

**MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL RECORDS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF  
TEACHING SERVICE ADMINISTRATION, BOTSWANA**



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of  
BOTSWANA**

By

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A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the award  
Of masters degree in  
Archives and Records Management

October 2016

**DECLARATION**

I declare that **MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL RECORDS AT TEACHING SERVICE ADMINISTRATION, BOTSWANA** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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DATE

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

It is an honour and privilege for me to wholeheartedly thank my supervisor and mentor, Professor N. Mnjama, for guiding me with vested research knowledge and expertise during the course of this dissertation.

I also wish to thank the Director of the Department of Teaching Service Administration for granting me an opportunity to undertake a research of Management of Personnel Records at TSA. For all the TSA employees who completed and returned the questionnaire, I salute you. In particular, I would like to thank the Records Manager of TSA, Mr Molatlheng for his assistance.

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Meshack Mauco who believed in me and encouraged me to do my Masters Degree and my children Bill, Sharon and Levi for understanding, as this study deprived them of our quality time.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the management of personnel records at the Department of at Teaching Service Administration (TSA) at the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The study sought to establish how personnel records were created, used, maintained and disposed of at TSA. A survey methodology was used and questionnaires were distributed to 65 officers selected from members of staff who deal with personnel records on a daily basis and records management personnel. Personal observations were carried out and interviews were conducted to substantiate data gathered from the questionnaires. The study revealed that TSA lacks policies and procedures for the creation, use, maintenance and disposition of personnel records resulting in loss of personnel records and that the processes for managing personnel records were manual. The study recommends that TSA develops and implements policies and procedures for managing personnel records to ensure maintenance of reliable and complete personnel records for improved service to teachers.

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**List of abbreviations**

TSA	.....	Teaching Service Administration
RMU	.....	Records Management Unit
BNARS	.....	Botswana National Archives Records and Services
HR	.....	Human Resources
BOSETU	.....	Botswana Secondary Education Teachers Union
BTU	.....	Botswana Teachers Union
MOESD	.....	Ministry Of Education and Skills Development
IRMT	.....	International Records Management Trust
GPO	.....	Government Purchase Order
NAA	.....	National Archives of Australia

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Records are valuable assets that need to be managed and protected. Tafor (2003) posited that every organization, be it private or public, generates records to document its actions, outline goals and programmes, and identify rights and privileges. Records contain information about evidence of organizational functions, policies, decisions, procedures and other management in decision making. Records management also provide litigation support; reduce paper work volume and results cost reduction. Records are essential tools of good business and for efficient administration since they provide information for planning and decision-making; evidence of government accountability; and evidence of communications, decisions and actions (National Archives of Australia 2005).

ISO 15489:2001 states that records enable organizations to:

- i. conduct business in an orderly efficient and accountable manner,
- ii. deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner,
- iii. support and document policy formation and managerial decision making,
- iv. protect the interests of the organization and the rights of the employees, clients and present and future stake holders, and
- v. Provide evidence of business, personal and cultural identify.

Every organisation employs staff and creates personnel records. Staffs are among an organisation's most important, and usually most expensive, assets. Personnel records documenting the management of employees are important in all organisations. According to the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (1999a) personnel management is an agency-wide function which affects every department and administrative unit within an organisation. The aim of personnel management is to use the human resources of the

organisation to the best advantage. This is done by deploying existing resources to meet current needs and developing those resources to meet anticipated future needs. Personnel records are therefore, critical to the human resource management function. Personnel records need to be maintained for long periods of time, often after an employee has left the organisation, in order to protect ongoing rights and interests of the employee and the organisation. Personnel records are also likely to be highly sensitive and confident and must be adequately protected from unauthorised access (The State Records Authority of New South Wales, 2003).

Personnel records contain the records that document an individual's employment history throughout his or her career. These records must be managed throughout their life cycle, from creation, through their active and semi-active phases until their final disposition as determined by retention schedules. Also, personnel files contain employment-related documents such as resumes, employment applications, appointment letters and forms, transcripts, performance evaluation, recommendation letters, training and professional development records, disciplinary action, salary records, changes in appointment status (i.e. promotion, transfer and so on) and information pertaining to separation of employment (University of California, 2001).

Good management of personnel records can help managers to make decision based on facts. Nicholson (2007) asserted that personnel records should be maintained with accuracy, relevance, timeliness, completeness, appropriateness and reasonable safeguards should be maintained by employers to ensure that there is security and confidentiality. Furthermore, accurate personnel records help in increasing the efficiency of recruitment, training development, and promotion and ensure that workers receive their correct pay, holidays, pension and other entitlements and benefits. They can also be used to monitor fair and consistent payment of staff. Personnel records show proper payments of wages, taxes and other employee payments (Sampson 1992). Crane (1986) noted that personnel records provide facts for a myriad of applications, including reports to government agencies and

employees; reports on the effectiveness of personnel activities; controls on operations (e.g. absenteeism) and problem situations (e.g. grievances), survey of wages and personnel practices, industrial relations, audit and explanations of the importance of personnel programs. Cain and Thurston (1998) stated that at the operational level, managers need information about staff member's performance on the job for the purpose of human resource planning and handling disciplinary matters. Policy makers need accurate, up to date and reliable information about individuals.

Personnel records include (State Records Authority of New South Wales 2003):

- i. personnel files for each employee - often known as personal or employee files (organised by name or position number);
- ii. Non-employee-specific personnel files (organised by activity or topic) e.g. procedural or policy files;
- iii. data in personnel database systems, either generic packages or custom built for the organisation; and
- iv. Personnel-related data in integrated database systems that have some personnel components.

As a result there should an effective and efficient management of personnel records in every organisation. The State Records Authority of New South Wales (2003), states that effective and efficient management of personnel records can be achieved by:

- i. establishing policies and procedures for managing personnel records in accordance with the organisation's regulatory framework;
- ii. designing or implementing personnel recordkeeping systems so that records with short retention periods can be destroyed while records with long retention periods are retained for as long as required;
- iii. designing or implementing personnel recordkeeping systems so that sensitive records can be kept secure and protected to meet privacy management obligations; and
- iv. Creating and maintaining adequate summary records of employees.



Records come in many formats; (i) physical paper in our files such as memos, contacts, marketing materials and reports; (ii) electronic messages such as e-mail content and their attachments and instant messages; and (iii) content on the website, as well as documents that reside on PADS, flash drives, desktops, servers and document management systems; and information captured in the organisation's various database (ARMA International 2005).

The study focused on management of personnel records of teacher employee at TSA in the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The personnel records at TSA are in physical paper kept in files with the information about every teacher employed by TSA.

### **1.2 Location of the study**

This section provides background information to the Teaching Service Administration where the study relating to the management of personnel records was conducted. TSA is a department under the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. The mandate of the Ministry of Education and Skills Development is to provide quality education and training to facilitate economic growth and global competitiveness. The mandate is premised on the need to enable individuals to develop their potential for a productive and meaningful livelihood. It is a key priority of the ministry that from an early age children experience quality learning that directs itself to the protection of all children's rights, and by extension, the rights of all persons as well, and the responsibilities arising from the enjoyment of such rights.

The vision of the MoESD is to build an educated and globally competitive human resource base by 2016 and its mission is to provide efficient, quality and relevant education and training that is accessible to all. The Ministry of Education Skills development consists of eleven (11) departments namely;

- i. Teaching Service Administration
- ii. Curriculum Development & Evaluation.
- iii. Training and Development.
- iv. Technical Services.

- v. Educational Planning and Research Services.
- vi. ICT and Media Service.
- vii. Special Support Services.
- viii. Tertiary Education Financing.
- ix. Technical Vocational Education and Training.
- x. Basic Education.
- xi. Corporate Services.

In this study the focus was on one particular department, Department of Teaching Service Administration. The Teaching Service Administration was established in April 1975 by an Act of Parliament No. 26 of 1975. The Department of Teaching Service Administration is headed by a Director, who is assisted by a Deputy Director.

TSA is responsible for recruiting and managing teachers employed by the government. The TSA has four divisions, namely; the Department Management, Procurement and Placement, Compensation and Benefit and Records Management Unit. The functions of each of these divisions are discussed below (Teaching Service Administration Newsletter, 2008).

#### 1). Department Management Division

This Division is responsible for the welfare and progression of TSA personnel, training and providing information on guidance and counselling.

#### 2). Compensation and Benefit Division

This is the largest division. The Division co-ordinates and manages the in-service training of teachers in primary and secondary schools, as well as Lectures at tertiary colleges of education. The division is also responsible for education of teachers by granting the study leave, endorsing bursary applications and processing applications for refund of training expenses incurred. Other functions of the Division includes undertaking job reviews, analysis, design and evaluation in consultation with supervisory department and monitoring and evaluating implementations of the revised national policy

on education. It is also responsible for implementing and managing the computerized personnel information system and budgeting and planning for the teaching service personnel.

This Division is further responsible for the promotion and maintenance of professional standards, conduct and discipline of staff, Authorizing medical aid and bank payment forms, motor vehicle and residential loan applications, air transport warrants, Government Purchase Orders (GPO), mileage and transport claims, and processing applications for compassionate leave. The division is also responsible for payment of teacher's salaries, reconciling the payroll system to ensure proper payment and processing terminal benefits such as gratuities.

### 3). Procurement and Placement Division

This Division is responsible for the selection, recruitment, deployment and transfers of teachers.

### 4). Records Management Unit (RMU)

The Record Management Unit falls under the Departmental Management Unit. It is headed by a Records Manager. The functions of the RMU include;

- i. receiving, registering and distributing incoming and outgoing correspondence/mail;
- ii. ensuring the disposal of records in accordance with prescribed procedures;
- iii. controlling the records created by the Department through proper classification to enable their retrieval, security and disposal; and
- iv. Providing appropriate storage for all officially created and registered records

## **1.3 Problem Statement**

Teaching Service Administration (TSA) is a large department responsible for keeping records of teachers and other administrative records. Preliminary investigations by the researcher revealed that the department is faced with the

challenge of managing paper records hence most of its records are either lost or misplaced.

The mailing system is poor and most of the teacher's files are continually lost through poor recordkeeping practices. The Botswana Secondary Education Teacher Union (BOSETU) has aired their concern about the poor management of personnel records. They point out that a teacher might take a longer time before he or she is paid due to poor management of records. It has also been reported in the local newspaper, the Botswana Gazette (2015) that at TSA, a significant proportion of the salary bill relates to non-existent ghost workers. At the same time, retired teachers have found it difficult to claim pension because records could not be retrieved. One incident that was cited was that an individual, who resigned from government in 2004, continued drawing salary, died in 2007 and was still paid until 2009.

Studies carried out in Africa revealed that most government ministries and departments in Africa had problems with keeping personnel records. A study carried out in Uganda by Cain and Thurston (1998) revealed that most government files held in the personnel registry were generally incomplete and there were serious problems in keeping files up to date. Research done by International Records Management Trust in Zimbabwe, revealed that in most government ministries in Zimbabwe there were delays in locating files. The registries had a passive approach to managing the loan of files to action officers. A file would be borrowed for an indefinite period and no attempt was made to recover it unless another officer requested it.

Gottelmann-Duret and Hogan (1998), in their study on the utilization, deployment and management of teachers in Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda noted that there are weaknesses in the management of teachers' records in the mentioned countries. They noted that:

- i. the data on teachers kept in individual records are often inaccurate and outdated;

- ii. there is lack of precise and reliable data on teachers' demands and non-satisfied teachers requirements which brings the forecasting of teacher supply and planning difficult;
- iii. comprehensive information on teacher turnover and transfer is not systematically collected and made available to those in charge of staff planning and management;
- iv. where there is relevant information, its reliability and accessibility are often problematic especially information on schools and their staff utilization is not available on a comprehensive and reliable format in Ministry Headquarters; and
- v. Especially in provincial or district level officers suffer from absence of an adequate database for carrying out tasks.

The above incidents are a pointer to the poor management of personnel records at TSA. This study therefore seeks to examine records management practices at TSA and to make recommendations for their future management.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The broad objective of the study was to evaluate the management of personnel records at Teaching Service Administration and to develop a strategy for the effective management of personnel records at TSA. Specifically the study sought to:

- 1: Examine the legislative and regulatory framework for managing personnel records at TSA;
- 2: Determine the composition of TSA personnel records;
- 3: Assess the record keeping practices at TSA;
- 4: Assess the skills of record management officers at TSA;
- 5: Investigate the use of ICT in managing personnel records at TSA; and
- 6: Make recommendations for the effective management of personnel records at TSA.

### **1.5. Research Questions**

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Are there records management policies and procedures in managing personnel records at TSA?
2. What is the current state of records management practices at TSA?
3. What constitutes personnel records at TSA?
4. What are the levels of skills and training of records managers and officers at TSA?
5. Are personnel records managed electronically?

### **1.6 Scope and Limitations of the study**

Due to time and financial constraints, the study was confined to the management of personnel records at TSA headquarters only. The exclusion of regional offices was based on the fact that the headquarters is a replica of what is happening in other centres other than Gaborone. Further, the study does not address records keeping practices in other related areas such as Alexander Forbes an organization responsible for payment of pension funds to government employees. Moreover, the study did not include records from BOSETU and BTU which are the unions responsible for the rights and welfare of teachers in general. Neither did the study look at the management of administrative records at TSA as the focus was on personnel records. The limitations of the study had impact on the study as it limited the study to explore more on the management of teachers' personnel records in others areas.

### **1.7. Significance of the Study**

Records are very important for the good management of an organization. Management of records is a problem experienced by all large organizations especially government departments and ministries. Records management at the Department of Teaching Service Administration is a big challenge because it is one of the biggest Departments under the Ministry of Education and Skills Development. This poses a threat in the management of records. This study is therefore important for the following reasons. It provides insights into records

management procedures at TSA and makes suggestion for improvement. It provides models of best practices on management of personnel records. Its further proposes solution on how to improve management of personnel records.

This study is therefore important because it will serve as a guide for government departments that are faced with challenges of managing personnel records through their life cycle. If the recommendations of the study are implemented, they are likely to lead to the improvement of management of personnel records in TSA, as well as in other government departments that are faced with similar problems. The study also adds to the body of knowledge on records specifically on the management of personnel; records.

## **1.8 Definitions of the key terms and concepts**

### **1.8.1 Record**

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) described a record as any piece of recorded information regardless of physical format or storage medium, created or received and maintained by an organization or individual in the transaction of business and kept aside for preservation as evidence of some specific activity. Records are extensions of human memory, purposefully created to record information, document transactions, communicate thoughts, substantiate claims, advance explanations, offer justifications and provide lasting evidence of events (Cox 2001). Records have four important qualities or characteristics, that is, they are authentic; they reliable; they have integrity and they are useable as outlined in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Characteristics of a record (ISO: 15489 - 2001)**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Explanations</b>
authentic	A record proves what it purports to be, to have been created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent it, and to have been created or sent at the time purported. To ensure the authenticity of records, organizations should implement and document policies and procedures which control the creation, receipt, transmission, maintenance and disposition of records to ensure that records creators are authorized and identified and that records are protected against unauthorized addition, deletion, alteration, use and concealment.
reliable	A record is contents can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities. Records should be created at the time of the transaction or incident to which they relate, or soon afterwards, by individuals who have direct knowledge of the facts or by instruments routinely used within the business to conduct the transaction
integrity	The integrity of a record refers to it being complete and unaltered. It is necessary that a record be protected against unauthorized alteration. Records management policies and procedures should specify what additions or annotations may be made to a record after it is created, under what circumstances additions or annotations may be authorized, and who is authorized



	to make them. Any authorized annotation, addition or deletion to a record should be explicitly indicated and traceable.
useable	A useable record is one that can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted. It should be capable of subsequent presentation as directly connected to the business activity or transaction that produced it. The contextual linkages of records should carry the information needed for an understanding of the transactions that created and used them. It should be possible to identify a record within the context of broader business activities and functions.

### **1.8.1.1 Paper records**

Paper records are physical entity; they are records-centred, product-driven and focus on records as tangible physical entities. Paper records are time-based that is, they pass through stages until they eventually die, except for the chosen ones that are reincarnated as archives (Xiaomi 2003). Agencies are responsible for creating full and accurate records of all their activities and decisions in accordance with standard recordkeeping requirements. When a record is created or received it is up to the user to ensure that it is filed and documented correctly to allow for easy tracking and further use by the Agency.

### **1.8.1.2 Electronic Records**

According to the National Archives of Australia (NAA) (2004,) electronic or digital records include “word-processed documents, emails, databases and images”. While many records are printed and kept in paper or hard copy format increasingly business activities are conducted in a purely digital context. Electronic records are information or data files that are created and

stored in digitized form through the use of computers and applications software). They are stored on various magnetic and optical storage devices and are products of computer hardware and software. (State of California 2002.) IRMT (2009) stressed that unlike paper records, electronic records may be stored in various formats and on various media. For example, an electronic record may be saved as both a Word document and as a 'portable document format' or PDF, a format that allows documents to be saved and exchanged over the Internet without alteration.

In both electronic and paper environments, a record has three characteristics: Content: that which conveys information (text, data, symbols, numerals, images, sound, and vision); Structure: the appearance and arrangement of the content (relationships between fields, entities, language, style, fonts, page and paragraph breaks, links, and other editorial devices); and Context: the background information that enhances understanding of technical and business environments to which the records relate (application software, link to function or activity, provenance information) (Hunter, 2003).

### **1.8.2 Records Management**

Millar (2003) defined Records Management as a consistent and coherent process of managing records from the time of their creation through to the preservation and use of record for operational purposes and as publicly accessible archives. She further stated that records are evidence that people existed as citizens of their country and that their government acted in good faith on their behalf. Without that evidence, citizens cannot protect themselves and governments cannot prove the integrity of their efforts.

On the other hand Robek, Gerald and Stephens (1996) view records management as the application of systematic and scientific control of recorded information required in the operation of an organizations business. Records management is a professional management discipline that is primarily concerned with management of document-based information systems, most of which are in paper media. Penn, Pennix and Coulson (1994) argues that

records management as the management of any information captured in reproductive form that is required for conducting business. They further asserted that records management is a logical and practical approach to the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of records therefore of the information that those records contain.

Ricks, Swafford and Gow (1992) noted that records management aid organisations efficiency, meet legislative and regulatory requirements through their processing, distribution, organization, storage and retrieval to their ultimate disposition.

Good governance is broadly synonymous with sound records management. Good governance is closely allied to public sector accountability, which in turn requires measurement and verification of government performance. Kennedy and Schauder (2000) pointed out that there is a link between the bureaucratic accountability of government officers and organisations, transparency and the availability and validity of information. Efficient markets and bureaucratic transparency are heavily dependent on the availability and validity of information. Government is clearly a major source of information as well as a major user. Government policies are vulnerable to poor quality information in the same way that information about the economy and market condition is essential to valid private sector calculations. Records management is important for organization to support decision making, for general operational purposes, as evidence of their policies and activities and for litigating support (Best, Macleod and Jones, 2002). Ricks, Swafford and Gow (1992) confirmed that the main reason for establishing a records management program is to reduce the volume of paper work and to produce cost reduction, aid organization efficiency, meet legislative and regulatory requirements and also to preserve organizational history.

ISO 15489 (2001) standard defines records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt maintenance, use and disposition of records including the

process of capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. ISO 15489:2001 further states that records management includes:

- (i) Setting policies and standards;
- (ii) Assigning responsibilities and authorities;
- (iii) Establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines;
- (iv) Providing a range of services relating to the management and used records; and
- (v) Designing implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records and integrating records management into business system and processes.

Kennedy and Schauder (2000) identified the elements of a records management as:

- i. Records management needs analysis;
- ii. Records appraisal and disposition planning;
- iii. Management of records creation and capture;
- iv. Record keeping systems;
- v. Management of active records;
- vi. Management of inactive records;
- vii. Vital records protection;
- viii. Policy to procedures documentation;
- ix. Training programs; and
- x. Ongoing review of systems rules and procedures.

### **1.8.3 Personnel records**

Personnel records are documents that relates only to an individual's personnel affairs and do not affect the conduct of agency business. (IRMT 1999a). Personnel records also serve the needs of the individuals. They guard people's rights and entitlements, provide evidence of their progress and employment history and serve as an authoritative source of accurate information about them. When personnel records are not managed properly, it becomes very difficult and time consuming to calculate pension benefits. In some countries

delays in paying pensions affect almost every civil servant in retirement, from the most senior to the most junior. Improving the completeness of personnel records can speed up this process and bring material benefit to a large number of people (Cain and Thurston 1998)

### **1.9 Organization of the study**

This study is organized into five chapters summarised below.

**Chapter One:** This chapter provides introductory information and the background, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the study and significance of the study.

**Chapter two:** Chapter two provides information on the location of the study.

**Chapter Three:** This chapter provides a review of the literature on what other authors have written about on the management of personnel records and identify gaps in the management of personnel records in general. The review focuses on the nature of records, their importance, records maintenance and use, retrieval and disposition. The chapter also reviews literature on Life Cycle model, records continuum model, personnel records management, contents of personnel records, importance of personnel records, and access to personnel record.

**Chapter Four:** This chapter presents the research methodology used in the study. It describes and justifies the methods and processes that were employed to collect data that was used in answering the research questions. The chapter starts by defining what research methodology is, it then reviews the different types of research with the view of classifying the research study and enhance the choice of appropriate research method. It explains the type of data collection instrument that were used and that were administered. It also describes how the sample size was selected and also explains how data was analyzed and ethical issues that had to be considered in the study.

**Chapter Five:** This chapter presents the findings of the study. It describes the response rate and discusses the findings of the study which are presented under each of the objectives of the study.

**Chapter Six:** This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The chapter concludes by identifying areas for further research on personnel records management in Botswana.

### **1.10 Summary**

Chapter one provided background information to the study. The chapter provided the research problem, an introduction and definition of key terms, background to the problem, and the research problem. Other issues were research objectives and questions, limitations of the study and the organization of the study. Chapter one was to demonstrate that though personnel records are important in every organization, in most government ministries in Africa Botswana included personnel records management is poor. Personnel records are important to every organisation because they document an individual's employment history throughout his or her career.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the theoretical framework of the study as well as literature review which provides insight into related studies to the topic of the research study. The review of the literature discusses what has been written on the subject of personnel records in order to identify gaps in the management of personnel records in general. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework; the records life cycle model and continuum model. It focuses on records management, records life cycle, records creation, records maintenance and use, mail management, records disposition, personnel records management, contents of personnel records, importance of personnel records, and access to personnel record and on other key concepts in the management of record.

Shuttleworth (2009) defined a literature review as a comprehensive summary of the research and/or theory on a specific topic, a critical and in depth evaluation of previous research. It is a summary and synopsis of a particular area of research, allowing anybody reading the paper to establish why you are pursuing this particular research program. Cano (2013) further state that a literature review is a critical summary and an assessment of the current state of knowledge or current state of the art in a particular field. A literature review is an evaluative report of studies found in the literature related to your selected area. The review should describe, summarize, evaluate and clarify this literature. It should give a theoretical basis for the research and help you determine the nature of your own research (Boote & Beile 2005).

According to Knopf (2006) literature review has two key elements. First, it should concisely summarize the findings or claims that have emerged from prior research efforts on a subject. Second, a literature review should reach a conclusion about how accurate and complete that knowledge is; it should present your considered judgments about what's right, what's wrong, what's inconclusive, and what's missing in the existing literature.

## **2.2. Importance of Literature Review**

Various scholars have highlighted the importance of conducting a literature review. A literature review may consist of simply a summary of key sources, but in the social sciences, a literature review usually has an organizational pattern and combines both summary and synthesis, often within specific conceptual categories. A summary is a recap of the important information of the source, but a synthesis is a re-organization, or a reshuffling, of that information in a way that informs how you are planning to investigate a research problem (Shuttleworth 2009). Literature review is important because it:

- i. give a new interpretation of old material or combine new with old interpretations;
- ii. trace the intellectual progression of the field, including major debates;
- iii. depending on the situation, evaluate the sources and advise the reader on the most pertinent or relevant research; or
- iv. Usually in the conclusion of a literature review, identify where gaps exist in how a problem has been researched to date.

## **2.3. Purpose of literature review**

A literature review is study of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers. It is often a part of the introduction to an essay, research report, or thesis

Boote and Beile (2005) in their study on the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation state that the purpose of literature review is to:

- i. Provide a context for the research;
- ii. Justify the research;
- iii. Ensure the research hasn't been done before (or that it is not just a "replication study");
- iv. Show where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge;
- v. Enable the researcher to learn from previous theory on the subject;
- vi. Illustrate how the subject has been studied previously;



- vii. Highlight flaws in previous research;
- viii. Outline gaps in previous research;
- ix. Show that the work is adding to the understanding and knowledge of the field; and
- x. Help refine, refocus or even change the topic

More or less similar purposes of literature review were presented by Shuttleworth (2009) as:

- i. Place each work in the context of its contribution to understanding the research problem being studied;
- ii. Describe the relationship of each work to the others under consideration;
- iii. Identify new ways to interpret prior research;
- iv. Reveal any gaps that exist in the literature;
- v. Resolve conflicts amongst seemingly contradictory previous studies;
- vi. Identify areas of prior scholarship to prevent duplication of effort;
- vii. Point the way in fulfilling a need for additional research; and
- viii. Locate your own research within the context of existing literature.

Hart (1998) contributes additional reasons for reviewing the literature, including:

- i. distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done;
- ii. discovering important variables relevant to the topic;
- iii. synthesizing and gaining a new perspective;
- iv. identifying relationships between ideas and practices;
- v. establishing the context of the topic or problem;
- vi. rationalizing the significance of the problem rationalizing the significance of the problem;
- vii. enhancing and acquiring the subject vocabulary;
- viii. understanding the structure of the subject;
- ix. relating ideas and theory to applications, identifying the main methodologies and research techniques that have been used; and
- x. Placing the research in a historical context to show familiarity with state-of-the-art developments.

Besides these basic points, a literature review can also help the researcher to identify the research trend in this area, determine the definitions of the main terms appeared in previous research, establish the knowledge base on the subject, and adjust the scope of the research (Yang and Bui 2009).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the management of personnel records at TSA. This chapter discusses the literature review which provides insight into related studies to the topic of the research study. The review of the literature discusses what has been written on the subject of personnel records in order to identify gaps in the management of personnel records in general. It focuses on the concepts of records management, records life cycle, records creation, records maintenance and use, mail management, records disposition, Records continuum model, personnel records management, contents of personnel records, importance of personnel records, and access to personnel record and finally summary of literature review.

## **2.4 Records Management**

This study focused on the management of personnel records but the literature review encompass of the records management practices in general before discussing personnel records as the two are inseparable.

Robek, Gerald and Stephens (1996) defined records management as the application of systematic and scientific control of recorded information required in the operation of an organizations business. Records management is a professional management discipline that is primarily concerned with management of document-based information systems, most of which are in paper media. Records management is the management of any information captured in reproductive form that is required for conducting business. They further asserted that records management is a logical and practical approach to the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of records therefore of the information that those records contain (Penn, Pennix and Coulson 1994). Ricks, Swafford and Gow (1992) noted that records management aid organisations efficiency, meet legislative and regulatory requirements through

their processing, distribution, organization, storage and retrieval to their ultimate disposition.

Good governance is broadly synonymous with sound records management. Good governance is closely allied to public sector accountability, which in turn requires measurement and verification of government performance. Kennedy and Schauder (2000) pointed out that there is a link between the bureaucratic accountability of government officers and organisations, transparency and the availability and validity of information. Efficient markets and bureaucratic transparency are heavily dependent on the availability and validity of information. Government is clearly a major source of information as well as a major user. Government policies are vulnerable to poor quality information in the same way that information about the economy and market condition is essential to valid private sector calculations.

It is important for every organization to have a vital records management program to avoid losing their records. Penn, Pennix and Coulson (1994) emphasized that with a vital records management program in operation, an organization can control both quality and quantity of information that it creates; it can maintain that information in a manner that effectively serves its needs; and it can efficiently dispose of the information when it is no longer valuable. Best, Macleod and Jones (2002) submitted that records management is important for organization to support decision making, for general operational purposes, as evidence of their policies and activities and for litigating support. Ricks, Swafford and Gow (1992) confirmed that the main reason for establishing a records management program is to reduce the volume of paper work and to produce cost reduction, aid organization efficiency, meet legislative and regulatory requirements and also to preserve organizational history.

ISO 15489 (2001) standard defines records management as the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt maintenance, use and disposition of records including the

process of capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records. ISO 15489:2001 further states that records management includes:

- i. setting policies and standards;
- ii. assigning responsibilities and authorities;
- iii. establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines;
- iv. providing a range of services relating to the management and used records; and
- v. Designing implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records and integrating records management into business system and processes.

#### **2.4.1 Advantages of Effective Records Management**

According to The State of Records Authority of New South Wales (2003), an effective records management programme is advantageous because it enables an organisation to find information easily. Records that are correctly files and stored easily accessible, and this facilitates transparency, accountability and democracy:

- i. the orderly and efficient follow of information enables the organization to perform its function successfully and efficiently;
- ii. authoritative and reliable records are created and maintained in an accessible, intelligent and usable manner to support the business and accountability requirements of the organization;
- iii. efficiency and economy are ensured by eliminating unnecessary duplication of records;
- iv. a retention and disposal programme ensures that the organization maintains only those records it really needs for functional purposes; and
- v. Controls are exercised to ensure that only authorized persons have access to the information, thus preventing information and/or the records themselves from being stolen or damaged. This ensures the protection of privacy and confidentiality, and prevents the inappropriate disclosure of information that could harm the organization or infringe the privacy rights of individuals.

Owen (2010) asserted that effective records management allows you to know what you know, both now and in the future as your information systems expand and allows you to readily see what you need to be doing with particular records in order to comply with relevant legislation According to ARMA International (2005) the role of records management in an organisation is to ensure that the information needed is retrievable, authentic and accurate. This requires:

- i. setting and following organisation policy and best practices;
- ii. identifying who is responsible and accountable for managing records;
- iii. Creating and communicating, and executing procedures consistency; and
- iv. Integrating best practices and process flow with other departments throughout the organisation.

ARMA international (2005) further states that records management ensures that employees use records and information to:

- i. Perform daily business transactions;
- ii. Deliver goods and services consistently and with integrity;
- iii. Identify vital records and establish guidelines and resources to maintain business continuity after disruption or disaster;
- iv. Comply with legislative and regularity requirements;
- v. Manage risk;
- vi. Protects the interest of all stakeholders inside and outside the organisation;
- vii. Provide documentation of research for the development of products
- viii. and services; and
- ix. Preserve the organisation identity and history

Government records of Hong Kong (2011) emphasised that records management is important because it supports an organization to:

- i. make decisions based on evidence;
- ii. meet operational, legal and regulatory requirements;
- iii. be open and accountable;
- iv. enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness; and
- v. maintain organization or collective memory

vi. **2.5 Theoretical framework**

This section provides the theoretical framework and the models which guided this study. As stated above the study investigated the management of personnel records at TSA covering the processes from the creation to the disposal of records. According to IRTM (1999) the care of records and archives is governed by four important concepts introduced here. These are (1) that records must be kept together according to the agency responsible for their creation or accumulation, in the original order established at the time of their creation; (2) that records follow a life cycle; (3) that the care of records should follow a continuum; and (4) that records can be organised according to hierarchical levels in order to reflect the nature of their creation.

These principles and concepts are known as: the principle of *respect des fonds*; the life-cycle concept; the continuum concept; and the principle of levels of arrangement and description. Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2006) stress that the records life cycle and records continuum models are the dominant theories in the archival and records management field. For this reason the study discussed only the two theories.

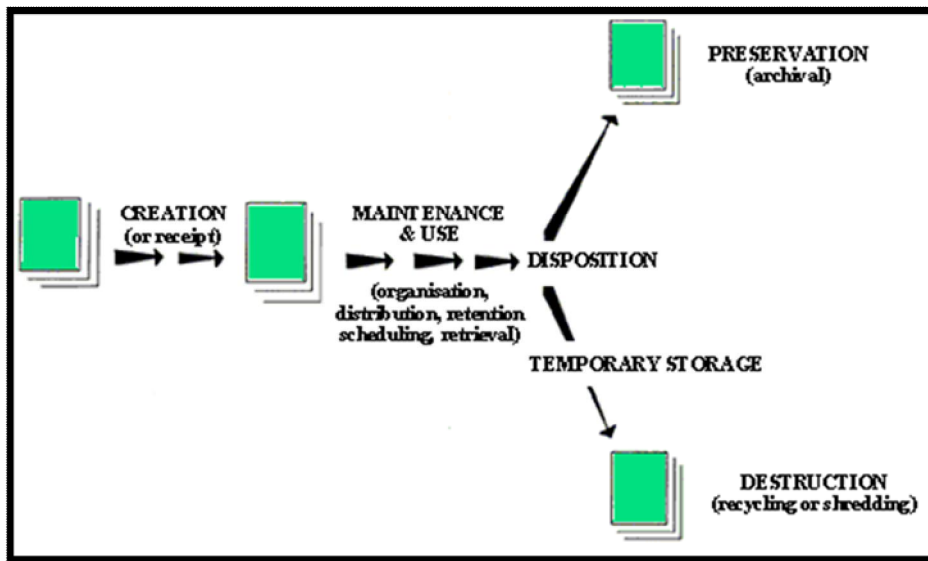
**2.5.1 Records Life cycle Model**

The life-cycle concept has been useful in promoting a sense of order, a systematic approach, to the overall management of recorded information. Tayfun and Gibson (1996) stressed that the records life cycle is an old well established, well documented concept on records management. It is a classic and timeless theme. It can be related equally to hard copy records and electronic records, with a life span of one week and records with life span of 100 years. They further pointed out that the fundamental premise of the life records cycle records management is that a) a record has a life cycle and b) that records should be managed throughout their life cycle. According to Penn, Pennix and Coulson (1994), records management addresses the life cycle of records, that is, the period of time that records are in the custody of an organization. Tayfun and Gibson (1996) further gave reasons for managing records throughout their life cycle as:

- i. The records manager will gain greater understanding of the record's use in the organization and will improve his or her ability to appraise them for retention and archival reasons,
- ii. The records manager will gain greater control over costs and proliferation of records,
- iii. The records manager will develop greater control over the organization and use of records in their active period.

The life cycle is based on the idea that records become less important as time passes. According to Houston (2007), ninety percent of the use of a record takes place during the first ninety days after their creation. This short period of high use is followed by a longer period of low use. The records only need to be looked up occasionally during this second phase. Eventually, even this limited use will end and the records will have no further operational value to their creator. This process is known as the lifecycle of a record. Figure 1 below outlines the life cycle concept of a record.

**Figure 1. Life Cycle model**



Source: Houston, B. (2007: 22) Records Management Basics: Maintaining a Sunny (Records) Disposition

The effective management of records throughout their life cycle is a key issue in civil service reform. Without it, vast quantities of inactive records clog up expensive office space, and it is virtually impossible to retrieve important administrative, financial and legal information. Such a situation undermines the accountability of the state and endangers the rights of the citizen (IRMT 2009).

### **2.5.2 Records Continuum Model**

Continuum model addresses the whole enterprise of recordkeeping; it differs from and complements the concept of the Records Life Cycle that identifies various phases in the useful life or span of an individual record or particular bodies of records under management. As defined in the Australian Standard (AS) 4390, record continuum is a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems) through to the preservation and use of records as archives. Paul (2000) stated that continuum is based upon an integration of the responsibilities and accountability associated with the management of records while, the life cycle model proposes a strict separation of management responsibilities. It can take place over many years, sequentially or simultaneously in real or virtual environments.

According to Tayfun and Gibson (1996), the records continuum model focuses on logical record and their relationships with other records and their contexts of creation and use. Thus the Continuum is a map of a dynamic, virtual place; a place of logical or virtual or multiple realities'- and it always has been, even in the paper world. According to McKemmish (1997), records continuum thinking is concerned about ideas about the role of recordkeeping which flow from this unifying concept - in five key areas:

- i. There is the role records play in governance, in regulating relationships between people and organizations, and as instruments of power and authority;



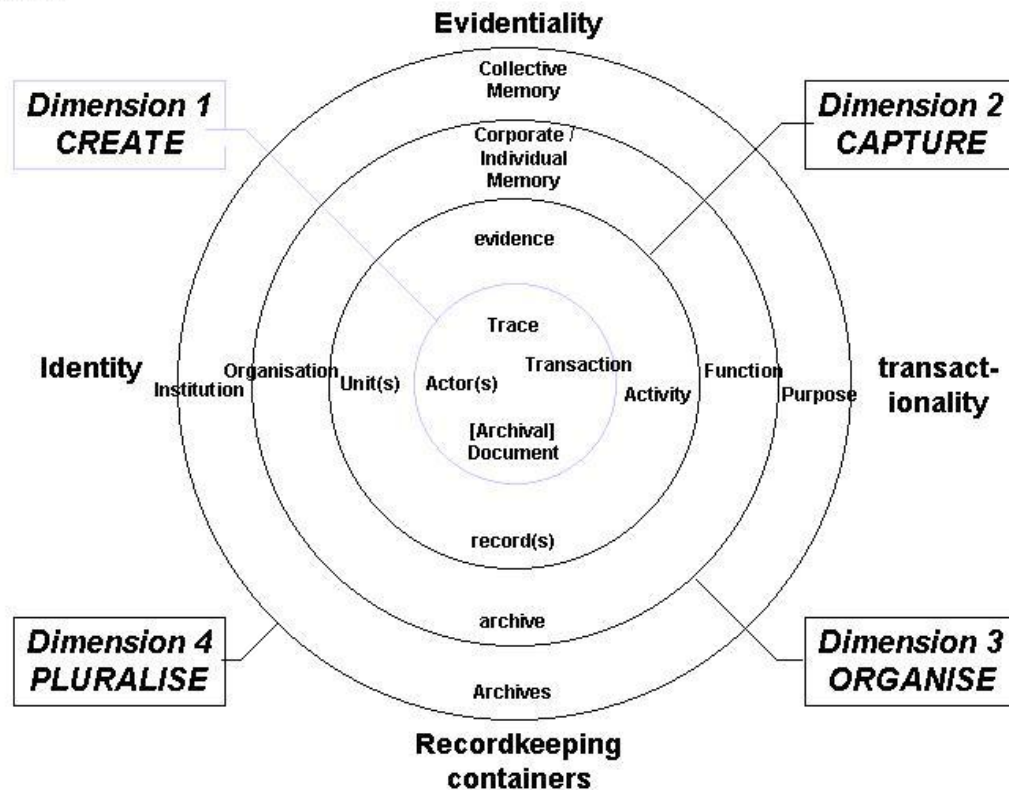
- ii. There is the nexus between recordkeeping and accountability in its broadest sense of accounting to each other for what we do to each other, encompassing corporate, social, cultural, and historical accountability;
- iii. There is the role that recordkeeping plays in constituting corporate and collective memory, especially insofar as records capture experiential knowledge;
- iv. There is the way in which recordkeeping can be understood as a kind of witnessing, providing evidence of both personal and collective identity; and
- v. There is the way records function as sources of value-added information and can be exploited as assets, with new records being created in the process.

Upward (1998) as quoted by Xiaomi (2003) reported that the continuum model is based on four principles as follows:

1. A concept of “record” inclusive of records of continuing value (archives) stresses their uses for transactional, evidentiary, and memory purposes, and unifies approaches to archiving/recordkeeping, whether records are kept for a split second or a millennium.
2. There is a focus on records as logical rather than physical entities, regardless of whether they are in paper or electronic form.
3. Institutionalization of the recordkeeping profession’s role requires a particular emphasis on the need to integrate recordkeeping into business and societal processes and purposes.
4. Archival science is the foundation for organizing knowledge about recordkeeping. Such knowledge is revisable but can be structured and explored in terms of the operation of principles for action in the past, present and future. Upward (2000) explored these principles through a diagrammatical presentation in Figure 2 below.

**Figure: 2 Records continuum model**

**Figure 1**



Source: Upward (2000)

Upward (2000) provide the four major themes in archival science as transactionality, identity, evidentiality and recordkeeping. These containers featured in the diagram above are explained below:

Transactionality – relates to records as products of activities;

Identity – relates to the authorities by which records are made and kept, including their authorship, establishing particularities of the actors involved in the acts of records creation, the empowerment of the actors and their identity viewed from broader social and cultural perspectives; and

Evidentiality – relates to the records as evidence; and Recordkeeping containers – relates to the objects created in order to store records.

In the records continuum model, there are no strict boundaries between archives and records management responsibilities, as current records can also become archives right from creation, instead of waiting for final disposal to

determine this. The records continuum model is applicable to records including archives regardless of whether they are in paper or electronic form. The study investigated the management of personnel records in the TSA through the entire life cycle.

### **2.5.3 Justification of using the life cycle model**

This study adopts the records life cycle model because according to Shepherd and Yeo (2003) the records life cycle model offers a useful framework, and it has a continuing relevance in records management. According to Ngulube and Tafor (2006) in the eastern and southern Africa region, the life cycle model is popularly used as a framework for the management of public sector records. The records life cycle model is the model which is currently used in the management of personnel records at TSA. Further, the majority of records in the government ministries in Botswana have been created and maintained in paper format. The life cycle concept has long been established and fits well with paper based records. Yusof and Chell (2000) emphasised that every record, particularly in paper format has to be created, used, maintained and stored, and finally either destroyed or retained into an archives.

In records continuum model records are both current and historical from the moment of their creation. By definition they are frozen in time, fixed in a documentary form and linked to their context of creation. They are thus time and space bound, perpetually connected to events in the past. Yet they are also disembodied, carried forward into new circumstances where they re-presented and used. Tayfun and Gibson (1996) emphasised that records continuum model is a best practice for managing electronic records and archives within a broader context of archives science. It aims at the development of record keeping that capture, manage and maintain records with sound evidential characteristics as long as the records are of value.

Therefore this study examined the management of personnel records at TSA through the lifecycle model.

## **2.6 Management of personnel records using the life cycle model**

There are five phases to the life cycle of records. This section provides literature review on the stages of managing records using a life cycle model. The literature review starts from records creation stage, records distribution, records maintenance and use, records distribution and records archival preservation stage.

### **2.6.1 Records Creation**

The creation stage of the records life cycle is where all records are born. How they came into being varies. In addition to those records created within an organization, some are also received from external sources. The National Archives of Australia (2005), state that creating records is an essential part of everyday business. Records provided evidence of work carried out, and help an agency conduct its business in an efficient and accountable way. Records can either be created as part of a business process, such as writing a letter or email or as a deliberate action after the event, such as writing minutes or creating a note for file. It is important that an agency has procedures in place to ensure records are created routinely by staff, as part of everyday business.

Records originate internally from dictation, handwritten drafts or word or data processors and externally from mail. Computer output, telecommunication systems or word and data processors. When a letter is written, an invoice typed, a report reported, an engineering drawing made, or a new formula recorded, a record has been created and information has been processed. Records are created at all levels of the organizations- from clerk to chief executive officer (Ricks, Swafford and Gow, 1992). Penn, Pennix and Coulson (1994) noted that records creation must often occur at the personal level with the records being created within the person's workstation under that person control. Seventy percent of the cost of information is in records creation and yet superfluous records are created unnecessarily in almost all organizations on a daily basis. Records creation stage is essential because it is where any organisations document its actions outline goals and programmes. It is

starting point of every organisation where information for planning and decision making are documented.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003:101) pointed out that in assessing the need for creating and capturing records, the aim should be to identify and assess:

- i. the requirements of the organization, or particular business units, for records that provide evidence and information, for operational use;
- ii. the requirements of the organization, particular business units or external; and
- iii. Stakeholders for evidence that can support accountability; and the costs of creating, capturing and maintaining the records that are required and the risk to the organization if it does not have those records.

### **2.6.2 Records Distribution**

The distribution stage is when information and records are transmitted to those who need them and, upon receipt, are used in the conduct of business. Records created or received in the organization must be distributed internally and externally. Records have many uses. They provide information for decision making, for documentation, for response to inquiries, for reference, or for supporting legal requirements. In this phase of the life cycle, information is put to its intended use (Rodriguez, 2008). The distribution state should be managed to prevent lose of records in an organisation.

### **2.6.3 Records maintenance and use**

This is the third stage of the records life cycle. These are Records that have been generated or received by an organization are now being used and reused to conduct business. The records are currently in use and are frequently referred to. They are retrieved at least once per month, so they are stored in readily accessible office spaces. According to Best, Macleod and Jones (2002) active records is such a vital part of the decision making function and they must be available to managers at the time they are needed. They should be housed in proximity to the people requiring the information.

Active records require the development of a standard approach to file organization that will ensure that information is available when required. This is called an active filing system (Penn, Pennix and Coulson, 1994).

Other scholars refer to this stage as maintenance and use because it is the stage where records are in use and record loss is minimized and retrieval time is shortened. Smith, Ginn and Kallaus (2002) asserted that information regarding storage and retrieval must be answered for proper maintenance. They should be answered before the records are created because the answer will determine the way in which information is captured.

According to the Records Management Handbook prepared by the U.S. Department of Energy, (2006) the objectives of the second stage of a record's lifecycle are to:

- i. preserve the integrity of a record by ensuring the record has not been altered after completion;
- ii. maintain usability of the record by those with a need for the information,
- iii. facilitate identification and retention of permanent records; and
- iv. Maintain permanent and temporary records in a segregable manner.

Milne (1999), noted that the functions of records maintenance include the following essential components: Organizing and filing records; and identifying which records to retain and for how long.

Current records should be arranged and filed for efficient retrieval and handling. Deciding how to file records need not be complicated; it begins with a careful look at the records currently in use. Records created by the authority should be arranged in a records keeping system that will enable the authority to obtain the maximum benefits from the quick and easy retrieval of information.

Young (2006) stated that the first step in setting up a new arrangement for current office records is to focus on the daily operational needs of the organization. There are three primary methods of filing organizational records:

1. Department or function;
2. Subject or topic; and
3. Chronological

Filing records by department or function is usually the most successful method of arrangement. It has the advantage of clearly demonstrating the activities, functions, and structure of the organization that created the records and is the preferred arrangement for archival records. This method brings together all records documenting a specific activity within the organization.

An organization with a less formal structure might file its records under topic headings which reflect the work of the group. This arrangement poses problems as topics begin to overlap or intersect, or as the list of topics becomes unwieldy. However, if the topics are limited in number, clearly defined, and distinct from one another, this is a successful system.

A small, very narrowly focused organization can file its records in simple chronological order. This method does not work well for a large, diversified, far-reaching organization. It is, however, adequate to meet the needs of a group that deals primarily with a single issue, topic, or project, and whose records are not voluminous (Young, 2006).

#### **2.6.4. Records Disposition**

Disposition of records is the fourth state of the records life cycle. During records disposition records that are no longer in use are destroyed or discarded. Disposition is made depending on the value of the information it contains. Paul (2000) noted that records disposition is that portion of a total records management program, which deals with semi-current records. Disposition actions include transfer, either to a records centre for temporary storage or to an archive, donation to a legible repository, reproduction on

microfilm, or destruction. Records disposition occurs in two forms: the physical destruction of records or their transfer to archives for permanent preservation (Penn, Pennix, and Coulson, 1994).

A record disposition program has two main objectives: first the designation permanent records, and secondly, the timely and systematic removal of records deemed temporary by the creating office, the organization and authorizing officials, (Paul, 2000). According to Tayfun and Gibson (1996), the importance of this phase of the life cycle is twofold: 1) proper retention and disposition of records protects the rights and interests of the organization and 2) proper retention and disposition of records is cost-effective with respect to use of space.

Records disposition programs are managed using disposal schedules. Records Disposition Schedules document the major records series (including electronic records) related to the activities of each office, identifies temporary and permanent records, and provides mandatory instructions for the retention and disposition (retirement or destruction) of each records series based on their temporary or permanent status. According to Kennedy and Schauder (2000), a disposal schedule alternatively called records retention schedule is a list of the record series of an organisation with the directions for how the records are to be disposed of after their creation and initial use.

The New York State Archives (2006) emphasized that retention schedules generally include a list of record types with a recommendation for how long to retain the record before it is discarded, destroyed, or transferred to the archives. It further stated that records should not enter a storage centre, destroyed nor transfer without a formal appraisal. Developing effective and well-documented appraisal and disposal practices for its records should be a priority for any organization. However this should be developed in response to immediate problem such as lack of space to store records.



### **2.6.5 Archival Preservation Stage**

This is the final stage in the records life cycle. Archival records are those records which have enduring value to the organization. This value can be based on historical, cultural, research, business, or legal reasons. Because of the extended lifespan of these records archival records require preservation and/or conservation techniques to be followed in the storage containers and the storage facility. Such techniques include acid-free containers and temperature and humidity controls. The Records Management organization needs to identify archival records as part of the retention scheduling process and to ensure that they receive proper protection (Tayfun and Gibson, 1996).

Preservation is a crucial element in the whole operation of a records programme. The aim of archival preservation is to prolong the usable life of useful research information in two ways. First, preventive preservation seeks to reduce risks of damage and to slow down the rate of deterioration. This aim is usually accomplished by selecting good quality materials and by providing suitable storage environments and safe handling procedures. Secondly, prescriptive preservation is a means of identifying and treating or copying damaged materials to restore useful access to the information (IRMT 1999b).

The characteristics of records that justify their continued retention as archives include such values as:

- i. evidential value – the value of the evidence records provide of the origins, structure, functions, and operations of the agency that created them;
- ii. informational value – the research or reference value of the information contained in the records; and
- iii. Financial, legal, and administrative value – the value of the records for the conduct of current and future agency business (Florida Department of State Library and Archives of Florida 2009).

There are other areas in records management that need to be addressed when studying the records life cycle. These aspects are discussed below.

## **2.7 Mail Management**

Mail include letters, post cards, electronically transmitted messages, documents, publications, directives, forms packages or any other written communication received for distribution or dispatch. It does not only include not only the receipt and transmission of written materials coming into an organization or leaving it but also the movement of received or internally generated documents from point to point within the organization. The main management program involves effectively organizing mail stations and establishing workable standards and procedures to govern the detailed processing of the mail throughout the organization. The mail management program encompasses both mail supervision and mail operations, which together constitute a total program for handling mail (Robek, Gerald and Stephens, 1996).

Mail management is the representation of information in a formalised manner suitable for communication in an organisation. It ensures preservation of records which can be used in decision making; relevant in legal matters as well as the business needs of the organisation.

## **2.8 Vital Records Management.**

Vital records are those records essential to the continued functioning of an organization during and after an emergency and those records, which protect the rights and interests of the organization, its employees, stakeholders, customers and the public (Penn, Pennix and Coulson 1994: 130) Vital records include: records relating to employee compensation and benefits, insurance, valuable research findings, proof of ownership, financial interests and legal proceedings and decisions.

Ricks, Swafford and Gow (1992) argued that vital records are those records essential to the continued life of a business also called class one records. Vital records maybe in any media: copy, magnetic tape, microfilm, or optical disc. Kennedy and Schauder (2000) opined that vital records are those records

which an organization could not continue to operate without during or after a disaster or calamity. They are the records, which contain information needed to establish the organization in the event of a disaster, which destroys all other records.

An organization should have a vital record protection plan. According to Best, Macleod and Jones (2002), the record protection plan must address the following categories of records:

- i. records which will be necessary and usable during the disaster;
- ii. records necessary to reconstruct the government when the disaster is over; and
- iii. records necessary to protect the rights of individual citizens

Vital records should not be the original records of an organization; they should be duplicated, located away from the areas where the original records are kept.

## **2.9 Records Management Administration and Staff.**

A records management unit needs properly trained staff to make sure that records are well managed. Records management staff must have the right skills and experience, and be given enough resources to manage records properly. University of Toronto Archives and Records Management Services (2000) and Northumbria University (2008) emphasized that a record manager is ideally a fully trained and experienced professional. As part of continuing professional development, it would be reasonable to expect the institution to support the person through the necessary training events and courses. The records manager is responsible for drawing up guidance for good records management practice and ensuring compliance with the overall policy. The guidance should deal with: record creation, filing classification schemes, retention schedule, storage and management of records and final disposition of records. Records management staffs are responsible for following the procedures that are set out in the Records Management Guidelines. They should also advise other staff in their organizations about correct procedures for managing and haling files and other records.

All Records Management Units have staff whose combined skills cover the following:

- i. understanding of the business of the organization and the kinds of records it needs to keep;
- ii. understanding of the organization's structure so that information can be distributed correctly and promptly;
- iii. knowledge of the correct storage and handling of files and other records;
- iv. ability to understand and apply file titling, numbering, registration and tracking procedures;
- v. ability to communicate with staff at all levels of the organization in order to provide an enquiry and retrieval service for the records;
- vi. through understanding of records management principles in order to advise the organization on policy and procedures;
- vii. training skills to assist other staff to understand their records keeping responsibilities;
- viii. knowledge of disaster preparedness principle;
- ix. ability to develop, monitor and correct performance indicators and strategies;
- x. high degree of trustworthiness to protect the information in their care; and
- xi. Analytical skills that allow them to understand policies and procedures and apply them to real life problems (University of Toronto Archives and records management 2000):

Mnjama (2002) as quoted by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) conducted a study on training in archives and records management with special reference to Botswana. The study highlighted that archivists and records managers require a greater understanding of the following areas:

- i. A clear perception of the impact of the information age on a rapidly changing world;
- ii. A knowledge of the functional areas of business organization;
- iii. A strong view of organizational behaviour;
- iv. Excellent communication skills;

- v. A specialized understanding of the basic fundamental concepts of information management that may be applied to information created in any medium; and
- vi. A mastery of computer applications – with a clear perception of the impact of the computer in the future.

## **2.10 Personnel Records Management**

Good records management practice encompasses concepts such as legitimacy, accountability and competency. Personnel records on individual employees are the most crucial employment records maintained by an organization. According to the IRMT (2009), the creation and control of personnel records are critical to the success of an organization's operations because personnel records enables organizations to manage their employees efficiently and equitably, encourages informed and consistent decision making, supports transparency and accountability. Personnel records are necessary for the formulation and implementation of employment policies and procedures for recruitment, training, promotion, dismissal etc. Some of these are required by law and others enable personnel to monitor other processes. For instance, personnel records, and the statistics they provide, are important in helping to develop policies free from any bias on grounds of sex, race, age or disability.

Personnel files contain the records that document an individual's employment history throughout his or her career. These records must be managed throughout their life cycle, from creation, through their active and semi-active phase until their final disposal as determined by retention schedule. Personnel records play a vital role in providing the information needed by organisations to manage and pay their staff members, plan their workforce requirements and monitor staff performance (IRMT, 2009).

The effective and efficient management of personnel records must be supported by an infrastructure of policies, structures, procedures, tools, training and resources. Thus the records management function of the organization must derive its authority from a policy statement or charter issued by the

organization setting out the objectives and mapping out the plan for the program. Ideally senior management should approve this policy statement. The policy should provide the rationale for the program, the objectives, the proposed structure of the program and the level of administrative and technical support required (IRMT 1999a).

### **2.10.1 Regulatory framework for personnel records**

The purpose of regulatory framework for managing personnel records is to define the rights and obligations of employer and employees and establishing mechanisms for resolving disputes (IRMT 1999a). Millar (2003) stated that the first critical step in managing personnel records effectively is to ensure the development and maintenance of a strong legislative and regulatory framework. Without consistency in the practice of creating, managing, and keeping records there can be no accountable or transparent mechanisms for the provision of access to records.

IRMT (1999a) emphasised that the overriding purpose of the legal framework for managing personnel is to: i) define the rights and obligations of employers; ii) define the rights and obligations of employees; and iii) establish mechanisms for resolving disputes between employers and employees (whether at the level of individual grievances or more widespread disputes).

### **2.10.2 Contents of Personnel Records**

Various scholars have provided various key documents to be kept in an employee personnel file. For instance Sampson (1992), presented the following as specific records to be kept in an employee personnel file: personal data employment history, wage and salary data, attendance records, performance appraisal, payroll information (payment deductions). Tax payments, benefits program records, health and accidents reports, skills inventories, and training and education background of an employee. Cain and Thurston (1998) identified the following as being the key documents in a personnel file: application for employment, appointment letter, medical report, confirmation of appointment, promotion letters, posting, secondment, transfer letters,

disciplinary correspondence, special leave, change of name documents and retirement notification.

More or less similar contents of personnel records were presented by Mnjama (2001) in his study on the management of personnel records in East and Southern Africa as:

- i. employee's full name, address and telephone number;
- ii. the employee's age and sex, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, membership of a trade union;
- iii. whether the employee is single or married, number of children;
- iv. the full name and address of the employee's next of kin;
- v. the nature of the employment in which the employee is engaged
- vi. the employer's wage rate and pay interval;
- vii. the period of notice to be given in order to terminate the employee's contract of employment;
- viii. the number of working days' leave to which at least basic pay to which employee is entitled in respect of each 12 months' continuous employment;
- ix. the number of days paid sick leave to which the employee is entitled in any year;
- x. particulars of the employee's weekly rest period;
- xi. the number of paid public holiday to which the employee is entitled to each year;
- xii. the date on which the employment (whether on probation or not) under the employee's contract of employment commenced;
- xiii. the date on which the employee's contract of employment terminated and the reasons thereof; and
- xiv. Particulars of all payments made to the employee by the employer on the termination of all employee's contract of employment (whether in respect of wages, payment in lieu of notice, leave with pay, severance benefit or otherwise).

Truesdell (2009) further contributes additional information to be kept in employee files as:

- (i) Employment history: Request for application, Appointment letter and confirmation letters, employee's original employment application, college recruiting interview report form, employment interview report form, Education verification, other background verification, rejection letter, employment offer letter, veterans/disabled self-identification form, transfer requests, relocation offer records, relocation report, security clearance status, loan applications, transfer letters, pension funds forms, promotion letters, acting appointments, disciplinary letters, contract letters and gratuity payment for foreigners, correspondence letters
- i) Payroll :Individual attendance record payments vouchers, pay advance request record, authorization for all other payroll actions, authorization for all other payroll actions
- ii) Performance Appraisals:
  - New employee progress reports,
  - Performance appraisal forms,
  - Performance improvement program records
- iii) Training and Development
  - Training history records,
  - Training program applications/requests,
  - Skills inventory questionnaire,
  - Training evaluation forms,
  - In-house training notification letters,
  - Training expense reimbursement records
- iv) Employee Separations
  - Exit interview form,
  - Final employee performance appraisal,
  - Exit interviewer's comment form,
  - Records of documents given with final pay check.
- v) Benefits



- Emergency Contact Form,
  - Medical/Dental/Vision coverage waiver/drop form,
  - Vacation accrual/taken form,
  - Request for non-medical leave of absence,
  - Retirement application,
  - Payroll deduction authorizations,
  - Hazardous substance notification and or reports,
  - Tuition reimbursement application and or payment records,
  - Employer concession and or discount authorization,
  - Annual benefits statement acknowledgement,
  - Safety training/meeting attendance/summary forms,
- vi) Wage/Salary Administration
- Job description form,
  - Job analysis questionnaire,
  - Payroll authorization form,
  - Fair Labour Standards Act exemption test,
  - Compensation history record,
  - Compensation recommendations,
  - Notification of wage and or salary increase/decrease
- vii) Employee Relations
- Report of coaching/counselling session,
  - Employee Assistance Program consent form,
  - Commendations,
  - Employee written warning notice,
  - Completed employee suggestion forms,
  - Suggestion status reports

Besides these basic points information placed in the personnel file should be shared with the employee. Unsolicited and anonymous materials should not be included in the personnel file unless there has been a finding of fact through an existing investigatory process (The Ohio State University 2004).

### **2.10.3 Importance of personnel records**

All organizations need to plan and formulate policies and procedures which will enable them to remain competitive and provide good service to their customers. Planning depends on information, and a personnel planning depends on effective and accurate record keeping which enables the organization recruit, train and develop its staff. Any organisation's development and sustainability depends on sound and effective human resource management, and the approaches it chooses to follow will be derived in part from an analysis of the information contained in personnel records. In other words competent government requires accurate data.

Mnjama (2001) stated that personnel records are created to serve the needs of the organization that created them. These records provide a store of information about each employee, providing personal details of age, health, timekeeping, training and records performance. He further pointed out that personnel records provided vital statistics regarding the labour force as a whole including such details as labour turnover, age and gender attribution of employees' wages salaries. Without these statistics it is virtually impossible for an organization to plan ahead. As pointed out by Nicholson (2007) personnel records play a vital role in providing the information needed by organizations to manage and pay their staff members, plan their workforce requirements and monitor staff performance.

Thompson (2007) outlined the three important purposes of keeping personnel records. Firstly, they enable staff to find all information quickly if necessary without going through other paper work in order to find what one needs. Secondly, since employees are entitled to a copy, it allows one to retrieve specific paper work for that employee. And thirdly, if an organisation is ever audited or sued, the organization can produce the information and prove that it has kept current and accessible records.

IRMT (2009) emphasized that the goal of personnel records management is to ensure that a complete and comprehensive employment history of each

employee is readily available for as long as it is needed, and that the information contained in personnel records supports the management, deployment, payment and development of staff. Cain (1996) emphasized that individual citizens need accurate records to claim their pension entitlements. Access to reliable information is thus essential to protect citizens' right. Other key objectives of personnel records management are to support transparency and organizational accountability and to enable accurate audits by creating and protecting human resource records as reliable evidence.

According to Mnjama (2001), although personnel records are the property of the employer, certain laws and regulations require that specific information be provided from employee files. As observed by Sampson (1992) records are a principal form of evidence used in judicial and administrative proceedings and in internal, external, government investigation or audit by documenting compliance with the law to minimize the risk and losses. Good documentation may prove that a hiring or firing decision was valid. Nicholson (2007) outlined three reasons why proper record keeping is a requirement for employers. The first reason is that it simply makes good business sense to have accurate information handy and organized when one want to use it. The second reason is that most business owners and managers will eventually encounter the need to produce documentation about employee performance and work history. Having the proper records to retrieve is vital when the need presents itself. Some employee records are required by federal or state governments and must be kept somewhere.

Thompson (2007) asserted that good personnel records management can help managers to:

- i. Make decisions based on fact rather than guesswork;
- ii. Know what staff resources are available to meet production/service requirements; and
- iii. More accurately assess levels of performance and productivity knows what is happening with absence levels, labour turnover, sickness,

accidents, lateness, discipline etc, and takes appropriate and timely action.

Cain (1996) stated that managers need information about staff member's performance on the job (both current and in the past) for the purpose of human resource planning and disciplinary matters. Policy makers and managers need accurate, up to date and reliable information, both aggregated as statistical data, and as detailed at a reasonable cost. To achieve these objectives there is no substitute for systematic well organized records.

#### **2.10.4 Access to Personnel Records**

Personnel records contain information about the professional (and sometimes private) circumstances of individuals. Access to these records must be strictly controlled in a physically secure environment with effective control systems to track their movement and use. Records staff must be aware that they have been entrusted with a special responsibility never to reveal information gained from working with personnel records. They must understand the ethical considerations concerning access to and management of these records. Personnel records are highly confidential and special care must be taken to guard them from unauthorized access. Information about individuals must never be passed to those with no legitimate interest and the information held on any individual must be objective and accurate.

Restrictions on access to personal files involves imposing physical security such as a locked area, or even physically separate systems for confidential material. In most organisations, personal files can be seen only by those whose job requires them to use the files. This was noted by Hethheld (2006), who observed that the policy should state explicitly who may access records for what purposes and when. Normally access must be limited to those whose official duties require them to have access; the sensitivity and confidentiality of personnel records demands that no unauthorised access be provided. A checking process is often in place protect the files from inappropriate or mischievous amendment (IRMT 1999a).

For this reason, an organization should establish a formal policy for accessing personnel records in order to protect the privacy of its employees. This was noted by Hethheld (2006), who observed that the policy should state explicitly who may access records for what purposes and when. Normally access must be limited to those whose official duties require them to have access; the sensitivity and confidentiality of personnel records demands that no unauthorized access should be provided. The Ohio State University (2004) stated that internal access to personnel files should be limited to supervisory personnel when considering the employee for promotion, transfer, accommodations or other personnel action, and other officials who have a legitimate need to know. On the other hand Berkeley University of California (2009) pointed out that all staff personnel records should be maintained in a secured and confidential location. Access to the records should be restricted to those with designated authority to review the files such as a supervisor, a department manager, or a human resources manager. North Carolina State University (2006), emphasized that access to information about employees should be strictly limited to those people in the business with a need to use the information in their jobs. Many states are aggressive protectors of employee privacy and random or unauthorized access to personnel files can bring on severe penalties. Personnel files should be stored in a secure location and they should not be left unattended even during the business day. An organization should make it a practice to confirm only the information their employees have authorized them to release. The employees should understand that the policy is designed for his/her protection.

On the other hand, some state laws permit employees the right to examine their personal employment records. This simply allows individuals the opportunity to confirm information in the file and identify any specific information which is believed to be incorrect. Individuals have the right to access all personnel records relating to them and can require the organization to justify decisions that have been made. Employees are not universally guaranteed the right to copies of all file contents, however. As the employer, one

usually has the right to control the time and location of these examinations as long as one is reasonable in doing so. The objective, of course, is to ensure accuracy of information about each person. In most states, ownership of the personnel file and its contents rests with the employer who maintains it.

### **2.11 Summary**

Chapter Two provided information on the purpose and the importance of the literature review. The chapter discussed two models that explain the management of records and provides the theoretical foundation of the study. The literature review was organized thematically, by using themes and sub-topics related to the study. The literature review discussed the following issues: the management of personnel records, advantages of effective personnel records, contents of personnel records, access to personnel records and importance of personnel records. Records management is essential for effective management of records. Records enable and support an agency's work to fulfill its mission. Records management contributes to the smooth operation of an organization's programs by making the information for decision-making and operations readily available. It also helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner and facilitates effective performance of activities throughout an agency. It further improves office efficiency and productivity and provides better documentation more efficiently.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the methodology that was employed to investigate the research problem under study. A research methodology defines what the activity of research is, how to proceed, how to measure progress, and what constitutes success. This chapter further describes how the proposed study was carried out. It covers research design, data collection procedures and techniques, instruments of data collection, data analysis plan.

#### **3.2 Research design**

Research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection (Creswell 2009). The design is the structure of any scientific work. It gives direction and systematizes the research (Blakstad 2008). It is the glue that holds all the elements in a research project together. Research design is the overall strategy that you choose to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby; ensuring one effectively addresses the research problem (Trochim 2006). It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. A research design will typically include how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected (Kothari 2004).

De Vaus (2001) argues that function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables you to effectively address the research problem logically and as unambiguously as possible but any well-developed design will achieve the following, 1) identify the research problem clearly and justify its selection, particularly in relation to any valid alternative designs that could have been used, 2) review and synthesize previously published literature associated with the problem. There are two main approaches to data collection research namely, quantitative and qualitative paradigms. Qualitative research

involves analysis of data such as words (e.g., from interviews), pictures (e.g., video), or objects (e.g., an artefact). The approach is descriptive and subjective in nature (Neil 2007). Wyse (2011) proposed that qualitative approach is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. It provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses for potential quantitative research. Quantitative research is about asking people for their opinions in a structured way so that you can produce hard facts and statistics to guide you (Collis and Hussey 2003). In qualitative research, the researcher employs various data-gathering strategies, depending upon the thrust or approach of his research. Examples of data-gathering strategies used in Qualitative Research are individual in-depth interviews, structured and non-structured interviews, focus groups, narratives, content or documentary analysis, participant observation and archival research (Explorable.com 2009).

On the other hand, Quantitative Research makes use of tools such as questionnaires, surveys, measurements and other equipment to collect numerical or measurable data (Explorable.com 2009). Quantitative approach may utilize interviews or focus groups to explore ideas or develop questionnaires. Investigators who prefer a more qualitative approach may quantify interview responses into categories which are coded numerically (Creswell1994). The study employed a mixed methods research design, a quantitative approach model, and a qualitative approach model.

A quantitative approach through the use of a questionnaire and participant observation was employed to collect quantitative data, while qualitative data was collected through interviews.

### **3.2.1 Survey research method**

Surveys represent one of the most common types of quantitative, social science research (Colorado State University 2003). The term 'survey' is used in a variety of ways, but generally refers to the selection of a relatively large sample of people from a pre-determined population (the 'population of interest'; this is the wider group of people in whom the researcher is interested in a particular study), followed by the collection of a relatively small amount of data from



those individuals. The researcher therefore uses information from a sample of individuals to make some inference about the wider population (Kell, Clark, Brown and Sitzia 2003). The purpose of survey research is to gather and analyse information by questioning the entire research population or individuals who are representative of the research population to assess the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelationships of naturally occurring variables (Pickard 2007).

The broad area of survey research encompasses any measurement procedures that involve asking questions of respondents (Trochimm 2008). It is a research method for collecting information from a selected group of people using standardized questionnaires or interviews (Pennsylvania State University 2006). The researcher selects a sample of respondents from a population and administers a standardized questionnaire to them. The questionnaire, or survey, can be a written document that is completed by the person being surveyed, an online questionnaire, a face-to-face interview, or a telephone interview (Colorado State University 2003). The survey research design is a very valuable tool for assessing opinions and trends. It is often used because of the low cost and easy accessible information (Shuttleworth 2008).

The present study employed the survey research method to examine personnel records management trends at TSA.

### **3.3. Study Population**

A study population is defined as the total number of people with common or observable characteristics that meet a theoretical set of potential observations (Rubin and Babbie, 2008). Population represents a group that the researcher wishes to generalize his or her research to. Populations are often defined in terms of demography, geography, occupation, time, care requirements, diagnosis or some combination of the above.

The total population of the study included all sixty-five (65) employees of Teaching Service Administration that used personnel records on daily basis. These included Records Management Personnel (12), Procurement and

Placement (2), Department Management (9), Compensation and benefit (17), Secretaries (5), however only 40 participated in the study.

### **3.3.1 Sample size**

Grinnel (2001) defined sample size as a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons which together comprise the subject of the study. Although only a portion of a population comprises a study's sample, that portion is assumed to be representative of the total population set. This means that the experiences, beliefs, changes or other factors which are observed in a sample can be assumed to be very similar for the entire population from which the sample is drawn such that the results can be generalized. In other words, it can be stated that the results which hold true for our sample also hold water for the population from which the sample was drawn. The findings and conclusions in survey research are based on information gathered from a limited number of people from whom generalisations can be made about the whole group. This selected group from the population is called a sample.

The sample for this study was drawn using natural sampling in which according to Collis and Hussey (2003), only particular employees are involved in the phenomena being investigated or only certain employees are available at the time of study.

### **3.3.2 Sample frame**

Ngulube (2007) stated that one of the major steps in survey designs is to define the population according to the survey objectives. He argued that it is important that the investigator carefully and completely defines the population before collecting the sample, including a description of the elements to be included. As Ngulube purports, defining the population and having sample frame are fundamental to sample design. He stated that the device or material used to have access to the target population is called a frame or the sample frame.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to collect data. In purposive sampling the researcher chooses the sample based on who they think would be appropriate for the study (Chaturvedi Dr. 2009). Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience. This involves identification and selection of individuals or groups of individuals that are proficient and well-informed with a phenomenon of interest. Unlike random studies, which deliberately include a diverse cross section of ages, backgrounds and cultures, the idea behind purposive sampling is to concentrate on people with particular characteristics who will better be able to assist with the relevant research (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016).

Data was collected from Teaching Service Administration employees who interacted with personnel records on daily basis; this included a representative sample from members of the Records Management Unit, Department Management Division, Compensation and Benefit Division, Procurement and Placement Division, TSA director and director of BNARS at the time of the study. Given that the Records Management Unit was developed to manage expectations and demand, address issues of poor records management which result in losing teachers personnel records, this was deliberately targeted with a view to suggest a system which will improve service delivery.

### **3.4 Data collection, instruments and procedures**

Reliability and validity are the major technical consideration that researchers take into account when constructing and evaluating instruments of data collection (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Hertzal (2003) stressed that although it is difficult to assess the quality of data that one collects; it is possible to assess the accuracy of the survey tools used to collect data in any investigation. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate the effectiveness of managing records at TSA. The major traits of these approaches are briefly discussed below in order to relate them to the assumptions and methodology adopted by this study. Data collection involves measuring some research phenomenon whether it is a process, an object or human subject's

behaviour. The research methodology chosen influences the techniques and instruments that are used. The choice of method is influenced by the data collection strategy, type of variables and the accuracy required the collection point and the skills of the enumerator (Way, Yoshikaa, Weisne and Kalil 2008).

The process of data collection includes:

- i. the generation of models, theories and hypothesis;
- ii. the development of instruments and methods for measurement;
- iii. experimental control and manipulation of variables;
- iv. collection of empirical data;
- v. modelling and analysis of data; and
- vi. Evaluation of results.

In order to get consistent answers to consistent questions, more than one instrument were used to collect data for this study. The rationale for using more than one method to collect data for this study was that, no single methods is perfect. If different methods lead to the same answer, the greater confidence can be placed in the validity of one's conclusions (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Surveys can be divided into two broad categories: the questionnaire and the interview. Questionnaires are usually paper-and-pencil instruments that the respondent completes. Interviews are completed by the interviewer based on the respondent says. The study used questionnaires as the main instrument for data collection supplemented by observations and interviews. These are discussed further below:

#### **3.4.1.1. The Questionnaire**

Collis and Hussey (2003) define a questionnaire as a list of carefully structured questions, chosen after a considerable testing, with a view to eliciting reliable responses from a chosen sample. The aim is to find out what a selected group of participants do, think or feel.

Questionnaires are restricted to two basic types of question. Closed-ended is a question for which a researcher provides a suitable list of responses (e.g. Yes / No). This produces mainly quantitative data. Open-ended (or "open question")

is a question where the researcher doesn't provide the respondent with a set answer from which to choose. Rather, the respondent is asked to answer "in their own words". This produces mainly qualitative data.

Melne (1999) indentified the following advantages of a questionnaire:

- i. The responses are gathered in a standardized way, so questionnaires are more objective, certainly more so than interviews;
- ii. Generally it is relatively quick to collect information using a questionnaire;
- iii. It is easy to analyse;
- iv. Questionnaire are familiar to most people; and
- v. Questionnaires are less intrusive; respondents are free to complete on their own time.

Melne (1999) however pointed out that questionnaires have several limitations of which are:

- i. questionnaires, like many evaluation methods occur after event, so participants forget important issues;
- ii. questionnaires are standardized so it is not possible to explain any points in the questions that participants might misinterpret;
- iii. open large questions can generate large amounts of data that can take a long time to process and analyze; and
- iv. Respondents may answer superficially especially if the questionnaire takes a long time to complete.

Despite the above advantages and disadvantages the researcher chose to use the questionnaire because as stated above, questionnaires offer several advantages. The questionnaires were accompanied by a letter of introduction and they were delivered personally to the respondents and collected two weeks after distribution. Two sets of questionnaires were distributed to Records management personnel (see Appendix B), and another to action officers (see Appendix C). The researcher used two sets of questionnaire one for records

officers personnel and another for action officers to be able to address different issues. The study used a combination of open ended and closed ended types of questionnaires. The questionnaire for records management personnel sought to collect data on the management of personnel records at TSA. The questionnaire for Action Officers sought to collect data on their knowledge of how to use personnel records.

#### **3.4.1.2 Personal Observations**

The observation method of research is basically developed for observing people in their natural setting. It focuses on their everyday normal life. Observation is more than just recording of data from the environment. This means that 'observation' is more than just recording of data from the environment (Fox, 1998). There are two ways in which observation can be conducted; non-participant observation and participant observation. The purpose of non-participate observation is to observe and record what people do in terms of their actions and their behaviour without the researcher being involved. Participant observation is a method of collecting data where the researcher is fully involved with the participants and the phenomena being researched. The aim is to provide the means of obtaining a detailed understanding of values, motives and practices of those observed (Collis and Hussey, 2003).

Demunck and Sobo (1998) as cited by Kawulich (2005) provide advantages of personal observation as follows

- i. It affords access to the "backstage culture";
- ii. it allows for richly detailed description, which they interpret to mean that one's goal of describing "behaviours, intentions, situations, and events as understood by one's informants" is highlighted;
- iii. It provides opportunities for viewing or participating in unscheduled events; and

- iv. It improves the quality of data collection and interpretation and facilitates the development of new research questions or hypotheses

However, there are several disadvantages of using personal observation as a method,

- i. Sometimes the researcher may not be interested in what happens out of the public eye and that one must rely on the use of key informants;
- ii. Controversy illustrates how different researchers gain different understanding of what they observe, based on the key informant(s) used in the study; and
- iii. Problems related to representation of events and the subsequent interpretations may occur when researchers select key informants who are similar to them or when the informants are community leaders or marginal participants.

A questionnaire method relies on other people to complete the questionnaire so this made it necessary for the researcher to supplement questionnaire with participant observation and interview. The RMU was visited to see the procedure for keeping records. This method was chosen because it is relatively straightforward. It can provide with direct answers. It is a way of cross checking and validating the facts in the questionnaire and it also eliminates bias from respondents. This study used the non-participatory obtrusive observation. The researcher visited the RMU for a period of four weeks to inspect files, incoming mail registers, outgoing mail registers, retrieval tools, and storage conditions, arrangement of records and general behaviour of officers in the registries.

#### **3.4.1.3 Interview**

Kajornboon (2007) defines interviews as a systematic way of talking and listening to people and is another way of collecting data from individuals. The researcher or the interviewer often uses open questions. Data is collected from the interviewee. According to Trochim (2006), interviews are one way to collect

data and to gain knowledge from individuals. The interviewers have the opportunity to probe or ask follow-up questions. And, interviews are generally easier for the respondent, especially if what are sought are opinions or impressions. According to Collis and Hussey (2003), there are two types of interviews. Interviews may be structured or unstructured. In Structured interviews questions have to be prepared beforehand. They are the type of interviews in which all respondents are asked the same questions with the same wording and in the same sequence. In unstructured interview, questions have not been prepared beforehand. There is no need to follow a detailed interview guide.

The main advantages of interviews are:

- i. they are useful to obtain detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions and opinions;
- ii. they allow more detailed questions to be asked;
- iii. they usually achieve a high response rate;
- iv. respondents' own words are recorded;
- v. ambiguities can be clarified and incomplete answers followed up; and
- vi. interviewees are not influenced by others in the group.

According to Cardiff University (2006), the main disadvantages of interviews are :

- i. they can be very time-consuming setting up, interviewing; transcribing, analyzing, feedback, reporting can be costly; and
- ii. different interviewers may understand and transcribe interviews in different ways.

The researcher made separate appointments after both the questionnaires and observations had been administered to conduct interviews, and the sessions were allocated one hour as the minimum time that could be used to interview respondents. The researcher used structured interview to collect data from Records Manager, BNARS director and TSA director.

A set of questions were read out to the respondent by an interviewer. The rationale for using a structured interview was that it allowed the interviewer to



follow a list of areas on questions to be covered with the participants while having an opportunity to converse and explore the respondent's responses. Three separate structured interviews schedules were prepared, one for records manager (see Appendices D), the Director TSA (see Appendices E) and the other for the Director BNARS (see Appendices F). The schedules aimed at soliciting data on legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel in government ministries and record keeping practices. The interviews were administered by the researcher through face to face encounter with the respondents. The researcher took notes throughout the interviews.

#### **3.4.2 Validation of data collection Instruments.**

The questionnaire was tested with seven (7) BNARS staff members to minimise measurement errors. Some questions in the questionnaire were changed after a pre-test as a result of the feedback from the pilot group. The results from the pre-test were not combined with the results of the post-test.

Before the questionnaire was sent to the respondents, approval was obtained from the TSA director who did not respond in writing and took the researcher to different officers to ask them to take part in the study. (See appendix G for the letter of request).

#### **3.4.3 Administration of Data collection Instruments**

The researcher recruited and trained two (2) research assistants working at TSA. The research assistants were recruited solely to collect all the completed questionnaires immediately and return them to the principal researcher. They were also responsible for providing clarity to the participants whenever necessary.

The researcher visited the RMU for a month to inspect files, incoming mail registers, outgoing mail registers, and retrieval tools. The researcher also observed storage conditions of personnel files, to find out if the files were properly maintained. For interviews a structured interview guide was used to gather data from the two directors of BNARS and TSA and the Records Manager. A set of questions were read out to the respondent by an interviewer.

The interviewer guide was developed to ensure that the interviewers covers all the necessary issues while remaining focused on the predetermined topics. Furthermore an arrangement of this nature enhanced controlled response rate as the respondents signed a consent form prior to the interview.

### **3.5 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics involves consideration of how researchers should treat the people who form the subjects of their investigation and whether there are certain actions that should not, or certainly should, be taken in relation to them (Bell 2008). Questions of gaining access to a research site, informed consent, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality are all issues that the researcher has to consider and resolve in any research context (Babbie and Mouton 2001). Pickard (2007) stated that gaining access to a research site requires careful planning and should come very early in the research process, usually as soon as a proposal has been approved but often even earlier. Participants have a right to participate voluntarily and the right to withdraw at any time, so that the individual is not being coerced into participation (Creswell 2003).

The participants were from first interaction made aware that they had the freedom to decline to participate in the research or discontinue participating at any time they felt uncomfortable. To build rapport and a sense of contractual agreement, participants were requested to sign a consent form which was read and explained to them before they signed it.

The participants were briefed about the nature, intentions and purpose of the study and how their participation would go a long way in contributing to the body of knowledge this study seeks to unearth. The participants were assured of confidentiality in that they will be made aware that the research findings will only be used for academic purposes and permission will be sought from them if there is a need to divulge the information gathered to anyone else

To promote the principle of anonymity, participants were not required to disclose their names. Instead of their names, codes were used for purpose of subsequent data processing and analysis exercises. The identity of individual respondents did not feature anywhere in the course of the research.

Respondents were informed that there would be no direct benefits for participating in the study.

### **3.6 Data Processing and Analysis**

Qualitative data obtained from the interviews and observations were analysed using content analysis. Content analysis is concerned with investigating the contents of documentary and verbal material (Kothari 1990). Open-ended questions in the questionnaire and interviews were content analyzed. The process involved going through each of the responses and writing down all the responses that were relevant to the research questions. The first step in content analysis entailed the construction of categories. The questionnaires were analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). According to Arkkelin (2014), SPSS is a versatile package that allows many different types of analyses, data transformations, and forms of output. The package enables you to obtain statistics ranging from simple descriptive numbers to complex analyses of multivariate matrices. The results of study are presented using frequency tables and bar charts. The researcher chose SPSS because according to SPSS empowers one to reach the in-depth answers that come only from using advanced analytical techniques. Using SPSS helped the researcher to get information needed with data access, data preparation, analytical reporting, segmentation and predictive modelling. It also helped the researcher get better analysis through prediction.

### **3.7 Summary**

Chapter three discussed the research design of the study. It outlined the methods and techniques used in to examine the management of personnel records at TSA. The topics discussed included research design, case study research methods, the study population and sample frame. Other subjects

discussed in the chapter were ethical considerations, data analysis, data collection methods and validation of data collection instruments.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF STUDY FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Michael (1995) described data analysis as a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision making. Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains. The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to present an analysis of data collected through questionnaires, interviews and observations, and to discuss the findings of the study. Data collected through questionnaires was analysed to obtain some descriptive statistics.

#### **4.2. Response rate and participants' profile**

In section 3.2.4 it was indicated that this study used questionnaires as the main instrument for data collection supplemented by observations and interviews. As discussed in section 3.2.2 in chapter three a total of (65) sixty five questionnaires were distributed to the selected sample. The total population of the study included the following; Record Management Personnel 86% (12), Department Management 56% (9), Compensation and Benefit 55 % (17) and Procurement and Placement 50% (2). Of the (65) sixty five questionnaires distributed only (40) forty were returned, representing a 65% return rate as indicated in table 2 below:

**Table 2: Response rate**

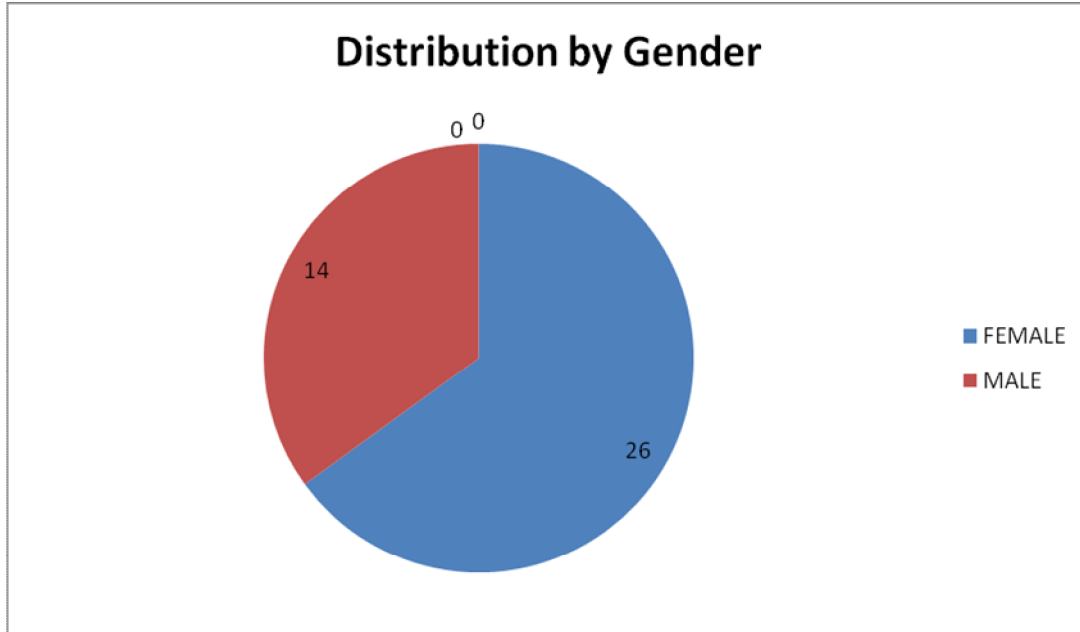
Respondents	Questionnaires distributed	Returned questionnaires	Questionnaires not returned	Response rate (%)
Department Management	16	9	7	56%
Procurement and Placement	4	2	2	50%
compensation and benefit	31	17	14	55%
Records Management Unit	14	12	2	86%
TOTAL	65	40	25	65%

Source: Field data, 2015

Even though different authors might have different views about acceptable response rate, it emerges as a common theme that a response rate above 50% is acceptable for any study. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001) 50% response rate in a study is adequate for analysis, while 60% is termed as good and 70% is considered as very good. Considering the suggestion made by Babbie and Mouton this study had collected data which was very good and adequate for purposes of analysis. Data from the above figure indicates that eighty Fifty six (56%) of Department Management Division responded to the questionnaire while forty four (44%) did not respond. Fifty five (55%) Compensation and Benefits Division responded while forty five (45%) did not. Eighty six (86%) of the Records Management Unit responded to the questionnaire while fourteen (14%) did not respond and fifty (50%) of Procurement and Placement responded while fifty (50%) did not respond. Of

those returned questionnaires, 35% (14) of the respondents were male while 65 % (26) were female as indicated in figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Gender of the respondents**

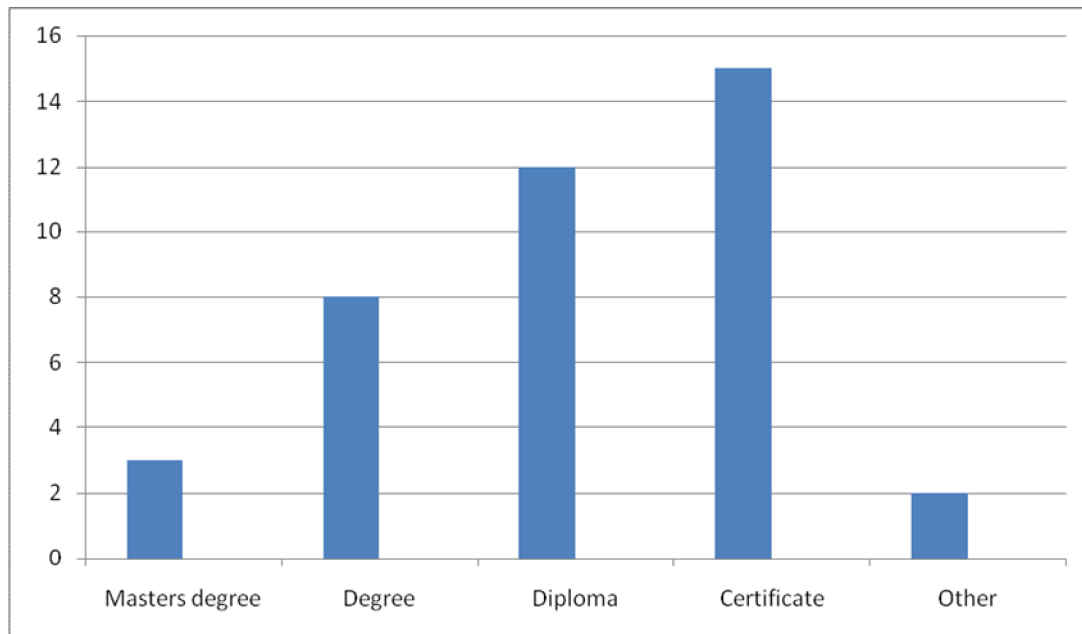


Source: Field data, 2012

The average in terms of the respondents' qualifications was a degree and diploma as shown in figure 4.3 below. This profiling was applicable to Records Managements staff, Department Management unit, Compensation and Benefit unit and Procurement and Placement unit. This information was important as it provides the researcher with a view on the level of understanding of dealing with personnel records. Qualifications for respondents range from BGCSE certificates to postgraduate degrees.

Figure 4.3 summarizes the respondents' education qualification.

**Figure 4 Qualifications of respondents**



Source: Field data, 2012

Figure 4 above indicates that two (2) of the respondents' have master's degree, eight (8) have first degree, twelve (12) Diploma, thirteen (13) certificates and five (5) have Botswana Junior Certificate and BGCSE. Most of the respondents were enlightened as they had all been to school as such it was assumed that they better understood issues related to records management and their importance.

Interviews were conducted with Records Manager, Director of TSA and Director of BNARS. This provided an opportunity to triangulate the data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusion. These interviews were successful and proved to be more fruitful since they provided a unique opportunity for discussing policy issues with senior management staff.

The findings are grouped according to the key objective of the study described in chapter one.

Also, the researcher spent a period of two weeks at the RMU so as to observe on how files are managed. Specifically, the researcher observed management of active records, preservation of record, record storage, security, fling, contents



of records, tracking of files, mail handling thickness of files, retrieval of files etc.

### **4.3 Data analysis**

The findings are presented according to the records management themes as well as the objectives of the study by following the study research objectives. The broad objective of the study examine personnel records management trends at TSA to establish if the Department was managing records according to legislative requirements.

**4.3.1. Objective one:** Determine the legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel records at TSA

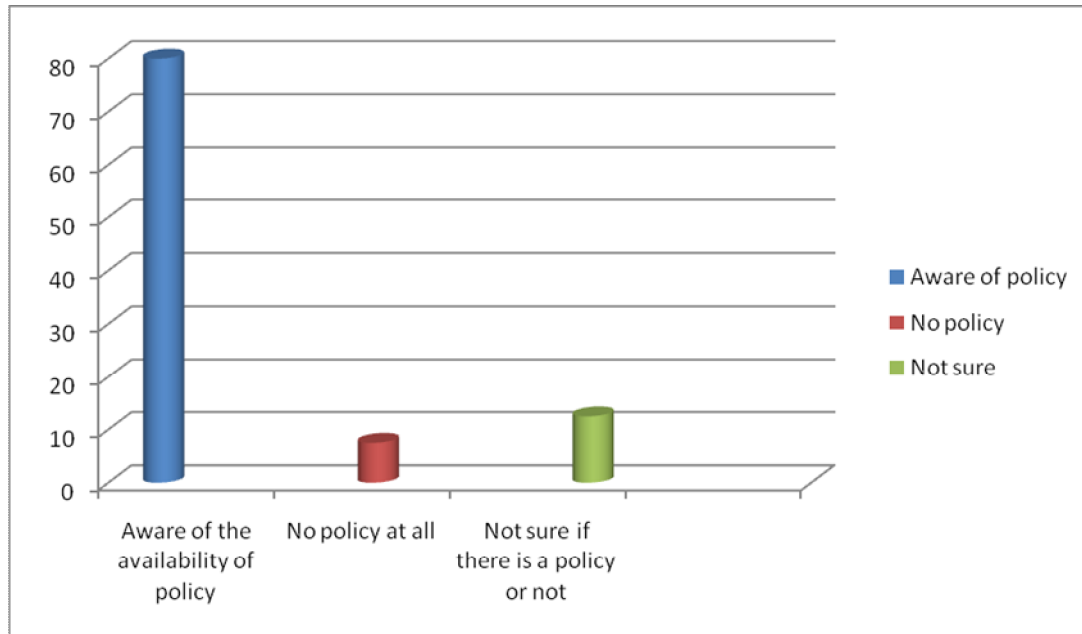
The first objective of the study sought to determine the legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel records at TSA

According to Millar, (2003) the first critical step in managing personnel records is to ensure the development and maintenance of a strong legislative and regulatory framework for record keeping. This study sought to determine the legislative and regulatory framework for managing Personnel Records at TSA. According to ISO15489-1(2001), all organization should define and document a policy for records management of authentic, reliable and useable records capable of supporting business functions and activities for as long as they are required. The policy should be adopted and endorsed at the highest decision making level and promulgated throughout the organization. The policy should be derived from an analysis of business activities. It should define the legislation, regulations, other standards and best practices have the greatest application in the creation of records connected to business activities. Policies should be regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect current business needs

The purpose of the objective in this section was to establish whether TSA has a policy for managing personnel records at TSA and whether the respondents were aware of it. As shown in figure 4.3 below indicates that 80% (32) of the respondents were aware of the availability of a records management as 69

compared to 12.5% (5) were not sure whether the policy existed or not. However 7.5% (3) argued that there was no policy for managing personnel records at TSA and this had a negative impact on managing personnel records in the department. As a result, some were not managing records according to the policy.

**Figure 5. Legislative and regulative frameworks**



Source: Field data, 2012

The findings of the study revealed that the department lacks a records management policy. When asked further if they were aware of the importance of having such a policy, 70% (28) of the respondents indicated that they are aware of the importance of having a records management policy in the management of personnel records, 12.5% (5) of the respondents were ignorant of the importance of having the policy. Interview with TSA director and observations by the researcher further revealed that TSA has no documented records management policy as none of these 80% of respondents was able to produce a copy.

Interviews with the director of BNARS further established that there are no specific policies governing the management of personnel records except for the

general records management procedures manual and the records management policy guide produced in 2009 which state that:

- i. There are records management generic standards across ministries. These have been made available to all Records Management Units across ministries including the TSA;
- ii. Professional advice across the public service is given by BNARS; and that
- iii. The processes for Records Management Unit in all the ministries are coordinated to make sure they adhere to the key records management areas and principles. Each government Ministry, Department or agency is responsible for the effective management of its current and semi-current records.

#### **4.3.2 Objective 2: Composition of TSA personnel records**

The second objective of the study sought to determine the contents of personnel. Pension payments are dependent on availability of records. According Truesdell, (2009) employees' personnel files should contain the following documents: Employment history, Payroll, Performance Appraisals, Training and Development, Employee Separations, Benefits, Wage/Salary Administration and Employee Relations. The contents of files are important because they assist in the payment of entitlements such as pension. Personnel records at TSA are subject to Employment Act of the laws of Botswana. The Botswana Employment Act Chapter 47:01 (2002/2003) requires that every employer shall, in performance of the duty imposed on him by section 92(1) of the Act, keep such records, books and accounts in respect of each employee employed by him as will at all times clearly show:

- i. The employee's full name and address;
- ii. The employee's age and sex;
- iii. Whether the employee is married or single;
- iv. The full name and address of the employee's next of kin;
- v. the nature of the employment on which the employee is engaged;
- vi. the employee's wage rate and the pay interval;

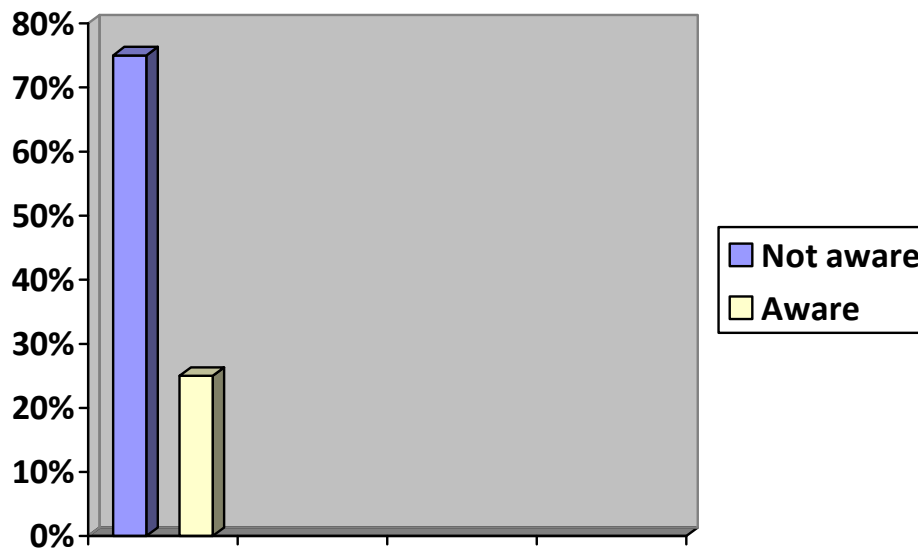
- vii. the period of notice to be given in order to terminate the employee's contract of employment;
- viii. the number of working days leave with at least basic pay to which the employee is entitled in respect of each period of 12 months continuous employment;
- ix. the number of days paid sick leave to which the employee is entitled in any year;
- x. the number of paid public holidays to which the employee is entitled each year;
- xi. particulars of the employee's weekly rest period;
- xii. particulars of the employee's weekly and daily hours of work;
- xiii. the date on which employment (whether on probation or not) under the employee's contract of employment commenced;
- xiv. the date on which the employee's contract of employment terminated and the reason thereof;
- xv. particulars of all payments made to the employee by the employer on termination of the employee's contract of employment (whether in respect of wages, payment in lieu of notice, leave with pay, severance benefit or otherwise); and
- xvi. particulars of the employee's wages in terms of his contract of employment specifying the aggregate of basic pay and each other form of remuneration, such as overtime payments, production bonuses and cost of living allowances and other special remuneration arising out of the particular circumstances under which work is carried out or from other considerations attaching thereto.

The purpose of the questions in this section was to establish whether RMU keep teachers records employed by TSA according to Botswana Employment Act and whether the respondents were aware of it.

As shown in figure 6 below 75% (30) of the respondents were aware of the fact that TSA keep teachers records according to Botswana Employment Act as compared to 25% (10) who were not aware. Sixty-five per cent (34) of the

respondents believed that teacher's personnel records have missing documents due to misfiling while 15% (6) indicated that this is due to poor handling of personnel records by Action officers. As a result Records users face problems when they have to act on teachers files, and they are always faced with problems when it comes to the payment of pension funds. They end up going to schools to get information and this delay the payments.

**Figure 6. Contents policy**



Moreover, personal observations revealed that teachers' records at TSA do not have proper documents. They mostly contain disciplinary correspondence letters. In average a personnel file at TSA contain only the following information: the employee's full name and address, the employee's age and sex, a form completed by a teacher on their first appointment and the form is not updated, disciplinary cases, correspondence letters, the full name and address of the employee's next of kin but the files are not always updated. This shows that TSA RMU do not comply with Botswana Employment Act.

### **4.3.3 Objective 3: TSA Recordkeeping Practices**

The third objective of the study sought to determine the manner in which personnel records are managed at TSA. The research findings on the current personnel records management programmes and systems within TSA are discussed in line with best personnel management practices. The findings are presented and discussed as follows:

- i. Records Creation maintenance and use,
- ii. Mail Management,
- iii. File Management,
- iv. Records Storage,
- v. Classification of Records,
- vi. Records Volume

#### **4.3.3.1 Creation of Personnel Records**

ISO 15489-1 provides the criteria for the organization to create and maintain authentic, reliable and usable records. These criteria among others are to:

- i. Determine what records should be created in each business process, and what information needs to be included in the records,
- ii. Deciding what form and structure records should be created and captured and the technologies to be used,
- iii. Determining what metadata should be created with the records and through records processes and how that metadata will be persistently linked and managed; and
- iv. Deciding how to organize records so as to support requirements for use.

Based on this understanding, this study sought to find the types of personnel records created by TSA. Unlike other organizations where two separate files are maintained one open and one confidential, at TSA only one file which is confidential is maintained for each member of staff as indicated by 12 (100%) respondents. It should be noted that it is only those who deal personnel records creation that know the types personnel records.

When asked to state the challenges experienced by TSA in the area of personnel records creation, 8 (66.7%) of the respondents indicated that they are faced with one challenge or the other in the process of personnel records creation, while 4 (33.3%) of the respondents suggested that the department does not face any challenges in personnel records creation.

Various issues have been cited as contributing directly or indirectly to poor personnel records creation. 8 (66.7%) indicated that it take time for a personnel file to be opened for a particular teacher which can result in late payment for that teacher. 3 (25%) indicated that is due to late arrival of documents regarding a certain teacher from the human resources office.

Government departments are required to develop a records creation policy that regulates records creation. This is emphasised by Yusof & Chell (1999) who state that records creation and capturing involves developing consistent rules to ensure integrity and accessibility, deciding on systems to log and track records, and procedures for registering, classifying and indexing.

The purpose of the question in this section was to establish whether the TSA has developed consistent rules or guidelines for the creation of personnel records. 3 (25%) of the respondents were unaware of the fact that the TSA had a records creation policy. They indicated that they were not made aware of such policy nor create personnel records according to the policy. 8 (66.7%) respondents indicated that there was a policy though they were not sure if the policy was endorsed by BNARS.

Moreover the study sought to determine the volume of records held at TSA. The findings of the study revealed that as of January 2015 there are over 27,000 volumes of personnel files, of which 2,000 are personnel records of lectures at Colleges of Education, 10, 000 personnel records of teachers in secondary schools, and 15, 000 of teachers in primary schools. The records manager was not able to tell the exact number of teachers currently employed by TSA.

This number is further broken down as shown in Table 4.1 below:

**Table 3: Number of Personnel Files at TSA**

Department	Number of Personnel Files
Colleges of Education	2 000
Secondary schools	10 000
Primary schools	15 000
Total	27 000

Source: Field Data 2015

Study conducted by Pansiri and Bulawa (2013) revealed that as of 2013, Teaching Service Management had a total of 26 122 teachers. In terms of their distribution, these are 13045 primary, 12 538 secondary school teachers and 539 college lecturers (Pansiri, 2011.)

#### **4.3.3.2 Records Maintenance and use**

According to ISO 15489-1, 2001, records should be stored in an environment adequate for the storage medium they are recorded on. They should be properly maintained so that they are retrievable for the period of time required by the schedule and until they are disposed of or transferred to the Archives. Any records of a confidential nature should be properly safeguarded and stored in a secure place with controlled access.

Mnjama (2001) pointed out that of all public records, personnel records pose one of the greatest challenges. In many organizations these records are poorly organized and underutilized. Mnjama (2004) as quoted by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) further conducted a survey in Kenya and Botswana, as well as visits to Tanzania, Ghana, The Gambia, and Sierra Leone which revealed many problems in the management of records, including:



- i. poor layout of the records office especially where records are managed centrally;
- ii. untidiness in the records area, with records scattered all over the place, on the floor, on top of filing cabinets, along corridors and basements and carports;
- iii. regular loss of files and information. In many organizations it was common practice for senior and middle executives to spend considerable amounts of time searching for information which ought to be readily available. In some cases senior executives were unable to make informed decisions due to a lack of information;
- iv. lack of file indexes or registers indicating the existence of the record in the organization. The absence of registers or inventories indicating the types of information resources held in organizations often led to a waste of time in the gathering of information which already existed in the institution;
- v. lack of retention and disposition schedules. As a result, many organizations either failed to destroy records which were no longer needed to support day to day business operations or they were forced to take disposal decisions on an *ad hoc* basis without observing any aspect of disposal criteria;
- vi. poor storage for semi-current records;
- vii. poor supervision of records staff; and
- viii. Ignorance of the value of information, for instance, lack of security procedures in handling sensitive or classified information.

For this reason the study sought to investigate the maintenance of records at TSA. Records management personnel were asked about the existence of file index at TSA. The findings revealed that out of twelve respondents, 25% (3) respondents were aware of the existence of the file index, while the remaining 75% (9) respondents were not sure if TSA has a file index.

It can, therefore, be concluded that there is no file index for current and semi current records kept in the RMU at TSA. Observation conducted by the

researcher revealed that records personnel use their own memories to identify and locate files when required for use by Action Officers. For this reason, the absence of a file index has a negative effect on TSA as it leads to delays in retrieval of files or duplication of files as there is a possibility of creating files on the same theme every day.

#### **4.3.3.3 Arranging Files/File plan**

Experience shows that if personnel files are organised and stored alphabetically by the name of the employee, numerous errors can arise when files are removed and replaced or when documents are added to the files. Moreover, an alphabetical filing system is difficult to audit against the payroll. Alphabetical filing is prone to error, because of, for instance, the similarity between two or more names; the misspelling of names on documents; changes to names over time; confusion between first, middle and last names; and the use of hyphenated names. The file numbering systems used by different offices within an organisation should be standardised so that there is no confusion between different methods of numbering. More importantly, the same number should never be issued for more than one individual. The simplest and most reliable method of achieving a common file numbering standard across a government or other agency is to use the individual's personal identification number (IRMT, 2009).

For this reason the study sought to assess the arrangement of personnel files at TSA. The findings of the study revealed that the files are arranged numerically from the smallest TSA number for easy retrieval as reported by 21(53%) respondents, and 12 (30%) said they do not know how they are arranged while 7 (17.5%) respondents said they were not sure. Observation revealed that each shelf is labelled with the numbers of files contained inside it. E.g. the shelves will be labelled 75508 – 89507 showing the ranges of the files arranged in a particular shelf. It also was observed that most of the files are fairly in good condition. The teacher's name and TSA number is written on the cover of a file e.g. 2018 for Keolebogile Thokwane for easy retrieval. The files are maintained by replacing the file when an old file cover is torn. A

volume is opened when a transaction for which the record was opened for is complete and when it is 3cm thick and when it contains more than 100 folios.

#### **4.3.3.4 Mail Management**

IRMT, (1999b) states that rules for handling 'confidential' and 'personal' letters should always be followed. All other mail should be opened and date-stamped as soon as it is received by the records office. Incoming mail must be registered by a designated officer in the Inward Correspondence Register. All columns of the RMU must be completed. The details to be entered are:

serial number (the next number in sequence),

- i. date of the letter;
- ii. date the letter was received;
- iii. from whom the letter was received;
- iv. reference given by the writer of the letter; and
- v. subject of the letter.

The head of the records office or a designated officer will decide how items are to be handled. Records Management Personnel must deal promptly and accurately with many different kinds of mail.

Mark routine documents with filing instructions and pass to the officer responsible for filing. Place letters which are not routine in mail folders for circulation to the most senior officers in the agency. The officers on the circulation list will vary from agency to agency, but it is important that the list is as short as possible so that the mail folder is returned to the records office quickly.

The officers on the circulation list should attend to the documents in the mail folder promptly. They should mark those letters that they would like to deal with personally or that they would like to refer to their staff by noting the name of the officer to whom they are to be sent. All such directions should be initialled and dated by the officer making them. Letters may not be removed from the mail folder. All must be returned to the records office for filing.

When the mail folder is returned to the records office place the documents immediately on the appropriate files. Before the files are passed to the nominated action officers, a member of the records office staff should note on the relevant file transit sheet the name or title of the Action Officer and the date of transit. At this time, the following information will be recorded in the Inward Correspondence Register:

- i. name or title of the Action Officer to whom the file was passed, and the date the letter was filed;
- ii. number of the file on which the letter was placed; and
- iii. The files must be delivered to the relevant Action Officers without delay.

For this reason this study sought to determine whether mail management meets the above criteria. The findings of the study indicated that mail at TSA is received from the Post Office twice daily, in the morning and afternoon from private institutions or companies. But some are hand delivered by messengers from ministries or departments and faxes. The mail is sorted by the assigned Records Officer according to the categories such as personal mail and registered mail. Official mail is sorted into open, confidential. Secret mail is handed to the secretary to the Deputy Director while the open mail (personal mail for teachers and policy mail) is opened and searched for enclosures and date stamped. Urgent mail is marked to the relevant Action Officer without being circulated and the remaining mail is sorted into three groups or primary secondary and policy mail.

The Teaching Service Administration is a big department and has many schools. These schools have been grouped under regions such as South Central, Southern, West Central, North and Central South regions and this mail is given to officers attached to these regions.

The findings of the study indicated that records officers have the tendency of marking the teachers' mail to the Action Officers without being registered or

circulated. This also impacts on the overall service delivery of the TSA department. The study indicated that the TSA does not receive E-mails from teachers which nor head teachers except from internal TSA staff which is printed and filed in the relevant file.

The study revealed that clerical staffs make mistakes like forgetting to stamp the incoming post which makes their work difficult. In most occasions they just file without looking at the contents of the letter and this leads to misfiling.

#### **4.3.3.5 File Management**

The study sought to determine whether the TSA has standard procedures for controlling file movements. Tracking of records is important as it documents the movement of records so that the organisation knows where its records are at any time. Tracking may also be used to ensure that, for example, a particular record is dealt with by the person to whom it has been assigned and that action is taken by a predetermined date. This is confirmed by ISO 15489-1 section 9.8 which states that “records should be documented to ensure that items can be located when required. Tracking mechanisms may record the item identifier, the title, person or unit having possession of the item and the time /date of the movement. It is further suggested that, “the system should track the issue, transfer between persons, and return of records to their location”. ISO 15489-1 (2001) states that tracking of records within a records system is required to identify outstanding action maintenance and security to maintain an audible trail of records transactions and lastly to maintain capacity to identify the operational origins of individual where systems have been migrated

The study revealed that TSA uses a system called Lotus Note (Version 6.5) for monitoring files as reported by 20 (50%) respondents while 17 (43%) said they did not know the use of this system. The main aim of this system is to record the movement of a file as it goes out and captures the name of officer requesting for it and records the date when it is returned. Lotus Notes 6.5 provides the different users with the information to locate the file. When

Record Officers were asked to indicate whether they face any problems in locating and retrieving records, 8 (67%) indicated that they faced some problems, whereas 4 (33%) stated that they faced no problems. They further stated that they are afraid of some Action Officers who take a long time using the personnel file and at times they forget about them until such a file is requested.

When asked if they receive any training regarding the use of records 18 (64%) Action Officers reported that they do not receive any training, while 10 (36%) said they were not satisfied with the training. The study revealed that Action Officers lack training on how to handle records since Records Officers never organize courses for them to educate them on how to use personnel records.

The findings indicated that Action Officers' fail to adhere to records keeping procedures. Sometimes the Action Officers take a long time to act on a file or they sometimes keep it after acting on it. The Action Officers do not know how to use the personnel files because when called for training they do not come and instead send their juniors who do not deal with personnel records to attend on their behalf.

The above findings were supported by personal observations which showed that there is lack of updating the system. The department had developed a file tracking database system which was to speed up the retrieval and location of files. The system is not fully utilized by the Records Officers and the Action Officers. 3 (7.5%) cited memory as a substitute method for keeping track of records as files were sometimes given to Action Officers without being entered and checked out in the computer and the Action Officers did not follow the procedure when passing on the file to another action officer.

When respondents were asked to indicate what happens when personnel records cannot be located, the results indicated that the majority 20 (50%) prefer the opening of temporary files while 16 (40%) preferred the creation of

new ones. Others 4 (10%) refer the matter to their supervisor who will request teachers to supply them with the requested information.

#### **4.3.3.6 Records Storage**

It is important to keep records in conditions that ensure that they are protected, secured and accessible for as long as they are required to meet the business and accountability needs of the organization. ISO 15489-1(2001) states that; appropriate storage environment and media physical, materials, handling procedures and storage systems should be considered when designing the records system. Records must be stored in such a way that they are accessible and safeguarded against environmental damage. A typical paper document may be stored in a filing cabinet in an office. For this reason, this study sought to assess the principles and techniques applied to store personnel records at TSA.

The TSA registry was visited on three occasions by the researcher during the study period. A visit to the TSA registry by the researcher revealed that a storage area has been allocated to records management to accommodate personnel records only. The area is too small for the volume of personnel records is expected to handle. The files are over packed and need more shelves since the number of teachers is increasing every year. When asked whether there was any storage facility for semi-current and non-current records, 4 (33.3%) respondents indicated that semi- current and non-current records were stored on shelves, 5 (41.6%) some on the floor because they lack space while 3 (25%) indicated that they were in a room which is not adequate for storage purposes. Current and semi-current files are kept in the same area. The study observed plenty of several closed personnel records at TSA RMU and there was no index or register for all closed files.

The findings of the study revealed that TSA has installed mobile cabinets where teachers' records are kept. Teachers' records are stored in 19 mobile lockable cabinets in the RMU. All personnel files are kept in lockable cabinets and the cabinets.

#### **4.3.3.6.1 Environmental Conditions**

Environmental conditions include temperature and humidity, light, air quality and pest management. Records require storage conditions and handling processes that take into account their specific physical and chemical properties. This study sought to establish the environmental conditions under which TSA personnel records are held. The storerooms that house semi- active and non- active records are full making it hard to clean and this can lead to breeding of insects. It was also observed that storage areas had accumulated a lot of dust and were not cleaned regularly.

The offices with records have air conditioners but they are not regularly used as they are switched off at night, whereas the storage areas do not have air conditions and it operates in normal room temperature. There is no direct sunlight entering the office because the RMU is surrounded by other offices but the records are exposed to electric lights which are situated directly above them. There are some smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and water sprinklers, but the officers have not been trained in the use of fire extinguishers, which may lead to the deterioration of records in the event of accidental fire. These were checked and revealed that they were not properly monitored.

Further the findings revealed that there were no dehumidifiers, and humidifiers in the rooms or no special environmental conditions for records.

#### **4.3.3.7 Records Security**

Records must be protected physically and intellectually throughout their lifecycle to ensure that they survive for as long as they are needed to serve their purpose as evidence and information of past and present activities. ISO 15489 -1 (2001) requirements demand that an organisation should have guidelines as to who is permitted access to records. For this reason, the study sought to assess the principles and techniques applied to secure personnel records.

The majority of the respondents 30 (75%) were of the opinion TSA does place emphasis on the security of personnel records. On the other hand 7 (17.5%) indicated that TSA does provide security measures to personnel records but



they are not adhered to, while 3 (7, 5%) were of the opinion that does TSA does not place much emphasis on the security of teachers' records. Personal observation revealed that the RMU has installed counters and coded security doors to prevent free movement of customers into the unit. These cabinets are locked after business hours and access into the RMU is restricted to Records Officers. No ordinary employees are allowed access into the RMU.

When asked if they face any problems regarding unauthorised entry, 9 (75%) records management personnel reported that they have challenges, while 3 (25%) reported that they do not face any challenges. The study revealed that there was unauthorised access into records storage by Action Officers who force their entry into the unit. This was also confirmed through observation when Action Officers were seen retrieving personnel files themselves citing that Records Officers took a long time to give them the files they had long requested.

#### **4.3.3.8 Retention and Disposition of Personnel Files**

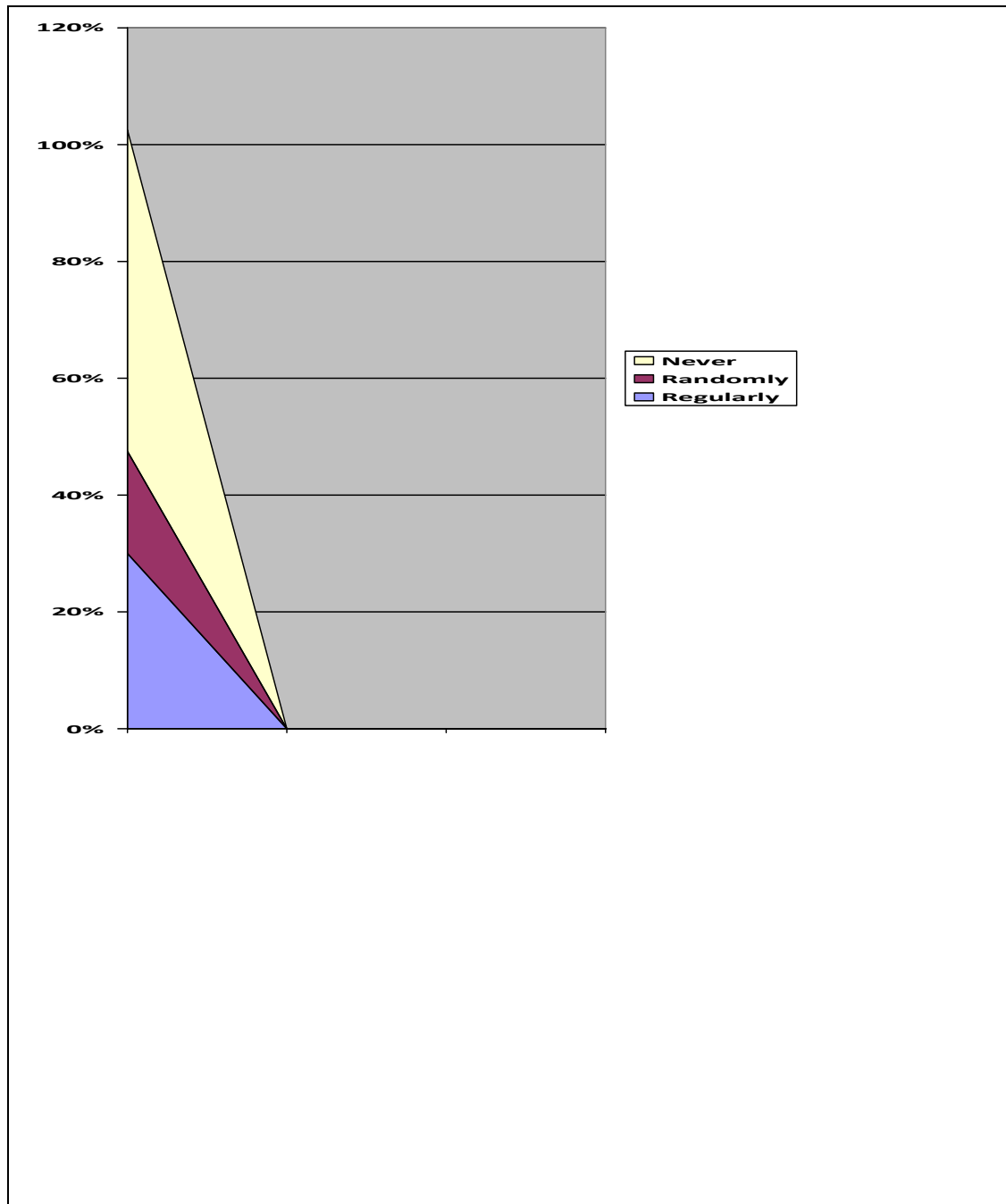
ISO15489 – 1: 2001 states that records system should be capable of facilitating and implementing decision on the retention or disposition of records. It should be possible for these decisions to be made at any time in the existence of records including during the design stage of records system. It should also be possible to be activated automatically. System should provide audit trails or other methods to track complete disposition actions. This is the reason why the study sought to determine the retention period and disposition of personnel files at TSA.

Observations revealed that closed files are kept in inactive shelves. Such files include files of deceased teachers, retired and resigned teachers from the service. Temporary files are termed inactive after three years. Files can also be closed when bulky and a new volume is opened. An interview with the director TSA further established that there are no written policies regarding the closure of files.

The study findings indicate that currently there are no specific retention schedules for personnel files except for individuals who had died, whereby their files were retained for a period of 50 years from the date of death. An interview with the Records Manager at TSA revealed that they do not have guiding policies on retention of personnel records. BNARS has been guiding ministries on retention schedules. This is done for the purpose of payments of pension fund and to make sure that all issues that may rise have been taken care of. The study also established that only policy records from TSA are transferred to BNARS.

Moreover, the study sought to establish when and how personnel records are disposed. As reflected in figure 7 below, 12 (30%) respondents reported that dispose of personnel records regularly, 7 (17.5%) they dispose personnel records randomly. A total of 22 (55%) indicated that they do not dispose personnel records at all.

**Figure 7 Disposition of personnel records**



Source: Field data 2015

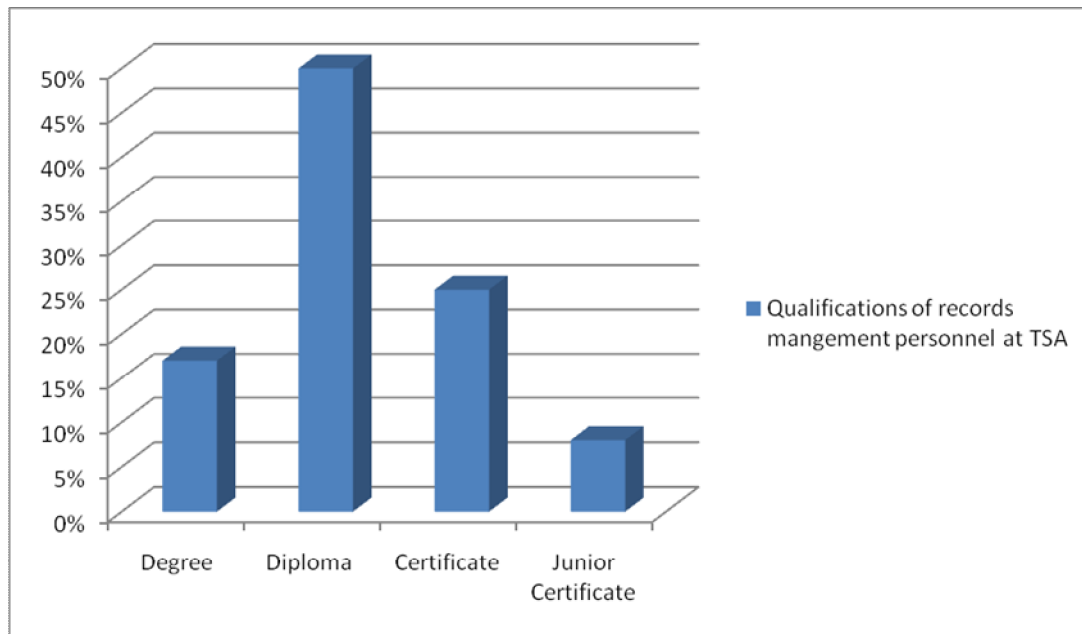
Interview with the records manager revealed that ministries do not dispose off their personnel records. This was further confirmed by the Director of BNARS. All records are disposed of by BNARS through the guidance of the National Archives Act of Botswana which state that personnel files are kept for sixty years while the teacher is still working for the government and then destroyed twenty to thirty years after the death of a teacher. The personnel records are kept for these periods so that they can be used when needed in the future. In-active personnel records are locked up in a store room fitted with shelves, while others are kept in boxes in the RMU.

#### **4.4 Objective 4: Skills of Records management personnel**

The fourth objective of the study sought to find out levels of qualification for RMU staff at TSA. Records management staff must be appropriately skilled, through experience and training, in order to successfully undertake the range of records management activities required. These skills must be updated to ensure staff capabilities and awareness remains current. Inadequate resourcing, results in poorly managed records management systems and programs, increases risks to agencies and inefficient use of staff time.

The study revealed that of the twelve records management personnel who took part in the study; two (17%) have a Degree, Six (50%) have Diploma, three (25%) a Certificate and one (8%) junior Certificate. An interview with records manager revealed that records officers are sent for training to further their education though there is shortage of records management personnel staff. Figure 8 below summarizes their qualifications.

**Figure 8 Qualification of record officers at TSA RMU**



Source: Field data 2015

#### **4.5. Objective 5: The Use of ICT's in Managing personnel Records at TSA**

The fifth objective of the study sought to determine whether TSA is using ICTs in its daily operations and ultimately produces and captures electronic records. The findings of the study revealed that TSA uses computers on daily bases but not for record keeping purposes.

The results of the questionnaire and the interview conducted showed that there is no policy on the management of electronic records and there is no linkage between ICT and records management unit. Personal observations revealed that the installed computers in the record management unit but respondents use the computers for other functions such as creating and capturing unique teachers' identification numbers. It was further observed that computers are used when issuing a file or returning it. Records officers use computers for their personal or official emails which are saved by the individual's desk top PC inboxes or a copy printed and filed in an appropriate file if official. They do not accept emails from teachers or head teachers.

#### **4.7 Summary**

The findings in this study clearly illustrate the value of establishing policies, activities and control framework necessary for proper personnel records management. Setting up correct policies, procedures and practices is important for building a culture of proper personnel records management in the organisation. Training of Records Management Personnel and Action Officers has proved to be an essential element for a successful records management programme. Trained records specialists are important in order to build and maintain the record keeping infrastructure.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This section of the study seeks to relate the findings of the study in relation to the literature reviewed in Chapter Two.

#### **5.2 Records management policies and procedures in managing personnel records at TSA**

The findings of the study revealed that TSA has no documented records management policy as indicated on figure 4.3. Majority of respondents indicated that they were aware of the availability of records management policy but could not produce a copy. Interview with the Director of TSA further revealed that TSA has no documented records management policy. These findings are similar to those reported by Tshotlo (2009) and Kootshabe (2011) all government Ministries and Departments in Botswana including BNARS lack written policies and procedures which performance in the management of records is measured.

#### **5.3 Creation and capturing of records**

The findings of study revealed that records officers are responsible for the creation, maintenance and use of records. Unlike other organizations where two separate files are maintained one open and one confidential, TSA has only one file which is confidential is maintained for each member. The findings of the study revealed that records are created and maintained in paper form. The department do not manage electronic records. The findings of the study revealed that there were computers but records management personnel did not use computers to manage records. A similar problem was noted by Kootshabe (2011) who noted that although most of government offices have computers, there is no management of electronic records in place within government Ministries and Departments in Botswana.

The findings of the study further revealed that TSA does not have consistent rules or guidelines for the creation, capture and retention of records. This was

supported by Yusof & Chell (1999) who stated that records creation and capturing involves developing consistent rules to ensure integrity and accessibility, deciding on systems to log and track records, and procedures for registering, classifying and indexing.

#### **5.4 Records maintenance and use**

The findings of the study revealed that there is no file index for current and semi current records kept in the RMU at TSA. Observation conducted revealed that records personnel use their own memories to identify and locate files when required for use by Action Officers. For this reason, the absence of a file index has a negative effect on TSA as it leads to delays in retrieval of files or duplication of files as there is a possibility of creating files on the same theme every day. This was further supported by Mnjama (2004) who highlighted that most African countries lack file indexes or registers indicating the existence of the record in the organization. The absence of registers or inventories indicating the types of information resources held in organizations often led to a waste of time in the gathering of information which already existed in the institution.

Further, Smith, Ginn and Kallaus (2002) asserted that information regarding storage and retrieval must be answered for proper maintenance. They should be answered before the records are created because the answer will determine the way in which information is captured.

#### **5.5 Mail management**

The findings of the study revealed that there is no proper management of mail at TSA. Records officers do not adhere to mail management procedures. Records mark the teachers' mail to the Action Officers without being registered or circulated. The study revealed that clerical staffs make mistakes like forgetting to stamp the incoming post which makes their work difficult. In most occasions they just file without looking at the contents of the letter and this leads to misfiling. This was supported by IRMT, (1999b) which states that rules for handling 'confidential' and 'personal' letters should always be followed. All



other mail should be opened and date-stamped as soon as it is received by the records office. Robek, Gerald and Stephens, (1996) further emphasised that the mail management program encompasses both main supervision and mail operations, which together constitute a total program for handling mail.

### **5.6 File Management**

The findings of the study revealed that department had developed a file tracking database system which was to speed up the retrieval and location of files called Lotus Note (version 6.5). Majority of respondents indicated that the system used for tracking of files is not properly used. Action Officers' fail to adhere to records keeping procedures and there is lack of monitoring of records by officers at TSA. ISO 15489-1 (2001) states that tracking of records within a records system is required to identify outstanding action maintenance and security to maintain an audible trail of records transactions and lastly to maintain capacity to identify the operational origins of individual where systems have been migrated

### **5.7 Records Storage**

The findings of the study revealed that there is no records centre in the department hence the housing of semi-current and non-current records, active records, staff and furniture in the same office. This is further supported by Kootshabe (2011) who observed that government Ministries and Departments in Botswana are in dire need of records storage areas and there are no purpose built areas for storing semi-current records.

Further, Mnjama (2004) asserted that most government department does not have retention and disposition schedules. Lack of retention and disposition schedules challenges hampered RMU space and led to congestion of records and mixing up of current and semi current records. The present findings are similar to those of Kenosi (1999), which showed that due to space problems most public offices in Botswana accommodate both closed and noncurrent records in the same storage area which make retrieval of current records difficult.

### **5.7 Records Security**

The study revealed that RMU has installed counters and coded security doors to prevent free movement of customers into the unit. These cabinets are locked after business hours and access into the RMU is restricted to Records Officers. However these counters are not used properly as some Action Officers forced their entry into the unit. Study by Kootshabe (2011) also found out that records security in many government ministries had challenges such as unauthorised access in to records storage areas as messengers and cleaners often had accesses to records storage areas. These findings are similar to those reported by Mampe and Kalusupa (2012) who argued that it is common practice for action officers to retrieve files for themselves when there is shortage of RMU staff. This situation creates an opportunity for some Action Officers to temper or steal records containing valuable information.

### **5.8 Contents of personnel records**

The findings of the study established that personnel files at TSA do not have proper records of teachers. As a result important information is missing in the personnel files. The findings are similar to those reported by Cain and Thurston (1998) who argued that most government files held in the personnel registry were generally incomplete and there were serious problems in keeping files up to date. The findings is consistent with observations made by Gottelmann-Duret and Hogan (1998) who argued that there are weaknesses in the management of teachers' records in Botswana, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda. The data on teachers kept in individual records are often inaccurate and outdated and there is lack of precise and reliable data on teachers' demands and non-satisfied teachers requirements which brings the forecasting of teacher supply and planning difficult.

### **5.9 The levels of skills and training of records managers**

The study revealed that there is shortage of records management personnel but the government has made an effort of sending records officers for further studies though there is inadequate training for Action Officers on the use of personnel records. This is not a new phenomenon in Botswana as observed by

Kootshabe (2011) that the bulk of the personnel managing records in government Departments and Ministries in Botswana, possess lower basic professional training while some still have no professional training. Mampe and Kalusupa (2012) on their study Records Management and Service Delivery at the Ministry of Health in Botswana revealed that most of the records management personnel were inadequately skilled and none of the record users had received any form of training in records management. Similarly Ndemanyshe (2014) also established that the majority of personnel that work in Tanzania Revenue Authority registries do not have qualifications in the area of records management.

### **5.10 Summary**

The findings of the study indicated a number of challenges which TSA Records Management Unit is facing which includes; lack of written records management policy, lack of storage, missing documents in teachers' files, lack of retention and disposition schedules and shortage of records management personnel. These challenges have an impact on the management of personnel records throughout the whole life cycle, the provision of resources, hunt for support from senior management and compliance with records management standards in the creation, maintenance, use, appraisal and disposal of records.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction.**

This chapter provides an interpretation of the research findings as presented in Chapter Four. The purpose of the study was to examine management of personnel records at TSA. The objectives of the study were;

- 1: Examine the legislative and regulatory framework for managing personnel records at TSA;
- 2: Determine the composition of TSA personnel records;
- 3: Assess the record keeping practices at TSA;
- 4: Assess the skills of record management officers at TSA;
- 5: Investigate the use of ICT in managing personnel records at TSA; and
- 6: Make recommendations for the effective management of personnel records at TSA.

This chapter presents the summary findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. Conclusions were drawn based on the content analysis, research questions and objectives of the study, as well as the findings of the study thereof. Recommendations were made based on content analysis and the findings of the study discussed in chapter four.

#### **6.2 Summary of findings**

##### **6.2.1 Legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel records at TSA**

The study findings revealed that there are no tangible personnel records management policies that can inform how employees relate to the management of the records. This resulted in ineffective management of personnel records. The study revealed that the management of personnel records at TSA is governed by the Employment Act which defines the type of records which must

be maintained by an employer at all times. These records must also be available for the payments of gratuities' and pensions and other terminal benefits.

### **6.2.2 Composition of personnel records at TSA**

The study established that personnel files at TSA do not proper records of teachers. As a result important information is missing in the personnel files. This makes it difficult when paying teachers pension funds and other payments such as leave concession.

### **6.2.3 Record keeping practices at TSA**

Record keeping practices include the following; records creation, maintenance and use, mail management, file management, records storage, records security, records scheduling and records disposition.

#### **6.2.3.1 Records Creation**

The finding of the study revealed that the procedure for file creation is that a personnel file is created immediately a teacher is employed by TSA. The recruitment division authorizes the creation of new files for teachers. Unlike other organizations where two separate files are maintained one open and one confidential, at TSA only one file which is confidential is maintained for each member of staff. However it can take time for a personnel file to be opened for a particular teacher which can result in late payment for that teacher. Personnel file is created immediately after a new teacher has been given a post. The study further revealed that there were no guidelines for the creation, capture and retention of records at TSA.

#### **6.2.3.2 Records Maintenance and use**

The study revealed that there is no file index for current and semi current records kept in the RMU at TSA. Records management personnel use their own memories to identify and locate files when required for use by Action Officers. For this reason, the absence of a file index has a negative effect on TSA as it

leads to delays in retrieval of files or duplication of files as there is a possibility of creating files on the same theme every day.

#### **6.2.3.3 Tracking of files**

File tracking is very important for the smooth running of every organization. It decreases a problem of losing files and looking for a file from one office to the other. The study revealed that the department had developed a file tracking database system which was to speed up the retrieval and location of files called Lotus Note (version 6.5). The system is not fully utilized by both records officers and records users. The file movements are not updated regularly in the system such that sometimes the system might show that the file is in whereas it is somewhere in the offices.

#### **6.2.3.4 Records storage**

The study revealed that about 450 files are opened yearly. There is lack of space for personnel records handled in the Records Management Unit. Semi-current and non-current records are kept in the same office together with the staff. There is no record centre in the department hence the housing of semi-current and non-current records, active records, staff and furniture in the same office.

#### **6.2.3.5 Records security**

The study revealed that for security reasons the Records Management Unit had installed counters and coded security doors to prevent free movement of customers in the unit. However these counters are not used properly as some Action Officers forced their entry into the unit.

#### **6.2.3.6 Records scheduling and disposition**

The study revealed that the records management unit lack retention and disposition schedules the department depended on the disposal schedule at the Botswana National Archives for the entire government department which was not readily available.

#### **6.2.4 Mail management**

The issue of handling both incoming and outgoing mail is a critical area for any organization. The study revealed that mail is marked to the Action Officers without being registered or circulated. Records Officers forget to put stamps on letters as they come in, they just file without looking at the contents of the letter and this leads to misfiling. The mail is properly attended to but the main problem is not registering and circulating the teacher's mail which resulted in losing it.

#### **6.2.5 Skills of record management officers at TSA**

The study revealed that records management personnel are sent for further studies but there is inadequate training for Action Officers on the use of personnel records in the department of Teaching Service Administration.

#### **6.2.6 The use of ICT in managing personnel records at TSA**

The study revealed that there were computers but records management personnel did not use computers to manage records. There is Lotus Notes 6.5 that is used to provide the different users with the information to locate the file. But the files are sometimes given to action officers without being entered and checked out in the computer.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

The study was undertaken to examine management of personnel records at TSA. It is clear from the above discussions, content analysis and findings that Department of Teaching Service Administration has a long way to go as far as record keeping is concerned.

After analyzing data from TSA, it is safe to state that management of personnel records at TSA is a good case study for driving government to improve management of personnel records in its ministries and benchmark its records management programme with other well established records management programmes for ministries in the region and the world. The study also revealed that improvement in the management of records, personnel records included is

a long-term and wide-reaching prospect for a government department and is often integrated into wider information and knowledge management agendas. Record management has long been a low priority in governments around the world. To achieve improvements in management of personnel records, TSA will require strong leadership and an improvement agenda that is endorsed at a high level and supported throughout the department. A records management system will only function effectively if it is developed as part of the larger managerial environment, so that procedures reflect overall management objectives. The establishment of an effective records management program is based on employees who understand the importance of records and the need of records management processes such as, policies, procedures, file plans, etc.

The lesson learned is, though most records management personnel hold lower qualifications department is determined to send records officers for further studies. They bench mark with other record offices of the rest of the world like some officers were sent to Australia to bench mark and they have since launched a record management committee.

## **6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIES**

### **6.4.1 Introduction**

The following are the key recommendations arising from the study.

### **6.4.2 Legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel records at TSA**

The study revealed that TSA lacks written records management policy. For improving service delivery and efficiency the study therefore recommends that; TSA formulate records management policy. The policy should address the management of records throughout the entire life cycle. The policy should also indicate the types of records to be captured when opening files and the periods for which they must be retained. The policy should address issues of access to TSA records and define the powers of Records Managers at TSA.



### **6.4.3 Composition of personnel records at TSA**

The study established that some personnel files at TSA do not have the complete documents some of important information is missing. This makes it difficult when paying teachers' pension and other payments such as leave concession.

The study recommends the following to improve service delivery and efficiency; Records Management Unit must ensure that complete and accurate records are captured during the creation of personnel files

### **6.4.4 Record keeping practices at TSA**

Record keeping practices include the following; records creation, file management records maintenance and use, file tracking, records storage, and records disposition.

#### **6.4.4.1 Records creation**

The finding of the study revealed that the procedure followed for the creation of a personnel file is that a personnel file is created immediately a teacher is employed by TSA. There were no guidelines for the creation of personnel records. The study therefore recommends that TSA must stipulate the types of documents to be provided by teachers on first appointment and the types of records which must be held by TSA during the period of employment.

#### **6.4.4.2 Records maintenance and use**

The findings of the study revealed that that there is no file index for current and semi current records kept in the RMU at TSA. The study therefore recommends that TSA Records Management Unit should develop a file index that will help them to locate personnel files and avoid mistakes of duplicating files. It is further recommended the index should be updated regularly to ensure that it is accurate at all times. It is also recommended that TSA should maintain a list of all closed personnel files kept in the organisation.

#### **6.4.4.3 Tracking of files**

The study revealed that the department had developed a file tracking database system which was to speed up the retrieval and location of files called Lotus Note (version 6.5). The system is not fully utilized by both records officers and Action Officers. The study therefore recommends the following:

- i. Tracking system should be properly used by Records Officers so that they can achieve their intended goals without difficulties.
- ii. There should be proper monitoring of files to make sure that record users do not keep the files for a long time in their offices. The name of the person retrieving the file as well as its reference title and the date of retrieval should be properly recorded.

#### **6.4.4.4 Records storage**

The study revealed that there is lack of space for personnel records handled in the Records Management Unit. Semi-current and non-current records are kept in the same office together with the staff, furniture used by staff and equipment used in the office. The study therefore recommends the following:

- i. The Records Management Unit at TSA should ensure that personnel records are organized and maintained in such a way that they are easily retrieved.
- ii. They should conserve office space and equipment by using filing cabinets to store only active paper records.
- iii. They can save money by moving inactive files to off-site storage areas until they are ready for final disposition
- iv. They should control the growth of records in offices through the systematic disposition of unneeded records
- v. The RMU should also secure a space or place for their semi-current records e.g. Records centre and transfer non-current records to the Botswana National Archives and those of ephemeral value should be destroyed.

#### **6.4.4.5 Records security**

The study revealed that for security reasons the Records Management Unit had installed service counters and coded security doors to prevent free movement of customers in the unit but these counters are not used properly as some Action Officers forced their entry into the unit.. The study recommends that:

- i. RMU should protect personnel records against unauthorized access safe keeping the storeroom where personnel records are kept.
- ii. The room where records are kept should be kept locked, and there should be a visible sign that restricts access to authorized personnel.
- iii. TSA should provide guidance to its staff on the requirements for storing personnel files

#### **6.4.4.6 Records scheduling and disposition**

The study revealed that the Records Management Unit lack retention and disposition schedules for personnel records and that the department relies on the disposal schedule at the Botswana National Archives for the entire government department which was not readily available. The study therefore recommends that;

- i. TSA in consultation with BNARS develop a records retention schedules that lists the minimum legal and fiscal time periods of personnel records.
- ii. RMU should establish guidelines regarding how long important information must remain accessible for future use or reference, as well as when and how the data can be destroyed when it is no longer needed.

#### **6.4.5 Mail management**

The issue of handling both incoming and outgoing mail is a critical area for any organization. The study revealed that mail is marked to the Action Officers without being registered or circulated. The study therefore recommends the following:

- i. The registration of mail must be accurate.

- ii. Incoming mail for teachers should be registered before circulation.
- iii. Records management personnel must deal promptly and accurately with many different kinds of mail.
- iv. All mail received in the RMU must be opened as soon as it is received by a designated officer, normally the head of the RMU. During the opening and date stamping procedures of the mail, all letters should be kept in a box file or other suitable container.

#### **6.4.6 Skills of record management officers at TSA**

The study revealed that there was inadequate training for records users and in the department of Teaching Service Administration on the use of personnel records. The study therefore recommends that;

- i. Records users should be properly inducted, trained and educated in the proper use of records. Workshops, seminars, conferences courses should be used for the purpose of inducting, training and developing Action Officers. Action Officers should be trained and encouraged to use 'pass on' in the computer for easy location of files.
- ii. The department of TSA should provide training for Records management personnel by sending them for further studies.

#### **6.4.7 The use of ICT in managing personnel records at TSA**

The study revealed that there were computers but records management personnel did not use computers to manage records. There is Lotus Notes 6.5 that is used to provide the different users with the information to locate the file. But the files are sometimes given to action officers without being entered in and checked out in the computer.

Records Management Unit staff should be encouraged to always use a computer when issuing files to the action officers to ensure the following;

- i. There is proper monitoring of files so that action officers do not keep the files for a long time in their offices. The name of the person retrieving the files as well as its reference title and the date of retrieval should be properly recorded in the computers.

- ii. Personnel record should be properly stored when not in use and access should only be granted to authorised staff.

### **6.5 Areas for further research**

The study has investigated Management of personnel records. The study recommends that further research be conducted in the following areas:

1. Personnel Management and payment of pensions in the Civil Service.
2. Managing Personnel Records in an electronic environment

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## **APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

### Introduction

This consent form is for all records management personnel, human resource officers, secretaries, heads of departments, accounts and financing who will be taking place in this research. The research will be conducted at Ministry of Education and Skills Development.

My name is Tidimalo Mauco and I am studying for a Master's Degree in Archives and Records Management at the University of Botswana. I work as a Principal Placement Officer at the Department of Tertiary Education Financing. As a requirement of the University of Botswana Master's Degree in Archives and Records Management, I am currently carrying out a study to examine management of personnel records at TSA. The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

**Objective one:** Examine the existence of legislative and regulative framework for managing personnel records at TSA

**Objective two:** Determine the composition of TSA personnel records,

**Objective three:** Examine the record keeping practices at TSA,

**Objective four:** Assess the skill of record management officers at TSA,

**Objective five:** Investigate the use of ICT in managing personnel records at TSA

**Objective six:** Make recommendations for the effective management of personnel records at TSA.

It is hoped that the findings of the study will inform recommendations for improved management of personnel records and meaningfully contribute to the academic body of knowledge.

It must be highlighted from the onset that, this study is entirely voluntary and respondents are free to withdraw from the study if they feel threatened in whatever way. The information gained from the interviews conducted will remain confidential. Lastly, rest assured that your identity as a respondent will not in any way be revealed.

#### Participation

You should understand that participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You should understand you may decide at anytime not to give an answer to a question or to decide to no longer participate in the study. You should know that your decision to withdraw for the study will not affect at all any services that you are getting from TSA.

#### Benefits of participation

There will be no immediate or direct benefits to you for participating in this study.

#### Confidentiality

Your identity will be kept confidential. To maintain anonymity, no client identifier will be used. Respondents are not required to write their names on the questionnaire.



**APENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL**

**MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL RECORDS AT TEACHING SERVICE ADMINISTRATION**

I am a Master’s student in the department of Library and Information Science (LIS) at the University of Botswana and conducting a survey on “Management of Personnel Records at Teaching Service Administration”. This information will be very useful in improvement of management of personnel records at TSA.

Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible. Your response will be treated with strictest confidence and will only be used for purpose of this study.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please mark x in the appropriate box

1. Gender

Female [ ]                      Male [ ]

2. Your official designation-----

3. Your highest qualification

Masters Degree	
Degree	
Diploma	
Certificate	
Other	

4. Where is the record management unit located?

Information technology	
Administration support services	

Human resource	
Other specify	

5. Is the RMU programme meeting your needs? Yes [  ] NO [  ]

6. If no, why? .....

7. How many registries does your department have? -----

What are they [  ] open registry

[  ] open

[  ] Confidential

8. Is RMU fully staffed? Yes [  ] No [  ]

9. If not, how long have posts been vacant?

6 months	
1 year	
2 years	
other	

10. Does the TSA have an appointed records manager?

[  ] Yes [  ] No

11. What is the level of the level manager within TSA?

[  ] Director

[  ] Deputy Director

[  ] Assistant Director

[  ] Other, specify

12. Does the ministry have a records management policy in place?

Yes [  ] No [  ] Not aware [  ] Do not know [  ]

13. Are all staff members aware of the policy?

Yes [  ] No [  ]

14. Do RMU manage personnel records according to this policy?

[  ] Yes [  ] No

15. Is the Records Management Unit regularly reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness?

[  ] Yes [  ] No

16. When do you open files for new employees? -----  
-----  
-----

17 How are personnel records grouped?-----  
-----  
-----

18. Do you have a tracking system for tracking the use of files from one officer to another?-----  
-----  
-----

19. If yes which system do you use? -----  
-----  
-----

20. Is the system useful to the department? -----  
-----  
-----

21. Do you receive training on how to use the tracking system?  
 Yes       No

22. What steps are usually taken when a file is lost?  
-----  
-----

23. Do you ever create temporary files -----  
-----  
-----?

24. If you create a temporary one do you merge it with the original when found?  
Yes  No

25. Are your personnel records classified as  vital       important  
 useful       non- useful

26. Is there any programme of vital records management  Yes  No

Is there protection against fire, theft, and dust e.t.c in your vital records? [ ]

Yes [ ] No

27. If Yes what methods do you use?

[ ] fire detecting device

[ ] fire raising alarm

[ ] fumigating machine

28. Is your record section fully air-conditioned?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

29. Does your department have a record file plan?

[ ] yes [ ] No

30. Are you capable of allocating file reference number using the file plan?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

31. Do you file personnel records according to the TSA file plan?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

32. If not, why?

---

---

33. Is the file plan known to all staff members?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

34. How would you rate the effectiveness of the file plan e.g. retrieval of records

[ ] Very effective

[ ] Ineffective

[ ] Other, specify

35. What filing system do you operate?

[ ] alphabetical

[ ] subject

[ ] chronological

[ ] by the department

36. What storage facilities do you have?

[ ] metal shelving

[ ] metal cabinet/case

Others specify -----

37. How many current or active files does the RMU keep? -----  
---

38. What are the contents of personnel files -----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

39. Do all personnel files contain all the necessary documents?

Yes  No

40. What security measures are put in place to protect personnel records?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

41. Do you have any policies on access to personnel files -----  
-----?

42. Who has access to personnel files -----  
-----  
-----?

43. Are all employees allowed access to their files -----  
-----  
-----?

44. Are there non-current personnel files you no longer use? Yes  No

45. If yes how are these files kept?

in the strong room arranged on shelves

arranged on the floor

dumped on a room without order

locked up

46. Do you keep any file register of these records? Yes  No

47. Do you have a record centre or archives where you transfer your non-current records Yes [ ] No [ ]

48. What happens to personnel files when the employee is dead -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

49. When are the personnel files closed? -----  
-----

50. Where are they transferred to after closure?-----  
-----  
-----.

51. When are the personnel files destroyed? -----  
-----  
-----

52. Which method do you adopt for the disposal of old personnel records?

**APENDIX: C**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACTION OFFICERS**

**MANAGEMENT OF PERSONNEL RECORDS AT TEACHING SERVICE ADMINISTRATION**

I am a Master's student in the department of Library and Information Science (LIS) at the University of Botswana and conducting a survey on "Management of Personnel Records at Teaching Service Administration". This information will be very useful in improvement of management of personnel records at TSA.

Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible. Your response will be treated with strictest confidence and will only be used for purpose of this study.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please mark x in the appropriate box

1. Gender

Female [ ]                      Male [ ]

2. Your official designation-----

3. Your highest qualification

Masters Degree	
Degree	
Diploma	
Certificate	
Other	

4. Where is the record management unit located?

Information technology	
Administration support services	
Human resource	

Other specify	
---------------	--

Is the RMU programme meeting your needs? Yes [ ] NO [ ]

If no, why? .....

How many registries does your department have? -----

What are they [ ] open registry

[ ] personal

[ ] Confidential

5. Does the ministry have a records management policy in place?

Yes [ ] No [ ] Not aware [ ] Do not know [ ]

Are all staff members aware of the policy?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Does RMU manage personnel records according to this policy?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

6. Is the Records Management Unit regularly reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

7. How are personnel records grouped?-----

-----  
-----

8. Do you have a tracking system for tracking the use of files from one officer to another?-----

-----  
-----

If yes which system do you use? -----

-----  
-----

Is the system useful to the department? -----

-----  
-----



9. Do you receive training on how to use the tracking system?

Yes  No

10. What steps are usually taken when a file is lost?

-----  
-----

11. Is there any programme of vital records management  Yes  No

12. Is there protection against fire, theft, and dust e.t.c in your vital records?

Yes  No

13. If Yes what methods do you use?

fire detecting device

fire raising alarm

fumigating machine

14. Is your record section fully air-conditioned?

Yes  No

15. Does your department have a record file plan?

yes  No

16. Are you capable of allocating file reference number using the file plan?

Yes  No

17. Do you file personnel records according to the TSA file plan?

Yes  No

18. If Not, why?

-----  
-----

19. Is the file plan known to all staff members?

Yes  No

20. How would you rate the effectiveness of the file plan e.g. retrieval of records

Very effective

Ineffective

Other, specify

21. What filing system do you operate?

alphabetical

subject

chronological

by the department

22. What storage facilities do you have?

metal shelving

metal cabinet/case

Others specify -----

23. How many current or active files does the RMU keep? -----

--

24. What are the contents of personnel files -----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

25. Do all personnel files contain all the necessary documents?

Yes  No

26. What security measures are put in place to protect personnel records?

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

27. Do you have any policies on access to personnel files -----

-----?

28. Who has access to personnel files -----

-----?  
-----?

29. Are all employees allowed access to their files -----

-----?  
-----?

30. Are there non-current personnel files you no longer use? Yes  No

31. If Yes how are these files kept?

in the strong room arranged on shelves

- arranged on the floor
- dumped on a room without order
- locked up

32. Do you keep any file register of these records? Yes  No

33. Do you have a record centre or archives where you transfer your non-current records Yes   
No

34. What happens to personnel files when the employee is dead -----  
-----  
-----  
-----

35. When are the personnel files closed? -----  
-----

36. Where are they transferred to after closure? -----  
-----  
-----.

37. When are the personnel files destroyed -----  
-----  
-----

38. Which method do you adopt for the disposal of old personnel records?

## **APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW WITH RECORDS MANAGER**

Thank you for finding time in your busy schedule to do this interview. As the interviewer reads the questions out loud, please follow along with this document and circle the appropriate answer and write in your answer in the space provided.

1. What is your highest qualification?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your position within the **RMU**? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What impact does the location of the Records Management Unit have impact on the provision of information? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What kind of resources are allocated to the RMU?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Under which division is the RMU? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Who heads the RMU? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Is the RMU fully staffed?

8. How many staff work in the RMU? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Is the RMU programme reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness?

11. How is the review done?

12. What are the functions of the RMU?

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13. Does the **TSA** have a personnel records management policy in place?
14. Who endorse the policy?
15. Are all staff members aware of the policy?
16. Is the policy reviewed at regular intervals?
17. Do staff members manage personnel records according to this policy?
18. How are the staff members made aware of the policy?
19. Does the **TSA** have a designated/appointed records manager?
20. What is the level of the records manager within the **TSA**?
21. Are staff members outside RMU programme aware of their RM roles/responsibilities?
22. Does the **TSA** have a records classification system/ file plan that is derived from analysis of business activity?
23. Is the file plan approved by the National Archivist?
24. Are you capable of allocating personnel file reference numbers according to the file plan?

25. Do you file personnel records according to the **TSA** file plan?  
If not, why? .....
26. Is the file plan known to all staff members?
27. How would you rate the effectiveness of the file plan within the **TSA** e.g. in terms of retrieval of records; accessibility; missing of files etc?
28. How do you dispose of personnel records?
29. How long are personnel records kept before disposal?
30. Do you have guidelines for retention schedules?
31. How many teachers are employed by TSA per year?
32. How many personnel files for lecturers at colleges of education, teachers at secondary schools and teachers at primary schools do you have?

## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR TSA**

Thank you for finding time in your busy schedule to do this interview. As the interviewer reads the questions out loud, please follow along with this document and circle the appropriate answer and write in your answer in the space provided.

1. What is your highest qualification?
  
2. Where is TSA RMU located? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Does the location of records management unit have impact on the provision of information?
  
4. Has the records management unit been allocated the appropriate resources (finance/equipment) to enable it to be maintained?
  
5. Under which division is RMU? \_\_\_\_\_  
Who heads the RMU? \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Is the RMU fully staffed?
  
7. How many staff work in the RMU? \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Do staff receive training and how often do you send them for training?
  
9. Is the RMU programme regularly reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness?
  
10. How is the review done?
  
11. Does the **TSA** have a personnel records management policy in place?  
Who endorses the policy?

12. Are all staff members aware of the policy?

13. Is the policy reviewed at regular intervals?

14. Do staff members manage personnel records according to this policy?

15. How are staff members made aware of the policy?

16. Are staff members outside RMU programme aware of their RM roles/responsibilities?



**APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR BNARS**

Thank you for finding time in your busy schedule to do this interview. As the interviewer reads the questions out loud, please follow along with this document and circle the appropriate answer and write in your answer in the space provided.

1. What is your highest qualification?
  
2. Are records management units allocated appropriate resources (finance/equipment) to enable them to be maintained?
  
3. Do you send records officers in government ministries TSA included for further training?
  
4. Is the RMU programme in government ministries regularly reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness?
  
5. How is the review done?
  
6. What are the functions of the RMU?  

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7. Does government ministries have personnel records management policy?
  
8. Who endorses the policy?

9. Is the policy reviewed at regular intervals?
10. Do staff members manage personnel records according to this policy?
11. What is the level of the records manager in government ministries?
12. Are staff members outside RMU programme aware of their RMU roles/responsibilities?
13. Who disposes of personnel records\_\_\_\_\_?
14. How do you dispose personnel records?
15. How long are personnel records kept before disposal?
16. Do you have guidelines for retention schedules?
17. Do you monitor RMU in ministries? If yes, how often do you do inspection?
18. Do you have records management generic standards across Ministries?

**APPENDIX G: Letter of request to undertake research at TSM**

PO Box 601510

Gaborone

14 February 2012

The Director – Teaching Service Administration

Private Bag 00188

Gaborone

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR DEPARTMENT  
FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT

The purpose of this letter is to request your approval for me to undertake a research on management of personnel records in your department.

I am a Masters student in Archives and Records Management at the University of Botswana doing research on “*Management of Personnel Records at TSA*” The main aim of this research is to acquire empirical data about current personnel records management practices and procedures at TSA in order to provide basic and practical information needed to enable government employees to implement proper personnel records management. This study will provide a guide for other government departments that are faced with challenges of managing personnel records. In this regard, TSA will benefit a lot from the recommendations of this study.

All replies will be treated in the strictest confidence. The results will be beneficial to all those with responsibility for managing personnel records.

Thanking you in advance.

Tidimalo Mauco (Ms)

University of Botswana student

Contacts: 723 898 95