A Study of the Management of Student Records in Academic Registrars' Offices in Kenyan Universities

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the management of student records in academic registrars' offices in Kenyan universities. A descriptive survey design was adopted in carrying out the study. The study targeted 49 chartered private and public universities in Kenya. The researcher classified the universities into private and public, and further, into two sets; those in the western region and eastern region of Kenya. The researcher then purposively chose in each region the youngest and the oldest public universities and similarly private universities. Questionnaires were used in the collection of data. The findings show that were clear ways of storing students' records in academic registrars' officers in Kenyan universities. However, the adoption of electronic records management was fifty-fifty. Though most universities had some form of electronic document use, some had not fully embraced electronic records management. The major challenges encountered were information breakdown from the registry, and problems with credit control among others. The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study; the academic registrar's office needs to have a clear policy explaining the "who, where, when, and what" of records management; there is a need to avail adequate finance for record management processes starting from record creation, storage, communication, and retrieval as well as disposal; right equipment such as cabinets, safes, locks, fire-extinguishers, trolleys, etc. should be procured; the university should develop and constantly upgrade recommended record management systems with extensive server capabilities to meet the needs of all students and other users. Members of staff should also be periodically trained to strengthen their capacity to handle the changing demands of record management as most of it migrates online.

Keywords: Creation and classification of Records; Storing Records; Retrieval and communication of Records; Disposal of Records; Academic registrar's Office; Management of Student Records; Kenyan Universities
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I. INTRODUCTION

Records are an important asset to every organization. Touray (2021) argues that the management of records serves as a 'secret weapon' and the 'winning strategy' that gives an organization a competitive edge. Organizational records are very important in preserving aspects of the institution's memory over the ever-changing governance and management. To serve this purpose effectively, therefore, an organization needs to determine how long records should be retained in their capacity as evidence of activities, transactions, and decisions. According to Osebe, Orayo, and Muthoka (2018), record management is an important aspect of an organization as it supports the governance foundation by protecting crucial information as well as mitigating risks associated with it.

For an academic institution, records management is an important activity that safeguards the institution's integrity. Academic records should be safeguarded against environmental damage and access by unauthorized persons since some of them can, because of sinister motives, destroy the records. Besides, stored records should be easy to retrieve (Wangui, 2018) if they are needed for reference, audit, litigation, or destruction.

Records serve as major information sources that facilitate effective decision-making, planning, operations, assessment of results, and projection into the future (De-Mingo & Cerrillo-i-Martínez, 2018). They serve as the guardian of peoples' and institutional rights, public or private (Frings-Hessami, 2020). As observed by Phiri and Tough (2018) and Ngoepe (2018), there is a link between good governance and compliance with the law and information management. Without reliable, authentic documentary evidence, universities cannot demonstrate to their societies that they have used resources responsibly and have fulfilled their mandate to the people. If records are managed effectively, undoubtedly, universities will also function effectively (Seniwoliba, Mahama, & Abilla, 2017).

It is mandatory therefore that records in a university are accurately made and carefully controlled and organized in line with stipulated guidelines and policies that govern the level of confidentiality, maintenance, security, the preservation of content and context, and efficient disposal of those that are inactive (Klareld, 2018). To underscore this, Khumalo and Chigariro (2017, p. 68) said "institutions of higher learning need meticulous records management

systems to carefully manage records throughout their lifecycle." To this end, Tyler (2017) advises that organizations need to be aware of the fact good record keeping is dependent on the proper grasp of the quality standards in record management.

Certainly, records management in the office of the academic registrar occupies a central position in the attainment of the fundamental goal of a university; the academic achievement of its students through teaching, learning, and research (Falolo, Capillas, Vergarra, & Cerbito, 2022). It is the office responsible for academic activities of the institution such as student enrolment, registration, course and examination schedules, credit transfer, graduation, and recordkeeping. It is in fact, the backbone of the institution a pivot around which all pursuits of the university smoothly roll out (Mu-Azu & Nabila, 2016).

The introduction of technology, however, has made the registrar's office a technology hub and partner to IT (Babu & Ma, 2018). This requires the personnel responsible for record-keeping in the office to be armed with appropriate skills and knowledge to effectively implement best practices in students' record management policy (Wangui, 2018). This however could still be a challenge given that there is no single international comprehensive education and training model to cater to the various groups of record keepers (Serdyukov, 2017). In support, Crystal (2017) demonstrated the diversity that existed in the African continent both the variety of institutions as well as the types of qualifications offered in archives and records management. The lack of a standardized education and training model for record keepers jeopardizes the management of records in both government and non-governmental organizations not only in developing countries but also in developed ones.

Student academic records kept by the registrar's office are those of students that have been admitted and are yet to report, the continuing students, and the alumni. These records require confidentiality and integrity and should be availed only to authorized persons including students, parents/guardians, and senior administrative officials within the institution as well as to outside parties such as accreditation commissions and government agencies (Danver, 2016).

Disorganization in the management of student records in the academic registrar's office can be a great challenge to a university given the expectations of the digital age of accuracy, speed, and accessibility of service which continues to increase dramatically making students of today to demand instantaneous service both in person and online (Matthew, 2019). Aside, we are living in a period characterized by rampant corruption in all public sectors, and universities are not an exemption from this. Some of these institutions have even issued fake academic degrees (Wanzala, 2017). Mosweu and Rakemane (2020) opine that corruption is a result of poor records management. Proper management of records, therefore, stands as a major step toward sealing loopholes leading to this terrible monster that can devour a society (Katekwe & Mutsagondo, 2018).

Records can be meaningless if no reference is made to them. Thus closely related to records management is the need for effective communication of information. A record is an information stored for future retrieval and communication (Mosweu, 2018; Christa, Alex, Lars & Sanjay, 2020). In a nutshell, maintaining an effective communication process in an educational institution is critical for the achievement of organizational objectives (Bucăţa & Rizescu, 2017). This is dependent on the managers responsible for the educational setting (Ezzeldin, 2017). It is imperative, therefore, that the academic registrar's office, being at the confluence of academic and student affairs, keep its constituents informed at all times. Key communication pieces used by the registrar's office include calendars, catalogues, directories, and websites (Babalola, Akinwumi, & Alegbeleye, 2021). It is crucial that communication in an organization, notwithstanding a university and specifically the registrar's office, is timely (Root, 2019).

There is probably a lack of effective communication between the academic registrar's offices in universities with their stakeholders. For example, there is evidence that the academic registrars in many institutions of higher learning (Pittinsky, 2019) still schedule courses manually. This practice is not only tedious, daunting, and time-consuming, but it is likely to result in a high percentage of anomalies and consequently, poor communication.

Record keeping in public institutions in many countries is guided by national records management policies. This, therefore, means that record keeping in universities may not differ much from that of other national bodies/institutions. In Zimbabwe, for example, government records and those of institutions including public universities financed by the government are supposed to be guided by government records management policy (InterPARES, 2018).

According to Shehu (2017), the history of the management of records in American universities and colleges dates back to the 1930s. The author traces the development of records management in America to the time of the Great Depression and the Second World War when there was a rapid acceleration and accumulation of paper records in the Federal Government agencies. Sullivan (2019) affirms that all the academic institutions in the country have functional retention programs. However, records management in US universities is not excellent despite its long existence (Momoti & King, 2020). Mohammed, Tetteh, and Ahmed (2020) further exposed other challenges of records management in US and Canadian universities as; the "lack of institution-wide electronic records management policies

and procedures developed in cooperation with senior administrators, information technology staff, university archivists and record managers and the absence of official standards for university archives and records programs."

In the rest of the world, the case was not different. In China, for example, Jin et al. (2021)) observed that colleges and universities in the country were at the initial stage in the process of developing student information management systems that would enhance efficiency in the management of student information such as updating, instant inquiry and long term preservation of students' overall development information data including their background, academic performance, and practices. On the same note, Semanur (2019) reported that records management in Turkish public universities did not meet the legal and administrative requirements. Equally, auditors investigating a fraudulent admission of a student to a university in South Korea reported that supporting evidence of the fraud was deleted from the university records (Chung, 2020). Such is possible when records are not well kept.

In South Africa for example, records offices are said to operate as "records warehouses instead of records management offices where records are systematically controlled from the time of creation to their final disposal through archiving or destruction." In Nigeria and Zimbabwe the sector is faced with challenges such as a shortage of professional record managers (Makwae & Nyarige, 2017); weak laws and inactive legislative provisions that fail to promote good records and archive management (Afriye, Yangapuori and Hindu (2020); and problematic personnel, especially administration officers and clerks "recycled" into records management roles (Namukasa, 2017). Still in Nigeria, Muhammad, Mannan, and Farashi (2021) reported that universities lacked sufficient space for preserving student records. In Uganda, Luyombya, David, and Ndagire (2020) reported that in public universities, officials applied indiscriminate strategies in the separation of email records and non-records due to the ineffective dependence on other institutional policies, reference to fringe legislation for the electronic recordkeeping of emails and the absence of record-keeping professionals in email management responsibilities due to limited ICT training and qualification.

 In Ghana, Azameti and Adjei (2020) established other challenges in the field of records management in the country as frequent freezing of computers, weak technological support, loss of records, low morale on the part of record keepers due to poor remuneration, inadequate record keeping equipment, virus infections, lack of dedicated backup storage facilities, poor and unreliable internet services, lack of ICT equipment replacement policy and poor knowledge among record keepers on electronic records management. In Kenya, Wangui (2018) noted that public universities use obsolete file management systems to manage records which consume a lot of space, thus making it difficult and cumbersome to access data from files causing the risk of easy manipulation of information. Mohammed et al., (2020), on the other hand, point to the upsurge in student enrolment in these institutions in the recent past as the basis of the creation of large volumes of records which is prone to failure. According to Makwae and Nyarige (2017), the poor practice of records management especially in the universities in Africa and beyond can be attributed to a lack of trained records managers in these institutions.

Studies carried out in universities in Kenya (Mulati & Wesike, 2017; Wangui, 2018; Wanzala, 2017; Mukhwana et al., 2016) have mainly looked at records management in a whole university as well as the influence of the adoption of ICT in the management of records in these institutions. The current study, however, was designed to assess the practice of creation, storage, communication, and disposal of student records in the academic registrar's office in Kenyan universities and further, to find out the challenges faced by this office.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In a university, the academic registrar's office is the custodian of all student academic records. However, public universities in Kenya use obsolete file management systems to manage records (Aduda, 2017). They are also not able to provide timely accurate information (Nyamwamu, 2018). The upsurge in student enrolment in these institutions has also compounded the poor state of records management (Mohammed et al., 2020). As a result, the system consumes a lot of space, thus making it difficult and cumbersome to access data from files causing the risk of easy manipulation of information (Wangui, 2018; Aduda, 2017; Nyamwamu, 2018).

These are serious anomalies that call for an appraisal of the practice of records management in the registrar's office in Kenyan Universities. This study, therefore, assessed the practice of records management among public and private universities in Kenya in terms of creation, storage, retrieval, circulation, and disposal of records in the academic registrar's office in Kenyan universities.

1.2 Research Questions
The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:
1. What are the practices of the academic registrar's office in Kenyan universities in the management of student records in terms of:
   a. Creation and classification of records
   b. Storing records

      c.   Retrieval and communication of records

      d.   Disposal of records

2.   To what extent have the academic registrars in Kenyan universities adopted the use of information technology in student academic records management?

II. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was adopted in carrying out the study. The study targeted 49 chartered private and public universities in Kenya. The researcher classified the universities into private and public, and further, into two sets; those in the western region and eastern region of Kenya. The researcher then purposively chose in each region the youngest and the oldest public universities and similarly private universities. For this study data were collected using three different tools; semi-structured interview schedules, a focused group discussion guide, and questionnaires. The interviewees included; the academic Deans, HODs, and registrars. The focused group discussion was held with student representatives. The questionnaires were used to collect data from the academic deans, HODs, student representatives, and staff in the registrar's office. The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions. The researcher sought to analyse documents including academic bulletins, letters and communication notes, and committee (academic standards, senate, etc.) minutes. The researcher issued 155 questionnaires to academic registers' office staff and 177 representatives of congress. At the same time, 53 deans of students, 53 HODs, and 8 academic registrars were sampled for interviews while 56 members of students' executive were sampled for FGDs. Among these, 42 (79.2%) deans, 46 (86.8%) HODs, 7 (87.5%) academic registrars, 142 (91.6%) academic registrar's office staff, 53(94.6%) executive students and 159 (89.8%) representatives of congress responded to the study. The overall response rate was 92.2%, which was deemed sufficient for analysis. Data for the research were analyzed in line with the research questions that guided the study. Data analyzed were presented using frequency tables, percentages, Mean scores (M), and Standard Deviation for research questions. The interview discussion was summarized and organized based on the purposes of the study.

III. RESULTS

Results have been presented in line with the research questions.

3.1 Creation and Classification of Records

The representatives of congress agreed that each student has an academic file in the academic registrar's office (M=3.06); that important student biographic and academic information is captured correctly in the student's file (e.g. date of birth, nationality, citizenship, sex, major area of study, etc.) (M=2.98) and that; students' files/records are updated regularly (e.g. grades, communications, and alerts) (M=2.90). This shows that the academic registrar's office created and classified student records.

Table 1 Creation and Classification of Records According to Representatives of Congress (N=156)

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Dev.
Each student has an academic file in the academic registrar's office	3.06	0.41
Important student biographic and academic information is captured correctly in the student's file (e.g. date of birth, nationality, citizenship, sex, major area of study, etc.)	2.98	0.57
Students' files/records are updated regularly (e.g. grades, communications, and alerts)	2.90	0.69

Staff at the registrar's office strongly disagreed (M=1.42) that there was an approved policy that guided the creation of records in the academic registrar's office. They also strongly disagreed (M=1.39) that each staff member working on the creation and classification of records at the academic registrar's office had a copy of the approved policy. Furthermore, they disagreed (M=1.37) that the policy on the creation and classification of records at the academic registrar's office specified the staff functions in records management. These findings show that there was no strong adherence to the required policies on recording keeping in the universities.

However, they went on to agree with the other statements. To this end, they agreed that records in the academic registrar's office at creation were classified (e.g. Public, internal or confidential) (M=2.98). The respondents also agreed that there was an academic file for every student in the academic registrar's office (M=3.09) and that important student's biographic and academic information was captured in the student's file (e.g. date of birth, nationality, citizenship, sex, major area of study, etc.) (M=3.49). The staff at the registrar's office also agreed that

students' files were updated regularly (e.g. grades and communications) (3.09) and that students' records were organized in a systematic order when filling (3.44). They also agreed that the rules that guide giving titles and names to folders in the registrar's office are maintained and followed (3.46).

Table 2 Creation and Classification of Records According to Staff at Registrar's Office (N=142)

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. There is an approved policy that guides the creation of records in the academic registrar's office	1.42	0.66
2. Each staff member working on the creation and classification of records at the academic registrar's office has a copy of the approved policy	1.39	0.67
3. Records in the academic registrar's office at creation are classified (e.g. public, internal, or confidential)	2.98	1.08
4. The policy on the creation and classification of records at the academic registrar's office specifies the staff functions in records management	1.37	0.66
5. There is an academic file for every student in the academic registrar's office	3.09	1.06
6. Important student's biographic and academic information is captured in the student's file (e.g. date of birth, nationality, citizenship, sex, major area of study, etc.)	3.49	0.72
7. Students' files are updated regularly (e.g. grades and communications)	3.09	0.70
8. Students' records are organized in a systematic order when filling	3.44	0.64
9. Rules that guide in giving titles and names to folders in the registrar's office are maintained and followed.	3.46	0.50

3.2 Storing Records

Most of the representatives of congress pointed out that there was no burglar-proof storage room (81.1%) and that there was a written notice restricting the entry of unauthorized persons on the door to the storage room (84.9%). In addition, they said that fire extinguishers in the storage room (86.8%) and student electronic academic records could only be accessed by authorized persons (90.6%). Most of them also agreed that their passwords were their secrets (86.8%). These findings show that there was meticulous attention to the storage of students' records.

Table 3 Storing Records According to Representatives of Congress (N=159)

	Yes		No		Missing	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
There is a burglar-proof storage room	24	15.1	129	81.1	6	3.8
A written notice restricting entry of unauthorized persons is on the door to the burglar-proof storage room	135	84.9	18	11.8	6	3.8
There are fire extinguishers in the storage room	15	9.4	138	86.8	6	3.8
Student electronic academic records can only be accessed by authorized persons	144	90.6	9	5.7	6	3.8
My password is my secret	138	86.8	15	9.4	6	3.8

Most of the staff in the registrar's office pointed out that student academic records are stored both electronically and in paper format in the academic registrar's office (84.5%) and that burglar proof storage room's cabinets, shelves and cupboards are labeled according to the classification of files (64.8%). Most of them also pointed out that there were fire extinguishers within the registrar's office in case of a fire outbreak (55.6%) and the storage room, and student records were kept clean and secure from destructive insects, rodents, and environmental hazards (67.6%).

Furthermore, most of the respondents pointed out that people's movement in and out of the storage room was monitored (e.g. by CCTV, entrance register) (55.6%) and that there was a record of students' files taken in and out of the storage room, time taken, date and persons taking them (62.7%). They went on to point out that after the creation and classification of student academic records; they were moved immediately to the storage room (64.1%).

Table 4 Storing Records According to Staff in Registrar's Office (N=142)

	Yes		No		Missing	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Student academic records are stored both electronically and in paper format in the academic registrar's office.	120	84.5	21	14.8	1	0.7
There is a specific burglar-proof storage room within the academic registrar's office for the storage of hard copy student academic records	63	44.4	78	54.9	1	0.7
There is sufficient space for storing student hard copy academic files in a burglar-proof storage room.	63	44.4	78	54.9	1	0.7
Storage facilities like cabinets, shelves, and cupboards are available and sufficient in the burglar-proof storage room	70	49.3	71	50	1	0.7
Burglar-proof storage room's cabinets, shelves & cupboards are labelled according to the classification of files (public, confidential, etc.)	92	64.8	49	34.5	1	0.7
There is a notice at the door showing that the burglar-proof storage room is restricted to unauthorized persons	51	35.9	90	63.4	1	0.7
Inside the burglar, proof storage room is a notice that bans eating, and smoking inside the room	63	44.4	78	54.9	1	0.7
There are fire extinguishers within the registrar's office in case of a fire outbreak	79	55.6	62	43.7	1	0.7
In the storage room, student records are kept clean and secure from destructive insects, rodents, and environmental hazards	96	67.6	45	31.7	1	0.7
People's movement in and out of the storage room is monitored (e.g. by CCTV, entrance register)	79	55.6	63	44.4	0	0.0
There is a record of students' files taken in and out of the storage room, time taken, date, and persons taking them.	89	62.7	53	37.3	0	0.0
After the creation and classification of student academic records, they are moved immediately to the burglar-proof storage room	51	35. 9	91	64.1	0	0.0

3.3 Retrieval and Communication of Records

The representatives of congress were asked to show the extent to which selected factors described the retrieval and communication of records in the registrar's office in their universities. The representatives of congress agree that student information kept in the academic registrar's office could be retrieved when required (M=2.98) and that on request, a student file stored could be retrieved within a satisfactory time (M=2.96). They also agreed with persons with permission to access student academic records, could only access records relevant to them (e.g. grades only for lecturers) (M=3.08) and that communication tools such as the university calendar and academic bulletins were issued in time to enable students and parents plan for their studies (M=3.10).

The members of the students' executive agreed that the registrar's office was prompt in sending academic information to students, parents, and other relevant stakeholders concerning (M=2.90) and that student academic information was sent via modern technology for example email, SMS, or by posting on the university website (M=3.06). They also agreed that they were assured of completing their studies on time because the academic registrar's office kept them updated on their academic progress (M=2.84) and that using their password that they retrieved their electronic academic records when they need to (M=3.18).

Table 5 Retrieval and Communication of Records According To Representatives of Congress (N=153)

Descriptive Statistics	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Student information kept in the academic registrar's office can be retrieved when required	153	2.98	0.67
On request, a student file stored can be retrieved within a satisfactory time	153	2.96	0.77
Persons with permission to access student academic records can only access records relevant to them (e.g. grades only for lecturers)	153	3.08	0.62
Communication tools such as the university calendar and academic bulletins are issued in time to enable students and parents to plan for their studies.	153	3.10	0.72
The registrar's office is prompt in sending academic information to students, parents, and other relevant stakeholders concerning	153	2.90	0.60
Student academic information is sent via modern technology for example email, SMS, or by posting on the university website	153	3.06	0.85
I am assured of completing my studies on time because the academic registrar's office keeps me updated on my academic progress	153	2.84	0.67
Using my password I retrieve my electronic academic records when I need to	153	3.18	0.76

The staff in the registrar's office agreed that student information kept in the academic registrar's office could be retrieved when required (M=3.42) and that on request, a student file stored could be retrieved within a satisfactory time (M=3.28). They also agreed that when a staff member opted to work on a student academic record or records outside the academic registrar's office, it was a must for consent to be granted by the academic registrar (M=3.30) and that access to student academic records is only granted to the relevant persons as per the policy (M=3.28).

The respondents also agreed that persons with permission to access student academic records, could only access that which is relevant to them (e.g. grades only for lecturers) (M=3.18). They went on to agree that the registrar's office was prompt in sending information to students or other relevant stakeholders as per policy (M=3.25) and that communication tools such as the university calendar and academic bulletins were issued in time to enable students and parents to plan for their studies (M=3.13).

Academic registrar's communication was done via modern technology like email, SMS, or posting information on the university website (M=3.21), and passwords were used to retrieve electronically stored student academic records (M=2.93). However, the respondents disagreed that an audit to ensure the security of electronic academic records was done at the start and end of every semester (M=2.14) and that students receive their academic information such as grades, probations, and disciplinary issues before the start of a new semester (M=2.47).

Table 6 Retrieval and Communication of Records According to Staff in the Registrar's Office (N=142)

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Dev.
Student information kept in the academic registrar's office can be retrieved when required	3.42	0.82
On request, a student file stored can be retrieved within a satisfactory time	3.28	0.86
When a staff member opts to work on a student's academic record or records outside the academic registrar's office, consent must be granted by the academic registrar.	3.30	0.74
Access to student academic records is only granted to the relevant persons as per policy	3.28	0.86
Persons with permission to access student academic records can only access that which is relevant to them (e.g. grades only for lecturers)	3.18	0.87
The registrar's office is prompt in sending information to students or other relevant stakeholders as per policy	3.25	0.89
Communication tools such as the university calendar and academic bulletins are issued in time to enable students and parents to plan for their studies.	3.13	0.91
Academic registrar's communication is done via modern technology like email, SMS, or posting information on the university website	3.21	0.97
Students receive their academic information e.g. grades, probations, and disciplinary issues before the start of a new semester	2.47	0.86
Passwords are used to retrieve electronically stored student academic records	2.93	1.10
Audit to ensure the security of electronic academic records is done at the start and end of every semester	2.14	0.91

3.4 Disposal of Records

The staff in the registrar's office strongly disagreed that there was a policy guiding the disposal of student academic records in the academic registrars' office (M=1.35) and that records were audited regularly to identify those that should be destroyed or moved to the archive (M=1.44). The respondents went on to disagree that the university had an archive where the academic registrar's office had a section to move its inactive student academic files (M=1.96). They also disagreed that inactive records were moved from the burglar-proof room to the archive (M=1.66) and that in the academic registrar's office, a record of student files moved to the archives was kept (M=2.10).

The staff in the registrar's office also disagreed that an alert was sent to the file owner whenever his/her file was moved from the academic registrar's office to the archives (M=1.94) and that inactive paper records selected for destruction were destroyed as per the policy (M=1.72). Lastly, the respondents agreed that inactive electronic academic records of students are destroyed using available software that guarantees permanent destruction (M=1.59). These findings show that there were no clear mechanisms for the disposal of records.

Table 7 Disposal of Records (N=142)

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Dev.
There is a policy guiding the disposal of student academic records in the academic registrars' office	1.35	0.62
Records are audited regularly to identify those that should be destroyed or moved to the archive	1.44	0.74
The university has an archive where the academic registrar's office has a section to move its inactive student academic files	1.96	0.90
Inactive records are moved from burglar proof room to the archive	1.66	0.90
In the academic registrar's office, a record of student files moved to the archives is kept	2.10	0.96
An alert is sent to the file owner whenever his/her file is moved from the academic registrar's office to the archives	1.94	0.83
Inactive paper records selected for destruction are destroyed as per the policy	1.72	0.89
Inactive electronic academic records of students are destroyed using available software that guarantees permanent destruction	1.59	0.81

3.5 Adoption of Use of Information Technology in Student Academic Records Management

The second research question was to find out the extent to which the academic registrars in Kenyan universities adopted the use of information technology in student academic records management. The staff in the academic registrar's office strongly disagreed that the academic registrar's office hosted a website to manage, store and retrieve student academic records (M=1.39). They agreed the academic registrar's office managed paper and electronic student academic records (M=3.31). The respondents went on to agree that measures had been put in place to ensure that electronically kept information was safe from hackers (M=3.08) and that emails pertaining to academic information were kept as part of student academic records in the academic registrar's office (M=3.32).

The staff in the registrar's office disagreed that students' paper records had been scanned and managed alongside those kept in the electronic format (M=1.46) and that when a change is made on a student's electronic academic record, the system automatically sent an alert to the academic registrar (M=1.68). However, they also agreed that the academic registrar's staff were trained on how to use technology in the management of student academic records (M=2.75) and that the academic registrar's office had quality computers, internet, and other necessary infrastructure needed in the management of student records (M=2.73).

Table 8 Adoption of Use of Information Technology in Student Academic Records Management (N=142)

Descriptive Statistics	Mean	Std. Dev.
The academic registrar's office hosts a website to manage, store and retrieve student academic records	1.39	0.61
The academic registrar's office manages paper and electronic student academic records	3.31	0.75
Measures have been put in place to ensure that electronically kept information is safe from hackers	3.08	0.95
Emails pertaining to academic information are kept as part of student academic records in the academic registrar's office	3.32	0.81
Students' paper records have been scanned and managed alongside those kept in the electronic format	1.46	0.66
When a change is made to a student's electronic academic record, the system automatically sends an alert to the academic registrar.	1.68	0.89
The academic registrar's staff are trained on how to use technology in the management of student academic records	2.75	0.61
The academic registrar's office has quality computers, internet, and other necessary infrastructure needed in the management of student records	2.73	0.58

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

It is evident from the study that has been done and the data that has been analyzed that there are no clear policy standards for the development and classification of student records in higher education institutions. Despite efforts to make student records well-maintained and accessible, this was not always the case. The analysis also showed that the procedures in place for records management were insufficient to provide a setting in which records management goals could be met. Additionally, it was discovered that the ideal controls at each stage of the records life cycle were insufficient. Furthermore, some universities had not fully embraced electronic records management. This was due to challenges encountered including information breakdown from the registry, and problems with credit control among others.

4.2 Recommendations

In light of the aforementioned:

- It is advised that the University performs a functional analysis of its primary operations, activities, and transactions to set standards for identifying the crucial records series that must be recorded and preserved in its records system.
- It is important to establish policies that offer a foundation for managing university records.
- Once policies have been created, it will also be required to make sure that records management system audits are used consistently to evaluate compliance and assess the system's performance.
- A retention schedule needs to be created right away, along with an inventory of all the University's record series.
- There is a need to avail adequate finance for record management processes starting from record creation, storage, communication, and retrieval as well as disposal.
- The right equipment such as cabinets, safes, locks, fire-extinguishers, trolleys, etc. should be procured.
- And the universities should develop and constantly upgrade recommended record management systems with extensive server capabilities to meet the needs of all students and other users.

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