in this section. Figure 1 shows that 9 (36%) respondents working in human resources department, 5 (20%) respondents working in exams, a further 4 (16%) respondents working in the registrar's office, 3 (12%) respondents working in the research department, 2 (8%) respondents working in finance and 2 (8%) respondents worked in student affairs department.

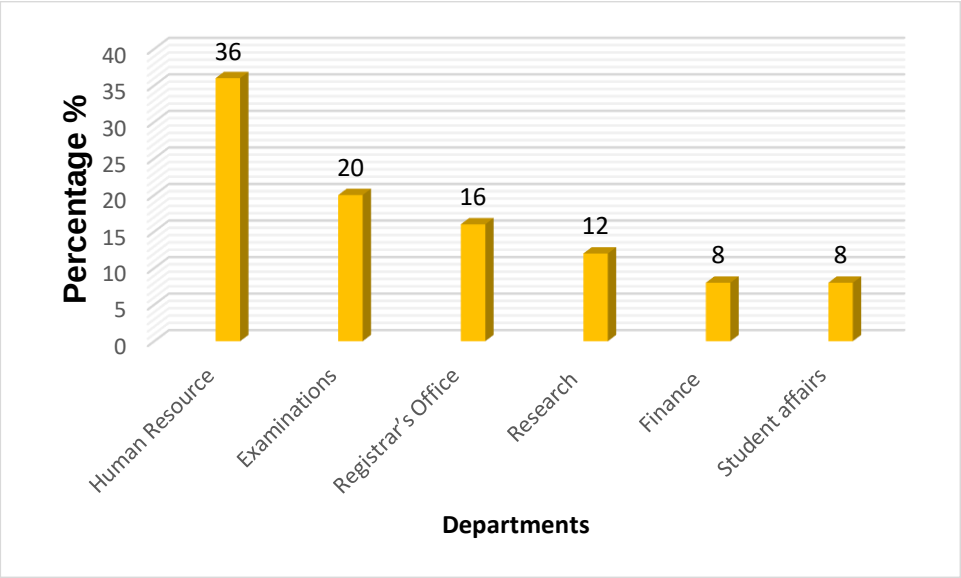


Figure 1: Departments at the University of Fort Hare [n=25]

Source: Field data 2019

4.3.2 Education Qualification

The organization is responsible for providing services to the community, which are typically supported by documentation. As a result, those who are trusted with the institution's operation should have attained the necessary degrees of formal education. As a result, the researcher was curious about the degrees of training held by those providing services at the institution. Analysis of the interviewees' educational backgrounds showed that 12 (48%) had a first degree, 8 (32%) had a diploma, and 5 (20%) had a matriculation certificate. According to the findings, 80% of the interviewees had a degree. Results are shown in Figure 2:

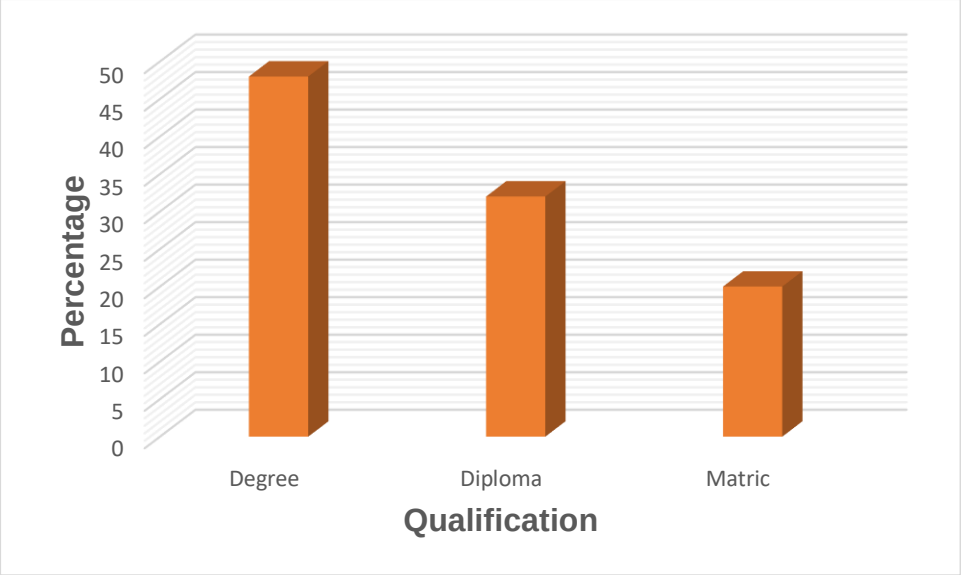


Figure 2: Education Qualification [n=25]

Source: Field data 2019

4.3.3. Position

Finding out who was in control of managing electronic records at the University of Fort Hare was the study's main goal. The respondents were therefore asked to list the positions they occupied at the University of Fort Hare. The results showed that eight respondents (32%) were senior managers while seventeen (68%) were administrators (manager of the Govan Mbeki Research and Development Center, committees' manager, faculty manager of education, faculty manager of management and commerce, faculty assistant manager of management and commerce) (GMRDC)

4.3.4. Period in the post

It was determined that 4 (16%) of the interviewees had experience working for 0–4 years, 9 (36%) had experience working for 5–9 years, 7 (28%) had experience working for 10–14 years, 3 (12%) had experience working for 15–19 years, and 2 (8%) had experience working for 20 years or more. Figure 2 show the results:

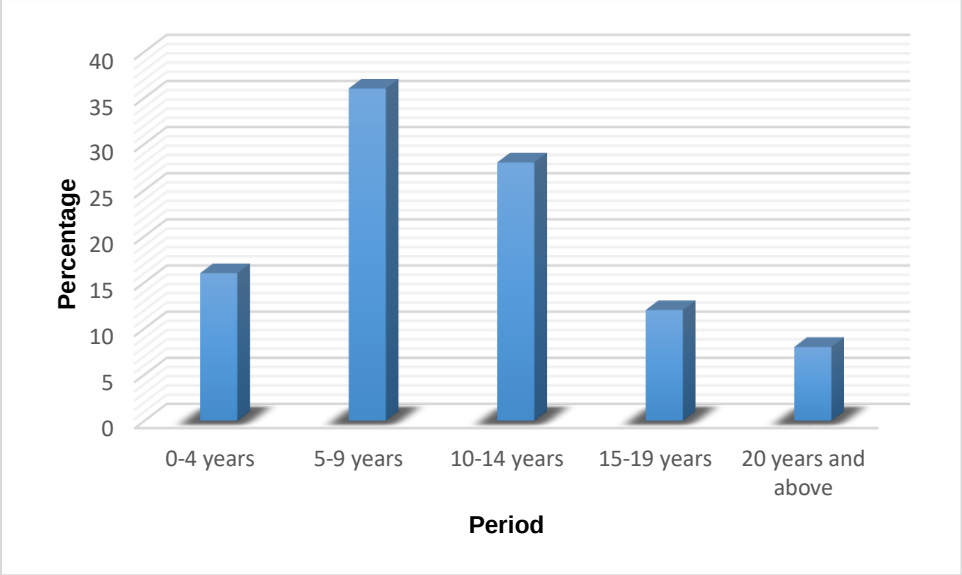


Figure 3: Period on the post [n=25]

Source: Field data 2019

Electronic records management (ERM) is an important part of modern university workflow and a growing topic in the digital age. The purpose of this subsection of the research is to present the thematic findings on ERM in the context of official obligations at a university. The following four major questions about electronic records management through a qualitative examination of the experiences of university employees were address. These issues include managing electronic records on a daily basis, storing electronic records, sharing electronic records for professional reasons, and the accessibility of electronic content within university systems. Our goal is to obtain a better knowledge of the university's current ERM processes and suggest areas for improvement.

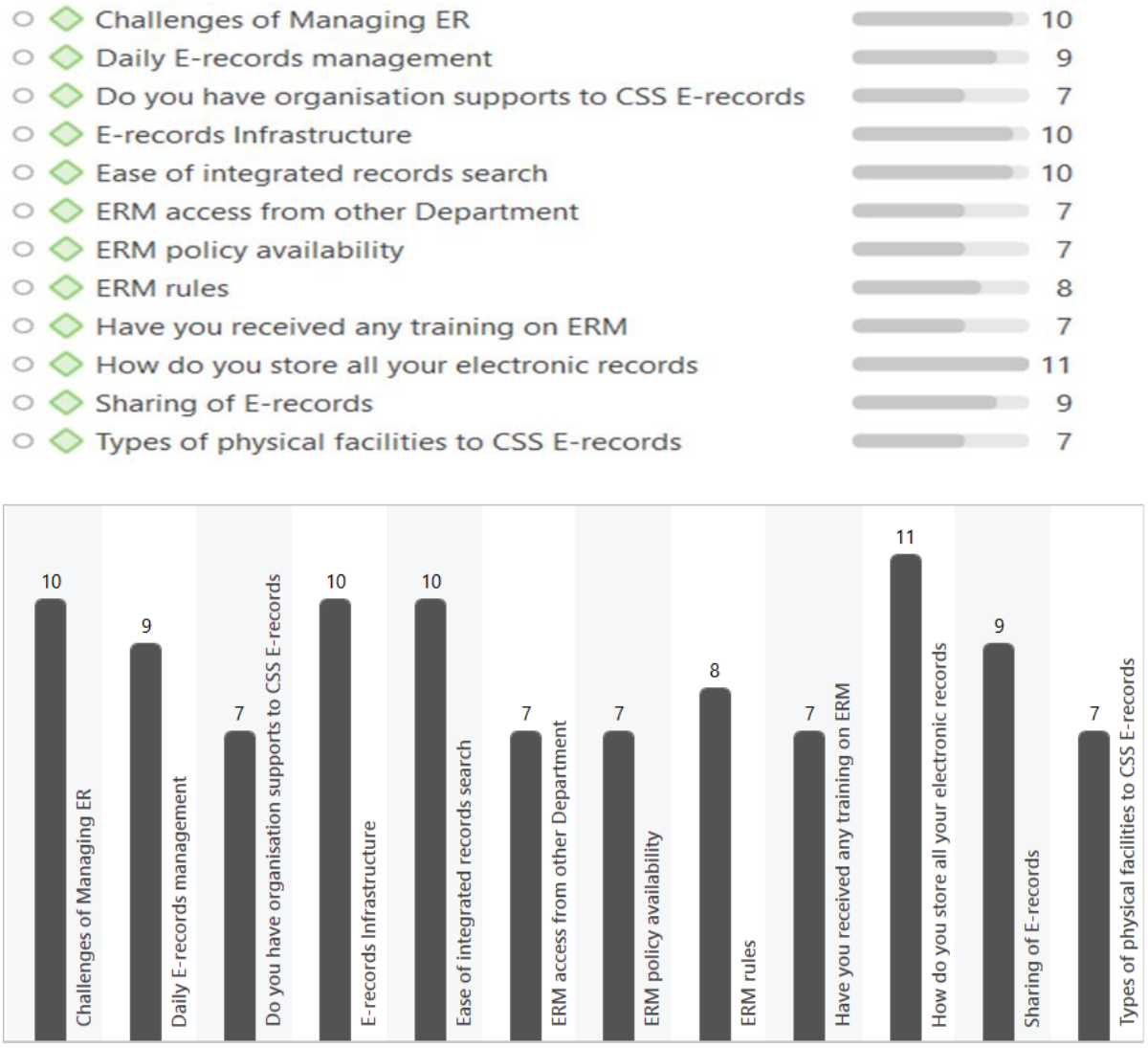
4.4. The management of electronic records

This section attempted to determine how electronic records are managed at University of Fort Hare in order to respond to the study's first question. Organizations cannot properly manage and protect their electronic information without Electronic Records Management (ERM). One of the potential role of ERM is that, institutions can boost

their efficiency in areas such as information access and retrieval, data loss prevention, legal and regulatory compliance, and operational transparency and accountability. The investment in a solid ERM system is essential to the long-term health of any business.

Based on the results from the data, this outcome was presented thematically in this section. A qualitative study method known as thematic analysis is used to find, examine, and interpret themes or patterns in data. It requires a thorough review and coding of the data, the identification of recurring patterns or themes, and the synthesis of these themes into a cohesive interpretation of the data. Thematic analysis is a flexible and frequently used tool for examining and comprehending the rich, complicated data generated in qualitative research, such as records management study. In the diagram below, are the thematic excerpt from the interview data which covers the four research objectives.

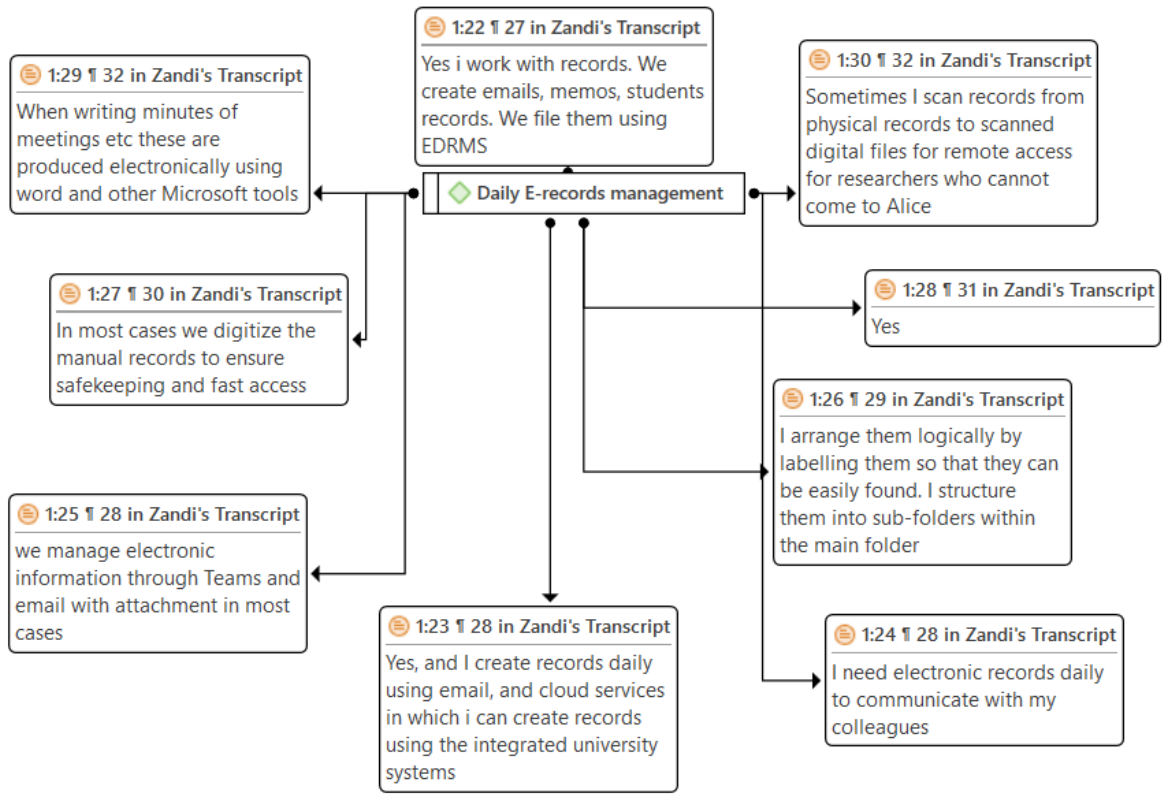
Interview Transcripts Thematic Analysis



Thematic Figure 1: Thematic Coding and Number of Responses per Theme

4.4.1. Nature of Daily Routine and E-records Management

Understanding whether respondent interactions at work involve dealing with e-records or regularly using electronic records is crucial for understanding how electronic records are managed in the institution. Therefore, the researchers ask whether the respondent job schedules requires dealing with electronic records on daily basis. Below are the visualisations of the excerpt from the thematic transcript.

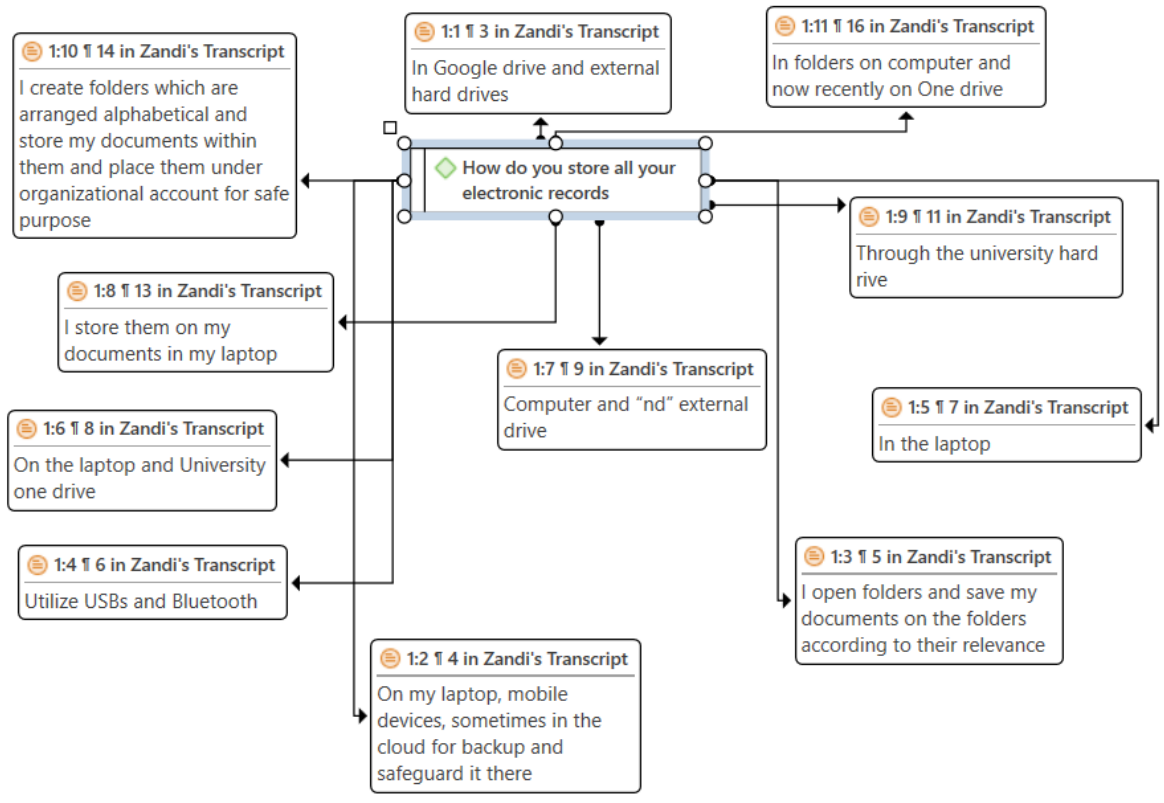


Thematic Figure 2: Does your job requires dealing with electronic records daily, and how do you manage this? please explain in detail

The respondents were also questioned regarding how they produce or obtain electronic records. According to the findings, 11 (44%) respondents said they created or received records manually, while 14 (56%) respondents said they did both. This means that deals with both electronic and manual records. More so, the respondents were asked how electronic records are processed in their departments. According to the findings, 14 (56%) respondents said that when using an Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS) template to create electronic documents. The capture of context, structure, and content is made possible by this template. While 11 (44%) respondents indicated that after they had created or received records they are given file name or file number and then captured into the system, then transferred to the relevant departments for storage.

4.4.2. How electronic records are stored at the University

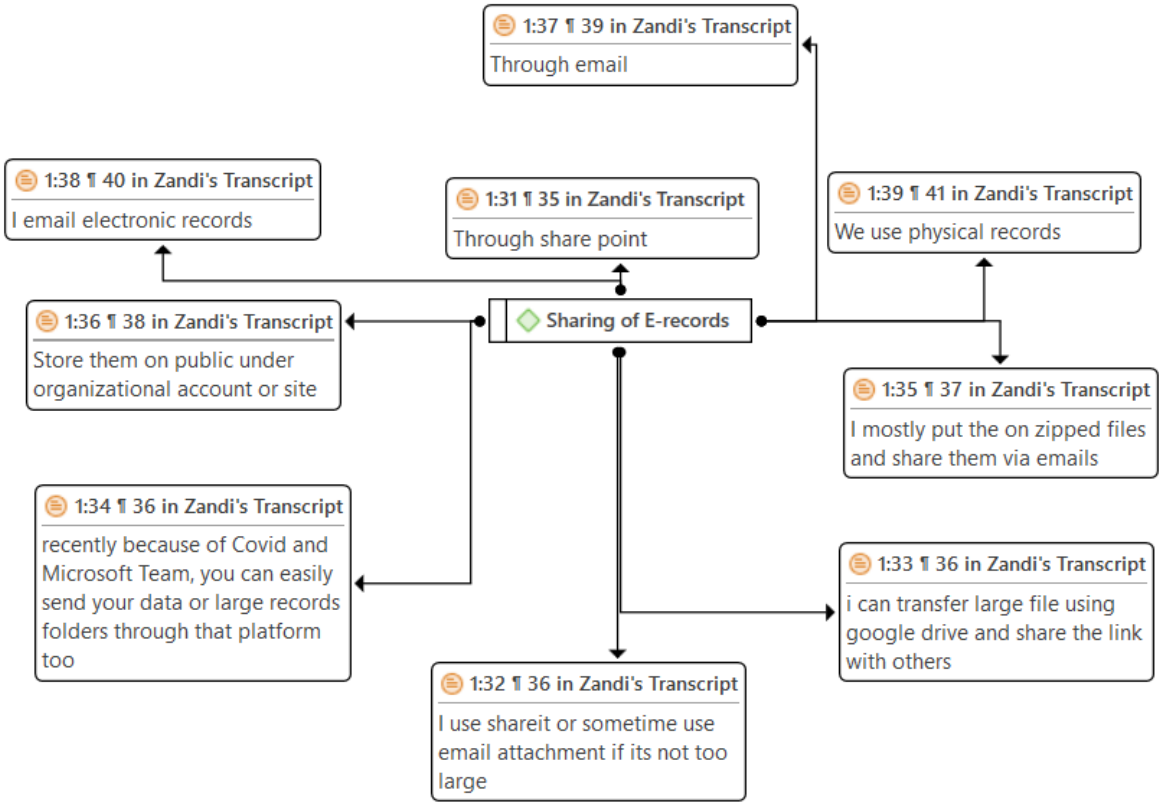
Securing electronic records storage is critical for safeguarding confidential data and meeting strict compliance standards. Data breaches, loss of sensitive information, and failure to comply with privacy regulations are all possible outcomes of inadequate security measures. Implementing appropriate access controls, encrypting data in motion and at rest, and regularly backing up data are all factors in the safe storage of electronic records. To maintain stakeholder confidence and stop the disclosure of sensitive information, electronic records must be protected. When it came to maintaining their electronic documents as part of their regular work assignments, the respondents were questioned. Their coded answers are in the excerpt below.



Thematic Figure 2: How do you store all your electronic records in the course of your official duties

4.4.3. Sharing of Electronic Records for Work Purposes

It is important for the study to differentiate between work-related and personal information and records sharing. Effective record sharing is essential for making informed decisions. It provides stakeholders with quick access to essential information, boosting transparency and collaboration. As a result, businesses can make decisions that are well-informed and based on current information, which improves the effectiveness and efficiency of their operations. The respondents were asked how electronic files irrespective of sizes were shared. The visualisation below indicated responses culled from the interviews.

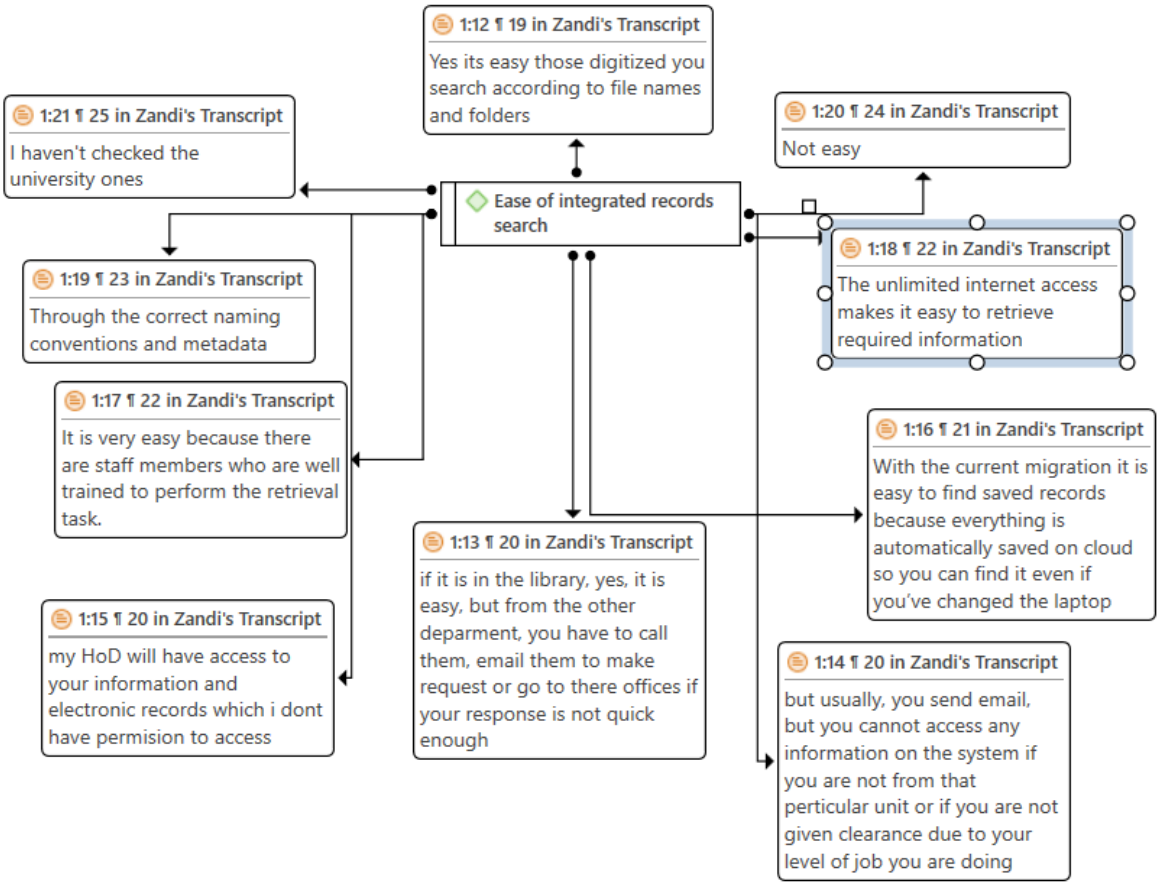


Thematic Figure 3: How do you share both small and large electronic files or electronic records for work purposes

4.4.4. Ease of accessing electronic records within the Institution

Electronic records management ensures that the higher institution or any other entities have unhindered access to its records when they are needed.

Several factor could promote or hinder ease of access to electronic information. It could be technical, infrastructure, competencies and skills. The researcher wanted to understand the ease of acceseing electronic records especially on the institutions integrated system. The excerpt below were some of the responses that was coded from the interviews.



Thematic Figure 5: Can you explain how easy it is to find electronic information/records on the university systems

The respondents were also questioned by the researcher about the benefits of managing electronic documents. The respondents gave the following answers:

> "*One advantage of electronic records management is that records are easily accessible, it does not rely on individuals responsible, for instance if one of your employees is sick or on annual leave, the files that they are working on are easily and immediately available. All of this is obsolete*

thanks to the advantages of a DMS. Even in their absence, the workflow procedures for which they are accountable can be handled.

"*There is a lot of advantages in electronic records management. Records are easily accessible as compared to paper based records. In addition, storing records electronically is actually much safer as compared to papers that can be lost due to disasters, fire, lost during location"*

"*The days of posting paper invoices to various locations or personally distributing them to other departments are long gone. An employee in charge of a specific step in the workflow process can use a tablet or smartphone to check their duties and verify or approve documents with a digital stamp in situations where the location of record is changing.*

"There are many advantages to using electronic records management, including increased data storage capacity, faster data retrieval, especially when looking, quicker data analysis, sorting data by specific criteria, simpler data amendment, and data redundancy." Records can be accessed with ease. They can be accessed by multiple people and are timely available.

"One of the advantages that electronic records management have over other types like the traditional paper is the availability of security which will ensure that records are protected from anyone who attempts to steal information. This security is due to the advent of ICT in electronic records management".

4.4.5. Electronic records management programme

Additionally, the researcher wanted to know if the University of Fort Hare offered a course in electronic records administration. The findings reveal that 22 (88%) of the

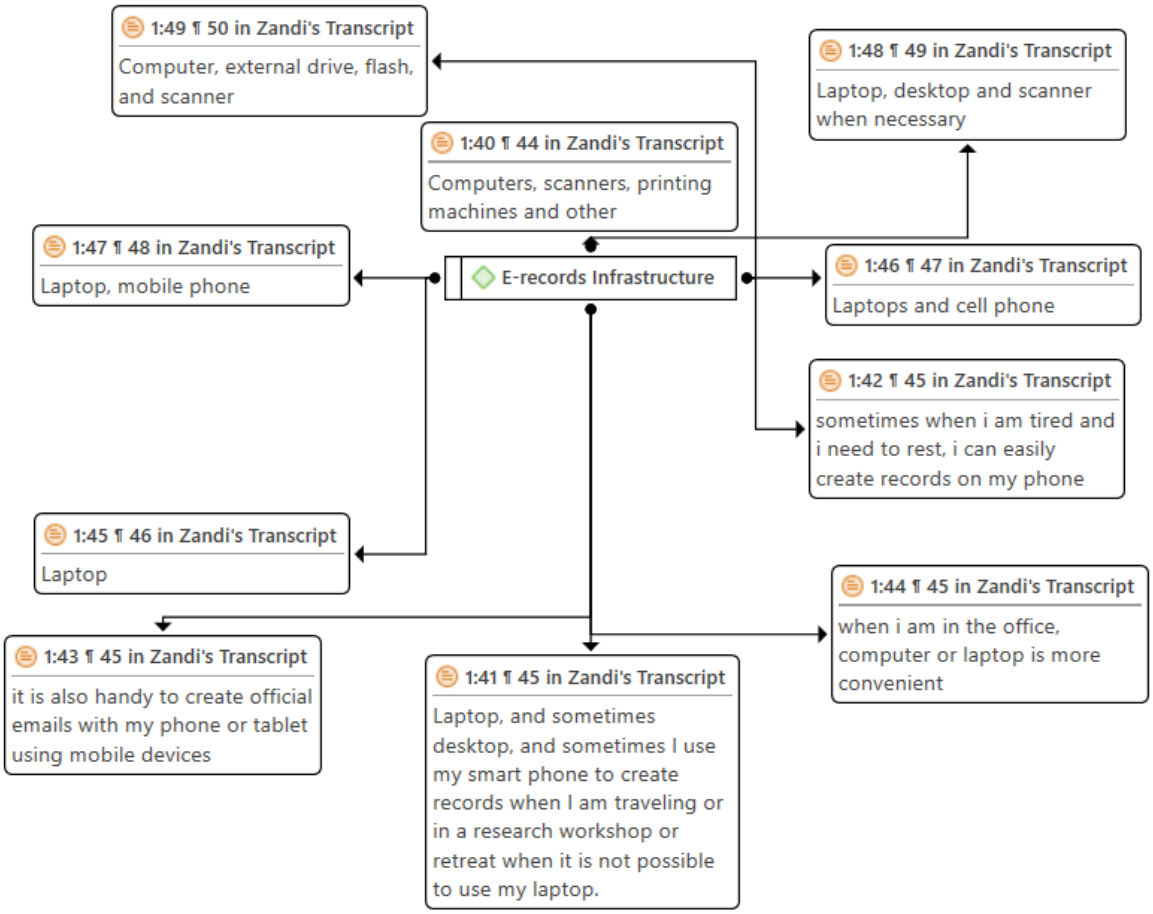
respondents gave a yes answer, while 3 (12%) said their department did not have a records management program.

4.5. Infrastructure and resources for electronic records management

Establishing the University of Fort Hare's infrastructure for electronic records management was one of the study's additional goals. The infrastructure for managing records includes both hardware and software. Records management hardware, software, and storage systems are all part of the "physical infrastructure." However, intellectual infrastructure includes the people who possess the knowledge, skills, and experience to maintain records efficiently. Both are essential for proper record keeping and must be carefully considered to guarantee safe, efficient, and legally compliant record keeping (Ajibade and Khayundi, 2018). In addition to having the proper hardware and software in place, it is also important to have the right individuals on staff who are well-versed in records administration.

4.5.1. The types of device used to create electronic records

To find out about the current support and infrastructure that is available at the institution, specifically in these department where respondents were working, the researcher asked about the types of devices that are used to create electronic records. Below are the thematic transcript.

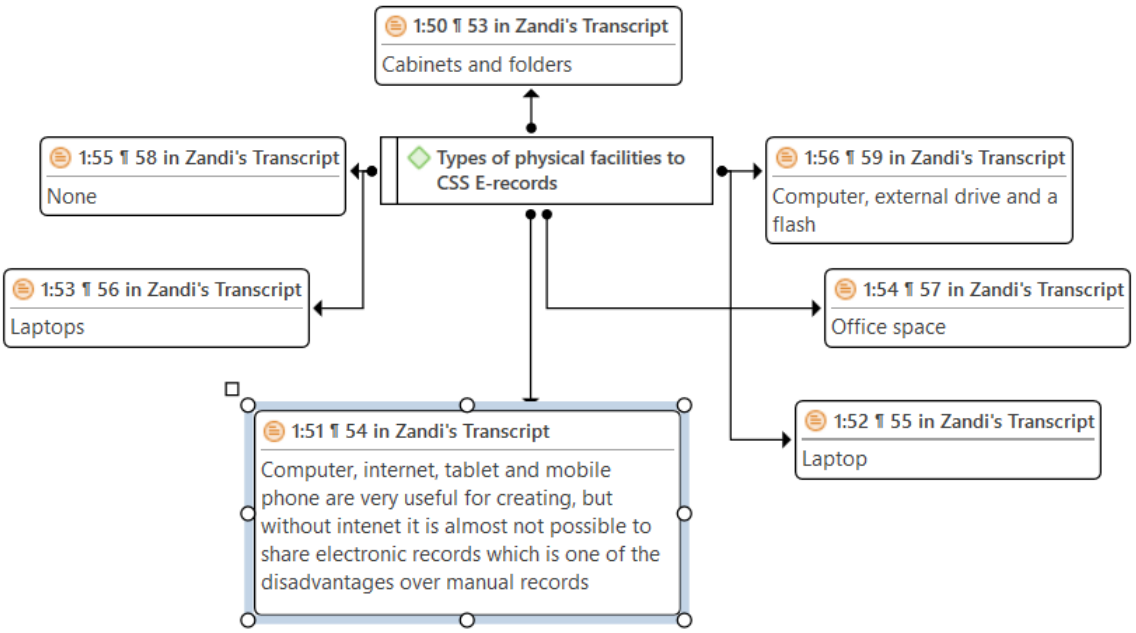


Thematic Figure 4: what types of devices do you use to create electronic records for official duties?

4.5.3. Availability of a records management system and Storage of ER

If the university of Fort Hare has a records administration system was the question posed to the respondents. According to the findings, 11 (44%) and 14 (56%) respondents respectively stated a yes and a no. Those who said they did had an integrated secondary software were in agreement (ITS). Documents must be kept in any format for as long as they are required for institutional transactions, study, and historical purposes in order to be retrievable, usable, and accessible. Therefore, proper storage is crucial for the institution to thrive. The researcher was curious as to how the departments maintained their electronic data. The respondents were asked how they keep or store their electronic records. The results show that 22 (88%)

respondents indicated computers, cloud computing, intranet internet, hard-drives, USBs and servers, while 3 (12%) respondents indicated computers, Google drive, hard-drives, USBs and cloud computing. Below are part of the visualisation from the transcript.



Thematic Figure 5: What type of physical facilities do you have that help you to create, store, or share your electronic records?

4.5.4. Types of records kept in the records management system

After affirmative responses, the respondents were asked to enumerate the types of records the University of Fort Hare's records management system maintains. Table 1 displays the conclusions from the 14 respondents.

Table 1: Records that are kept in the records management system at the university of Fort Hare

Committee section records	National Heritage and Cultural Studies (NAHECS) records
Exam records	Payroll records
Faculties' records	Purchasing
Fees records	Student admissions records
Finance records	Student registration records
Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre (GMRDC) records	
Human resource records	

4.5.5. Types of systems used for recordkeeping in the departments

The respondents were questioned about the types of electronic record-keeping systems that they presently employed in their department. According to the 14 interviewees, they were using Integrated Tertiary Software. They also mentioned laptops provided by the university, cloud computing and intranet, hard drives, USBs as the types of systems. The results show that the respondents were not familiar with the difference between the system and hardware.

When asked about the kind of technology that is used to manage electronic records at the university, interviewee A remarked as follows:

> *"We use servers, cloud computing, hard drives, USB, Google drive, web pages and other systems that I may not have mentioned"*

Interviewee B said that;

> *"When managing electronic records, it is important that the personnel and staff is aware of the various methods for storing electronic records,*

this will ensure that there is no loss of electronic records. For instance, cloud computing is one the ways for storing"

Interviewee C also noted the following;

"ICT and records management have a strong degree of commonality and many complementary skills. Similar concerns about data production, maintenance, accessibility, and security underlie both ICT and records management. The ultimate aim of both record management and ICT is to support, protect and enable the business of the organisation in a cost-effective manner now and in the future".

Interviewee D also noted;

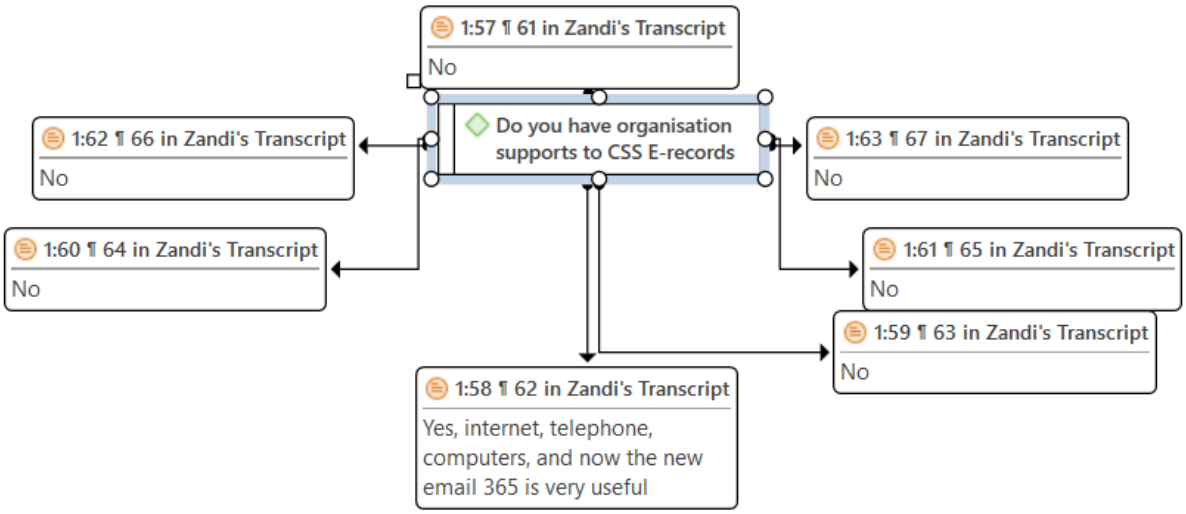
"Unlike other forms of records keeping, electronic records have various specific security strategies that could be useful and essential for records management, for instance the organization could implement regular backing of files, anti-virus could be installed for protect from virus. Records can also be kept in online storage like cloud, in addition they can also encrypted as a way to ensure that records are well stored".

The results show that the systems that are commonly used for managing electronic records at the university was cloud computing, google drives.

4.5.6. Organisational infrastructure and support for electronic records

Records need to be protected from harm regardless of any format. One of the important factor in ERM is the support from the institution throughout the records lifecycle. There are three types of records infrastructure; physical, intellectual and organisational. Therefore, it is important that there are known organisational support

for ERM and that the staff In this case, the researcher was keen to find out about the protection of electronic records. All the 14 respondents mentioned that records were protected through assigning passwords; firewalls. They also mentioned that records can be acquired and accessed through an authorized personnel.



Thematic Figure 6: Do you have any organisation supports or facility to help you with creating, storing, or sharing electronic records?

4.5.7. Custody of electronic records

According to the respondents, several university departments, including the ICT center, Office of the Registrar, Human Resource (HR) department, Director of National Heritage and Cultural Studies (NAHECS), and Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre, are in charge of keeping track of all records generated by or received at the University of Fort Hare (GMRDC).

4.6. Competencies and human resources skills for managing electronic records

The goal of this study was to evaluate the University of Fort Hare staff's capacity and expertise in handling electronic records. The researcher was interested in finding out what kinds of skilled human resources were accessible for managing electronic records. The findings reveal that 17 (68%) respondents indicated that they were

trained, 5 (20%) indicated that they were professionals, and 3 (12%) indicated that they were semi-professionals.

A follow-up query was asked to provide more details on the responses given above. The researcher was interested in learning whether ERM training had been provided to university employees. According to the results, 17 respondents (68%) received training in electronic records administration, compared to 8 respondents (32%) who did not.

Furthermore, the researcher asked about the importance of training of staff that is managing electronic records, and below were the excerpts from the respondents, and these were labelled alphabetically for east of reading.

interviewee A said that;

> *"Ensuring that employees are well-trained is important, without well trained employees, it might be difficult to ensure that there is proper records management in the organization. Hence, organizations should ensure that employees are skilled through provision for training in the organization".*

Interviewee B remarked as follows;

> *"Moving towards the use of ICTs, electronic records management is very important. Therefore, those who are not familiar with the use and management of electronic records needs to be educated, especially the elderly people, since youth is so equipped with the knowledge of using technology".*

Interviewee C noted that;

> "*Without effective training for electronic records, it is difficult to operate records electronically, hence the organization emphasize on proper training for electronic records, it ensures that those who are responsible for managing records are well equipped with the skills for electronic records management"*

Interviewee D also noted;

> "*The current organization environment emphasizes on efficient technology like electronic records, however this technology requires skills from the personnel and employees, in this context in our organization emphasize on ensuring that employees are well versed with the necessary skill and technique for electronic records management".*

Interviewee E responded as follows;

> "*We have various ways of training for electronic records management workers. This comprises full time training, various workshop conducted in different locations, seminars in which experts for electronic records management provide teaching of skills and methods, there is also on job training in which supervisors leads the training".*

Interviewee E also noted;

> "*Ensuring employees and personnel are well-skilled should be a priority in the organization, especially with the coming of electronic records which needs employees that are equipped with the skills for maintaining and storage of electronic records".*

Interviewee F said;

> "*The type of personnel and employees that are required with the advent of electronic records have expanded, organizations have to either hire specialist for IT or train their internal employees to ensure that their employees have the necessary skills for electronic records management"*.

Interviewee G noted the following;

> "*Without skilled personnel, it might be difficult to ensure that records are well managed in the organization, hence skilled and well trained personnel cannot be overemphasized, regarding their contribution to records management in the organization".*

4.6.1. Types of training

The respondents were asked to indicate the type of training they received. The results show that 9 (36%) respondents had received training through workshops, 8 (32%) respondents received training through seminars, 5 (20%) respondents received training through on-job training and 3 (12%) respondents received training through fulltime training. Unfortunately, none of the resondents have received former training in records and archives, based on the above responses. The results are shown in Figure 4.

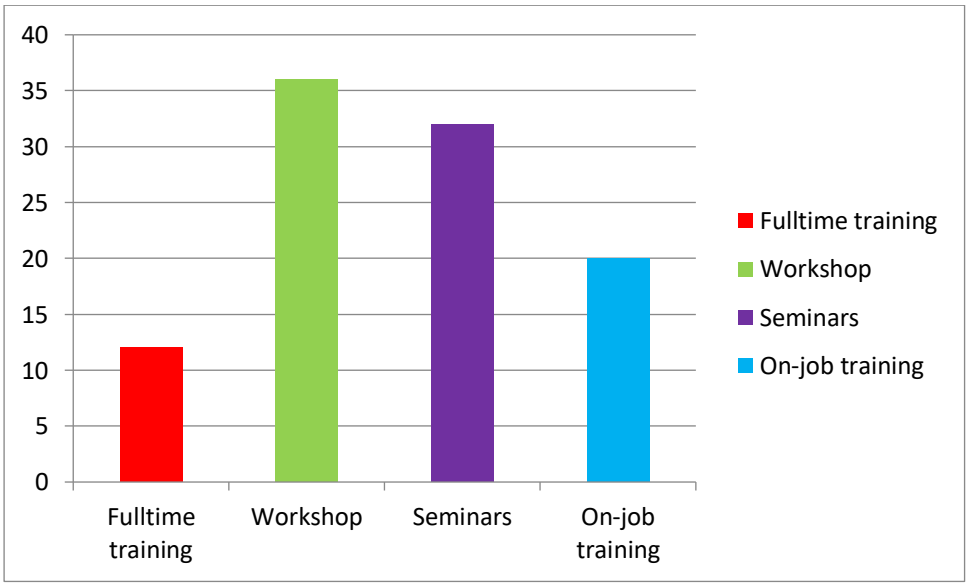
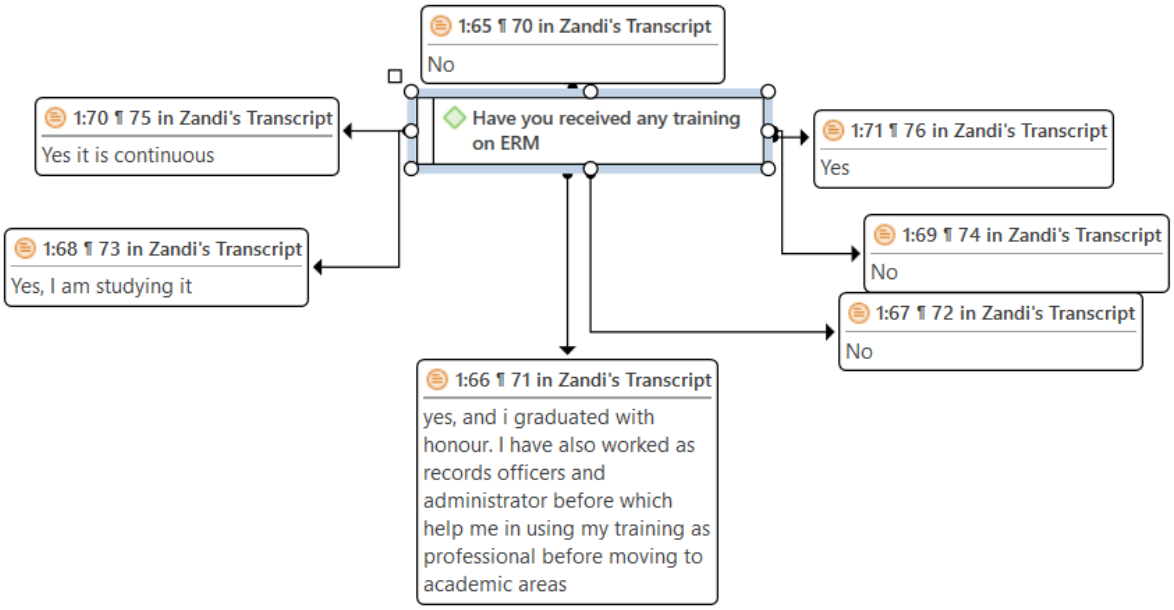


Figure 4: Types of training [n=25]

Source: Field data

The need for staffing and professional training in records management is essential in comprehending the depth and breadth of records management, according to Kalusopa (2011), Ajibade and Mutula (2019). The university records must be properly preserved, organized, and made accessible, all of which require the assistance of trained specialists that specialize in the management of electronic records. They encourage transparency, maintain the security and integrity of sensitive information, and enable compliance with the requirements of the law. Both productive business operations and sound decision-making are supported by a system of electronic records that is efficiently managed.

The university is able to ensure that the information included within its electronic records is easily retrievable, consistent, and dependable, as well as capable of being used in legal and research contexts since it has electronic records managed by a skilled expert. In addition to this, it lessens the likelihood that essential data will be lost, as well as the likelihood that errors will occur as a result of inappropriate management. The demonstration of accountability and transparency as a result of efficient management of electronic records also contributes to the development of trust in the academic system. Therefore, the researcher asked the respondents regarding their training and the excerpt in this visualisation was some of their responses.



Thematic Figure 7: Have you received any training about records management or archives?

It is unexpected that these respondents have not signed up for the postgraduate diploma program in archives and records administration provided by the department of library and information science in order to earn a professional certification.

4.6.2. Challenges associated with the use of electronic records management

During the interviews, the interviewees were asked the challenges that they were experiencing with the use of electronic records management. Interviewee A noted that *"one of the complex issues is that some of our staff and personnel are not well trained with regards to electronic records, which make it difficult for service delivery".*

Interviewee B said that;

> *"Electronic records management is a complex issue, beside the issue of personnel which must be well trained, it is quite expensive to purchase some of the software's and equipment. In addition, electronic records can also be lost through sabotage and virus".*

Interviewee C said;

"We encounter numerous challenges with regards to electronic records, one of these challenges is the loss of data due to virus and in other instances there is also problems of network which might jeopardize electronic records".

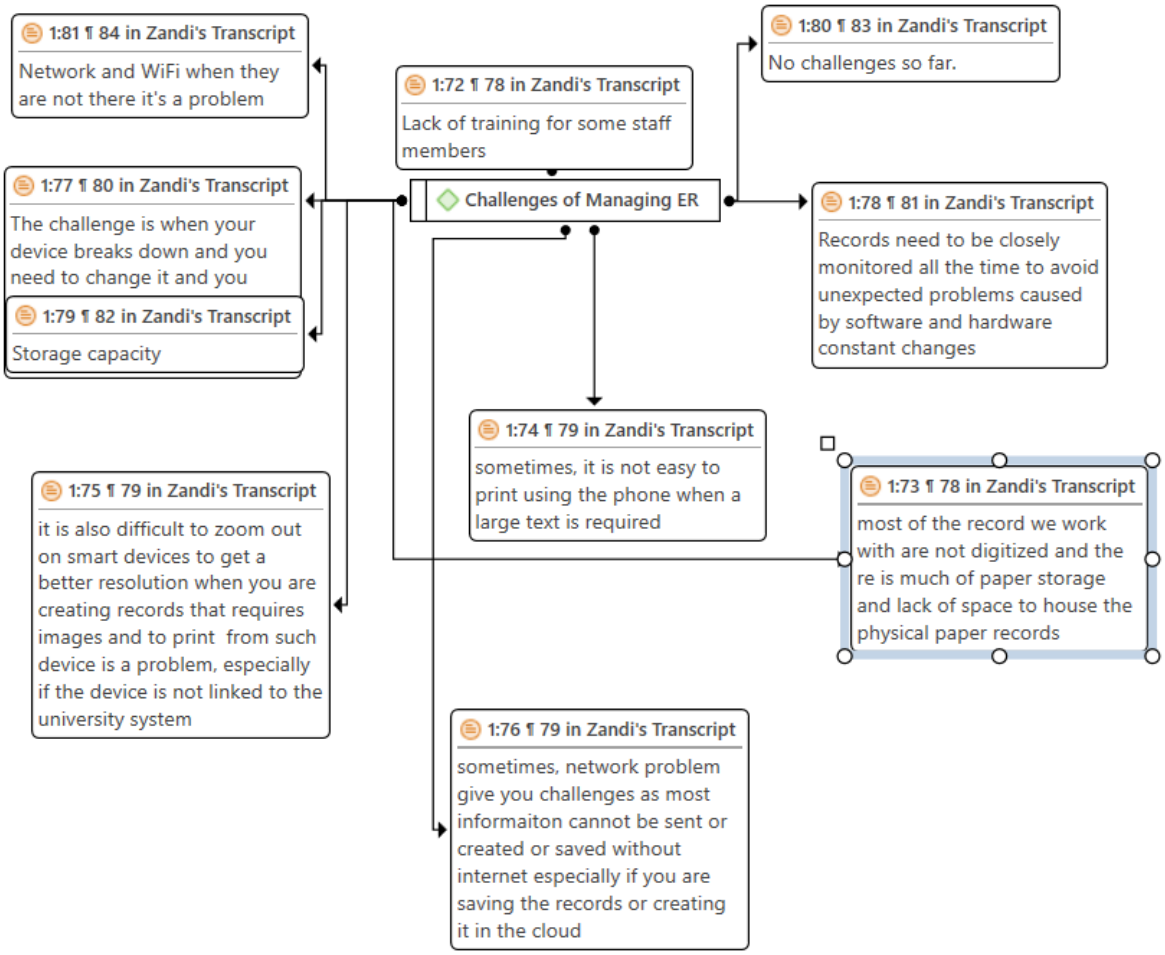
Interviewee D mentioned that:

"They are not private, anyone can view them. Anyone can hack the record which makes it dangerous for the institution. At time, one can decide to delete the document. And if it is deleted, it cannot be stored, not unless there is a backup".

Interviewee E responded that:

They can be affected by the virus. The systems that are used to manage them they need to be updated regularly. The license needs to be renewed. Also, they can be hacked since they can be access anywhere.

Managing electronic records presents several challenges, including data security, data retention, and accessibility. With the increasing volume of digital information, ensuring that records are stored securely and can be easily retrieved can be difficult. Additionally, maintaining records over time to meet legal and regulatory requirements, while also ensuring their ongoing usability, is a complex task. Effective management of electronic records requires a comprehensive strategy that addresses these challenges and ensures that information is properly preserved, organized and accessible. Beside the challenges associated with the use of electronic records, it is important to understand the nature of challenges that the respondents are routinely facing on day to day job regarding ERM. Some of the excepts from the interview were visualised below



Thematic Figure 8: What challenges are you facing in managing electronic information/records on your job? please explain in detail

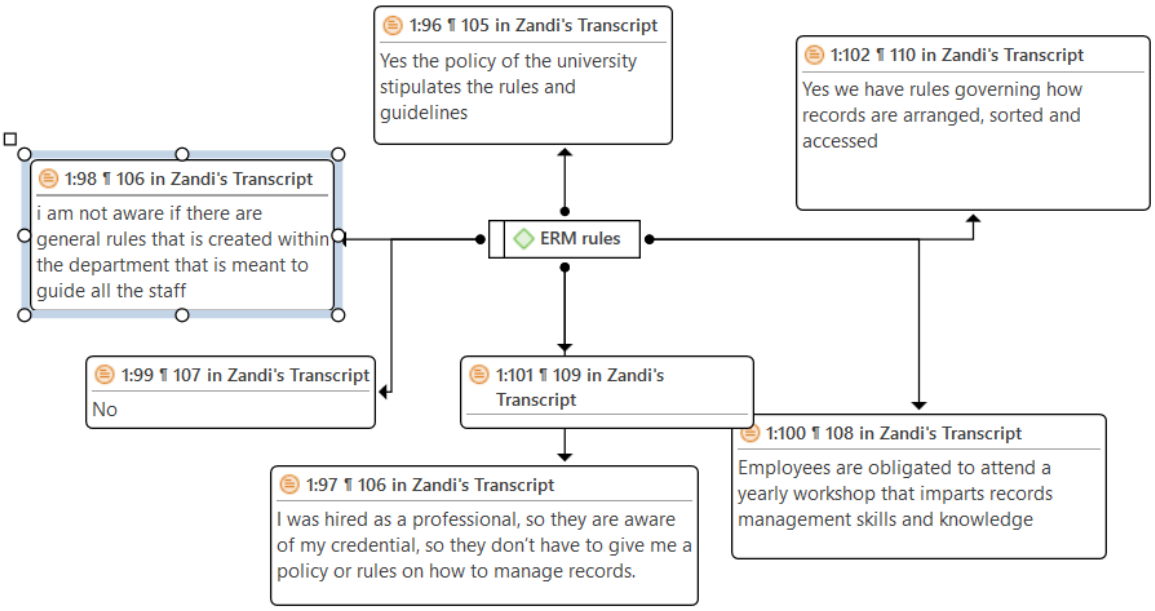
4.7. Legal and statutory requirements instruments for the management of electronic records

This part attempted to ascertain the current situation with regard to the existence of statutory and legal requirements for the management of electronic records. Policies, rules, and protocols that govern practice are incorporated into records management programs. According to Ngulube (2005), their goal is to create a setting that is conducive to appropriate records management. Nevertheless, because this data was collected during Covid-19 severe lockdown rule, this descriptive qualitative data was design to get basic information regarding each sub-topics below. The responses were,

therefore, presented using predetermined parameters with number of options to choose from.

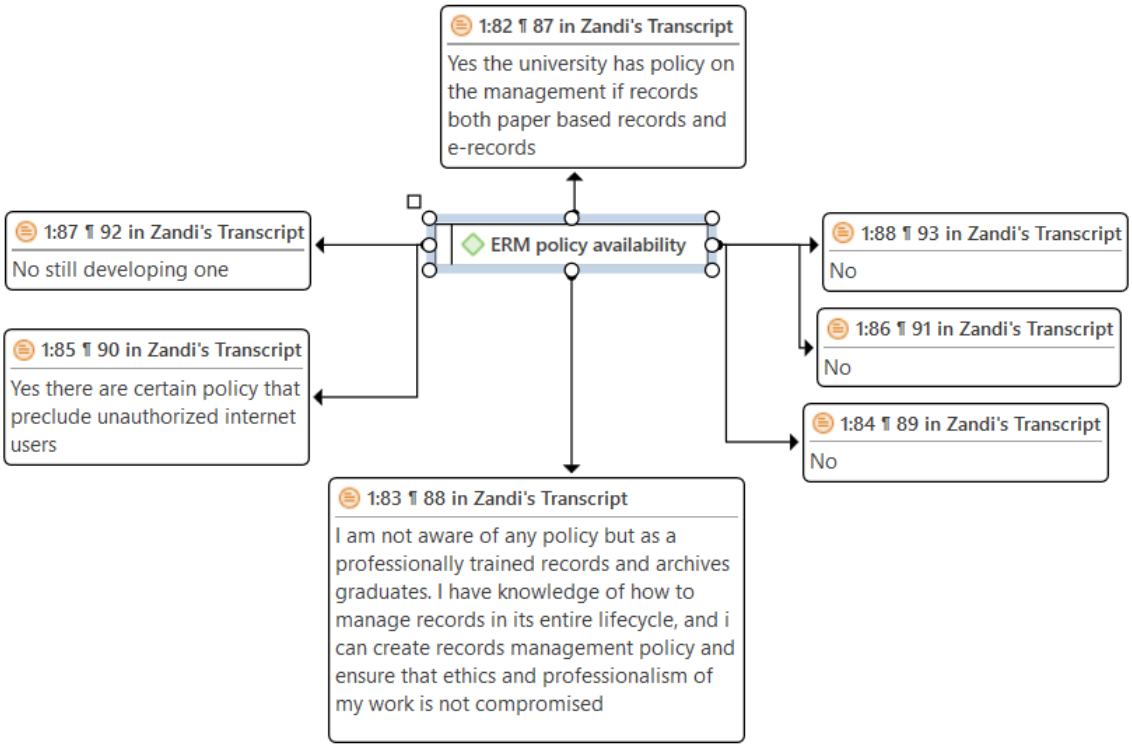
4.7.1. Rules and regulations

Regarding rules and regulations for the managemnt of electronic records, the respondents were asked about the available rules to govern how records are managedthe results show that 14 (56%) respondents indicated yes, 11 (44%) respondents were not sure. The institution and its divisions should have a policy for managing their records because it sets standards for the creation, upkeep, and destruction of records within the organization. For reasons relating to law and regulation, as well as history, it guarantees that documents are handled and preserved in an appropriate manner. A policy that is clear and concise can assist in avoiding the loss of vital information, enhancing the operational efficiency of a business, and providing accountability and transparency. In addition to this, it assists organizations in meeting the legal and regulatory requirements pertaining to the management of sensitive information. An efficient policy for managing records helps to protect an organization's reputation and helps guarantee that crucial information is accessible at the appropriate times. The respondents were asked if they have rules that govern their ERM, and below excerpt was recorded:



Thematic Figure 9: Do you have any rules in your unit that guide you on how to manage records daily? Kindly explain in detail

Furthermore, the respondents were asked about the presence of policy that guides their ERM. The thematic transcript below were some of the excerpts.



Thematic Figure 11: Were you given any policy to guide you with creating, storing and sharing electronic files or electronic records at work

A comprehensive records management policy is necessary in the context of a university because it ensures the proper preservation, organization, and accessibility of crucial institutional information (Ajibade and Khayundi, 2018). It safeguards the university's historical and legal records, upholds the integrity and privacy of private data, and helps the university run effectively and efficiently. The success of the university and its capacity to fulfill its instructional and research responsibilities depends on the institution's ability to effectively implement a robust records management policy.

4.7.2. Awareness of the rules and regulations governing the management of electronic records

The purpose of the study was to determine whether all employees were conscious of the policies and procedures governing the management of electronic records. According to the findings, 14 (56%) of the respondents said yes, while 11 (44%) said no.

4.7.3. Methods to make staff aware of the rules and regulations

The researcher was interested in learning how the divisions were informed of the rules and regulations. The methods used to inform staff members of the rules and regulations governing the management of electronic records were further inquired of by respondents who indicated that all staff members were informed of those rules and regulations. The findings reveal that every respondent said they used the intranet, email, and circulars to inform staff members of the policies and guidelines governing electronic records administration.

The researcher further enquired as to whether the employees were handling electronic records in accordance with policies and guidelines. The findings reveal that the

respondents chose to answer yes. The respondents were also questioned about whether the guidelines were founded on the university's electronic records management policy. All 14 respondents indicated that they were managing electronic records according to the rules and regulations that were based on the university policy.

A company's or institution's records management strategy is crucial. The results from the respondents demonstrate that the institution had a policy, even though it wasn't documented. The scholar was eager to learn more about the law. Interviewees were consequently questioned regarding the significance of a strategy. These were the responses:

Interviewee A said;

> "*Records management policy are vital for the organization, without them, it is difficult to guide employees and staff in records management related tasks".*

Interviewee B noted the following;

> *"For a records management system to be legal, it must adhere to certain policies and procedures. Among the many different sorts of records and media that need to be managed is email. This implies before conducting records management policy, records managers and staff should be controlled by specific rules and standards".*

Interviewee C said the following;

The efficient and systematic supervision of the production, receipt, maintenance, use, distribution, storage, and disposal of documents is the responsibility of records management policy.

Interviewee D indicated the following;

> *"Records management policy is very important for management for control of records. Records management is important in handling and maintaining office records from the time of creation to disposal".*

4.8. Use of electronic records management

The researcher asked the interviewees to suggest some recommendations regarding the use of electronic records at the university; please note the labelling such as interview ABC were just used to demarcate each distinctive responses. Interviewee A outlined that;

> *"There should be effective maintenance, arrangement, controlling of electronic records management in the organization to ensure that there is proper electronic records management. Generally, what this implies is that the organization should be able to improve electronic records, if there is any situation where they fail to properly maintain electronic records, it could be because of lack of proper personnel for instance".*

Interviewee B said;

> *"Electronic records should be properly managed, this entail that they should be properly maintained, handled and controlled in a way that improve them overall, without this, it might be difficult to properly manage records if they are handled by people who are not trained".*

Interviewee C said that;

> *"With regards to strategies for records management, without proper strategies for records management, it might be difficult to handle and*

manage records in an organization. Strategies are essential for ensuring that the types of records to be handled and managed are clarified".

Interviewee D noted;

"Strategies for records management are required for ensuring that the specific skills required in the organization are identified. This will inform the form of training that is required for the specific personnel, in addition, strategies are also essential for clarifying the role of each individual in the organization".

Interviewee E noted that;

"*The organization should wary of how the electronic records are stored, controlled, maintained, overall management of electronic records should be up to update regularly to avoid a hindrance for proper management of electronic records".*

Interviewee F also noted the following;

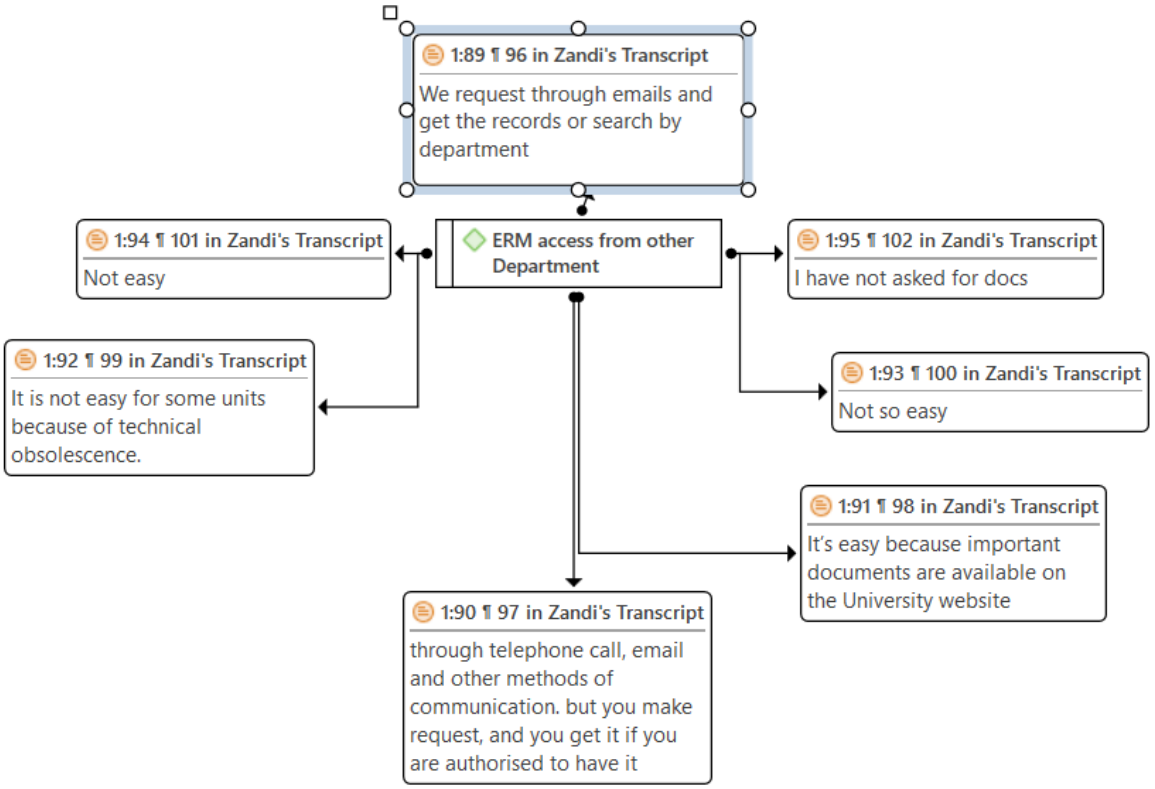
"There should be Strategies for records management. Strategies are essential within the organization. It is also essential for determining who is going to manage the processes and records".

Interviewee G indicated that*;*

"People who are working with electronic records should learn new things regarding the use of electronic records and acquire new knowledge from other institutions about the management of electronic records".

The findings reveal that the participants advocated staff training to give them the information and abilities necessary for managing electronic records. The findings

also demonstrate that the strategies for managing electronic documents were suggested by the participants. Last but not least, the researcher was interested in how simple it was for other units within the organization to access records based on the current rules that were in place. The responses below were some of the except from the interview:



Thematic Figure 10: Please explain how easy or difficult it is to access/get electronic records from other department or units?

Access to other records in time is very important as many units depend on the effort and records from other department for their tasks. Easy access to electronic records provides for quick and efficient access to pertinent information, which is essential for effective decision-making. This increases an organization's overall efficacy and competitiveness by enabling timely, informed decision-making.

4.9. Chapter Summary

The findings from the four primary goals and study questions were presented in this chapter. The infrastructure and resources required for efficient Electronic Records Management (ERM) within a company were covered in this chapter. The types of devices used to generate electronic records, the importance of having the right human resources for managing electronic records, and the availability of a records management system to store and manage electronic data were all covered in the study. The chapter also covered the types of records that are typically kept in records management systems and the importance of organizational infrastructure for supporting electronic records management. The chapter stressed the necessity for enterprises to invest in both technology and human resources to enable the secure and efficient administration of electronic records. descriptive data Finally, the section covered the legal and regulatory aspects of ERM. It also sought the views of the respondents on rule governing the ERM and to find out methods being employed to make the staff aware of the rules and finally the challenges of ERM were covered.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The previous chapter covered the data processing and presentation of the participant data. This chapter interprets and discusses the research findings that were revealed in the preceding chapter. The research questions for the current study were the main topic of discussion.

The primary objective of this study was to examine the electronic data management practices at the University of Fort Hare. To accomplish this, the study set out to address the following research questions: At the University of Fort Hare, how are electronic documents managed?

1. What infrastructure is available for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
2. What are the staff competencies and skills for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare?
3. What are the legal and statutory requirements in place for managing electronic records at University of Fort Hare?

5.2. Demographic information

This section gives the characteristics of the respondents who participated in this research. As a consequence, inquiries about the respondents' personal information, including their department, educational background, employment status, and length of service, were made. The results show that 9 (36%) respondents worked in human resources department, 5 (20%) respondents worked in exams, a further 4 (16%) respondents worked in the registrar’s office, 3 (12%) respondents worked in the

research department, 2 (8%) respondents worked in finance and 2 (8%) respondents worked in student affairs department (section 4.3.1).

The institution is tasked with delivering services to the community which in most cases is based on documentation. Therefore, those who are trusted with the operation of the organization should have attained the necessary levels of formal education. In order to comprehend the depth and breadth of records administration, Kalusopa (2011) contends that staffing and professional training are essential. Thus, the analysis by levels of education revealed that 12 (48%) respondents had a first degree, 8 (32%) respondents had diploma, whist 5 (20%) respondents had matric certificate. The results show that most participants (80%) had a degree (section 4.3.2).

Moreover, the results on the positions held by the participants showed that the participants were managers (32%) and administrators (68%) (section 4.3.3). In terms of their work experience it was established that 4 (16%) participants had worked 0-4 years, 9 (36%) participants had worked for 5-9 years, 7 (28%) participants had worked 10-14 years, 3 (12%) participants had worked 15-19 years, whilst 2 (8%) had worked for 20 years and more (section 4.3.4).

5.3. The management of electronic records

The study's first query, "What are the benefits of electronic records management at University of Fort Hare?" was addressed in this part. Kuteesa and Kyotalimye (2019) define electronic records management as the management of records using electronic systems to apply records management concepts to physical records like paper, CDs/DVDs, magnetic tape, audio-visual, and other records. Due to the absence of technology, such as computers and the internet, the management of these records differs from the conventional methods of keeping records in hard copies. Based on the

excerpt, it can be seen that the respondents play an important role in managing electronic records in the university. It is clear from what has been presented in the previous chapter that the respondents uses records routinely based on their position within the university in terms of the management of electronic documents. However, there are differences between using an ERM and the ability to manage it efficiently. The fact that the respondents use email, cloud services, Teams, and various other linked university systems demonstrates that they regularly interact with electronic records. These individuals are responsible for establishing records, digitizing manual records for safekeeping, and ensuring that the records are filed and structured in a logical manner for simple access. In addition, they must ensure that the records are properly filed. The university's reliance on electronic records management is highlighted by the usage of Microsoft programs such as Word to jot down meeting minutes and by the scanning of physical records into digital files that researchers can access remotely. Based on these findings, electronic records management appears to be an essential component of the university's operations, as well as an important factor in the institution's capacity to function and communicate with its peers.

In conclusion, it is abundantly obvious that managing electronic records is a crucial part of the institution's ongoing operations. The respondents' interactions with electronic records demonstrate the importance of managing these records effectively in order to support communication, research, and administrative activities at the institution. The university's dedication to using technology to handle its records is evidenced by the digitization of manual records, use of electronic document management systems (EDRMS), email, cloud services, Teams, and other integrated university systems. Other integrated university systems include: These findings bring to light the significance of efficient management of electronic records in contemporary

educational institutions and the necessity of continual efforts to enhance and sustain management that is both efficient and successful in this regard.

5.3.1. Creation, receipt of records and routine storage of ER

Creation, receipt, and maintenance of records are the three major procedures in records management. Creation and reception are the initial stages of both the records continuum theory and the records life cycle theory. The records continuum model served as the study's framework. The model, according to McKemmish (2001), exemplifies how documents, such as archives, are produced and kept for use in improving institutional operations. Read and Ginn (2016) point out that the word "record" refers to a specific type of data that reflects and serves as evidence of business processes or personal activities rather than merely a collection of data.

According to Kuligowski (2020), electronic records are typically the computerized versions of traditional paper records and serve as proof of organizational actions. Electronic records are sometimes referred to as digital records, as stated by Kuteesa and Kyotalimye (2019). If the University produced or got electronic records was what the researcher was interested in learning. All 25 (100%) participants indicated yes (section 4.4.1). The results revealed that electronic records are currently attracting relatively more attention than paper based records because of rapidly growing and changing technology used to create and manage records (Cummings 2019: 16).

In addition, Franks (2018) argues that electronic records have many advantages as an alternative to paper files. Such a paper can be viewed by multiple people simultaneously. Through connections to the computer file room system, the electronic papers are accessible. Processing paper no longer requires the expensive stages. Electronic documents rarely, if ever, go missing, according to what has been said.

According to Wang (2015), computerization in a company aids in cost-effective storage reduction, enhanced record retrieval, access, and quicker response.

It is clear, based on the responses of the respondents, that the respondents at the institution are employing a wide array of strategies in order to store their electronic documents. These include the use of Google Drive, external hard drives, laptops, mobile devices, cloud storage for the purpose of backup and protecting, USBs and Bluetooth, as well as the university's One Drive. While some of the respondents are saving their data on their own personal laptops and sorting them into folders, others are making use of the server and cloud storage provided by the institution. A number of respondents say that in addition to storing records on their mobile devices and computers, they also make use of USBs and Bluetooth for the purposes of file transfer and storage. In addition, respondents are making use of organizational accounts as a means of secure storage, and some of them have only very lately begun using One Drive as a repository for their electronic data. The numerous storage options accessible focus attention on the significance of electronic records management at the university as well as the need for a system that is both effective and efficient to handle and maintain these documents.

The following is a list of the consequences that this conversation has about the keeping of electronic documents at the university:

- The fact that the respondents employ a variety of storage methods—including Google Drive, external hard drives, laptops, mobile devices, cloud storage, and USBs—highlights the necessity for flexibility in the administration of electronic data. Because there is such a wide variety of storage techniques, it is essential

to have a system that is flexible enough to accept all of them in order to ensure that record management is carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

- The fact that the respondents are using their own personal laptops and mobile devices for storage reasons demonstrates the necessity of a system that is both accessible and efficient. Records need to be stored in a place where they can be accessed quickly and simply.
- The importance of having a system that is organized and enables for easy retrieval of documents is driven home by the fact that it was mentioned that records should be categorized into folders and then arranged alphabetically.
- The usage of organizational accounts and cloud storage for the purposes of safe storage underscores the necessity of a secure and dependable system that is able to protect sensitive information.
- Use of Cloud Storage on the Rise The recent adoption of One Drive by certain respondents demonstrates a trend towards the use of cloud storage and underscores the necessity for a system that can support this trend and provide cloud storage solutions that are efficient and effective.

In general, the conversation that took place regarding the archiving of electronic records at the university brought to light the necessity of an effective, well-organized, secure, and adaptable system that is able to accommodate the various storage methods that were utilized by the respondents, as well as provide support for the operations and information exchange of the university.

In addition, workers need access to data so they can perform their official tasks openly and honestly. Therefore, how records are created and stored are very important as well. Any organization's foundation is its records, which are the only source of data

that can be used as evidence of actions, judgments, and deals that can be verified by law enforcement. The researcher was eager to learn more about the University of Fort Hare's production and receipt of records. As a result, the participants were asked how they create or receive electronic records. The results show that 14 (56%) participants stated that they created or received records electronically, while 11 (44%) participants stated that they created or received a manual. This means that deals with both electronic and manual records (section 4.4.2).

In terms of storage of records, the results of this question reflect a wide variety of storage strategies employed by respondents in the course of their official responsibilities. The most often mentioned ways were Google Drive, external hard drives, and laptops for keeping electronic information. In addition to saving documents in folders, USBs, and Bluetooth, cloud storage is also offered as a backup option. Some responders also acknowledged the utilization of University one drive. This demonstrates that individuals use a combination of personal and corporate storage solutions for their official activities, emphasizing the necessity for clear standards and procedures to maintain the consistent and secure storage of electronic information within the business.

5.3.2. Job routine, ERM and processing of electronic records

Luthuli and Kalusopa (2017) argue that accurate, up-to-date documentation of administrative acts including resource acquisition, allocation, and disbursement is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability. When records are handled properly, they are filed according to the filing plan or system, making them easier to find when needed. If the filing system is well-managed, documents can be easily retrieved from filing cabinets or shelves by using their file or reference number on the filing plan, preventing misfiling.

Additionally, all of the digital files that have been arranged and saved in a way that avoids data input errors can be easily found on the e-records management system. Simply enter the required reference number, subject, keyword, or other options of the record as programmed and created by the system into the keyboard to accomplish this. Then, view the desired electronic document via the screen (Luthuli and Kalusopa 2017). The process by which physical or electronic records are managed from the time they are created or received until they are destroyed, regardless of whether they were created internally or externally, is known as records management (Ngoepe 2017). Therefore, the respondents were questioned about whether dealing with electronic records was necessary for their employment and how those records were handled in their departments. The majority of respondents do work with electronic records on a daily basis, according to the answers to the question about how often they use them. Emails, memoranda, student files, meeting minutes, and digitized versions of handwritten records are all examples of the types of electronic records they deal with. Respondents employ a wide variety of approaches, including electronic document management systems (EDRMS), cloud services, and Microsoft applications, to generate, store, and oversee their electronic documents. The comments emphasize the need for a planned and coordinated strategy for managing electronic documents, as well as the significance of electronic records in internal communication and cooperation. Important tactics for maintaining electronic documents include using electronic records management systems, labeling and organizing records into sub-folders, and digitizing manual records. Regarding the creation, the results show that 14 (56%) participants indicated that electronic records are generated through the use of Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS) template. This template makes possible the capture of content, structure and context. While 11 (44%) participants indicated that

after they had created or received records they are given file name or file number and then captured into the system, then transferred to the relevant departments for storage (section 4.4.3). Cummings (2019) asserts that electronic records are important in that if they are well managed they are cost saving, efficient, save space and are easily accessible and manageable.

5.3.3. Sharing of electronic records for work and job purposes

By using electronic records management (ERM), the company is guaranteed to always have the records it requires. The records continuum paradigm states that records must be managed throughout their entire lifespan. Electronic record-keeping processes must take into account the foundation of record-keeping systems and the durability of the documents contained in them.

The ways in which the respondents shared electronic records call attention to the necessity of a system that is able to facilitate the quick and safe exchange of records while maintaining their confidentiality. The fact that SharePoint, email attachments, Google Drive, and Microsoft Teams are all used to share information underlines how important it is to have a system that is flexible enough to accept a variety of sharing approaches. Zipping files and keeping records on public organizational accounts or sites further underscores the necessity for a secure and organized approach. Physical records also play a role in record sharing, underlining the necessity for a system that can combine both electronic and physical information. It is imperative to have effective record management practices, which must include means of information sharing that are both productive and safe, in order to facilitate rapid decision-making and guarantee the university's efficient functioning.

Unfortunately, the discussion has led to the conclusion that in the event that there are power outages and people are unable to connect to the internet, it may become difficult for the responders to access electronic records and exchange them with one another. Without a connection to the internet, it will not be possible to access these records if they are only kept in the cloud or on online platforms such as SharePoint. Similar to how you wouldn't be able to use Microsoft Teams for record sharing if you didn't have an internet connection, neither of these things are possible. Physical records may still be available, but this could offer a barrier in terms of sharing them with others. This underscores how important it is to have backup systems and contingency plans in place to ensure that records can be accessed in the event that there is a loss of power or internet connectivity. This might involve keeping electronic documents both in the cloud and on physical storage devices, and having a plan in place to access and share physical records during an outage.

It is clear from the responses to the question about where people save their electronic records that people utilize a wide range of different services, including their own computers, the university's central server, the server itself, the cloud, and even separate accounts for their various projects. In order to enable quick access, some respondents organize their digital files into folders in alphabetical order on their computer. One drive was also noted by a few responders. Based on these comments, it appears that employees use a combination of local and networked storage options to keep track of digital files.

To maintain the security, authenticity, integrity, and confidentiality of electronic data, this underscores the need for establishing explicit norms and regulations for their storage. Electronic documents can be protected from theft or tampering by using dedicated organizational accounts and cloud storage options. You should also make

regular backups of your electronic records to prevent any irreparable damage to your data.

Also, how records are stored will impact the ease of access and retrieval. Finding electronic information/records on university systems elicits a variety of responses. Others find it difficult to access records without authorization or direct interaction with the department. Nonetheless, the shift to the cloud has made it simpler for users to locate previously saved documents. Additionally, well-trained staff members and unrestricted Internet access facilitate the retrieval of necessary information. In addition to proper name standards and metadata, the simplicity of record retrieval also depends on the appropriate naming conventions and metadata.

5.3.4. Electronic records management programme

Records management (RM) is defined by ISO 15489 (2016) as the effective and methodical supervision of the records lifecycle. RM is a branch of management that deals with the efficient and orderly management of records, including the procedures for record production, receipt, upkeep, use, and disposal as well as the preservation of transactional evidence of business activities. The proper records management program, according to Vimalachandran et al. (2018), guarantees that choices are made with documented proof rather than frequently unreliable memory. To control the creation and disposal of documents, policies and processes for controlling their creation, retention, and disposal must be put in place (Vimalachandran et al 2018). However, some of these technical details would not be known to someone who has not been trained professional through formal ER programme. The institution offer a former certificate, and would be beneficial for all institutional employees dealing with records management to take this courses. For example, the proper sharing of records

and creation of records guides would be taught and the respondents and all staff would benefit from professional training.

In term of the responses to the question of sharing electronic files or records for work purposes may vary. Some possible methods include email attachments, cloud storage services such as Google Drive or Dropbox, file transfer protocol (FTP) sites, shared network drives, and instant messaging platforms with file sharing capabilities. The choice of method may depend on the size of the file, the number of recipients, the level of security required, and the availability of technology. Some organizations may also have specific policies or procedures in place for sharing electronic files or records.

However, according to the responses, various methods are utilized for the purpose of sharing electronic files or records for work-related purposes. These methods include email attachments, cloud storage services such as Google Drive, instant messaging platforms such as Microsoft Teams, file transfer protocol (FTP) sites, and share point. While some responders store their responses using shareit or zip files and send them via email, others upload their responses to a public institutional account or website. There are still some respondents who rely on tangible records. It is recommended that institution evaluate their needs and select the method that is most appropriate based on factors such as the file size, the number of recipients, the security requirements, and the availability of technology. This is because there is such a wide variety of methods and technology that is currently available. In addition, businesses should consider putting in place guidelines or protocols to ensure that the sharing of electronic documents is done in a way that is both reliable and safe.

Additionally, the researcher wanted to know if the University of Fort Hare offered a records administration program. The findings reveal that 22 (88%) of the participants

gave a yes answer, while 3 (12%) said their departments did not have a records management program (section 4.4.5). The outcomes showed that an electronic records management program is crucial for accountability, efficacy, and efficiency. The purpose of records administration is to enhance compliance with legal and regulatory requirements. It will also be ensured that access to organizational memory and improvements in knowledge preservation and sharing. Additionally, having evidence available will guarantee better risk management. The records will serve as proof of the organization's activities and decisions. Keeping accurate documents will also result in lower costs for labour, materials, and storage (Ngoepe and Saurombe 2016).

Furthermore, records management was described by Franks (2018:19) as the administration of information resources to make information readily accessible, securely protected and preserved, and properly disposed of when necessary. It is important that the e-records continuum lifespan must be professionally handled to allow the institution benefit from proper ERM. Consequently, records management will be used to regulate and supervise records' development, maintenance, usage, and disposal. The same process can be applied to how physically created or electronically generated records that are generated internally or externally are handled, from their formation to their ultimate destruction. 2017 (Ngoepe). Therefore, having a records management program in place is crucial for any organization.

5.4. Infrastructure and resources for electronic records management

Establishing the University of Fort Hare's infrastructure readiness for electronic records management was another study goal. To successfully handle its records, an organization must have an information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure in place, according to Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016: 25). The responses from the participants shed light on the ever-increasing use of a variety of technologies

in the academic setting for the purpose of establishing electronic records. The widespread use of electronic devices like desktops, laptops, and mobile phones is proof that electronic documents are being created with the aid of technology. The use of printing devices and scanners, as well as other tools, is evidence that high-quality electronic records are created using a range of technologies. It is clear that a system that is adaptable enough to accommodate the use of a variety of devices is necessary given that the participants were ready to use their mobile devices to create records while they were on the move. Because of the prevalence of laptops and desktop computers in the workplace, it is clear that these types of computers are still an indispensable instrument for the production of electronic records. The need of having a safe and effective storage system for electronic data is brought into further relief by the widespread usage of removable storage media such as flash drives and external hard drives.

5.4.1. Storage of electronic records

Electronic records can be store in different locations and on many devices. Records must be stored in order to be retrievable, accessible, and usable for as long as they are required for institutional operations, research, and historical reasons, regardless of the format. Therefore, efficient storage is essential to the institution's success. The researcher was interested in how departmental electronic records were maintained. Participants were asked how they maintain or save electronic documents. All 25 (100%) participants indicated computers, cloud computing, intranet, internet, hard-drives, USBs and servers (section 4.5.1).

This finding shows that documents must be stored properly in order to maintain their retrievability, usability, and accessibility for as long as they are required for institutional transactions, research, and historical reasons. For the organization to be successful,

storage must be done properly. It is important to realize that records will continue to be subject to modifications or deletions if the organization chooses to store electronic records in shared drive folders without official controls. Access controls, which restrict the number of users who have access to, can modify, or can delete records that are kept in particular folders, can help to lessen this risk. Giving access rights to straightforward folder groups might be more practical because maintaining complex access controls requires a lot of resources.

5.4.2. Human resources for the management of electronic records

This finding shows that documents must be stored properly in order to maintain their retrievability, usability, and accessibility for as long as they are required for institutional transactions, research, and historical reasons. For the organization to be successful, storage must be done properly. It is important to realize that records will continue to be subject to modifications or deletions if the organization chooses to store electronic records in shared drive folders without official controls. Access controls, which restrict the number of users who have access to, can modify, or can delete records that are kept in particular folders, can help to lessen this risk. Giving access rights to straightforward folder groups might be more practical because maintaining complex access controls requires a lot of resources. Additionally, it is crucial for an institution's performance to offer staff members the proper training in the management of electronic records. The results showed that most respondents were either taking seminars or learning on the job, but given the importance of the essential documents handled in these departments, this was insufficient.. The administration of records correctly requires making sure that staff have the knowledge and abilities necessary to effectively handle electronic records. This is a crucial part of the process of ensuring proper handling of ERM continuum. Because of the growing significance of information

and communications technologies (ICTs) and electronic record management, it is crucial for all personnel, young and old, to receive training in these areas. Thankfully, the department of Library and Information Science offers certification in this field, and all employees involved in ERM should be encouraged or required to have this certification. By giving employees the chance to participate in full-time training as well as on-the-job training, workshops, and seminars, employers can successfully train their staff in electronic records management. However, this study would rather advocate for a full professional training due to so much that should be learnt from to be eligible to handle sensitive recorded information. The university should place a high emphasis on ensuring that staff members are knowledgeable and equipped with the necessary skills when it comes to the maintenance and storage of electronic data. Because of the emergence of electronic records, and the associated risks of securing it in a network environment, (Ajibade and Mutula, 2019), there is a greater demand for qualified workers. As a result, businesses are being forced to either bring in outside experts or provide further training to their existing staff. It is impossible to overstate how crucial it is for employees who have received the appropriate training to add to the organization's records management. In conclusion, the significance of providing employees with training in the management of electronic data cannot be overstated enough. It is imperative that businesses make it a priority to provide their staff with the training and education they need to efficiently manage electronic documents and maintain their integrity. The training can be delivered in a variety of formats, including full-time training, workshops, seminars, and training while on the job. Organizations have two options for ensuring that their employees have the appropriate abilities for electronic records management: either they may hire professionals for information

technology (IT) or they can teach their internal personnel. For a firm to effectively maintain its records, having a personnel that is highly skilled is absolutely necessary.

5.4.3. Availability of a records management system

The subjects were questioned about the existence of a records management system at the university of Fort Hare based on the presentation of the data. According to the findings, 11 (44%) individuals said no, while 14 (56%) said yes. This difference in opinion may be brought on by the absence of an integrated records management policy or a lack of knowledge of it within the divisions. It is important that those managing the institutional records have access to guide and records policy and made it available to all new recruit to familiarise themselves with this rules and guides. Those who indicated yes, they had an Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS). Only the proper users have access to properly built storage. The most utility is maintained by online storage, but it costs more to store data on a network.

Outside of the office, electronic documents can be produced and saved on tablets, smartphones, and USB flash drives. Similarly, staff members may store records on network devices, CDs, and the hard drives of personal computers (PCs). To protect digital copies of electronic university papers, control methods like access monitoring, user verification, and authorized security must be implemented. (ISO 15489-1: 2016).

5.4.4. Types of records kept in the records management system

ISO 15489-1: (2016) states that record-keeping systems can be configured to instantly register new records in an electronic environment by gathering some basic metadata about them and creating a new identifier for them. The assistance of experts in records management is essential for this to happen. University systems would thus produce enormous quantities of electronic documents that would be extremely difficult to

manage, secure, retrieve, and disseminate for decision making purposes. The types of records kept by the University of Fort Hare's records management system were requested from the participants. The 25 (100%) participants mentioned exam records, committees' records, student records, faculties' records, HR records, finance records, GMRDC records (section 4.5.4).

5.4.5. Types of systems used for recordkeeping in the departments

According to Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016: 23), internal and external audits are just two examples of control methods that a good records management system can bolster. Records management is thus implemented for a number of reasons, one of which is to make sure that current and pertinent information is readily available. Ngoepe (2017) noted the need for amenities like internet-connected computers, fax machines, photocopiers, and phones. According to the author, such systems should be in place to guarantee coordination among all the important parties involved in the existence of a record. Therefore, offices must build up strategies and systems to guarantee that electronic records and documentation are held safely. Offices are required to incorporate electronic records administration goals, obligations, and experts in office mandates or principles as pertinent (Crockett 2016: 12). The responses from this study is also aligned with the study of Ngoepe (2017). It has implications for the administration of records in a manner that is both effective and efficient because the university's staff has adopted a variety of technologies for the creation of electronic records. The employee's ability and the option to generate records on a variety of platforms such as laptops, desktop computers, mobile phones, and tablets—ensures that they will be able to do so regardless of location, time, or the nature of the situation they find themselves in. This may lead to an increase in the total volume of records that are created, which will necessitate more effective management

of those records. However, there are a little challenges to the successful use of these devices if the systems are not connected to the internet, saving such in the cloud might be impossible. The use of scanners to digitize physical records helps minimize the danger of losing or damage physical records and also helps improve access and retrieval times. Secondly, the use of scanners helps eliminate the risk of losing or damaging physical records.

According to Franks (2018: 11), developed countries have successfully used electronic filing systems to reduce the significant demands of managing physical files and the long-term costs of storing official documents. According to Franks (2018), the leading advocates for developing, establishing, and providing authoritative guidance on all aspects of ERM are the archival institutions of these developed countries. Based on the presentations of the findings of this study (chapter 4), the system that is utilized at this university to create electronic records is a combination of numerous technologies. These technologies include mobile phones, tablets, printers, scanners, and other technology equipment. Laptop computers and mobile phones are frequently used by employees because of their portability and the convenience they provide when it comes to making records while on the move, such as when participating in research workshops or when traveling (see, thematic figure 6). When employees are in the office, computers or laptops are preferred because they give a more convenient manner of creating records and sending official emails. This preference is due to the fact that computers and laptops are more handy. When it comes to the digitization of physical records, scanners are typically utilized. The personnel also keep electronic records on external drives and flash drives, which they utilize to transfer such documents from one device to another. To summarize, the institution offers its staff

members a robust and adaptable system for the creation of electronic records, which can be customized to meet a variety of requirements.

The university's implementation of a range of technologies for the production of electronic records has implications for the effective and efficient management of records. To begin, giving employees the option to generate records on a variety of platforms—laptops, desktop computers, mobile phones, and tablets—ensures that they will be able to do so regardless of location, time, or the nature of the situation they find themselves in. This may lead to an increase in the total volume of records that are created, which will necessitate more effective management of those records. The use of scanners to digitize physical records helps minimize the danger of losing or damage physical records and also helps improve access and retrieval times. Secondly, the use of scanners helps eliminate the risk of losing or damaging physical records.

On the other hand, the use of various technologies may pose challenges to the creation of a successful records administration system. When there is inconsistency in naming conventions, file formats, and storage locations, the storage and administration of electronic documents from numerous sources can become complicated and difficult to maintain. This is especially true if the file formats vary from one source to another. Electronic records offer a new set of challenges when it comes to the preservation and protection of data because of how easily they can be altered, deleted, or lost. Because of this, it's crucial that the institution implement a system for managing records that is both comprehensive and integrated. In addition to providing a centralized and risk-free repository for the storage and management of electronic records, such a system should be able to address the issues stated above.

Additionally, according to Franks (2018), ICT has been adopted by many nations around the globe. For instance, in South Africa and Rwanda, two African nations, digital recorders and transcription systems have been implemented in numerous institutions, particularly universities. These tools aid in the documentation of all information during court proceedings. Additionally, ICT is crucial for managing electronic documents in universities. ICT enables data retrieval more quickly (especially when searching), data analysis more quickly, data sorting by specific parameters, and data redundancy more easily. The 14 respondents indicated that they were using Integrated Tertiary Software. They also mentioned laptops provided by the university, cloud computing and intranet, hard drives, USBs as the types of systems. The results show that the respondents were unfamiliar with the difference between the system and hardware (section 4.5.5).

The results show that the systems that are commonly used for managing electronic records at the university was cloud computing, google drives.

According to Ab Aziz et al (2018), computerization of records is used to decrease loss and misplacement of records. Ab Aziz et al. (2018) found that electronic records management makes it easier to retrieve file records in their research on the management of university records. The authors claimed that electronic remote access to student data speeds up and facilitates access to information. Information that would normally take days or weeks to access using only paper files can now be obtained in a matter of minutes using a remote electronic system. A strong records management system would also make it simpler to arrange, recognize, and get rid of the records that are not required for ongoing business activities. By improving the administration of an organization's information resources, an effective records management system can help cut down on unnecessary expenses by reducing the amount of money spent on supplies and tools.

5.4.6. Protection of electronic records

Records need to be protected from harm regardless of any format. In this case, the researcher was keen to learn about electronic records protection. All the participants 14 respondents mentioned that records were protected through assigning passwords; firewalls. They also mentioned that records can be acquired and accessed through an authorized personnel.

5.4.7. Custody of electronic records

Ambira (2017) states that for accountability's sake, it's crucial that documents be able to be uniquely identified, that there be controls in place to prevent unauthorized changes to those data, and that there be an unbroken audit trail.

The scholar was interested in learning who had custody of the documents generated, received, and/or kept at the University of Fort Hare. The findings demonstrate that 25 (100%) participants stated that the ICT, Office of the Registrar, Human Resource (HR) department, Director of National Heritage and Cultural Studies (NAHECS), and Govan Mbeki Research and Development Centre (GMRDC) were in charge of keeping records at the institution (section 4.5.7). The findings demonstrate that various institutional divisions were in charge of the university records. According to the researcher, the purpose of this method was to guarantee the security of the records produced or received by each department.

5.5. Competencies and skills for electronic records management

The purpose of this research was to determine the staff's capabilities and skills for managing electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. Effective records management in electronic or manual bases requires the skilled personnel (Read and Ginn 2016). Thus, organizations require the skill of the workers and other records management (RM) staff, IT staff, lawful staff, and records overseers. The researcher was keen to know if the staff at the university had received training. The findings indicate that while 8 (32%) of the participants did not receive training in electronic records management, 17 (68%) of the participants did (section 4.6.1).

The researcher was interested in hearing the interviewees' opinions on the value of training during the discussion. When questioned about the significance of staff training for managing electronic documents.

5.5.1. Types of training

Managing information in the digital era is a significant job and a top priority for organizations in the public and private sectors (Franks 2018). Giving current and potential employees (i.e., students) education and/or training is a vital part of completing the job and managing strategic management (Jeong and Kim 2018). So that these individuals can fulfill their obligations for effectively and efficiently managing records in the digital environment, it is important to ensure that this is specifically in accordance with roles and responsibilities at the proper level of detail and in the appropriate areas of the problem (Franks 2018).

Moreover, ISO 15489-1: (2016) pointed out that there are skills that should be possessed by electronic records manager such as information management abilities. The ability to manage knowledge as a valuable asset necessitates these abilities. Although the precise skills needed will change based on the position within the business, information professionals must have a comprehensive awareness of information management challenges and viewpoints beyond the confines of their own function and job.

Data confidentiality and protection is the second ability. The success of an organization's information governance relies heavily on how well they handle this aspect of the process. Numerous rules and regulations have already been implemented, and more appear to be published daily. There are technological aspects and local rules to consider, but the basics can be used universally (ISO 15489-1: 2016). Professional abilities come last. These skills are usually applicable regardless of the position or job title. They can greatly advance the success of that position, and their absence will result in subpar service delivery (ISO 15489-1: 2016).

The researcher was keen in understanding the types of training obtained by the participants. The participants were asked to indicate the sort of training they got. The results show that 9 (36%) participants had received training through workshops, 8 (32%) participants received training through seminars, 5 (20%) participants received training through on-job training and 3 (12%) participants received training through fulltime training (section 4.6.2).

In addition, training workers is very important for successfully managing electronic records. The interviewer further asked the interviewees about the types of training records management personnel, records. Interviewee G responded as follows;

> "*We have various ways of training for electronic records management workers. This comprises full time training, various workshop conducted in different locations, seminars in which experts for electronic records management provide teaching of skills and methods, there is also on job training in which supervisors leads the training".*

Managing electronic records requires organizations to adapt to new ways of working to create, manage and preserve such records successfully over the long term (Nengomasha 2018). In comparison to traditional paper-based records and expertise, the responsibilities of creating, maintaining, and storing electronic documents and documentation are more prevalent across all disciplines (Ambira 2017). In the final decade of the 20th century, electronic records and documentation, along with the associated management systems (electronic records management systems, or ERMS), and electronic document management systems, or EDMS, were introduced. Since then, a number of programs and classes have been developed to instruct

experienced and recently qualified record managers on the various concerns with electronic records (Ngoepe 2017).

Interviewee C noted that;

> "*Without effective training for electronic records, it is difficult to operate records electronically, hence the organization emphasize on proper training for electronic records, it ensures that those who are responsible for managing records are well equipped with the skills for electronic records management"*

Furthermore, an increasing number of record managers and specialists in other disciplines are now beginning to understand the effects such problems have on long-term preservation of such records (Kuteesa and Kyotalimye 2019).

Interviewee D also noted;

> "*The current organization environment emphasizes on efficient technology like electronic records, however this technology requires skills from the personnel and employees, in this context in our organization emphasize on ensuring that employees are well versed with the necessary skill and technique for electronic records management".*

What is often underestimated is that in an organization that retains digital records; substantially more training is required across a wider range of workers than was previously required for traditional paper records (Ju and Yim 2017). Unlike paper records, the management and storage of digital records no longer fall under the purview of a single department, and the positions engaged now include supervisors, database managers, IT staff, and management (Johnston 2017).

For the staff to effectively carry out their duties, they must be well-equipped with the required records management skills. The interviewee's opinions on the value of personnel expertise and skills were sought after by the researcher. The following was noticed by interviewee H.;

> "*Without skilled personnel, it might be difficult to ensure that records are well managed in the organization, hence skilled and well trained personnel cannot be overemphasized, regarding their contribution to records management in the organization".*

Interviewee I said that;

> *"Making sure employees are properly taught is crucial because, without properly trained personnel, it may be challenging to ensure that the organization practices proper records management. Hence, organizations should ensure that employees are skilled through provision for training".*

The effective management of records be it electronic or manual requires the skilled personnel (Griffin 2018). Thus, organizations require the skill of the officer and other records management (RM) staff, IT staff and records overseers. IT assumes a crucial part in keeping up electronic records as they make and keep up the foundation on which the records dwell and key staff must cooperate to guarantee that electronic data is accessible, safeguarded, and discarded by appropriate laws and guidelines (Griffin 2018).

5.6. Legal and statutory requirements instrument for the management of electronic records

If there are any rules or regulations in place that handle the management of electronic records, this section wanted to know about them. Records management systems are built on a foundation of policies, rules, and procedures that give practice direction. According to Ngulube (2005), their goal is to create a setting that is favorable for effective records management.

5.6.1. Rules and regulations

The researcher was looking for laws and rules governing the management of electronic records. According to the findings, 11 (44%) and 14 (56%) respondents said they were unsure.

5.6.2. Awareness of the rules and regulations governing the management of electronic records

The study's goal was to find out if all workers were aware of the rules and regulations governing the management of electronic records. The results show that 14 individuals (56%) selected "yes," while only 11 (44%) selected "no."

5.6.3. Methods to make staff aware of the rules and regulations

The scholar was curious about how the departments were made aware of the rules and regulations. Respondents who stated that all staff members were told of the rules and regulations governing the management of electronic records were further questioned about the procedures used to educate them.. The findings reveal that all 14 respondents said they were informing staff members of the guidelines for electronic records administration using the intranet, email, and circulars.

The researcher also checked to see if the staff handled electronic papers in accordance with rules and regulations. The results show that 14 people answered yes. The foundation of the rules and guidelines, according to a second query, was the university's electronic documents management policy. Each of the 14 respondents asserted that they were handling electronic papers in accordance with the regulations outlined in the university policy.Records management policy is very important in any organization or an institution. The findings from the respondents show that the university had a policy, although the policy was not written. The researcher was keen to find out about a policy. As a result, interviewees were asked about the importance of a policy and its importance. The responses were as follows:

Interviewee A said;

> "*Records management policy are vital for the organization, without them, it is difficult to guide employees and staff in records management related tasks".*

Interviewee B noted the following;

> *A legally binding records management system is defined by its policies and procedures. Among the many different sorts of records and media that need to be managed is email.This implies before conducting records management policy, specific rules and standards should control records managers and staff".*

Interviewee C said the following;

"Records management policy is responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use, distribution, storage and disposal of records".

Interviewee D indicated the following;

“Records management policy is very important for management for control of records. Records management is important in handling and maintaining office records from the time of creation to disposal”.

5.7. Challenges associated with the use of electronic records management

The value of university and organization administration can be significantly increased by using electronic records between universities and their stakeholders to improve business operations' efficiency and effectiveness on both a personal and institutional level (Ambira 2017). However, some challenges in the management of digital papers have been found. The challenges include the following: the aging of technology, threats to reliability and authenticity, privacy and security breaches, reliance on technology, decentralization of information, increased security risk of data and records in electronic format, inadequacy of e-records management experts, rising costs, a shaky and outdated legal framework, and inadequate infrastructure systems (Ambira 2017).They discussed some of their imagined obstacles and other real-world difficulties they were running into when using electronic records management during the interviews (section 4.8).

The complexities and difficulties of managing electronic records in a university setting are underlined by the obstacles that were mentioned by the interviewees. An unskilled workforce can have a detrimental impact on service delivery, as was mentioned by Interviewee A, hence it is essential to have workers who are well-trained in electronic records administration. This underscores the necessity for an extensive training program for staff to guarantee that they have the essential abilities to efficiently maintain electronic documents. This training program should be designed to ensure that staff members have the appropriate skills.

Participants B, C, and D in the interview shed light on a variety of problems relating to the safety and dependability of electronic records. It was stated that some of the issues include the costs of the software and equipment, the threat of viruses and sabotage, and the potential of problems with the network. It was also brought up that there is a possibility that unauthorized parties could gain access to sensitive information, in addition to the fact that there is a possibility that data could be lost. In addition, Interviewee E pointed out that systems used to maintain electronic documents must be updated regularly and licenses need to be renewed. All of these problems underline the need of having a solid and comprehensive plan in place to handle electronic data in a secure, dependable and efficient manner. If you have a strategy like this in place, you can reduce the likelihood of data loss and ensure that electronic documents are always accessible for use in legal proceedings and academic research. The results show that electronic records bring challenges and must be properly managed. According to Franks (2018), the largest problem with digital systems is ensuring that accurate records are kept and their integrity isn't compromised over time. Ngoepe and Saurombe (2016) discovered that as a consequence of the transition from paper-based to digital systems made possible by ICTs in many countries, the quality, management, and accessibility of recorded information have all suffered. Read and Ginn (2016) claim that many information technology systems developed by numerous universities and governments ignore elements of electronic records management, which makes e-records management more challenging. Cummings (2019) asserts that records in South African universities are prone to many dangers including random or arbitrary destruction, improper file management and unprotected from disaster. They also lack effective management principles which safeguard them from creation to final disposition. This call for all universities in the country to adopt electronic records

management system that provides backup system for all the records. Lack of electronic records management principles in the university give more scepticism on how the university management and administration as well as professionals can handle and take administrative decisions (Cummings 2019: 2). It is therefore imperative to give attention to the management of electronic university records.

Furthermore, academics like Ambira (2017: 56) have argued that efficient management of an institution's data and information is greatly improved by proper electronic records management. Nyampong (2015: 12) opined that academic institutions such as South African universities have problems relating to virus attacks, cyber-attacks, lack of privacy and immense commercial data mining and these challenges pose a major threat to electronic records management. The main issues with managing electronic records in educational institutions in eastern and southern Africa are lax security and confidentiality controls, according to Vimalachandran, Wang, Zhang, Heyward, and Whittaker (2018), who provided commentary on the subject of security threats on electronic records management. Another case in support of this is the University of KwaZulu-Natal study by Kuteesa and Kyotalimye's (2019) finding that the majority of the institutions they surveyed did not adequately protect and secure their electronic records.

Lastly, Having individuals that are not skilled enough to be in charge of records management presents a number of issues and can result in a number of unfavorable outcomes, including the following:

- Unskilled professionals may not have the essential abilities to ensure the security of sensitive information, which can result in a breach of confidentiality for the information in question.

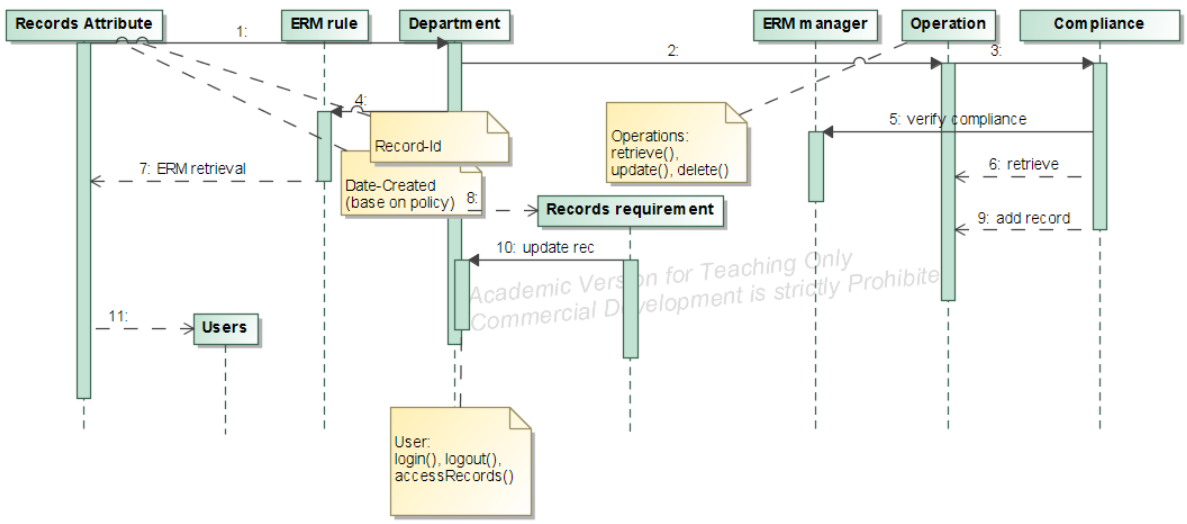
- If records are not correctly handled, there is a danger of losing vital data. This risk exists because there is a risk of losing valuable data.
- Incorrect information: If the records are not properly managed, there is a possibility that errors and inaccuracies will be present.
- Non-compliance with statutory mandates An incompetent professional might not be aware of the statutory mandates, and as a result, they might not be able to comply with those mandates.
- Ineffective operations: Efficient operations are supported by a well-managed electronic records system; nevertheless, it is possible that this will not be the case if the records are controlled by an incompetent individual.

Therefore, in order to reduce the impact of these unfavourable effects, it is essential to have a competent professional in charge of the maintenance of electronic data.

5.8. Intellectual contribution of the study

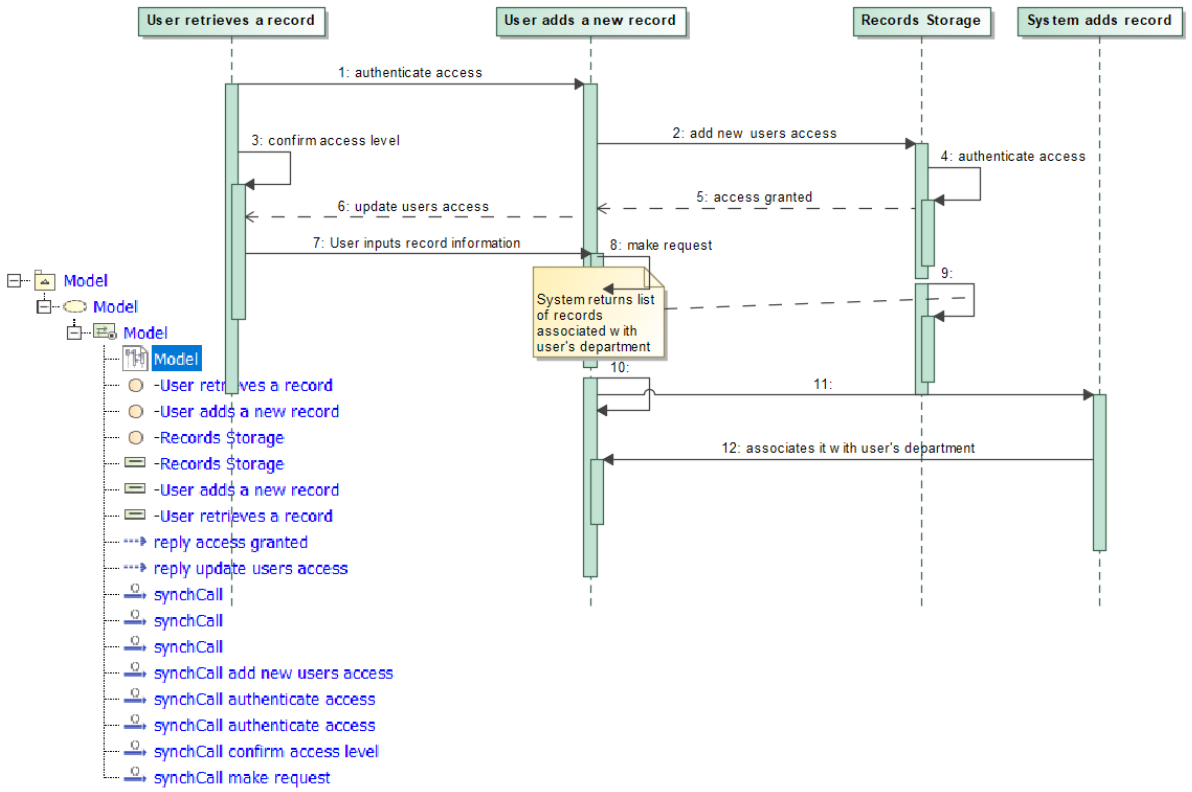
One of this study contributions to the field is to propose a flexible electronic record management design that can be implemented regardless of units the person is working. Proposing an agile ERM at universities can only be as efficient and effective as the design behind it. Using Unified Modelling Language (UML), ERM designers may work together more effectively with the records offer, which improves their overall comprehension of the system's needs for an agile ERM and the best way to meet those needs. As a result, the system is easier to maintain and evolve over time, and it better serves the interests of the institution and its stakeholders. An iterative method of development is also advocated for in Agile Records UML Design, which boosts quality assurance and facilitates quicker adaptation to shifting needs.

Based on the findings and some of the challenges that have been highlighted, The study foresees a flexible ERM layout that a university records officer may use as a template to enhance ERM policy and administration. In order to better organize their records, businesses could implement the ERM design's service-oriented approach to record keeping. This design made use of UML as its modeling language because it's crucial for system designers to have a firm grasp on the needs of records managers before they can create a really useful records management system. This records management system simple example was designed using the ERM design process and UML so that at least five different parts of the institution might use it. Nonetheless, if the registry needs more space, this can be easily expanded to meet those needs. For example, the researcher is suggesting one method that can be used to automate ERM access depending on an individual access levels.



Researcher presented example of automation processes with three access levels (general, classified, and executive) to the shared records repository, which will help automate the electronic records management system and facilitate agile governance in the institution. The automation can be applied across all departments and devices to streamline the entire documents lifecycle and preservation procedure.

The sequence diagram below shows the other side of the proposed design.



Importantly, the graphic above identifies a class of records, as different university departments can provide distinct records processes. The constructor function "init" of the "record" class accepts five parameters: "record id", "date created", "department", "status", and "classification." These parameters are needed to initialize the Record class' attributes. Additionally, the Record class includes three methods: fetch, update, and delete. Retrieve returns a string indicating that the record has been successfully retrieved. The "update" method changes the record's status to "updated" and returns a string that indicates the record has been updated. The "delete" method changes the record's status to "deleted" and produces a string that indicates the record has been destroyed.

The ERM basic design may be used to store information about records in a system, while the procedures can be used to retrieve, modify, or delete the records. This ERM

design framework can be expanded and modified to meet all ERM requirements and needs.

5.9. Chapter summary

Based on the benefits of handling electronic records, records management policies, infrastructure, custody of electronic records, and personnel competencies and skills, this section offered an interpretation and discussion of the findings. Several of the many components that make up the administration of electronic records are analyzed in Chapter 5. It handles the production of electronic records, as well as their receipt and routine storage. It emphasizes the significance of job routines and ERM processes in assuring the efficient maintenance of electronic records, which is essential for modern businesses. The exchange of electronic records for the purposes of work and employment is another topic of discussion. The next topic that is discussed in this chapter is the program for managing electronic records, as well as the infrastructure and resources that are necessary for this program's execution. Also included in this discussion are the archiving of electronic records, the availability of human resources for their maintenance, and the provision of a records management system. There is discussion about the different types of recordkeeping methods used by the various departments, as well as the storage and protection of electronic records. Additionally, this chapter discusses the competencies and abilities needed for effective administration of electronic records. Additionally, we discuss the regulatory and legal requirements as well as strategies for educating the staff about the rules and regulations. The challenges associated with using electronic document handling are highlighted in the conclusion.

The overview focuses on the most important parts of managing electronic records, such as the production of new data, their storage and exchange, as well as the

resources, systems, and legal requirements involved. An efficient enterprise risk management system is essential to the effective management of electronic records, the safeguarding of sensitive information, and the fulfilment of legal duties.

At this level present the findings and discuss them immediately i.e. in one chapter4.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The data analysis and discussion of the results were covered in the prior chapter. This chapter provides a brief overview of the study findings that formed the foundation for the conclusions and suggestions. findings of an empirical study and literature review into the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare. The extent of managing electronic records, staff expertise in managing electronic records, infrastructure for managing electronic records, statutory and legal framework governing managing electronic records, and major challenges to managing electronic records are all explicitly covered.

6.2 Summary of findings

The purpose of this study was to look into how electronic records are handled at the University of Fort Hare. Specificity was given to the assessment of university staff in order to examine the management of electronic records management practices and how it affects academic excellence at the university. For the purposes of this study, "electronic records" refer to digital files containing data generated by or transmitted to an institution or an individual during the planning, execution, or conclusion of that activity, while "management" refers to the process by which that activity is directed toward its intended outcome (Ju and Yim 2017). The study's justification is that there is still an increase in subpar electronic records management practices that have an effect on the university's service delivery, despite university efforts to implement policies that regulate electronic records management in the institutions' departments. However, this affects the service delivery since some of data can be lost by unprofessional and incompetent workers who don’t know how

to use electronic records management process. There are more claims and worries that the university's continued absence of electronic records management may result in the loss of crucial documents that could have an impact on the institution's overall performance. As a result, this jeopardizes the university's plans to advance computerized records management techniques, enhance the services it provides, and increase the openness and transparency of its records management operations. Additionally, because the institution will not provide quality service, the nation's economy will also suffer. The empirical evidence was focused on the University of Fort Hare, where the research sample included employees of the university records administration department. In-depth interviews, qualitative research inquiries, and desk research were used to gather the data. The findings were discussed on electronic records management (ERM). Electronic records are created, received, and stored. Job routines and ERM processes are crucial to managing electronic records. Discussing work-related electronic record exchange. The chapter covers electronic records man. Participants' responses showed that academics are using more and more technology to create electronic records. Desktops, laptops, and smartphones show that technology is used to create electronic records. Printing machines, scanners, and other equipment are used to create high-quality electronic records. The participants' willingness to utilize their mobile devices to record while moving shows the need for a flexible solution. Laptops and desktops are still needed to create electronic records due to their popularity in the office. Removable storage media like flash drives and external hard drives emphasize the necessity for a secure and reliable data storage solution. agement program, including the necessary infrastructure and resources. Electronic record storage, managerial resources, and a records management system are all

discussed. Discussed include departmental recordkeeping systems, electronic record protection, and custody. The chapter addresses electronic records management skills and competencies. Covered are legal and statutory requirements and ways to inform staff of the rules. Finally, electronic records management challenges are discussed.

Electronic records management includes generation, storage, sharing, resources, systems, protection, and legal requirements. ERM is essential for electronic record management, data security, and legal compliance.

This shows that record storage helps keep records retrievable, accessible, and usable for institutional transactions, research, and history. Institutional success depends on proper storage. Thus, if the organization stores electronic data in folders on shared drives without formal safeguards, they risk manipulation or erasure. By restricting who can create, update, or delete records in specific folders, access restrictions can reduce this risk. Keeping folder groups with access permissions basic saves resources.

6.2.1 The extent to which electronic records are managed

This study finds that the university's electronic records management system is insufficient to meet the needs of the finest service delivery. The lack of knowledgeable and seasoned staff was one of the main factors contributing to the university's poor electronic records administration. The study found out that some of the workers that deals with electronic records management process are interns who are students still perusing their studies. They lack the expertise needed to produce, manage, and discard electronic documents. Some of the soft and electronic information will end up lost in the process because the inexperienced records keepers do not know about the

backup system of the electronic records. It is more advisable that the university offers induction and on the job training sessions to all the workers. Another factor that was raised is shortage of electronic gadgets such as computers and tablets that should be used in the process. The lack of internet facilities and slow internet services can also affect electronic records management process at the university. The study noted that some of the electronic records are easily tampered with as compared to paper records. It would be easier to accomplish this using the electronic system's features than it would be with paper records. Redundancy and a dearth of record-keeping control are the results of this. However, when working with electronic records, trustworthiness is required, including authenticity, dependability, and integrity. Furthermore, respondents indicated that Google Drive, external hard drives, laptops, mobile devices, cloud storage, USBs and Bluetooth, and One Drive are all used to store electronic documents at the university. A versatile, easily accessible, well-organized, and secure system for managing electronic data is essential in this era of widespread use of personal laptops, organizational accounts, and cloud storage. It is crucial to have a system that can support the growing demand for cloud storage and offer reliable and effective cloud storage solutions, as seen by the recent uptake of One Drive by several respondents.

6.2.2 The skills of the staff managing electronic records

The administration of records depends heavily on skills. Employees with the required training and expertise in electronic records management will enhance the university's service delivery to its stakeholders, including its shareholders and students. Participants showed that he majority of the workers are not experienced in the process of electronic records management. The participants showed that records manager and the registrar of the university are the ones that are experienced and all the other

workers do not have the proper skills and work experience They highlighted that most of the data capturers are interns who are still studying within the university. This results in many mistakes in the electronic data process. In order to encourage the best service delivery at the institution, it is advised that the university spend more in employee training. Other university staff members have stated that to progress their understanding of electronic records administration, ongoing on-the-job training programs are required. There should be training programs to inform the staff of the essential steps of electronic records management in order to prevent the procedure from becoming monotonous for the staff.

To succeed, an institution must train workers in electronic record management. Most respondents learned on the job or through seminars, which isn't enough considering the importance of these departments' documents. Staff must be trained to handle electronic records to properly manage records. This is essential to ERM continuum management. All employees, young and old, must be trained in ICTs and electronic record keeping due to their expanding importance. Fortunately, the Department of Library and Information Science offers ERM certification, which should be encouraged or required for all ERM workers. On-the-job, workshop, seminar, and full-time electronic records management training can be beneficial. This study prefers thorough professional training because there is so much to learn to handle sensitive recorded material. The institution should prioritize staff training in electronic data maintenance and storage. Electronic records and the threats of network security have increased the need for qualified professionals (Ajibade and Mutula, 2019). Businesses must hire outside specialists or teach their employees. Staff training is crucial to the organization's records management.

Finally, electronic data management training is crucial. Businesses must prioritize training their workers to manage and protect electronic documents. Full-time, workshop, seminar, and on-the-job training are available. Organizations can hire IT professionals or train their staff to manage electronic records. High-skilled staff is essential for record-keeping.

6.2.3 The infrastructure used for electronic records management

In the process of managing electronic documents, infrastructure is crucial. The research found that the records management section faces a few obstacles because of a lack of infrastructure. It was observed that infrastructure issues have a negative effect on institutions' preservation efforts for records and archives. Unfortunately, this situation affects the majority of colleges, leading to subpar preservation and conservation efforts. The participants noted that the majority of those working in electronic information face challenges related to the efficient preservation and conservation of electronic information resources. National archival institutions are typically housed in specially constructed or previously used structures, and the majority of these purpose-built repositories were established in the distant past. Participants acknowledged that for a long time, it was typical to find university archival collections kept in subpar facilities. Such structures do not offer favourable working conditions for either the archives' employees or the documents they house.

The comments from the participants offer insight on the ever-increasing use of a number of technologies to create electronic records in university environment. Technology is being used to help collect electronic records, as evidenced by the prevalence of electronic devices like desktops, laptops, and cell phones. Not just the usage of printing machines and scanners, but also the use of other equipment, demonstrates that high-quality electronic records are produced utilizing a variety of

technologies. The fact that participants were willing to utilize their mobile devices to create records while on the move indicates the need for a flexible system that can accommodate the use of a variety of devices. Given the predominance of laptops and desktops in the office, it is evident that these types of computers remain indispensable for the generation of electronic documents. The widespread use of detachable storage media such as flash drives and external hard drives emphasizes the importance of having a secure and efficient system for storing electronic data.

6.2.4 The statutory and legal framework that guides electronic records management process

Statutory and legal requirements are vital for proper electronic records management process and they should be followed because they provide the guidelines and regulations that should be followed in the execution of duties within the institution. The framework keeps a record of the care and treatment being provided to each electronic record management official. Information from these files is utilized to tailor an individual's care and treatment to their specific requirements. Participants showed that the electronic records management process does not follow the prescribed statutory and legal framework of records management. This results in violating the principles and standards of records management and leads to poor service delivery. Participants noted that they are no clear code of contact that specifies the statutory and legal requirements by workers in the execution of their duties.

6.2.5 Major constraints to the management of electronic records

Electronic documents are being created and used much more frequently as a result of the quickening process of electronisation that is taking place in information technology. Along with the apparent conveniences that digital records have brought, there are a

number of new and unexpected issues that have arisen in the electronic records management process, posing both theoretical and practical challenges. Participants noted many constraints to management of electronic records. The study indicated that weak legislative and organizational infrastructures as well as inadequate information computer technology skills, resources and competences are constraints to effective electronic records management process. More so inadequate finance has a negative impact. This means that if there is no enough finance to buy all the electronic gadgets required, the process of electronic records management will not be successful. The political instability and poor funding within the geographical location of the university affects the electronic records management process.

Interviewees identified a number of challenges inherent to managing electronic records in a university setting. According to one responder, having staff who are well-trained in electronic records administration is crucial since an inexperienced workforce might have a negative effect on service delivery. Because of this, it's more important than ever to provide thorough training to employees so they can effectively manage electronic documents. The goal of this training program should be to provide employees with the necessary abilities.

Interviewees B, C, and D (see chapter 4 and 5) provided light on a wide range of issues concerning the trustworthiness and security of electronic documents. The price of the software and hardware, the risk of hacking and sabotage, and the potential for technical difficulties with the network have all been cited as drawbacks. Aside from the danger of data loss, the possibility of unauthorized individuals gaining access to sensitive information was also raised. Interviewee E also mentioned that the systems used to maintain electronic documents require regular updates and license renewals. Due to these issues, it is more important than ever to have a thorough and well-

thought-out strategy for dealing with electronic data in a safe, reliable, and effective manner. Having a plan like this in place can lessen the chances of data loss and guarantee the perpetual availability of electronic records for use in court and study.

6.3 Conclusions

The management of electronic documents at the University of Fort Hare was the main emphasis of the study. The study aimed to: determine the extent of electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare; look at the policy and legal regulatory instruments in place for the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare; determine the availability of infrastructure for electronic records management at the University of Fort Hare; and determine the effectiveness of the University of Fort Hare's electronic records management program. It was noted from the research that most of the workers responsible for electronic records management process do not have the required qualifications, experience and the skills. The study concluded that there is need for the university to invest more on the education and skills of the workers. This means that there is need for continuous on the job training programs. The study indicated that the records management manager and university registrar are the only qualified and experienced workers, therefore the institution should employ more people with the necessary skills.

The study also concluded that there is no enough infrastructure and electronic resources to facilitate the execution of duties by the electronic records department. This means that there are no enough storage facilities, shortage of electronic devices such as laptops and tablets. The study also concluded that the internet is sometimes weak that affects the backup system of the electronic records.

Furthermore, the research came to the conclusion that the electronic records management process does not carry out its responsibilities in accordance with the established statutory and legal framework. As a result of the inadequately given guidelines, poor service delivery results. Finally, the study concluded that there many constraints that affects the electronic records management process such as shortage of funding, corruption, unskilled workforce and shortage of electronic gadgets.

6.4 Recommendations

On the basis of the study's findings and an examination of the body of related literature, the researcher provided recommendations for how to improve the University's administration of electronic records. The following suggestions were given:

6.4.1 Managing risk and liability

The institution must be able to manage risk and liability, claims the research. With better tracking of the evidence of work done and of client acceptance at each step of the process, risk management will be made simpler legally. A comprehensive computerized documents management system will aid in more effective file security.

6.4.2 Administration

The study recommended proper administration of all the records. Documenting time and billing will be simpler, and it will be simpler to know where jobs are in the work flow at any given moment.

6.4.3 Management

According to the study, efficient management structures should be implemented to simplify the management of electronic records. Electronic record keeping will make data analysis simpler to perform, which will enhance the ability to monitor productivity.

6.4.4 File management.

The study recommended proper file management procedures to be followed. Using file metadata will make it easier to find files, give backup and archiving procedures more control and security, and make it easier to manage files as possibly reusable resources.

6.4.5. Records management policy

The study advised the establishment to develop a records management strategy. a rule that offers a framework for managing the institution's use of electronic papers. It is crucial to make sure that records management system audits are regularly used to assess the system's performance and confirm compliance once a policy has been created.

6.5 Suggestions for further studies

For additional study, the following suggestions were made:

Future studies should focus on how electronic records are organized for use in different institutions around the globe.

- More study is required to understand how electronic records management practices affect service delivery in universities and across the country.

• Research on practices for managing electronic documents should be done based on the policies.

Further investigation must concentrate on potential tactics that universities should use to enhance the administration of electronic records.

• More investigation should be done to determine whether South Africa's electronic records management methods comply with global records management standards.

• Additional study is required to understand the difficulties universities confront managing electronic records and possible solutions.

6.6 Chapter summary

The chapter included a summary of the findings, conclusions, and suggestions with regard to the electronic records management procedures used by the University of Fort Hare. The research found that poor electronic records management procedures have a detrimental effect on how well services are generally provided at the university and globally. Therefore, methods to improve these practices ought to be implemented. The chapter concludes with recommendations for improving university procedures for electronic records administration.

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Some sources are missing. Be very meticulous

Appendix A

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Staff Questionnaire

Please complete within three (3) days

My name is Zandiswa Mnguni. I'm doing a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science. I am conducting research on the topic, An investigation into the Management of Electronic Records in the SA universities: A case study of the University of Fort Hare

The current study will help in the generation of strategies or policies by universities to promote the proper management of electronic records in academic institutions. Kindly assist me by completing the questionnaire. Please do not enter your name on the questionnaire. It should take you a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. The researcher will physically collect completed qualitative questions within three to five days of distribution. For any enquiries relating to this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher (Extension 2379 or 0824262723).

Please tick the appropriate answer or fill in the spaces where needed

Section A: Information on records management

Section A. Demographic information

1. Gender

Male	**1**	**Female**	**2**

2. Age

Below 18-25	**26-30**	**31-35**	**36-40**	**41+**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. Highest level of educational achievement?

No formal education	**certificate**	**Diploma**	**University degree**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

4. Work experience

1-5 years	**6-10 years**	**10-15 years**	**Over 15 years**

Section B

1. Have you ever been trained as records keeper or manager?

YES	**NO**

2. Does your work deal with records management (e.g. student, financial, academic staff records)?

a) Yes (b) No

If yes, please indicate the types of records you are working with and complete

……

3. Your current position within the university?

Records manager

Senior manager and above

Admin / personal assistant

Finance administrator

Professor

Other: Specify……..

4. Which section are you currently working for ?

Finance ; Examination; Registrar Human Resources; Filing; Research

Faculty Administration

Other, specify……

5. Does the University of Fort Hare have a records management system?

a) Yes (b) No

6. What types of records are kept in the records management system?

7. What system are you currently using in your department for recordkeeping?

a) Manual recordkeeping

b) Electronic

a. ITS

b. Non-ITS

c. All of the above

8. Does the university have a formal (written) policy, procedures and filing system for records?

a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Sure

9. (If your answer is No kindly move to question 10). If yes, does it form part of University Regulatory Structures?

a) Yes (b) No (c) Not Sure

(If yes, please move to question 13)

10. If No, are you aware of plans to formulate one within the next 12 months?

a) Yes (b) No (c) Maybe

Other……

11. If the university does not have a written policy, is there any existing strategy for recordkeeping (e.g. a plan of action designed to achieve a major or overall aim)?

a) Yes (b) No

12. If yes, what are the strategies, please list them below

i).....

ii).....

iii).....

13. Does the policy comply with government regulations for records management?

a) Yes (b) No

14. Are all the staff members aware of the policy?

a) Yes (b) No

15. Do staff members manage records according to this policy?

a) Yes (b) No

16. If yes is the policy reviewed at regular intervals?

a) Yes (b) No

17. What methods are used to make staff aware of the policy?

Intranet. E-mail; Circulars; Other,

Specify…..

18. Does the university have a records management system that it uses for Recordkeeping?

a) Yes (b) No

If yes, please include the type of system that the university uses if you know it

……

19. Kindly list any challenges that you are facing with regard to records Management

……

……

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What do you understand by the term electronic records management?

2. What are the advantages of managing records in an electronic way?

3. What are the challenges of managing records in an electronic way?

4. What kind of technology is used to manage electronic records?

5. What are the positive changes that you have noted as a result of managing records electronically?

6. In what way does electronic records management develop the University Library information system?

7. What reasons can you give to support the management of records in an electronic manner?

8. What are the challenges associated with using electronic records management at the University?

9. What recommendations can you give regarding the use of electronic records management at the University?

ANNEXURE 2

Managing Electronic Records within the University: A case Study

Dear Colleagues, Kindly assist one of our departmental students who is researching into the Management of Electronic Records in the South African University: A case study of the University of Fort Hare. All information you provided will not be linked to you and your name will not be mentioned in the study. The aim of the study is to assist the study in graduating, and to help university to form policy. Kindly continue with the information if you consent to participate and you will not face any consequences or harm by contributing.

Thank you for your answers.

1. A1: What is your current job role (e.g., researcher), and your year of experience?

2. 1. what types of devices do you use to create electronic records for official duties?

3. 2. How do you store all your electronic records in the course of your official duties

4. 3. Does your job requires dealing with electronic records daily, and how do you manage this? please explain in detail

5. 3a. What challenges are you facing in managing electronic information/records on your job? please explain in detail

6. 4. How do you share both small and large electronic files or electronic records for work purposes

7. 5. Were you given any policy to guide you with creating, storing and sharing electronic files or electronic records at work

8. 6. Have you received any training about records management or archives?

9. 7. What type of physical facilities do you have that help you to create, store, or share your electronic records?

10. 8. Do you have any organisation supports or facility to help you with creating, storing, or sharing electronic records?

11. 9. How do you normally store your electronic files and folders?

12. 10. Can you explain how easy it is to find electronic information/records on the university systems

13. 11. Please explain how easy or difficult it is to access/get electronic records from other department or units?

14. 12. Do you have any rules in your unit that guide you on how to manage records daily? Kindly explain in detail

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: KHAI 61 SMNGOI

Project title:	An investigation into the management of electronic records at the University of Fort Hare.
Nature of Project	Masters in Library & Information Science
Principal Researcher:	Zandiswa Mnguni
Supervisor:	Mr F.E Khayundi
Co-supervisor:	N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the abovementioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document;
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research.

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect Of ical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee

and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

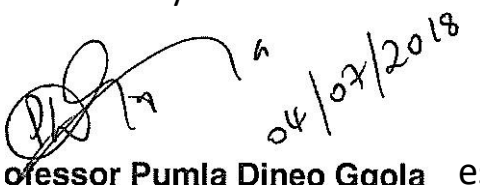
- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if o Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected; o Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented; o Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require; o The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to.

- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office.

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola essor Pumla Dineo Gqola

Dean of Research

27 June 2018