
Application of electronic records management system

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Background of the study The University of Nairobi, a body corporate established under the Universities Act 2012 of the laws of Kenya and the University of Nairobi Charter, is the pioneer institution of University education in Kenya and the region. The University of Nairobi responded to the national, regional and Africa's high level manpower training needs by developing and evolving strong, diversified academic programmes and specializations in basic sciences, applied sciences, technology, humanities, social sciences and the arts.

1.2 Context of the study ISO standard 15489: 2001 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, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.” Electronic Records Management (ERM) ensures the organization has the records it needs when they are needed. National Records for Scotland states that an Electronic Records Management System otherwise abbreviated as(ERMS) is a computer program or set of programs designed to track and store records. The software can be used to manage the creation and reception, classification, application of retention and disposal, and control access and use. Record management has become a challenge to many institutions in as far as Records control, loss, retrieval, retention and disposal, disaster management, maintenance and preservation is concerned. Also acquisition or development of an electronic records management system has proved to be as difficult task to many organizations in that the duration and the procedures that are followed are equally involving and expensive. Though there would be varied differences amongst many organizations mainly due to organizational structures and their varied needs.

1.3 Statement of the problem of the problem The study aims to assess the level of records management practices within University of Nairobi as a learning institutions in respect to loss, access and retrieval, retention and disposal, conservation and maintenance of student academic records. The qualitative research aims to show how application of electronic records management system aims to reduce and manage these problems effectively. 1.4 Aim of the study This study aims to allow academic institutions to manage student academic records from creation, reception, storage, use and disposal. In this respect, the study aims to identify problems and their solutions to be applied throughout the process.

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1.4 Research Objectives

1. To improve access and retrieval of student academic records.
2. Improve conservation and disposal(maintenance) of student academic records
3. Address challenges encountered in training of users of electronic information system
4. Show the resources available for developing and sustaining electronic records management system.
5. Show the benefits that electronic records information system has to the institution

1.5 research questions The aim of the study is to investigate;

1. How Electronic information system will improve access and retrieval of student academic records
2. How it will improve conservation and disposal (maintenance) of the records
3. What the challenges and solutions available in training staff about use of the Electronic Records information system are
4. What resources are available for developing and sustaining electronic records management system
5. What the benefits of Electronic Records management system are?

1.6 significance of the study This research is significant because there has been no research done to determine the effects of ERMS. The study aims to indicate the advantages and disadvantages in the adoption of ERMS. It will also be a stimulus for enhanced service delivery reduces expenditure for the institution, and finally its findings shall be of added value to the expansion of knowledge to learners and researchers.

CHAPTER TWO: LITETRATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction Electronic Records management System is a computer software program or a set of applications which are built

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to track and store records. The program can be used to manage the creation and maintenance of records, apply retention and disposal schedules, and control access and use. The main business reasons for an electronic records management system were to enable sharing of documents across several sites, to make finding information easier, to stop duplication and to help version control in order to make Estates run more efficiently. At first, it was thought that an electronic document management system would do all that was required, and this would probably have met the business reasons for a system. However, the compliance-related reasons led to procuring a system that could allow both the ease of working and version control of document management and the legal reliability and retention control of records management. The purpose of this chapter is to review literature sources relevant to the area of study so as to determine what have been done and what has not been done about this topic.

2.2 Electronic Records Management Information System McLeod (1996), in her review of a document management strategy report, states that: ... The most important success factors for Electronic Records management systems, almost irrespective of business sector, include faster task completion, improved quality, cost reduction in addition to other significant issues in records are like meeting statutory requirements and improving records security. The basic benefits are that work is done more easily with less effort and it is done more quickly; it is done with better quality. It is also easier to find out about it afterwards. It is widely known that implementation of ERMS is a long and complex process. However, it is also recognized in the academic literature that implementation of ERMS is worthwhile due to the numerous benefits that ERMS

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holds. (Johnston and Bowen, 2005) It is thus widely accepted that ERMS can lead to less coordination effort, higher quality, higher efficiency, and higher maintainability (Reijers et al., 2003) and that it can stimulate transparency and accountability. Thus providing an unbiased, accurate and recorded account of responsibility

Direct benefits from the use of Electronic Records Management Systems include productivity improvements, cost-cutting, space saving, and a general improvement in work processes (Johnston & Bowen, 2005)

2.3 Benefits of Electronic Records Management Systems An automated system used to manage the creation, use, maintenance and disposal of electronically created records for the purposes of providing evidence of business activities. These systems maintain appropriate contextual information (metadata) and links between records to support their value as evidence (National Archives of Australia, 2005). Paper records can only be in one place at a time. Electronic records can be viewed by many people at the same time. This has benefits in terms of access: users in different places can discuss the same record, or different users can use the same record for different purposes. Remote access to records by staff who are not in the office is a significant benefit. (Improvement and Development Agency, n.d.). (Salford City Council, 2005)

2.3.1 Access and user convenience Paper records can only be in one place at a time. Records in an Electronic records Management System hosted in a central server can be viewed by many people at the same time. This has benefits in terms of access. Users in different places can use the same record, or different users can use the same record for different purposes. Remote access to

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records by staff who are not in the office has been a significant benefit to one project. (Improvement and Development Agency, n.d.). This provides several tangible and intangible benefits. For example, there has been a 15-20 per cent improvement in productivity in Council Tax and Benefits processing and an even more significant increase of 48 per cent in productivity within Overpayments in Salford City Council. The important intangible benefits include a heightened level of staff satisfaction and motivation (Salford City Council, 2005). In relation to this, Electronic Records management Systems is important to academic institutions in that sections, departments such as schools, finance, exam centers and students who are need access to these records at any time can access them conveniently from remote locations. It only needs to be hosted in a central server. This will help in promoting efficiency, effectiveness and quality in work and service delivery. In terms of records storage, space is an important matter to consider. Electronic Records management System requires only one copy of the record the stored in the system and thus can be accessed by many users from different locations simultaneously. This helps in managing of storage space economy.

2.4 Resources available for sustaining ERMS Electronic records management system is a very complex information system. Requirements pertaining to it are quite diverse and unique. Basically, in almost all types of information systems, requirements are categorized into two and they are functional requirements and non-functional requirements. Functional requirements are requirements that an information system must have in order to operate seamlessly. The non-functional requirements are

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requirements that technically support the operation of the information system. Examples of functional requirements include the computer hardware and software while non-functional requirements include shelter and human workforce. Information systems are developed based on these two requirements [Satzinger, Jackson & Burd, 2009];[Shelly & Rosenblatt, 2010].

3.0 CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Introduction This chapter describes the specific strategies used in data collection analysis. It focuses on the study area, research design, study population, sampling techniques and description of the research instruments, data collection, procedures and analysis of data.

3.1 Study Area The study will be carried out at The University of Nairobi, Chiromo Campus. This area of research is chosen because of its location as it is based near Nairobi Westlands and therefore the researcher will not experience traffic jam on the road during the time of conducting this research.

3.2 Research Methodology The researcher will use a mixed research method which will give the researcher exhaustive results pertaining the research question being pursued. It gives the researcher space to get results for the research from different varied research methods such as questionnaires and interviews hence producing exhaustive and satisfactory results Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g. use of qualitative and

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quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123).

3.3 Data collection tools The tools for research will include

3.3.1 Questionnaires The researcher will use both structure and unstructured questionnaires. The questionnaires will have both structured and unstructured predetermined questions. The questionnaires will be hand delivered to the respondents and given a chance to fill them, after which they will be collected for analysis.

3.3.2 Emails The researcher will also send questions through emails to the respondents and later analyze the responses from the respondents.

3.3.4 Interviews The researcher will conduct a question and answer session with the respondents to collect data from their responses.

3.3.5 Documentary Analysis. The researcher will also check through past researches, journals and even textbooks to collect data about the research topic for analysis.

3.4 Sampling Methods. This is the process of identifying and picking members of a population as a representation in research, to provide answer to the question being sought. The researcher will use probability/Random sampling method in the research and more so a homogenous sampling, which identifies samples with

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similar characteristics with a particular interest needed by the researcher. **3.5 Sample population.** According to Explorable, Population sampling is the process of taking a subset of subjects that is representative of the entire population. The sample must have sufficient size to warrant statistical analysis. The researcher will also take eighty (80) individuals as the total sample population needed to accomplish the intended results for the above research question. **3.6 Data Analysis Techniques** After collecting data from the respondents, like the questionnaires, interviews and documentary analysis, the researcher will check their reliability and relevancy using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. This will involve descriptive statistical and non-statistical methods to generate means, modes percentages and frequencies. Data will be cleaned, coded, summarized and analyzed, then presented using tables, graphs and pie charts. **3.6 Reliability and validity** Responses from respondents will be treated with high degree of confidentiality. Ethical issues will be observed throughout the study and objectivity will be the main focus of the study

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