

# Management of Records in Tanzania: Review and Appraisal of Applicable Theories and Examination of Selected Empirical Findings

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## Abstract

This paper has examined applicable theories on the records and archives management (RAM) in an attempt to use empirical results and findings to explain the RAM practices. The paper had used ten deliberately selected empirical studies on the RAM practices conducted in Tanzania. Results and findings from the examined empirical studies reveals that records life-cycle theory has been dominantly used to study RAM practices in Tanzania; whilst case study methodology being the dominant research design used by most of the examined studies. Empirically, it has been found that RAM practices in Tanzania have been constrained by a number of constraining factors. The identified factors were, inter alia: inadequacy of RAM practices; inexistence of RAM guidelines; inadequate funding over RAM activities; untrained personnel; lack of comprehensive RAM policy; inadequate records storage space, equipment and facilities; and unreformed records and archives management systems. Based on these

results and findings it is concluded that theories propounded for the records and archives management could be supplemented by other management theories and philosophies in studying specific issues on the subject matter. It is recommended that RAM needs specialised studies to determine the influence of the constraining factors on the extent of proper management of records and archives in the specialised administration and management fields that need efficient management and care of records.

**Keywords:** archives, life-cycle, management, records, Tanzania

## 1. Introduction

Records management is a corporate function similar to other organisational functions. It is similar to human resources, finance and estates management to name a few. Therefore, it should be recognised as a specific corporate function (*sic*, programme) within an organisation. Essentially, records management should receive the necessary levels of organisational support to ensure effectiveness (see Smith, 2007). Records are indispensable for the efficient management of organisations but are often undervalued (Williams, 2006). In many African countries including Tanzania, it has consistently emphasized the importance of improving the quality of records management as a basis for decision making, more timely service delivery and financial savings (World Bank and International Records Management Trust, 2000; Manyambula, 2009).

Due to the nature and complexity of records – since creation, receipt, use, maintaining, and disposition – as organisation resource (see Smith, 2007); proper records management and care is vital. Managing records is essential as managing other valuable organisational assets. Records management is a fundamental activity of public administration (World Bank and International Records Management Trust, 2000). The management of public records is an integral part of the effective administration and governance of public sector agencies and facilitates sound decision making (Victorian Auditor General, 2008). Management of public records in many African countries has been characterized as an area of crisis (International Records Management Trust, 1999; World Bank and International Records Management Trust, 2000). Improperly managed records adversely affect the broad scope of public service reforms, and development projects are often difficult to implement and sustain effectively in the absence of well managed records (World Bank and International Records Management Trust, 2000). Not only public records, but also private enterprise records need and efficient management and care.

### 1.1 Contextual Setting – Records Management in Tanzania

Tanzania has recognised the impact of proper records management on the efficiency of government operations and on accountability and transparency in the public sector and has been working to strengthen its records management systems (see International Records Management Trust, 2011). This endeavour is similar to private records keeping. In the 1990's, Tanzania has embarked on the Public Service Reform Programme (PSRP); whereas records [and archives] management was identified as one of the areas that had affected public service delivery (*National Records and Archives Management Policy*, 2011; with annotation).

Tanzania took several measures to improve management of public records. Through Government Notice No. 289 of 1999, the National Archive of Tanzania was transferred from the Ministry of Education and Culture where it had institutional and regulatory challenges to the President's Office – Public Service Management (PO-PSM). The result of this transfer was the establishment of the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD) in 1999 (*National Records and Archives Management Policy*, 2011). The enactment of the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 gave the RAMD a new legal and institutional mandate to manage public records for the entire records life-cycle. Initially, the records and archives management legislation (Act No. 3, 2002) was enacted to institutionally re-arrange the RAMD and repeal the Records (Disposal) Ordinance of 1931, and the National Archives Act of 1965. The repeal of Records (Disposal) Ordinance of 1931 and the National Archives Act of 1965 were due to inter alia: out-dated of the laws due to the passage of time; evolution of the records and archives management (RAM) profession; the RAM best practices; and the changes in the RAM technologies thereto.

Tanzania, through the President's Office – Public Service Management (PO-PSM), promulgated and launched the National Records and Archives Management Policy of 2011 (issued in September 2011). This policy was initially aimed at setting a framework within which records and archives of Tanzania could be managed in accordance with the statutory requirements and international standards to ensure reliability, authenticity, integrity, and usability for the national development (*National Records and Archives Management Policy*, 2011). Theoretically and in practice, the policy was an initiative to take the pace of the evolutionary nature of the RAM as a profession requiring specialised knowledge, skills, and ethics in a continuous professional development spectrum.

The National Records and Archives Management Policy of 2011 was to be applied to all types of records whether subject or case files, transaction records or the specialised records generated, received and maintained by public offices. It was also intended to be applied to records of national interest generated, received and maintained by private sector and individuals regardless of either their form or medium. The policy, therefore, called for review and harmonisation of legislations related to records and archives management (RAM) as there are some noticeable fragmentations of the legislations related to the same issues of interest in the RAM practices in Tanzania (see procurement records management as given under the public procurement legislation, Chapter 410; and the RAM legislation, Act No. 3 of 2002).

### *1.2 Statement of the Problem*

Despite many of the deliberate initiatives considered by Tanzania on the RAM practices, there were and still are significant challenges facing RAM practices that need attention. The significant challenge was and still is to have legislation before a policy was put into place. The national records and archives management legislation did not exhaustively consider most of the issues found in the policy document. The Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 therefore is not broad enough to cover and guide the management of both public and private records (*National Records and Archives Management Policy*, 2011). Other

challenges according to the policy document (*National Records and Archives Management Policy*, 2011) revolve round: creation, capture and receipt of records, classification of records and archives, use and tracking of records, storage and protection of records, vital records, access to records, and disposition of records among others.

The challenges enunciated in the National Records and Archives Management Policy of 2011 can be justified through theories, professional experiences and practices on the RAM and empirical studies either on the public or private RAM perspectives. This paper therefore tries to examine applicable theories on the RAM in an attempt to use empirical findings in order to examine the RAM practices in Tanzania.

## **2. Theory in Records and Archives Management (RAM) Research**

### *2.1 Conceptualisation of Records*

Record is information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business (International Organisation for Standardisation – ISO 15489-1: 2001 as amended in 2016). Records are essential to the business of all organisations (Smith, 2007). Records document the work of public authorities and private companies, support their operations and form the basis for the many services that are provided by them. Records are essential to effective operations in several respects; such as: supporting the delivery of services; supporting administration; documenting rights and responsibilities; legal documentation; evidence of the work of public authorities; and for the future research (Smith, 2007). In such undertakings, as in Smith (2007), records are therefore created or received in the conduct of business activities and provide evidence and information about those undertakings (Smith, 2007; see also ISO 15489-1: 2001 as amended in 2016). Therefore, records are vital to virtually every aspect of the governance process (World Bank and International Records Management Trust, 2000). Generally, records constitute the most vital resource and are essential for the operation of organisations (Makhura, 2005; Smith, 2007). Records are valuable property, or resources, of a firm; and, like all other resources, they must be managed properly (Read and Ginn, 2007; see also Read and Ginn, 2011). Records, generally speaking, are vital information generated out of and kept for the functioning of the business processes and activities thereto in an organisation setting. Generally, organisations cannot do without records. Therefore, efficient records management is a must to ensure proper functioning of organisational undertakings.

### *2.2 Essence of Theory on Records and Archives Management Practices*

Theory defines, motivates, and explains human beings (Cook, 2008). But theory is not monolithic series of scientific laws objectively true in all times and places, but rather an on-going, open-ended quest for meaning about our documentary heritage that it is ever evolving (Cook, 2008). The term theory is used in a variety of different ways (Bryman, 2004; Polit and Beck, 2004), but its most common meaning is an explanation of observed regularities (Bryman, 2004). Scientists have used theory to refer to an abstract generalisation that offers a systematic explanation about how phenomena are interrelated. Others, however, use the term theory less restrictively to refer to a broad characterisation of a phenomenon

(Polit and Beck, 2004). Theory is a set of interrelated constructs (*sic* concepts), definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena (Kerlinger, 1985; Ruane, 2005; Welman, Kruger and Mitchell, 2005). Generally speaking, theory is a systematic way of seeing a phenomenon in its reality.

Theory plays a number of roles in research. Theory helps to decide what and how the research is conducted. It can be crucial in transferring findings to new settings, and an important end-product of research findings (Gorard and Taylor, 2004). Theory is a potential source of further information and discoveries. It is in this way a source of new hypotheses and as yet unasked questions; it identifies critical areas for further investigation; it discloses gaps in our knowledge; and enables researchers to postulate the existence of previously unknown phenomena (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). Theory is a systematic view might be an argument, a discussion or a rationale and it helps to explain or predict phenomena that occur in the world (Creswell, 2003). Theory, in any scientific study, is the essence of theoretical frameworks.

Researchers often look for the theoretical frameworks to help them make sense of complicated experiences, and make complex situation manageable, understandable, consistent and meaningful (see Cook, 2008). Theory is the essence of a theoretical framework. Theoretical framework is a conceptual model of how one theorizes or makes logical sense of the relationships among the several factors that have been identified as important to the problem (Sekaran, 2003). Generally, the theoretical framework discusses the interrelationships among the variables that are deemed to be integral part of the dynamics of the situation under investigation. From the theoretical framework, testable hypotheses can be developed to examine whether the formulated theory is valid or not (Sekaran, 2003). The purpose of any designated theoretical framework is to make research results and findings meaningful and generalizable. Theories help to stimulate research and the extension of knowledge by providing both direction and impetus (Polit and Beck, 2004). Theories are considered as backbone of scientific inquiries.

Management and care of records and archives, particularly within the context of public sector, is governed by four important principles or theories (International Records Management Trust – IRMT, 1999). Theories on the RAM, according to IRMT (1999), must adhere to the following perspectives: records must be kept together according to the agency responsible for their creation or accumulation, in the original order established at the time of their creation; records follow a life-cycle; the care of records should follow a continuum; and that records can be organised according to hierarchical levels in order to reflect the nature of their creation. Four models have been discussed by different scholars in the RAM sciences (Ndenje-Sichalwe, 2010). These are, inter alia: records life-cycle concept (Penn, Pennix and Coulson, 1994; Yusof and Chell, 2000; Shepard and Yeo, 2003); records continuum model (Upward, 2000; Flynn, 2001; Shepherd and Yeo, 2003); the records integrated approach (IRMT, 1999); and records entity life history (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). However, according to Chachage and Ngulube (2006), records life-cycle and records continuum are the dominant models in the RAM field. Therefore two theories are discussed hereunder due to their

cognitive importance and dominance in the RAM practices.

### 2.2.1 Records Life-Cycle

Records life-cycle concept has been regarded as a theory which provides a framework for the operation of records management programme (Penn, Pennix and Coulson, 1994). The life-cycle concept dates from the 1930s and is attributed to Schellenberg of the National Archives of the United States of America (USA) (Yusof and Chell, 2000; Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). The concept was developed in response to the ever increasing volume of records produced by organizations (Yusof and Chell, 2000). The life-cycle concept is based on the fact that recorded information has a life similar to that of a biological organism in that it is born (creation phase), it lives (maintenance phase) and dies (disposition phase) (Penn, Pennix and Coulson 1994; Williams 2006). Since the 1950s many variants on the records life-cycle concept have been modelled. Most models aim to show a progression of actions taken at different times in the life-cycle of a record, typically, its creation, capture, storage, use and disposal. Some writers showed the life of records as a linear progression while others describe a loop or a circle (Shepherd and Yeo 2003).

### 2.2.2 Records Continuum

Records continuum has originated in Canada. However, it was developed and adopted in Australia. Flynn (2001) provided the Australians' view of the records continuum as a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of creation of records and (before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems) through to the preservation and use of records as archives. The model was developed in the 1980s and 1990s, in response to criticisms of the life cycle model (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). The continuum concept suggests that four actions continue or recur throughout the life of a record: identification of records; intellectual control of them; provision of access to them; and physical control of them. According to the continuum concept, the distinction between records management and archives management need not be rigidly maintained. These four actions are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Four actions of records care

<i>No</i>	<i>Process</i>	<i>Records management actions</i>	<i>Archives management actions</i>
1	Identification and acquisition	Creation of receipt	Selection or acquisition
2	Intellectual control	Classification within a logical system	Arrangement and description
3	Access	Maintenance and use	Reference and use
4	Physical control	Disposal by destruction or transfer as archives	Preservation

Source: Adapted from IRMT (1999a)

## 3. Research Methodology

The general purpose of this paper is to examine applicable theories in the RAM in an attempt to use empirical results and findings to explain the RAM practices in Tanzania. The study

towards writing this paper was largely guided by the qualitative paradigm. The study has used a survey of deliberately selected empirical studies on the RAM practices conducted in Tanzania. The considered empirical studies were sought from both public and private organisations. Secondary data from unpublished and published research reports, journal articles, theses, and treatises on the RAM practices and issues related thereto were considered pertinent for this specific paper.

This paper has examined ten deliberately selected empirical studies on the RAM practices. The empirical studies, inter alia, were: Kalumuna (2000); Kitalu (2001); Ndibalema (2001); Chachage (2005); Lyaruu (2005); Chachage and Ngulube (2006); Ngulube and Tafor (2006); Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010); Lufunyo (2013); and Ndemanyisho (2014). The paper has reviewed and appraised the applicability of theories on the RAM researches conducted in Tanzania prior to this academic paper. Together with the review and appraisal of the applicable theories; this paper examined the methodologies adopted in conducting those studies and the observed results and findings in explaining management of records and archives in the context of Tanzania. The study examined secondary empirical data to produce a set of descriptive results and analysed the quantitative and qualitative data to obtain thematic results on applicable theories and empirical findings on the RAM practices and issues. Lastly, this paper has established theoretical, methodological, and empirical gaps for further research on the RAM research agenda in Tanzania.

#### **4. Results, Findings and Discussions**

Results, findings and discussions presented in this paper arise from the deliberately selected empirical studies. Here, among other observations; results, findings and discussions were pinned on the applicable theories that justified theoretical frameworks used in the selected empirical studies. This was used in order to expound the context of the intended studies as envisioned by their specific objectives. Generally, the selected empirical studies depict either the successes or failures or both on the significant factors (*sic*, constraints) over the RAM practices in Tanzania.

##### *4.1 Selected Empirical Findings on Records and Archives Management in Tanzania*

Kalumuna (2000) has used a case study methodology to study on improving efficiency of records management in three local government municipalities in Dar es Salaam. The study, among other results and findings, revealed the inadequacy of the RAM practices. Further, results and findings recorded that the existing records management in the registries on the municipalities in general had failed to meet the information needs of decision-makers and the technical staff of the envisioned local authorities. The records registries in the three municipalities were basically in their infancy. There were no guidelines or procedures for what constituted a record or a document that hindered efficiency in records creation. There was a missing link between records registries and other departments. The study recorded that, most of the record files in the municipality departments were not recorded in the registries.

It was further recorded that the information flow patterns between the municipalities' departments and the records registries were inadequate. There were no appraisals of records,

no records centres and no identified processes for sending obsolete (*sic* non-current or extinct) records to the Records and Archives Management Department (RAMD). Lack of adequate resources for retention or disposal, an absence of policy on information and services and lack of a positive attitude towards the importance of using and keeping records for both registry and technical staff were factors which hindered the efficiency of records management in the studied municipalities. This study further revealed absence of policies and procedures towards records and archives management, budgetary constraints, low level of application of information technology in creation, distribution, maintenance and disposal of records or dissemination of information, and inadequately trained records management personnel.

There was an investigative case study on the management of current records. This study was conducted at the Ministry of Education and Culture. The study was carried-out by Kitalu (2001). The study recorded that the management systems for all types of records including current records were inadequate and still inefficient for the effective flow of information in the ministry. Constraints accounting for this observed scenario included resource and management policy-related challenges. These were observed to be inter alia: lack of funding; untrained records management personnel; inadequate space for keeping records; lack of a comprehensive records management policy; negligence on the part of the ministry officials; and non-availability of essential working tools and equipment. This study by Kitalu (2001) emphasized the need for the formulation of a ministry-wide records management policy which was, by the time this study was conducted, not in existence.

In the line of investigative case study, Ndibalema (2001) conducted research on the state of records management. The focus of the study was at the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) headquarters in the metropolis city of Dar es Salaam. The NSSF was specifically considered due its nature and complexity in dealing with pensions and related social security issues which generates, receives, uses, and maintains a multitude of records on various social security schemes. The study revealed that the state of records management at the NSSF did not support the records life-cycle theory. Efficient records management was affected by lack of records management programmes and policies, and lack of training and support from top management. It was revealed that, there was lack of awareness on records management by the decision-makers and lack of a comprehensive scheme of service, inadequate equipment, and a shortage of tools and facilities relevant to records management. Further, the study revealed lack of a comprehensive records management policy aimed at an integrated approach to the management of whole life-cycle theory of records, inadequate records storage area, lack of trained personnel, insufficient equipment, improper records classification and indexing systems. Generally, the study concluded an improper records and archives management practices at the NSSF.

In another line of study, Chachage (2005) conducted a study to develop a model for a corporate records management system. The study had a special reference to sustainability reporting in Iringa region in Tanzania. It was a case study whereas multiple cases were considered. The case population consisted of nine deliberately selected cases. Data were collected by interviews and physical observations. The major findings of the study were that general sustainability related records were kept by all nine cases, except environmental



related records, which were not comprehensively kept. It was further revealed that studied cases used administrative officers with a higher education to head records management systems. It was also revealed that most of the administrative officers who headed the records management systems had in-house or professional training on records management. Lastly, it was learnt that all studied nine cases were found to use computers in records keeping.

Lyaruu (2005) conducted a study to examine the personnel records management in the public sector in Tanzania and its impact on the pension payment. This study used a multiple case study design focusing on the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, the President's Office – Public Service Management (PO-PSM) and the Public Service Pension Fund (PSPF). This study identified a number of problems associated with the payment of pensions to retired public servants. It was recorded however; the identified challenges had their origin in improper management of records in the ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs). The identified challenges, according to Lyaruu (2005) included but not limited to: lack of records management policy; inadequate and poor facilities; lack of knowledge and skills on records management; lack of support from the management; lack of awareness on the importance of records; and information flow breakdown between employees and employers.

Chachage and Ngulube (2006) conducted an empirical study to expound the results and findings of Chachage (2005) for managing business records from the nine cases in Iringa, Tanzania. The expounded results and findings revealed that records management activities were given a low priority for most of the studied cases due to lack of policy and management support. The study showed that seven (77.78%) out of nine case respondents were not aware of the records management standards that indicated the studied cases had no RAM guidelines. The studied cases indicated that despite of training given to the heads of records management their delivery of the professional records management services was not significant as envisaged.

Further, Chachage and Ngulube (2006) learnt that: eight (88.89%) out of nine cases had disintegrated vital records programme whilst only one had integrated written vital records programme; seven (77.78%) out of nine cases closed their files on a regular basis, however eight (88.89%) out of nine cases did not transfer their inactive records to on-site archives; and eight (88.89%) out of nine cases treated their inactive records unprofessionally. In the issues and matters related to safety and security of records, it was observed that: two (22.22%) out of nine cases had fire extinguishers in the records storage areas; one (11.11%) out of nine cases had fire sprinkler; and none (0.00%) out of the nine had fire detectors in the records storage areas. Finally, it was observed that the filing system was functional, which was used by five (55.56%) out of nine cases whilst two (22.22%) out of nine cases used numerical and alphanumerical systems.

Accordingly, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) conducted a cross-sectional study between 2004 and 2005 to determine the extent to which archival institutions within the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region managed public records and archives. Data for this study were obtained through interviews,

content analysis of documents and self-administered questionnaires that were mailed to the 13 member states that comprised the ESARBICA region. The study revealed, among other results and findings that: the national archives within the ESARBICA region had limited resources for records management functions; the records management processes were neither governed by standards nor guided by a professional code of ethics; the records management personnel were not adequately trained; the electronic records were in danger of being lost due to benign neglect; the legislations that mandated archival institutions to manage records through their life-cycle were not comprehensive in certain instances; and the strategies used for public programming activities were rather limited and not clearly targeted at some archival institutions.

Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) investigated the extent to which records management practices foster accountability in the Public Sector Reform Programme (PSRP) in some government ministries in Tanzania. This study had successfully used the survey design. Here, government ministries in Tanzania were surveyed and studied. Results and findings for this study indicate that records in some government ministries in Tanzania were not properly managed to foster accountability in the implementation of the PSRP. The study established that although the introduction of the PSRP has resulted in some efforts in reforming the RAM practices in the government ministries, current records management in the ministries was still weak, thus fostering accountability in the PSRP would be difficult. The results and findings further revealed lack of registry mission statements, records management policy and dedicated budgets for registry sections. The majority of government registries in Tanzania lacked records retention schedules and systematic disposal of records resulting in heavy congestion of records and poor retrieval of information. Further, disaster preparedness and security control for records and archives did not form a significant part of the records management activities in the government ministries of Tanzania.

There was another unique empirical study conducted by Lufunyo (2013). This study was aimed at investigating the impact of public sector reforms on service delivery in Tanzania. The main question for this study was to what extent the public sector reforms has contributed or inhibited service delivery. The study was a qualitative documentary review of secondary information that was complimented by primary data through administered questionnaires to the sampled respondents. The study, among other results and findings, revealed that despite of the known facts that the public sector reforms were aimed at (1) improving records keeping systems to facilitate and easy responsiveness on attending to public queries in service provision and (2) improving the quality of records at large and easy retrieval systems; it was revealed that very little has been done with regard to reforming the records management systems. Records management systems were not streamlined in tandem with the dire need of the improved delivery of public services in Tanzania.

Ndemanyisho (2014) conducted a study to investigate the current practices of records management at the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) throughout the whole life-cycle of the records and the extents to which TRA records management adheres to the ISO 15489-1 on information and documentation. The case study design was used to investigate the management of tax records at the TRA. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data

collection approaches. Interviews, observations, documentary review and questionnaires were employed. The study was conducted at the TRA headquarters in Dar es Salaam and two tax regions of Kinondoni and Dodoma. The study findings indicate that TRA was faced by challenges on records management. These challenges, inter alia, were: unqualified records officers; little linkage between information and technology department and records management unit; lack of records management tools such as policies, records retention and disposition schedules; and lack of vital and disaster management plan. Further the study revealed that, there is a low priority given by the organisation on records management issues.

#### *4.2 Review of Applicable Theories in the Selected Empirical Studies*

Kalumuna (2000) whilst studying the efficiency of records management in three local government authorities in Dar es Salaam had used records life-cycle theory to study records management. In this study, it was observed among other results and findings, lack of adequate resources and other factors that hindered efficiency of records management in the studied local government authorities (LGAs) in the Dar es Salaam metropolis. Records life-cycle theory was also used by Kitalu (2001) to study on the management of records at the ministry responsible for education and culture. Kitalu (2001) observed constraints for proper management of public records at the ministry. On the other hand, Ndibalema (2001) used the records life-cycle theory to investigate state of records at the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) headquarters. The results and findings obtained by Ndibalema (2001) at the NSSF established that records management at the headquarters did not support the records life-cycle theory. However, amongst other results and findings it was revealed that there were observed factors (*sic*, constraints) that affected proper records management.

In tandem with records life-cycle used by Kalumuna (2000), Kitalu (2001), and Ndibalema (2001) respectively; Chachage (2005) went to use a combined records life-cycle and records continuum theories to develop a model for a corporate records management. Alongside the development of the envisioned model, the study went to the extent of revealing the essence of sustainability of related records kept by the studied cases and the use of educated records management administrators. In refining the study by Chachage (2005), Chachage and Ngulube (2006) have used a modified records life-cycle that blended records life-cycle and records continuum model. This study (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006) further identified records management gaps in both records care and maintenance.

Ngulube and Tafor (2006) used records life-cycle to determine the extent to which the ESARBICA member states manage public records and archives. Amongst other findings, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) observed that the national archives in the ESARBICA region had limited resources for proper records and archives management. Whilst studying the significance of records management to fostering accountability in the public service reform programme of Tanzania; Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) used records life-cycle theory. The results and findings of this study revealed, among others, lack of registry mission statements and records management policy.

The study by Lufunyo (2013) was not directly related to the RAM practices. The study however, was related to some specific issues associated with public records and archives

management in the public services delivery system. The study revealed that very little has been done in line with reforming the records and archives management systems in Tanzania. Here, records life-cycle and records continuum theories could have been considered for adoption and application in studying the efficacy of proper records and archives management in the public services delivery systems in Tanzania. Lastly, Ndemanyisho (2014) used records life-cycle to investigate records management practices at the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) headquarters in Dar es Salaam metropolis and two tax regions (Kinondoni municipality in Dar es Salaam and Dodoma municipality in Dodoma). Among other findings, Ndemanyisho (2014) observed constraints for proper records management in the TRA businesses and processes.

#### *4.3 Synthetic Summary of the Selected Empirical Studies*

Examination of the deliberately selected empirical studies has identified applicable theories, methodologies, and key results and findings on the management of records and archives in the context of Tanzania. The summary of key findings on applicable theories, study design, and methodological approach is found in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of key findings on the selected empirical studies

No.	Author and Year	Adopted and Applied Theory	Study Design	Methodological Approach
1	Kalumuna (2000)	Records Life-Cycle	Case	Single case
2	Kitalu (2001)	Records Life-Cycle	Case	Single case
3	Ndibalema (2001)	Records Life-Cycle	Case	Single case
4	Chachage (2005)	Combined Records Life-Cycle and Records Continuum	Case	Multiple cases
5	Lyaru (2005)	Records Life-Cycle	Case	Multiple cases
6	Chachage and Ngulube (2006)	Modified records life-cycle theory that blended records life-cycle and continuum theories	Case	Multiple cases
7	Ngulube and Tafor (2006)	Records Life-Cycle	Survey	Survey of the ESARBICA regional members including Tanzania
8	Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010)	Records Life-Cycle	Survey	Survey of government ministries in Tanzania
9	Lufunyo (2013)	Records Life-Cycle and Records Continuum	Survey	Survey of various government institutions in Tanzania
10	Ndemanyisho (2014)	Records Life-Cycle	Case	Multiple cases

Source: Review, appraisal and examination of the selected empirical studies, 2017.

It is evident that out of ten selected empirical studies examined eight (80%) have used records life-cycle theory. Only one (10%) has used the modified theory that blended records life-cycle and records continuum theories. The study by Lufunyo (2013); however, due to its nature of the results and findings could have applied the records life-cycle and records continuum theories. The examination of ten deliberately selected empirical studies has revealed that the most dominant theory adopted and applied was the records life-cycle.

Generally, the observations found in this examination comply with the observations of Chachage and Ngulube (2006), Ngulube and Tafor (2006), and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010).

Accordingly, as in Ngulube and Tafor (2006), in the eastern and southern Africa region (including Tanzania) the records life-cycle is popularly and predominantly used as a framework for the management of public sector records. This observation concurs with observations made by Ndenje-Sichalwe (2010) that, records life-cycle is the framework which is currently used in the management of public records in Tanzania. For generality therefore, the RAM practices in Tanzania have been dominantly studied by the use of records life-cycle theory. However, there is a gap of applicability of other theories and philosophies in administration and management sciences that could have been adopted and applied to study the RAM practices in Tanzania. The theories and philosophies could have been considered in terms of: norms, regulatory, and cultural-cognitive; resource based views; factors and constraints influencing the RAM practices; organisation behaviours; new institutional dynamics and economics; and organisational resources management.

On the applicability of study designs and the methodological approaches, it is evident that case study with its variants were dominantly used by 70%; whilst survey designs preponderated by 30%. There were 30% of single case study approaches, 40% of multiple case study approaches, and 30% of survey studies. As a fundamental practice, the realist research methodology of qualitative case study is process orientated and does not deal with cause and effect relations, but with underlying causal tendencies as agreed by Bhaskar (1978) and Tsoukas (1989). Most of the examined empirical studies show the phenomenology of realism in the records and archives management in the studied cases. This has left a research gap in broadening the study to other specialised areas of records and archives management as case study methodology has limitations (see Yin, 2003). Also, multiple case studies are more complex where researcher needs to study several individual cases again and again (see Robson, 2002). Therefore the examined studies were not comprehensive in the theoretical and methodological phenomena. The gaps are vivid that need rational justification to be filled thereon.

## **5. Conclusions and Recommendations**

This paper has examined the applicable theories in the RAM and therefore utilised the empirical results and findings from selected empirical studies to explain the RAM practices in Tanzania. To address this theme it was theoretically contextualised that records and archives management could be studied by variant of theories and theoretical frameworks. Results and findings from the selected empirical studies conducted in Tanzania have recorded that records life-cycle theory has been dominantly used to study the RAM practices in Tanzania. Whilst case study methodology has been the dominant research design adopted and used by most of the reviewed, appraised, and examined empirical studies. On the other hand, empirical results and findings have showed that records and archives management in Tanzania is constrained by significant challenges (*sic*, constraints) that affect or influence proper management of records and archives. The challenges, inter alia were: inadequacy of the RAM practices; inexistence of the RAM guidelines; inadequate funding over the RAM activities; untrained personnel; lack of comprehensive RAM policy; inadequate storage space, equipment and facilities; improper management of records and archives; and unreformed records and archives management systems. Based on the empirical results and findings it is

hereby concluded that the theories propounded for the records and archives management could be supplemented by other administration and management theories and philosophies in studying specific issues on the subject matter. It is recommended that the records and archives management needs specialised studies on determining the extent of challenges (*sic*, constraints) in influencing proper management of records and archives in the specialised records and archives management fields that generates multitude of public records within and across the public offices in Tanzania. To further the research agenda on records and archives management a survey study could be considered to cover a large sample of the population so that the results and findings could be generalised to determine the status of records and archives management practices in Tanzania.

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