

**Implementation of records management practices in technical and vocational education and training institutions in South Africa**

**By**

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## **Declaration**

I declare that the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions in South Africa is my work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other university, and all the sources I have used have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

Ms. M E Kodisang

**Signature**

28 December 2024

**Date**

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"As you can see, I send an Angel in front of you to guide you and lead you to the location I have prepared." - Exodus 23:20, King James Version

## Abstract

In technical vocational education and training colleges, records management plays a major role as it enables service delivery in a consistent, equitable manner, and it further provides continuity and productivity in its management and administration. This role extends to the provision of support for the institution's mandate, that of research, teaching, learning, and community engagement. Despite the crucial role that records play in TVET institutions, several studies have highlighted a lack of appreciation for this role. In this context, the study was undertaken to explore implementing records management practices in a TVET institution. The Organisational Culture Framework by Schein and Schein (2016) was determined to be an appropriate framework supporting the study due to the connection between records and information management. To optimise the theoretical implications of research findings, a case study research design was employed. To allow the researcher to develop the meaning of a situation, constructivism was chosen as the appropriate worldview for the study. Qualitative data collection was used for both administrators and managers using semi-structured physical questionnaires and face-to-face semi-structured interviews, respectively. A purposeful sample of 17 administrators and 21 managers was used. The key findings of the study revealed that administrative staff lacked formal records management training. Additionally, there is limited funding for training staff on records management. Moreover, there are no policies on records management. Based on the findings, the study recommends the need for trained records management staff paired with records management governance guidelines, as well as management buy-in, and records management being driven from the top. The study concluded that for records management to be fully implemented, management should ensure that records management staff are trained on records management principles and provided with guidelines, including infrastructure. To make this possible, the study recommended that senior management make funds available to train records management staff on records management principles. In addition, senior management must make records management governing documents available and use their authority to compel staff to comply with these policies.

**Keywords:** records management, records implementation, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), organisational culture

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## **List of abbreviations**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ARM     | Archives and Records Management                 |
| B. Tech | Bachelor of Technology                          |
| COSATU  | Congress of South African Trade Unions          |
| DHET    | Division of Higher Education and Training       |
| FET     | Further Education and Training                  |
| ICASS   | Internal Continuous Assessment                  |
| ISO     | International Organisation for Standardisation  |
| NARSA   | National Archives and Records Services Act      |
| NSFAS   | National Student Financial Aid Scheme           |
| PAIA    | Promotion of Access to Information Act          |
| POPIA   | Protection of Personal Information Act          |
| SASA    | South African Society of Archivists             |
| SASOL   | South African Synthetic Oil Limited             |
| SETA    | Sector Education and Training Authority         |
| SIU     | Special Investigating Unit                      |
| SRC     | Students' Representative Council                |
| TVET    | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |

# Chapter 1: Introduction and background of the study

## 1.1. Introduction

Records management is the coordination and harmonisation of various records throughout their lifecycle to accomplish the goals and objectives of the organisation. It involves the creation, distribution, use, storage, preservation, retrieval, and disposal of records (Jatto, 2021:241). Processes for recording and keeping proof of, and information about, company operations and transactions in the form of records. These records, or sources of information, were created internally or externally in a variety of formats, some of which were hard copy and others of which were electronic. Various authors have found that these records are not well kept (Procter, 2002; Iwhiwhu, 2005; Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005; Bailey, 2011; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011; Asogwa, 2013; Muhenda, 2013; Phiri & Tough, 2018; Tsabedze & Ngoepe, 2020: 158; Giba-Fosu, 2020). Despite the memory value, cultural significance, and historical importance of records, Joseph (2016:316) observed similar practices in the Australian motor racing business. Records were administered by libraries and museums because there was no trained staff for record-keeping responsibilities. In the Nigerian study by Enakrire (2020:7), an observation indicates that records management duties in the Nigerian health ministry are conducted by administrative staff members who have no idea what records management is, proving that there is no culture of record keeping.

Records management practices vary from country to country. In China, studies by An and Jiao (2004:35) note that record keeping provides historical information and serves as the government's memory of government accomplishments instead of providing proof, accountability, and details regarding corporate operations and governance. However, because of their transactional nature, which sets them apart from other information assets, records in other nations, such as Africa, Australia, and Malaysia, must be kept reliable and authentic and treated like any other organisational asset. They must be kept as sources of information from the moment they are created until they are destroyed (Keakopa, 2013:37; Joseph, 2013:316; Yunus & Araffin, 2013:9). Additionally, records include a range of information, some of which is sensitive, as well as documentation of activities and choices, they should be kept in safe storage areas. Due to the various formats of records, records-keeping principles were followed, with

only authorised persons having access to them for business operations and compliance audits.

The study conducted by Kulcu and Cakmak (2012:194) in Turkey opines that records contain authentic information that forms a part of evidential value, which enables institutions' continuity and consistency of services and prevents any legal disputes. This makes it more appropriate to review records regularly, apply proper retention, and destroy them timeously to sustain cost-effective business processes, legal and regulatory compliance, and corporate accountability, as it is more suited to serve the institution's goals (Atumolah, 2011:3). In addition, Enakrire (2020:3) mentions that effective records management might help institutions better manage their data, accomplish their goals, protect themselves from legal action, maintain their corporate memory, and foster accountability and sound governance. These authors go on to state that a haphazard approach to record keeping will tarnish the university's reputation at the very least.

It is also worth noting that records containing sensitive information are disposed of and treated in line with applicable regulations and laws when they are destroyed. In separate studies conducted at the University of Namibia (Namibia) and the University of Mpumalanga (South Africa), the researchers Matangira, Katjiveri-Tjiuoro and Lukileni, (2013:113): Netshakhuma (2019:62) observed that there is no proper records management function in various organisations, and its value within organisations is undervalued, resulting in it being labelled as an administrative tool for efficiency rather than a strategic asset. There are issues implementing policies in some organisations in South Africa due to a lack of ability, managerial support, and strategic direction needed to carry out actions that assure proper record management (Keakopa, 2013:37). Research conducted by An and Jiao (2004:34) indicated that China's national archives, oversee developing and implementing policies, and not organisations.

Records management in Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) plays a major role as it enables service delivery in a consistent equitable manner, it further provides continuity and productivity in its management and administration (Musembe, 2016:14). This role extends to the provision of support of the institutions' mandate, that of research, teaching, learning and community engagements (Chinyemba & Ngulube,

2005:2). The researcher, who works in records management at an HEI, observed that minutes of committee meeting are important and should be handled properly so that they can be consulted in the future to inform similar decisions. Examples of these decisions include how certain appointments were made when appointing executives and other resolutions in the past. Furthermore, Yunus and Ariffin (2013:1) posited that effective records management in institutions facilitates many activities leading to quicker and more accurate decision-making because the appropriate knowledge and information are made available, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel. Therefore, this demonstrates the important role of records management in organisations to enhance the institution's productivity. Without proper records management, people and organisations would not easily access records, thus they cannot prove that actions were taken, commitments entered, and obligations carried out (Yunus & Ariffin, 2013:3).

Considering the poor state of records management in business, government, and higher education, Kaczmarek (2006:24) emphasises that it is indisputable that having strong upper management support is essential to a successful records management program. Management must take the lead in promoting records management practices in TVET institutions, as Enakrire (2020:4) states that this will assist institutions with information management, effective mandate fulfilment, lawsuit protection, corporate memory preservation, accountability, and good governance. In their studies in records management in higher education institutions, various researchers (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011:157; Ngoepe & Ngulube, 2013:7; Phiri & Tough, 2018:150) discovered patterns of poor records management, beginning with a lack of capacity, management support, and strategic direction in carrying out activities that would ensure proper records management. Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011:157) remarked that poor records management is sometimes attributed to a lack of resources, including policies and procedures, inappropriate storage facilities, and training. This is a result of some office administrators' lack of experience with records management, which can lead to issues like inconsistent record naming, a propensity to keep everything in case it's needed, and a lack of knowledge about which records to keep (Shepherd, Stevenson & Flinn, 2011:122; Asogwa, 2013:792). In their opinion, Khumalo and Chigariro (2017:73) and Netshakhuma (2019:61) emphasise that these issues can cause storage deficiencies and poor management, as well as expose

organisations to unfounded audit findings and litigation. The absence of formal training and working in silos in institutions has resulted in administrators in various divisions using inconsistent records management practices.

Although there is historical importance of records, many institutions have an inadequate understanding of records management practices; these challenges are not unique to developing countries. For instance, a study conducted in Melbourne by Joseph (2016:320) revealed that limited full-time staff and records management practices are common deficiencies in the records management discipline. In addition, a case study by Phiri and Tough (2018:47) on managing university records-at six universities of which four were South African higher education institutions observed that some South African higher education institutions are using their governance structures and other drivers for record-keeping putting in place sound record-keeping systems to manage their records and documents effectively.

Young and Poon (2013:943) state that, management support has long been recognised as critical to implementation success. But management alone will not achieve this goal; instead, management must collaborate with lower-level staff "followers" to accomplish this goal. Although progress has been made in the records management field, in some institutions, some more advanced than others, this role, as observed by Musembe (2016:26), has not been without problems. Adding to this, a study conducted in Malaysia by Kulcu and Cakmak, (2012:196) specified that although progress has been made in the implementation of records management, the impact of technological developments necessitates multi-perspective approaches rather than traditional linear definitions, allowing for digitization within the organisational framework, which is traditionally addressed within the scope of records management. The mentioned problems were not unique to the public sector only; they are also prevalent in higher education institutions.

Involvement of management in the implementation of records management practices can help clarify its alignment with the strategic objectives of the institution clearly so that it is executed, delivered, and accepted by the community and obliges the overall business purpose (Khan, Long & Iqbal, 2014:1373). When this is driven by management and the right infrastructure, shelves, storage space, and policies are provided, it is easier for lower staff to follow. In addition, Kotter (2007:26) states that

top managements need to create and communicate the organisation's vision and strategies for them to be successfully implemented. The involvement of management, even if it can be strong support from at least one executive-level manager, is beneficial in identifying potential conflicts between organisational strategies and addressing them early (Iqbal, Long & Bukhari, 2015:541). Nguyen and Fraunholz (2007:792) suggested the need for further research on top management's attitude toward records management implementation, stating that "there are still several agencies where top management does not see records management as a priority". For this reason, the researcher chose to explore the implementation of records management practices in South African TVET colleges, using Flavius Mareka TVET College based in Sasolburg.

## **1.2. Records management in TVET institutions**

Tertiary institutions engage in multiple transactions that result in the generation of a variety of records, including admissions, assessments, human resources, financial records, memos, and other forms of communication. The records management program in higher education institutions (HEIs) in South Africa, according to Giba-Fosu (2020:24), serves as a primary vehicle for establishing and disseminating best practices in the creation and administration of all types of institutional documents. Records of this nature can put an institution in court with severe fines if they are not found when needed, thus HEIs need thorough document management systems that can handle records throughout their existence. The study conducted in South Africa and Malawi by Phiri and Tough (2018:54) observed that this discipline demands the application of well-established processes and procedures to control information sources that originate organically within an organisation due to its operations. A well-integrated records management implementation requires more than just well-established processes and procedures. To allocate access to reliable and authentic records, Yunus and Araffin's (2013:9) research in the Malaysian context explained that modern organisations require records managers with a deep understanding of their functions, activities, business processes, understanding of legislation, organisational policy framework, and strategic direction from a records management perspective.

Records management is critical for institutions and organisations to function, starting with student applications and supporting documents, proof of payments to academic

curriculum guides, participation and achievement in assessments, and not to mention senate and council meeting agendas and minutes, as well as historical records. In a case study conducted in Kenya, Moi University, Musembe (2016:16) deliberates that institutions can utilise a functional analysis methodology to determine which records should be managed. The author notes that this analysis strategy can determine the key activities and transactions that are fundamental to the organization's functions, as well as the supporting data. The study conducted at the University of Ilorin, in Nigeria by Tella and Olanyi (2021:24) accepts the notion that records are important sources of information some of which serve as memory of the institution that should be managed with utmost care and high levels of dedication must always be displayed, as records should be made available when required for the institution's credibility, reputation, and integrity. Management involvement in the implementation of records management and a conducive organisational culture can save the institution from making headlines due to failure to produce records as sources of evidence, thus the choice of Organisational Culture Framework as a supporting framework is fitting to understand the study of an organisational culture that has been created when it comes to records management.

Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005:3) confer that records are important because they keep track of administrative, research, and educational services given by organisations and higher education institutions. Due to the importance of records in TVET institutions, most colleges throughout the world have built institutional archives to handle a plethora of recorded data that reflects their everyday activities (Mosweu & Rakemane, 2020:106). The records kept in this location are crucial as they are consulted regularly to guarantee that the university's divisions run smoothly. Although it appears like some institutions have a level of records management that supports the control of the quantity and quality of information produced, there is still a noticeable gap. Coetzer and Le Roux (2012:4), writing from a South African perspective, claim that there still seems to be a gap in record management within faculties and divisions, particularly in managing records of courses taught and curricula, faculty and divisional committees, projects, and budgets. The study conducted in Botswana by Keakopa (2013:37) elucidated that some institutions still maintain their records in silos, resulting in disparities in records management methods

across the board and this is an area where most TVET institutions should devote a lot of effort.

### **1.3. Context and background of the study**

The Further Education and Training (FET) Act 98 of 1998 established the TVET institutions sector in nine (9) South African provinces in 2002, transforming one hundred and fifty-two (152) former technical colleges into fifty (50) multi-site TVET institutions. Flavius Mareka TVET College is one of the colleges. It has three campuses, one in Sasolburg being used as a research site. The other two campuses are in Kroonstad, 124 kilometres from Sasolburg. The Sasolburg campus has two sites specialising in Engineering and Business Studies courses. It offers full-time and part-time studies to 4095 students. The researcher will use the Sasolburg campus to explore the implementation of records management practices in Flavius Mareka TVET College. Like all other organisations, TVET institutions must maintain their records and be self-sustaining to remain competitive despite obstacles, such as reduced government subsidies and inexperienced records management staff.

Sasolburg, a town in the Free State province, was established in 1954, and is located 13km south of Gauteng province. Sasolburg has a population of 113, 268 and its size is 85.19 square kilometres (Nel et al. 2024:240). Sasolburg is well known for its petroleum production. It was built by Sasol Limited, the former South African Coal, Oil, and Gas Corporation Ltd, to house employees at the world's first oil-from-coal plant producing commercial quantities of oil. The location was selected for its proximity to large coal deposits, the Vaal River, and the Witwatersrand markets. A variety of petrochemicals are also produced. Sasolburg attained official town status in 1967 (Nel et al., 2024:234).



Figure 1.1: Map of South Africa depicting Sasolburg location in South Africa and Flavius Mareka TVET College (adopted from Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc, Map data, 2023)

### 1.3.1 Background of TVET institutions

The existence of TVET in South Africa dates to the apartheid era when colleges were established to address the needs of the mining sector which required technical skills (Badroodien, 2004:21). Initially this training was offered to whites only, and later in the 1970s, training was opened for black people as well, part of this training theory was offered by the college and the practical part provided by large companies (Chisholm, 2009:2). Badroodien (2004:21) opined that these colleges have always been characterised by apartheid education, colleges in rural areas were meant to provide people in those areas with skills to prevent them from migrating to urban centres. TVET colleges during this era were always viewed as demeaning and undesirable, as they encompassed poor quality education for Blacks, Coloureds, Indians, and poor Whites (Chisholm, 2009:3).

The government was faced with colleges that were not fit for purpose in 1994, following the end of the apartheid era. Other organisations, such as the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), which maintained that education should lead to "emancipation, creativity, and liberation, and should not be used as an apparatus for manipulation of workers", supported the government's efforts to address the dysfunctions (Badroodien, 2004:24). Due to the bad reputation that FETs had during the apartheid era, the Further Education Act 98 of 1998 suggested in 1994 that the name be changed to TVET institutions. This resulted in the transformation of 152

former technical institutions located throughout the nine provinces of South Africa (Terblanche & Bitzer, 2018:105).

With all the challenges that are cited, there are learning centres like Flavius Mareka TVET College, based in the Sasolburg area, which is a public college under the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). TVET institutions established partnerships with businesses and industry, which enabled the college to place students for internships, learnerships, and apprenticeships through sponsors from various Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA). The study will explore how management in this College supports the implementation of records management.

#### **1.4. Research problem**

Poor records management implementation in institutions can be attributed to a lack of management involvement, among others. Management can support in clarifying records management and its alignment to the institutional strategic objectives in a crystal-clear way so that it is executed, delivered, accepted by the community, and serves the overall business purpose (Khan, Long & Iqbal, 2014:1373). Furthermore, the support will contribute to enhancing other areas, including proper records management infrastructure, like appropriate storage facilities and inadequate staffing levels due to the absence of budgets dedicated to records management (Tsabedze & Ngoepe, 2020:158).

Poor records management implementation was formerly associated with a lack of resources, which included policies and processes, storage facilities, and training (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011:157). Additionally, some office administrators were discovered to be working in silos and adopting a range of unorthodox records management practices. Some of the administrators lacked records management training, posing issues such as inconsistent record naming, a lack of knowledge about which records to keep, and a tendency to keep everything in case it's needed, resulting in storage shortages and mismanagement, as well as exposing organisations to unfound audit findings and litigation (Shepherd, Stevenson & Flinn, 2011:122; Netshakhuma, 2019:61).

The researcher observed a gap in the various work contexts where she worked, and when the researcher talked with colleagues at conferences, she found the same gap. Regular audits were undertaken in one work environment. As a result, management was visible and supportive of the implementation because records provided evidence of business activities. Thus, the organisation was certified as compliant because it was perceived that they could provide evidence when needed due to the well-managed company records.

Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011:147) explained that records management should be "connected with other information management tasks so that it becomes a strategic management function toward achieving a competitive advantage". Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011:147) and Netshakhuma (2019:61) seem to agree that the lack of an appropriate organisational structure and reporting line for both archives and records management responsibilities is to blame for the inadequate records management implementation challenges in South African universities. According to the study, structure and functions should be positioned at a strategic level to receive the attention they deserve. Hence, it is critical to explore the role that management plays in records management within TVET institutions.

### **1.5. Objective of the study**

The primary aim of the study is to explore the implementation of records management practices at Flavius Mareka TVET College.

### **1.6. Critical questions**

To address the main objective, the following critical questions are investigated:

- 1.6.1 What are the current records management practices in your institution?
- 1.6.2 What records management governing documents, policies, procedures, and guidelines are available at your institution?
- 1.6.3 Which records management training or interventions have staff received?
- 1.6.4 What is management's approach to records management implementation practices?
- 1.6.5 Which best practices could be implemented for effective records management at Flavius Mareka TVET College?

## **1.7. Significance of the study**

The importance of records and records management cannot be overstated, as they help to put higher education institutions ahead of their competition. Records should be managed by trained staff in a standardised way because they protect the institution from litigation. Furthermore, records preserve institutional memory, foster accountability, and good governance (Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005:2). This study is significant since it could serve as a guide for TVET institutions in obtaining management support for records management. It will serve as a roadmap for what must be done and might even facilitate further investigation if there are other issues besides management commitment. The findings of the study will enhance records management practices in Flavius Mareka TVET College and other TVET institutions in South Africa, Africa, and beyond. Additionally, the study will also contribute to the body of knowledge on records management in TVET institutions or similar institutions.

## **1.8. Definition of relevant terms**

The following definition of the terms helps to provide the context in which they are used in this study.

### **1.8.1. Record**

A record is defined by Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005:2) and Iwhiwhu (2005:345) as “evidence of an event”, “a recorded information produced or received in the initiation, conduct or completion of an institutional or individual activity and that content, context, and structure sufficient to provide evidence of the activity”. These can be in any format or medium, electronic or microfilm. Not all records can be kept for evidential purposes; only those that will halt the running of the business should be retained. Records are inevitable information carriers with high reference, legal, transactional, and historical value. They are information carriers that are pivotal for personal, economic, financial, political, legal, national, and general growth and development (Jatto, 2021:242). Shepherd, Stevenson, and Flinn (2011:124) further stated that organisations “use records to support accountability when they want to prove that they have met their obligations or complied with best practices according to established policies”.

### **1.8.2. Management**

It is defined as a position in which an individual manages the work of another individual or group of individuals. Managers may also be in charge of a certain department within an organisation. Those who hold leadership positions within an organisation are assigned management titles, which serve to illustrate the organization's hierarchy of ranks. In addition to handling duties and obligations, including setting goals and updating stakeholders and the public on the organization's actions, top-level managers are experts who oversee and manage a complete organisation (Erasmus, 2021:202).

### **1.8.3. Records management**

Records management is a field or a process of controlling institutional records in all formats from creation throughout their lifecycle until they are disposed of (Netshakhuma, 2019:63). Musembe (2016:25) stated that when records are properly managed, they “serve as a benchmark by which decisions are made and enhances service delivery and growth of an organisation”. Therefore, for this study, records management will be addressing all types of records generated within the institution where the study is conducted.

### **1.8.4. Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a broad term that refers to aspects of the educational process that include, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences while also focusing on the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to people working in various sectors of the economy and society (Ayonmike, Chijoke & Okeke, 2015:25). TVET is recognised to be a crucial vehicle for social equity, inclusion, and sustainable development (Matenda, 2019:14).

### **1.8.5. Organisational culture**

It is defined as the characteristic, customary, and traditional personality that originates inside every organisation, where its people share common wishes, desires, and aspirations, and they can commit themselves to working together. This culture has worked well enough to be considered valid and introduced to new members to care about the same things, this applies to nations as well as to associations and

organisations within nations (Schein & Schein, 2016:17; Hairunneessa & Azeez, 2020:134).

### **1.9. Overview of methodology**

The study's methodology is crucial as it guides the overall approach to the research, it concentrates on the procedures and the instruments that will be employed for data collection that impact the results (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:56; Babbie & Mouton, 2008:74). To allow the researcher to develop the meaning of a situation, constructivism was chosen as the appropriate worldview for the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:56). The study adopted a qualitative approach using semi-structured questionnaire and interview to collect data. An in-depth analysis of Flavius Mareka TVET College's records management practices was conducted using a case study research design. The selected design would assist the researcher in developing an understanding based on what is heard (Creswell, 2018:80). A case study is characterized by a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context to generate knowledge (Rule & John, 2011: 4). Semi-structured questionnaires were utilised to collect data from 21 administrators, while semi-structured interviews were used to gather data from 17 managers who were purposively sampled from the population for the study. Physical questionnaires were handed to the institution's host to distribute to administrators, and interviews with managers were conducted face-to-face.

### **1.10. Delimitations of the study**

Delimitations of the study are what the researcher controls, the scope of what will be covered, the population, methodology, and more (Kumar, 2014:274; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:62). The study was conducted in the Flavius Mareka TVET College. The population was confined to administrators in different divisions (Human Resources, Finance, Faculties, Admissions, Registrations, and Examinations) as the first line of support to generators of records and caretakers of records in the institution. Managers within the stated areas and academics as recipients and generators of records were also included as they are part of management that was supposed to encourage staff to follow records management principles and best practices within the institution.

### **1.11. Limitations of the study**

Limitations of the study are put forward by Leedy and Ormrod (2015:65) as potential study flaws, such as the intended sample, data collection site, measurement techniques, and human biases, as well as any strategies that may affect the quality of the study results and the credibility of the conclusions. For the study, various limitations were experienced as explained in 3.5.

### **1.12. Organisation of the minor dissertation**

The study is divided into five chapters. Chapter One provided an overview of the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions. It further discussed the context of the study, the institution that served as the research site, Flavius Mareka TVET College in the Sasolburg area, and a brief background of the area. The objective of the study was to explore the extent to which records management practices were implemented in Flavius Mareka TVET College as part of TVET institutions. Critical questions of the main objective were highlighted. This chapter further deliberates on the study's significance, limitations, and delimitations. The conceptual framework chosen for the study, the Organisational Culture Framework, and a literature review of past investigations on records management practices both in South Africa and globally were covered in Chapter Two. Chapter Three deliberated on research paradigm, approach, and design, the study adopted a constructivist paradigm. Sampling techniques and data gathering methods. Chapter Four summarised, analysed data, and presented findings. Chapter Five covered the study's primary findings based on critical questions, conclusions as well and recommendations. The last section presents references and appendices.

### **1.13. Chapter summary**

This chapter outlined the importance of records and how TVET institutions should maintain them. It further gave the study's background and context, which was Flavius Mareka TVET College. The area's geography and background were provided. Previous studies on records management practices conducted in South Africa and other countries were also investigated to uncover similarities, disparities, and advancements. In addition, problems that motivated the undertaking of the study were deliberated on, with the key ones being the unfitting structure or positioning of archives

and records management function responsibilities, about the difficulties in implementing records management in South African TVET institutions. This lack of support is attributed to a lack of or insufficient budget to provide infrastructure and adequate and skilled staff. Literature supporting the study and the supporting framework will be discussed in Chapter two.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical support and literature review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter summarises the existing body of knowledge relevant to this study and provides a critical assessment of scholarly perspectives on the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions. Creswell and Creswell (2018:75) state that a literature review can assist in assessing whether a topic is worth examining and can also provide insight into how the researcher can narrow the scope to a certain area. A literature review, in a nutshell, is a thorough inspection, appraisal, and evaluation of material from multiple sources to get a current state of knowledge and it organises the literature into categories and thoughtful understanding of the phenomenon and establishes the need for proposed study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:72; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:75). The study's critical questions guide the researcher in deciding which literature to review in exploration for answers to the study's objective.

The chapter is confined to two sections, a review of the suitable conceptual framework, which is the Organisational Culture Framework, as well as a literature review, objectives, and critical questions. The conceptual framework is an analytical device that assists the researcher in shaping an appropriate research approach for the study, one that is associated with the research problem, and that validates that the study is not based on personal intuition but rather on credible studies (Adom, Hussein & Agdu-Agyem, 2018:434). A framework is an important component of the literature review; it facilitates streamlining and shapes the inquiry, whereas the literature review informs the researcher about previous studies related to the current study and their conclusions.

### **2.2. Conceptual framework**

The Organisational Culture basis serves as the conceptual basis for this investigation. Elliott Jacques created the Organisational Culture Framework in 1951 to examine how the social life of an industrial community changed. He detailed this in his book "Changing the Culture of a Factory" (Schein & Schein, 2016:19). Organisational Culture Framework was chosen as an appropriate framework compared to other frameworks for the study's goal of examining implementing records management practices in TVET institutions, with a focus on Flavius Mareka TVET College in the

Sasolburg area. This was influenced by the connection between organisational culture and information culture in the context of the study, where records are used as information sources. This framework describes how employees perform in organisations when it comes to record-keeping, implying that their lack of understanding and application affects how business is conducted (Schein & Schein, 2016:19).

Organisational behaviour, human resources management, and leadership are just a few of the numerous sectors that use Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) Organisational Knowledge Creation Theory. The process of making knowledge generated at work accessible to coworkers and ultimately the entire organisation is covered by the theory (Nonaka, von Krogh & Voelpel, 2006:1179). Despite the Nonaka and Takeuchi's theory's close connection to the study, the researcher chose not to use it because it focuses mostly on knowledge creation. The researcher chose the Organisational Culture Framework because it is more suitable for the study, which primarily aims to investigate the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions.

Weick's (1995) Theory of Organisational Sensemaking, which focuses on giving experiences meaning and structuring events in organisations by giving them purpose, was another theory that the researcher took into consideration. This facilitates more adaptable responses from organisations, which is advantageous for the continuous transformation of organisations (Kudesia, 2019:406). This theory was necessary for the study because it looks at how to address organisational circumstances and why records management implementation seems to be difficult in higher education institutions. It did not, however, address other elements that have been suggested in the literature as hindering the implementation of records management, such as governance, structure, human behaviour, and biases.

The Organisational Culture Framework by Jacques (1951) was then chosen as a preferred framework for the study, as it was more appropriate to understand this phenomenon. It is in these authors' Pathiranage, Jayatilake, and Abeysekera (2020:524) review in Sri Lanka, that the researcher found that the Organisational Culture Framework has benefits for corporate governance, particularly the implementation of records management. Curry and Moore (2003:94) further state that

it serves as a useful starting point for organisational knowledge work and not as an end. The usefulness of the Organisational Culture Framework (Schein and Schein, 2016) as presented in Figure 2.1 can be used to the organisation's advantage as it is broken into three parts: assumptions, artefacts, and values. In implementing records management, management can choose to start working on artefacts like work processes, the workplace setting, and organisational structures, which will be easier to work with as they are visible elements (Pathiranage, Jayatilake & Abeysekera, 2020:525).

The Organisational Culture Framework includes levels and elements. Schein and Schein (2016:19) explained levels as how people in the organisation behave, impacting how the business is run. While elements relate to factors contributing to the culture in the organisation, like atmosphere amongst others (Prasanna & Haavisto, 2018:5616), state that the Organisational Culture Framework has been applied in multiple disciplines such as human resources, information, knowledge management, as well as records management. According to the framework, people are an essential resource that needs inspired management and leadership to function at their best. This includes the extent to which people may share common goals, interests, and aspirations and how committed they are to cooperating and caring about the same things in groups and organisations (Curry & Moore, 2002:94; Hairunneessa & Azeez, 2020:134).

In their view, Prasanna and Haavisto (2018:5613) state that organisational culture is a set of shared basic assumptions that a group develops, discovers, or creates as it learns to deal with problems of external adaptation and internal integration. These assumptions, in the opinion of the authors, have proven to be valid enough to be taught to new members of the group as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel about those problems. In addition, Schein and Schein (2016:18) allude that culture is important in every institution around the world; however, the types of cultures differ from one institution to the next. The absence of effective records management techniques has been mentioned as an example of organisational culture in several studies conducted by different researchers throughout the world, including Ngoepe and Ngulube (2013:3), alluding to “senior management in both the public and private sectors frequently disregard records management as a necessary component of

successful governance". The practice of poor records management implementation has proven to be a challenge all around the world, and most businesses struggle to put in place effective records management frameworks (Egwunyenga, 2017:111). This speaks to an organisational culture that has been created when it comes to records management, hence this framework is fitting to understand this phenomenon.

Hairunneessa and Azeez (2020:139) are of the understanding that, to motivate and inspire employees to offer records management that reflects the organization's goals, objectives, and leadership style influenced by how people behave and act in different organisations, higher education institutions must implement a strong and positive organisational culture. In addition, Iwhiwhu (2005:349) believes that employees would be willing to embrace the implementation of initiatives such as records management if senior management were visible and had a leadership style that communicates the vision and describes the organisation's objectives, making it easier for staff to comprehend records management. Xiaoming and Junchen (2012:30) highlighted great cultural advantageous traits that contributed to higher performance. Therefore organisation "dysfunctional business culture brings forth qualities that can hamper even the most successful organisation", whereas a healthy organisational culture and leadership style has the potential to support the implementation of organisational goals, including records management, allowing the organisation to easily access information when needed (Lehman, 2017:55). This illustrates a link between culture and performance, Lehman (2017:55) recommends that managements get to know the company's culture, so they know what they are up against and how to proceed when it's time to execute change to eradicate "dysfunctional corporate culture". Sulkowski (2012:65) states that knowing one's company's culture levels can help senior management at higher education institutions integrate and support records management practitioners from the start when offering new services. This justifies the choice of the Organisational Culture Framework when addressing records management implementation.

The study drew levels or layers and elements of the Organisational Culture Framework. These layers, as stated by Schein and Schein (2016:19), cover how people in the organisation behave, deliberate, and feel, and while some of these are evident, much culture is concealed beneath the surface. The aspects are profoundly

entrenched in how businesses run, as well as in the thinking of managers and other employees (Sulkowski, 2012:65). These elements are embedded in the many levels of culture; for example, the structure is embedded in artefacts; performance, decisions, and team performance all take place inside the Organisational Culture Framework. Schein and Schein (2016:19) explain levels as how people in the organisation behave, impacting how the business is run. Elements related to factors contributing to the culture in the organisation, like atmosphere, amongst others mentioned within the levels. Schein and Schein's (2016) levels, elements, as well as problems with corporate culture are discussed further in 2.2.1. The researcher has embedded elements of the Organisational Culture Framework within the stated levels of organisational culture.

### **2.2.1. Levels and elements of Organisational Culture Framework**

Schein and Schein (2016:19) employed three levels to explain the Organisational Culture Framework as: artefacts, values, and basic assumptions. These provide an overview of how organisational culture manifests itself in organisations; however, these differ from organisation to organisation

#### **2.2.1.1. Artefacts**

Schein and Schein (2016:18) refer to this as a superficial layer, which consists of observable manifestations of an organisation's culture, which are difficult to translate or comprehend, such as structure and processes. According to the study, this suggests that establishing clear institutional procedures and placing records management at the appropriate level within the institutional structure may facilitate the implementation of records management. Studies conducted across the world revealed a significant culture in which university councils did not acknowledge records management, placing the function at a low level in the organisational structure with an inappropriate reporting line (Netshakhuma, 2019:62). An observable element within artefacts is the "atmosphere" as stated by O'Donnell and Boyle (2008:9) and Atumolah (2011:7), impacts records management implementation positively or negatively, is lack of management appropriate interventions, like creating an institutional structure that would make it easier for better records management to emerge, with governance supporting it consciously and strategically.

### 2.2.1.2. Espoused values

In their study conducted in India, Hairunneessa and Azeez (2020:134) indicate that espoused values serve as a guide for employees' behaviour and performance. They further state that these values are the cornerstone of an organisation's culture, which may include strategies as well as a code of conduct and behaviour in some cases. Espoused values are seen as responsible for success and transformation as they instruct employees on what to do and what not to do (Hairunneessa & Azeez, 2020:134). The decision to raise records management awareness would be easily accepted if a company's culture is guided by strong values. Schein and Schein (2016:6) argue that decision-making in an organisation can be more difficult because the decision may result in changes that members of the organisation may either resist or welcome.

The challenge for leaders in these organisations in improving records management implementation and addressing the Organisational Culture Framework is to work on espoused values. Employees must be made aware of the importance of records in information exchange, the long-term impacts of organisational culture on performance, and the necessity of more team-based creative work as opposed to solitary creative endeavours (Xiaoming & Junchen, 2012:33; Stoffers, Neessen, & van Dorp, 2015:199). Knowledge sharing through records can improve success and transformation in organisations as part of the espoused values. In addition, it will contribute to the appreciation of records management and its value will be noted by involving employees and expressing clear objectives (Matangira, Katjiveri-Tjiuoro & Lukileni 2013:111).

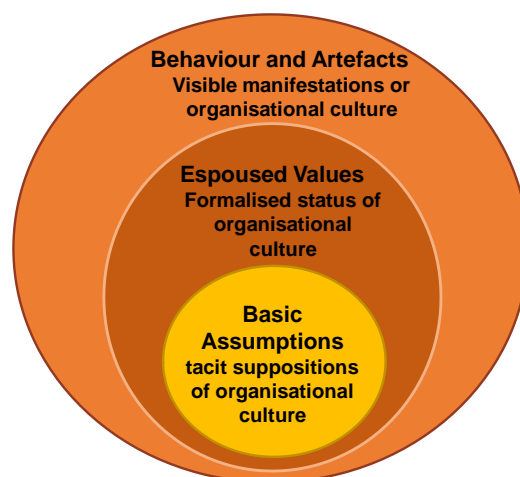


Figure 2.1: Organisational Culture Framework (Schein & Schein, 2016)

### **2.2.1.3. Basic assumptions**

Xiaoming and Junchen (2012:29) view basic assumptions as "rules that characterize an organisation in terms of what it is, what it stands for, and what it is all about". Basic assumptions relate to the study's critical question on "What are the records management practices in the institution? Basic assumptions are also viewed as "the ways things get done around here" as the group learned to cope with its difficulties when introducing them as a level of Organisational Culture Framework (Schein & Schein, 2016:18). The basic assumptions include deeply held beliefs and perceptions that influence employees' actions and serve as a foundation for how they see, think, and feel about things. In their study at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Chinyemba and Ngulube, (2005:16) remark that management could potentially shift perceptions in organisations where records management was not given the emphasis it deserves, by placing it into the organisational structure with appropriate reporting, resulting in a synergy of functions within the institution, might result in a perception change. This addresses records management-related organisational culture that has developed in organisations, making the chosen framework appropriate for the study. Teamwork will result in more effective service provision, depending on where the implementing unit is placed in the hierarchical structure and if they are in a position that can influence buy-in. Other factors like team approach and structure can be seen as contributing factors in promoting the desired core values for the institution (Prasanna & Haavisto, 2018:5614).

### **2.3. Literature review**

This section critically discusses the study's literature review on management engagement in records management implementation in higher education institutions and generally. A literature review is meant to help a researcher determine whether the topic is worth studying and to provide insight into ways of limiting the scope to a needed area of inquiry by looking at the results of other studies that are closely related to the one being undertaken (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:75). For the study the review will be used to build bridges between the study objectives and broader literature in this area of study.

This section examined scholarly perspectives on management's involvement in implementing records management in higher education institutions. Literature from

several countries was examined to determine best practices and if any other studies were closely related to the one being conducted. The review of the literature also allowed researchers to identify how the study fits into the larger context because of earlier studies that led to the study's requirement. The study relied on databases such as *ProQuest*, *EbscoHost*, *JSTOR*, and *Sage Journals Online*, as well as other relevant databases and grey literature.

### **2.3.1. Records management practices**

For many years, records were maintained in offices near administrators for convenient access, with no systematic filing system in place, and most organisations operating in silos. The severity of the problem may differ from one country to the next, in Malaysia, Yunus and Araffin (2013:6) reveal that, in addition to silo operations, there was a regular loss of court files, which substantially hampered the effective administration of justice and resulted in unnecessary court hearing adjournments. Lack of proper structured records control led to records being duplicated across institutions, making it difficult for their retrieval, as people were very conscientious and kept everything, no matter how insignificant, because there were no criteria for what should be kept (Keakopa, 2013; Netshakhuma, 2019).

Although records offer value to institutions, this is not how records and their administration are perceived. Studies like the one conducted by Bailey (2011:47) in six United Kingdom HEIs indicate that in other institutions, records management is viewed as an overhead. Sometimes it takes a disaster for an organisation to grasp the importance of what it had previously taken for granted. In the United States of America (USA), for example, it took the 11 September 2001, disaster to appreciate the terrible lessons of those records buried forever in the World Trade Centre debris when it collapsed (Yunus & Araffin, 2013:9). Records management implementation does not come without challenges, studies conducted in Turkey where records management has been implemented fruitfully, Kulcu and Cakmak (2012:195) highlight challenges brought by the digital environment where records practitioners must ensure the existence of digital records, making it accessible even if the technology supporting it becomes obsolete, and ensuring the validity and dependability of the information's content and scope of information.

Several researchers (Bailey, 2011; Atumolah, 2011:2; Hase & Galt, 2011; Matangira Katjiveri-Tjiuro & Lukileni, 2013; Mosweu, 2020:111) on the state of records administration in HEIs from different contexts indicate that there are numerous challenges and limitations with records management in both developed and developing countries, which are not limited to:

- Staff members are not aware of the existence of the function within the institution, as in some instances it is not widely marketed.
- Inadequate security and confidentiality procedures.
- Alarming rate of misplaced records.
- Slow speed at which needed records are retrieved from their storage;
- Other units resorting to external records management service providers for storage;
- Insufficient resources for records management;
- Accumulation of administrative which ought to have been released, causing disgruntled customers; and,
- Funding for records management activities in many African countries has always been a problem

In a study on Archival and Records Management (ARM) function placement within institutions, Netshakhuma (2019:64) observed that in Nigeria, Botswana, and Namibia, the ARM function is not placed in the appropriate structure, leading it to be unrecognised. The National Archives and Records Service Act (NARSA) of 1996, as well as other regulations, govern the ARM functions of universities in South Africa lack of clarity on the placement of ARM, and the mere existence of such regulations does not guarantee good effective records management (Phiri & Tough, 2018:54). Netshakhuma (2019:64) goes on further quoting Kaczmarek 2006, saying the same practise is applicable internationally, at University of Illinois (USA) the function is embedded in the divisions and units whilst at Harvard University (USA) records are cared for by librarians. These authors note that in other areas, like Canada, few universities have a fully functional ARM function. Overcoming the ARM issues in institutions can be reduced by utilising various approaches such as management collaborating with employees, developing and implementing policies, and more than just cultural change as a starting point for implementing records management in higher education institutions.

### **2.3.2. Management and records management**

Apart from policy implementation and culture change, an understanding of management and records management must be unpacked and demonstrated as to how the two relate. Eminent authors (Koontz and Weirich, 1998:4; Drucker, 1999:34; Erasmus, 2021:202) define management as the process followed by managers of establishing and maintaining an environment where people, working together in groups, using financial and physical resources, may effectively and efficiently achieve goals and objectives. Simply put, it is an activity where an organisation's resources execute activities efficiently and effectively towards a common objective. With management, records management is a field or a process of controlling institutional records in all formats from creation throughout their lifecycle until it is disposed of (Netshakhuma, 2019:63). To contextualise the relationship, Erasmus (2021:202) explains that management determines what must be done, how it should be done, provides guidance for getting it done, and then determines whether it has been done. For records to be managed, an instruction should be given by management in that organisation. This would benefit the organisation as authors (Yunus and Ariffin, 2013:3; Musembe, 2016:25) go on to say that when records are properly managed they "serve as a benchmark by which decisions are made and enhances service delivery and growth of an organisation", without them people in organisations cannot prove that actions have been taken, commitments entered into or obligations carried out.

The relationship between the two processes suggests that implementing records management depends on well-coordinated management tasks like planning goals, determining how resources will be allocated to achieve them by organising, and involving staff at all levels to achieve organisational and records management goals (Mosweu & Rakemane, 2020:106). In performing their management tasks when implementing records management, managers need to decide and commit human and material resources and clear communication sent out so that people know their purpose, tasks to be performed and guidelines to be followed with clear roles and proper controls in place (Koontz & Weirich, 1998:16). On its own records management process cannot take place as management plays a critical role, in that managers must manage and prioritise employees' daily activities towards the attainment of

organisational goals including aligning records management implementation as it underpins the organisation's efficiency, effectiveness and good governance (Coetzer & Le Roux, 2012:5).

As part of TVETs' institution's strategic goal when managing records, management, middle management, and staff must collaborate to accomplish record management implementation, for implementing records management funds must be allocated for the development of necessary skills for comprehensively capturing organisational memory (Yunus & Araffin, 2013:1). This collaboration will make it easier for management to prioritise and monitor daily activities with upskilled staff for the successful execution of records management, management can at this point for each category of task delegate a team leader to oversee the task, somehow allowing them to own the activity, this will need managers to apply different management styles where each employee should feel they are adding value, at the same time addressing long-standing organisational culture (Iqbal, 2015:542). Management functions show that in organisational planning, specific goals are established from where the organisation is and the direction it is taking in terms of records management. Moreover, managers will identify and bring up-to-speed employees who lack the necessary skills by sending them to external training or conducting internal training, where these people will be able to carry out assigned tasks and deviations corrected by implementing strategic controls (Koontz & Weirich, 1998:16).

Once upskilled, employees will be able to manage records as they are a vital part of institutional knowledge. Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005:3) elaborate that senior management in TVET institutions should learn about records management practices within institutions, as institutions would not take off without executive buy-in. In the case study conducted in New Zealand, Yin (2014:10) states that records management implementation can improve productivity, foster a culture of information sharing within the organisation, and improve overall organisational record management efficiency, it is therefore important that senior management support is demonstrated, as lack thereof can be a major barrier to successful implementation.

As per Yin (2014:10), implementing records management can improve productivity, foster a culture of information sharing within the organisation, and improve overall

organisational record management efficiency. However, the lack of senior management support is seen as a major barrier to successful implementation. This indicates that to transform institutional organisational culture, a change management procedure must be put in place Yin (2014:10) further states that records management implementation can help boost the overall organisational record management efficiency, increase productivity, and help to facilitate the culture of information sharing within the organisation, however, lack of senior management support is seen as a key issue that prevents successful implementation. From this statement, it can be mentioned that organisational culture in institutions needs strong management. To further highlight this, Kotter, as quoted by Hase and Galt (2011:37), stated that senior management support is critical for organisational transformation, in this case, the culture of higher education institutions needs to shift and adopt new ways of managing records.

The records management profession is not the only one dealing with leadership issues; other fields such as libraries are also having difficulties, studies by Kunene and Mapulanga (2021:562) on academic libraries state that management or proper leadership support is essential for effective implementation of changes in any organisation as they must inspire and motivate employees to accept organisation's vision and goals. For records management initiatives in higher education, Kaczmarek (2006:32) attributes the continued lack of strong or consistent support to the academic focus of HEIs. Without management backing, records management continues to be the norm in colleges and universities. Management should use tacit knowledge by preserving it in records for expertise transfer to aid organisations in future innovation, operational continuity, and corporate memory (Kaczmarek, 2006:24; Yunus & Araffin, 2013:5). This demonstrates that leadership support and an open-minded attitude will assist in attaining organisational goals including records management implementation (Gowda, 2015:7). Implementation should be "directed from the top but constructed from the bottom" (Hase & Galt, 2011:37), which means that younger staff and staff at different levels should be enabled to accept ownership and accountability, which will help to eliminate resistance. Kaczmarek (2006:26) believes that a records management implementation program works both top-down and bottom-up, initiating conversations with employees to learn about their urgent needs and securing funding for records management programs from management.

### **2.3.3. Organisational culture in records and information management**

Svard (2014:9) refers to information culture as the organisation's values, norms, and practices toward the management and use of information. Information culture is linked to organisational culture in the sense that if an organisation has no respect for information, access, or integration into daily activities or its administration, the odds of implementing records management in higher education institutions are minimal to none (Svard, 2014:6). Lehman (2017:55) asserts that culture is the second most important success factor in information management, behind leadership or management support. This culture influences what information is and how it is transmitted, as well as whether new information is accepted or rejected by the organisation through validation. The success or failure of information management projects is influenced by the intersections.

Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005:4) explain that the structure of higher education institutions, which is based on function or discipline that functions independently of one another, complicates how records are kept in different entities, making management involvement even more difficult because there are bureaucratic entities. In situations where records are not properly managed, employees looking for information are hampered since they are not aware of where to look, as records are piled up in corridors with no proper filing system. Lehman (2017:48) confers that ignorance can be viewed as another organisational culture barrier, which hampers records management implementation, as the staff does not realise how records that are not properly managed impact other staff members if they cannot be located.

Hairunneessa and Azeez (2020:135) discuss that organisational culture has an impact on knowledge sharing and collaboration, as there are barriers among employees in that those with information do not realise its usefulness to others. In their investigation of the banking sector in Pakistan, Umrani et al. (2017:96) postulate that information sharing is a key component of collaborative behaviour needed in higher education that can lead to the establishment of a higher standard of education that correlates to enhanced performance. In all these initiatives, including records management, information sharing, and improving organisational culture, are integrated, O'Donnell

and Boyle (2008:62) believe that leadership is critical to indoctrinate the vision, keep people focused, and effectively manage the change process.

#### **2.3.4. Section summary**

The literature review section summarises the literature reviewed on records management practices and their role in TVETs. It identified records management practices locally, regionally, and globally. It also observed similarities and differences across, where in some instances there are similarities, like a lack of support, which is attributed to a focus on the institutional academic priorities. Literature has also revealed that some institutions are advanced, while others still lack even basic records management implementation or functions, for various reasons, such as a lack of resources in terms of trained staff and appropriate structures, for example. Furthermore, literature has also revealed that records management programs continue to lack strong or consistent support in higher education in developed countries such as Turkey, the USA, and Malaysia, a similarity shared by the discipline across various sectors, including businesses, academic institutions, and government.

#### **2.4. Chapter summary**

The chapter covered a wide spectrum of literature on the management of records created internally and received by institutions in daily operations from South Africa, Africa, and globally. All countries face the same issues on a local, regional, and international level. In nations like Turkey, which has fully functional records management, the issue for record managers is the digital environment, where records are growing exponentially, and technology is changing rapidly. On the other hand, global south countries are faced with a lack of infrastructure and support from management, all of which demonstrate that the field of records management is never without challenges. The chosen conceptual framework, the Organisational Culture Framework, was also discussed to strengthen the study, where elements and levels by Schein and Schein (2016) were deliberated on, stating how espoused values guide employee behaviour and performance. The choice of the preferred framework over Organisational Knowledge creation and Theory of Organisational Sensemaking was also explained. In addition, the conceptualisation of records management, indicating its memory value, cultural significance, and historical importance, was elaborated on.

Lastly, records management was deliberated on, stating its deficiency as a major barrier to successful implementation. The study's research methodology will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3: Research methodology**

### **3.1. Introduction**

Research methodology provides insights into the techniques used to collect and analyse data (Neuman, 2006:21; De Vos, 2011:11). This chapter discusses research methods and design used in the study to ensure that the objective of the study as outlined in chapter one is achieved, implementing records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka TVET College. The researcher outlines the plan used to conduct the study, starting with the chosen paradigm, research approach, and design; the chosen population and how data were collected to ensure the validity of the results. Consideration was also given to ethical requirements for the study. The methodology, informed by a constructivist worldview, discussed the research approach where the researcher adopted a case study design and used a qualitative data collection method using the semi-structured questionnaire and interview. These methods would guarantee that the study aligns with its objectives and yields reliable findings. The study's objective was further broken down into investigated critical questions:

- What are the current records management practices in your institution?
- What records management governing documents, policies, procedures, and guidelines are available at your institution?
- Which records management training or interventions have staff received?
- What is management's approach to records management?
- Which best practices could be implemented for effective records management at Flavius Mareka TVET College?

### **3.2. Research paradigm**

A paradigm or worldview can be thought of as a set of beliefs, a system of thinking about authenticity that serves as the study's foundation, this, in turn, informs the researcher's viewpoint and informs the study for future exploration as well as guides how the study research questions should be addressed (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:5). Furthermore, Babbie (2021:54) and Kumar (2014:19) state that this model, pattern, or set of beliefs governs the researcher's approach to actions including the design that

relates to the worldview. Worldviews are instrumental in guiding the researcher to choose a research approach for their study (Babbie, 2021:51).

Looking at the challenge faced by higher education institutions regarding records management implementation, the researcher opted for the constructivist worldview approach. The constructivist worldview underlies that individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences (Babbie, 2021:56). This worldview involves seeking an understanding of the world in which individuals live by allowing different techniques for interacting with people for a deeper meaning to make sense of situations and their practicality. Pragmatism could have been chosen, but it focuses on solutions to problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:28; Babbie, 2021:51). The chosen worldview will assist the researcher in comprehending participants' behaviour and allow the researcher to generate new information found in the study findings.

### **3.3. Research approach and design**

The research approach is the thorough plans and procedures the researcher employs for research called research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:50). Research approach outlines and guides the researcher's steps from broad assumptions to detailed research methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the study enabling the researcher to maximise the validity of the results (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:156; Razali et al., 2019:157). There are three approaches to choose from, qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. The study employed a qualitative approach to get an in-depth understanding. A qualitative approach always the study to explore and understand the complexities of human experiences, behaviors, and social phenomena through non-numerical data. It focuses on gaining in-depth insights into why and how people think, feel, and act, rather than simply measuring what or how much, as is the case with quantitative approach.

A research design is viewed by Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:71) as a functional plan that links “certain research methods and procedures to provide a reliable and valid body of data for empirically grounded analyses, conclusions, and theory formulation”. For this study, the researcher used a case study research design using Flavius Mareka TVET College to investigate the implementation of records management practices in

South African TVET institutions. Case study research is a qualitative research approach that focuses on an in-depth investigation of a specific case or phenomenon within its real-world context. Yin (2018:15) describes case study research design as an empirical method that “investigates a phenomenon (case) in depth and within its real-world context”.

### **3.4. Research methods**

Research methods refer to instruments and techniques utilised for data collection, analysis, and interpretation that the researchers recommend for their studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:65).

#### **3.4.1. Population**

A population is a group of people on which the research is focused and to which the obtained results should be generalized (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:85). The Population in this study was taken from Flavius Mareka TVET College, comprising managers, lecturers, and administrators. The researcher used the intranet and the college's webpage to identify the population, which was made up of 23 Managers, lecturers as part of management, because they are recipients and generators of records, and 21 administrators for the study's population.

#### **3.4.2. Sampling**

A sample is a selected group from the population to participate in a research project that supports the collection of information relevant to the purposes of research (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996:201). The study used a non-probability sampling technique by selecting people with experience and knowledge (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:85). In this case purposive or judgmental sampling was utilised to select study participants as they had played a role in how records were managed or would be influential in future implementation (Babbie & Mouton, 2014:202). This meant that the researcher made choices about who or which groups were included in the sample because of their insight and potential contribution to the phenomenon under study.

The purposive sample from the population translated into 21 managers, including lecturers as part of management (see Table 3.2), and 17 administrators (see Table

3.1). Managers were chosen as record owners, lecturers as recipients and generators of records, whilst administrators were perceived as record custodians. Qualitative data was collected from both using questionnaires for administrators and semi-structured interviews for managers. Since administrators were tasked with overseeing divisional records, the researcher concentrated on them. They provided information on how records management has been handled throughout the years and suggestions for how it should be handled moving forward. Similarly, management and lecturers were purposefully selected for semi-structured interviews as they were better suited to advise on their role in implementing records management practices at Flavius Mareka TVET College.

*Table 3.1: Population of administrators for questionnaire survey (Marketing, 2024)*

| <b>Department</b>              | <b>Job titles</b> | <b>Number of purposively sampled administrators</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Administration                 | Receptionist      | 1   |
| Corporate Services             | Officer           | 1   |
| Department of Higher Education | Clerks            | 3   |
|                                | Officer           | 1   |
| Exam Office                    | Clerk             | 1   |
| Finance                        | Clerk             | 2   |
| Governance                     | Administrator     | 1   |
| Human Resource Department      | Officer           | 2   |
|                                | Clerk             | 2   |
|                                | Practitioner      | 1   |
| Media Centre                   | Officer           | 1   |
| Student Support Services       | Clerk             | 1   |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>17</b>         |   |

Table 3.2: Population and sample management for semi-structured interviews (Marketing, 2024)

| Department  | Job Titles         | Number of purposively sampled administrators |
|---|--------------------|--|
| Business Studies  | Head of Department | 1  |
| Communication   | Lecturers          | 2  |
| Computer Department   | Lecturer           | 1  |
| Corporate Services  | Assistant Director | 1  |
| Curriculum  | Manager            | 1  |
| Department of Higher Education  | Executive Director | 1  |
| Engineering Studies   | Head of Department | 1  |
| Exams   | Officer            | 1  |
| Finance Supply Chain Management (SCM); Supply Chain Management and Assets | Executive Director | 1  |
|   | Assistant Director | 1  |
| Governance and Communications   | Manager            | 1  |
| Human Resource Department and Development                                 | Assistant Director | 1  |
| Information Communications and Technology (ICT)                           | Lecturer           | 1  |
| Maintenance   | Officer            | 1  |
| Maintenance and Infrastructure  | Head of Department | 1  |
| Marketing   | Assistant Director | 1  |
| Registration  | Assistant Director | 1  |
| Student Admin   | Officer            | 2  |
| Student Support Services  | Assistant Director | 1  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>21</b>          |  |

### 3.4.3. Data collection

Data collection entails defining study limits, collecting information through semi-structured interviews, documents, and visual materials, as well as establishing standards for documenting information (Creswell & Creswell, 2018:120). Nachmias & Nachmias (2000:189) and Kumar (2014:171) go on further to say that it may be regarded as a variety of methodologies to obtain data from managers to achieve high-quality, respectable results to improve the study's reliability. The study collected data from (17) administrators responsible for overseeing records in Table 3.1 and (21) managers in Table 3.2 from Flavius Mareka TVET College in the Sasolburg area. Semi-structured physical questionnaires and face-to-face semi-structured interviews were employed to collect qualitative data, to understand current practices and existing gaps, and to bring the institution to a desired state of record management principles

implementation. The researcher used questionnaires for administrators and semi-structured interviews for managers to gain broader insight.

### **3.4.3.1. Research instruments**

Research instruments, as stated by Neuman (2006:126), are tools that were employed to gather and evaluate data from managers. The instruments used in this study to gather data from sampled individuals were questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, as they complemented each other; this enabled triangulation for generating high-quality results (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000:226).

#### **3.4.3.1.1. Questionnaires**

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:156) and Babbie (2021:256) define a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection consisting of a standardized sequence of questions on the research topic, to get facts and opinions from persons who are knowledgeable about the phenomenon. The researcher chose the semi-structured physical questionnaires as one of the instruments that were used based on its cost-effectiveness. The final questionnaires were physically distributed by the skills development officer to administrators. The officer distributed these to the administrators, some administrators handed these to the researcher on the days scheduled for semi-structured interviews with managers, and outstanding questionnaires were scanned and e-mailed to the researcher.

Questionnaires facilitate data collection with minimal effort and allow administrators to take the survey in privacy at their own pace, giving them time to consider their responses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:160). However, questionnaires are known to have a low response rate. The researcher was fortunate to discover that, once approved by the institution, participation was encouraged by the institution as it was seen as being beneficial, which subsequently improved the response rate.

#### **3.4.3.1.2. Semi-structured interviews**

Face-to-face semi-structured interviews were adopted for the study. A semi-structured interview is a research tool that collects data by questioning a single

person or a group of people who were purposefully selected for a specific topic, allowing going deeper into a topic or a problem (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:160). The benefit of using semi-structured interviews is that it is ideal for identifying diversity and variation as they have a combination of closed and open-ended questions (Rwegoshora, 2014:279; Kumar, 2014:177). Semi-structured interviews permit the researcher to validate some similar questions on the questionnaire by exploring general understanding and in-depth information. The questions are asked in whatever sequence and allow the participant to talk freely about the topic. The interviewer can clarify questions and probe for additional information (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000:218). Semi-structured interviews were used as a primary data collection instrument for this study.

Although costly and cumbersome, it was important for the researcher to use semi-structured interviews to yield data for qualitative investigation on individual perceptions, historical accounts, and understanding of phenomena under investigation (Denscombe, 2010:172; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:160). Even though face-to-face semi-structured interviews are seen as time-consuming and have been noted for promoting dialogue, the researcher preferred its use, as it provides the interviewer the power to manage interactions by studying the managers' body language and facial expressions, which are easier to distinguish and probe further where necessary (De Vos, 2011:167; Rwegoshora, 2014:243; Kumar, 2014:173). This allows the interviewer to elicit explanations for responses. Before the semi-structured interview could be conducted, the researcher sought consent from managers (see Appendix C) and requested the manager to sign the consent form, permitting the researcher to interview and record the session.

#### **3.4.4. Pre-testing of instruments**

The pre-testing of a research instrument, based on study objectives and critical questions, in Kumar's (2014:1910) opinion, is comprised of a critical analysis of administrators' understanding of each question. Rwegoshora (2014:267) states that the data collection instrument needs to be validated in a small, sampled area before it is fully applied. The researcher purposively identified colleagues responsible for overseeing records and a few managers as custodians to pre-test the data collection

instrument on them; these administrators and managers were not part of the sample. As part of the pre-test, the researcher emailed the questionnaires to colleagues to ensure clarity and eliminate any ambiguity or contradictions to pilot the instrument and determine its dependability (Denscombe, 2010:169; Rwegoshera, 2014:270). The exercise assisted the researcher in identifying possible flaws, areas of confusion, and potential weaknesses in the data collection instruments before they were used to collect data from the desired study sample. Pre-testing the data collection instruments adequately also improved the validity of data collection by allowing the researcher to modify between design and implementation, which maximizes the likelihood of achieving reliability (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:169).

#### **3.4.5. Validity and reliability**

Denscombe (2010:297) believes that, for people to trust the findings of the study, some level of credibility must be demonstrated as part of the research process, which includes validity and reliability. The concept of validity and reliability states that research should be conducted using a correctly designed instrument and a population that has been appropriately sampled to yield truthful and accurate results (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000:149; De Vos, 2011:173). To achieve reliability, the researcher standardised the order of the questions and removed any unclear items from the questionnaire. This was done because, according to Kumar (2014:215), reliability tests the same entity repeatedly and yields the same deductions.

Since the researcher employed an additional different measuring tool, (such as the semi-structured interview) for the qualitative strand of the study, the interview questions were carefully constructed and pre-tested with the researcher's purposively identified colleagues at the academic institution (Neuman, 2006:21; Babbie & Mouton, 2014:76). Managers were provided with sufficient detail when introducing the investigation to enable them to respond. The researcher requested permission from managers to record the session and complemented this by taking notes to ensure data was captured correctly (see Appendix C). Captured information was confirmed with both administrators and managers to demonstrate transparency and that the notes were a true reflection of their views

The pre-test guided the researcher to amend and redesign the questionnaire by clustering similar themes together and refining questions to be more condensed and clearer (Nachmias & Nachmias, 2000:149). This enabled the researcher to gather facts and opinions and to measure administrators' consistency in the study under investigation.

#### **3.4.6. Data analysis and presentation**

Data analysis entails the assessment, structure, and interpretation of information harvested from managers through various questions, some generic and some open-ended questions (Neuman, 2006:520; De Vos, 2011:174; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:218). To conduct a quality investigation, the researcher collected qualitative data from both administrators and managers. Questionnaires were used for administrators, whilst managers' semi-structured interviews were utilised. The researcher had to come up with well-thought-out methods of interpreting and presenting data in line with the themes emerging from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

To gain a high level of validity, the researcher classified qualitative data into clear categories, separated into several themes and sub-themes aligned to the critical questions and objectives. Data collected via questionnaires was analysed first using Excel, whilst data collected from semi-structured interviews was classified into themes, analysed, and provided descriptive conclusions (Denscombe, 2010:278; Creswell & Creswell, 2018:219). The presentation of findings resulting from the analysed questionnaires was aided by figures and tables generated using frequencies and percentages. Semi-structured interview findings were presented in the form of narratives. Data presentation provided the reader with extensive and comprehensive information on the study findings. The findings were organised and summarised in a systematic arrangement to conclude (Kumar, 2014:332; Rwegoshora, 2014:342).

#### **3.5. Study limitations**

Kumar (2014:273) explains limitations as any concern, potential weakness that is usually out of the researcher's control. The primary limitation the researcher faced was the lack of response for ethical clearance from the research site for more than five months. After losing five months, the researcher approached another research site

and was granted permission within the same month; however, recess kicked in, and after institutional processes like registration were completed, the researcher started collecting data. Based on the decision to utilise purposive sampling, the researcher was unaware of the exact number of administrators and managers, even though the prospectus and the institution's intranet served as guidelines. Some people had left the institution, while others moved from specific positions. Although the researcher had no view of the number of managers, significant results were received as the sample size was relatively small, considering the size of the research site.

### **3.6. Ethical considerations**

Kumar (2014:284) and Babbie (2021:92) believe that all researchers are subject to ethical considerations, which are mainly concerned with what is wrong and what is right when conducting research, irrespective of the research design, techniques, and choice of method. When conducting research, a researcher needs to adhere to ethical research principles. The study received ethics clearance from the University of Cape Town, through the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship, where the study is registered, as well as from Flavius Mareka TVET College, as information was gathered from human subjects (see Appendices D and E). Furthermore, the researcher complied with the research site policies and adhered to the communicated schedule by the skills development officer for data collection. The questionnaire had a disclaimer stating that administrators were not obliged to complete the tool, whilst, for semi-structured interviews, managers signed a consent form to demonstrate that they participated voluntarily (see Appendix C).

#### **3.6.1. Anonymity and confidentiality**

Babbie (2021:67) distinguishes anonymity in the study from confidentiality, which is sharing information gathered without disclosing the participant's name, whilst confidentiality is not sharing information at all, as the participant is promised. Kumar (2014:285) believes that in cases where findings need to be in context, it is important to keep participants anonymous and confidential, as sharing information with others for purposes other than research is unethical. The researcher ensured that the information gathered on the questionnaire could not be linked to the administrators by designing the instrument so that it did not need personal identification. The researcher

utilised participant and manager as aliases and employed coding to eliminate participant identifying information for confidentiality concerns, making it impossible to relate information to specific people.

### **3.6.2. Informed consent**

It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that participants understand what it means to engage in the study and determine whether they want to participate, how they are expected to participate, as well as to explain the study's purpose, risks, benefits, and expected duration for their participation (Kumar, 2014: 285; Babbie, 2021: 65). For this study, the researcher had informed consent (see appendix C), which was part of the interview questionnaire for managers. The researcher used informed consent as a reference while describing the study, requesting managers' signatures and soliciting their voluntary agreement to participate. Consent is used to protect participants' rights and make sure they understand the study.

### **3.7. Reflection on data collection methods**

Yin (2018:15) describes case study research design as an empirical method where evidence can be collected from many sources. The study used a combination of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to complement data collection from different tools. Although it is simple to distribute and collect questionnaires from many people, there is no way to ask clarifying questions. Respondents can rush to complete questionnaires and make mistakes that could distort the results, interviews can be used in addition to address this. Semi-structured interviews worked well, they were pre-arranged on behalf of the researcher. The researcher was given dates with start times and no number of participants. The only hiccup was that the researcher did not know how many participants were accessible.

### **3.8 Chapter summary**

The researcher used a constructivist worldview in this chapter to construct an understanding of implementing records management practices at Flavius Mareka TVET College. The study adopted a case study research design and collected qualitative data from both administrators and managers. Data was collected from 17

administrators using semi-structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews from 21 managers. The design was used to investigate various themes that formed part of critical questions. Qualitative data collected via questionnaires were analysed using Excel, whilst data collected through semi-structured interviews were thematically analysed. The presentation of findings resulting from the analysed data was aided by figures and tables. Findings were presented in the form of narratives. Ethical clearance was obtained from the study institution and research site, where administrators and managers were briefed about the study and how anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained. The analysis and conclusions of the study will be covered in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 4: Presentation of findings**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents an analysis of data gathered to address the study's objective, which explores implementing records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka TVET College. Five critical questions guided this study:

- What are the current records management practices in your institution?
- What records management governing documents, policies, procedures, and guidelines are available at your institution?
- Which records management training or interventions have staff received?
- What is management's approach to records management?
- Which best practices could be implemented for effective records management at Flavius Mareka TVET College?

The study adopted a case study design to collect data from administrators using a semi-structured questionnaire. For management, data was collected through semi-structured interviews. A case study is characterized by a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context to generate knowledge (Rule & John, 2011: 4). Qualitative data collected via questionnaires were analysed using Microsoft Excel, whilst qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews were thematically analysed. Figures and tables have aided the presentation of findings from the analysed data. Qualitative findings are presented in the form of narratives.

### **4.2 Presentation of study findings**

The presentation of findings is structured according to the five critical questions informing this study. The findings from both questionnaires with 17 administrators and semi-structured interviews with 21 managers are presented in an integrated manner. The first section presents biographical data from both the questionnaire and interviews (see Appendices A and B). Then, followed by findings relating to each of the five critical questions, and lastly, general comments and observations are presented.

#### 4.2.1. Biographical information

This section presents the biographical data of Flavius Mareka TVET College administrators and managers who participated in this study. Demographic information of interest to the study included administrators' and managers' departments, departments they service, job titles, highest qualifications, and years employed in the institution.

##### 4.2.1.1. Administrators and managers' departments

This section presents the departments of administrators and managers. Table 4.1 indicates the departments where administrators are based, with the most administrators in the Human Resources Department and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

Table 4.1: Administrators' departments (n=17)

| Department                     | Frequency | Percentage  |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Administration                 | 1         | 6%          |
| Corporate Services             | 1         | 6%          |
| Department of Higher Education | 4         | 23%         |
| Exam Office                    | 1         | 6%          |
| Finance                        | 2         | 12%         |
| Governance                     | 1         | 6%          |
| Human Resource Department      | 5         | 29%         |
| Media Centre                   | 1         | 6%          |
| Student Support Services       | 1         | 6%          |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>17</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The study asked managers in the semi-structured interviews about their departments. Table 4.2 indicates managers' departments with more managers, 2 (two) coming from Communication, Finance, and Student Admin.

Table 4.2: Managers' departments (n=21)

| Department  | Frequency | Percentage  |
|---|-----------|-------------|
| Business Studies  | 1         | 5%          |
| Communication   | 2         | 9%          |
| Computer Department   | 1         | 5%          |
| Corporate Services  | 1         | 5%          |
| Curriculum  | 1         | 5%          |
| Department of Higher Education  | 1         | 5%          |
| Engineering Studies   | 1         | 5%          |
| Exams   | 1         | 5%          |
| Finance Supply Chain Management (SCM); Supply Chain Management and Assets | 2         | 9%          |
| Governance and Communications   | 1         | 5%          |
| Human Resource Department and Development                                 | 1         | 5%          |
| Information Communications and Technology (ICT)                           | 1         | 5%          |
| Maintenance   | 1         | 5%          |
| Maintenance and Infrastructure  | 1         | 5%          |
| Marketing   | 1         | 5%          |
| Registration  | 1         | 5%          |
| Student Admin   | 2         | 9%          |
| Student Support Services  | 1         | 5%          |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>21</b> | <b>100%</b> |

#### 4.2.1.2. Administrators and managers' departmental responsibilities

The study also enquired from administrators and managers about the departments they were responsible for in their roles. Figure 4.1 shows departments serviced by administrators, with the three (3) administrators being responsible for Finance, while other units had single administrators.

Managers were also asked about the departments they were responsible for. Figure 4.2 shows a breakdown of the departments managers interviewed in this study were responsible for. The managers participating in the study were responsible for mostly Business Studies nine (9) departments, followed by seven (7) from Student Support Services

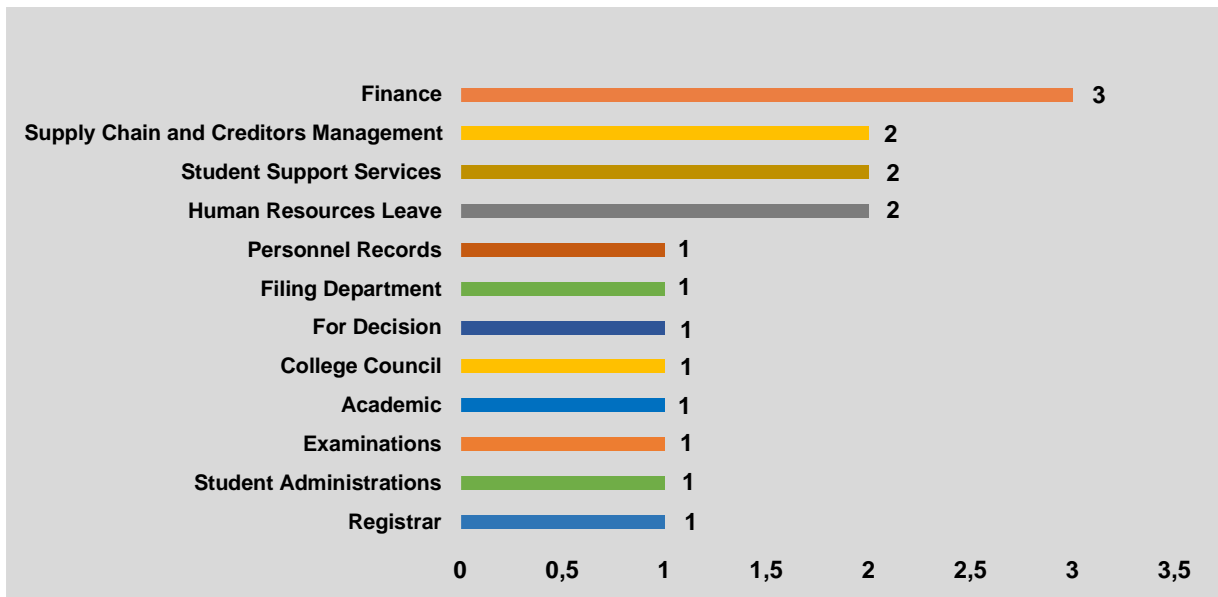


Figure 4.1: Department's administrators are responsible for (n=17)

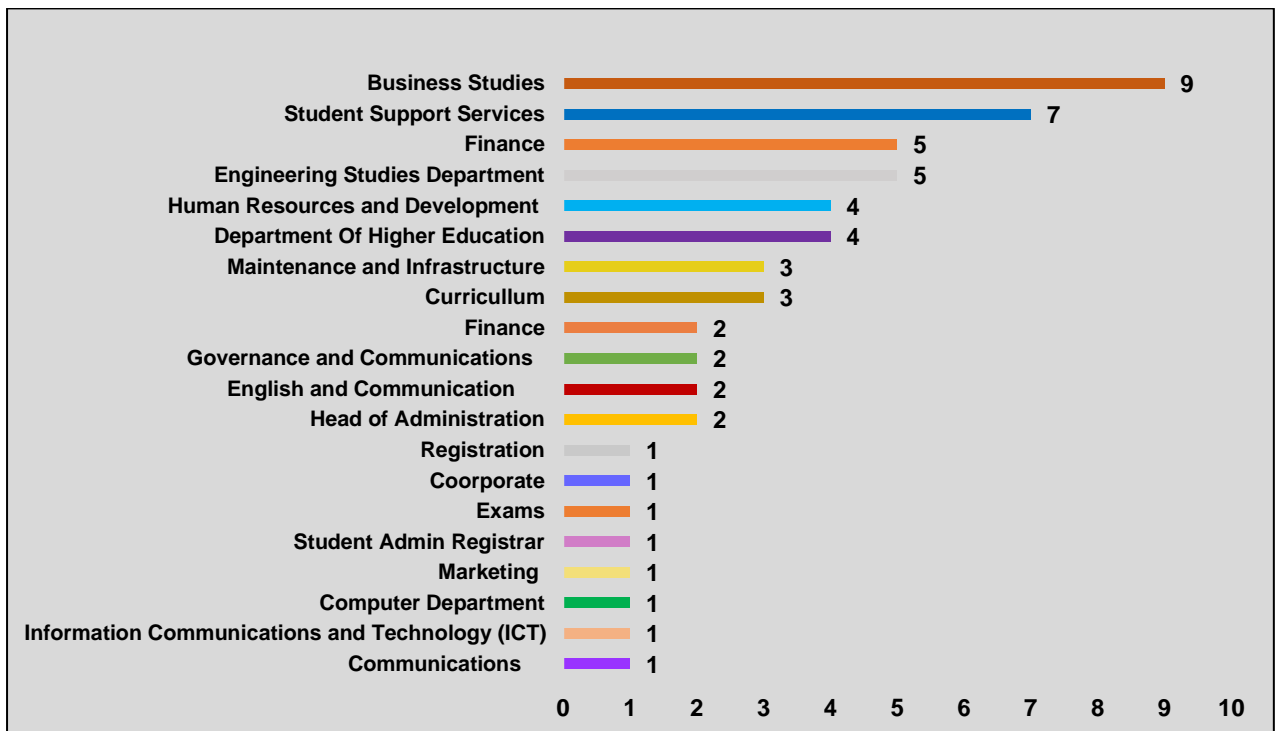


Figure 4.2: Department's managers are responsible for (n=21)

#### 4.2.1.3. Administrators and managers' job titles

The study in this section wanted to establish the titles of administrators who are assigned record-keeping roles and those of managers overseeing these departments. Figure 4.3 illustrates that most administrators 9, 55%) were clerks, followed by 5 (29%) officers.

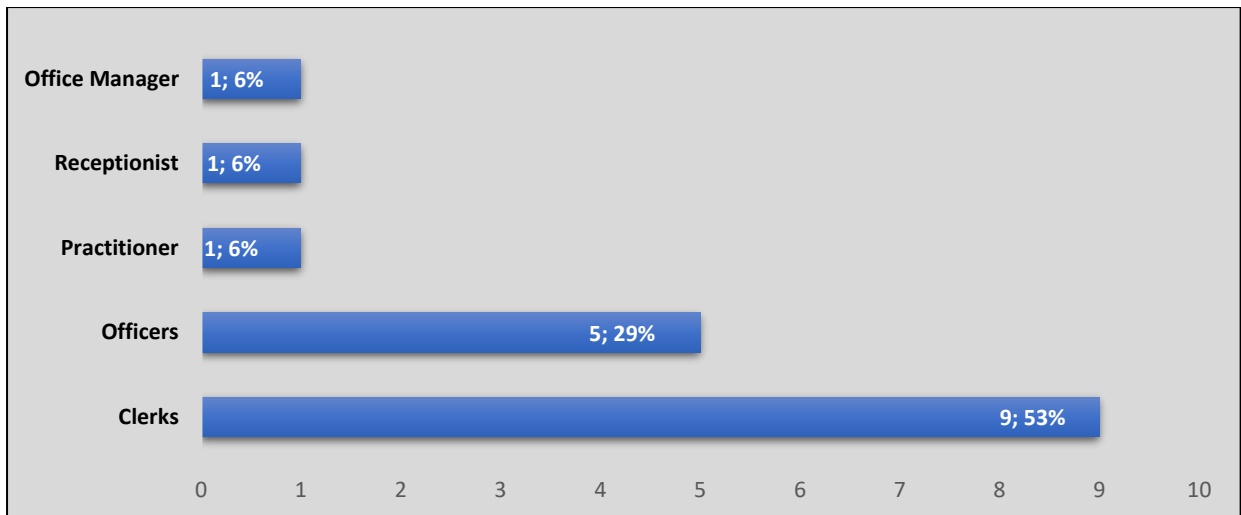


Figure 4.3: Administrators' job titles (n=17)

Figure 4.4 shows a breakdown of managers' positions, with most (6) managers with the Assistant Director title.

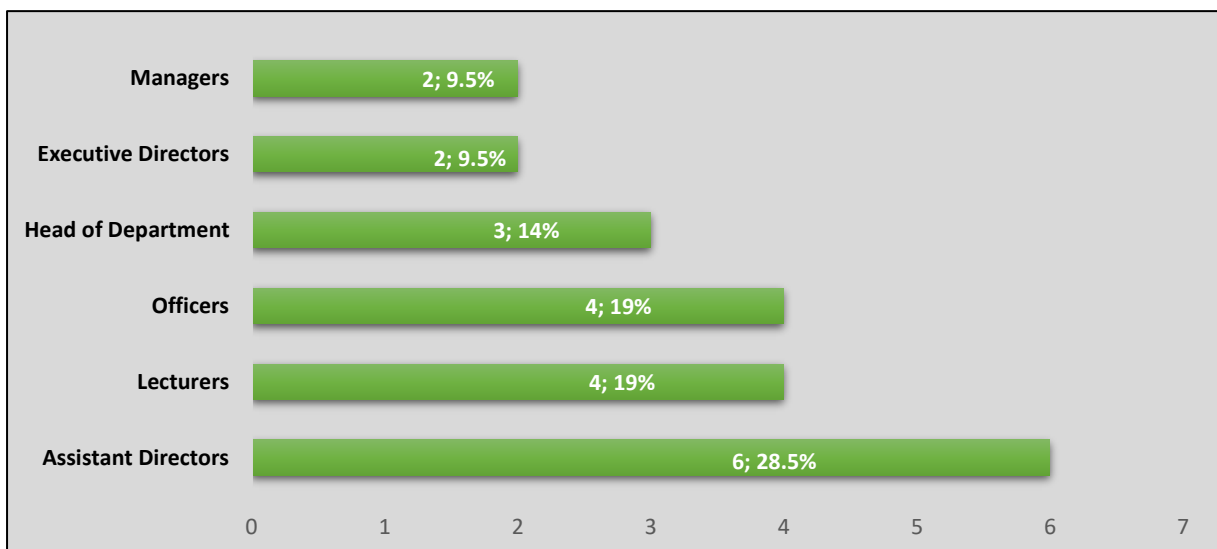


Figure 4.4: Managers' job titles (n=21)

#### 4.2.1.4. Administrators and managers' years in the position

The administrators and managers were asked about their years in the positions they hold in the institution. Figure 4.5 indicates that the majority, 10 (59%) of administrators have been in the position for 5 years or less, with 4 (23%) having been in the position for 16-20 years.

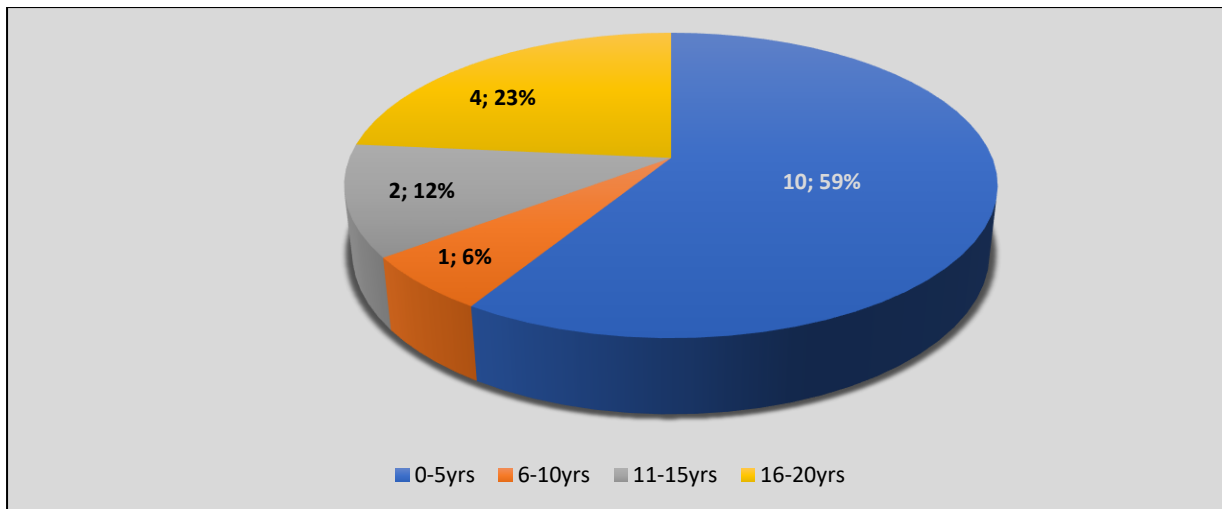


Figure 4.5: Administrator's years in the position (n=17)

For managers, years in the institution are indicated in Figure 4.6. The figure indicates that most managers, 11 (53%), have been with the institution for 6-10 years. The other 4 (19%) managers have been in the institution for longer, 16-20 years, thus making them likely to contribute rich insight to the study.

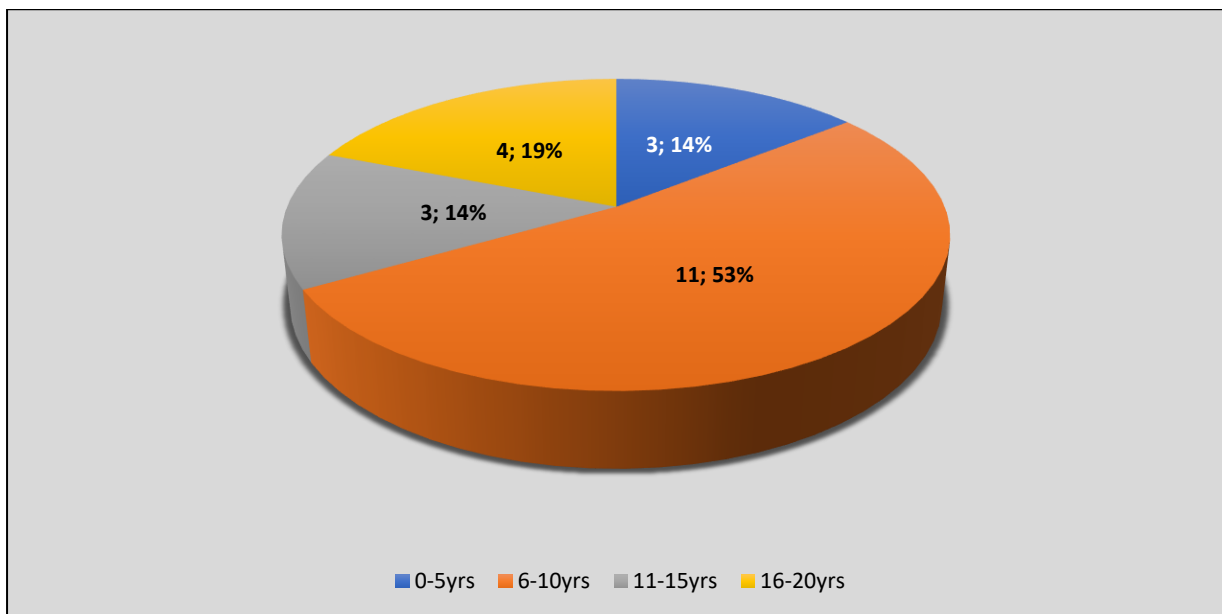


Figure 4.6: Managers' years in the position (n=21)

#### 4.2.1.5 Administrators and managers' highest qualification

This section presents administrators' and managers' highest qualifications. Figure 4.7 shows that most administrators' highest qualification was a Diploma 13 (76%), while only 2 (12%) had a degree.

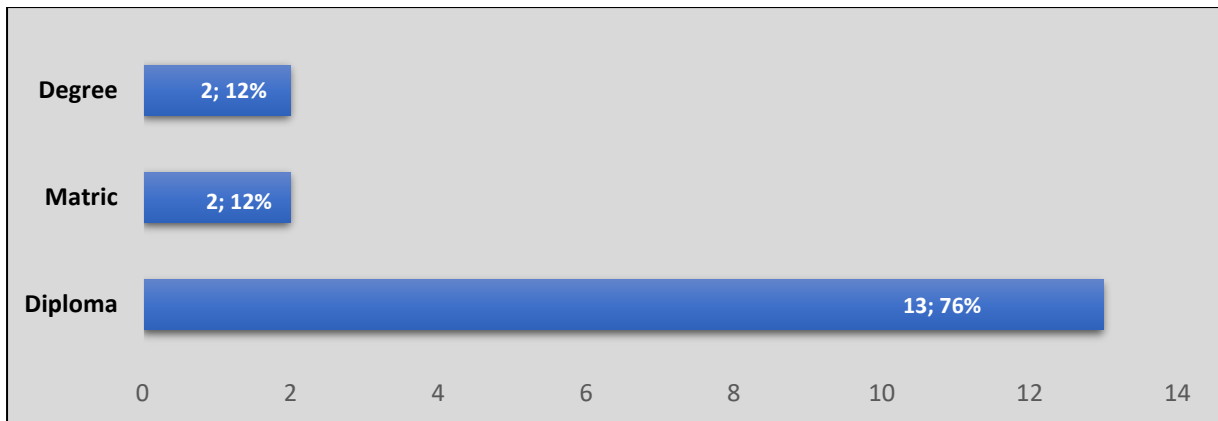


Figure 4.7: Administrators' highest qualification (n=17)

The study also enquired from managers about their highest qualifications. Most managers had honours 9 (42%), see Figure 4.8. Only 2 (10%) of managers had master's degrees.

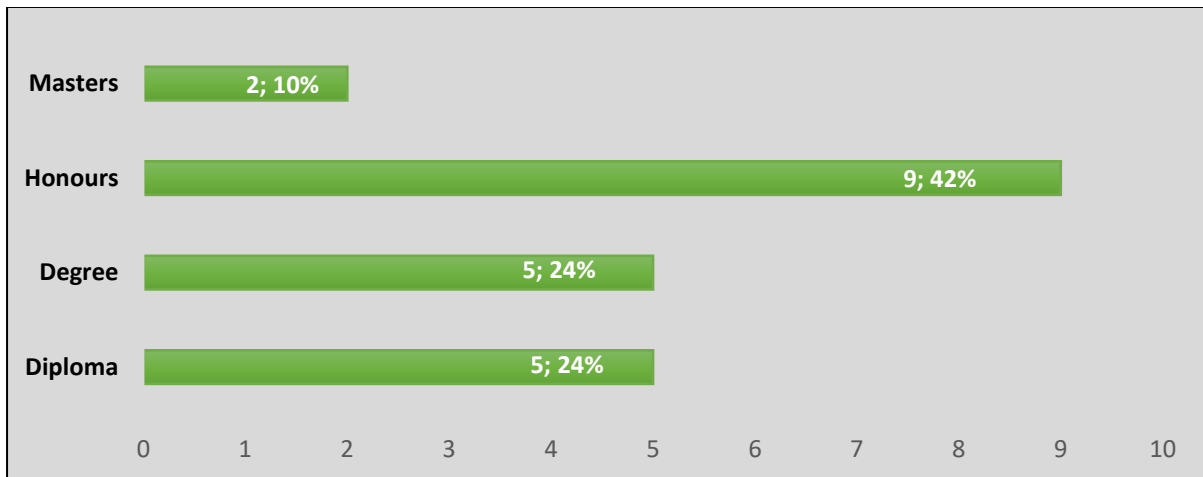


Figure 4.8: Managers' highest qualification (n=21)

This section presents the sampled population's biographical information, including managers and administrators. Both administrators and managers departments and the sub-departments they are responsible for servicing were presented. Managers' duration in their current roles ranged from zero to five years, followed by those with 16 to 20 years. The study observed that although some administrators and managers may have been with the organisation for a while, they have been in different roles and departments than the current one. The management team's qualifications range from a diploma to a master's degree.

## **4.2.2. Records management practices**

The first critical question probed administrators and management regarding their understanding of records management: current records management practices; the perceived role of administrators as custodians of records; and the role played by records management in the institution (see Appendices A and B).

### **4.2.2.1. Records management understanding**

The researcher sought to explore the administrator's understanding of records management to establish a point of departure. All administrators had some understanding, and some were clearer than others. A small portion of the administrators (3) had a very good understanding of records management. One administrator stated that it is an institutional function of managing information in a *“record format for future reference purposes for a certain time while putting control measures in place and allocating access to authorised personnel”*.

All (21) managers had a clear understanding of records management and linked it to audits and compliance. One manager stated that:

records management is a process where we keep all records as evidence of all transactions done by institution for scrutiny and evidence for all assets bought by the institution and complied with Supply Chain processes and tendered with three suppliers and have permanent records and some are kept for five years.

Another manager further explained that it is the *“process of storing confidential and relevant information of compliance audits, community and students’ information, it is supported by a database of information of the institution in any format, be it electronic or hardcopy”*. Managers highlighted the importance of maintaining confidentiality and granting access to authorised users as part of records management best practices. They also shared examples of their departmental activities, including but not limited to reports to the council, students' financial aid records, National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NFSAS), adherence to financial processes, and accuracy in students' exam records, to mention a few. One of the managers highlighted that *“each area must have Students’ Representative Council (SRC) election records so that we can be able to check how many disputes we have during elections.”*

#### **4.2.2.2. Current records management practices**

The researcher posed this question to both administrators and managers in line with the research question on current records management practice (see Appendices A and B). This was to examine how well records were managed in the institution.

Eight (8) administrators from each department indicated that they retain their records in a designated secure space and destroy them after reaching their retention period of five years. A small number of administrators indicated that some records are received electronically and stored on *Sage System* (employee online service for payslips, leave submissions, and other employee-related actions), whilst others are kept on *Coltech System* (a student portal).

Managers revealed that hardcopy records are managed manually in various sections for different years, whilst electronic records are managed in databases that are regularly backed up and stored on the cloud. Four (4) managers indicated that soft copies are stored on computers in shared folders that are only accessible by authorised users for a minimum of five years. Additionally, managers revealed that student marks are communicated using a backed-up student portal accessible to authorised users on all campuses and that institutional records are maintained on the *Coltech System*. One of the managers stated that *“records are filed in the storeroom when no longer needed in the office space, different departments have different methods, they are managed in silos, there is no central place where records are managed, academics do it on their own”*. A few managers (5) stated that there is no centralised location for managing records; instead, records are kept differently in respective areas due to a lack of guidelines that support uniformity across the institution. Nevertheless, each department is aware of the location of sectional records.

#### **4.2.2.3. Records management perceptions in the institution**

Managers in the interviews were asked about records management perceptions in the institution to determine if they recognise records management as a vital function in the institution. All managers expressed that records are created at all levels for compliance, reference, historical, and evidential purposes during investigations or audits. Manager 17 stated that *“records management ought to be seen as the most*

*important function within the organisation and given top priority by management*". A manager from Student Support Services emphasized that poorly managed records can ruin an institution's brand and image. Similarly, Manager 7 stated that *"good record keeping has the potential of taking the institution to greater heights and lead to the organisation's growth and serve as evidence when looking for sponsors"*. In addition, Manager 19 further emphasised how records are perceived in the institution, stating that *"records management is a critical role that can lead to the crumbling of the institution, standardisation, monitoring, and compliance to audits, can only be achieved through records"*.

#### **4.2.2.4. Administrators' role in records management**

Administrators and managers were questioned about the perceived role of administrators in managing institutional records. The question was to determine administrators' and management's perceptions of the role administrators are playing or should be playing in managing records in the institution.

Although administrators had a range of viewpoints, most of them agreed that their role is to manage records by keeping them in the strong room "vault" in a way that is safe, secure, and access controlled. Respondent four highlighted that they would *"recommend an improvement where they have a system where to capture information in a central place rather than walking to go and validate"*. The other 2 administrators mentioned that for best practices, they *"determine which records to keep and for how long"*. To ensure legal and regulatory compliance, administrators elaborated that they make records available upon request and specify their duration in line with organisational best practices. In addition, respondent seven indicated that *"it is important, entrenchment is important in that the organisation will not find itself wanting to result from document loss"*.

Many managers specified that there is no designated records management staff, instead, administrators in various departments performing administrative tasks contribute to overseeing records as part of their administrative tasks. They further indicated that administrators keep records filed in a safe, central environment and an accessible repository for electronic records. Different managers shared their

department practices, one manager revealed that an “*administrator in charge of exams would be responsible for recording student assessment marks, whereas an administrator in Financial Assets would have a different responsibility, thus the roles may differ according to departmental needs*”.

The findings for the first critical question on records management practices revealed that both administrators and managers understand records management concepts. Even though both groups had differing views on how records are managed in the institution, since records management practices are different from department to department, some managers provided evidence of their records management practices. Managers and administrators mentioned that they do not have employees primarily responsible for record-keeping. However, record-keeping is an addition to administrators’ daily responsibilities. Managers also stated that administrators are responsible for ensuring that records are kept safe, and access is limited to authorised users. Managers further emphasised that records management should be prioritised and driven from the top by management.

#### **4.2.3. Records management governance**

The second critical question explored by administrators via questionnaires and managers through semi-structured interviews records management governance in the institution, see Appendices A and B. The section examined resources available to administrators for effective records management, responsible resources for the implementation of governance principles, the managers’ role in the implementation of records management governance principles at the institution, and records management training opportunities. Managers were probed regarding their role in ensuring that the legal and regulatory frameworks’ requirements for records management are followed.

##### **4.2.3.1. Resources for effective records management**

Figure 4.9 reflects administrators’ responses on resources provided for effective records management execution in the institution. Administrators were provided with a list of governance resources to choose from, allowing them to choose more than one response. This then led to the total count of responses exceeding number of

administrators. Most administrators opted for a combination of approved policies 15 (37%) and records management systems 10 (24%) (see Figure 4.9). They also noted, to a lesser extent, training on records management legislation and sufficient training, whilst the option of others has been stated as from colleagues. This resulted in a total of 41 responses for Question 9 (see Appendix B), even though only 17 administrators completed the questionnaire. Some administrators mentioned other available resources, such as learning from colleagues about effective records management.

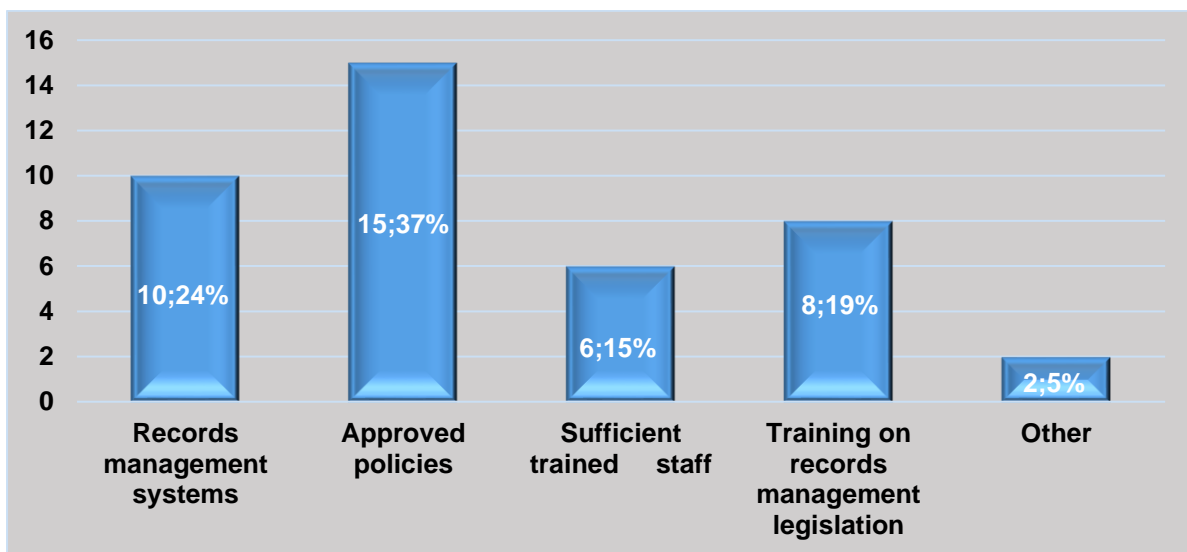


Figure 4.9: Administrators' available resources for effective records management (n=17)

#### 4.2.3.2. Management's role in the implementation of records management governing principles

Most managers declared that they do not have a direct role in ensuring the records management principles. Furthermore, they are not aware of any records management-related guidelines; this might be due to many managers managing multiple units. One of the managers indicated that *“although I do not have a role to play, management should ensure that policies are implemented”*. However, the managers noted that other policies relating to Human Resources, Finance Management, Supply Chain, and Student Administration, as well as policies and charters, were acquired from the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). These are shared by Flavius Mareka's central office and disseminated to different units for execution. Furthermore, one manager elaborated by stating that *“we monitor, moderate files, assessment files, mark sheets to see if academics are doing their job correctly. Post moderation has to talk to the number of sheets submitted”*.

They also indicated that, institution’s intranet provides easy access to all these policies. However, this is not the case for records management guidelines. Hence, managers stated that *“having records management policies would be an added advantage to help manage records consistently and appropriately and avoid incidents”*.

#### 4.2.3.3. Responsible resources for the implementation of governance principles

In this multiple response question (hence n=28), administrators were asked about resources provided for the execution of records management governance principles, as indicated in Figure 4.10, with the highest number (13) being representatives within departments. Despite having "other" as one of the possible options, no respondent selected this option.

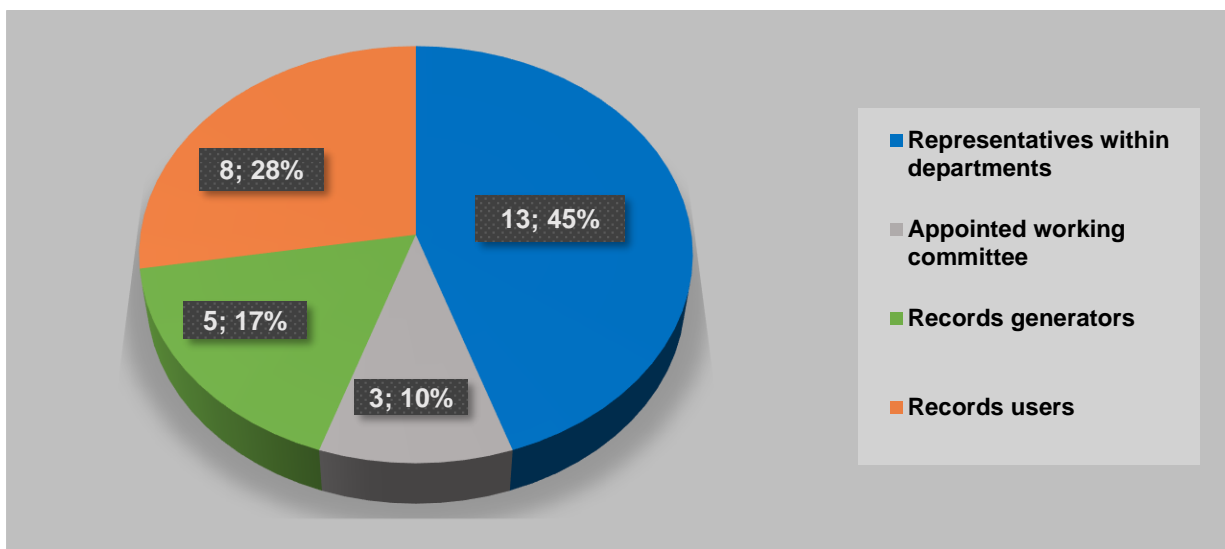


Figure 4.10: Responsible people for implementation of records management governance principles (n=28)

#### 4.2.3.4. Records management practices compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks

The study also evaluated compliance with institutional policies, legal and regulatory frameworks. The managers claimed that they work closely with staff during compliance audits, including Special Investigating Unit (SIU) investigations and National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) student funding. One of the managers mentioned that *“we have ICAS from DHET policies that are adhered to for assessment and monitoring”*.

Managers also highlighted that the institution makes use of council-approved templates to ensure compliance. Moreover, records received from DHET are shared within the institution. While lower institutional structures are informed of updated policies by institutional committees and management to ensure compliance. A manager stated that “*DHET visits contribute to attaining institutional compliance, and for student data, the institution requests permission before sharing it with outside companies for bursary application purposes*”.

The findings for records management governance for administrators addressed resources made available to them for executing their tasks, and employees responsible for implementing governance principles (see Appendix B). Administrators mentioned multiple options, including approved policies and records management systems were highly rated. In terms of the manager's perceptions of records management governance, one manager indicated that they have no direct role to play in implementing governance principles, but “*we work closely with staff during audits to ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks*”. They discussed that they share governance-related records with staff to ensure compliance. In one of the areas, a manager highlighted that “*although we do not have records management-related guidelines, we ensure that student-related information is handled in line with legislation like the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA)*”.

#### **4.2.4. Records management staff development**

Critical question three explored managers' contribution to developing administrators as records keepers and validated with administrators' what development opportunities were made available to equip them with the records management skills, they need to carry out records management duties (see Appendices A and B).

##### **4.2.4.1. Management role in upskilling administrators**

The study provided administrators with a list of potential management interventions, where administrators could select more than one option of intervention that could empower them to effectively manage records. Consequently, the total count of responses exceeded the number of administrators, as each chose a combination of interventions. Figure 4.11 demonstrates that most administrators (11) chose to identify their training requirements during performance management, contracting with line

managers. The other (7) administrators stated that although they chose their preferred training, managers recommend that they undergo a different training than the one they had identified. One of the administrators chose other and specified it as “not sure.” Of the (17) administrators, none indicated that they belonged to a professional body such as the South African Society of Archivists (SASA), just as an example, nor did they receive development-related notification through related bodies (see Appendix B). Other administrators in the other option noted that they were unsure.

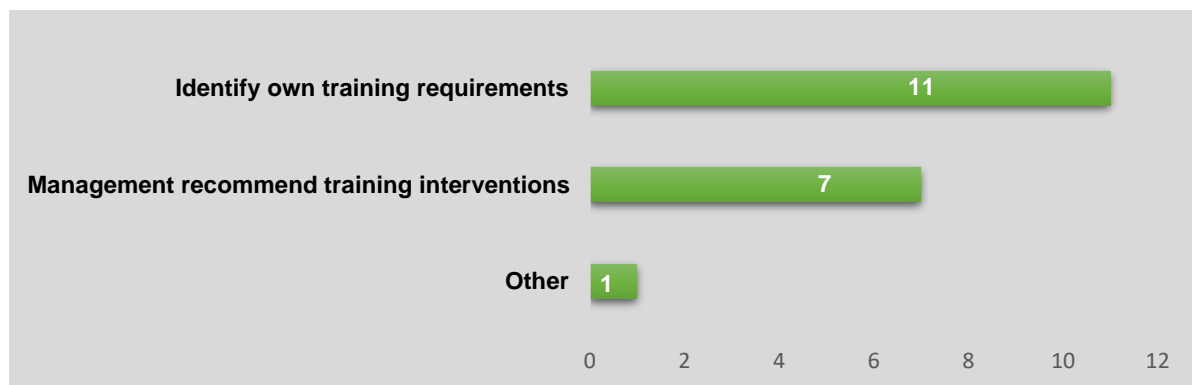


Figure 4.11: Management interventions offered to empower administrators on current records management developments (n=17)

#### 4.2.4.2. Perceived relevant skills for records management administrator

The study inquired from managers about perceived technical and personal skills essential for administrators as records custodians to fulfil their roles, as well as training offered in developing them to master their work.

Managers shared the same view that “*administrators need to be trustworthy*”, whilst a few added that “*administrators need to undergo a screening procedure because they are handling important student information, and confidentiality cannot be compromised*”. Manager 16 emphasised that administrators need to be “*taught basics around records management/archives fundamentals or principles of records management and these are linked to institutional processes and structures*”. They also stressed that administrators need to be able to move records to an electronic platform, have administration abilities, time management, administrative and communication skills, and maintain confidentiality.

#### **4.2.4.3. Development opportunities for records administrators**

The study probed managers about development opportunities available to records administrators for effective records management. All (21) managers indicated that during performance management contracting, line managers have one-on-one meetings with staff members, including administrators, to identify skills gaps and suggest training. The institutional skills training officer then uses this information to select the service provider who can offer the training that many staff members have specified. However, the managers expressed a concern that not everyone could attend the identified skills training due to financial constraints. Manager 14 further added that *“sometimes staff select a preferred course, but due to financial limitations, only a limited number of staff members can register for the course”*. Managers also added that, occasionally, the skills development officer performs a skills audit, and then funding is assigned for a specified training. Most managers (11) highlighted that there are no administrators delegated for record keeping only, however, there is a need for staff dedicated to managing records. In addition, Manager 5 emphasised that *“administrators should be trained on records management principles, including managing records on electronic platforms, which can be challenging for many”*. Lastly, managers suggested that administrators should receive training to manage confidential information, the use Microsoft Excel as a backup for system challenges. Further training on cybersecurity to protect information from being hacked was emphasised by a few (3) managers.

#### **4.2.4.4. Knowledge, skills, and personal attributes of records management administrators**

The study inquired from managers about the knowledge, skills, and personal attributes that records administrators should possess to be able to execute their tasks. Managers reported that training administrators on the institution's system allows them to perform their duties, and after training, administrators are assigned tasks about the training they attended for monitoring. Four of the managers indicated that training administrators on the latest technology would benefit the institution, as they can serve the institution better. In addition, other managers detailed that induction helps newly appointed administrators to execute their duties well. Few (4) managers expressed their appreciation for structured records management training. Manager 18

emphasised that “*available training in records management is not structured and thus staff are not fully equipped with such training, resulting in staff having to be trained and retrained in this area*”. The unstructured training referred to covers file naming conventions and shelf placement, but it does not apply any principles while transferring files to central storage. As opposed to unstructured training, records management training addresses a variety of topics, including how and when records should be disposed of, access, classification of sensitive information, and the enforcement of guidelines and standardisation.

The study asked managers about personal attributes that administrators should possess to serve records users. Most managers (16) repeated related attributes for records management administrators: interpersonal skills such as being self-driven, enthusiastic, going the extra mile, eagerness to learn; organisational skills, trustworthiness, customer-oriented, analytical skills, ability to understand instructions, accuracy, high concentration level to avoid making mistakes, proficiency in English, time management, reliable, flexible and ability to maintain confidentiality.

In terms of technical skills, managers specified technical skills required for record-keeping, such as computer literacy, advanced filing, and capturing skills. They further recommended that they “*should be conversant with Sage and Coltech Systems used by the institution, Microsoft Office, particularly Microsoft Excel, and learn new electronic records management programs in the market*”. Records administrators, according to some managers (4), should be able to train users on records keeping using *Microsoft Teams* platform and be able to generate records status reports.

Managers' contributions in developing records administrators showed that most administrators identify their training with line managers during performance contracting. In some instances, specific training is recommended by managers. Interviewed managers emphasised that administrators recommended computer literacy as one of the relevant abilities needed to carry out their duties. The highest personal attribute noted by managers was the importance of maintaining confidentiality due to the nature of the records they work with. Both administrators and

managers indicated inadequate funding as an obstacle for developing administrators to achieve identified skills.

#### **4.4.5. Management's approach to records management**

This section presents managers' support to administrators to carry out their records management responsibilities. The section outlines the managers' role in promoting the institution's records management implementation. Data to address the fourth critical question was collected via semi-structured interviews with managers (see Appendix A).

##### **4.4.5.1. Management role in driving of records management implementation**

The first part of this critical question explored management's role in leading records management implementation. Even though some (8) managers indicated they had no direct role in overseeing records management, they participated differently in supporting records management in the institution. Thirteen managers are involved and engage in various activities within their different spaces, which support records management implementation. Four of these managers stated that "*we ensure that evidence in the form of records is provided when required*". In addition, two of the managers indicated that "*good records management practices are adhered to in other areas, such as Human Resources and Finance, and audits do not reveal any recurrences with records management*". Four managers mentioned that "*we revisit policies in place to verify which policies are in place, and which ones are outdated, we then review and monitor institutions' practices against what is in the policy, and therefore influence records management implementation in that way*". Three managers are looking to hire records management experts who can monitor the audit trail and develop templates to provide uniformity and standardisation across departments. Among the (21) managers, four (4) managers stated that they monitor that files are properly labelled according to the authorised labelling convention that is understood by users for retrieval purposes and that current versions are in place. Manager 7 stated that:

Despite the lack of records management policies, student health and wellness-related matters are handled in a manner that complies with POPIA, including situations involving student health and wellness matters like gender-based

violence, rape, and students testing positive. These are handled with the highest confidentiality when reported to the Academic Board, the Principal's Office, and the Council.

#### **4.4.5.2. Management support to records management staff**

The second part of critical question four probed from management the support that records management administrators are provided with so that they can execute their duties. Managers provide administrators who oversee records with the necessary equipment, including stationery, shelving, files, and cupboard space to allow them to carry out their tasks. For exam preparation and moderation, managers (2) shared that *“information is distributed via weekly meetings, email, and chat groups; files are routinely checked to make sure everything is in order”*. In Finance and Student Support Services, six (6) managers highlighted that they ensure that administrators are aware of the value of records and that extra staff are assigned whenever there is a backlog among administrators. In areas like HR, one manager affirmed that administrators *“should be able to maintain confidentiality and be vetted for secrecy as they are working with sensitive information”*. Some managers (4) detailed that even though they do not provide support to staff, the administrator’s nature of work necessitates them to be meticulous as they deal with student marks and need to handle records with care whenever there are student queries. Three managers (3) declared that they only realise the importance of records during audits, as they provide support and monitoring. According to one manager noted that *“in certain instances, staff encounter difficulties with senior staff's unwillingness to adhere to the process; these incidents are reported so that corrective actions can be taken”*.

#### **4.4.5.3. Infrastructure necessary for records management**

The last part of critical question four examined the role that management plays in guaranteeing that administrators have the infrastructure they need to fulfil their records management obligations. This is because, despite their best efforts and willingness to help, administrators cannot succeed in serving the institution if they lack the necessary tools. All managers (21) specified that infrastructure is allocated for record storage. Additionally, it was also highlighted that *“although storage is available, it still needs to be improved to comply with records management standards”*. One of the managers

stated that, when shredding is required, temporary workers are appointed to handle the task. In the Student Support Services, one manager mentioned that student information is shared with students via the *Coltech System*, which is completely backed up to ensure that data is never lost. Additionally, another manager highlighted that records are filed the way auditors request them to be. Furthermore, periodic spot checks are conducted at regular intervals to verify that the infrastructure is utilised properly.

In summary, managers discussed that they do not have a direct role to play in driving records management, but they highlighted that they support administrators by providing them with tools necessary to execute their responsibilities. In addition, they work closely with administrators during institutional audits. Moreover, managers asserted that they source additional staff to assist administrators in the event of a backlog. Lastly, managers emphasized the value of records and how cautiously they should be handled by administrators.

#### **4.2.6 Effective records management best practices**

This last critical question discusses how management leads in the institution's records management implementation, how administrators are supported, and the infrastructure provided to administrators so that they can carry out their records management obligations. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to explore the last critical question (see Appendices A and B)

##### **4.2.6.1 Administrator's best practices for effective and efficient records management**

Administrators shared a combination of best practices provided for efficient records management, which are presented in Figure 4.12, with approved policies (13) and management support (8) rated high. The selection of more than one response leads to the total number of responses exceeding the number of administrators, as depicted in the Figure 4.12. Administrators in other noted management systems as one of the best practices.

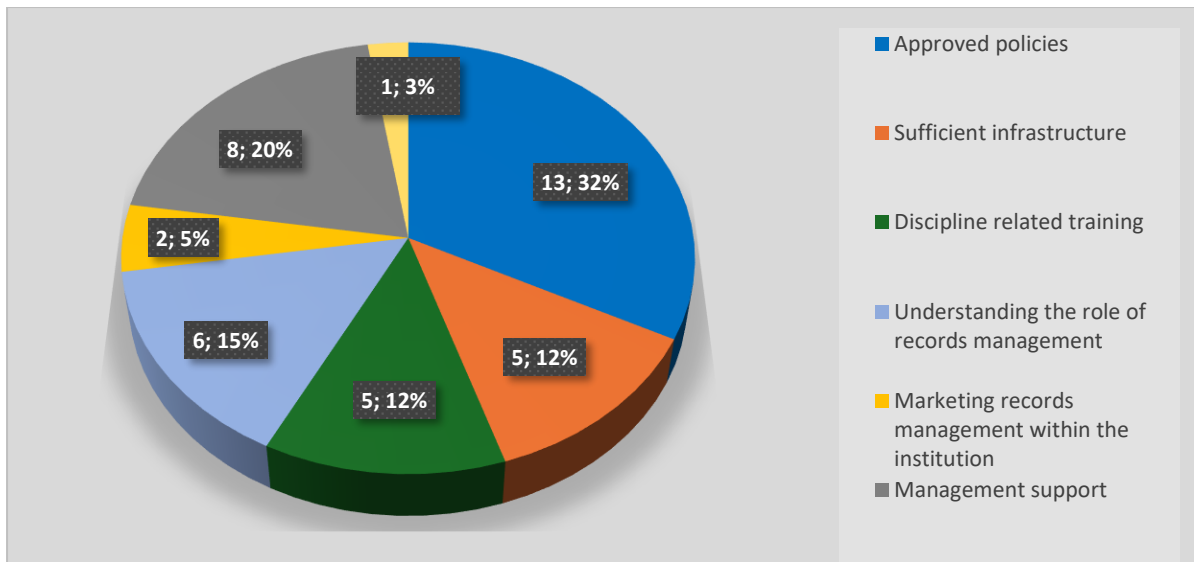


Figure 4.12: Flavius Mareka's best practices for effective and efficient records management (n=17)

#### 4.2.6.2. Management best practices for effective and efficient records management

The managers expressed different opinions on effective and efficient records management best practices. Some mentioned that records need to be migrated from the old to the new filing system and properly labelled. Of the 21 managers, three indicated that the intranet is not functional for effective and efficient records management. One of the managers stated that “*classification codes for records should be developed for ease of access and retrieval, and policies on the Intranet should be implemented as a way of following best practices*”. Five (5) additional managers recommended that administrators be the only ones with access to the records management function and that appropriate records management guidelines be provided. This will help prevent information tampering for malicious purposes, as information tampering can affect an institution's operational and strategic activities. One manager suggested another best practice of establishing communities of practice where departments effectively manage their records and share them with other departments.

#### 4.2.6.3. Records management lessons learned for effective implementation

One manager mentioned that “*every hardcopy record that is issued needs to be recorded so that it can be recalled*”. Furthermore, one of the managers indicated that “*since records can get lost, they should never be left unattended and always be filed*”

*immediately*". From the Auditor General audits, a few (4) managers stated that the institution needs minor improvement for record keeping. Two managers learned from lecturers that proper records management measures in place made it easier "to prevent students from sneaking similar answer books into examination venues". In addition, some managers in the academic stream indicated that proper mechanisms are in place for protecting exam question paper containers from being tampered with before they are delivered to exam venues. Four managers dealing with examinations and student marks stated that "there should be a backup plan in place should technology fail". Manager 19 emphasised that "unnecessary records should be disposed of and when staff members move, there should be a proper handover, including relevant records".

#### **4.2.6.4. Management support for records management implementation**

Eight managers indicated that records management technology has been upgraded to a barcoded system for easy tracking to release and receive records. Manager 4 stated, "we constantly remind and sensitise administrators about the importance of record-keeping, how to address audits, and avoid having findings". Management supports administrators, sends them for internal training, and provides oversight to guarantee timely submissions by giving them examples of how to execute queries from the *Coltech System* to generate reports on student information.

In summary, most administrators stated that with approved policies and management support, they could perform better and offer effective records management services. This will be in line with best practices for efficient records management. Managers emphasised the need for migrating information from the old system to the newly upgraded platform, where only records administrators will have access to records. They also mentioned the lesson that they learned, emphasising that, "we need to strengthen security by making sure that the containers with exam question papers are not tampered with before they reach the exam venues". Managers further send administrators to internal training as part of their support.

#### 4.2.7 General comments

This last critical question discusses how management leads the institution's records management implementation, how administrators are supported, and the infrastructure provided to administrators so that they can fulfill their records management obligations. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to explore the last critical question (see Appendices A and B). The study asked managers in semi-structured interviews and in the questionnaire to share any general comments on the study that were not mentioned before.

This was done to allow space for any study-related topics they would have wanted to discuss. Out of 17 administrators, four completed this section. Administrator 16 specified that they would appreciate it if the institution could *"implement an efficient filing system, regularly conduct records audits, and invest in quality storage solutions"*. Another administrator 9 showed appreciation for the study and indicated that *"the study showed us that there is a better way of managing our filing system better and effectively saving time and costs"*. The other 2 administrators alluded to records security, highlighting that they would value *"a secure fireproofed storage room is necessary to ensure safety of such records, and a proper management system may reduce the potential risks of losing documents and preserve the integrity and confidentiality of the file"*. This was also mentioned by managers in section 4.3.5.3, stating that the storage area needs to be improved to comply with records management standards.

Manager 13 expressed their appreciation for the session, stating that *"I was not aware of how important records were to the point where study could be conducted on them, I now have a greater understanding of their worth"*. Other managers noted that people tend to underestimate the value of records, which are accessible to the next person in the organisation after you leave. Manager 17 indicated that *"people do not realise the importance of records, as they can be used for reference purposes when one leaves the organisation, teaching is important, but record-keeping is equally important"*. While Manager 3 elaborated further, asserting that, *"if the institution wants to be an outstanding institution, records need to be managed properly"*. This was also emphasised in section 4.3.2.3, with different managers indicating that *"records*

*management must be seen as the most important function within the organisation and given top priority*". Furthermore, other managers emphasised that *"it will be easier to push from the top down with support from management, but it will be challenging to enforce compliance from the bottom up"*. These managers noted it would be beneficial to have policies and guidelines on record-keeping. This was also mentioned in section 4.3.3.2 that managers recommended that the existence of policies would contribute to managing records consistently across the institution. Additionally, Manager 10 highlighted that *"technology is moving fast as a result hacking happens all the time, the institution should implement a system that aligns with 4IR cyber security, as some systems are too old and weak, not intelligent"*. Institutions and departments should learn from one another, as there is always an opportunity for development. Managers indicated that the session made them realise that records management has not been practiced appropriately and that the institution needed to reflect on proper implementation.

### **4.3 Chapter summary**

The study's findings shed light on how records are maintained at Flavius Mareka TVET College. The findings also showed that although there are policies in the institution, there are inadequate records management policies and guidelines to ensure effective records management. Moreover, even though the institution engages in training for administrators, records management training is not prioritised due to limited funding. The findings revealed that those administrators managing records are mainly administrative staff with records management responsibilities added to their daily tasks, with many not skilled or qualified records-keeping staff. The study findings indicate that management supports administrators by making resources available for them to manage records and collaborate with administrators in preparing for audits. In terms of best practices, the study findings showed that both administrators and managers alluded to migrating to electronic platforms where information would be backed up, and both also mentioned that training is necessary, as there is room for improvement. The next chapter will share the study's main findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion of main findings, conclusions, and recommendations**

### **5.1. Introduction**

Chapter four presented the analysis of findings from data gathered from managers through semi-structured interviews and administrators using a questionnaire. This chapter discusses the main findings, concludes, and makes recommendations. The chapter is based on critical questions guiding this study to address the study's objective, which is to explore implementing records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka TVET College.

### **5.2. Discussion of main findings**

The findings are guided by the five critical questions, study objective, literature review, and the study's framework – Organisational Culture Framework by Schein & Schein (2016), as it acknowledges cultural gaps that impact the implementation of records management in institutions.

#### **5.2.1. Records management practices**

The discussion of practices in the institution was based on the four aspects, which are records management understanding, perceived role of records management, current records management practices, and perceived records administrators' role.

Findings in Chapter 4, Section 4.2.2.1 indicated that administrators understood the records management concept and its competitive advantage for the institution. Although the concept was understood by study administrators, the researcher observed that administrators were not all aware of the records management principles that go with the concept. In terms of managers, they understood the concept well, which was demonstrated through examples in their different sections responsible for. The researcher further noted that the managers' understanding needs to be shared with administrators so that there is harmony between the two parties so that no one will be left with information sludge as articulated by Upward et al. (2013:40). Findings from managers in Section 4.2.2.3 highlighted that managers understand the importance of the records management function in the institution. Furthermore,

findings highlighted that managers were aware that poorly maintained records could have negative consequences for the institution. The study also revealed that managers would like to see top management taking the lead and supporting records management implementation as a priority for the institution. This finding is in line with findings by Touray (2021:4) suggesting that, "top management must embrace and be involved in each phase of records management, the process to enhance effectiveness in all aspects".

The study also discovered that managers keep records in different areas and dispose after they have reached the retention period. Managers also alluded to the same practice. The study further revealed that although management demonstrates a high level of support for records management, there is an element of a lack of deeper understanding of records management as a profession, the difference between administration "filing" and records keeping. Section 4.2.2.4 Chapter 4 revealed that administrators agreed on their role of record keeping in a safe, access-controlled area and making them available when needed. This agreed with findings from managers, as they discussed that the institution does not have staff dedicated to record-keeping only. Despite having administrators, the researcher noted that administrators could do better in delivering record-keeping services once upskilled with relevant records management knowledge and skills, instead of basic office filing.

### **5.2.2. Records management governance**

The study findings from both administrators and managers on records management governance are discussed in this section. The findings cover resources for effective records management execution; management's role in the implementation of records management governing principles; responsible staff for implementing governance principles, and records management practices for legal and regulatory frameworks. These are going to be vital in helping the researcher formulate recommendations.

Section 4.2.3.1 in Chapter 4 highlighted a range of resources available for administrators to enable them to manage records effectively. The findings showed that a high number of administrators indicated the availability of approved policies and records management systems as being useful for effective records management.

Nevertheless, the researcher observed from the interviewed managers that the institution lacked records management-specific guidelines. Furthermore, administrators had insufficient records management governance resources to provide effective records management services. In addition, the systems utilised for records management were not designed for records management, as the systems used are designed for the storage of student records.

The study revealed that managers did not have a direct role at present to play in ensuring implementation; instead, the researcher observed that managers would appreciate access to guidelines, as indicated by some. When probed further about their developing workgroups, managers indicated that other institutional policies are shared with staff via the Intranet for easy access. The minimal role of managers in implementing records management in the institution will render records management chaotic. Wright (2013:18) suggests that inadequate adherence to formal information governance policies perpetuates the neglect of sound knowledge and records management practices.

Regarding resources tasked with the implementation of governance principles, study findings demonstrated in Figure 4.10 in Chapter 4 indicated that most administrators are representatives from the department responsible for the implementation of governance principles. Contrary to the findings, both administrators and managers indicated that there are no records management-specific practitioners. The findings might be attributed to administrators' inadequate understanding of implementing records management governance principles. The study findings revealed that administrators are executing records management tasks over and above their administrative tasks.

Study findings revealed that managers collaborate closely with administrators during compliance audits. This could be because of their knowledge of legal and regulatory frameworks, which allows them to advise, assist, and ensure that administrators are aware of these frameworks. Furthermore, the study findings indicated that managers used Council-approved templates to guarantee compliance. The researcher observed that while managers support the implementation of records management, some

managers have inadequate comprehension of the concept and related activities. Given that several managers believed that top management buy-in is crucial, the display of support is a positive step in the right direction when implementing records management.

### **5.2.3. Records management staff development**

This section unpacks findings on support given to administrators as addressed in Section 4.2.4, Chapter 4. The findings cover management roles in developing administrators, perceived relevant skills for records management administrators, development opportunities available to records management staff, acquired knowledge and skills from development opportunities, and records management staff's personal and technical skills.

Section 4.2.4.1 of the study findings highlighted that administrators specify their training needs during performance contracting with line managers. Despite being identified and attended, the study found that the training does not empower administrators in record keeping, the finding contradicts Musembe's (2016:15) statement that "records management staff should be trained to ensure compliance with legislation and manage the control of institutions' records effectively". Additionally, the researcher observed that administrators are learning records management skills from more seasoned administrators and receiving support from "managers", but these skills still do not equip them enough in records management, which somehow impedes implementation.

Further findings in Section 4.2.4.2 show that managers indicated that administrators need to be trustworthy. This is understandable given that administrators are handling confidential information and that "confidentiality cannot be compromised". The study on information sharing by Ahmad and Huvila (2019:678) emphasises the need for trust, and that confidentiality should be maintained when "information sharing at the interpersonal level, that is, the exchange of work-related information between employees within an organisation" takes place. The study findings also revealed that managers recommend the ability to move records to an electronic platform, administrative and communication skills, and time management.

The study findings from managers suggested that the skills training officer conducts audits to identify skills gaps, determine the necessary training, and source the service provider. This will be done using the training that most staff have selected. Managers further indicated that in some cases, financial constraints prevent administrators from attending these training opportunities. The findings further revealed that even though managers wanted administrators to receive training in records administration and associated tools for handling them, funding constraints made matters worse.

The findings in this study revealed that administrators receive training on the systems used by the institution so that they can perform their duties. Following this, they are assigned work-related tasks to test if the training was effective and to allow them to put what they have learnt into practice. The findings in this study demonstrated that some managers would appreciate administrators having training in records administration, highlighting that administrators might not fully understand the offered unstructured training in records. Although induction was also mentioned in the findings as a way of helping newly appointed administrators, in this case, induction would not benefit administrators in performing records management-related tasks.

Like administrators, findings from managers highlighted similar attributes such as interpersonal skills and trustworthiness, since they would be interacting with people and managing sensitive information. Some managers focused on strong computer proficiency using "*Microsoft Office*," including the institution's systems. The findings also showed that a few managers mentioned that administrators should be able to use technology to provide training. As indicated in this study, this is consistent with the new way of doing things.

#### **5.2.4. Management's approach to records management**

This section addresses the findings from Section 4.2.5 of Chapter 4 on management's approach to records management. The findings relate to the support offered to administrators concerning, management role in records management implementation, management support to records management staff, and infrastructure essential for records management

The study found that, although some of the managers do not play a role, most managers played different roles in their respective areas, including providing evidence when needed and ensuring no recurrences during audits. Furthermore, findings reflect that some managers review and monitor the alignment of the institution's practices and policies. The study also observed that other managers recommended the appointment of records management practitioners to implement records management, including populating templates to support uniformity. The researcher viewed this as compliance with regulations and a positive move, as it acknowledged the need for proper records management implementation.

Findings from the study indicated that managers support administrators with their records management outputs by providing the resources they need to perform their duties. Administrators are supported based on the institution's seasonal activities, such as sharing information for exam preparation and moderation. In other findings in the study, managers highlighted that the administrator's nature of work compels them to be meticulous when handling student marks, as this activity demands that records be handled with care for student queries.

The study found that all managers mentioned the allocated record storage space; nevertheless, some managers highlighted that it must be upgraded in line with records management standards. This finding assured the researcher that some managers understood records management better than others, as appropriate records storage should be in place. Studies by Iwhiwhu (2005:346) and Musembe (2016:15) indicate that ineffective records management leads to files being stacked in various offices and corridors, as records were created without a systematic plan for their storage and maintenance. For electronic records, the findings confirmed that student information is shared on the *Coltech System*, which is backed up.

#### **5.2.5. Effective records management best practices**

This section covers the study findings on best practices in Section 4.2.6. covering administrators' best practices for effective and efficient records management; management best practices for effective and efficient records management; records

management lessons learned for effective implementation and management support for records management practices implementation.

According to the study's findings, most administrators highlighted approved policies and management support as a factor that contribute to improving their effective and efficient records management implementation. The study findings show that most managers mentioned migrating records from the old to the new filing system and allocating proper labelling, which may be attributed to easy access and retrieval as part of best practice for effective records management. The study further found that other managers suggested that administrators have records management guidelines. Access to the records function must be restricted to administrators only. The researcher's observation will assist in the audit trail to identify who tampered with information.

The study obtained different lessons from managers, some in the academic space cited measures in place to guarantee students do not enter exam venues with similar answer books, by stamping the ones used on the examination day. Some managers in other departments alluded to the disposal of unnecessary records. When the researcher followed up to confirm her observation, the manager clarified that it is a risk mitigation strategy because retrieving documents requires time and space. The findings indicated that managers constantly remind and sensitise administrators about the importance of record keeping and prevent the recurrence of audit findings. Findings from other managers highlighted that administrators are sent for in-house training and provided with oversight for timely reporting.

### **5.3. Conclusions**

This study is guided by the Organisational Culture Framework by Schein & Schein (2016). The framework proved useful in addressing the research objective and the study's critical questions. Other researchers on Organisational Culture Framework (Svard, 2014:6; Ahmad and Huvila, 2019:678) state that the framework has a close relationship with information culture, which highlights how it influences the approaches organisations employ to manage their information or records and the relationship between individuals and information in their work. Based on additional studies (Ahmad

& Huvila, 2019:678; Oliver & Foscarini, 2014:81), the researcher observed that the Organisational Culture Framework and information culture are appropriate for this study's critical questions, including information governance and compliance, staff development on managing information, and the relationship between management and workers. The study draws the following conclusions based on the main findings exploring implementing records management practices in TVET institutions:

- Although some administrators understood records management better than others, managers had a more holistic understanding.
- Administrators and managers cited record-keeping practices, whereby certain records are kept in a central repository, others in offices close to administrators, and others in the *Coltech System*, all of which are accessible to authorised users.
- The managers perceive records management as a crucial role that management should prioritise.
- The role played by administrators is viewed as critical by both managers and administrators; however, administrators are responsible for record-keeping in addition to other administrative duties.
- Findings implied that administrators' records management role differs from department to department depending on the department's roles.

Both managers and administrators have challenges because of inadequate records management governing documents. Although findings highlighted those administrators mentioned approved policies and records management systems, these are not records management specific. Furthermore, administrators responsible for implementing records management principles are allocated other responsibilities as well. Most managers had no role to play in implementing records management principles other than sharing available governance documents with the greater community via the intranet. To address these challenges, managers recommended the availability of records management guidelines. As part of skills transfer and audit needs a better understanding, managers need to work closely with administrators during significant audits to ensure compliance with regulatory frameworks. Visits from DHET assist in their efforts to achieve institutional compliance.

### **5.3.1. Records management practices**

Most staff receive training as directed by performance contracting, as arranged by skills audit, or as recommended by the line manager. Whilst there are no records, management-specific staff, managers recommend that records management staff should be trustworthy as they work with sensitive information and be able to migrate information to digital platforms. Findings reveal that managers mentioned the induction of new staff, however, the researcher observed that induction is not elaborate enough to enable staff to perform records management duties. Managers highlighted that as part of the attributes, records management staff must be conversant with the systems used by the institution and be able to train users on records management principles using online platforms. Although managers and administrators have brought up these points, the primary obstacle to providing staff with all these interventions is a lack of funding.

Managers in different spaces contribute differently to driving records management. They collaborate closely with administrators to guarantee that evidence is accessible when required, even in the absence of guidelines, and ensure that student information is managed in line with regulations. Administrators are supported and assigned the required tools to perform their job, including the safekeeping of confidential records, where necessary. Additional staff are provided where there is a backlog of records-related work. The study also discovered that although the storage space is allocated, it should be upgraded according to applicable standards.

Although the study discovered that there are no records management guidelines, most administrators cited management support and approved policies as best practices in place for successful and efficient records management implementation. Most managers recommended that appropriate guidelines for records management be made available. This will assist in resolving several issues, starting with proper labelling, “naming convention”, and classification codes, which would further enable easy access and retrieval of records. Findings further stated that access should be allocated to staff working with records. Managers emphasised that strengthening security measures in exam venues helped prevent students from smuggling answer

books that were like those used on the examination day. In addition, findings highlighted that records that are no longer needed should be disposed of.

## **5.4. Recommendations**

Considering the discussion and conclusions drawn in this chapter, the following recommendations are made:

### **5.4.1. Records management practices**

As records management is perceived as a critical function in the institution by both administrators and managers, the study suggests that knowledgeable records management staff should be employed. Understanding the records management concept alone is inadequate; principles and best practices are equally important and must be implemented. Compared to administration, records management is more complex and highly regulated. Despite the sectional administrators, the study proposes that the institution should adhere to whichever record-keeping strategy works best for it, whether it is central or decentralised. However, this time, standardisation should be applied with knowledgeable employees.

### **5.4.2. Records management governance**

The study has shown that the institution does not have records management-specific governing documents, the institution should compile or customise DHET records management governing documents to suit their environment. These policies will provide records management guidance. Senior management should use their authority and compel staff to comply with these policies. Working closely with staff and transferring skills during specific periods is not enough to introduce policies. Management must communicate from the top down to ensure that all staff members support the records management vision to maintain compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. It is significant to emphasise that records are not managed for audit purposes, but rather as a norm.

### **5.4.3. Records management staff development**

The study has highlighted that staff responsible for records management practices implementation must be trained in records management interventions so that they can be able to perform their tasks efficiently. Nevertheless, the study suggests hiring a

records management practitioner and assigning personnel to work exclusively on records management. Senior management should explore ways to raise funds for records management staff training if the organisation is serious about compliance and avoiding audit recurrences. A phased approach to training staff on records management interventions can help them learn about trends in records management, gain confidence, and appreciate their work so that they can share their knowledge with the larger community. They can also learn how to train users on online platforms and use institutional systems.

#### **5.4.4. Management's approach to records management**

The role of management in advancing the implementation of records management extends beyond ensuring that they have access to evidence and the tools they need to carry out their responsibilities. Senior management needs to drive culture change by motivating staff to recognise the importance of records management. Records management cannot be implemented by records practitioners alone. At their level, senior management can assign each head of department records management-related objectives and desired infrastructure that can be cascaded to the lowest level in the departments to ensure that everyone plays a part.

#### **5.4.5. Effective records management best practices**

Best practices promote efficiency, the institution should take note of other institutions that are effectively managing their records. The institution would be in a better position to reach out to other comparable institutions for benchmarking. In addition, the institution can use records management-trained administrators to set up a forum, have regular workshops, agree on indicators to report on, and share knowledge while standardising. Under the guidance of a records management specialist, this will eventually bear fruit and be expanded upon. In their departmental meetings, administrators will report on indicators and other upcoming events, including audits and their planning.

### **5.5. Suggestion for further research**

Further study should be conducted to address the gaps and critical questions relating to records management practices. Further study should be conducted on:

- Management's approach to records management
- Current records management practices in higher education institutions
- Existence and enforcement of records management governing documents

Additionally, further studies are necessary to explore the possibility of records management being elevated to a strategic level, which this study found as a gap.

## **5.6. Chapter summary, general conclusion, and evaluation**

The main findings of the study were discussed in this chapter, with the objective of the study, critical questions, and Schein & Schein's (2016) "Organisational Culture Framework," a supporting framework that other authors use when writing on information culture, which is closely related to the study. The study's main findings were discussed, and recommendations were made. The study adopted a case study method. Qualitative data was collected using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Study findings revealed that administrators that are overseeing records are not records management practitioners; they manage records in addition to other administrative tasks. Although records are managed, the practice varies by area depending on the function of that area; there is no standardised practice.

The study further revealed that administrators responsible for record-keeping lack records management-specific policies. Managers mentor administrators during audits to ensure compliance with the regulatory framework. The study recommended that the institutions develop records management policies and modify DHET's policies to suit the needs of the institution to remedy this shortcoming.

Administrators as record keepers, as observed in this study, have generally not received specific training on records management. This is attributed to insufficient training funds allocated to the institution. Ultimately, administrative staff attend training that is suggested by management or chosen by the majority. According to the study, if management is serious about records management, funds should be made available, and administrators must receive phased approach training to capacitate them to do the job.

Managers consider themselves to be supportive of administrators; this, according to the findings, is because they collaborate with administrators in ensuring that evidence is accessible when required. Findings further stated that managers recommended that the institution would gain a lot from having guidelines available and that standardisation would be guaranteed.

This study brings to the attention of management the importance of how crucial it is to lead the institution's records management implementation from the top down and have skilled staff to carry out records management. Institutions must recognise the value of records management in addition to their focus on research, teaching, learning, and community engagements, since these activities depend on effective records management that is created and subsequently used for a variety of purposes.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Semi-structured interview schedule for management in Flavius Mareka technical and vocational education and training (TVET) college**

#### **Implementation of records management practices in Flavius Mareka TVET College**

My name is Mmamie Kodisang, a student at the University of Cape Town enrolled for Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) in the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship. My study focuses on the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) College based in the Sasolburg area. I am supervised by Dr Andiswa Mfengu. As part of this study, I am conducting interviews with managers. You have been purposively sampled as you form part of the managers responsible for records management.

Your participation in this is voluntary. All information discussed in this interview will be kept confidential. Ethical clearance has been obtained from UCT and the college (research site). You have consented to participate in the study, and you have agreed/not agreed for the interview to be recorded.

#### **Section A: Biographical information**

1. Which department are you currently employed in?
2. Which departments are you responsible for?
3. What is your job title?
4. How long have you been in this position?
5. What is your highest qualification?

#### **Section B: Records management practices in your institution**

6. What do you understand by records management?
7. What role do you perceive records management should play in the institution?
8. How are records managed in the institution?
9. What is the role of records administrators in records management in the institution?

### **Section C: Records management governance**

10. What role, if any, do you think you should play in ensuring records management governing principles (e.g., policies, procedures, and guidelines) are implemented in the institution?
11. How does management ensure that records management practices at Flavius Mareka TVET College comply with the required legal and regulatory frameworks?

### **Section D: Records management staff development**

12. In your opinion, what relevant skills do you perceive records management administrators should possess?
13. What development opportunities are available to records management staff to keep up with developments?
14. How do these development opportunities ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills?
15. What personal attributes and technical skills do records management staff require?

### **Section E: Management's approach to records management**

16. What is your role in driving records management implementation practices in the institution?
17. How does management support records management staff in records management within the institution?
18. What role does management play in ensuring that Flavius Mareka TVET College has the infrastructure necessary for record management?

### **Section F: Best practices for effective records management**

19. What records management best practices are in place for effective and efficient records management in Flavius Mareka TVET College?
20. What records management lessons have you learned in your capacity as a manager, and what best practices can you share for effective records management implementation?

21. What do you as management do to support the implementation of records management practices as part of institutional processes?

**Section G: General comments**

22. Do you have any general comments related to the study that you would like to share?

Thank you for your time and contribution. Your participation and time are appreciated.

[Duration of interview: \_\_\_\_\_ minutes]

## **Appendix B: Questionnaire for administrators in Flavius Mareka technical and vocational education and training college**

### **Implementation of records management practices in Flavius Mareka TVET College**

My name is Mmamie Kodisang, a student at the University of Cape Town (UCT) enrolled in Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) in the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship. My study focuses on the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka technical and vocational education and training college based in the Sasolburg area. I am supervised by Dr Andiswa Mfengu. As part of this study, I am conducting a questionnaire survey to understand records administrators' views on the implementation of records management practices in the institution.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and all information collected will be anonymous. The study has received ethical clearance from UCT and the college (research site).

#### **Consent**

I agree to voluntarily participate in this study. **Yes**  **No**

#### **Instructions**

Please tick what is applicable or comment in the provided space.

#### **Section A: Biographical information**

1. Which department are you currently employed in?

---

2. What departments are you responsible for in terms of records management?

---

3. What is your job title?

---

4. How long have you been in this position?

0 - 5 years

- 6 -10 years
- 11 – 15 years
- 16 -20 years
- More than 20 years

5. What is your highest qualification?

- Matric
- Diploma
- Degree
- Other

Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Section B: Records management practices in your institution**

6. What do you understand by records management?

---

---

7. How are records managed in the institution?

---

---

8. As an administrator, what do you perceive your role to be in records management in this institution?

---

---

### **Section C: Records management governance**

9. What records management governance resources has management made available to you for effective records management execution?

Select all applicable

- Records management system
- Approved policies
- Sufficient trained staff

- Training on records management legislation
- Other/s

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who has management made responsible for the implementation of these governance principles and complying with regulatory frameworks?

Select all applicable

- Representatives within departments
- Appointed working committee
- Records generators
- Records users
- Other/s

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section D: Records management staff development**

11. How does management make sure you stay current on records management developments?

Select all applicable

- Management recommends training interventions.
- Belong to professional bodies i.e., the South African Society of Archivists.
- Identify your training requirements.
- Receive development-related notifications through related bodies.
- Other/s

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section E: Best practices for effective records management**

12. What records management best practices are in place for effective and efficient records management in Flavius Mareka TVET College

Select all applicable

- Approved policies
- Sufficient infrastructure

- Discipline related training
- Understanding the role of records management
- Marketing records management within the institution
- Management support
- Other/s

Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

13. What best practices do you perceive that management needs to implement in your institution for effective records management?

---

---

### **Section F: General comments**

14. Do you have any general comments related to the study that you would like to share?

---

---

Thank you for your contribution to the study, your participation and time are appreciated.

Researchers contact:

Ms Mmamie Kodisang

Email: [KDSAMMA001@myuct.ac.za](mailto:KDSAMMA001@myuct.ac.za) or [Kodisme@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Kodisme@unisa.ac.za)

## **Appendix C: Informed consent for management in Flavius Mareka technical vocational education and training college**

### **Implementation of records management in Flavius Mareka TVET College**

My name is Mmamie Kodisang, and I am a University of Cape Town (UCT) student enrolled for Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) in the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship. I am inviting you to participate in this study, which explores the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions, focusing on Flavius Mareka TVET College in the Sasolburg area. The study is conducted under the supervision of Dr Andiswa Mfengu. The study aims to determine the implementation of records management practices in TVET institutions. The study will collect data through questionnaires and face-to-face semi-structured interviews. As a manager at Flavius Mareka TVET College, you are invited to participate in the semi-structured interviews as part of this study. Your participation will provide insight into the implementation of records management practices in Flavius Mareka TVET College.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you are not obligated to consent to participate. All information will be kept confidential. Your responses will be allocated a number, so they cannot be linked to any study participants. Ethical clearance has been obtained from UCT and Flavius Mareka TVET College (research site). To verify the facts, I will share the interview transcript with you for verification.

Should you require any further information or want to contact the researcher about any aspect of this study, please contact:

Ms Mmamie Kodisang

Email: [KDSAMMA001@myuct.ac.za](mailto:KDSAMMA001@myuct.ac.za) or [Kodisme@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Kodisme@unisa.ac.za)

## Informed consent

Please tick with an X what is applicable.

| Statements   | YES                      | NO                       |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I understand the purpose of the study  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I choose to participate in this study voluntarily. I understand that should I decide to stop participating I can do so at any point. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My participation will remain anonymous and the information I provide is confidential.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I consent to the interview being recorded.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: UCT Ethics approval letter



Department of Knowledge & Information Stewardship  
University of Cape Town  
Upper Campus

Private Bag X1, RONDEBOSCH, 7701 South Africa  
Level 5 Flanganani, Chancellor Oppenheimer Library  
Tel +27 (0) 21 650 4546  
E-mail: [dkis@uct.ac.za](mailto:dkis@uct.ac.za)  
Website: [www.dkis.uct.ac.za](http://www.dkis.uct.ac.za)

2 August 2023  
Ref: DKIS2023-08-07

Ms Mmamie Evelyn Kodisang (KDSMMA001)  
Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship  
Chancellor Oppenheimer Library  
University of Cape Town

### Ethics approval for Master's research (KDSMMA001)

Ms Kodisang

I am pleased to inform you that ethical clearance has been granted by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Knowledge and Information Stewardship (DKIS), on behalf of the Humanities Faculty of the University of Cape Town, for you to proceed with collecting data for your Master's study entitled: *Top management's role in the implementation of records management in higher education institutions.*

As a next step, please ensure that you obtain approval from the relevant ethics committees to collect data at your data collection sites, as necessary.

We wish you well with your data collection and the completion of your research.

Yours faithfully,

Signed by candidate

Ms Theresa de Young  
Chair: Department (DKIS) Research Ethics Committee

## Appendix E: Flavius Mareka TVET college ethics approval letter



**higher education  
& training**  
Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### DHET 004: APPENDIX 1:

### APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

#### 1. APPLICANT INFORMATION

|      |                                    |   |                     |
|------|------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 1.1. | Title (Dr /Mr /Mrs /Ms)            | Ms  |                     |
| 1.2  | Name and surname                   | Mmamie Evelyn Kodisang                      |                     |
| 1.3  | Postal address                     | 8528 Sharpeville<br>P.O Sharpeville<br>1928 |                     |
| 1.4  | Contact details                    | Tel   | 012 429 4958        |
|      |                                    | Cell  | 072 851 6930        |
|      |                                    | Fax   | -                   |
|      |                                    | Email                                       | Kodisme@unisa.ac.za |
| 1.5  | Name of institution where enrolled | University of Cape Town                     |                     |
| 1.6  | Field of study                     | Masters in Library and Information Studies  |                     |
| 1.7  | Qualification registered for       | <b>Please tick relevant option:</b>         |                     |
|      |                                    | Doctoral Degree (PhD)                       |                     |
|      |                                    | Master's Degree                             | X                   |
|      |                                    | Other (please specify)                      |                     |

#### 2. DETAILS OF THE STUDY

|   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 2.1   | <b>Title of the study</b> |
| Top managements role in the implementation of records management in higher education institutions |                           |

|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 2.2   | <b>Purpose of the study</b> |
| To explore top managements role in implementing records management in higher education institutions focusing at Flavius Mareka TVET college in the Sasolburg area (if permission can be granted for all campuses. |                             |

Open Rubric

DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES

3. PARTICIPANTS AND TYPE/S OF ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE COLLEGE

*Please indicate the types of research activities you are planning to undertake in the College, as well as the categories of persons who are expected to participate in your study (for example, lecturers, students, College Principals, Deputy Principals, Campus Heads, Support Staff, Heads of Departments), including the number of participants for each activity.*

|     |   |   |                                  |
|-----|---|---|----------------------------------|
| 3.1 | Complete questionnaires                               | Expected participants (e.g. students, lecturers, College Principal) | Number of participants           |
|     |   | a) Administrators   | Depend on how many are available |
|     |   | b)  |                                  |
|     |   | c)  |                                  |
|     |   | d)  |                                  |
|     |   | e)  |                                  |
| 3.2 | Participate in Individual interviews                  | Expected participants   | Number of participants           |
|     |   | a) Executive Management   | Depend on how many are available |
|     |   | b) Top management (different campuses)                              |                                  |
|     |   | c)  |                                  |
|     |   | d)  |                                  |
|     |   | e)  |                                  |
| 3.3 | Participate in focus group discussions/ workshops     | Expected participants   | Number of participants           |
|     |   | a) N/A  | 00                               |
|     |   | b)  |                                  |
|     |   | c)  |                                  |
|     |   | d)  |                                  |
|     |   | e)  |                                  |
| 3.4 | Complete standardised tests (e.g. Psychometric Tests) | Expected participants   | Number of participants           |
|     |   | a) N/A  | 00                               |
|     |   | b)  |                                  |
|     |   | c)  |                                  |
|     |   | d)  |                                  |
|     |   | e)  |                                  |
| 3.5 | Undertake observations<br><i>Please specify</i>       | N/A   | 00                               |
| 3.6 | Other<br><i>Please specify</i>                        | None  |                                  |

**DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES**

**4. SUPPORT NEEDED FROM THE COLLEGE**

| <i>Please indicate the type of support required from the College (Please tick relevant option/s)</i> |   |    |   |
|--|---|----|---|
| Type of support  | Yes   | No |   |
| 4.1  | The College will be required to identify participants and provide their contact details to the researcher.  | X  |   |
| 4.2  | The College will be required to distribute questionnaires/instruments to participants on behalf of the researcher.  |    | X |
| 4.3  | The College will be required to provide official documents.<br><i>Please specify the documents required below</i>   |    |   |
|  | N/A   |    |   |
| 4.4  | The College will be required to provide data <i>(only if this data is not available from the DHET)</i> .<br><i>Please specify the data fields required, below</i> |    |   |
|  | Researcher will collect data from participants and no additional documents will be required   |    |   |
| 4.5  | <i>Other, please specify below</i>  |    |   |
|  | N/A   |    |   |

**5. DOCUMENTS TO BE ATTACHED TO THE APPLICATION**

| <i>The following 2 (two) documents must be attached as a prerequisite for approval to undertake research in the College</i> |  |
|---|--|
| 5.1   | Ethics Clearance Certificate issued by a University Ethics Committee |
| 5.2   | Research proposal approved by a University                           |

**DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES**

**6. DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT**

I undertake to use the information that I acquire through my research, in a balanced and a responsible manner. I furthermore take note of, and agree to adhere to the following conditions:

- a) I will schedule my research activities in consultation with the said College/s and participants in order not to interrupt the programme of the said College/s.
- b) I agree that involvement by participants in my research study is voluntary, and that participants have a right to decline to participate in my research study.
- c) I will obtain signed consent forms from participants prior to any engagement with them.
- d) I will obtain written parental consent of students under 18 years of age, if they are expected to participate in my research.
- e) I will inform participants about the use of recording devices such as tape-recorders and cameras, and participants will be free to reject them if they wish.
- f) I will honour the right of participants to privacy, anonymity, confidentiality and respect for human dignity at all times. Participants will not be identifiable in any way from the results of my research, unless written consent is obtained otherwise.
- g) I will not include the names of the said College/s or research participants in my research report, without the written consent of each of the said individuals and/or College/s.
- h) I will send the draft research report to research participants before finalisation, in order to validate the accuracy of the information in the report.
- i) I will not use the resources of the said College/s in which I am conducting research (such as stationery, photocopies, faxes, and telephones), for my research study.
- j) Should I require data for this study, I will first request data directly from the Department of Higher Education and Training. I will request data from the College/s only if the DHET does not have the required data.
- k) I will include a disclaimer in any report, publication or presentation arising from my research, that the findings and recommendations of the study do not represent the views of the said College/s or the Department of Higher Education and Training.
- l) I will provide a summary of my research report to the Head of the College/s in which I undertook my research, for information purposes.

I declare that all statements made in this application are true and accurate. I accept the conditions associated with the granting of approval to conduct research and undertake to abide by them.

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>SIGNATURE</b> | Signed by candidate |
| <b>DATE</b>      | 22/11/2023          |

**DHET 004: APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION FORM FOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PUBLIC COLLEGES**

**FOR OFFICIAL USE**

**DECISION BY HEAD OF COLLEGE**

| <i>Please tick relevant decision and provide conditions/reasons where applicable</i> |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Decision   |   | <i>Please tick relevant option below</i> |
| 1  | Application approved  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>      |
| 2  | Application approved subject to certain conditions. <i>Specify conditions below</i> | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
| SHARE THE OUTCOME OF THE RESEARCH CONDUCTED WITH THE PRINCIPAL                       |   |  |
| 3  | Application not approved. <i>Provide reasons for non-approval below</i>             | <input type="checkbox"/>                 |
|  |   |  |
| NAME OF COLLEGE  |   | FLAVIUS M LARREA GIS COLLEGE             |
| NAME AND SURNAME OF HEAD OF COLLEGE  |   | FLORENCE MAPALISA CAELMILE               |
| SIGNATURE  |   | Signed by candidate                      |
| DATE   |   | 27/11/2023                               |