

RECORDS SURVEYS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS IN
ZIMBABWE

by

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I declare that **RECORDS SURVEYS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS IN ZIMBABWE** 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.

.....

SIGNATURE

(MS F CHATERERA)

.....

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband Gerald and children; Geraldine, Gerald and Gerilyn.

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the role of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The goal was to determine how far records surveys were going in enhancing sound records management practices, thereby improving public service delivery, accountability and good governance. Through interviews, questionnaires and document review it was revealed that records surveys were struggling to attain their intended goal of nurturing sound records management practices in public registries. The lack of ideal mission statements, registry manuals, written disaster management plans, vital records protection programmes, adequate records management training, records retention and disposal schedules, top management support, financial constraints and unclear archival legislation were cited as some of the challenges affecting records and information management surveys from nurturing acceptable records management practices. A closer working relationship between the National Archives and public records management units was recommended.

Key terms:

Records surveys; Public records management; Effective public service delivery; Accountability; Good governance; Retention and disposal schedule; Records procedures manual

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List of Acronyms

ARMA	The Association of Records Managers and Administrators
GARP	Generally Accepted Principles
DAP	Digital Asset Protection
ESARBICA	East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives
GZ	Great Zimbabwe
GNU	Government of National Unit
ICA	International Council on Archives
KNADS	Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service
MSU	Midlands State University
NARSSA	National Archives and Record Service of South Africa
NAZ	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NUST	National University of Science and Technology
RMAs	Records Management Assistants
RAIMAZ	Records and Information Management Association of Zimbabwe
UB	University of Botswana
UNISA	University of South Africa
VERS	The Victorian Electronic Records Strategy
ZOU	Zimbabwe Open University

ZPS

Zimbabwe Public Service

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Records surveys are a critical exercise aimed at achieving proper records management practices. This study investigated the role of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The underlying principle for the study was that the key step in developing a sound basis for proper records management practices is to inspect, monitor and examine all records created and kept by an office through conducting records and information management surveys amongst other records management activities. (Cox, Helen & Samuels 1988:28). Records surveys are therefore a corner stone in nurturing proper records management practices and improving service delivery. In Zimbabwe, which was the context of the research project, records and information management surveys are conducted by the National Archives of Zimbabwe's Records Centres. The exercise is carried out in terms of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Act of 1986, Chapter 309 Section 6 and 7. It is a statutory obligation for NAZ records centres to ensure records created in public registries are properly managed at every stage of their life cycle. The study sought to investigate whether records surveys in Zimbabwe were influencing records management activities in public registries. The ultimate goal was to determine how far records surveys were going in nurturing proper records management practices, thereby improving public service delivery, accountability and good governance.

1.1 Background to the study

Delays and failure to access services due to missing or misplaced records from public institutions is a common challenge in Africa including Zimbabwe (Mazikana 2000). Tsaura (2011) found that the records storage facilities at the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture provincial registry in Gweru were not appropriate for records keeping. Tsaura (2011:24) observed that there were no adequate shelves to store

incoming records from district offices, files were piled on the floor and some records were torn because they were tied in bundles with elastic bands. A similar situation was established at Chitungwiza Central Hospital where the poor records management practices were attributed to a high rate of staff turnover and lack of staff with records management training Manheru (2009). Mutare (2009) and Katekwe (2008) observed that the security of records in Zimbabwe's public registries is highly threatened due to unsuitable storage facilities and unskilled registry personnel. The current study sought to investigate why such situations prevail when records surveys have been attested to be a powerful tool in enhancing proper records management practices. Maboreke (2007), Dewah (2010) and Chaterera (2008) acknowledged that proper records management practices lead to better records management practices. The New South Wales Government (2004), Graham (2003), Ngulube and Tafor (2006), Roberts (2006), Idaho State University (2006), Thurston (2005), Charman (1984), Hunter (2003), Man (2010) and The Northern Territory Government (2006) have attested to the situation that records surveys are the primary mechanism for monitoring and improving records management activities. The above mentioned studies differ in their approach to records surveys and the management of public records but are united by one interest which is presenting records surveys as the key step in developing acceptable records management practices. The underlying factors for the studies mentioned earlier on are; ' what are records surveys, why they should be done, who should execute, where, when and how.' While all these components are very important, the current research project found it worthy to launch further investigations going beyond the above pinpointed aspects and examined whether records surveys have been successful in enhancing sound records management practices, thereby leading to accountability, transparency and good governance.

The working relationship between the National Archives and the public registries is very vital towards attaining the success of records surveys in improving public registry activities. In that respect, the current study sought to establish the frequency of contact between the National Archives and the public registries. That assisted in finding out the manner in which records surveys are executed by the National Archives and received

by public registries, hence exposing obstacles that are challenging records surveys from attaining their intended goals of nurturing proper records management practices.

The relationship between records surveys and other records management activities was one of the key issues addressed in this study. In that respect, the study examined the role of records surveys in appraisal, producing vital records management programmes and developing retention and disposal schedules. In addition, the study also assessed the skills and knowledge possessed by people working in public registries. The idea was to establish whether the amount of training received and knowledge possessed by the people who have been trusted to take care of public records is adequate to make records surveys and public records management a success.

1.2 Research problem

It has been theoretically agreed that records surveys are a critical function in the management of public records. Yet little has been done to establish why records surveys are failing to fully attain their intended goal of enhancing proper records management practices in Zimbabwe (Dewah 2010; Dewah and Mnjama 2013; Maboreke 2007 and Chaterera 2008). Members of the public often fail to access government services or face unnecessary delays in doing so due to missing and/or misplaced documents. Owing to this situation, it was deemed necessary to identify the obstacles preventing records surveys from fostering acceptable records management practices. This could help in devising channels to help public offices achieve good governance, effective public service delivery and transparency.

1.3 Research purpose

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The study went beyond 'why, how, where and when' records surveys be conducted and looked into why the crucial exercise was struggling to nurture acceptable records management practices. The overall purpose was to find possible ways in which a friendly and serious working relationship between NAZ and the public registries could be attained. A serious working relationship may go a long way in ensuring that recommendations produced in records survey reports are

seriously considered, hence improving the manner in which records are managed. If that has been accomplished, members of the public may enjoy efficient and effective services that usually result from proper records management practices.

1.4 Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the role of records surveys in enhancing sound records management practices in Zimbabwe's public registries. As such, the following research objectives were developed.

1.4.1 Research objectives

In light of the aim of the study, the following objectives were to:

1. Demonstrate the influence of records surveys on key records management activities.
2. Establish whether electronic records were also examined during surveys.
3. Establish the working relationship between NAZ and public registries.
4. Assess the training needs for information management professionals.
5. Develop strategies that could see records surveys giving birth to acceptable records management practices.

Based on those set objectives, the following research questions were developed.

1.4.2 Research questions

1. Is there a significant relationship between records surveys and other records management activities?
2. Are electronic records also examined during surveys?
3. Is there a stable working relationship between NAZ and public registries?
4. Does the records survey executing team and the registry personnel have the required skills and knowledge to help records surveys attain its goals?

5. What form of strategies can be implemented to help surveys successfully foster acceptable records management practices?

Table 1 serves to illustrate the relationship of research objectives, research questions and possible sources of data.

Table 1 Relationship of research objectives, research questions and possible sources of data.

Research objective	Research question(s)	Sources of data
Demonstrate the influence of records surveys on other records management activities.	Is there a significant relationship between records surveys and other records management activities?	Literature Interviews
Establish whether electronic records are also examined during records surveys.	Are electronic records being included during surveys?	Interviews Historical research Questionnaires Document analysis (Records survey worksheet)
Establish the working relationship between the National Archives and public registries.	Is the working relationship between NAZ and public registries stable and serious?	Interviews Questionnaires Historical research Document analysis
Assess the training needs for information management professionals.	Do the people who are responsible for managing public records have the required knowledge and expertise?	Interviews Questionnaires
Develop strategies that could help surveys foster proper records management practices.	What can be done to assist surveys successfully nurture acceptable records management	Interviews Literature

	practices?	
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1.5 Justification for the study

It is fully appreciated and acknowledged that several studies on records surveys have been carried out. However, the existing literature on records surveys mainly emphasise records surveys as a corner stone in enhancing sound records management practices. Very little was done to establish if records surveys are succeeding in enhancing appropriate records management practices and if not, why is that. The thrust by previous studies seem to be ending on why, how, where and when records surveys should be done. The research project perceived the approach as incomplete and therefore went beyond the why, how, where and when components of records surveys. Investigations were launched to find out the extent to which the exercise was going in enhancing acceptable records management practices. Further enquiries were made to establish why records surveys were struggling to nurture acceptable records management practices and attain favourable service delivery within public registries.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study was very important because it sought to find ways in which an agreement could be reached between NAZ and the public registries on the need to seriously consider the execution of the exercise and the implementation of given recommendations. That may lead to the prevalence of acceptable records management practices in public registries. The study was the first one in Zimbabwe to go beyond why, how, where and when records surveys should be done. That led to the potential of records surveys in nurturing proper records management practices to be fully realised and appreciated from a realistic and practical point of view. Literature produced in the study is of significant relevance to public institutions that are working towards achieving effective service delivery, transparency and good governance through appropriate records management practices.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The study assumed that:

- Government offices want to properly manage their records to achieve their purpose in life.
- Inadequate or absence of records surveys results in chaotic management of records and that threatens service delivery.
- Records surveys are central to the development of acceptable records management practices.
- Records surveys are inextricably linked to records management activities.
- Informants will respond to all questions and provide true information.
- Responsible authorities from institutions to be investigated will grant access to their departments.
- Public records need proper management so as to protect the rights of the public and improve the services of a government.

1.8 Definition of key terms

Man (2010), Pearce (2005) and Bradsher (1988) were consulted to assist in coming up with contextual meanings of terms that went beyond common language.

1.8.1 Public record

A public record in this study referred to all records created and held in government departments. These included all records generated from the twenty three government ministries in Zimbabwe as they are highlighted in Chapter Four.

1.8.2 Record

A record referred to any information captured in whatever format. Records are usually created or received by institutions or individuals in the course of executing transactions.

1.8.3 Records life cycle

Refers to the stages followed by records. It is an analogy of a living organism which is born, then lives before it dies. Similarly, records are created, maintained, used and disposed. It is important to note that disposition of a record is twofold. Records of enduring value are disposed by means of transfer to the National Archives while records of ephemeral value are totally destroyed using a shredder or recycled by the National Waste Paper Collection.

1.8.4 Records management

Records management is the professional care given to records from the time they are created, used until disposition.

1.8.5 Records survey

Records survey is an exercise whereby information on how records are created, kept, used and disposed within a public office is gathered. In most cases the focal points will be on quantity, physical form, type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, use and rate of accumulation. Such information would be used for planning informed archival activities. That explains why records surveys have been considered to be inextricably linked to other records management activities.

1.8.6 Retention and disposal schedule

A retention schedule is a document that provides instructions for the disposition of records. It is usually facilitated by the process called appraisal where values are determined for every record. The determination of values would then enable information management professionals to come up with instructions for the disposition or retention of a record.

1.9 Methodology

The study sought to establish the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The survey research design was used because of its known ability to collect large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007).

The research project employed self administered questionnaires, structured interviews and document review as data collection instruments. The triangulation technique of using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection was chosen because it permitted the research project to neutralise weaknesses inherent in both a quantitative and qualitative approach. For example, the study used interviews and document analysis to confirm data that was obtained through questionnaires.

The target population for the study were identified and communicated through the guidance of Kothari (2004:10) who described population of study as “all possible cases of what the researcher is interested in studying”. The study investigated into the influence of records surveys on records management activities in Zimbabwe. That placed NAZ records centres and public registries at the interest of the research project. No sampling of units was done. The study covered all the six records centres in Zimbabwe as they are identified on NAZ Website (2011). The research project also managed to gather data from twenty three government ministries out of the thirty two ministries that are identified on the Website for the Zimbabwe Government Online licensed under the Government of National Unit (GNU) (2011).

Chief informants for the study were registry supervisors in government ministries as well as records management assistants (RMAs) and archivists from NAZ records centres. Detailed communication on research methodology was dealt with extensively in Chapter Three.

1.10 Ethical considerations

Collecting data to find out the role of records surveys in the management of public records required the participation of people who were in custody of public records. It

was the responsibility of the research project to ensure that the rights of all participants were not violated in any way. However, that was done in a way that maintained the objectivity of the study. The study acknowledged and appreciated the fact raised by Creswell (2009:87) which says, "It is important for researchers to protect their participants, develop a trust with them and promote the integrity of research, guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organisations". The research project sought permission to solicit information from, RMA, archivists and registry supervisors. Nachmias and Nachmias (2005:81) indicates that a signed consent from research participants should be obtained prior to the research project. The research project gave informants freedom of choice to participate or not to participate. The right to privacy was also upheld. Confidentiality of information is one strategy that was used to ensure participant's right to privacy. Data collected by the study was and shall never be used for any reason other than for the academic purposes for which it was collected. Results of the study were not concealed in any way. The results were neither falsified nor exaggerated. The research made an effort to comply with the University of South Africa's (UNISA) policy on research ethics (2007) which amongst other principles call for the respect of autonomy, promotion of beneficence, guarding against nonmaleficence and upholding justice.

1.10 Scope and delimitations of the study

The study focused on records surveys and the management of public records in Zimbabwe. Key issues addressed included the influence of records surveys on other records management activities, the skills and expertise possessed by those who were in custody of public records as well as the working relationship between NAZ and public registries. Previous studies concentrated much on what records surveys are, how they are conducted, when, where and why they are conducted. The research project went beyond those parameters and established possible barriers that were challenging records surveys from attaining their intended goal of enhancing acceptable records management practices.

The research project was geographically limited to twenty three out of the identified thirty two government ministries in Harare (GNU Website 2011) and six provincial

records centres. However, the results could be generalised as the sample was considerably strong. Literature from textbooks, refereed journals, previous dissertations and the internet was reviewed.

1.12 Organisation of thesis

This study is organised in six chapters. Chapter One communicates why records surveys and the management of public records emerged to be the research area of interest. The chapter prepared the reader of what the entire study was all about. Chapter One explained why it was crucial to investigate into the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. That was achieved by setting out clear and sound objectives which were all derived from the problem that members of the public were having difficulties and challenges in accessing government services due to missing and or misplaced records. Chapter One mainly emphasised on what the study intended to achieve by investigating into records surveys and their influence in managing public records. Chapter Two dealt with theories, principles, guidelines, models and concepts relevant to records surveys and the management of public records. The chapter also contextualised the study by giving an overview of public records management in Zimbabwe and how records surveys are done. Chapter Two also provides the basis on which the research was built. That was done through a critical analysis of what previous scholars have said about records surveys and related issues. However, the chapter did not merely provide a summary of everything that has been written on records surveys, but reviewed relevant works so as to avoid repetition of work while possible knowledge gaps were identified. Chapter Three systematically communicated how the entire research project began, progressed and ended. That involved communicating how data was collected from the beginning of the research to the end. Particular attention was given to the pros and cons encountered as the various ways of gathering data were implemented. Using appropriate illustrations, Chapter Four presented and analysed the findings. Chapter Five discussed the implications of the results on the management of public records in Zimbabwe and tried to ascribe meanings to established situations and communicated the relevance of the findings to the study. Chapter Five communicated how the data obtained addressed the perceived

problem of the study. Chapter Six summarised the entire study, drew conclusions, provided recommendations and suggested possible areas for future research.

1.12 Summary of Chapter One

Chapter One mainly focused on why it was important to undertake the study. The chapter emphasised that the ultimate goal of the study was to determine the extent to which surveys were going in as far as enhancing proper records management is concerned. The chapter presented the background to the study where several schools of thought were noted to have attested to the situation that records surveys are the primary mechanism for monitoring and improving records management practices. The failure and delays by members of the public to access government services due to missing and or misplaced files was identified as the problem statement. The chapter identified objectives of the study as well as the accompanying research questions. Chapter One justified that the research taken was worth the effort and time since previous researches seem to have been ending on why, how, where and when records surveys be done without addressing why they were failing. The study was very important because literature produced is of significant relevance to public institutions working towards attaining effective service delivery. A set of assumptions on which the study was based were communicated before proceeding to define key terms that seemed to go beyond the common language. Chapter One progressed by briefly describing the manner in which data for the study was gathered reserving extensive explanations for Chapter Three. The chapter explained how integrity for the study was promoted while upholding the rights of participants. Boundaries of the study were clearly defined in an attempt to inform the reader of what exactly the study was covering. It was also communicated that the study is organised in six chapters, each covering a different component. The following chapter presents theories and concepts surrounding records surveys.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the contextual background and an overview of public records management in Zimbabwe. The chapter discussed the views from other philosophers and disciplines pertaining records management and archival theories. Although the debates appeared outrageous, it was necessary for the study to include them as they paved way for improvement on certain issues. Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework that informed the study. Identified concepts, theories, models, guidelines and principles included the records life cycle concept, The International Council on Archives (ICA) functional requirements, the Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS), the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA)-International Generally Accepted Record keeping Principles (GARP), the Australian Standard Model and the National Archives and Record Service of South Africa (NARSSA) Model.

2.1 Context of the study and overview of public records management in Zimbabwe

The management of public records in Zimbabwe seem to be an ongoing struggle as witnessed by several studies which have been conducted on Zimbabwe. Ngulube (2000) revealed that public records in Zimbabwe are mishandled and abused due to lack of ethics. In the same study, it was observed that public registry personnel smoke and eat in their offices. Guided by such observations, the current study deemed it essential to investigate why such improper practices were prevailing when records surveys are done to ensure acceptable records management practices prevail in public institutions. Using the case of Masvingo province in Zimbabwe, Maboreke (2007) established that the records management situation in most public registries was chaotic. A similar study was conducted in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe by Chaterera (2008). In her study, Chaterera (2008) observed that public records were at risk of being

lost or misplaced due to inappropriate records management practices. The studies by Maboreke (2007) and Chaterera (2008) focused on the role of records surveys in managing public records. However, Chaterera (2008) and Maboreke (2007) did not address why records surveys were struggling to nurture sound records management practices, hence creating a point of departure for the current study. A severe crisis in the management of public sector records was observed to be an African continent wide challenge (Mazikana 2000). With particular reference to Zimbabwe, Mazikana (2000) observed that records centres have been completely full for many years making it difficult to accept new deposits. As a result records remain in the ministries and that threatened effective records management practices.

The present study was initiated by the need to improve public service delivery in Zimbabwe. NAZ was given the responsibility through its records centres to ensure all public records are given proper care at every stage of their life. NAZ was established in 1935 through an Act of parliament. Its mandate is to provide records and information services to main stream government departments, parastatals and local authorities. That role is administered through the use of NAZ records centres that are found in Bulawayo, Gweru, Masvingo, Chinhoyi, Mutare and Harare. It is the obligation of NAZ records centres to monitor and advise public institutions on the professional creation of records, filing systems, utilisation, storage and disposal of records. That responsibility is mandatory as stipulated under the NAZ Act of 1986 Chapter 309 Section 6 and 7. The Act obliges NAZ records centres to perform records and information management surveys in public registries after every four years. In that respect, the current study sought to establish the extent to which the services provided, particularly records surveys were going in enhancing proper records management activities, thereby attaining effective service delivery, accountability, transparency and good governance. It is interesting to note that the head office records centre in Harare is regarded the biggest in Southern and Central Africa with a hundred thousand metres in linear form. For that reason, the researcher found it worthy to devote time and resources to look into how far records survey exercises are going towards attaining effective service delivery. Other core services provided by NAZ records centres included the training of registry workforce through workshops and seminars.

2.2 Theoretical framework

Eastwood (1994:122-123) defined a theory as a systematic view or speculation that help in the understanding of something. Similarly, Buckland (1994:346) defined it as a view or description about the nature of something. Dale (1998) cited in Kemoni (2008) emphasised that a framework gives researchers the ability to make informed conclusions and formulate improved theories. This study subscribed to Cappon (1982:21) who stated that theory embraces principles. However, Burke (1981:41) insists that a theory is a set of universal laws which must be applicable on all occasions, regardless of time or place. Burke's (1981) perception of theory was manipulated by several critics to express their dissatisfaction over the records management and archival theories as discussed in section 2.3.

2.3 Views from other disciplines concerning records management and archival theories

It was important for the study to discuss the concerns and perceptions from other disciplines regarding information management theories. Some of the views presented in this section appear destructive, emotional and outrageous. Nonetheless, it remained crucial for the study to discuss the opinions, suggestions and views from other fields concerning existing theories in the discipline of information science. That helps people from various professions to correct their misconceptions about records management and archival administration while creating opportunities for the information management field to keep improving.

Roberts (1987:66) asserted that the field of information management does not have any theory but rather presents simplified details of practical archival work. Roberts (1987:66) further argued that the field of information science is trying to derive a theory from a less objective need and from an emotional need seeking greater professional acceptance. The problem with critics such as Roberts (1987) was highlighted by Buckland (1994:347) when he indicated that critics of records management field have made a mistake of considering records management as merely the numbering, shelving, fetching and re-shelving of pieces of paper. That observation is very true as reflected by

the title of Roberts 1987 work, "Archival theory: Much ado about shelving". That misconception about the field of information science has led to the perception of records management as unimportant and insignificant.

Burke (1981:41) suggested that theory is the development of universal laws applicable on all occasions regardless of time and place. In that regard, Burke (1981) felt that there is little or nothing in the existing body of archival literature to form a universally accepted hypotheses. Burke's (1981) major argument was that principles of provenance and respect *des-fonds* amongst others are not binding and the laws are European driven. The main problem with such critics is that they tend to narrow the meaning of theory to something that can be experimentally tested or mathematically calculated and found to be correct or incorrect (Buckland 1994:347). The view that little or nothing has been done in the field of information science to warrant the existence of a theoretical framework was denounced by Buckland (1994:348). He argued that professionals from other disciplines should perceive records management beyond the mere numbering, shelving, fetching and re-shelving of pieces of paper. It is high time critics of records management consume with the knowledge that records management deals with information retrieval, records life cycle design and information policies. Regarding records management in that way is enough to indicate that the field is actually rich in theory of one kind or another (Buckland 1994:349).

Roberts (1990) maintained that archival theory does not produce new insights, stimulate intellectual progress or advance the archival profession (Roberts 1990:110). He felt that theories in the archival field are almost impossible (Roberts 1990:115). (Roberts 1993:111) further debated against the validity of archival theory expressing that "archival theory mimics academic methods without producing worthwhile scholarship." While there could be dissatisfaction and disapproval in the state of archival practice, it is unnecessary to bring out the issues in such a belittling manner. Roberts (1987, 1990 & 1993) represented a group of historians who are fighting to be recognised as academically and professionally superior to archivists and records managers. However, it may not be disputed that archivists and records managers are the life blood of historians as the later largely depend on archives to keep on adding to their existing

body of literature. If historical documents, both electronic and paper are not made available to historians, it may become very difficult for the historian to meaningfully exist.

It is worthy to note that Roberts is not alone in this battle to disregard the capabilities of information management professionals. Peterson (1986:126) thought that it is incorrect to teach and receive provenance, original order and the life cycle as theories. He insists that principles are not theories. Dissatisfaction also came from Kimball (1985:370) who propounded that archivists borrowed theoretical support from the library science. Kimball (1985:371) further stated that library theories are not original; they have been borrowed from the social sciences. That rigid type of thinking by Kimball (1985) is unexpected and is a serious cause for concern within the academic and professional circles. It is not encouraged to think that a theory should be unique to a discipline. Sharing the same view is Buckland (1994:350) who noted that “professionally; there is nothing wrong to observe that while indexing and classification are a concern for archives and records management; other areas like librarianship, museology and data base management also have vested interests.” It was not necessary for Kimball (1985) to assert that information science theories are not original and have been borrowed from the social sciences. As correctly noted by Buckland (1994:351) such contributions are unhealthy for they create professional apartness instead of collaborating as related disciplines.

Despite the several criticisms advanced towards the theories in the discipline of information science, the present study acknowledges and maintains that much work has been done in the field and the discipline is actually rich in theories. These theories were identified by different institutions, organisations and schools of thought in the archival and records management community. The theories, principles, models and guidelines that informed the present study are:

- The Records Life Cycle
- The Records Continuum
- ICA Principles and functional requirements

- The Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS)
- ARMA-International, Generally Accepted Record keeping Principles (GARP)
- The Australian Standard Model
- The National Archives and Record Service of South Africa (NARSS) Model

2.4 The records life cycle theory

The life cycle concept began in the United States of America in the 1930s and it is one of the core concepts in records management (Yusof & Chell (2000:136). Buckland (1994:346), Yusof and Chell (2000) and Atherton (1985) noted that for any kind of records management service to be efficient and more effective, the records manager and the archivist should be involved in the full life cycle of records. Buckland (1994:347) emphasised that the records manager needs to participate in such activities as producing retention schedules, carrying out appraisals and launching vital records management programmes.

However, Yusof and Chell (2000) argued that the life cycle concept is inapplicable to electronic records. Yusof and Chell (2000:137) noted that the characteristics of electronic records are distinct in nature. As such, they may not necessarily follow one stage to another in a serial path from creation to disposal like paper records. Yusof and Chell (2000:137) observed that records generated in the electronic environment are dynamic and continuing in nature causing them to exist in more than one stage of the life cycle. To that effect, Yusof and Chell (2000:137) suggested that the life cycle concept be replaced by the continuum model so as to cater for electronic records.

Hardcastle (1989:60), Charman (1984:2), Couture and Rousseau (1987:37) and Hare and McLeod (1997:17-18) all cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:137) indicated that the life cycle of a record has three phases. In contrast, Smith (1986:4-5), Saffady (2011:3) and Diamond (1995) all cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:137) argued that regardless of medium, records have four phases in the life cycle. However, Ricks, Swafford & Gow (1992:14) and Gill (1993:4) cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:138) insisted that there are five stages in the life cycle of a record. A six stage record life cycle was developed by

Schwartz and Hernon (1993:199) cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:137). Wallace, Lee and Schubert (1992:4) cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:138) extended the life cycle of a record to seven stages while eight stages were identified at the records management training programme at Edith Cowan University of Australia as noted by Yusof and Chell (2000:138). Goodman (1994:134-135) cited in Yusof and Chell (2000:138) suggests that electronic records need many more components to explain their life stages and he developed ten stages.

The foregone discussion concerning the stages in a life of a record indicates that the discipline of records management is growing and applying paper records management theories like the life cycle concept to electronic records may not be appropriate (Yusof & Chell 2000: 146). However, it is important to note that despite the number of stages involved the bottom line is that a record passes through various stages requiring specific attention (Yusof & Chell 2000:137).

Atherton (1985:47) noted that the life cycle concept promotes a sense of order through a systematic approach to the overall management of recorded information. As a way of appreciating the importance of the life cycle theory, Atherton (1985:43) urged archivists to be actively involved in the entire life cycle of a record. Atherton (1985:47) was however not happy with the theory's failure to accommodate interrelations that exist between records management and archival operations. In light of that observation, Atherton (1985:48) proposed that the life cycle be replaced by a simpler and more unified model reflecting a pattern of continuum rather than a cycle.

This study considered the life cycle theory as an effective approach of examining how records are created and used, which is the essence of good records management programme. In that respect, the current study perceived the life cycle as the starting point for creating an effective records management programme because it allows the development of appropriate tools, systems and procedures to appropriately manage each phase of the life of a record (Yusof & Chell 2000).

The current study discussed the need for both archivists and RMAs to be actively involved in the management of records throughout their life cycle. The current study

emphasised that one way for archivists to participate in the management of current and semi current records is through conducting records and information management surveys. The present study was built on the appreciation that the life cycle concept forms the basis on which an acceptable records management programme can be developed. This study was also of the view that records surveys are done by archivists and records managers to ensure that proper care is given to a record at a specific stage of its life. The life cycle concept significantly contributed in the construction of the framework for the current study. The theory is known to be the starting point of any successful records management programme. In that light, the life cycle concept was deemed essential for this study as it focused on the influence of records surveys in ensuring records generated in public offices are properly managed from the time of their creation to ultimate disposition.

2.5 The records continuum model

Bantin (2002) cited in Kemoni (2007) noted that the records continuum model originated in Canada and was later developed in Australia. The records continuum was relevant to the present study because the model is applicable in the management of both paper and electronic records. Inspection of public records was the key subject under spotlight in the current study and the exercise does not separate electronic from paper records. It was amongst the objectives of the study to establish if electronic records in the custody of public offices in Zimbabwe were being examined together with paper records during records surveys. Building the research upon such a multimedia embracing model was very healthy for the study because it enabled current issues in the field of information science to be addressed. Kemoni (2008:5) observed that the continuum model is widely accepted for managing records and archives both in paper and electronic form. Under the records continuum model, both archivists and RMAs are involved in managing every stage in the life of a record (Kemoni 2008:5). The current study presented archivists and records managers being actively involved in the management of current records through records and information management surveys. The applicability of the continuum model in the management of records and archives, paper and electronic records contributed to the model's adoption as a theoretical framework for this study.

The current study discussed how a sound records management programme can be fostered within public institutions so as to attain effective service delivery, good governance, transparency and accountability. Building the study upon the records continuum model was very appropriate because combining the efforts of an archivist and a records manager in the management of both records and archives ensures that records are created at the right time, containing the correct information and in the appropriate formats (Kemoni 2008:5). Kemoni (2008:6) confirmed that the records continuum model presents a better opportunity for developing a sound records management programme.

Duranti and Preston (2008:3) revealed that the records continuum model is significant because it broadens the interpretation of records and record keeping systems offered in the life cycle concept. The goal of the records continuum model is to guarantee reliability, authenticity and completeness of records. Duranti and Preston (2008:4-5) attested that the records continuum framework provides a common understanding, consistent standards and unified best practice criteria. They also described the record continuum model as “an integrated record keeping framework that facilitates provenance, underpins accountability and provide authoritative sources of value added information” (Duranti & Preston 2008:5). The continuum model was used in the current study is because it improves responsiveness, increases efficiency and satisfies user requirements (Duranti and Preston 2008:6). Listed below are some of the good qualities embraced by the records continuum model as they were identified in Duranti and Preston (2008:6).

Records continuum model focuses on;

- Similarities instead of differences
- Qualities and quantities, not quantity alone
- Integrated approaches to problem solving rather than disparate approaches
- Integrated policy making rather than fragmented frameworks

The current study aimed at finding ways in which effective service delivery can be attained. As such, the records continuum model was deemed significant.

2.6 ICA principles and functional requirements

The principles and functional requirements for records in electronic office environments was sponsored by ICA in 2008 as a project in its electronic records and automation priority area. Information technology has penetrated every sphere of academic and professional disciplines and records management was not left out. The functional requirements offered by ICA are generally aimed at enabling better record keeping in the electronic environment. In that regard, the present study looked into whether archivists were examined records created in electronic environments during surveys. ICA functional requirements specifically targeted government agencies that sought to realise automated records management capabilities. Similarly, the current study sought establish how public registries were managing records created in electronic environments.

The functional requirements emphasised the need for electronic records containing business information to remain accessible to users for as long as they are required. The current study focused on both paper and electronic records. That made ICA principles to be even more appropriate for the study because the principles emphasised that similar with paper records, electronic records need to be disposed of in a managed, systematic and accountable way. ICA principles and functional requirements indicated that "good record keeping is an integral part of any business process". In that regard, this study calls for all public institutions to prioritise the needs of information management as a core business by paying attention to recommendations offered during and after records and information management surveys. ICA principles and functional requirements are inextricably linked to the VERS strategy in that they both focus on the need to ensure electronic records are properly managed throughout their life cycle.

2.7 The Victorian Electronic Records Strategy (VERS)

VERS was developed on the basis that good governance requires good record keeping and government business is becoming electronic. The Public Record Office Victoria in Australia initiated the VERS project to address the challenges of managing electronic records. The present study sought to establish if archivists and RMAs in Zimbabwe were providing professional advice on managing electronic records. In that regard, VERS emerged to be appropriate because it emphasised the need to preserve electronic records as evidenced by its motto “forever digital” (Leask 2009:1). VERS focused on the long term preservation of electronic records that can last for at least a hundred years. The strategy was specifically designed to create rich, fully useful and self describing records (Leask 2009:6). The main objective of the strategy was to preserve the authenticity and reliability of records, now and for the future through the process of Digital Asset Protection (DAP). The ultimate goal of VERS was to support electronic records management and knowledge management so as to improve authenticity, accessibility and to build the corporate memory of an institution(Leask 2009:13).

The model was adopted in the study because it highly supports accountability and digital heritage. In that light, the current study encouraged archivists, RMAs and information management professionals in Zimbabwe to be well equipped with the electronic records management skills, else the country will lose its valuable digital heritage.

2.8 The Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA)-International, generally accepted record keeping principles (GARP)

ARMA is a non-profit professional association for records and information managers and related industry practitioners and vendors. The association was founded in 1955 in Kansas –America. The association aimed at providing educational opportunities and publications covering the principles of records management. In 2009, ARMA approved the GARP model which emphasised that records must be created, organised, secured, maintained and used in a way that effectively supports the activities of an organisation.

The model emphasised that for any records management programme to be efficient and effective, it should meet the following principles;

Accountability

The principle of accountability refers to the ability to accept responsibility and be in a position to provide answers on activities done by the organisation. According to GARP , accountability can be achieved through assigning a senior executive who will oversee a record keeping program and delegate responsibility to appropriate individuals. Adopting clear policies and well defined procedures to guide records management personnel can help attain accountability.

Integrity

The principle of integrity requires that a record be able to prove that it is authentic, unaltered and reliable. Records and information management surveys can be employed as the key mechanism to impart records management skills that would result in retaining the integrity of a record.

Protection

Protection refers to the need for a record keeping programme to provide a reasonable level of security to vital records such as private, confidential, top secret files as well as those records that are essential for the continuity of an organisation. Such types of records can only be identified through records and information management surveys amongst other records management activities. There has to be an appropriate level of security to both electronic and paper records. Security to records may include but not limited to key card access restriction and locked cabinets. GARP (2009) emphasised that the principle of protection should prevail throughout the life of a record. For example, confidential records like employee files should be shredded or destroyed in an unrecoverable manner.

Compliance

The principle of compliance requires that a record keeping programme operate within applicable laws, regulations, organisation's policies and other binding authorities. Compliance requires that the organisation be in a position to demonstrate that it conducts its activities in a lawful manner; else the organisation's credibility will be questioned while its legal standing may be impaired.

Availability

Availability refers to the need for an organisation to maintain records in a manner that ensures timely, efficient and accurate retrieval of needed information.

Retention

The principle of retention as asserted by GARP (2009) requires that an organisation maintain its records and information for an appropriate time, taking into account legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational and historical requirements.

Disposition

The principle seeks to commend records management programs to provide secure disposition of non-current records. There has to be clear and well defined procedures of how to destroy records that are no longer of use to the creating entity.

Transparency

Transparency refers to the need for an organisation's activities to be understandable to all the personnel and members of the public. The principle of transparency can be achieved through executing duties in a lawful and appropriate manner, accurately and fully recording the activities of the organisation.

The above pinpointed principles form the basis of an effective record keeping programme. The current study discussed the role of records surveys towards the attainment of accountability, integrity, protection, compliance, availability, retention,

disposition and transparency. The attainment of these principles lead to effective public service delivery.

2.9 The Australian Standard Model

The Australian Standard model offer guidelines which are applicable to the management of both paper and electronic records in the custody of either public or private organisations. The model emphasised the need to gain visible support from senior management. That will help to ensure enough resources are allocated for executing proper records management activities. The current study was concerned with the failure by records surveys to nurture acceptable records management practices due to the lack of top management support amongst other identified challenges. The Australian Standard Model encouraged records management personnel to have clear procedures and guidelines, planning and strategy statements and disposition authorities. The model emphasised the importance of formulating a policy that obliges all employees to create and maintain records that meet the legal, regulatory, fiscal, operational and archival needs of the organisation. Similarly, the current study sought to establish if public registries had records procedures manuals that clearly spell out who should do what and when.

2.10 The National Archives and Record Service of South Africa Model (NARSSA)

NARSSA was established by the promulgation of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act No# 43 of 1996. The model is specifically designed to enhance proper management and care of the records of governmental bodies and the preservation and use of a national archival heritage. The mission of the model was to foster a national identity and the protection of human rights. That will be achieved through preserving the national archival heritage for use by the government and the people of South Africa. The model also encourages the promotion of efficiency, accountability and transparency in government operations through the proper management and care of public records. In the current study, issues of attaining efficiency, accountability and transparency through records surveys were amongst key matters that were under investigation.

NARSSA was aimed at ensuring that records in the custody of governmental bodies are properly managed and preserved to facilitate timely retrieval and access for use by members of the public. The current study investigated how far records survey exercises in Zimbabwe have gone in ensuring public records are readily available for use by all potential users. The impact of records surveys on access and use of records was amongst the chief discussions in the current study. NARSSA highlighted that it is the responsibility of the National Archives to make sure that all public records are properly managed. The model emphasised the need by the National Archives to promote an awareness of records management activities within public registries and to provide training to public registry personnel. In relation to the current research, through records and information management surveys NAZ is obliged to ensure that public records are properly managed at every stage of their life.

2.11 Review of related literature

Relevant and significant literature on records surveys and the management of records was reviewed in an effort to develop a good understanding of the issues that were under investigation in the study. It also helped that study to identify knowledge gaps in relevant previous researches as concurred in (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007).

2.12 An overview of records surveys

The New South Wales Government (2004) emphasised that the quality of service by an office is largely determined by how well it manage its records. To achieve effective service delivery, the New South Wales Government promulgated the State Records Act which under Chapter 12 Section 2 stipulates that records surveys are the principal means by which public offices can achieve sound records management practices. Zimbabwe, which was the area of the research project also has NAZ Act of 1986 which under Chapter 309 Section 6 and 7 stipulates that records surveys be done to all public registries after every four years. The placement of records surveys as a legislative obligation renders the exercise highly important. The New South Wales Government (2004) asserted that records surveys are the primary mechanism for monitoring records management activities for they are highly potential in identifying priorities for further

improvements. In that respect, the current research deemed it worthy to investigate the role of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The intention was to find out how far records surveys were going towards improving records keeping practices and promoting effective service delivery.

Charman (1984) revealed that records surveys are a key mechanism for developing improved records management practices within public offices. The study by Charman (1984) was primarily based upon the British, Canadian, Australian and the United States practice. However, the findings of that study together with its policies and procedures can be applied to any institution that seeks to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness in the management of its records. Charman (1984) observed that inadequate or absence of records surveys and schedules leads to inappropriate use of precious office space. Storage space would be occupied with semi or noncurrent records which should have been destroyed long back if records surveys were done and given advices implemented. The absence or poorly done records surveys often leads to the storage of noncurrent records in cupboards, corridors and cellars in order to free office space for the latest current records (Charman 1984). The study by Charman (1984) excellently presented records surveys as a corner stone for developing acceptable records management practices. However, the study did not explain why poor records management practices were still prevailing in public registries. In other words, the study did not communicate the several challenges that could be surrounding both the execution of records surveys and the implementation of advices given. In this regard, the current research project sought to establish if records surveys were indeed having an effect on the way public offices in Zimbabwe were managing their records.

Roper and Millar (1999) asserted that one of the best ways to introduce records management care into public offices is through conducting records surveys. Similarly, Graham (2003) affirmed that the ability to identify and locate information contained in records is critical for operations and it helps to ensure that resources are not spent keeping unnecessary records. Similarly, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) indicated that records surveys are a key monitoring mechanism to the classification systems as well as the proper care and management of public records throughout their life cycle. From

those perspectives, the current study attempted to verify within the Zimbabwean context if records surveys attained the intended goal of enhancing proper records management practices within public registries, thereby improving service delivery.

Shepherd (2006) observed that in organisations where records are not properly managed, business operations are crippled and the rights of citizens and the wider community may be compromised. To avoid such situations, there is need to execute records and information management surveys for they have so far been attested to be the primary mechanism for developing sound records management practices. Despite that clear assertion of records surveys as highly significant in enhancing effective and efficient business operations, the current study observed that the ultimate question still stood unanswered, 'what exactly is hindering the surveys from ensuring that sound records management activities are adopted and implemented to improve the delivery of services to the wider community?'

2.12.1 What is a records survey?

The South Carolina Department of Archives (2010) and the Public Record Office in Victoria (1999) described a records survey as an exercise that involves gathering comprehensive information about records held by an office. Hare and McLeod (1997) explained that records surveys give answers to questions such as which records exist, where they are, how many they are and how long they should be kept. For electronic records surveys, information gathered usually include but not limited to how records are accessed and used, the format in which the records are stored, availability of backup copies and where they are stored and whether original versions of records are kept or only updated versions. Such information is usually collected using questionnaires or by physical observation (Graham 2003:2). The State Records of South Australia (1998) and the Public Record Office in Victoria (1999) noted that records surveys are an activity that provide a snapshot about records management practices in government ministries and is the starting point towards gaining control over existing records and developing a systematic records management program. In addition, Dewah (2010) described records surveys as an exercise that can be manipulated to make known the activities of the National Archives by public offices. It is crucial that National Archives

services be known in public offices to help them establish if they create records of enduring value in the transactions they make. The Caribbean Collection (2010) observed that records creating offices are in custody of records of enduring value which they may not be aware of. Historical records can be very fragile in that once they are lost it may be impossible to replace them. It is therefore advisable for National Archives to assume an active role in ensuring the nation's archival heritage is not lost. That noble obligation can be achieved through records and information management surveys amongst other activities.

The Northern Territory Government (2006) described a records survey as an exercise meant to ensure public offices comply with the records management standards. It was also affirmed by the Public Record Office in Victoria (1999) that records and information management surveys provide standards for the management of public records and they can help in identifying challenges being faced within the existing records management system, thereby facilitating the establishment of a sound records management programme. The records management programme will be improved in the sense that information collected through surveys will be used to improve access to records, develop vital records management programmes, create retention and disposal schedules, motivate registry staff to obtain training and improve storage facilities amongst other records management activities.

2.12.2 How are records surveys executed?

As highlighted in the foregone section, records surveys are an essential exercise that can be used to attain acceptable records management practices. As such, it is important that the exercise be done in certain acceptable ways. Graham (2003) and the Public Record Office (1999) cited planning and the need for effective communication as the basic components required for a successful records survey. Similarly, the South Carolina Department (2010) declared that communication is crucial as it may lead to gaining top management support and cooperation from other members of staff. Staff involved should be reassured that records surveys are not a fault finding mission exercise. Instead, they are done to improve poor records management practices and to maintain the existing strengths (Idaho State University 2006 & South Carolina

Department 2010). The records survey team should effectively assume the responsibility of informing involved parties about the nature of the survey, its objectives and the likely impacts on their work. It is crucial that both positive and negative impacts likely to be caused by the exercise be communicated before the survey commences. That may involve holding orientation sessions with key staff. That does not only comply with ethical considerations but also aid the survey to obtain desired results. It is important that registry staff understand the entire exercise for them to be able to contribute meaningfully because communication is the key to every participatory activities.

If records surveys are to yield desired results the exercise should inspect records held in any location (onsite, offsite and online). Idaho State University (2006) and South Carolina Department (2010) noted that physical examination starts with the active records because they are usually better organised compared to semi active records. Moreover if active records are examined first, it becomes easier to establish the relationship between records series. Hare and McLeod (1997) asserted that for a records survey to yield the desired results, the exercise has to be done systematically, beginning in a specified location, proceeding logically. That can be achieved by marking every box or location surveyed to avoid repetition and confusion.

The nature of activities among organisations vary and may require specific records survey sheet. However, the Northern territory Government (2006) and the Public Record Office (1999) indicated that an acceptable records survey sheet form should include the following details;

- Name(s) of person conducting the survey
- Date
- Series title
- Clear description of records (purpose. use and subject content of the records)
- The earliest and most recent dates of records in each series

- The medium
- The type of filing system and equipment used to store records
- The volume of records in cubic feet
- Annual accumulation of each record series
- Frequency of access
- Does the record qualify as a vital record?
- Indicate any restrictions on access to and use of records
- Describe the physical condition of records in the series
- Current disposal practices

A records survey that collects the above outlined information and other types of information is likely to produce a report that would contribute significantly towards the construction of sound records management activities (Northern territory Government 2006 & the Public Record Office 1999). The available literature on records surveys shows that records managers, archivists and registry personnel are indeed greatly assisted to understand the importance of records surveys and how they are supposed to be executed. However, little has been done to establish why poor records management practices continue to prevail and how to address the associated challenges.

2.12.3 The importance of records surveys

Northumbria University (2001) and the Public Record Office (1999) stated that records surveys are important for they provide an objective assessment of an institution's records keeping practices. Dewah (2010), Charman (1984), Maboreke (2007) and Chaterera (2008) confirmed that records surveys are the key to gaining control over records. Below is a summary of what can be benefited through records surveys

- Unnecessary duplication of records is detected

- Records that are being kept for too long will be exposed
- Areas of weaknesses that require immediate attention are identified
- Vital records are identified and can be strategically protected from possible hazards
- Preservation requirements are determined

The identification of such information can potentially bring positive change in the productivity of an organisation and its service delivery to members of the public. The information obtained from records surveys can help to justify recommendations, decisions and support an organisation's records management programme. The Northern Territory Government (2006) highlighted that the amount and nature of information gathered during records surveys create a strong foundation on which key records management activities can be developed.

Records surveys can help to establish how adequately the record keeping requirements of the organisation are being met and to determine if any improvements are required (Maboreke 2007). A records survey is therefore very important because it plays a significant role in planning a range of records management activities such as the security of records, disposal procedures, retention schedules, vital records management programme, appraisal, storage and access. The Public Record Office (1999) noted that through records surveys, it becomes possible to determine what is required to install and maintain a sound records management programme.

Charman (1984) and Idaho State University (2006) revealed that the reason why surveys are done is to ensure records are properly managed throughout their life cycle. If records surveys are not done or poorly done, records disposal of an organisation will be unplanned and chaotic. Precious office space will be occupied with semi and noncurrent records which should have been destroyed or transferred to records centres if a records survey was done properly and its recommendations seriously considered.

2.13 The influence of records surveys on key records management activities

Records surveys influence key records management activities and are regarded the key mechanism towards fostering acceptable records management practices (Graham 2003 & Chaterera 2008). Records management activities influenced by records surveys include but not limited to carrying out records appraisals, developing retention and disposal schedules, creating records management procedures, preparing a disaster recovery and vital records plan. The Northern Territory Government (2006) attested that surveys gather information of records held by an organisation, thereby facilitating the planning of key records management activities indentified above. Information obtained from records surveys facilitate the planning of offsite storage, the review of records systems and locating records due for destruction. Griffin and Roper (1999) noted that records surveys, retention schedules, disposal schedules, vital records management programme and appraisal are different records management activities that are tightly linked.

The Northern Territory Government (2006) explained that a records survey is used to create a records inventory. The records inventory contains relevant information about records held by an office and is the key to sound records management practices. The South Carolina Department (2010) concluded that a properly done records inventory builds a solid foundation for a good records management programme while poorly done records surveys set a stage for continuing records management problems. The information contained in a records inventory is highly significant in developing records disposal schedules, records management procedures, preparing a disaster recovery and vital records plan, identifying records of enduring value and locating records due for destruction. The South Carolina Department (2010) noted that information gathered through records surveys enables those responsible for managing records to dispose records systematically and to decide which records to reformat into microfilm or some other medium. Northumbria University (2001) observed that the results of a records survey enhances better management of records throughout their life cycle.

2.13.1 The role of records surveys in records appraisal

Man (2010) indicated the appraisal process can only be a success if a systematic survey of records is done. Agere, Lemieux and Mazikana (1999:46) observed that for appraisal to be successful the required information has to be available and that information is collected through records surveys. Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) indicated that the records inventory becomes the working document for planning the appraisal process, preparing the records retention schedule, establishing the vital records protection programme and making other improvements to the records management programme. Man (2010:106) further revealed that records surveys are intertwined to the critical records management activities such as appraisal. Records appraisal takes an organisation a long way towards meeting its business needs, accountability and community expectations (Ndenje-Sichalwe 2010). In addition Cook (2010:73) noted that accountability is seen as the main principle in the appraisal of public records.

Griffin and Roper (1999) emphasised that the information obtained from records surveys helps to determine the type of records, who creates them and when. Once all this information is known, it then becomes possible for the appraisal process to be undertaken. The Queensland State Archives (2008) recognised that a records inventory which is a product of a records survey is a powerful instrument that can support the functional approach of records appraisal. Mary State Archive (2009) noted that the success of a records appraisal process is based on the information contained in the records inventory. Despite all that knowledge and the potential of records surveys to enable a sound records appraisal process, the Queensland State Archives (2008) found that most public registries have records that have not been appraised. On that note, the current study questions why such improper records management behaviour prevails when records surveys which seem to be well understood are in existence. Smith (2007) emphasised on the importance for public sector bodies to decide what records to keep and for how long. That would help avoid destruction of records of enduring value and saves registry personnel unnecessary time searching records from a large volume of dead ephemeral records. As a result expensive office space is better used and members of the public and all potential users of records are effectively and efficiently

served. Griffin and Roper (1999) indicated that without the control imposed by the process of appraisal current records systems will become congested with semi current and noncurrent records. As a result, it becomes difficult to retrieve needed records, thus delaying service to members of the public who may be in need of a service facilitated by the hard to find or even missing file.

However, while records surveys play a vital role in the appraisal of records, the Queensland State Archives (2008) emphasised the need for a better understanding of what the organisation does otherwise records surveys alone may not be adequate to perform appraisal processes. It can be noted that a successful records appraisal depends on properly executed records surveys and a thorough analysis of the context of the organisation and the nature of records they produce.

2.13.2 The role of records surveys in creating retention and disposal schedules

Mary State Archives (2009) in the United Kingdom and Delaware Public Archives (2010) indicated that a records survey is the first step in preparing a records and disposition schedule. Hare and McLeod (1997:21) observed that formulation of retention schedules is made possible by information obtained from records surveys. Graham (2003) emphasised that records surveys can be used to come up with a records inventory which is very helpful in developing retention schedules and filing systems. Bearing in mind that appraisal of records is made possible by a records inventory which is a product of a records survey, Griffin and Roper (1999) attested to the situation that the product of appraisal function is the disposal and retention schedule, thus demonstrating a link of records management activities as illustrated below.

Records survey



Records inventory



Records appraisal



Retention and disposition schedule



Development of vital records management plan

Similarly, the South Carolina Department (2010) observed that through records surveys, it becomes clear which records to destroy, keep permanently and or temporarily. The South Carolina Department (2010) concluded that a records inventory enables an organisation to evaluate the content of their records and will be supplied with data crucial to the ability of an organisation to make justifiable decisions on the ultimate retention or destruction of their records. Hare and McLeod (1997:32) revealed that retention schedules are essential towards meeting acceptable records management standards. Amongst the several benefits retention schedules help to;

- Provide standards and consistency across the organisation on records management issues
- Identify unnecessary duplication, encourage timely relocation of material from costly office space to less expensive
- Promote effective management and identify records of long term value as early as possible
- Secure records from accidental destruction and to plan for their preservation (Hare & McLeod 1997).

The Public Record Office (1999) indicated that “records surveys are aimed at identifying all organisations’ records by series or collection as well as to gain an understanding and their functional context”. That provides the basis for the disposal schedule. Charman (1984) found that inadequate or absence of records surveys and schedules results in expensive office accommodation being clogged with semi or noncurrent records which could have been destroyed long since. Griffin and Roper (1999) noted that to balance economy with good administration, it is necessary that records are neither disposed of too early or too late in their life cycle. Early disposition may lead to the destruction of records of enduring value and a late disposition clog important office space and makes retrieval difficult while compromising service delivery. Charman (1984) concluded that several organisations have wasted much time and money on records which should have been destroyed if proper records surveys and schedules had been in effect. The Queensland State Archives (2008) and Smith (2007:105) observed that identification of records which can be destroyed saves money, time, resources and facilitates the identification of vital records.

The creation of retention and disposal schedules is influential towards achieving sound records management practices. Delaware Public Archives (2010) highlighted that records retention schedules are vital in that they make records classification easy in the sense that a retention schedule essentially lists what kinds of records exist in an office, describes the contents of records and the time periods they should spend as active, semi active to the time they should be destroyed. As a result, it becomes easier for records to be classified into four categories (nonessential, useful, important and vital) (Delaware Public Archives 2010). With the availability of vast amount of literature on the importance of records surveys, the current study questioned the perceived poor records management practices in many government departments. What is stopping the key from unlocking the doors of sound records management activities was the task of this research. The current study sought to establish why the creation of retention and disposal schedules appears to be a rare practice when records surveys exist to ensure that they are produced.

2.13.3 The role of records surveys in producing a vital records management programme

Records surveys are indeed a key exercise aimed at improving records management activities such as developing vital records protection plans. The Queensland State Archives (2008) highlighted that records surveys can serve to ensure vital records are identified and managed appropriately. The California Records and Information Management Department (2003) communicated that well planned and written records retention schedules can be extremely helpful in rescue planning. That is evidenced in the flow chart displayed in section **2.14.2**, which summarises that a well designed records schedule and a good records inventory comes from a successful records and information management survey. It is from a well designed records schedule that a disaster recovery team can be helped to establish rescue priorities and procedures for each records media and it is from a good records inventory that locations of vital records are shown, hence making it faster to retrieve vital records in the event of a disaster. Exact locations of storage or filing equipment containing vital records will be given if records surveys were properly done.

It is important that vital records be given due attention for they are critical records which are difficult and even impossible to replace if they are lost or damaged. Examples of potentially vital records are insurance policies, minutes of board meetings; policy documents, annual reports, bank balance statements, certificates of incorporation, copyrights, corporate seals, deeds, contracts, loan agreements and mortgages amongst other records. The Caribbean Collection (2010) highlighted that the idea of archival records surveys is to save records that are not just important today, but will be important for future generations.

Delaware Public Archives (2010) emphasised the need to manage vital records for they contain important information required by an organisation to continue functioning after a disaster has occurred. Vital records are important and must be maintained in their original form to be legally admissible as evidence. The ability by a government to manage its vital records is essential towards the success of its operations. Delaware Public Archives (2010) noted that government departments whose vital records

programme are built out of a comprehensive records management will be able to achieve their objectives more economically and efficiently. In addition, Delaware Public archives (2010) observed that vital records management is a form of self assurance that preserves the public trust. In the public sector, vital records programmes protect the public interest and ensure maintenance of individual rights. It is therefore important that vital records be identified and given proper management. Failure to give these records proper management would place the interests and the rights of the citizens in danger and the daily operations of an agency may be compromised. The Delaware Public Archives (2010) explained that if vital records are not properly managed, the organisation will be prone to litigation, exposed to unplanned and unnecessary expenses. For a successful vital records management programme to exist there is need for identification and analysis of record series which can be effectively done during a routine records inventory. The records inventory is regarded as the first step in developing a comprehensive records management programme. Delaware Public Archives (2010) noted that a vital records management programme begins by conducting a records inventory to gain knowledge of record holdings.

2.14 Records surveys and the management of electronic records

There is a perceived tendency by developing countries to overlook electronic records when conducting records surveys (Ngulube & Tafor 2006). That and led the current study to find out if electronic records were also examined during records surveys in Zimbabwe. The Public Record Office (1999) and Mary State Archive (2009) emphasised that a records survey should cover all records, whatever their form and location. The survey of electronic records should capture the source and use of a record, policies on access and use, their function, location and media in which electronic records are maintained as well as character and content of each electronic record (Mary State Archive 2009). Charman (1984) posited that records surveys are not only essential in the better management of paper records but also useful in the introduction of microforms and data processing. Nengomasha (2009:113) lamented the inappropriate environment in which electronic records are being created and maintained in Namibia.

Her main argument was that for an electronic records management programme to be successfully launched there has to be a sound paper records management practice.

Ngulube and Tafor (2006:5) highlighted that, “electronic records in member countries of East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) are in danger of being lost due to benign neglect”. Ngulube and Tafor (2005) found that only two member countries of the ESARBICA region included electronic records during records surveys and inspection. Kemoni (2007:5) did a study in Kenya and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) conducted a study in Tanzania which established that Archives personnel had not undertaken a survey to determine the extent of management being given to electronic records created in the public sector. In light of those findings the current study sought to establish whether Zimbabwe is amongst the countries that include or does not include electronic records during surveys. The reason for doing that was to establish the possible challenges that could be stopping records survey execution teams from including electronic records when conducting records surveys. To that effect, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) discovered that management of electronic records has been a frustration and intentionally avoided in many countries due to the lack of resources, expertise and facilities to manage the electronic media. Thurston (2005) revealed that the speed at which information technologies and electronic records are being adopted around the world is not being matched by the skills and infrastructure needed to manage them. Nengomasha (2009:116) observed that the management of electronic records is highly challenged by the lack of records retention and disposal policies, poor security and confidentiality controls as well as the absence of policies and procedures to guide the management of both paper and electronic records.

Despite the existence of records surveys, effective electronic records management seem to be a thorny task for many developing countries. Katuu (2009) revealed that while archivists in developed countries face up to the challenges of digital media, Africa is still battling to recover from dilapidated paper record keeping systems. Nengomasha (2009:120) found that the government’s electronic records are at risk of misuse and loss because there are no standards for electronic and digital preservation. Nengomasha

(2009:121) added that the public service of Namibia is on a high risk of wasting resources and funds unless electronic government initiatives are supported by a solid records management programme. It is the intention of many governments to employ electronic methods in the execution of their business. The public service minister of Kenya, Otieno (2012) reported in the Daily Nation that “ministries and public agencies have embarked on a journey towards paperless correspondence to increase transparency and accountability in their operations’. However, it is sad to note that most public offices perceive disposal of electronic records as costly, time consuming and difficult (New South Wales Government 2004). As a result, many organisations are not aware of the retention requirements that apply to their electronic records. The New South Wales Government (2004) indicated that there is a wide spread belief that digital disposal can wait till later and they regard paper records disposal as a more pressing issue. Smith (2007:105) noted that it is dangerous to think that an office can keep everything in electronic form because if systems are upgraded, it may not be easy to migrate information to new software. It is therefore not recommended to delay digital disposal. Appropriate digital disposal is highly encouraged because it enables digital continuity and longevity and should therefore be more actively encouraged across the public sector. Smith (2007:108) emphasised that it is important for electronic records to be appraised at an early stage in their life, preferably at creation stage, thus making greater use of disposal schedules.

Nengomasha (2009) concluded that there are no backups at Namibia’s government departments and that is contrary to government regulations which say there has to be offsite storage. Electronic information systems were reported to be outdated, hence the popular frustrating response by most public offices in many developing countries including Zimbabwe; ‘our machines are down, please come back later’. Kimber (2001) in Kemoni (2009:197) revealed that the nature of electronic records is a challenge on its own as they depend on technology. That probably explains why most developing countries are still struggling to attain an acceptable electronic records management environment. Mnjama (2004) observed that while acceptable paper records management practices prevail in certain government departments, the same cannot be said of electronic records.

2.15 The implementation of recommendations provided to surveyed departments

When records surveys are done, it is expected that surveyed departments respond to advices and recommendations produced in records survey reports (Queensland State Archives 2008). That creates a health working relationship between the surveying and the surveyed departments. Nengomasha (2009) advised that after surveys are done and reports produced, the surveyed departments are required to produce a date when it will have implemented the recommendations and follow up reminders should be sent to public registries by the National Archives. Maboreke (2007) revealed that public service delivery is at risk due to the reluctance by stakeholders to implement recommendations given during and after surveys. Similarly, Dewah (2010) revealed that some government departments are not complying with some of the recommendations and some are not even aware of the National Archives services. Kemoni (2007) and Kemoni and Ngulube (2007) found that records management advices given to government departments by the National Archives were not adequately implemented. However, the studies did not do much to explain why responses from surveyed departments were not favourable. It is in light of that observation that the current study investigated why stakeholder response to records surveys was perceived to be negative. That went a long way in establishing various practical challenges surrounding the entire process of conducting records surveys. As a result, possible ways of overcoming the challenges were devised, hence assisting the crucial exercise to achieve its goals of enhancing sound records management practices and improving public service delivery.

Ngulube and Tafor (2006) found that there is a serious shortage of records management resources in most member countries of ESARBICA. That could be one of the possible reasons why stakeholder response to records surveys was negative. It remained the task of the current research project to establish if the shortage of records management resources was applicable to the Zimbabwean context and reveal other possible challenges. The current study acknowledged that records and information management surveys are multimedia embracing and the issue of stakeholder response to records surveys should also include electronic records. On that note, Kemoni (2009)

emphasised that for the electronic environment to improve in the information management sector, there is need for surveyed departments to implement recommendations produced in survey reports.

2.16 The skills and knowledge of information management professionals regarding surveys

The role of a records manager in the management of public records need not be an afterthought. Sutcliffe (2003:51) noted that records managers must play an active part throughout the life of a record. That can be done through records surveys amongst other activities. The quality of a records management programme is directly related to the quality of the involved personnel.

It calls for a well trained records management team for surveys to be successfully executed. It also requires formally trained registry staff for recommendations produced in records surveys to be seriously considered and properly implemented. In light of that observation, the current study deemed it essential to look into the training of information management professionals and its effect to the success of records surveys and public service delivery. Wamukoya (2000) emphasised that training is an important component of modern management. He said that “records personnel at all levels require appropriate training not only to acquire knowledge and skills but also to gain confidence in what they do” (Wamukoya 2000:30). The Kansas State Records Management Manual (2004) pinpointed that a key element in the success of the records survey is adequate training.

Mnjama (1996) stipulated that records managers must have the necessary skills and knowledge to manage records at every stage in their life cycle. Ngulube (2001) reflected that education and training are the basic needs for promoting the management of records and archives. Katuu (2009) emphasised the need for developing countries to prioritise the education and training of information management professionals to tackle the challenges of governance in the electronic age. The study by Katuu (2009) lamented the loss of qualified public registry staff to the private sector. The current study saw it necessary to address the issue of training possessed by information

management personnel. As highlighted in Katuu (2009), it is impossible to build real skills without building the basis of thinking and that basis of thinking is indeed education.

Nengomasha (2009) found that most records management personnel in the public registries of Namibia have a grade ten certificate which is equivalent to ordinary level. That has negative effects for the provision of an effective records management service. Nengomasha (2009) further noted that the level of education possessed by registry personnel is too low for them to be recognised as professionals and to be taken seriously. That has resulted in the marginalisation of the records keeping activities in the public service. Due to a very low level of education possessed by many public registry personnel, top management has rarely given priority to registry demands and that has affected recommendations produced from records surveys to be implemented. Nengomasha (2009) found that records management was not considered a specialised area and could be well handled by a person with grade ten and at least an E in English. Nengomasha (2009) established that records management is appropriate for people who have grade ten because they tend to stay on the job unlike those with grade twelve (Advanced level) who come and leave because they are over qualified. That directly compromises the potential of records surveys to bring in improvements. Advices given by records survey reports will be issued to people with a limited appreciation and understanding of the profession. The current study also sought to established the training needs for the information management professionals in Zimbabwe.

Otuoma (2010) lamented inadequate skills and high staff-turn over in Kenya. He revealed that practitioners in the field of archives and records management execute their duties through trial and error efforts. Nengomasha (2009) and Mazikana (1998) revealed that most public registries are operated by people who have simply completed four years of secondary education. Absence or inadequate training of records managers, archivists and registry clerks has a direct negative bearing to the success of records surveys in attaining their intended goals. The surveys will either be incompletely conducted, unprofessionally received or both. The current study was therefore geared to establish the status quo in as far as the training of information management professionals in Zimbabwe was concerned.

Despite the issue of training, other factors should come into play if records surveys are to be successful in enhancing proper records management practices. While training of information management professionals is very crucial, Hare and McLeod (1997:22-23) urged those responsible for conducting surveys to regard the exercise as a project. All projects begin with planning and planning for records surveys should consider the following:

- Commitment and support from top management
- Cooperation from all levels of staff to be involved
- Timing of the audit and resources required

Planning is very important for records survey execution team, otherwise failure to plan will be planning to fail. Hare and McLeod (1997:45) added that records managers should seek to assure records creators and handlers that their judgements would be respected and recognised especially during the active phase in the life cycle. Additionally, whether trained in records management or not registry personnel must make an effort to be in possession of a documented guide that lays procedures of what to do and when. MacKenzie (2003) observed that a registry procedures manual should be developed to ensure records are properly managed through-out their life. A registry manual provides registry personnel with guidelines that define departmental records management procedures thereby serving as a model for establishing acceptable and sound records management practices.

2.17 Summary of Chapter Two

Chapter Two presented the theoretical framework on which the study was built. The chapter began by communicating the context of the study and provided an over view of public records management in Zimbabwe. It was communicated that the current research was developed from NAZ Act of 1986 Chapter 309 Section 6 and 7. The chapter then proceeded to explain what a theoretical framework is and its importance in research. That was followed by a brief discussion of views and opinions from other disciplines concerning records management and archival theories. The theories that

informed the current study were identified and discussed. Existing literature on key issues under spotlight by the current study was reviewed. An overview of records surveys and how they are carried out was provided. A discussion of the relationship between records surveys and key records management activities was also presented. The chapter also reviewed what previous scholars have found concerning the survey of electronic records, especially in developing countries. The general observation to that effect was that most public offices were not prepared to meet the challenges of electronic records management. The role that information management professionals play in introducing acceptable records management practices was discussed. Previous studies confirmed to the situation that records management is rarely given attention due to the low level of education possessed by registry personnel. As a result, the profession is hardly taken seriously. The next chapter presented how data for the study was gathered.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The present study sought to establish the influence of records surveys in the management of public records management in Zimbabwe. To achieve that aim, an empirical field research was done. The current research was confirmatory in nature. As such, the survey research design was deemed appropriate as it permits the collection of large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007). This chapter describes the research methodology that was employed in the study. Methodology is a way of producing and analysing data so that theories and conclusions can be tested, accepted or rejected (Kothari 2004). Without this systematic way of producing evidence, findings may be dismissed as guess work or common sense that has been made complicated (Maboreke 2007). The issues discussed in this chapter include the research design, research strategies, target population and justification, data collection methods and instruments, the reliability and validity of the instruments and pre-testing of the data collection instruments. It also discussed the research ethical considerations, processing and analysis of data. Ngulube (2005) and Kothari (2004:31) emphasised that it is essential for researchers to clearly communicate their research methodology for their studies to be credible.

3.1 Research design

Coolican (2004:19) explained that research design refers to the steps that researchers follow to complete their study from the start to the end. De Vaus (2001:9) noted that a research design is more than a work plan in the sense that the work plan will flow from the project's research design. De Vaus (2001:9) further explained that the function of a research is to ensure that evidence obtained enables the researcher to answer the research question. From those explanations, the current research understood a research design to be the logical structure of the inquiry. Below is an illustration of the

logical structure that was followed by the current study to gather data that was needed for the in the execution of the investigation.

- Selecting research respondents and data collection instruments
- Seeking authority from the head of departments and consent from respondents to carry out the study
- Dispatching questionnaires
- Receiving completed questionnaires from respective departments
- Conducting face-to-face and telephone interviews with NAZ personnel
- Data analysis and discussion.
- Reporting the results.

The research design assisted the study to attain its purpose and ensured that the collection of data was finished within the scheduled time frame using the available resources. The research design therefore acted as the guideline for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data. The fundamental objective was to solve the research problem and assist the researcher throughout the project (Kothari 2004:31).

There are various types of research designs that researchers may adopt as guides throughout their studies. The choice of a research design by an investigator largely depends on the nature of the research. Babbie and Mouton (2001:75) advised that attention has to be given to the research question and the research problem. In light of that advice, the researcher developed a workable research problem and considered the nature of data that the study required. That permitted the study to adopt a realistic means of collecting and interpreting the data.

De Vaus (2001:3) advised that researchers have to pay particular attention to research design as it determines the success of a research project. Adhering to that advice, the researcher for the current study made research designing a key exercise for the project. Durrheim (2006:37) and Kothari (2004:32) emphasised that when designing the study,

an investigator must be guided by the purpose of the research, the theoretical framework informing the research, the context within which the research was carried out and the research instruments engaged to collect and analyse the data. In that regard the present study deemed it appropriate to employ the survey research design.

3.1.1 The survey research design

Dooley (2003:64), Owens (2002:12) and Glasgow (2005:4) indicated that the survey research method is mainly known for producing less detailed data but can be applied over a broad area. Previous studies that are similar to the current research project successfully used the survey research design and that influenced this study to confidently adopt the survey research method. Those studies include Kemoni (2007), Maboreke (2007) and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010). From those studies, it was demonstrated that the survey research design has the ability to provide current conditions existing within a particular country's records management system.

As discussed in the previous section, the choice of a research design should be largely determined by the nature of the study. The current study was confirmatory as it sought to establish the influence of records surveys on public records management. Key issues that were under spot light by the current study included the influence of records surveys on records appraisal, creating retention and disposal schedules, developing vital records management programme, managing electronic records and the role of information management professionals in conducting records surveys. The overall aim was to find out if records surveys were influencing other records management activities. As such, the survey research was deemed appropriate in the study as it enabled the investigator to understand how records surveys were done and how they influenced key records management issues within the public registries in Zimbabwe.

Owens (2002:9) and Glasgow (2005:4) explained that surveys are concerned with collecting data directly from people about occurrences, incidences of events, instances in varying circumstances and situations. De Vaus (2001:10) noted that surveys are descriptive in nature for they seek to make sense of the situation being studied from a descriptive point of view.

3.2 The research approach used

It is imperative to be able to identify and understand the research approach underlying any given study. This is because the selection of a research approach has a bearing on the questions asked, the methods used, the statistical analyses used, the conclusions made and the ultimate goal of the research (Bryman 2004:36). The selection of the research approach for this study was mainly based on the set objectives, the problem that the study attempted to solve, resources available, the skills of the researcher and the research audience. O’Leary (2005:21) observed that in most cases, researchers are caught in the dilemma of choosing the research approach that best suits their study and objectives. The dilemma stems from the reality that there are both strengths and weaknesses to quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Lund 2005:119). Based on that knowledge, the current study deemed it helpful to use methods from both the quantitative and qualitative paradigms. The following section discussed the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research approaches paying particular attention to both their strengths and weaknesses. That was done to help readers appreciate why the two strategies had to be mixed in the current study.

3.2.1 The difference between quantitative and qualitative research approaches

Bahari (2010:22) observed that the main distinction between qualitative and quantitative is that the latter is intensive while the former is extensive. Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2007:17) and Tuli, (2006:101) indicated that qualitative and quantitative strategies are respectively characterised as inductive and deductive testing of theory. Inductive approach (qualitative) begins by gathering information from respondents and develops this information into themes. On the contrary, deductive approach (quantitative) involves carrying out a research with reference to ideas inferred from existing theories. The aim of quantitative methods is to determine whether the predictive generalisations of a theory are true (Walliman 2011:13 & Silverman 2010:8). Conversely, a study based upon qualitative research methods has the purpose of understanding a social or human problem from multiple perspectives (Punch 1998:233). Moreover, qualitative research is carried out in a natural setting and involves a process of building a complex and unified

understanding of the subject matter under investigation (Tashakkorri & Teddie 2009:219).

Creswell (2003) and Mahoney and Goertz (2006:233) explained that a quantitative approach primarily yields statistical data using strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys. Quantitative research mainly involves the use of structured questionnaires in which the response options are pre-coded and a large number of respondents are involved. Silverman (2010:13) noted that quantitative research approach obtains data which is statistically relevant and are usually used to answer questions such as how many, where from and how much amongst other questions. In contrast, the qualitative research approach mainly give answers to the questions of why and involves collecting data by observing what people say and do. Unlike the quantitative research approach, qualitative methods yield non-numerical data that provides depth and detail through description of situations and observed behaviours in order to generate patterns, themes and ideas (Punch 1998:234). However, Lund (2005:120) observed that qualitative methods are subjective. Despite that weakness of subjectivity, many studies that sought descriptive data have used qualitative methods because they are able to generate ideas and concepts with in-depth focus and knowledge of the researcher’s problem (Tuli 2006:101). The qualitative research approach is therefore mainly used for brainstorming and testing new ideas. Below is a table that demonstrates the basic differences between the quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Bahari 2010:22).

Table 2: The basic differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches

Process	Qualitative	Quantitative
Question design	Rely on indirect, projective and open ended questions.	Rely on direct and structured questions.
Data collection	Researches deal with relatively small number of informants who are interviewed at length.	A large number of people are interviewed from pre-coded questionnaires.

Analysis and interpretation	Looks at the total pattern of responses and basis the analysis on people.	Typically analyse responses to questions across a larger number of people.
Instruments	Interviews, focus group discussion, observation and non-numerical analysis	Questionnaires, tests, inventories, check list and statistical analysis.

In light of both the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study chose to employ the methodological triangulation approach because it permitted weaknesses inherent in the qualitative approach to be neutralised by the quantitative research methods. The following section discussed the triangulation approach as it was used by the study.

3.3 The triangulation method

Hussein (2009:2) advised that good research practice obligates the researcher to triangulate and identified four types of triangulation namely; data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation. Data triangulation refers to using several data sources for validation purposes, for instance, including more than one individual as a source of data. Investigator triangulation was described as the use of more than two researchers in any of the research stages in the same study. It involves the use of multiple observers, interviewers, or data analysts in the same study for confirmation purposes. Theoretical triangulation is defined as the use of multiple theories in the same study for the purpose of supporting or contesting findings since different theories help researchers to see the problem at hand using multiple lenses. Methodological triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods in the examination of a subject under study (Jick 1979; Lund 2005 & Thurmond 2001).

Methodological triangulation is the strategy that was employed by the current study. The basis for methodological triangulation is that the flaws of one method are neutralised by the strengths of another. Olsen (2004:18) and Hussein (2009) observed that by combining methods, the research can achieve the best of each while overcoming their

unique deficiencies. In an effort to enhance the reliability of the research findings, the current research deemed it necessary to employ both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Olsen (2004:8) agreed that triangulation improves the results of a research and evaluation of the study. Supporting that notion is Hussein (2009:8), Thurmond (2001) and Lund (2005) who emphasised that triangulation is typically perceived to be a strategy for improving the validity of research or evaluation of findings. Jick (1979:606) communicated that triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or at least do not contradict it.

Contrary to Jick (1979:606), Hussein (2009:9) explained that it is not only possible for data to be inconsistent but to actually contradict. When several methods have been used, researchers sometimes obtain a data bank with opposing views. However, obtaining inconsistent and or contradicting results should not be perceived as a weakness or a drawback. In fact, not only convergent findings but also inconsistent and contradictory findings can help the researcher's efforts to understand the subjects under study (Marty 2008:32). It is the responsibility of the researcher to make sense of the evidence gathered regardless of what the outcome is. In other words, whether the data converge, is inconsistent, or contradictory, the researcher must attempt to construct explanations for the data and about the data (Hussein 2009:5). Triangulation is therefore a technique which provides more and better evidence from which researchers can construct meaningful propositions about the subject under spot light. As such, triangulation becomes a device for enhancing the credibility and persuasiveness of a research account.

The current study decided to adopt the methodological triangulation strategy because it essentially helps in the elimination of bias and permits the dismissal of likely rival explanations such that a truthful proposition about some social phenomenon can be made (Lund 2005:128). However, Thurmond (2001:254) warned that using different methods to investigate a certain practice does not necessarily imply that the research will generate findings that will automatically come together to produce an integrated whole. The point of triangulation is therefore to study and understand when and why there are differences (Olsen 2004).

Marty (2008:25) was of the opinion that using triangulation to produce complementary data and using it to serve validation purpose are not incompatible. IMarty (2008:25) indicated that using different methods to investigate a certain practice permits the researcher to understand the subject under spotlight from different viewpoints, providing complementary information not validation. Thurmond (2001:255) indicated that triangulation does not strengthen a flawed study, but only help researchers to understand the matter under study. Marty (2008:29) noted that the two paradigms, qualitative and quantitative, differ epistemologically and ontologically and can therefore not be used in a single study.

From the foregone discussion, It should therefore be appreciated that the triangulation strategy is not an absolute solution towards attaining reliable or credible findings. As indicated by Thurmond (2001:254) difficulties may arise from trying to fit qualitative data into a quantitative nature. Marty (2008:31) revealed that the inaccuracies of data from one approach may not necessarily lessen the inaccuracies of the other. What it means is that while the added method contributes to the strength of the research, the primary method must be thorough enough to be able to sustain the study by itself. Appropriately used, triangulation might enhance the completeness and confirmation of data in research findings.

3.4 Study population and justification

Kothari (2004:10) described population of study as “all possible cases of what the researcher is interested in studying”. The study investigated into the influence of records surveys on records management activities in Zimbabwe. That placed NAZ records centres and public registries at the interest of the research project. The study collected information from all the six records centres in Zimbabwe as they are identified on NAZ Website (2011). The research project also collected data from twenty three government ministries out of the targeted thirty two ministries. The government ministries were identified from the Government Online Website (2012) licensed under GNU. No sampling was done; all the thirty two government ministries were asked to participate in providing information for the current study. However, the study managed to gather data from twenty three government ministries. The current study found confidence in

employing such a strategy because it was successful when it was used by Kemoni (2007) who looked at records management practices and public service delivery in Kenya. The same selection strategy was also used by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) who addressed the significance of records management to fostering accountability in the public service reform programme of Tanzania. Registry supervisors from the thirty two public registries were asked to inform the study. Data from the twenty three registry supervisors was gathered through self administered questionnaires which were posted to the informants. The data obtained from questionnaires was verified through the interviews that were conducted with RMAs and archivists from the six NAZ records centres. A single archivist and a single RMA were interviewed from each records centre, making the number of informants from NAZ to stand at twelve. The study also interviewed three NAZ former archivists. The deputy director of the NAZ was also interviewed as he is an archivist by profession who once actively participated in conducting records surveys. The total study population sample size stood at forty eight respondents.

The current study considered personnel from NAZ records centres' as the chief informants of the study because they actively participate in the execution of records surveys in public registries. As such, NAZ personnel emerged the most appropriate sources of information with regards to the influence of records surveys on key records management activities. The registry supervisors were equally important informants of the study. These provided first hand information pertaining to the working relationship between NAZ and public registries. They also gave insights into the manner in which records surveys are being conducted and whether the exercises have had any impact towards their conduct of records management business. With the data gathered from the surveying teams and the surveyed departments, the study was given an opportunity to make informed conclusions concerning the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The presentation and discussion of the obtained data has been reserved for the next chapter. However, it may be worth mentioning that the vast amount of data that was collected basically aimed at establishing whether conducting records surveys in Zimbabwe has managed to nature acceptable practices in the management of public records, thereby improving public

service delivery. The data needed to answer the research question was gathered from the above presented study population using the data collection instruments communicated in the following section.

3.5 Data collection instruments

Data collection instruments are classified into qualitative and quantitative. As explained earlier under the section of the research approach, qualitative techniques gather descriptive type of data while quantitative collects statistical data (Tuli 2006:99). Kothari(2004:420) recommended the use of more than one data collection method when carrying out a research project. The adoption of more than one data collection method is referred to as the methodological triangulation technique (Thurmond 2001:256). The triangulation technique permitted the investigator to use a mixture of more than one method. The research project employed self administered questionnaires, telephone and face to face interviews and document review as data collection instruments. The triangulation technique of using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection was chosen because it permitted weaknesses inherent in qualitative methods to be neutralised by quantitative methods and vice versa. For instance, interviews were done to confirm data obtained from questionnaires.

The construction of data collection instruments or tools has been considered a vital aspect of a research project. (Kumar 2005:137) observed that the findings, conclusions and recommendations that a study presents are based upon the nature of information collected. Kumar (2005:237) added that the nature of information gathered by researchers largely depends on the questions that they ask informants. The following section presents and discusses each instrument of data collection that was used by the study.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

By definition, a questionnaire is a document comprised of questions that are specifically formulated to suit the objectives of the study, to get answers for the research question and possibly to solve the research problem. Questionnaires have been overwhelmingly used by many studies that involve human subjects (Tashakkori & Teddie 2009:234).

Questionnaires were used by the current study because they have been attested and they have proved to be very useful for collecting survey information. The investigator was able to get the questionnaires completed in her absence although some were not returned and some were incomplete.

The other strength of questionnaires is that they are easy to analyse (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight 2006:179). Punch (1998:134) confirmed that questionnaires have the added advantage that they can be completed personally by the informant without the help of the researcher. The current study made efforts to obtain all the required data through asking motivating questions as advised in Nachmias and Nachmias (1996:250). However, the formulation of motivating questions was done in a way that did not compromise the purpose, content, structure and format of the questionnaires. Questions formulated were largely guided by the set objectives.

Compared to other data collection tools, the questionnaire was relatively inexpensive and it permitted a large number of respondents to be surveyed in a relatively short period of time even if the respondents are widely distributed geographically (Milne 1999:2). The other reason why questionnaires were used is because they provide a high degree of anonymity for respondents (Nachmias and Nachmias 1996:226). The investigator gave respondents the assurance that their responses will be unidentified, and so they felt comfortable and the researcher presumed they were more truthful than they would be in a personal interview especially on seemingly sensitive issues. Unlike interviews, questionnaire affords respondents the chance to look up for information in cases where they were not sure of answers (Nachmias and Nachmias 1996: 226).

However, the major disadvantage of using questionnaires is that the majority of people who receive questionnaires do not return them and some would be incomplete. Questionnaires usually have a low response rate compared to interviews. Kumar (2005:130) indicated that the major drawback of questionnaires is that their application is limited to a literate study population. They may not be used on a population that cannot read or write, very young, very old or handicapped. Another disadvantage is that in cases where respondents do not understand some questions, there is no opportunity

for them to have the questions clarified (Walliman 2011). Moreover, the control over the questionnaire is lost once questionnaires are sent.

In an effort to ensure participation of respondents was voluntary and not by coercion, a covering letter seeking consent was attached to every questionnaire. The letter explained the aim and significance of the study to respondents and communicated that their participation was important towards improving the management of public records in Zimbabwe. Creswell (2009) emphasised that it is the responsibility of every social science researcher to make sure that participants understand that while their participation is crucial, it is however not mandatory. The cover letter for the current study clearly communicated that even though their participation was essential; it had to be by choice and not coercion. This helped the researcher to have a fairly high response rate. The responses obtained from public registries through questionnaires were verified by the data collected through interviews by the records management officers and archivists from NAZ.

To obtain insights into key records management activities, the investigator consulted fundamental records management sources from periodicals, textbooks and the World Wide Web. Since there are multiple sources that have addressed important issues in records management, the current study mainly focused on sources that addressed records surveys and their role in managing records. Consulted sources included but not limited to the New South Wales Government (2004), Graham (2003), Maboreke (2007), Ngulube and Tafor (2006), Roberts (2006), Idaho State University (2006), Thurston (2005), Charman (1984), Hunter (2003), Man (2010), Kemoni (2007), Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) and The Northern Territory Government (2006).

Moreover, the investigator approached records management practitioners and those in the academic circles of information science for discussions that gave insights into issues worth addressing when one is investigating on records surveys and the management of public records.

3.5.2 Interviews

Amongst the several research instruments, interviews are regarded as one of the widely used and powerful method in which researchers try to understand their respondents (Hartman 2011). Interviews are suitable when the study is aimed at obtaining individual views, beliefs and feelings about a subject. Interviews were chosen for this study because they have been recommended for their ability to simplify complicated questions to a certain level that can be easily understood by respondents (Tashakkori & Teddie 2009:222). The technique permitted respondents to talk about key issues that were under spot light by the study in less directed but discursive manner. Interviews proved to be a powerful instrument for they permitted the investigator to establish rapport with interviewees. As a result, a relaxed and comfortable environment was created permitting respondents to give answers of their honest knowing. Creswell (2009) advised that it is the responsibility of the interviewer to make the interviewee feel comfortable and relaxed. However, the interviewer for the current study was careful not to ask suggestive questions and remained nonjudgmental to the responses provided by the interviewee. That assisted in reducing the bias effect inherent in almost every human being (Boyce & Neale 2006).

Interviews were adopted by the current study because of their ability to neutralise some of the weaknesses inherent in questionnaires. For instance, while respondents could not get clarifications and interpretations of questions from questionnaires, interviews gave the investigator room to explain, clarify and give detailed information where necessary. In addition, the NAZ personnel were given an opportunity to express their opinions with regards to the role of records surveys in the management of records.

Another reason why interviews were used by the current study is because they are more appropriate for studying complex and sensitive areas (Kajornboon 2005:4). The interviewer had the chance to explain satisfactorily to respondents before asking sensitive questions. For example, the current study sought to establish the amount and type of records management training received by those responsible for managing public sector records and executing records surveys. That was done to see if education and training plays a role in implementing the recommendations given in condition survey

reports and in conducting the records survey exercise. Information about one's professional qualifications is a sensitive issue that most people may not take lightly unless they are satisfactorily explained about the intention of the study. The interview technique helped the investigator to explain to respondents why their education and training information was important towards improving the management of public records and service delivery in Zimbabwe. Although providing explanations and probing was an advantage, it was time consuming and expensive, especially for this study where respondents were spread over a wide geographical area. However, some respondents were interviewed over the phone and that saved time.

The chief reason why interviews were used was to supplement data obtained from questionnaires. The interviews were conducted by the researcher through the telephone and face-to-face in a two-way conversation that was initiated by the interviewer. In addition, the study deemed it appropriate to use interviews because according to Silverman (1993:90), interviews enable researchers to obtain data which is valid and reliable. The questions asked were both open and closed-ended and were pre-tested to verify their applicability to the study.

Penn, Pennix & Coulson (1994) advised that the interviewer should make efforts to ensure that all the questions were understood by informants before they responded. Further comments and suggestions were sought from respondents through probing. The answers obtained were verified by the responses obtained from the questionnaires. Appointments were made with respondents and the purpose of the study was communicated to them so that they would participate in a project that they understood.

Amongst other reasons why interviews were used by the current study is that they allow inter personal interactions (Hartman 2011). These gave the researcher a chance to observe non-verbal communication. The advantage was that it became easy to distinguish fact from fiction. For example, gestures, glances, pauses and facial expressions often revealed hidden feelings. In this study, most interviewees were betrayed by their glances and pauses especially when asked about their records management training and restriction of access to records storage areas. Apart from the ability to detect between fact and fiction, interviews gave the researcher an opportunity

to clarify both seemingly ambiguous responses and answers. This method provided an opportunity to obtain in-depth data by probing and asking supplementary questions in areas where the researcher required more information.

While interviews have the advantage of immediate response of the face to face aspect, they also have the drawback of a high level of researcher's subjectivity. That may threaten the validity and reliability of the study. Dooley (2003:23) noted that "Interviews may suffer a double dose of subjectivity. They may interject unwarranted interpretations, guesses and impressions". Dooley's (2003) argument was that interviews may suffer from faulty perceptions and lack of insight.

Another challenge of using interviews is that interviewees may intentionally or unintentionally side step some important experiences. As a result, information yielded will be incomplete and at times irrelevant. Kothari (2004:28) warned that in some cases interviews cramp respondents within imposed limits of a question instead of inducing respondents to talk freely and display their natural tendencies.

Several measures were taken to guard against the potential drawbacks of using interviews. The study made efforts to ensure that questions were clear and understood by respondents before they responded. That was achieved through a trial run of the interview guide before it was administered to informants. Probing was employed where interviewees gave responses that were not clear or irrelevant to the question. In addition, the answers obtained were verified by the responses obtained from the questionnaires administered to registry personnel. Appointments for interviews were done through the telephone in order to avoid disruption of normal work. The initial step was to gain management support. The investigator managed to obtain both verbal and written authority from heads of departments. Management support is very critical to the success of a research. The support obtained permitted the current study to access all records storage areas and it instilled a sense of cooperation within the targeted employees.

3.5.3 Document review

Document review in this study referred to the records survey reports that were produced for public registries by NAZ records centres. The survey reports were very essential as they enabled the investigator to explore trends and patterns of stakeholder response in relation to the given advices. Content analysis of the records survey reports gave the investigator an opportunity to observe weaknesses that kept recurring and those that were solved. Ultimately, content analysis of records survey reports permitted the investigator to notice trends and patterns in records management within the Zimbabwean context. The investigator also did a content analysis of the records survey worksheet that is used by NAZ when they carry out records surveys in public registries. The worksheet enabled the investigator to establish aspects that are covered and those that are not covered by NAZ during records and information management surveys.

3.6 Reliability and validity of the instruments

The credibility of a research project largely depends on the accuracy of the data collection procedures. That means the instruments employed to gather information must obtain the type of data needed to provide answers to the research questions (Tashakkori & Teddie 2009:209). Whether a study employed quantitative, qualitative or mixed model approach, reliability and validity have been confirmed to be the major technical considerations (Babbie & Mouton 2001:119). Reliability and validity play a significant role towards establishing the reliability, credibility and truthfulness of findings (Walliman 2011:62). A study can only be considered valid if the conclusions are credible and accurate. However, Punch (1998) expressed that reliability is a required but inadequate condition for validity in research.

The concept of validity and reliability requires that researchers produce results that are consistent and reliable. Leedy and Omrod (2005:29) noted that a researcher can only measure something accurately when they can measure it consistently.

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability is concerned with stability and consistency of measurement (Sekaran 2003:203). The implication is that research findings can only be regarded to be reliable if they can be repeated and if they can manage to yield constant results (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007:146). To achieve reliability of the research instruments, an adequate, broad and representative population was used. All the thirty two government ministries and six NAZ records centres were asked to inform the study. Data from that broad population was collected over a period of six months and that eliminated the challenge of time constraints. In an effort to yield consistent and reliable results, questions and instructions were made very clear. That was done with the help of five information management professionals who pre-tested the research instruments. Furthermore, the study founded its theoretical basis on the lifecycle and continuum model as a means to attain reliability for the study.

3.6.2 Validity

Validity is an essential key to acceptable research. It refers to the extent to which obtained information represents the subject under study (Walliman 2011:41). Methods that have been used to test the validity of a study are content validity, criterion-related validity and construct validity (Kothari 2004:74 & Sekaran 2003:206). Content validity refers to the extent to which a measuring instrument provides sufficient coverage of the phenomena under study (Kothari 2004:74). This study pre-tested the questionnaire as a method for content validation. The researcher also made sure that content validity was achieved by ensuring that questions formulated addressed set objectives.

Golashafani (2003:598) noted that the concept of validity is mostly applicable to quantitative researches although it is beginning to be tested in qualitative researches as well. The basis of the concept lies on whether the obtained results are truthful. The current study made efforts to attain validity of the study by ensuring that the research instruments were sufficient in scope and coverage. That was done by including all the issues relating to records surveys and the management of public records. No sampling was done as the study included all the records centres and government ministries. That

reduced the coverage error. In an effort to ensure that the study remained valid and not biased, the research instruments were emailed to known and appreciated experts who provided their inputs accordingly.

3.7 Pre-testing of the research instruments

Ngulube (2005) observed that data collection instruments may never be immune from errors despite the level of carefulness that a research may employ. Amongst the best ways a researcher can eliminate the errors is through pre-testing the instruments (Babbie & Mouton 2001:244). The current study pre-tested the questionnaire and interview data capture sheets to expose any flaws in the instruments. In essence, pre-testing was done to anticipate how the instruments will perform under realistic conditions.

The current study pre-tested the data capture sheets and that permitted the investigator to identify questions that were likely to be misunderstood by participants. Powell and Connaway (2004:10) said that pre-testing gives researchers the chance to note vague questions, poor instructions, and irrelevant questions. In principle, the pros of pre-testing instruments are that refinement of the data collection instruments is allowed and it may lead to the discovery of various weaknesses of the instruments so that they can be adjusted accordingly.

Pretesting for the questionnaire and the interview guide was done between April 2012 and May 2012. A total of seven information management professionals were asked to participate in trial running the research instruments. Those were drawn from Botswana, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Two people could not respond. The five who responded and subsequently provided their inputs include a lecturers from the University of Botswana (UB), National University of Science and Technology (NUST), University of Dar-es-alam as well as the director for NAZ and a former NAZ archivist. The five information management professionals who participated commented that the instruments were doing justice to the scope of the study. Nonetheless, two people felt that the questionnaire was too long and some typographical errors and double barrelled

questions were dictated by all the four reviewers. One reviewer advised that technical terms be generalised or explained so that they be understood by every informant.

Paying attention to the inputs from the reviewers of the data collection instruments, the researcher then made appropriate adjustments. However, the investigator as the author of the study felt comfortable with the length of the questionnaire and made no changes to that effect. Technical terms that needed explanations were identified and re-phrased to general terms. Double-barrelled questions were redone and a single issue was included in one question.

3.8 Data analysis and presentation

Creswell (2009:151) described data analysis and interpretation as the procedures one would follow to present, analyse and interpret findings. The first procedure for the present study was to report information about who has responded and who has not. The information was presented in the form of a table with numbers and percentages illustrating respondents and non respondents. That was followed by a discussion of the effects that the response rate had on the results of the study. Findings of the study on key issues which were under spot light by the research project were presented in various illustrations such as prose, tables, figures, pie charts and graphs depending on the nature of data that was presented. An analysis was done from the findings of the study. The process of analysis involved reporting the relevance of the information found to the research questions. Emphasis was put on how the information found addressed the research problem. The next procedure was to apply logical reasoning as well as consulting what other scholars had said about the results which occurred. The implications of the results on current records management practices were also discussed. That was followed by a discussion on how the findings of the study may affect future research on records surveys and related subjects. Data analysis and presentation ended by conclusions and recommendations.

After collecting the data, it was then qualitatively analysed using the processes of thematic and content analysis (Kothari 2004:122). Quantitative analysis was adopted for statistical data so as to identify trends and patterns on subjects which were under

investigation. The process of analysing data was done for the purpose of compressing the vast amount of data into a manageable size that would give meaning and provide answers to research questions. The data obtained by the study was processed through editing, coding, entry and checking the accuracy. Before coding, the obtained data was edited in order to identify and eliminate mistakes made by informants. That helped to ensure that the data was accurate, consistent and complete, thus attaining reliability and validity for the study (Kothari 2004:122).

3.9 Ethical considerations

Collecting data to find out the role of records surveys in the management public of records required the participation of people who are in custody of public records. It was the responsibility of the present research project to ensure that the rights of all participants were not violated in any way (University of Minnesota 2003). Observing the participants rights was done in a way that did not compromise the objectivity of the research. Creswell (2009:87) noted that “It is important for researchers to protect their participants, develop a trust with them, and promote the integrity of research, guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organisations”. This study sought permission to solicit information from individuals and their organisations. Nachmias and Nachmias (2005:81) indicated that a signed consent from research participants should be obtained prior to the research project. This research project gave informants freedom of choice on whether to participate or not. The right to privacy was also observed and upheld by the current study. Confidentiality of information is one strategy that was used to ensure participant’s right to privacy was not violated. The data collected by the study was used for nothing else other than the academic purposes for which it was collected. The current study did not plagiarise or falsify results. All sources consulted were acknowledged. Results of the study are reported as they were found without exaggerating or concealing any information. The research project also complied with the University of South Africa’s policy on research ethics (2007) which amongst other principles call for ‘the respect of autonomy, promotion of beneficence, guarding against nonmaleficence and upholding justice.’

Research ethics were closely observed throughout the research as they are considered a fundamental concern of all social science researchers (University of Minnesota 2003). Research ethics were therefore observed and respected from planning, designing, implementing to the reporting of findings. The ethics provided a guiding set of principles that assisted researchers in conducting ethical studies (Johnson & Christensen 2008:102).

As part of fulfilling the ethics of research, this study began by writing requests to conduct the research from heads of institutions and departments which were under spotlight by the study. The letter communicated that the study was aimed at improving the management of public records thereby leading to effective public service delivery. Maboreke (2007) emphasised that gaining support from the management or head of departments is critical to the success of a research project. In addition, Kumar (2005:212) asserted that it is unethical to collect data without the knowledge of participants as well as their informed consent. On that note, the current study managed to get willing participants. That was a very crucial procedure because participants should not be forced to participate and they have a right to withdraw at any time (Creswell 2003:64). Owing to that emphasis, the current research provided participants with as much information as the investigator felt was needed to help participants make informed decisions about whether to participate or not (Bryman 2004:511 & Neuman 2006:135).

3.10 Limitations of the study

Obtaining permission from government ministries' permanent secretaries to conduct the research was a tiring and time consuming process. In some ministries, the investigator was referred to a series of individuals before getting to the appropriate person. Some ministry personnel seemed too busy and un-interested to help. As a result, the process became winding as the investigator was sometimes referred to people whom she would have previously talked to. That forced the investigator to at times by pass the protocol and went straight to the registry supervisor. The strategy worked very well as most of the registry supervisors participated except for a few who would direct the investigator to the permanent secretary, director or the human resources manager. Two ministries

demanded that there be a stamped letter from UNISA confirming that the investigator is a student. Emails of the investigator's communications with the UNISA were provided to the two ministries, but it was to no avail as the ministries demanded a stamped hard copy letter of confirmation. Despite those challenges, the investigator managed to win the participation of twenty three ministries out of thirty two ministries, bringing the study to a questionnaire response rate of 71.8%.

3.11 Evaluation of the research methodology

This section serves to communicate the unexpected situations, challenges faced and to acknowledge weaknesses that were noticed during the implementation of the research. Ngulube (2005:48) observed that all research methods have their weaknesses. As such, it is mandatory for researchers to evaluate their investigation procedures. The current study employed the survey research design which was supported by the triangulation technique. The approach enabled the investigator to gather reliable and verifiable data.

Using data obtained through interviews, the investigator noticed contradicting responses provided in questionnaires completed by registry supervisors. To that effect, it can be commented that questionnaires were not reflecting the true status quo as responses obtained were not conforming to the data obtained through document review and interviews. The problem of inaccurate responses by some registry supervisors is attributed to the fact that most registries were reported to be under staffed resulting in busy schedules. That may have contributed to the rushing through of the questionnaires so that they attend to other business. In light of that experience, the investigator recommends the verification of data obtained from questionnaires through the use of other research instruments such as document review, observations and or interviews.

Carrying out a research in government ministries was not as smooth as anticipated. Long and winding procedures had to be followed to obtain permission from the permanent secretaries. Some never responded while some responses took longer than the investigator could wait. As a result, the investigator proceeded without covering some of the ministries. To that effect, the investigator advises future researchers to be

familiar with what government ministries require so as to save time and unnecessary hassles.

Despite the fact that some interviews could not be done during scheduled times, it is worth to note that all scheduled interviews with NAZ archivists and RMAs were successfully conducted. The use of the triangulation technique permitted the investigation to attain what the study aimed to achieve.

3.12 Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter discussed how the research project was planned, implemented and completed. The matters discussed included the research design, study population and justification, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments. Other issues discussed in the chapter were data processing and analysis as well as ethical considerations. The chapter emphasised the need for researchers to state their research design and to ensure instrument validity and reliability. The triangulation approach helped the researcher to minimise the weaknesses inherent in each of the research instruments used for data collection. The data collected addressed the objectives of the study, research questions and the problem that the study was attempting solve. The chapter ended by evaluating the research methodology used. The next chapter discussed the findings of the data that was gathered through the research methodology communicated in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presented and analysed data gathered through the use of questionnaires, interviews and analysis of records survey reports. Using tables, graphs and pie-charts, this chapter illustrated various responses that were obtained. According to Kumar (2005:248), Minter and Michaud (2003:2) and the University of Leicester (2012:2) tables and graphs are ideal for conveying detailed information in a concise manner. Data gathered from interviews, questionnaires and content analysis of records survey reports was analysed and presented around appropriate themes. In cases where a certain theme was addressed by all the three research techniques employed, the researcher presented and analysed the findings together. That was done to obtain integrated insights into the subjects under the spotlight. As part of upholding ethics in scientific research, data presented in this chapter was not attributed directly to any respondents or a specific ministry. Responses and all information yielded by the study was presented in generality with the specific aim of looking into whether NAZ records surveys managed to attain their intended goal of effecting acceptable records management practices in public registries.

4.1 Response rate

Out of the dispatched 32 questionnaires, a total of 23(72%) were returned while the other 9(28%) were not returned. Data presented in this chapter was also gathered from ten informants who were drawn from the six NAZ records centres that are found in Zimbabwe. Those ten respondents consisted of archivists and RMAs. NAZ records centres had one archivist and one records management assistant except for Bulawayo and Harare records centres which had more than two archivists. For Bulawayo records centre, the researcher interviewed the chief archivist and the records management assistant while the deputy director and the chief archivist were interviewed for Harare

records centre (Head Office). With the recommendation of the interviewed archivists and the promoter of this study, the research interviewed three former NAZ archivists. Those were interviewed because they were once involved in executing records and information management surveys during their time of service with NAZ. That brought the total number of interviewees to thirteen. Table 3 displays the interviewees of this study.

Table 3: Interviewees of the study

Name of records centre	Number of archivists interviewed	Number of RMAs interviewed	Total number of interviewees at a records centre
Gweru Records Centre	1	1	2
Bulawayo Records Centre	1	1	2
Mutare Records Centre	1	-	1
Head Office Records Centre-Harare	2 (One of the archivists is the deputy director)	-	2
Masvingo Records Centre	1	-	1
Chinhoyi Records Centre	1	1	2
Total number of current NAZ personnel interviewed			10
Former NAZ archivists interviewed			3
Total number of interviewees			13

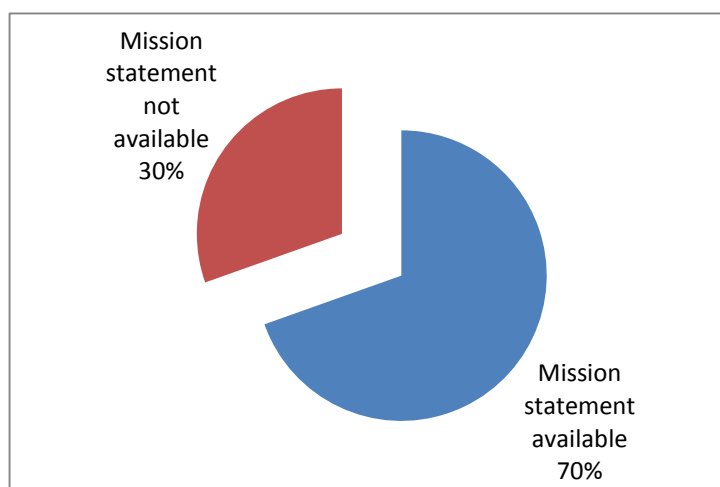
In addition to the use of interviews and questionnaires, the study analysed records survey reports of the surveyed departments. With regards to response rate, Girden

(2001:36) stated that there is no agreement as to what should be regarded an adequate response rate. However, Kothari (2004:23) indicated that a response rate of fifty percent is adequate for analysis while a response rate of sixty percent and seventy percent are good and very good respectively. Tripathi (2003:38) noted that a response rate of below fifty percent is poor and anything above ninety percent is excellent. The current study got a questionnaire response rate of 23 of 32 which is 71.8%. Adopting the arguments advanced by Kothari (2004) and Tripathi (2003), the response rate obtained in this study may be considered adequate to make unbiased analysis, interpretations, conclusions and meaningful recommendations.

4.2 Knowledge of mission statement

The opening question after the informant had provided background information sought to find out if registry supervisors had knowledge of their department's mission statement. A mission statement is an important aspect which defines the purpose in life of an institution. For that reason, the investigator deemed it essential to establish if public registries had mission statements in their respective departments. O'Leary (2005:34) described a mission statement as a clear, well written document defining the purpose or mission of the department. The current study sought not to find out the ministries' mission statements from registry supervisors as these were available on the Zimbabwe Online Government Website. Out of the 32 ministries in Zimbabwe, 26(81%) ministries had their mission statements displayed on home pages of their Websites while the mission statements of the remaining 6(19%) departments could not be found on-line. This research project sought to find out if public registries as departments had their own mission statements which were independent of the entire organisation's mission statements. Out of the 23 surveyed departments, 16(70%) indicated that their departments had mission statements while the remaining 7(30%) indicated that they did not have departmental mission statements. Figure 1 depicts the responses obtained on the availability of mission statements in public registries.

Figure 1: The availability of mission statements in public registries



Out of the 16 registry supervisors who informed the study that their departments had mission statements, 12(75%) managed to either state or attach a copy of their mission statement while the other 4(25%) neither stated their mission statements nor attached a copy as was requested in questionnaire item 2. Failure to state or attach a copy of the mission statement by those who had claimed to have mission statements meant that their responses had to be treated with caution.

4.3 Registry procedures manual

As discussed in Chapter Two, the registry procedures manual is critical to the implementation of sound records management practices. The document is an important guide to a proper and systematic management of records. Questionnaire items six and seven sought to establish whether the surveyed public registries had records procedures manuals in place. Out of the 23 surveyed departments only 8(35%) indicated that they had registry procedures manuals in place. Of the remaining 15(65%), three did not respond to the question leading the investigator to assume that they also did not have registry procedures manuals in place. Figure 3 illustrates the responses obtained concerning the existence of registry procedures manuals in public registries.

Figure 2: The existence of registry procedures manual in public registries

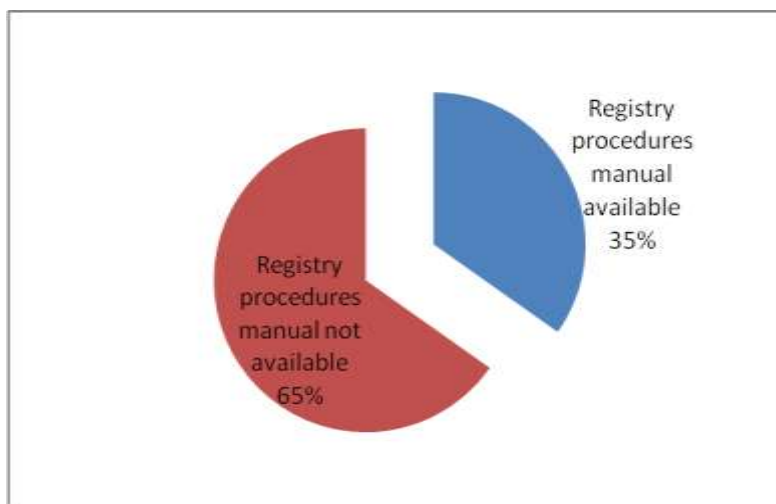


Figure 2 depicts that the majority of public registries were operating without a documented guide to assist them in systematically managing their records. A registry procedures manual is a critical document which public registries cannot afford to function without as it ensures retrieval efficiency, enhance service delivery, ensures records of ephemeral value that are no longer used are disposed of, ensure accessibility, security and even the preservation of records with long term value (Kemoni 2007:161).

registry supervisors were requested to indicate activities that were covered by their registry procedures manuals (See question 7 in Appendix A). Table 4 indicates their responses.

Table 4: Activities covered by registry procedures manual (n=8)

Activity covered by registry procedures manual	Number of departments indicating yes to the activity	Percentage
Responsibilities of registry staff towards users	3	38
How to handle incoming mail in paper form	8	100
How to handle incoming electronic mail	1	13

How to handle outgoing mail in paper form	8	100
How to handle outgoing electronic mail	1	13
Filing procedures	8	100
How to create a new file	8	100
How to record the existence of a new file	5	63
File movement control	8	100
File closure instructions	8	100
File storage methods	8	100
Security of records	6	75
Good housekeeping procedures	8	100

Table 4 shows that the mostly covered records management activities by registry procedures manuals were how to handle incoming mail in paper form, how to handle outgoing mail in paper form, filing procedures, how to create a new file, file movement control, file closure instructions, file storage methods and good housekeeping procedures. Those activities accounted for 8(100%) responses.

4.4 The influence of records surveys on key records management activities

Sound records management practices are amongst the keys to effective service delivery. As such, the study sought to find out how records surveys were impacting on public sector records management. Chapter Two reviewed relevant literature on the influence of records surveys on key records management activities. For instance, the Northern Territory Government (2006) indicated that the information gathered through records surveys is highly significant in developing records disposal schedules, records management procedures, preparing a disaster recovery and vital records plan, identifying records of enduring value and locating records due for destruction amongst other records management activities. The first objective of the study was to

demonstrate the influence of records surveys on key records management activities. To that effect, interview questions 11 (a) to (n) (See Appendix B) sought to find out areas of records management that NAZ offered guidance on when they conducted records surveys. Responses obtained from the interviewees were cross checked with information obtained through questionnaire item 11 as depicted in Table 5. The total number of registry supervisors who indicated the nature of records management guidance offered during surveys stood at 20 because as discussed in the coming sections, the other three had indicated that NAZ had never visited them.

Table 5: Records management guidance offered during surveys

Records management activity	Number of NAZ informants indicating that they covered the activity (n= 13)	Percent age	Number of registry supervisors citing that NAZ covered the activity (n=20)	Percent age
Records maintenance and use	13	100	20	100
Records appraisals	3	23	15	75
Records disposition	13	100	20	100
Creating retention and disposal schedules	13	100	20	100
Records preservation and conservation	13	100	20	100
Preparing a disaster management plan	13	100	20	100
Preparing a vital records management programme	13	100	20	100
Registry layout and design/Registry management	13	100	20	100

Automation/Managing electronic records	4	31	3	15
Housekeeping practices	13	100	20	100
File creation/Filing procedures	13	100	20	100
Records security	13	100	20	100

Table 5 indicates that NAZ and public registries agreed that most records management activities were covered during surveys. Differences in response were noted in such records management activities as records appraisals and the management of electronic records accounting for 3(23%) and 4(31%) respectively from NAZ personnel and 15(75%) and 3(15%) respectively from registry supervisors.

4.4.1 Records appraisal

Records surveys are the key mechanism for promoting successful records appraisal processes (Griffin & Roper 1999). As such, questionnaire item 11 and interview question 11 sought to establish if advice relating the appraisal of records was given to public registries during records surveys. Responses obtained were as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 Records appraisal guidance during surveys

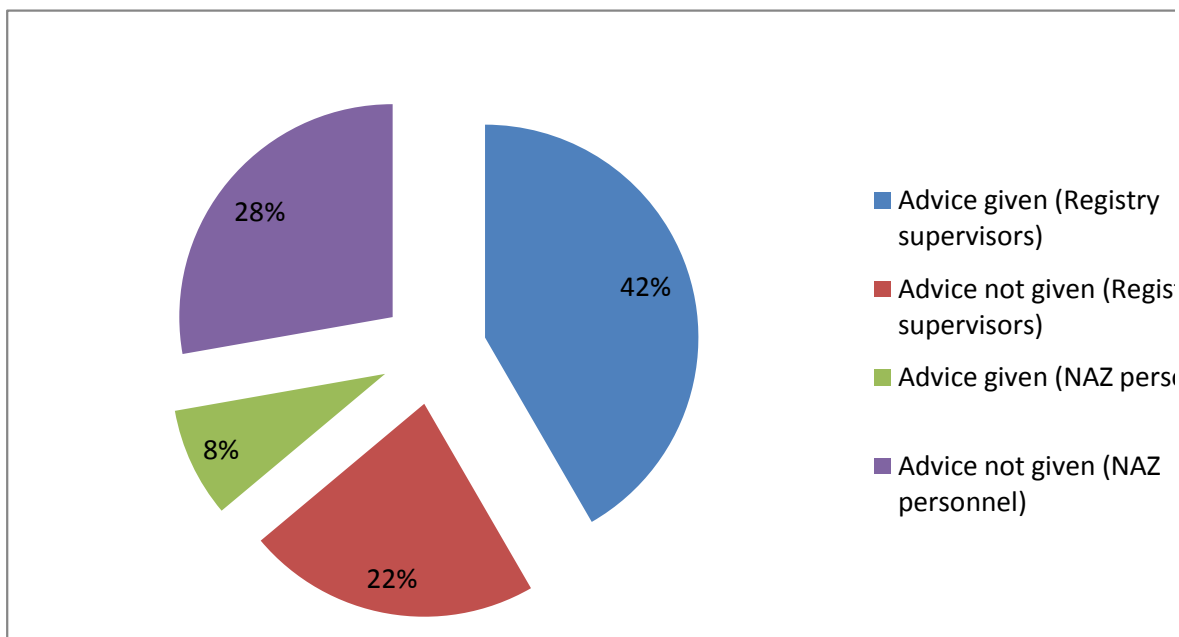


Figure 3 indicates a response rate of 15 (75%) registry personnel and 3(23%) NAZ personnel indicating that guidance relating records appraisal was offered to public registries during surveys. The remaining 5(25%) registry personnel and 10(77%) NAZ personnel said that guidance on records appraisal was not offered.

4.4.2 Records retention and disposal schedules

Questionnaire item 11 and interview question 11(e) sought to establish if NAZ offered guidance to public registries on creating retention and disposal schedules during surveys. That was in line with objective one which sought to demonstrate the influence of records surveys on key records management activities such as the creation of retention and disposal schedules. The study got a 100% response rate from the public registries respondents and the 13 interviewees (See Table 5). Item six of the records survey worksheet (See Appendix C) showed that the issue of retention schedules is covered during surveys. As a way of verifying whether the advice given on creating retention and disposal schedules was well received, questionnaire item 20 asked registry supervisors if they had retention and disposal schedules in their departments. Responses obtained were as depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Retention and disposal schedules in public registries

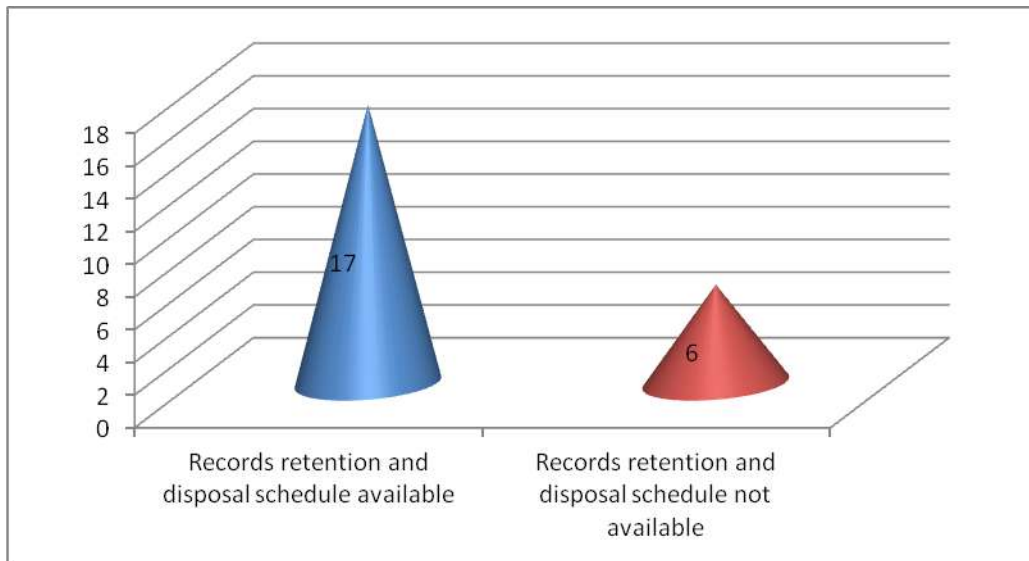


Figure 4 depicts that public registries with records retention and disposal schedules recorded a response of 17(74%) while those who indicated non-availability of the document accounted for 6(26%) responses. Those responses were verified through content analysis of records survey reports. The analysis corresponded with the six departments which indicated the absence of records retention and disposal schedules in their registries. Analysis of records surveys reports for the remaining 17 yielded contrary results. The reports showed that four departments that gave a yes response to the availability of the retention and disposal schedule did not have the documents in place. That led the investigator to assume that either their responses were false or the schedules were developed after NAZ's last survey at the public registry.

Informants from NAZ revealed that existing standing instructions from which retention schedules are developed were made and adopted by the Zimbabwe Records Committee. The committee comprised of the Public Service Commission, University of Zimbabwe's History Department, Office of the Auditor General, Justice Department and members of the creating agency. It was however sadly reported that the Zimbabwe Records Committee had been dormant for years.

4.4.3 Records disposition

Records disposition is a critical component of records management as it contributes to the efficient running of business in registries. In line with the first objective which sought to establish the influence of records surveys on key records management activities, this study asked respondents if advice on records disposition was provided during surveys. The study also asked registry supervisors about the methods of records disposition in use in their respective departments. Responses obtained through interview question 11(d) (See Appendix B) indicated that NAZ provided advice on records disposition during surveys (See Table 5). Questionnaire item 21 got 17(74%) out of 23 responses indicating the use of standing instructions for the disposal of records. The remaining 6(26%) had two departments that indicated the use of their organisation's policy documents while the other four respondents did not respond to the question.

When asked how they disposed of records that were no longer required for current business (See question 22 in Appendix A), the following responses displayed in Table 6 were obtained.

Table 6: Means of records disposition in public registries (n=23)

Methods of disposal	Number of ministries indicating a 'Yes' response	Percentage
Burning	1	4
Shredding	13	57
Transfer to NAZ records centre	17	74
Through National Waste Paper Collection (NWPC)	10	44

Table 6 shows that 17(74%) departments disposed of their records by transferring them to NAZ records centres. That was followed by shredding accounting for 13(57%) and

deposits to the National Waste Paper Collection (NWPC) recorded 10(44%) responses. The least method of disposal indicated was burning, scoring a response rate of 1(4%).

Item 23 of the questionnaire sought to establish if departments got certificates of destruction when they employed other means of disposal which was not transfer to NAZ records centre. The six respondents who indicated that they would dispose of their records by giving them to NWPC, through shredding or burning, informed the study that they neither sought permission from NAZ nor obtained a certificate of destruction. With regards to the disposition of records, document analysis and interviews revealed that disposal of records was rarely practiced in public registries. Interviewed information management professionals communicated that most public registries were congested with semi-active and in-active records, most of which were kept on the floor and in corridors. The interviewees added that the situation could be a sign of rare disposal practices in public registries.

4.4.4 Vital records management

As discussed in Chapter Two, vital records management planning is made possible by the information gathered through records surveys amongst other means. In an attempt to address the first objective which sought to demonstrate the influence of records surveys on key records management practices, questionnaire items 24 to 26 sought to gather information on vital records management in public registries. Obtained information was cross checked with data yielded from interview questions 11(h) as well as document analysis of records survey reports.

When asked if they had an in-house protection programme (See question 25 in Appendix A) the study obtained an 8(35%), 'yes' response while the remaining 15(65%) gave a 'no' response. That reflection was supported by all the 16 interviewed former and current NAZ personnel who reported that despite their always provided advice during records surveys for departments to have vital records protection programmes, most departments had not responded to the call. An examination of records survey reports indicated that public registries were constantly recommended to develop in-house vital records protection programmes. Figure 5 illustrates the responses given by

registry supervisors when asked if they had an in-house vital records protection programme.

Figure 5: In-house vital records protection programme

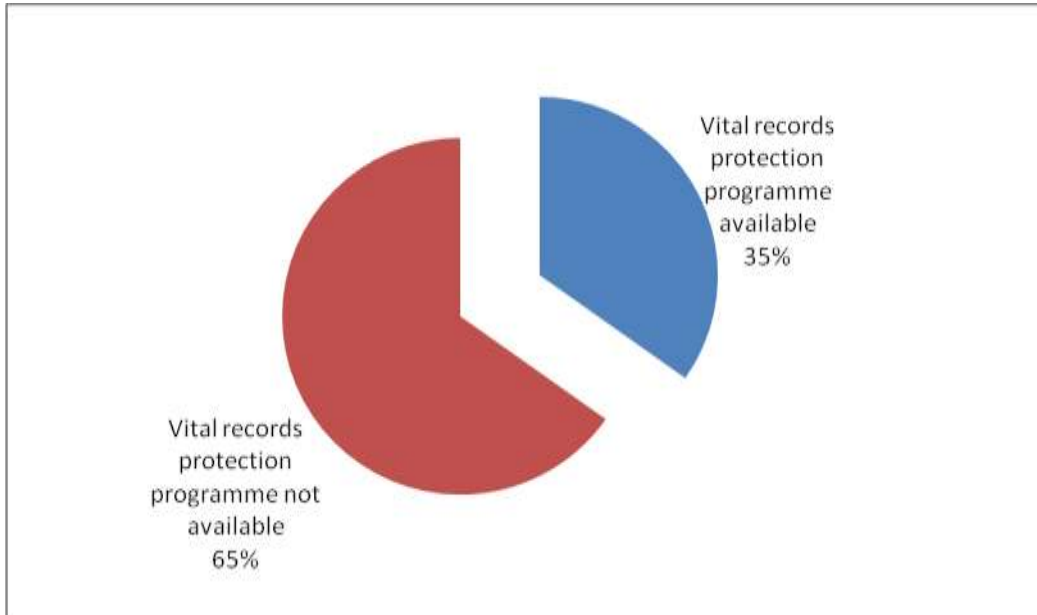


Figure 5 shows that 15(65%) had in-house vital records protection measures in place while the remaining 8(35%) did not have vital records protection programmes. Questionnaire item 26 requested those who had indicated the existence of in-house vital records protection programmes to show the methods they used for protecting vital records. Table 7 depicts the responses obtained.

Table 7: Vital records protection programmes (n=8)

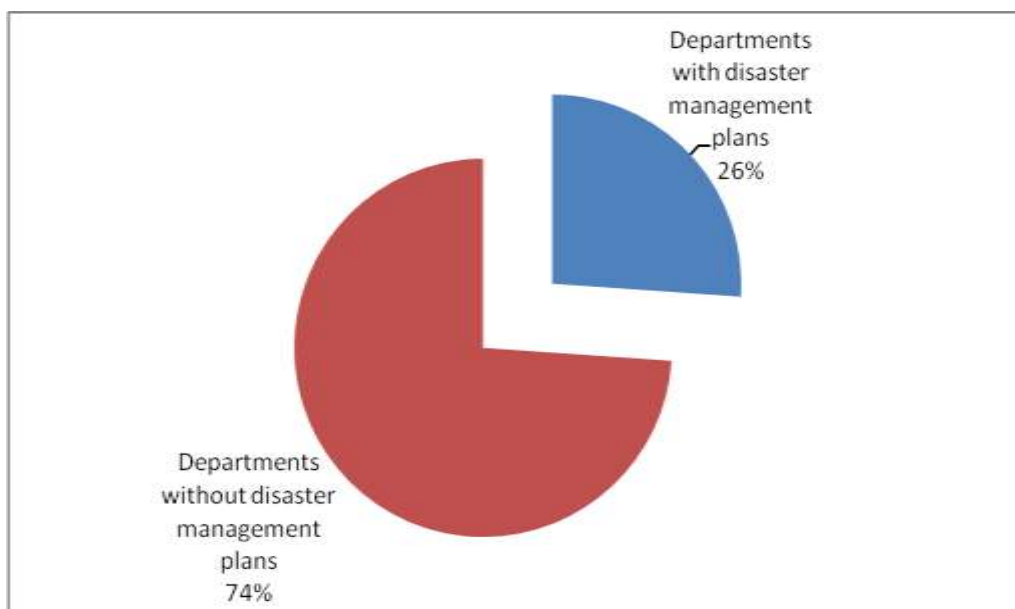
Method of protection	Number of registry supervisors indicating yes	Percentage
Offsite storage	6	75
Duplication	8	100
Microfilming	3	38
Digitising	7	88

Table 7 depicts duplication as the method that was mostly used for vital records protection accounting for a response rate of 8(100%). The method was closely followed by digitising and offsite storage accounting for 7(88%) and 6(75%) respectively. Microfilming was cited as the least used method of vital records protection mechanism scoring a response rate of 3(38%).

4.4.5 Disaster preparedness

The ability to handle disasters is critical to the survival of information centres. That makes disaster preparedness a key component of records management. With reference to the first objective, questionnaire items 27 and 28 as well as interview question 11(g) sought to gather information on disaster preparedness in public registries. All 16(100%) interviewees communicated that advice and guidelines on how to prepare disaster management plans was given to public registries during surveys (See Table 5). That led the researcher to anticipate the presence of disaster management plans in public registries as responses from the registry supervisors also showed that they received guidance on disaster preparedness (See Table 5). Ironically, only 6(26%) out of the 23 surveyed ministries responded that they had disaster management plans. The responses obtained are illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Disaster preparedness in public registries



The 6(26%) ministries that affirmed the availability of disaster management plans in their registries were asked to indicate what their check list included (See question 28 in Appendix A). Table 8 displays the responses that were obtained.

Table 8: Disaster preparedness checklist (n=6)

Check list item	Number of departments indicating yes to the item	Percentage
Pests	4	67
Fire	6	100
Leaking roof	3	50
Floods	6	100
Explosions	1	17
Data failure due to viruses	3	50
Data loss or alteration due to computer hackers	0	0
Thievery	5	83

4.5 Records surveys and the management of electronic records

The second objective of this study was to find out if electronic records were also examined during records surveys. Interview question 11(j) asked former NAZ archivists and current archivists if they offered guidance on electronic records management during records surveys. Four out of thirteen interviewees replied that they examined electronic records during surveys while three out of thirteen registry personnel indicated that advice on electronic records management was provided during surveys (See Table 5). Those who replied that they were not examining electronic records during surveys recorded a response rate of 9(69%) while the registry personnel who cited that electronic records management advice was not given recorded a response rate of

17(85%) (See Table 5). The high score indicating non-examination of electronic records during surveys was supported by observations made on the records survey worksheet which made no mention of electronic records (See Appendix C). The 4(30.8%) interviewees who informed the study that they covered electronic records explained that the word record does not separate paper records from electronic records; it embraced all information held in whatever format. In the words of one interviewee,

“Chapter 309 of 1986 NAZ Act stipulates that NAZ is obliged to carry out ‘records’ and information management surveys to all public registries. The word record as it is mentioned in section 6 and 7 of the 1986 NAZ Act did not separate paper from electronic records”

Questionnaire item 29 sought to establish if public registries created electronic records. Responses obtained are illustrated in Figure 3.

Figure 7: The creation of electronic records in public registries

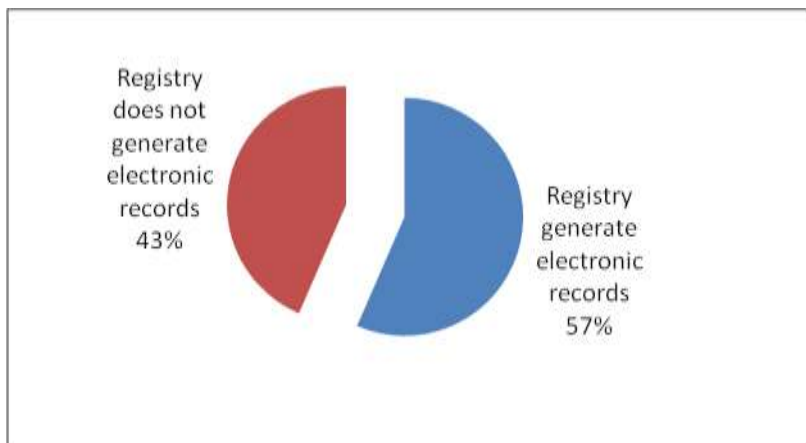


Figure 7 shows that 13(57%) out of 23 surveyed departments generated electronic records. when asked on measures that were in place to ensure the security of electronic records, the 13 informants who responded that they generated electronic records gave the responses illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9: The security of electronic records in public registries (n=13)

Mechanism in place	Number indicating method	Percentage
Log-in procedures	10	77
Passwords	13	100
Access levels	4	31
Firewalls	1	8
Gateway filters software	0	0
Audit trail to trace use	2	15
Encryption techniques	1	8

Table 9 shows that passwords and log-in procedures were the mostly used means of security for electronic records. The measures accounted for a response of 13(100%) and 10(77%) respectively. Table 9 indicates that gateway filters software were not used while firewalls and encryption techniques were the least used both accounting for an eight percent response.

Questionnaire items 33 and 34 sought to establish the methods that public registries employed to dispose of their electronic records. Table 10 indicates the responses obtained.

Table 10: Methods of disposing electronic records (n=13)

Disposal method	Number of responses indicating yes to the method	Percentage
Deleting	13	100
Formatting	13	100
Re-writing disk	1	8

Crushing disk	2	15
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Table 10 shows that deleting and formatting were the most used methods of electronic records disposition in public registries accounting for a 100% response. Disk crushing and disk re-writing recorded the lowest response of 2(15%) and 1(8%) respectively.

Questionnaire items 35 and 36 sought to establish challenges that public registries were facing regarding electronic records management. Table 11 illustrates the responses obtained.

Table 11: Nature of electronic records management challenges experienced in public registries (n=13)

Nature of challenge	Number of respondents indicating yes to the nature	Percentage
Technological obsolescence	13	100
Inadequate trained personnel in electronic records management	9	69
Absence of electronic records management policies	13	100
Policies are there, but there is implementation	0	0
Inappropriate equipment	13	100
Inadequate financial support	13	100

Table 11 indicates that technological obsolescence, absence of electronic records management policies, inappropriate equipment and inadequate financial support were cited as the mostly encountered challenges recording a 100% response rate. Inadequate training recorded 9(69%) while no one responded that policies were there but not being implemented.

4.6 The working relationship between NAZ and public registries.

As discussed in Chapter Two, a healthy working relationship between NAZ and the public registries is a corner stone to the success of records surveys. If surveys are to attain their intended goal of enhancing proper records management practices, there has to be a closer working relationship between NAZ and the public registries. The third objective of this study sought to establish the working relationship between NAZ and the public registries. Data for that objective was gathered through questionnaire items eight to ten (8-10) and 15 -18 as well as interview questions four and seven.

Questionnaire item eight sought to establish if registry supervisors had knowledge on the existence of NAZ. A hundred percent 'yes' response was obtained. However, out of the 23(100%) responses that replied yes to questionnaire item eight, three indicated that NAZ had never visited their offices. Responses obtained through questionnaire item 10 showed that at times NAZ went for more than the mandated four years without visiting some public registries. Table 12 shows responses obtained with regards to how often NAZ conducted surveys to public registries.

Table 12: NAZ records surveys to public registries-how often? (n=23)

Years when the last records survey was conducted	Number of ministries	Percentage
2008-2012	16	70
2004-2007	4	17
2000-2003	0	0
Survey was never conducted	3	13

The study found that the 3(13%) ministries that reported NAZ never visited their offices were giving inaccurate responses. That was evidenced by the presence of their files at NAZ with copies of records survey reports. One of NAZ interviewees explained that the reason for such responses could be because of high staff turnover in public registries. It

was further explained that because many departments did not respond to the need for a correspondence file between NAZ and their office, there was no continuity when an office experienced change of staff. Taking that explanation into consideration, it is possible that some registry supervisors might not have been with the organisation during the time of NAZ's visit(s).

4.7 Implementation of recommendations given to public registries by NAZ

In pursuance of the third objective, the study sought to establish if recommendations given to public registries during surveys were implemented. As such, questionnaire items 12, 13 and 14 sought to establish if public registries managed to implement recommendations provided to them by NAZ. Questions relating to the implementation of recommendations were responded by 20 departments which had replied that NAZ carried out records surveys at their institution (See Table 12). Responses obtained are illustrated in Figure 8.

Figure 8: Compliance with advice provided by NAZ

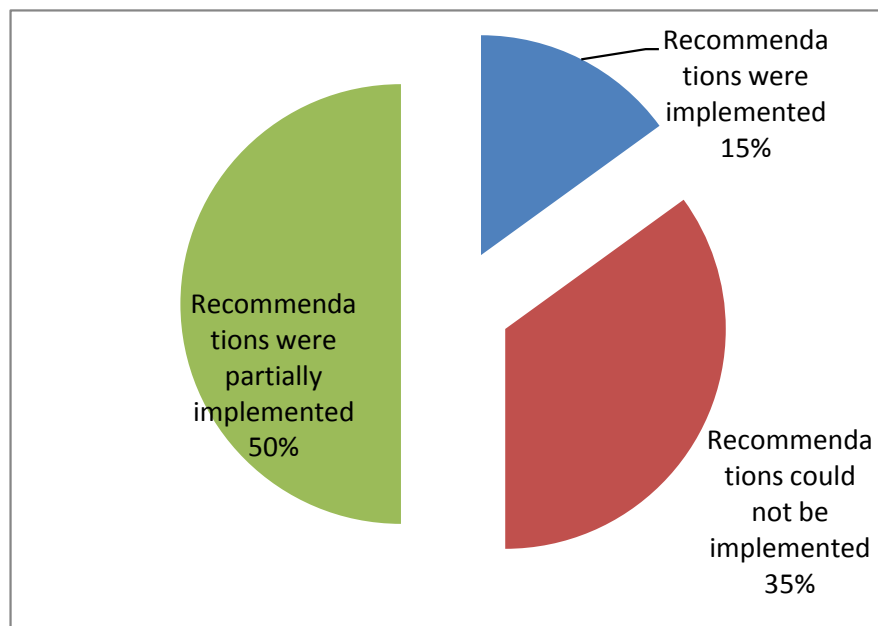


Figure 8 shows that 3(15%) ministries complied with recommendations provided by NAZ during and after surveys. Out of the remaining 17 ministries, 10(50%) indicated that they completely failed to implement the recommendations while the other 7(35%)

replied that they partly managed to implement the given recommendations. The reasons illustrated in Table 13 were obtained when respondents were asked why they partially and or totally failed to comply with the advice given by NAZ (See question 14 in Appendix A).

Table 13: Reasons for failing to implement recommendations given by NAZ during surveys (n=17)

Reason for failing to implement or partly implementing given recommendations	Number of registry supervisors indicating yes on the reason	Percentage
Financial constraints	17	100
Lack of top management support	14	82
Shortage of manpower	15	88
Absence of skilled personnel	4	24

Table 13 indicates that financial constraints, lack of top management support and shortage of manpower were all high contributors to public registries' failure to implement recommendations given by NAZ during and after records surveys.

The 7(35%) and the 3(15%) (See Figure 8) who indicated that they managed to partially and fully implement recommendations provided during and after records surveys were asked how the advice improved their records management activities (See question 13 in Appendix A). Table 14 illustrates the responses obtained.

Table 14: Benefits for complying with recommendations provided by NAZ (n=10)

Nature of benefit realised	Number of responses indicating yes to the benefit	Percentage
Advice given led to timely retrieval of records	10	100
In-active records which were congesting storage facilities were disposed of as advised	10	100
Security to records storage areas was increased thereby preventing unnecessary loss of records	10	100

Table 14 shows that advice given to public registries by NAZ during surveys helped public registries to efficiently retrieve their records, identify records that were due for destruction and improved their security to storage areas.

In an effort to further establish the working relationship between NAZ and public registries, questionnaire item 15 asked registry supervisors if they took the initiative to contact NAZ for professional guidance. 14(61%) out of the 23(100%) surveyed ministries gave a yes response. Table 15 illustrates data gathered through questionnaire item 16 on the means of contact that public registries used to consult NAZ.

Table 15: Methods of contact used to consult NAZ by public registries (n=14)

Method of contact used	Number of ministries indicating method	Percentage
Personal visits	8	57
Correspondence	12	86
Fax	2	14
Email	4	29

Telephone	10	71
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Table 15 shows that correspondence and telephone were the most used methods of contact to NAZ by public registries recording response rates of 12(86%) and 10 (71%) respectively. The least cited was fax and email recording responses of 2(14%) and 4(29%) respectively.

Questionnaire items 17 and 18 asked respondents if they faced any challenges when seeking advice. Out of the 14 who responded that they sometimes took the initiative to consult NAZ, only 3(21%) replied that they faced challenges when seeking advice from NAZ. Data gathered through questionnaire item 18 described the challenges that they faced as is shown in Table 16.

Table 16: Challenges faced by public registries when seeking advice from NAZ (n=3)

Nature of problem	Number of ministries indicating yes	Percentage
No response	1	33
Delays in response	3	100
Uncooperative staff	1	33

Table 16 shows that delays in response were the most experienced challenge by public registries when they contacted NAZ accounting for a 100% response. The challenges of getting no response and dealing with uncooperative staff were cited as the least experienced both recording 1(33%) response rate.

4.8 Training of information management professionals

The fourth objective of the study sought to establish the amount of training received by information management professionals. The information was gathered on the basis that

it calls for a well trained records management team for surveys to be successfully executed and for recommendations produced in records surveys to be seriously considered and properly implemented. To that effect, questionnaire items 38, 39 and 40 sought to gather data relating to the training of registry personnel in records management. When asked on the level of qualification obtained by registry personnel (See question 38 Appendix in A), 6(26%) of the surveyed 23 departments did not respond to the question. The responses of the 17 departments that responded are illustrated in Table 17.

Table 17: Level of qualification in records management (n=17)

Qualification	Number of registries indicating yes	Percentage
National Certificate	17	100
National Diploma	9	53
Higher National Diploma	5	29
Honours Degree	1	6

Table 17 shows that most public registry personnel are holders of national certificates in records management accounting for 17(100%). Honours degree qualification in records management recorded the least response of 1(6%). National diploma holders in records management accounted for 9(53%) response.

Questionnaire items 39 and 40 sought to establish if public registries offered staff development activities in records management. Data obtained through questionnaire item 39 indicated that 21(91%) out of the 23 surveyed departments offered staff development activities in records management. When asked what form of staff development they offered (See question 40 in Appendix A), the responses illustrated in Table 18 were obtained.

Table 18: Staff development activities in public registries (n=21)

Staff development activity	Number of respondents indicating yes	Percentage
In-house training	21	100
Seminar attendance	7	33
Conferences	4	19
Workshops	21	100

Table 18 shows that workshops and in-house training were the mostly used form of staff development both accounting for 21(100%) response. Conferences and seminar attendance were cited as the least used form of staff development recording a response of 4(19%) and 7(33%) respectively.

4.9 Strategies that could help records surveys foster proper records management practices: perspectives from informants

Data obtained through interview question 18 and questionnaire item 13 revealed that records surveys are a key mechanism to unlocking effective public service delivery. Following up to such responses, informants of the study were asked to share with the study, information that could be of relevance towards making records surveys attain their intended goal of enhancing acceptable records management practices (See questionnaire item 41 in Appendix A and interview question 23 in Appendix B). Responses obtained were as follows;

- The government of Zimbabwe must recognise and acknowledge the importance of registry personnel by ensuring that they are paid according to the qualifications they possess as they do with other professions. Registry personnel in Zimbabwe's public registries can only be paid up to National diploma level. That discourages registry personnel from pursuing further studies in records management

- There is need for records management associations in Zimbabwe
- Top management should be made to appreciate and acknowledge the need to give records management the support it deserves
- The intervals at which records surveys are conducted should be reduced
- There is need for a closer working relationship between NAZ and public registries

Data obtained through interview question 23 concurred to the need for regular contact between NAZ and public registries. Former and current NAZ archivists as well as RMAs informed the study that there was an urgent need to revive such critical associations as the Records and Information Management Association of Zimbabwe (RAIMAZ). The once vibrant association was reported to have been dormant for at least the last five years.

4.10 Summary of Chapter Four

Guided by research objectives and research questions, Chapter Four presented and analysed data obtained in the research project. The use of interviews, questionnaires and analysis of records survey reports provided the research project with data that gave insights into key issues that were under the spotlight by the study. Data obtained through questionnaires was cross checked with the information yielded through interviews and document analysis. The chapter presented data on such key issues as knowledge of mission statements, availability of registry procedures manuals in public registries, the working relationship between NAZ and public registries, the nature of records management advice provided during records surveys and the amount of records management training received by registry personnel in public registries. Data presented revealed that records surveys are struggling to fully attain their intended goal of enhancing acceptable records management practices. Information provided by respondents pinpointed lack of top management support, financial constraints and inadequate formal training in records management as some of the barriers to the goals of records surveys. The following chapter interprets the data presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

DATA INTERPRETATION

5.0 Introduction

This chapter searched for the broader meaning of the research findings through interpreting the results that were presented in Chapter Four. The process of data interpretation was essential for this study as it helped in advancing the understanding of key issues that were under the spotlight in the research project. The meaning making process offered in this chapter related the results of the study to the research problem, research questions, existing literature, models, concepts as well as previous research studies (Leedy & Omrod 2005:276). Data interpretation for this chapter followed the order in which results were presented and analysed in the previous chapter.

The intention of the study was to examine the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The perceived problem to be solved was that records surveys are a critical function in the management of public records, yet little has been done to establish why records surveys are failing to fully attain their intended goal of enhancing proper records management practices. The research questions and objectives from which the interpretation of the results was based are illustrated in Table 1

5.1 Mission statements in public registries

A mission statement is a clear and well defined written document communicating the purpose in life of an organisation (Marshall 2007). It is a declaration of what an institution aspires to be. The current study sought to establish the existence of mission statements in public registries. That was done because a mission statement is the starting point for the development of business goals and for setting objectives of the organisation. Gupta (2006) noted that an ideal mission statement is visionary, broad, realistic, motivational, short and concise and it must be easily understood. Ngulube and

Tafor (2006:74) were of the opinion that a mission statement should contain the purpose, business statement and values of the organization.

The study managed to access mission statements of 26 ministries from the Zimbabwe Government On-line Website. 16(70%) registry supervisors informed the study that their ministries had mission statements. Some of the surveyed ministries stated their mission statements in the spaces provided in questionnaire item five while some departments managed to attach copies of their registry mission statements. The components of an ideal mission statement as indicated by Gupta (2006) mentioned in the above paragraph were not met by the stated mission statements as well as the copies provided. Below are two examples of mission statements provided by the surveyed registries;

Example 1 *“Our objectives as records and information office are to maintain, analyse, design and administer an effective records system so as to ensure safe storage and easy retrieval of the entire organisation’s information, including manning the switchboard and ensure cleanliness of offices”.*

Example 2 *“To undertake the country’s internal security-related responsibilities involving maintenance of law and order, control of entry and exit of people, issuance of personal documents and to preserve national and historic documents and heritage”*

The two examples provided above were typical of the mission statements obtained by the study from public registries. The mission statements indicated that the intention of the registry was to maintain and administer effective records system. The mission statements provided failed to make a difference with the entire ministry’s mission statements. They appeared more like a duplication of the ministry’s mission statement. The public registries’ mission statements did not have the other attributes of a mission statement such as well defined goals and strategies as stipulated by Gupta (2006). That meant registry personnel were not conscious of what an ideal registry mission statement should constitute. As a result, the reliability of those registries 16(70%) that claimed to be in possession of mission statements was questioned. The results obtained in this study on mission statements were in harmony with the findings of a

researches conducted by Kemoni (2007:279) and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010:255). Those studies established that there was some uncertainty among archival professionals when it came to differentiating mission statements from other policy documents. The current study found that informants were not conscious of the critical attributes that mission statements should constitute. That was similar to Kemoni's (2007) study which revealed that respondents confused the intention of the registry to provide information in a timely manner and at lowest possible cost to be a mission statement. Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) also established that instead of being guided by a mission statement, registry personnel were guided by registry procedures manuals and registry supervisors in executing their work.

The absence of mission statements and the lack of critical components on public registries' mission statements entailed that public registries in Zimbabwe were unable to deliver their services efficiently and effectively. It also implied that the registries failed to provide a model for achieving their goals and a mechanism for measuring progress in attaining them. Without a mission statement it is extremely difficult to effectively execute an organization's core programmes and activities. The efficiency and effectiveness of government ministries largely depends on sound records management practices. As a result, the absence of a document that communicates the registry's purpose in life might compromise public service delivery because departmental goals, vision and strategies will not be clear.

5.2 Registry procedures manual

As discussed in Chapter Two, a registry procedures manual is an essential guide for the operations of a registry. The document provides registry personnel with procedures that are geared towards the attainment of acceptable records management practices. MacKenzie (2003) observed that a registry procedures manual should be developed to ensure records are properly managed through-out their life. A registry manual provides registry personnel with guidelines that define departmental records management procedures thereby serving as a model for establishing acceptable and sound records management practices.

The findings of the present study revealed that most public registries 15(65%) (See Figure 2) were operating without documented guidelines on how to execute their responsibilities. The research found that only 8(35%) of the surveyed public registries had registry procedures manuals. That was a disturbing indication as the registry manual is critical to the success of registry operations without which service delivery would be threatened. However, the ability of NAZ records surveys to influence the development of registry procedures manuals in 8(35%) public registries was commendable. The registry procedures manuals in the eight departments covered most of the key records management activities (See Table 4).

Mnjama (1996) observed that the presence of a registry manual is vital to the success of registry operations. It is therefore crucial that registries be in possession of a well defined document that clearly articulates their responsibilities. That is certainly one of the ways for cultivating sound records management practices which subsequently lead to effective service delivery. With the help of a registry procedures manual in public registries, it becomes relatively easy for government departments to make records available to the right person, at the right time and at the least possible cost (MacKenzie 2003). The high response indicating the absence of registry procedures manual in the current study was similar to the findings obtained by Kemoni (2007) in Kenya and Akussah (2002) in Ghana yet different from the results that were revealed by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) in Tanzania.

The low response obtained by the current study on the availability of registry manuals implied that registry personnel lacked the necessary guidelines for managing records throughout their life-cycle. Kemoni (2007) acknowledged the lack of registry manuals compromise the ability of action officers to access and use the records. Unlike the current study which established that the Zimbabwe records committee had been dormant for years, Kemoni (2007) revealed that Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS) had formed a records management committee that was active as it had managed to type a draft of a model registry manual. Kemoni (2007) indicated that KNADS had formed a records management committee that spearheaded the preparation of a records management manual. However, Kemoni (2007)

commented that it is doubtful if the records management committee finally prepared and released the records management manual to government ministries, given that a high response of 124 (79%) respondents said that they did not have the records management manuals. That was contrary to the results obtained by the current study which indicated that the Zimbabwe records committee had been dormant for years. That created disunity among information management personnel and promoted haphazard records management operations in public registries.

5.3 Records management advice offered to public registries by NAZ during surveys

The first objective of the study sought to establish the influence of records surveys on key records management activities. To that effect, the study asked registry supervisors and NAZ personnel to indicate records management activities that were covered during surveys. Records and information management surveys in Zimbabwe were legislated by Chapter 309, Section six and seven of the 1986 NAZ Act. According to Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010), it is a vital component of accountability to assign the National Archives a legislated obligation for the management of public records throughout their life cycle. The current study found that NAZ conducted records surveys in public registries at intervals of four years. However, it was established that NAZ at times went for more than four years without reaching some departments. The major identified reason for stretching for more than the legislated four years was inadequate financial support. That situation compromised continuity and consistency thereby negatively affecting the ability of records surveys to nurture acceptable records management practices. Failure by NAZ to meet the legislated four years meant that they were not able to do follow up inspections to ensure given recommendations were implemented. That interpretation was supported by the high response obtained from registry supervisors indicating that they were not able to implement advice given by NAZ.

The present study found that NAZ records survey teams offered guidance on the following records management activities:

- Records maintenance and use

- Records appraisals
- Records disposition
- Creating retention and disposal schedules
- Preparing disaster management plans
- Developing vital records management programmes
- Registry layout and design
- Housekeeping practices
- Filing procedures
- Records security

The present study established that most departments were not able to implement the recommendations provided by NAZ personnel during and after records surveys. The reasons that were given for failing to implement the given advice included financial constraints, lack of top management support, shortage of manpower and lack of skilled personnel (See Table 13 and Figure 8). The failure by public registries to implement records management advice given by NAZ during surveys entailed adverse repercussions which could have led to poor records management practices thereby compromising public service delivery. The results obtained by the study were similar to Ndenje-Sichalwe's (2010) research in Tanzania which indicated the non-implementation of advice relating to the management of their records. The same challenge was observed by Kemoni's (2007) study in Kenya which revealed lack of support from senior management as one of the reasons for non-compliance with records management advice provided to registry personnel. In another study conducted by Mnjama (2003:93), it was established that the advisory role of the Kenya National Archives was often ignored in most government ministries and departments. Similar results were obtained by Mazikana (1997:148) who found that most National Archives were not able to carry out regular visits to public ministries and departments to undertake surveys. In another

study conducted by Nengomasha (2009:206), it was observed that the National Archives of Namibia was unable to conduct routine visits to government ministries mainly because of shortage of staff in the archival institutions. To that effect, Mnjama (2003:94) commented that the reasons which have barred sound records management practices in public registries are within the public institutions themselves and the National Archives' failure to effectively assume its responsibilities as the legal and nation's adviser to government departments on acceptable records management practices.

5.3.1 Records surveys and appraisal

Records surveys are the key mechanism for promoting successful records appraisal processes (Griffin & Roper 1999). The first sub research question to the first research objective sought to establish the role of records surveys in records appraisal. The records inventory created as a result of a records survey becomes the working document for planning the appraisal process, preparing the records retention schedule, establishing the vital records protection programme and making other improvements to the records management programme. Man (2010:106) revealed that records surveys are intertwined to the critical records management activities such as appraisal which is the process of determining the value of a record so that an informed decision is made on what to do with the record. That would take an organisation a long way towards meeting its business needs, accountability and community expectations. Cook (2010:73) noted that accountability is seen as the main principle in the appraisal of public records.

Amongst the goals for this study was to establish how records surveys were impacting on key records management issues such as records appraisal. The analysed NAZ records survey worksheet revealed that the focal points were on quantity, physical form, type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, use and rate of accumulation. Such information was used for planning informed archival activities. That explains why records surveys have been considered to be inextricably linked to other records management activities including records appraisal

In Zimbabwe, records and information management surveys gathered information in public registries on the functions of their records, records classes, covering dates and quantity (See Appendix C Chapter Four). Such information enabled records survey teams to find out what records existed, how they are used and where they are kept. Understanding the context in which records are created and kept is vital to the success of records appraisal activities. The majority of registry supervisors 15(75%) indicated that NAZ was offered guidance on records appraisal during surveys (See Table 5). However, that response was contrary to what the majority of NAZ personnel informed the study. As communicated in Table 5, 3(23%) NAZ personnel indicated that they offered guidance on records appraisal to public registries during surveys while the remaining 10(77%) said that guidance on records appraisal was not offered. The implication of such a wide discrepancy between NAZ personnel and public registry responses might mean that the term 'records appraisal' is not well understood amongst information management professionals. In the words of one interviewee,

“Records appraisal is the responsibility of NAZ records centres which public registries should not be burdened with. Public registries are given advice on the need to identify semi current and in-active records so that they are transferred to NAZ records centres thereby creating space for current records”.

The interviewees of the study communicated that those registry supervisors who reported that they received guidance on records appraisal might have been mistaking the identification of records that are due for destruction and or transfer to NAZ as the appraisal process. However, the 3(23%) NAZ personnel who indicated that they offered guidance on records appraisal explained that they were trying to discourage public registries from transferring everything to NAZ records centres as that was causing storage challenges. As a result, guidance was offered on how to look into their records and determine which could be transferred to NAZ and which records could be destroyed. The discrepancy of information provided by NAZ personnel relating records appraisal implied that the information management professionals were not clear of what records appraisal entailed. That probably reflected the need for archivists and records

management assistance to take refresher courses to remain on course and before great damage befalls the discipline.

5.3.2 Records surveys and the creation of retention and disposal schedules

As communicated in the previous section, records surveys provide essential information used in the appraisal process and the end product of the appraisal of records is the retention and disposal schedule (Agere, Lemieux & Mazikana 1999:46). The second sub research question to the first objective sought to establish how records surveys impacted the creation of records retention and disposal schedules. Mary State Archive (2009) and Delaware Public Archives (2010) indicated that a records survey is the first step in preparing a records and disposition schedule. In addition, Hare and McLeod (1997:21) observed that formulation of retention schedules is made possible by information obtained from records surveys. This study obtained a hundred percent response from both NAZ personnel and registry supervisors indicating that advice was offered on the creation of retention and disposal schedules (See Table 5).

Records retention and disposal schedule helps an office to determine for how long records should be kept and when they should be disposed of (Ngulube & Tafor 2006: 67). Despite the fact that the study got a 20(100%) response from registry supervisors indicating that guidance was offered on retention and disposal scheduling, Figure 4 showed that 6(26%) registries had no retention and disposal schedules to guide them in disposing of their records. The non-availability of retention and disposal schedules in 6(26%) public registries implied that disposition was rarely practised and when it was done, it was on an ad-hock basis. That probably explained why some government departments were congested with semi and non-current records kept in corridors and on the floor in offices as was attested by the interviewed NAZ personnel. Similarly, Ngulube and Tafor (2006:67-68) indicated that where disposal schedules were not available, registries tended to dump records in whatever space was available thereby congesting offices. The absence of such a critical document as the retention and disposal schedule in public registries implied that NAZ records survey teams had not effectively helped government departments to develop records retention and disposal schedules. That implication was supported by the finding that some government

departments went for more than the stipulated four years without surveys being done at their offices (See Table 12). The study also found that NAZ was unable to do follow-ups after surveys due to limited resources. Consequently, the intended results of records surveys were not fully realised. Perhaps that explained why the majority of public registries did not have records retention and disposal schedules resulting in expensive office space being clogged up.

The findings of this study on the absence of retention and disposal schedules in most public registries were in harmony with Kemoni (2007) who found that most ministries in Kenya lacked retention and disposal schedules and therefore did not dispose of their records on a regular basis. Ndenje-Sichalwe's (2010) found that retention and disposition schedules were developed but not implemented. Akussah (1996) observed the lack of comprehensive records retention schedules in Ghana's public offices and Mnjama (2004) who established the lack of retention and disposal schedules in many African and Caribbean countries.

The lack of retention and disposal schedules in public registries threatens public service delivery since records disposal is a critical activity in the life-cycle of records. Griffin and Roper (1999) said that to balance economy with good administration, it is necessary that records are neither disposed of too early or too late in their life cycle. Early disposition may lead to the destruction of records of enduring value and a late disposition clog important office space and makes retrieval difficult while compromising service delivery.

Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) indicated that records retention and disposition schedules are critical to every records management programme. It is therefore essential for government departments' records management systems to be able to develop and implement decisions on the retention and disposition of records. The absence of retention and disposal schedules in most government departments reflected a poor management of current records.

Marshall (2006:10) indicated that it is important for the national archivists to collaborate with government agencies and determine for how long records must be retained for the

purposes of government business, for administrative, legal or fiscal reasons. Such deliberations should be headed by records management committees and associations. On that issue, it was disappointing to establish that the Zimbabwe Records Committee as RAIMAZ had been dormant for years.

5.3.3 The influence of records surveys in creating vital records management programmes

Records surveys are a key exercise aimed at improving records management activities such as developing vital records protection plans. The fourth sub research question to the first objective sought to find out the role of records surveys in developing vital records management programmes. As communicated by Queensland State Archives (2008), records surveys can serve to ensure vital records are identified and managed appropriately. The California Records and Information Management Department (2003) supported that observation when it stated that a well planned and written records retention schedules can be extremely helpful in rescue planning. The flow chart displayed in section 2.14.2 (See Chapter Two) demonstrated that a well designed records schedule and a good records inventory comes from a successful records and information management survey. Using a properly designed records schedule, disaster recovery teams can be helped to establish rescue priorities and procedures for each records media. In essence, it is from a good records inventory that locations of vital records are shown, hence making it faster to retrieve vital records in the event of a disaster.

The current study found that only 8(35%) public registries had in-house vital records protection programmes (See Figure 5). Those findings were in harmony with the information obtained through analysis of records survey reports that repeatedly urged public registries to develop in-house vital records protection programmes. Interviewed NAZ personnel reported that most public registries had not responded to the advice by NAZ to develop in-house vital records protection programmes. The absence of vital records protection programmes in Zimbabwe's public registries might have meant that critical records which are difficult and even impossible to replace could be lost or damaged. If that happens, the nation's memory would be impaired and the ability of an

organisation to resume its operations after experiencing a disaster may not be possible. Examples of such documents that are critical to the ongoing of an organisation's operations may include but not limited to insurance policies, minutes of board meetings; policy documents, annual reports, bank balance statements, certificates of incorporation, copyrights, corporate seals, deeds, contracts, loan agreements and mortgages amongst other records.

Failure to develop vital records management programmes defeats the entire purpose of conducting records surveys. According to the Caribbean Collection (2010) the idea of archival records surveys is to save records that are not just important today, but will be important for future generations. The Queensland State Archives (2008) highlighted that records surveys can serve to ensure vital records are identified and managed appropriately. That line of thought was supported by the California Records and Information Management Department (2003) which communicated that a well planned and written records retention schedule can be extremely helpful in rescue planning.

On that note, it may be asserted that it is important to give vital records the protection they deserve as they are critical records which are difficult and even impossible to replace if they are lost or damaged. The Caribbean Collection (2010) highlighted that the idea of archival records surveys is to save records that are not just important today, but will be important for future generations. The absence of vital records protection programmes in most public registries might mean that government departments were unable to achieve their objectives more economically, efficiently and they lacked self assurance that holds the public trust. In the public sector, vital records programmes protect the public interest and ensure maintenance of individual rights. It is therefore important that government departments identify vital records and give them proper management. Failure to give these records proper management would place the interest of the public in danger and the daily operations of an agency would cease.

As indicated by the Delaware Public Archives (2010), if vital records are not properly managed, the organisation will be prone to litigation, exposed to unplanned and unnecessary expenses. For a successful vital records management programme to exist there is need for identification and analysis of record series which can be effectively

done during a routine records inventory. In actual fact, the records inventory is regarded as the first step in developing a comprehensive records management programme.

5.3.4 Disaster preparedness

The ability of an organisation to manage disaster is fundamental to the protection of records from both human and natural disasters. The fifth sub research question to the first objective sought to establish the role of records surveys in preparing disaster management plans. A disaster management plan enables efficient, quick and informed response to a crisis. According to Ngulube (2005:15) a disaster preparedness plan is crucial to ensuring adequate protection of documentary heritage so that it survives into the future. The current study found that all the 20(100%) registry supervisors and 13(100%) NAZ personnel agreed that guidance relating disaster preparedness was offered during records surveys. Contrary to the affirmative response on guidance relating disaster preparedness being offered, the current study found that only 6(26.1%) of the surveyed ministries had disaster management plans while the remaining 17(73.9%) indicated that they did not have the important document (See Figure 6). That implied records in government departments were at risk as there were no disaster management programmes in place for most ministries.

Similar to this study are researches which were done by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010), Kemoni (2007), Chachage (2005) and Akussah (2002). Those studies found that the absence of disaster management plans in government departments was the major drawback to recordkeeping. Ndenje-Sichalwe's (2010) study in Tanzania found that government ministries lacked written disaster management plans and security control of their records. The study by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) showed that 86(71.7%) registry personnel did not have written disaster preparedness plans. Similarly, the research by Kemoni (2007) in Kenya revealed that 140(89.2%) respondents had neither criteria for evaluating potential hazards nor a disaster management plan. Akussah's (2002:162) study indicated that most government registries in Ghana did not have any idea about disaster preparedness. The absence of disaster management plans in most government departments might have meant that the survival of some records and archives into the future was lost.

The findings of the present study further concurred with Ngulube (2007:47) who observed that archival institutions in South Africa did not make disaster preparedness part of the preservation strategy. The study by Ngulube (2007:47) found that only four archival institutions had written disaster preparedness plans. The lack of disaster management plans may result in irreversible destruction and absolute loss of important records in government ministries. That would compromise efforts to foster accountability, transparency, good governance and effective service delivery. It was therefore essential that NAZ helped public registries develop comprehensive disaster management plans. According to Mansell (2003:14) a well prepared disaster management plan makes it relatively easier to manage disasters before they cause irreparable damage.

Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) noted that preparing how to handle a disaster before it occurs is vital to the preservation and protection of records and archives. It may not be possible to recover items lost in a disaster. To that effect, it is essential that there be arrangements in place to mitigate the consequences of a disaster. Records and archives are prone to a variety of disasters which include but not restricted to pests, floods, explosions, data failure due to viruses, thievery, rodents, mould, humidity, power outages and bomb threats. That means protection of records should not be limited to environmental or natural threats as is the case with many disaster management plans in Zimbabwe's government departments (See Table 8). Most departments that had indicated the existence of the document revealed that disasters such as explosions and data loss or alteration due to computer hackers were not included in their check list. According to Ngulube (2003:8), a disaster management plan should include the protection of records and archives from all possible disasters so that the documentary heritage is preserved into the future.

5.4 Records surveys and the management of electronic records.

The second objective for this study sought to establish whether electronic records were also examined during surveys. The study found that 13(57%) out of the 23 surveyed ministries created electronic records. It was however disturbing for the study to yield a high response of 9(69%) from NAZ personnel indicating that they did not offer guidance

on managing electronic records. Informants of the study argued that NAZ Act of 1986 Chapter 309 Section six and seven from which the surveys are derived makes no mention of examining electronic records. That probably explains why the aspect of electronic records management is not included in the records survey worksheet used by NAZ. The results were in harmony with the research conducted by Mnjama (2005:465) which revealed that archival legislation in most countries in the ESARBICA region failed to address issues relating to electronic records. According to Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) archives legislation should provide adequately for such electronic records and outline how to deal with electronic records creation, accessibility and disposal.

Existing literature has it that records surveys should cover all records, whatever their form and location (The Public Record Office 1999) and (Mary State Archive 2009). In addition Charman (1984) noted that records surveys are not only essential in the better management of paper records but also useful in the introduction of microforms and data processing. In support of those schools of thought, the current study obtained 4(31%) interview responses indicating that they offered advice on electronic records management. The 4(31%) responses from NAZ personnel who affirmed to giving advice on electronic records management argued that the word record as it is presented in Chapter 309; Section six and seven of the 1986 NAZ Act did not separate paper records from electronic records.

The results obtained by the current study concurred with Ngulube and Tafor (2006) who attested to the situation that most developing countries do not cover electronic records when executing records survey exercises. The study by Ngulube and Tafor (2006) revealed that only two member countries of the ESARBICA region included electronic records during records surveys and inspection. The findings of the current research were also in harmony with Kemoni (2007), Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) and Wato (2006) who established that Archives personnel had not undertaken a survey to determine the extent of management being given to electronic records created in the public sector. Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) revealed that the National Archives personnel had not undertaken a survey to determine the number of electronic records being created in the ministries. Wato's (2006:76) research reported that the National Archives in the

ESARBICA region had not carried out a survey on the status of e-records created by government bodies in member countries and had no capacity to preserve electronic records due to lack of specialized storage facilities, skills and controlled environment. The lack of professional guidance to public registries on managing electronic records meant that the government's electronic records were at risk of misuse and loss. It might have also implied that the government was in danger of wasting resources and funds. The need to support electronic government initiatives by a sound records management programme should not be over-emphasised; hence the need for records surveys to look into electronic records creation, maintenance, use and disposal.

The need for records surveys to cover electronic records is an important matter which information management professionals must seriously consider. Katuu (2009:35), Moloji and Mutula (2007:295), Mutiti (2001:60) and Wamukoya (2000:29) observed that government electronic records need as much attention as paper records. The current study sought explanation from those respondents who indicated that they were not offering guidance on electronic records management. The interviewees identified unclear archival legislation which makes no explicit mention of electronic records, rapid changing technology which most of the staff fail to cope with and a general lack of expertise among archives and records management personnel in the area of electronic records management. The findings relating to surveys and electronic records management was in agreement with Mutiti (2001) who revealed that the responsibility of managing electronic records was usually left to Information Technology (IT) specialists because archivists and records managers lacked the required expertise in managing electronic records. The lack of skills in the management of electronic records implied that NAZ had lost intellectual and physical control over electronic records. That observation made by the current study was in harmony with Moloji's (2009) study which observed the inadequacy of staff and the lack of skills for managing electronic records in the government of Botswana.

5.5 Records management training needs for public registries personnel

The quality of a records management programme is directly related to the amount of training received by the personnel that operates it. To that effect, objective four sought

to assess the training needs for information management professionals. Similarly, the success of records surveys in nurturing proper records management practices largely depends on the expertise of the surveying team and the knowledge as well as the zeal of the surveyed departments. Ngulube (2001) reflected that education and training are the basic needs for promoting the management of records and archives. Katuu (2009) emphasised the need for developing countries to prioritise the education and training of information management professionals to tackle the challenges of governance in the electronic age. The current study established that most public registry personnel in Zimbabwe were holders of national certificates in records management. Honours degree qualification in records management recorded the least response of 1(6%) while national diploma holders in records management accounted for 9(53%) response. The presence of at least a holder of a national certificate in records management within most public registries implied that there was better management of records in government departments. Kemoni (2007) highlighted that appropriate records management was dependent upon registry staff receiving education and training in records management. Yusof and Chell (1998:25) indicated that education, knowledge and skill were an essential element in the continuing development of sound records management practices. The high response indicating national certificates holders in public registries might have been a result of several institutions that were now offering training in records management. Such institutions included the Midlands State University (MSU), NUST, Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), Gweru; Harare and Kwekwe Poly-Technical Colleges. The amount of tertiary institutions that offered records management courses reflected the beginning of a new era in Zimbabwe, where records management is given the professional recognition it deserves.

Despite the presence of at least a national certificate holder in records management within government ministries in Zimbabwe, interviewed NAZ personnel revealed that the bulk of records personnel were people who had only completed ordinary or advanced level. In the words of one interview;

“Most registry personnel in public registries do not have formal training in records management. They are people who were once office orderlies, messengers, receptionists....”

The sentiments expressed by one of NAZ personnel implied lack of professionalism in records management, hence compromising effective public service delivery. The sentiments shared by the interviewees of the current study were similar to Ndenje-Sichalwe's (2010) study in Kenya and the research done by Lyaruu (2005) in Tanzania. Those studies observed that the lack of professionalism in records management could be the main challenge affecting registries in most government ministries. Wamukoya (2000) emphasised that training is an important component of modern management. He said that “records personnel at all levels require appropriate training not only to acquire knowledge and skills but also to gain confidence in what they do” (Wamukoya 2000:30).

5.6 The ability of records surveys in fostering sound records management practices

Records surveys are a crucial exercise that can lead to effective public service delivery through enhancing acceptable records management practices. The fifth objective of the study sought to develop strategies that could help records surveys foster proper records management practices. Northumbria University (2001), Charman (1984), New Castle University (2009), Maboreke (2007) and Dewah (2010) confirmed that records surveys are a key mechanism for gaining intellectual and physical control over records. It can therefore be said that records surveys lay the foundation for sound records management practices. Information obtained during records surveys can be used for the analysis of current and past recordkeeping practices. Such analysis prepares the basis on which acceptable records management systems can be built.

The findings of the study showed that 3(13%) ministries indicated that NAZ never conducted records surveys in their ministries (See Table 12). However, that information was contrary to the information yielded through document analysis. The 3(13%) ministries had files at NAZ with copies of records survey reports that were produced after surveys were done to them. An explanation of that discrepancy from NAZ

personnel revealed that public registries were experiencing a very high rate of staff turnover. It was added that because registry personnel in most government departments were not responding to the call by NAZ to have correspondence files in place, there was no continuity whenever there was change in staff, hence the response that NAZ never visited their offices by some registry supervisors. The reported high rate of staff turnover and the absence of correspondence files between NAZ and public registries was a hindrance that disturbed records surveys from attaining their intended goal of nurturing acceptable records management practices.

Effective service delivery is a result of sound records management practices. As such, the first objective of this study sought to establish the influence of records surveys on key records management activities. Griffin and Roper (1999) observed that records surveys provides the foundation on which records appraisals are performed, retention and disposal schedules are created and the bases on which vital records management programmes are developed. That makes records surveys invaluable for records management activities. As shown in the flow chart provided in Chapter Two, records surveys, retention schedules, disposal schedules, vital records management programme and records appraisal are different records management activities that are tightly linked.

The current study concurred with Kemoni (2007) and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) who observed that records surveys gather information of records held by the organisation for the purposes of improving the organisation's records management practices thereby promoting efficiency, good governance, accountability, transparency and effective service delivery. Data gathered by the current study revealed that information obtained during surveys and the nature of guidance offered facilitates the planning for offsite storage, reviewing records systems and locating records due for destruction.

Records surveys are amongst the principal means by which public offices can achieve sound records management practices. Ngulube and Tafor (2006:62) observed that records surveys are done to help the national archives foster acceptable records management practices from creation to ultimate disposition. The purpose for conducting records surveys is to obtain information for the analysis of current and past

recordkeeping practices of organisation. Information obtained during surveys provides the foundation for the development of records retention and disposition schedules, records preservation strategies, disaster management plans, vital records management programmes and acceptable housekeeping practices amongst other records management activities.

5.7 Summary of Chapter Five

Chapter Five was an interpretation of what the research found regarding the impact of records surveys in managing public records in Zimbabwe. Using the results that were presented in the previous chapter, implications for the study were provided. The process was done in light of the available literature, existing records management concepts and previous research projects of similar nature to this study. The researcher made an attempt to ascribe meanings and implications to the research findings. That was done through explaining established situations regarding mission statements in public registries, the availability of registry manuals, and the influence of records surveys on key records management activities as well as the training needs for information management professionals. In this chapter the major drawbacks identified to be hindering records surveys from attaining their intended goal of nurturing sound records management practices were discussed and explained. The identified challenges included lack of ideal mission statements, absence of formal guides to records management, irregular visits by NAZ to public registries, high staff turnover in public registries, financial constraints, weak archival legislation, and lack of top management support as well as untrained registry personnel. The following chapter summarises the results of the current research project, draws conclusions, makes recommendations and suggests possible areas for further research.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter serves to provide the conclusions, recommendations and possible areas for future research based on the results that were presented in Chapter Four and interpreted in Chapter Five. The conclusions and recommendations provided in this chapter were guided by the research purpose, research questions and the problem that the study attempted to solve as communicated in Chapter One.

6.1 Research purpose and research questions

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The study sought to establish if records surveys had an impact in key records management activities. Research questions were developed in light of the research purpose. The questions included an enquiries into the relationship between records surveys and other records management activities, the management of electronic records, the working relationship between NAZ and public registries as well as the registry personnel's knowledge and expertise in records management.

6.2 Summary of the findings

Using the research questions stated above, this section provides a summary of the research findings.

6.3 Mission statement in public registries

Out of the 32 ministries in Zimbabwe, 26(81%) ministries had their mission statements displayed on home pages of their Websites while the mission statements of the remaining 6(19%) departments could not be found on-line. From the total of 23 surveyed departments, 16(70%) indicated that their departments had mission

statements while the remaining 7(30%) indicated that they did not have departmental mission statements. Out of the 16 registry supervisors who informed the study that their departments had mission statements, 12(75%) either stated or attached a copy of their mission statement while the other 4(25%) neither stated their mission statements nor attached a copy as was requested in questionnaire item 2.

6.4 Registry procedures manual

8(35%) out of the 23 surveyed departments indicated that they had registry procedures manuals in place. Of the remaining 15(65%), three did not respond to the question. The mostly covered records management activities by registry procedures manuals were how to handle incoming mail in paper form, how to handle outgoing mail in paper form, filing procedures, how to create a new file, file movement control, file closure instructions, file storage methods and good housekeeping procedures. Those activities accounted for 8(100%) response.

6.5 The influence of records surveys on key records management activities

NAZ and public registries agreed that most records management activities were covered during surveys. The results of the study indicated that information gathered through records surveys is highly significant in developing records disposal schedules, records management procedures, preparing a disaster recovery and vital records plan, identifying records of enduring value and locating records due for destruction amongst other records management activities.

6.5.1 Records appraisal

15 (75%) registry supervisors and 3(23%) NAZ personnel indicated that guidance relating records appraisal was offered during surveys. The remaining 8(25%) registry supervisors and 10(77%) NAZ personnel said that guidance on records appraisal was not offered.

6.5.2 Records retention and disposal schedules

Public registries with records retention and disposal schedules recorded a response of 17(74%) while those who indicated non-availability of the document accounted for 6(26%) responses. Analysis of records surveys reports showed that four departments that gave a yes response to the availability of the retention and disposal schedule did not have the documents in place.

6.5.3 Records disposition

The study got 17(74%) out of 23(100%) responses indicating the use of standing instructions for the disposal of records. Two departments indicated the use of their organisation's policy documents while the other four respondents did not respond to the question on records disposal. When asked how they disposed of records that were no longer required for current business, 17(74%) departments indicated that they disposed of their records by transferring them to NAZ records centres, 13(57%) registry supervisors employed the shredding method, 10(44%) indicated that they deposited their records to the National Waste Paper Collection (NWPC). The least method of disposal indicated was burning, scoring a response rate of 1(4%).

6.5.4 Vital records management

15(65%) of the surveyed public registries indicated that they had in-house vital records protection measures in place while the remaining 8(35%) did not have vital records protection programmes. Duplication was cited as the mostly used method for vital records protection accounting for a response rate of 8(100%). The method was closely followed by digitising and offsite storage accounting for 7(88%) and 6(75%) respectively. Microfilming was cited as the least used method of vital records protection mechanism scoring a response rate of 3(38%).

6.5.5 Disaster preparedness

All 16(100%) interviewees and 23 (100%) registry supervisors communicated that advice and guidelines on how to prepare disaster management plans were given to public registries during surveys. However, only 6(26%) out of the 23 surveyed ministries

responded that they had disaster preparedness plans. The check list for the departments that indicated the availability of disaster management plans covered pests, fire, floods, explosions, data failure and loss to due to viruses and thievery.

6.6 Records surveys and the management of electronic records in the surveyed government ministries

NAZ personnel who replied that they were not examining electronic records during surveys recorded a response rate of 9(69%). The 4(30.8%) interviewees who informed the study that they covered electronic records explained that the word record did not separate paper records from electronic records; it embraced all information held in whatever format. 13(57%) out of 23 surveyed departments generated electronic records. Passwords and log-in procedures were the mostly used means of security for electronic records. The measures accounted for a response of 13(100%) and 10(77%) respectively. Firewalls and encryption techniques were the least used both accounting for an eight percent response. Deleting and formatting were the most used methods of electronic records disposition in public registries accounting for a 100% response. Disk crushing and disk re-writing recorded the lowest response of 2(15%) and 1(8%) respectively. Inappropriate equipment and inadequate financial support were cited as the mostly encountered challenges in electronic records management recording a 100% response rate.

6.7 The working relationship between NAZ and public registries

All registry supervisors had knowledge on the existence of NAZ. However, three registry supervisors indicated that NAZ never visited their offices. Some surveyed departments indicated that NAZ went for more than the mandated four years without visiting them. The researcher found that the 3(13%) ministries that reported NAZ never visited their offices had files at NAZ with copies of records survey reports. Out of the surveyed 23 ministries, 3(15%) indicated that they fully complied with recommendations provided by NAZ during and after surveys. Of the remaining 17 ministries, 10(50%) indicated that they did not manage to implement the recommendations while the other 7(35%) replied that they partly managed to implement the given recommendations. The advice given to

public registries by NAZ during surveys helped public registries to efficiently retrieve their records, identify records that were due for destruction and improved their security to storage areas. 14(61%) out of the 23(100%) surveyed ministries indicated that they took initiatives to consult NAZ for records management advice. Correspondence and telephone were the mostly used methods of contact to NAZ by public registries recording response rates of 12(86%) and 10 (71%) respectively. The least cited was fax and email recording responses of 2(14%) and 4(29%) respectively. Three departments indicated that they faced challenges when seeking advice from NAZ. Delays in response were the most experienced challenge by public registries when they contacted NAZ accounting for a 100% response. The challenges of getting no response and dealing with uncooperative staff were cited as the least experienced both recording 1(33%) response rate.

6.8 Records management training for information management professionals

Six of the surveyed 23 departments did not respond to the question relating the level of qualification obtained by registry personnel. Results of the study revealed that most public registry personnel are holders of national certificates in records management accounting for 17(100%). Honours degree qualification in records management recorded the least response of 1(6%). National diploma holders in records management accounted for 9(53%) response. 21(91%) out of the 23 surveyed departments offered staff development activities in records management. Workshops and in-house training were the mostly used form of staff development both accounting for 21(100%) response. Conferences and seminar attendance were cited as the least used form of staff development recording a response of 4(19%) and 7(33%) respectively.

6.9 Strategies that could help records surveys foster sound records management practices

The results of the study revealed that records surveys are a key mechanism to unlocking effective public service delivery. NAZ personnel revealed the need for regular contact between the national archives and public registries.

6.10 Conclusions

This section provides conclusions of the study based on the results of the research presented in Chapter Five. The study tried to establish the relationship between what the research found and the meaning that can be ascribed to such findings (Leedy & Omrod 2005:276). The conclusions provided in this section were arranged in the order in which the research objectives and research questions were organised.

6.10.1 Records surveys and the management of public records

The study found that records surveys were struggling to attain their intended goal of nurturing sound records management practices in public registries. That threatened public service delivery for it is largely dependent upon the appropriate records management practices. The study observed that public registries did not have mission statements while some provided mission statements that did not have the basic components of what is regarded as an ideal mission statement.

The study also found that the bulk of public registries in Zimbabwe did not have records retention and disposal schedules. The absence of records retention and disposal schedules in most public registries resulted in semi-active and non-active records clogging up office storage space. Such a situation compromises service delivery as retrieval of records may not be efficient in an office where more than the required documents are kept. As indicated by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010), satisfactory public service delivery and accountability depends on proper records management from the point of creation to the final disposition. From that perspective, the current study concluded that fostering accountability, transparency and good governance may not be possible in government ministries since records were not properly managed.

Despite a total response from both NAZ personnel and registry personnel confirming that professional advice was given regarding developing disaster management plans, it was established that most public registries did not have written disaster management plans in place. The lack of written disaster management plans in public registries might have led to the destruction of records that could have been saved had there been a disaster management plan. Circumstances where a disaster management plan is not

part of an organisation's records management programme could result in permanent loss of irreplaceable vital records of the government ministries. Consequently, the nation's memory would be impaired while the rights of citizens could be violated.

6.10.2 Electronic records management in public registries

The study obtained a low response on the generation of electronic records in public registries. It was observed that paper records are still dominating the nature of records created in public registries. Despite a wide range of literature revealing that most governments in Africa were going electronic and paperless (Chaterera 2012, Schuppan 2009 & Kasaira & Pather 2009). The study found that very few departments generated and kept electronic records as part of their registry collection. Similarly, NAZ had not yet embraced the need to properly manage electronic records in public government departments. That was evidenced by the lack of electronic records management components on the NAZ records survey worksheet. In addition, NAZ Act of 1986 Chapter 309 Section six and seven on which records surveys are legislated is not clear on whether electronic records should be examined during surveys. The situation implied that electronic records created in government departments were at risk of being destroyed and lost as they were not properly managed.

It was also established that electronic records were not examined during records surveys because NAZ did not have adequate financial resources and their personnel did not have the required expertise in Information Technology. Non-examination of electronic records during surveys meant that electronic records generated in government ministries were poorly managed.

6.10.3 The provision of professional records management advice by NAZ personnel

The results of the study revealed that the majority of public registries could not implement the recommendations provided by NAZ during and after records surveys. The nature of professional records management advice provided by NAZ was meant to enhance appropriate records management practices in public registries. Kemoni and

Ngulube (2007:122) noted that records management advice given to public registries facilitates effective management of recorded information throughout its life cycle.

The non and partial implementation of recommendations implied that records in government ministries were inefficiently and ineffectively managed from their creation to ultimate disposition. Such a situation compromised the ability of public institutions to effectively deliver their services. Ngoepe and van der Walt (2009:118) observed that records that are not managed properly in their office of origin will result in poor products being transferred to the national archives repository.

The results of the study revealed that records surveys were irregularly conducted due to financial constraints. Graham (2003) identified that records surveys are key to essential records management practices. The lack of regular contacts between NAZ and public registries implied that the provision of records management advice was limited and it became difficult for records surveys to fully realise its abilities of nurturing sound records management practices.

6.10.4 The levels of skills and training of registry personnel in the government ministries

The results of the study indicated that the levels of formal records management training in public registries were relatively low. Data presented in Chapter Five indicated that the majority of registry personnel had received training in records management at certificate level. Registry supervisors informed the study that records management professionals in public registries were paid up to the national diploma level. That discouraged registry personnel from pursuing further studies in records management. Such a situation implied that records management was not recognised as a critical discipline. The lack of records management training among registry personnel contributed towards the failure by records surveys to attain their intended goal of enhancing appropriate records management practices.

Registry operations are vital to the success of an organisation. Without a fully functional registry, it may not be possible for an organisation to realise its vision and mission. The lack of qualified registry personnel implied that the proper management of records could

not be guaranteed (Ngulube & Tafor 2006:62). The absence of appropriate knowledge and skills among registry personnel may have serious effects on implementing recommendations provided during and after records surveys.

6.10.5 Overall conclusions on the research problem

The research project investigated the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The aim was to establish how records surveys impacted on key records management activities and how the exercise influenced effective public service delivery. The results of the study revealed a number of challenges which were affecting records surveys from attaining their intended goal of enhancing sound records management practices in public registries. The challenges included lack of ideal mission statements, registry manuals, written disaster management plans, vital records protection programmes, lack of adequate records management training among registry personnel, unclear archival legislation, lack of records retention and disposal schedules, lack of top management support, and financial constraints.

6.11 Recommendations

Various challenges affecting records surveys from attaining their intended goal of fostering sound records management practices were identified and discussed by the study. Based on the identified challenges, the study suggests possible recommendations to address the records management issues. The provided recommendations are aimed at enhancing acceptable records management practices in public registries, so that effective service delivery is attained.

6.12 The management of records in public registries

The results of the study indicated that public registries in Zimbabwe lacked mission statements. It is recommended that registries formulate mission statements which include the registry purpose, vision, core values and goals (Roper & Williams 1999:31). Registry mission statements provide the model for registry operations to meet the future plans of respective government ministries. It is recommended that NAZ provide professional guidance to public registries on developing mission statements that include

the basics of what is considered an ideal mission statement. NAZ is also recommended to assume the responsibility of ensuring that public registries formulate a documented guide on how to execute registry operations. A registry manual enables consistency in records management activities and it communicates a high level of dedication towards registry personnel's responsibilities. Kemoni (2007:389) noted that a records management manual is essential in that it outlines the procedures and practices for managing records, from the state of creation to final disposal. This study therefore urges the development of registry manuals as it is one of the measures which would help improve the state of records management in government departments.

The study found that efforts were made by public registries to obtain advice from NAZ and they would at times face the challenges of delays in response and even non-response. To that effect, this study recommends NAZ to cement its relationship with public registries by responding to their calls efficiently and effectively. It is also recommended that NAZ should make efforts to at least fulfil the legislated four year interval visits to public registries. To improve the management of records during their continuum, it could be better if NAZ is to visit public registries more regularly preferably by way of follow up inspections. Regular visits to public registries by NAZ would lead to enhanced records management practices and the attainment of effective public service delivery.

Document analysis of records survey reports revealed a chaotic situation in terms of records storage space in public registries. To that effect, it is recommended that places that are used as dumping grounds for semi and non-current records be thoroughly cleaned. Old furniture should be removed from potential records storage areas and semi current records should be deposited to records centres. This would create adequate space for current records and facilitate the efficient retrieval of records.

There is a need for registries to systematically dispose of records to avoid a situation whereby valuable records are destroyed. Public registries are recommended to develop disposal policies. These should be done in consultation with NAZ. To improve records disposal, NAZ should encourage public registries to create and follow retention and disposal schedules. According to (Ngulube & Tafor 2006:79), retention schedules would

help government ministries and departments determine how long records should be kept or how soon they should be disposed of. Kemoni (2007:395) indicated that systematic appraisal and disposition of records through record retention schedules would lead to enhanced records management practices and leads to effective service delivery.

The current study advises that public registries should develop a disaster management plan that describes what to do and how in the event of a disaster (Lyll 2002). Saffaddy (2011:111) observed that fire is the number one enemy of records. To that effect, the current author advises all public registries to install fire detection systems in records storage areas. It is recommended that registry staff receive training in fire-fighting techniques. The fire-fighting equipment found in registries should be inspected regularly. It is recommended that government ministries in collaboration with NAZ form disaster management teams whose responsibilities would be to identify potential disasters and device best ways of handling such situations. The disaster management team would negotiate with necessary offices such as the Ministry of Public Works and the City Council to provide training in fire-fighting techniques to all ministry staff and specifically to registry staff. The appointed team would ensure that fire-fighting equipment is regularly inspected and serviced. Aitchson (2004) indicated that the development and implementation of disaster management plans would lead to mitigation against disasters and facilitates the protection and salvage of records in the event of disasters, thus making them available for continued use as tools for public service delivery.

6.13 NAZ and the professional records management advice offered to public registries

The current study recognised and appreciated efforts by NAZ to improve the management of records in public registries. However, it is recommended that NAZ also examine electronic records when conducting records surveys. In addition, NAZ must develop some mechanisms to ensure the implementation of records management advice provided to records creating agencies. If possible, NAZ must revise its Act and make it mandatory for public registries to implement provided recommendations. The

Act must include stiff penalties to non-complying departments as they would be placing the nation's documentary heritage at risk and that presents unfair challenges to future generations.

The shortage of staff and financial constraints emerged as issues barring records surveys from successfully nurturing sound records management practices in public registries. From that observation, the current study recommends the development of some policy where government ministries are tasked with more responsibility to manage their own records. That might result in creating entities becoming more responsible and gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of records management issues.

Records management refresher events such as seminars and workshops can be held to provide a platform where ideas are shared and discussed for the purposes of improving public service delivery. This recommendation would address one of the recordkeeping issues identified in the study by registry and archives personnel and which affected public service delivery, namely the lack of support from senior ministerial officers. Through workshops and seminars, the top management may develop an interest in ensuring records management needs within the organisation are prioritised. That may subsequently lead to the implementation of recommendations provided by NAZ during surveys.

6.14 The management of electronic records in public registries

With regards to the execution of records surveys, NAZ Act of 1986 Chapter 309 Section six and seven has been criticised for failing to clearly communicate the need to examine electronic records during surveys. It is on that basis that the current study recommends the revision of archival legislation to make it solid on electronic records management. In addition, the current study recommends NAZ Act to be reviewed to ensure that the responsibility for record keeping is shared between government agencies and the National Archives. That reduces the amount of pressure on NAZ regarding finances and man power. As recommended by Kemoni (2007:397) the National Archives Act should state that every government agency be legally required to manage its records and have specific legal requirements for records management.

The findings indicated that the majority of registry personnel did not have electronic records in their registry. The use of computers has since been fully absorbed by many government departments throughout Africa and across the world. The present author therefore recommends the use of computers in public registries as that may enhance effective service delivery. The use of computers in public registries permit the storage of large amount of data in a relatively small space and it enables the retrieval of records to be much easier and relatively faster. However, Thurston (2005) observed that the successful implementation of an electronic records management system largely depends on an intact traditional records management system. On that basis, the current study further recommends registries to develop acceptable paper records management systems and migrating to electronic records becomes possible. The current study encourages public registries to take advantage of current and on-going e-government initiatives to computerise registry functions and services. A study conducted by Chaterera (2012) revealed that the government of Zimbabwe is currently making efforts to provide its services on-line. E-government initiatives by Zimbabwe were further recognised by the current study when the author managed to access the bulk of ministries' mission statements on-line. Public registries are therefore encouraged to urgently make use of the ongoing e-initiatives to computerise their operations.

The results of the study revealed that electronic records were not included during surveys. It is recommended that NAZ include electronic records when conducting surveys and provide advice to public registries on how to manage records created in electronic format. The study found that NAZ did not have the technical expertise to advise record-creating agencies on how to manage electronic records. Inadequate technical expertise emerged to be a common challenge faced by archivists in the ESARBICA region (Mutiti 2001 & Ngulube 2004).

The current study recommends NAZ to recruit IT professionals who would assist archivists in providing electronic records management advice to public registries.

6.15 Professional knowledge and skills of registry staff responsible for managing records

The study recommends that public registry personnel receive formal training in records management. The researcher observed a number of higher learning institutions in Zimbabwe that were offering records management courses. The colleges included NUST, ZOU, Great Zimbabwe (GZ), MSU as well as Gweru, Kwekwe and Harare Poly-technical colleges. The study applauds the presence of at least a single person possessing a national certificate in records management in every surveyed public registry that responded to the question on the qualifications held by registry personnel. However, it was established that the majority of these people were registry supervisors. The current study therefore encourages other registry personnel who have no training to enrol for records management courses. It is vital that registry personnel receive formal training in records management as it would be useful in implementing the recommendations provided by the national archives during and after records surveys.

6.16 Suggestions for further research

The study investigated the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The study managed to survey 23 out of the targeted 32 government ministries. The limitations of the current research were that it gathered data from government ministry head offices leaving out provincial and district registries. The study also concentrated on main stream government departments leaving out other public sector offices such Local Authorities and Parastatals.

The author recommends future studies to examine the influence of records surveys at provincial and or district level. What the current study found about records surveys and the management of public records at head office level may not be applicable to provincial and district registries. Such studies may yield different information, resulting in deeper insights being obtained about records surveys and the management of records. There could be other factors and issues surrounding the subject of records surveys and the management public records that can be unearthed from information provided by those managing public records at provincial and or district level. It is also recommended

that studies be conducted to establish recordkeeping practices in the private sector. Such a research may provide useful comparative data on recordkeeping practices in the public and private sectors in Zimbabwe.

The present study managed to gather data from 23 out of the 32 targeted ministries. The sample of 23 out of 32 was strongly representative making the findings very generalisable. However overlooked the issue of records management policies yet these are an important point of interest for records managers and registry personnel. In that respect, the author recommends future studies to address the aspect of records management policies.

The study found that the records management profession was looked down upon as registry supervisors revealed that the government of Zimbabwe only paid registry personnel up to National Diploma level. That could have been a contributing factor towards the failure by public registries to implement given recommendations by NAZ. The fact that registry personnel was looked down upon was also evidenced by registry supervisors who cited lack of top management support as one of the reasons why it was difficult for them to implement recommendations provided to them by NAZ. In light of those findings, the present author recommends future studies to investigate why such an attitude exists and establish possible ways that can be adopted to correct the situation. Such studies would help in improving the profile of records management in the Zimbabwe's Public Service (ZPS) and lead to improved public service delivery and the attainment of transparency, accountability and good governance.

The current study observed that NAZ had not been providing guidance on managing electronic records during surveys. Future researchers are recommended to investigate how electronic records are being managed in public registries without the professional advice of NAZ. The study would establish the conditions under which electronic records are generated in the public registries and examine how the existing electronic records management situation in the public sector would affect public service delivery. The research might also reveal how the status of electronic records management in government departments was affecting e-government initiatives. Through the document analysis of records survey reports and NAZ records survey worksheet, the current study

briefly got an insight into environmental control in the registries. For instance, the current study established that NAZ looked at such environmental conditions as the control of light and dust in public registries and provided guidance accordingly. However, the subject of the need to control the environment in records storage areas was treated in passing by the current study. From that perspective, it is recommended that future researchers undertake a more comprehensive and detailed study to establish the effects of the existing environmental conditions on the survival of records. Such studies might need to establish if registries perceived environmental control as crucial.

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APPENDIX A

Letter used to seek authority from the permanent secretaries

The Permanent Secretary

Ministry of

P. O. Box

Harare

REF: REQUEST FOR AUTHORITY TO GATHER INFORMATION FROM THE REGISTRY SUPERVISOR

Dear Sir/Madam

With reference to the above mentioned subject, may you kindly grant me permission to gather information from the registry supervisor.

I am a student at the University of South Africa pursuing Masters Studies in Information Science (Archival Science) in the Department of Information Science. This research project examines the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The purpose of the study is to establish the influence of records surveys on key records management practices and on improving public service delivery. You are kindly informed that participation is essential and anonymity is assured. A publication is envisaged from this study and the literature will help public registries better manage their records leading to effective service delivery.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could assist by permitting me to have the attached questionnaire completed by the registry supervisor. Responses to be obtained will only be used for the purpose of completing this study and will therefore be treated privately and confidentially.

Yours Faithfully

Forget Chaterera

For more details, queries and urgency, feel free to contact me on:

[Tel:0773625956](tel:0773625956) or 054222146/ Email 47703261@mylife.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE COVERING LETTER

The Registry Supervisor

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Dear Respondent

I am a student at the University of South Africa pursuing Masters Studies in Information Science (Archival Science) in the Department of Information Science. This research project examines the influence of records surveys in the management of public records in Zimbabwe. The purpose of the study is to establish the influence of records surveys on key records management practices and on improving public service delivery. You are kindly informed that participation is essential and anonymity is assured. A publication is envisaged from this study and the literature will help public registries better manage their records leading to effective service delivery.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could assist by completing this questionnaire. Your responses will only be used for the purpose of completing this study and will therefore be treated privately and confidentially.

Yours Faithfully

Forget Chaterera

For more details, queries and urgency, feel free to contact me on:

[Tel:0773625956](tel:0773625956) or [054222146](tel:054222146)/ Email 47703261@mylife.unisa.ac.za

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR REGISTRY SUPERVISORS

Instructions for completing the questionnaire

1. Kindly provide information asked in the spaces provided where appropriate
2. Insert a tick [] in the brackets to present your response to the question
3. Please attempt to answer all the questions

I BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Name of department.....
2. Ministry.....
3. Designation of respondent.....

II RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

4. Does your department have a mission statement
 - a) Yes []
 - b) No, go to question 6 []
5. Please state the mission statement. **(If possible, kindly attach a copy).**

.....
.....

6. Does your department have a registry procedures manual?

a) Yes []

b) No, go to question 8 []

7. Which of the following activities are described by your registry manual? **(If possible, kindly attach a copy).**

	YES	NO
Responsibilities of registry staff towards users.		
How to handle incoming mail in paper form.		
How to handle incoming electronic mail.		
How to handle outgoing mail in paper form.		
How to handle outgoing electronic mail.		
Filing procedures.		
How to create a new file.		
How to record the existence of a new file.		
Controlling of file movement.		
Instructions for closing files.		
File storage methods		
Security of records.		
Good housekeeping procedures.		

8. Are you aware of the existence of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ)?

a) Yes [] No, go to question 20 []

9. Does NAZ conduct records surveys at your institution?

a) Yes []

b) No, go to question 15 []

10. When was the last records survey conducted?

a) 2008-2012 [] b) 2004-2007 [] c) 2000-2003 [] d) Other.....

11. Which of the following indicates area(s) of professional records management advice given by NAZ during records surveys?

	YES	NO
Registry management.		
Records security.		
Appraisal of records.		
Creation of vital records management programmes.		
Managing electronic records.		
Creation of retention and disposal schedules.		
Preservation of records.		
Records storage.		
Housekeeping practices.		
Filing procedures.		
Other.....		

12. Did your department manage to implement recommendations that were given by NAZ?

- a) Yes, ignore question 14 []
- b) No, go to question 14 []
- c) Partly, go to question 14 []

13. How have recommendations that were given during and after records surveys improved your records management activities?

	YES	NO
Advice given led to timely retrieval of records.		
Inactive records which were congesting storage facilities were disposed off as advised.		
Security to records storage areas was increased thereby preventing unnecessary loss of records.		
Other.....		

14. Which of the following explains why the department could not implement the recommendations?

	YES	NO
Financial constraints.		
Lack of top management support.		
Shortage of manpower.		
Absence of skilled personnel.		
Other.....		

15. Do you sometimes take the initiative to contact National Archives of Zimbabwe's Records Centres for professional guidance?

a) Yes []

b) No, go to question 19 []

16. What means of contact do you use to consult NAZ?

	YES	NO
Personal visits.		
Correspondence.		
Fax.		
Email.		
Telephone.		

17. Do you face any challenges when seeking advice from NAZ?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 19** []

18. Which of the following describes the problems that you face?

	YES	NO
No response.		
Delays in response.		
Uncooperative staff.		
Other.....		

19. Is your department aware of the standing instructions for the disposal of records provided by NAZ? **Yes** [] **No** []

20. Does your department have a records retention and disposal schedule? **Yes** [] **No** []

21. What instruments do you use for the disposal of your records?

a) Standing instructions **Yes** [] **No** []

b) Document laws **Yes** [] **No** []

c) Other.....

22. How does your registry dispose of records that are no longer required for current business?

	YES	NO
Burning.		
Shredding.		
Transfer to the records centre.		
Through National Waste Paper Collection.		
Other.....		

23. If answer to 22 is not disposal by **Transfer to the records centre**, do you get a certificate of destruction from NAZ once the records are destroyed? **Yes** [] **No** []

24. Is your department in custody of vital records?

- a) **Yes** []
- b) **No go to question 27** []

25. Do you have an in-house vital records protection programme?

- a) **Yes** []
- b) **No go to 27**[]

26. Which of the following methods do you use for vital records protection?

	YES	NO
Offsite storage.		

Duplication.		
Microfilming.		
Digitisation.		

27. Do you have a disaster preparedness plan?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 29**[]

28. What does your plan checklist cover?

	YES	NO
Pests.		
Leaking roof.		
Floods.		
Explosions.		
Data failure due to viruses.		
Data loss or alteration due to computer hacking.		
Other.....		

29. Does your registry generate electronic records?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 38** []

30. Has NAZ examined your electronic records during its records surveys?

a) **Yes** [] **No** []

31. Do you have a standard for labelling electronic storage devices?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No** []

32. Which of the following do you use to ensure the security of electronic records?

	YES	NO
Login procedures.		
Passwords.		
Access levels.		
Firewalls.		
Gateway filters software.		
Audit trail to tract use.		
Encryption techniques.		
Other.....		

33. Do you have procedures for the disposal of electronic records?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 36** []

34. Which of the following methods do you use for the disposal of electronic records?

	YES	NO
Deleting.		
Formatting.		
Re-writing disk.		
Crushing disk.		
Other.....		

35. Do you experience any challenges in managing electronic records?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 37** []

36. Which of the following represents the challenges that you are experiencing?

	YES	NO
Technology obsolescence.		
Inadequate trained personnel.		
Absence of electronic records management policies.		
Policies are there, but there is no implementation.		
No appropriate equipment.		
Inadequate financial support.		
Other.....		

.....

37. How many people work in your registry.....?

38. State the number of registry personnel who hold the following qualifications in records management or relevant field.

a) National certificate in records management []

b) Diploma in records management []

c) Other.....

39. Does your department offer staff development activities in records management?

a) **Yes** []

b) **No, go to question 42** []

40. What form of staff development is being offered?

	YES	NO
In house training.		
Seminar attendance.		
Conferences.		
Workshops.		
None.		
Other.....		

41. Kindly recommend how information management professionals can make records surveys attain their intended goals of enhancing acceptable records management practices.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT!

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR NAZ PERSONNEL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Town and Province in which the records centre is located.....

.....

2. Designation of the interviewee.....

3. Date of the interview.....

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How often do you conduct records surveys in public registries?
2. When was the last time NAZ conducted surveys in registries?
3. What is the approximate number of public departments that you survey per year?
4. Are you managing to reach every public registry within the province that you are responsible for?
5. What constraints or challenges has NAZ come across in conducting such surveys?
6. Are you permitted to examine all records storage areas in such registries?
7. How have public registries responded to advice that is given in records survey reports?
8. How best can you explain the reason for such responses?
9. Have you done follow ups to ensure that recommendations are being implemented?

10. Have you noticed any recurrence of particular problems as you revisit public departments?

11. During surveys, do you offer guidance on the following records management activities? Kindly explain how you assist.

- a) Records creation.
- b) Records maintenance and use.
- c) Records appraisals.
- d) Records disposition.
- e) Creating retention and disposal schedules.
- f) Records preservation and conservation.
- g) How to prepare a disaster management plan.
- h) Prepare a vital records management programme.
- i) Registry layout and design.
- j) Automation.
- k) Housekeeping practices.
- l) File creation.
- m) Records security.
- n) Other.....
.....
.....
.....

12. Do you cover electronic records when conducting records surveys?

12.1 If yes, what aspects of electronic records management do you examine?

- 12.2 If no, what aspects of electronic records management do you cover?
13. From your experiences during records surveys, kindly give your impression of the general status of electronic records management in public registries.
14. Who is eligible to conduct records and information management surveys?
15. What criteria do you use to select those who execute records surveys?
16. Do you train the records and information management survey team before visiting a public registry for a records survey?
- 16.1 If yes, what form of training do they receive?
17. Do you consider records surveys as one of the keys to unlocking effective public service delivery?
18. From your experiences, are records surveys succeeding in promoting acceptable records management practices within public registries?
19. If records surveys are failing to cultivate acceptable records management practices, kindly suggest what information management professionals can do to improve the situation.
20. Can other practitioners other than information management professionals be brought into play to ensure that records surveys are more effective?
21. If yes, who can possibly be consulted or invited to help?
22. Is there any other information of relevance to records surveys that you may want to share?

Nb* Relevant issues which may be brought to light by informants during the course of the interview will be discussed accordingly. Face to face interviews will be conducted in the six provincial Records Centres.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT!

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FORMER NAZ ARCHIVISTS

1. Date of the interview.....

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

2. How long were you employed with NAZ?
3. From which province were you working from?
4. Did you participate in the execution of records surveys?
5. How often would you conduct records surveys in public registries?
6. Were you managing to reach every public registry within the province that you were responsible for?
7. What constraints or challenges would NAZ come across when conducting such surveys?
8. Were you permitted to examine all records storage areas in such registries?
9. How would public registries respond to recommendations that were given in records survey reports?
10. How best can you explain the reason for such responses?
11. Would you do follow ups to ensure that recommendations were being implemented?
12. Would you notice any recurrence of particular problems as you revisit public departments?
13. During surveys, would you offer guidance on the following records management activities? Kindly explain how you assist.

- a) Records creation.
- b) Records maintenance and use.
- c) Records appraisals.
- d) Records disposition.
- e) Creating retention and disposal schedules.
- f) Records preservation and conservation.
- g) How to prepare a disaster management plan.
- h) Prepare a vital records management programme.
- i) Registry layout and design.
- j) Automation.
- k) Housekeeping practices.
- l) File creation.
- m) Records security.

Other.....

14. Would you cover electronic records when conducting records surveys?

15. If yes, what aspects of electronic records management would you examine?

16. From your experiences during records surveys, kindly give your impression of the general status of electronic records management in public registries.

17. Who was eligible to conduct records and information management surveys?

18. What criteria were used to select those who execute records surveys?
19. Would any form of training be offered to records and information management survey team before visiting a public registry for a records survey?
20. If yes, what form of training was given?
21. Do you consider records surveys as one of the keys to unlocking effective public service delivery?
22. From your experiences, are records surveys succeeding in promoting acceptable records management practices within public registries?
23. Kindly suggest what information management professionals can do to help records surveys attain their intended goals of enhancing sound records management practices.
24. Can other practitioners other than information management professionals be brought into play to ensure that records surveys are more effective?
25. If yes, who can possibly be consulted or invited to help?
26. Is there any other information of relevance to records surveys that you may want to share?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT!

APPENDIX F

NAZ RECORDS SURVEY WORKSHEET

Ministry/Department.....

Date established.....

Headed by.....

Staff compliment.....

Registry/Records staff.....

Training in records management/registry procedures:

.....
.....

1. FUNCTIONS

.....
.....

2. Records classes	Covering dates	Qty

3. Filing Control System: eg. Alphabetical, numerical etc

.....

4. Filing equipment (type and size)

.....

5. Legal requirements/retention/disposal policy

.....

6. (i) Office (How long)

.....

(ii) Records Centre Operations-Awareness

.....

(iii) Date of last deposit.....

7. Vital records management programme (Information absolutely vital to the survival and reconstruction of the organisation)

.....
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8. Access to registry (Unauthorised entry e.t.c)

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9. Security precautions against:

a) Fire

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b) Pests

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c) Sunlight

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d) Dust

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Problems/Observations

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Conducted By:.....Date.....

APPENDIX G
LIST OF GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES SURVEYED

1. Ministry Of Energy and Power Development

Chaminuka Building

Private Bag 7758

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263 4 733095-9/ 4 799194

Website: <http://www.energy.gov.zw>

2. Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Munhumutapa Building

P.O. Box 4240

Harare

Telephone : +263-4-727005/9 : 794681/5

Fax: +263-4-705161

Website: <http://www.zimfa.gov.zw>

3. Ministry of Education, Sport, Art and Culture

Ambassador House

P. O. Box CY 121

Causeway

Harare

Telephone:+263-4-734071/4, 734051/9

Fax :+ 263-4-734075

Website: <http://www.moesc.gov.zw>

4. Ministry of Public Service

Kaguvi Building

Private Bag 17;

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-704085/703871/705151

Fax: +263-4-793930

Website: <http://www.publicservice.gov.zw>

5. Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development

Ngungunyana Building

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-706081-9/709081-9

Fax: +263-4-734646

Website: <http://www.moa.gov.zw>

6. Ministry of Defence

Defence House

Harare

Telephone: +263-4 250042, 252050-7, 700155-8, 700077-8

Website: <http://www.mod.gov.zw>

7. Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs

P. Bag 7751,

Causeway,

Harare

Telephone +263-4-774560 or 774620/7

Website : <http://www.justice.gov.zw>

8. Ministry of Transport Infrastructural Development

Kaguvi Building

Box CY 595

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-700991-9 / 700693-9 / 707121-9

Fax: +263-4-7 08225. 737358

Website: <http://www.transcom.gov.zw>

9. Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion

New Complex Building, Government Composite Offices,

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-706848/795987

Website: <http://www.ecoplan.gov.zw>

10. Ministry of Home Affairs

Mukwati Building

P. Bag 7703

Telephone: + 263 - 4 - 703641, 263 - 4 - 703643

Fax: +263 - 4 - 707231

Website: <http://www.moha.gov.zw>

11. Ministry of Health and Child Welfare

Kaguvi Building

Box CY 1122

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-798537-60

Fax: +263-4-729154/ 793634

Website: <http://www.mohcw.gov.zw>

12. Ministry of Public Works

Makombe Building

Box CY 441

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-704023

Fax: +263-4-797706

Website: <http://www.publicworks.gov.zw>

13. Ministry of Media, Information Publicity

Munhumutapa Building

Box CY 1122

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-706891-4/737502

Fax: +263-4-937537

Email: info@zim.gov.zw Website: <http://www.zim.gov.zw>

14. Ministry of Industry and Commerce

Mkwati Building

Box CY 7708

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-791823-7/796498

Fax: +263-4-253137

Website: <http://www.miit.gov.zw>

15. Ministry of National Housing and Social Amenities

Kaguvi Building 11th Floor

Central Avenue

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-798537-60

Fax: +263-4-729154/ 793634

Website: <http://www.housingministry.gov.zw>

16. Ministry of Finance

New Complex Building,

Government Composite Offices,

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-794571-7

Fax: +263-4-796563

Website: <http://www.zimtreasury.gov.zw>

17. Ministry of Information Communication Technology

Bank Chambers Building

Box CY 419

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263(04)707347/ 708407

Fax:+263-4-763016

Website: <http://www.ictministry.gov.zw>

18. Ministry of Higher And Tertiary Education

New Complex Building

Government Composite Offices,

Harare

Telephone:+263-4-736862

Fax:+263-4-706516

Website: <http://www.mhet.gov.zw>

19. Ministry of Youth Development, Indigenisation And Empowerment

Mukwati Building

Box CY 7762

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-707741-3

Website: <http://www.mydie.gov.zw>

20. Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender And Community Development

Kaguvi Building

Central Avenue

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-251599/707741-2

Website: <http://www.women.gov.zw>

21. Ministry of Local Government and Urban and Rural Development

Makombe Building

Box CY 7706

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-794166/796757/793700/251114

Fax: +263-4-791470

Website: <http://www.mlgvturd.gov.zw>

22. Ministry Of Constitutional And Parliamentary Affairs

New Complex Building,

Government Composite Offices,

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-737933

Website: <http://www.mocpa.gov.zw>

23. Ministry Of Labor And Social Welfare

Compensation House

Private Bag 7707;

Causeway

Harare

Telephone: +263-4-790865/796450-9

Fax: +263-4-794568