RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT IN POSTCOLONIAL ZIMBABWE'S PUBLIC SERVICE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (RECORDS AND ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT) IN THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

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MARCH 2016

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ABSTRACT

Good recordkeeping systems are reported to have existed in the colonial period, while general crisis situations have been reported in many postcolonial African nations, including Zimbabwe. The main concern of this study was why this seemingly success factor in colonial recordkeeping failed to continue in postcolonial Africa, including Zimbabwe, as reported in various studies. In light of these insights, this study therefore sought to conduct an investigation of the status of records and archives management in postcolonial Zimbabwe so as to have in-depth explanations on its postcolonial recordkeeping experiences. The study took a colonial-postcolonial dimension in an effort to gain in-depth explanations on the strengths or weaknesses of current recordkeeping practices; and to find out if the situation regarding recordkeeping, as observed in other countries, is applicable to the Zimbabwean context.

This case study on Zimbabwe, carried out within an interpretivist paradigm, employed qualitative data collection methods of interviews, observations and documents search. This was in order to gain in-depth insights into the state of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe; which constituted the population of the study. The total targeted sample was 76 interviewees distributed as follows: three persons from each of the 24 Ministries comprising the Permanent Secretary, the Records Supervisor, and one Action Officer; three from the National Archives of Zimbabwe comprising the Director, Head of Records Management section and Head of Public Archives section; and one key person from the Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Postal & Courier Services (MICTPCS) responsible for ICT issues in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Observations were made on recordkeeping facilities at the registries within the Ministries. In addition, an assessment of related recordkeeping documents was also carried out.

The study revealed that, contrary to the general notion of collapsing recordkeeping systems in many postcolonial African scenarios, the recordkeeping systems established in the colonial era in Zimbabwe did not actually collapse but, in fact, the continued use of these archaic manual systems from the colonial past became the main source of recordkeeping problems in Zimbabwe. The absence of information communication technologies (ICTs) in the management of records and archives overwhelmed the traditional manual system resulting in the system's failure to incorporate technology-based records into the formal recordkeeping systems. This problem was compounded by lack of ICT resources, skills, and a general lack of government commitment to make a paradigm shift from manual to electronic recordkeeping systems.

Nevertheless, the study also found many strong points in Zimbabwe's recordkeeping systems. Top among them is that Zimbabwe inherited a strong recordkeeping system from the colonial times and by the time of independence; the country had over four decades of archival experience. In addition, the transitional period into independence did not disrupt recordkeeping systems but in fact allowed continuation and consolidation of recordkeeping work. The government's deliberate records management expansion drive, which saw the decentralisation of records management facilities and an active archivist training programme helped consolidate recordkeeping work in Zimbabwe. Archival legislation was also revised and improved to support the expansion drive. The study attributes the strong archival framework found in the country to a cocktail of these factors even though there were operational problems in between the life-cycle stages. The study, however, singles out the effects of the current Zimbabwean political and economic crisis which threatens to derail the good framework available; worsens the weak points already in the system, and could lead to collapsing recordkeeping systems.

With this state of affairs in Zimbabwe, the study recommends, through a proposed model, points of intervention that recognise the strong factors found in the system but also incorporates those factors that have been overlooked. More importantly, it recommends introducing new aspects of ICTs that relate to electronic records management, which were found to be inadequate in the current recordkeeping systems.

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DECLARATION

I, Violet Matangira, declare hereby that this is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in another institution of higher education.

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VIOLET MATANGIRA

DEDICATION

To my late father Zviriro Jairus Makonyere, who from when I was a little girl encouraged me to strive for knowledge, greatness in life and, above all, independence as a woman. He would have been the proudest father today.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special mention also to Bravismore Mumanyi, Nigel Mkwaira and Sara Mwanandimai for their technical support in structuring this work, configuring, cleaning and making it not only presentable, but readable too. Without you, I would not have reached this far. Finally, I thank my extended family, and particularly, my children Nangisai and Farai, for their endurance and support throughout the seemingly never-ending journey. Above all, I say, all good things come from God.

Lastly, I take full responsibility for any weaknesses, shortcomings and misinterpretations I may have made in the study.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIPPA - Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act

AO - Action Officer

BSAC - British South Africa Company

CAA - Central African Archives

CMED - Central Mechanical Equipment Department

DIRKS - Design and Implementation of Record Keeping Systems

ERMS - Electronic Records Management System

ESAMI - Eastern and Southern African Management Institute

ESAP - Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

ESARBICA - East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives

FOI - Freedom of Information

GZU - Great Zimbabwe University

ICA - International Council on Archives

ICDL - International Computer Driving Licence

ICT - Information and Communication Technology

MICTPCS - Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services

IDRC - International Development Research Centre

IMF - International Monetary Fund

IRMT - International Records Management Trust

ISAD (G) - International Standard for Archival Description (General)

ISO - International Organisation for Standardisation

IT	-	Information Technology
KIT	-	Key IT Person
MSU	-	Midlands State University
MTB	-	Management Training Bureau
NAZ	-	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NUST	-	National University of Science and Technology
OPC	-	Office of the President and Cabinet
PFMS	-	Public Finance Management System
PS	-	Permanent Secretary
RBM	-	Results Based Management
RS	-	Records Supervisor
SAP	-	Systems Applications Processing
SWOT	-	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	-	United States of America
ZIMASSET	-	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
ZIPAM	-	Zimbabwe Institute for Public Administration and Management
ZOU	-	Zimbabwe Open University

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

The guiding principle of records and archives management is to ensure that information is available when and where it is needed; in an organised, efficient, and well maintained environment. Fundamentally, an organisation tends to benefit more from efficient information systems, including records management than when it is operating with chaotic records. The benefits of good records management, according to Blake (2005), include supporting information exchange, facilitating evidence-based policy making, supporting data protection principles and effective implementation of freedom of information (FOI) and other related legislation. Other benefits include supporting accountability by providing reliable records of actions and decisions.

Typical procedures for any aspect of records management practice include, among others; the creation of records; registration and capture of records; employment of systems to be used for recordkeeping; digital recordkeeping and preservation; classification; access and use; tracking; storage and handling; security and maintenance; appraisal, retention and disposal; transfer; destruction of records; and specific procedures about high risk processes such as scanning, migration and recordkeeping within business systems (State Records Authority of New South Wales, 2004).

Standard records management practices require records to be treated as strategic components of good governance. Information is critical in any government for it is through it that the government relates with the public. Efficient information and records management provides the foundation for accountability; and protection of rights. It increases citizens' awareness to their rights; provides for justice and respect for human rights; gender and sensitivity balance; and effective management and

distribution of state resources. Furthermore, most of the services that the government provides to citizens, businesses and to internal clients are about information in one way or the other, e.g. birth, death and marriages registration. Therefore, fundamentally, most governments are mandated to manage government information and any failure in this role negates its value of service to the public (Nandain, 2006).

Various theories, models, standards, guidelines and procedures have been developed internationally that guide recordkeeping work. These collectively set benchmarks which require systematic management of records at different times. Thus, this study was carried out under the notion that records need to be systematically managed throughout their life-cycle; that is from creation to disposal in a continuous and integrated way. Generally, if this does not happen, there are bound to be problems. Such problems have been identified in many postcolonial African situations. The study therefore, acknowledged the relationship between systematic, continuous and integrated life-cycle management of records as advocated by the records life-cycle and continuum theories as well as other international archival management standards. Factors such as the legal and regulatory framework; resources, facilities and tools; training, skills and awareness - which form the backbone of any recordkeeping practice, were examined in this study. The researcher looked at the presence or absence of such tools and facilities such as acts, policies, manuals, registries, records centres, preservation tools, storage facilities, training activities and general awareness within the Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. These factors are critical to the effective operation of any records management programme and thus became points of investigation for this study.

1.2   Background to the study

The problem of poor recordkeeping systems in postcolonial Africa, including Zimbabwe, has been a subject covered by many authors for many years in the past two to three decades. Earlier studies include Mazikana (1996), Mnjama (1993, 1996), Musembi (1986, 1988); Mwiyeriwa (1985); Njovana (1989); and Thurston and Smith (1986), who all confirmed the presence of serious problems in the management of records and archives in the period after independence. They all expressed concern over the way records and archives were being managed and concluded that poor records management has seriously hindered the implementation of public sector reforms as well as development programmes in Africa. This has also hampered the ability of governments to manage resources and effectively comply with international agreements and donor conditions. The World Bank and the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) (2000) in particular, concluded that records management has remained a neglected area of public sector reform in the developing countries and that recordkeeping has deteriorated gradually so much that it has gone unnoticed as a development issue. Consequently, such governments are often seen as having failed in the management of records and archives, which form the back-bone of all government administration.

Numerous other studies (Barata, Kutzner & Wamukoya, 2001; IRMT, 2011a; Mazikana, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006) also alluded to this general failure, collapse or decline in recordkeeping operations in most postcolonial African nations. The symptoms of this failure are evidenced in the following situations, as summarised from studies by Mazikana (1996, 2009); Mnjama (2005); and the World Bank and IRMT (2000):

- malfunctioning or outdated registry systems;
- the loss of control over the creation and use of records
- the fragmentation of official records
- the misuse of records, such as unauthorised access to or alternation of records

- antique or inappropriate file classification;

- no training for staff;

- problems of missing files;

- inadequate records centre facilities;

- non-existent record appraisal and transfers;

- backlogs in archives processing;

- poor physical wellbeing of collections;

- equipment breakdowns; and

- technology-related difficulties in retrieving records

Mnjama (2007) carried out a review of the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) resolutions from 1969 and observed that many of the resolutions sought to address some of the problems identified in this study which range from training, storage and preservation, records management services, access to technological challenges. Garaba (2007) looked at appraisal practices in the ESARBICA region and revealed that most countries in that region had records appraisal problems.

In a much more recent study, Wamukoya and Lowry (2013), while acknowledging that procedures for the life-cycle management of records have now been developed for paper records in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, observed that their application has been problematic due to challenges such as lack of space, poor storage conditions, complacency amongst staff, lack of senior management support and the non-availability of experienced staff. Tough and Tough (2012) also concurred that recordkeeping procedures had improved in the same countries but implementation remained a problem particularly because there were no provisions for electronic records. This, according to the above authors, remained a major weakness in "some of these improvement programmes" (Tough

& Tough, 2012, p. 15). Similar implementation challenges as well as capacity issues have also been raised in postcolonial Zimbabwe (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000).

Such challenges, as explained above, were of particular interest to this study because Zimbabwe is part of Africa and the Southern African region, whose countries have also witnessed recordkeeping problems.

On the other hand, within the same African context, good recordkeeping systems are reported to have existed during the colonial period. For instance, some regional and general African studies, including specific African country studies such as those by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000); Kemoni and Ngulube (2008); Mazikana (1996); Musembi (2000); Nengomasha (2009); Ngoepe (2008); and Tough (2009), maintained that there were good records and archival systems in many African countries during the colonial period. They conceded that while archival systems during the colonial period were not perfect; those very systems that were operating with some degree of success during the colonial period ceased to operate or collapsed immediately after independence. For instance, in colonial Zimbabwe, strong recordkeeping systems are reported to have existed (Mazikana, 1988; Mnjama, 2005; Thurston & Smith, 1986; Tough, 2009). More on colonial recordkeeping in Africa is covered in Section 3.3.1.

However, while many of the studies provided a good understanding of the nature of recordkeeping in Africa, and confirmed the existence of problems, this study sought to, within the Zimbabwean context, re-examine this phenomenon from the perspective of colonial legacy and its effects - good or bad; as well as single out those issues that were entirely non-legacy issues in the postcolonial scenario. Previous literature has extensively confirmed the existence of problems and managed to show their symptoms, but not so much on why the problems persisted. Many of them focused

mainly on showing and acknowledging the existence of recordkeeping problems without going into the depth of the problems faced and the reasons for their persistency. Therefore, what became of major concern in this study was why this recordkeeping 'success' story from the colonial past failed to continue in postcolonial African countries, however, focusing on investigating the experience of Zimbabwe. In this case study of Zimbabwe, the study sought to establish the nature of this colonial-postcolonial dimension.

Although there has been an interest in the subject of colonial archiving in Africa, none of these studies mentioned above have particularly taken such an investigative route as in this study, which links the colonial and the postcolonial epochs. This study tried to explore this subject from a colonial-postcolonial perspective other than just re-confirming the problems of decolonised countries. It sought to find the interconnections, if any, between colonial recordkeeping foundations and the success or failure of the postcolonial period as well as any other which might not be defined along those lines. Namhila (2014), writing about the content of colonial archives acknowledged the existence of this link when she commented that:

> colonial archival heritage remains as such, and its character is not automatically changed by a country's new legal status given that the legacy of previous recordkeeping practices persists in the content of colonial archives, if not in the new country's government offices (p. 4).

This colonial link as suggested by Namhila above was key to the investigation of this study.

In the case of Zimbabwe, Thurston and Smith (1986) particularly noted that Zimbabwe had "long established and highly developed [recordkeeping] institutions" (p. 1). Similarly, Tough (2009) also noted that the Central African Archive (CAA), which was born out of the archive in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), was "the outstanding archive repository in sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 189). In a case study on Zimbabwe's financial records, Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000),

observed that postcolonial Zimbabwe was a source of good practice, especially in the area of evaluating and monitoring of recordkeeping systems, but lacked resources to fully operate and meet demand across the whole country. This observation by Barata et al. is interesting as it came in the midst of reports of ultimate failure to manage records and archives in most of postcolonial Africa, Zimbabwe included. Ngulube (2000), while focusing on professionalism and ethics among postcolonial Zimbabwe Public Service's recordkeeping staff, noted a general lack of professionalism, which he attributed to lack of training among the records personnel. With such mixed views on Africa in general and Zimbabwe, this study sought to establish the status of records and archives management in the Zimbabwe Public Service in the wake of a multitude of recordkeeping problems reported in many postcolonial African countries.

By and large, no in-depth investigation solely focusing on Zimbabwe's overall records and archives management had been carried out in Zimbabwe, particularly one taking the colonial-postcolonial angle such as this study. This study also attempted to establish whether or not the issues highlighted above, which affected other African countries, were also applicable to Zimbabwe considering that the countries went through similar colonial experiences but might have had different recordkeeping experiences. In view of all this, the study sought to fill this gap by conducting a comprehensive investigation of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service, with a specific focus on seeking in-depth explanations to the way records and archives have been managed. This was done primarily in light of reports of general crisis situations relating to the manner in which public sector records and archives have been managed in many postcolonial African nations, including Zimbabwe.

1.3   Statement of the problem

Two distinct issues emerged from the literature reviewed in this study and subsequently informed the direction this study took. One is that good recordkeeping systems existed in the colonial period; while the other is that acute recordkeeping problems were identified in the postcolonial period. Evidently, there is a remarkable distinction between the colonial and postcolonial periods, which emerged from the literature, and this raised intriguing issues, which became of interest to this study. The main issue in this study, which became the problem under investigation, was finding out what could have contributed to the current state of affairs if the recordkeeping systems were good during the colonial days. Mazikana (2009) saw a missing link between today's records management and public sector development initiatives. According to him, records management in Africa has failed to become relevant; has been left lagging behind; and has not been moving in tangent with the rest of public sector reforms. This scenario presented a gap in the literature, which this study sought to address, with a view of establishing this missing link and coming up with detailed explanations regarding recordkeeping in Zimbabwe's Public Service. Some of the problems experienced could be seen as an outcome of the missing link as expounded by Mazikana (2009). In addition, the experiences of the other African nations became a crucial reference point for this study, as pertinent problems raised were also identified and raised within a general African and postcolonial context. In addition, the researcher noted a tendency by some authors such as Musembi (1988) to bunch together records management and archives management issues in their determination of success or failure. This study, in its in-depth examination, tried as much as possible to distinguish the two aspects in order to be specific on which areas were weak or strong; hence its examination of the whole life-cycle of records.

Many of the studies available and reviewed in this study such as Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya (2001); IRMT (2011a); Mnjama (2005); Ngulube and Tafor (2006); The World Bank and IRMT

(2000) tended to focus on recordkeeping problems and their symptoms, but not so much on why the problems persisted, in particular from a colonial-postcolonial perspective. Furthermore, there has not been an in-depth study on Zimbabwe covering the entire life-cycle from records to archives yet the success or failure of a country's recordkeeping should encompass both aspects. Therefore, this scenario presented an opportunity to seek in-depth explanations from a different perspective than that taken by previous studies. While other studies tended to focus on confirming the existence of problems, this study looked at the same problems from the perspective of colonial-postcolonial and decolonised nations but using the case of Zimbabwe on which inferences have been made about its recordkeeping systems.

1.4   Objectives of the study

Even though the orientation of this study was drawn from a general African perspective, the main objective of the study was to establish the postcolonial and current recordkeeping experiences in the Public Service of Zimbabwe in order to determine whether the colonial set-up had contributed to those experiences. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1.4.1   Establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service.

1.4.2   Find out if the situation regarding recordkeeping systems as observed in other countries is applicable to Zimbabwe and determine the reasons for this situation.

1.4.3   Formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for Zimbabwe's Public Service.

1.4.4   Make recommendations that will strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service.

1.5   Significance of the study

The significance of a study tries to answer such questions as to why the work is important; what are the implications of doing it; how it links with other studies and knowledge; why it is important to the understanding of the world; and what new perspectives it will bring (Punch, 2006). In this study, pertinent issues pointing towards poor or collapsing recordkeeping systems in postcolonial Africa including Zimbabwe have been raised in literature (Barata, Kutzner & Wamukoya, 2001; IRMT, 2011a; Mazikana, 1996, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; World Bank & IRMT, 2000). The colonial-postcolonial dimension of this study makes an original contribution to this discourse. Many of these earlier studies covered Africa's inherent recordkeeping problems but mainly confirmed their existence. This study was particularly significant as it attempted to explain the situation from a colonial-postcolonial perspective. It not only highlighted the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe, but also provided a basis for possible explanations to some of the inherent recordkeeping problems common in many postcolonial African countries.

In addition, the study also significantly identified and acknowledged, not only strong archival foundations in Zimbabwe from the point of view of using these positive factors to further strengthen the recordkeeping system, but also any weak areas that need to be rectified. Such critical issues had not been adequately addressed in previous studies, which tended to focus more on acknowledging the existence of recordkeeping problems.

Findings from this study could also be used to address specific recordkeeping problems that affect Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service. The government could use these findings as well as the recommendations of the study as basis for policy formulation and/or revisions. The recommendations could also be used to draft procedures and guidelines regarding records and archives management for the entire Public Service. The study has potential to draw long-term

lessons that could put governments and the archival field in a better position to improve and strengthen recordkeeping and archiving practices suitable for a postcolonial African scenario.

Furthermore, the failure reported elsewhere is of great concern to Zimbabwe in as much as it is to the archival field, especially in Africa where its countries tend to share common experiences and problems. Therefore, this study was worthwhile as it sought to establish the real status in Zimbabwe which will allow comparison with the experiences of other countries. Researchers working on comparative studies could benefit from this study. Records managers and archivists in Africa should be increasingly questioning the foundation on which they have based their work for decades, and this study on Zimbabwe gives important insights into this new thinking. There is a need to fully understand, through such studies as this one, the colonial background in order to have full appreciation of some of the postcolonial practices and challenges.

The study proposes a model which highlights strategies that not only take advantage of the strong factors found in the existing record keeping systems but also incorporates those factors that have been overlooked particularly the critical issues of electronic records and the introduction of electronic records management systems. This is a significant contribution to the body of literature on Zimbabwe and Africa. Lessons learnt from the findings of this study could also be useful to other nations in African and especially for postcolonial nations which face similar recordkeeping challenges.

1.6   Definition of key terms

This section defines the key terms as they were used in this study in order to ascertain the context to which the terms were used. They are presented below:

1.6.1. Collapsing recordkeeping systems

The word collapse has been used to refer to varying degrees of failure of recordkeeping systems or the extent of problems encountered. In this study, the word should be read to refer to inefficient recordkeeping systems.

1.6.2. Colonial period

Colonial period generally refers to any period in a country's history when it was subject to administration by a colonial power. In Zimbabwe, the colonial period began in September 1890 when the British South Africa Company was granted the Royal Charter by the Queen of England to administer the territory of Southern Rhodesia (known as Zimbabwe after independence in 1980). The colonial period ended in April 1980 when the country attained independence. Thus, the colonial period in Zimbabwe spans from 1890 to 1980.

1.6.3. Postcolonial period

In this study, postcolonial period refers to the period in a country's history when it regains the power from administration from a colonial power. Zimbabwe attained independence in April 1980 from British colonial occupation which started in September 1890. Thus, the period from April 1980 when the country gained to self-rule marks the start of the postcolonial period to the present.

1.6.4. Recordkeeping

A framework to capture, maintain and provide access to evidence of transactions over time, as required by the jurisdiction in which it is implemented and in accordance with common business practices (National Archives of Australia, n.d). Based on this definition, recordkeeping in this study refers to both records management and archives management.

1.6.5. Registry

A division within an organisation responsible for the recording, control, and maintenance of records (Pearce-Moses, 2005). It is any unit that creates and maintains current files. In Zimbabwe, the term 'Registry' was changed after professionalisation in 2005 to 'Records and Information Office' but many people in government still refer to it as 'Registry' or sometimes just 'Records Office'. There are debates on the functions of a registry but in the traditional sense, in the paper-based system, the essential functions of a registry are to:

- receive, record and distribute incoming and internally created mail of all kinds (such as letters, memoranda, faxes)

- open and index files, attach relevant papers and pass the files to action officers

- build up and control all officially registered files and other documentation in their care, so that they can be produced quickly by means of effective indexing, classification and tracking procedures

- know the location of all officially registered files in their care and be able to produce them quickly, by means of effective indexing, classification and tracking procedures

- provide storage, repository and reference services for all officially registered files and other documentation in their care

- record and arrange for the efficient and timely dispatch of all correspondence produced by the officers they serve

- review and dispose of all outdated files or other records in accordance with retention periods as agreed between the records and archives institution, the organisation or department concerned and other relevant officials.

In the electronic age where records are created and received electronically, the registries use software and databases to capture such electronically generated records.

1.7   Research Methodology

Through a case study of Zimbabwe, the study employed a qualitative methodology with an interpretivist paradigm. The combination of this research methodology and paradigm; together with the research instruments of interviews, direct observations and documents search complement each other for a qualitative study which seeks to get in-depth understanding and perceptions of individuals. The theoretical framework surrounding records and archives management was the foundation on which this study was based. More of this is covered in the literature review in Chapter 3, Section 3.2.

The population of the study was the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The units of analysis were all the 24 Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe, excluding departments, regional centres and other government agencies. It, however, included the department of National Archives of Zimbabwe for its mandatory role in national records and archives management. Purposive sampling procedure was used to identify key records personnel from each ministry through purposively selecting participants who best helped understand the problem and the research question as described by Creswell (2009) and Patton (2002). The total targeted sample was 76 interviewees made up of three persons from each of the 24 Ministries, three from the National Archives of Zimbabwe and one key person from the Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Postal & Courier Services (MICTPCS) - the Ministry responsible for ICT issues in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Permission was sought to carry out interviews and make observations at each of the Ministries. This was followed by making appointments to meet specific individuals for interviews. Observations on recordkeeping facilities were carried out after interviews. This was in order to make use of some of the information gathered from the interviews. The researcher asked for copies

of supporting documents such as job descriptions, guidelines, manuals and policies if they were available and permissible. Seven semi-structured interview guides were used in order to ensure that each category of interviewees got the same questions. The interview questions were open-ended to allow individual perspectives on responses. This was followed by probes to gain in-depth explanations on issues under discussion. In addition, observation checklists were used for on-site observations and documents search at the registries.

Furthermore, a pre-test of the research instruments was also carried out in January 2013. It helped to detect flaws in data collection instruments and enabled the researcher to refine the instruments. Content analysis technique was used in order to interpret meaning from the data collected. Furthermore, a qualitative computer software programme, *Atlas.ti* was used to help code, organise and sort information in preparation for analysis and interpretation of findings. In particular, the integrative outputs from *Atlas.ti* were helpful in merging similar categories from different documents making triangulation easier. Table 1.1 below indicates the relationship between the research objectives and possible sources of data.

Table 1.1: *Research objectives and possible sources of data*

Research Objective	Sources of Data
1. Establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service.	Literature review Documents (Policies, Acts, manuals, guidelines, reports) Photographs Interviews Observations
2. Find out if the situation regarding recordkeeping systems as observed in other countries is applicable to Zimbabwe and determine the reasons for this situation.	Literature review Documents (Policies, Acts, manuals, guidelines, reports) Photographs Interviews Observations
3. Formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for Zimbabwe's Public Service.	Field data Archival models
4. Make recommendations that will strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service.	Field data Archival models

1.8 Delimitations and scope of the study

Delimitations define the parameters of the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). This study was a case study of Zimbabwe. Africa was only used as a referral point because Zimbabwe exists within Africa; and the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe has been insinuated in many African and regional studies. The study was therefore, not a comparative study in which a researcher is expected to study two data sets; whereby, for instance, Zimbabwe is taken as the study group and Africa being the control group. In addition, the study used the colonial period as reference point only. It did not include an empirical assessment of the colonial recordkeeping

practices as would be required if the study was a comparative study of the colonial and postcolonial periods. Data collection was limited to activities in the postcolonial period, that is, the current period. This was done through gathering data which described how the current situation is and why it is like that. The study did not seek for empirical evidence for recordkeeping practice during the colonial period. Perhaps such comparative studies of the colonial and postcolonial eras could be handled in another study. However, through literature review, a lot of reference was made to some recordkeeping issues from the colonial period and these were used to determine the success or failure of the postcolonial period. Thus, a historical background of colonial recordkeeping was only used to trace archival development in Zimbabwe simply to contextualise the study at hand and to provide in-depth explanations of the foundations of the current systems.

Furthermore, the study was confined to Ministries in Harare only, where all the 24 Ministries are located, leaving out departments, regional branches, local authorities and parastatals mainly for the reason that decisions are mostly made at ministry level cascading to departments and regional branches.

1.9   Limitations of the study

Limitations are potential weaknesses in a study that in most cases are beyond the control of the researcher (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010). Since it was not feasible for the researcher to cover all the Public Service entities, this means that the findings of this study are not generalisable to the entire Public Service. However, following on Silverman's (2000) explanation, generalisability in qualitative research can be achieved through the use of purposive sampling procedures, which takes a representative sub-section of a precisely defined population in order to make inferences about the whole population. Thus, such representativeness as in this study allowed the researcher to make broader inferences to the population without following purely a statistical logic as is

mostly found in quantitative research. Despite this limitation, the findings of this study, therefore, are capable of providing important insights and possible solutions to some of the recordkeeping challenges in Zimbabwe's Public Service considering the key role played by Ministries, which most likely cascades down to departments and other arms of the government. For instance, in this study, two Ministries (M4 and M13) confirmed that the headquarters in Harare introduced and implemented similar records management changes to their departments and branches in the provinces country-wide, including induction and training of records staff. However, perhaps another study could assess what is happening at the branches and departments as being removed from the head office, they could have their own different dynamics which could affect records keeping differently.

1.10   Organisation of the study

This section shows how the dissertation chapters are organised with a brief explanation on what each chapter is for.

Chapter 1: Introduction: The chapter introduces the focus of the study, its purpose, importance, objectives and emerging research issues on the subject under investigation. It also summarises the research methodology employed in the study, the population and selection of sample, the extent and delimitations of the study as well as research ethics.

Chapter 2: Context of the study: The chapter covers the background of the study in order to put the study into context. It gives a historical background on Zimbabwe, particularly within the public sector. It also gives an overview to records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework and literature review: The chapter is a review of the theoretical framework that guided the study including archival theories that influenced the direction taken by the study. In addition to this, the chapter also shows literature that was consulted which relates to recordkeeping issues in Africa and Zimbabwe in both the colonial and postcolonial periods including best practice examples.

Chapter 4: Research methodology: The chapter explains the philosophical foundations of the study that guided the research methodology, paradigm, design and methods of the study. It also gives the reasons why these were selected and how they were employed in order to provide answers to the research problems of this study.

Chapter 5: Presentation of research data: The chapter presents the research data as gathered and reports the status of records and archives in the Public Service of Zimbabwe as guided by the objectives of the study.

Chapter 6: Discussion of research findings: The chapter discusses the results of the study in relation to the original objectives and research questions, and points out the main emerging issues.

Chapter 7: Summary, conclusions and recommendations: The chapter lists in summary form the major findings of the study as well as recommendations to improve or strengthen recordkeeping processes including formulating a model programme to improve records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. It also gives an overall conclusion in the form of a summary of the entire research process from problem identification, the methods taken to investigate the problem, to findings and conclusions.

1.11   Research ethical considerations

At the beginning of the study, the researcher received a research support letter from the University of Namibia, which also carried ethical clearance with it (Appendix A). With this, the research methods employed by the researcher during data collection were sensitive to the perspectives of all participants. A consent form was given to all interviewees, which they signed after full explanation on purpose, risks and implications, as recommended by various authors (Christians, 2009; Patton, 2002). The researcher informed interviewees of the commitment to protect their rights and welfare, their identities and interests as well as confidentiality of the information given to the researcher. This method was recommended by many authors including Christians (2009); and Israel and Hay (2006). In this case study, interviews and observations were carried out in respondents' official, not private, capacities and environment. The researcher took time to explain that information gathered would remain anonymous and would not be used for any purposes other than for study.

1.12   Summary

This chapter gave a brief introduction of the study which was conducted to investigate the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe in light of regional and African studies, which confirmed the existence of recordkeeping problems in postcolonial countries. The study followed a qualitative approach within an interpretivist research paradigm and taking a case study design. The population of the study was the Public Service of Zimbabwe and the 24 Ministries were the units of analysis including the National Archives of Zimbabwe. Furthermore, key terms on pertinent records and archives management issues that were used in the study were defined. It also shows how the dissertation chapters were demarcated. Lastly, the chapter also indicated how the researcher handled ethical issues in carrying out this study.

The next chapter covers the context of the study.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1.   Introduction

While the literature review in Chapter 3 of the study looks at empirical studies regarding recordkeeping experiences in Africa including Zimbabwe in both the colonial and postcolonial periods, this chapter lays the foundation for the study by highlighting the stages through which recordkeeping has developed in Zimbabwe while at the same time identifying essential recordkeeping features which characterised each stage. A discussion of this manner is necessary in order to situate the study in a wider context of the colonial-postcolonial scholarship, which guided this study. An examination of the colonial recordkeeping practice is particularly important in order to be in a position to determine the success or collapse of postcolonial recordkeeping systems. It covers a brief historical background of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwean government from the colonial to the postcolonial periods. Such a historical understanding of the country provides a more informed picture of the archival scene for the period under discussion.

The chapter further traces major archival developments in the country from the colonial period to independence. This was important in order to qualify the success factor or failure of the postcolonial period; more so because the foundations for recordkeeping in Zimbabwe were laid during the colonial administration. Lihoma (2012) found a direct relationship between changes in government and recordkeeping and concluded that "initiatives in the imperial periphery…played a significant role in the development of recordkeeping systems in the British Empire and Commonwealth" (p. 191), suggesting a direct link between colonial and postcolonial recordkeeping practices.

The direction in which this research took was informed and guided by the stages in the life-cycle of records; the records continuum model; and also used the International Standards Organisation

Standard for Records Management: ISO 15489 as the benchmarks for records management practice. The chapter thus traces archival development in terms of both records and archives management covering the legal framework; skills, training and awareness; and resources, facilities and tools available to manage the records and archives.

Information for this chapter was mostly gathered through a review of literature, which included annual reports, legislation, archival documents, published works and other academic articles on Zimbabwe.

2.2. Country Profile

A brief historical account of the country helps put into context the underlying recordkeeping issues of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Such an examination of the historical development of the country is important as recordkeeping processes happen within the realm of a political and economic environment. The foundations for today's record and archives management within the Public Service of Zimbabwe were laid during the colonial period and therefore it makes sense to trace this foundation for a better understanding of the present.

Southern Rhodesia (known as Rhodesia from 1963 and Zimbabwe from 1980) came under British protection in 1888. Banton (2008, pp. 272-273) summarised the country's colonial foundations and noted that formal administration in the country commenced with the granting of a Royal Charter by the Queen of England in 1889 to the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to develop and administer the territory, marking the beginning of colonial administration as a British Protectorate. In 1891, an administrator nominated by the company was appointed and in 1896, a resident commissioner was appointed by the British government. In 1896, Southern Rhodesia was placed under the supervision of the High Commissioner for South Africa, although retaining the position

of Resident Commissioner. In 1923, the territory was annexed to the Crown and BSAC rule came to an end on 1 October 1923 when the country became a self-governing British colony under Responsible Government. On 1 August 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland came into being. The Central African Federation operated for the next decade until it came to an end on 31 December 1963. This saw Northern Rhodesia becoming Zambia, and Southern Rhodesia became Rhodesia while Nyasaland became Malawi. Two years after the dissolution of the Federation, the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, declared Rhodesia independent from Britain through the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on 11 November 1965 (Banton, 2008). Britain declared this action illegal and banned trade with Rhodesia and meanwhile African nationalism also grew stronger. All these tensions culminated in a war of liberation where the Rhodesian Africans were fighting for independence. The war ended with independence on 18 April 1980 and the country became known as Zimbabwe (Mazikana & Johnstone, 1984). Around the year 2000, the country went into a political and economic crisis, which stretched to over a decade. This period is commonly referred to as the Zimbabwean crisis and it is mentioned in this study because recordkeeping work was also affected during this period.

The account above relates to the general administrative scenario upon which recordkeeping systems were introduced and operated from the onset of colonialism until independence in 1980. Much of the recordkeeping aspects are discussed in detail in the sections below.

2.3.   Archival work in Zimbabwe and the establishment of the National Archives of Zimbabwe

This section presents information on early colonial recordkeeping in Zimbabwe as well as the establishment of the National Archives.

Formal and modern recordkeeping in Zimbabwe can be traced to the colonial administration of the BSAC. Tough (2009) observed that the conventional practice of recordkeeping in most of sub-Saharan Africa began with colonial administration in the form of bureaucratic paper and card systems. Prior to this, recordkeeping was largely oral (Lihoma, 2012, Tough & Lihoma, 2012). Anwere (1997, as cited in Asogwa, 2012) also observed that before colonialism, "Africa had no culture of writing and recordkeeping" (p. 198).

The case of Southern Rhodesia was peculiar, having started off colonialism under the rule of a company without it being a full-time British colony. This could explain why its early recordkeeping was not as organised as that of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, an observation made by the Government Archivist (Central African Archives, 1947), and an argument which eventually paved way for the establishment of a records management programme at the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia in 1954. It is imperative to take note that the BSAC, while mandated to administer the Southern Rhodesian colony on behalf of the Queen of England, its administrative departments situated in Southern Rhodesia were only part of the company's larger administrative machinery whose headquarters was in London (Central African Archives, 1947). As a result, all important matters were referred to the board of directors in London, at first through the local office at Kimberly (transferred in 1891 to Cape Town) and later directly from Salisbury (now Harare) (Central African Archives, 1947). When the Cape Town office ceased to exercise any administrative functions, its early records were sent to Salisbury. Those in London, the minutes and agenda of board meetings, correspondence with Salisbury, Bulawayo, Cape Town, the Colonial Office, the High Commissioner for South Africa and others, remained in London. At no stage was it recognised by the BSAC that the administrative records in its custody were anything but its private property (Central African Archives, 1947), "as it was thought that they were the property pure and simple of the Company" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1925). In the end, the

vast majority of the BSAC records never left London; notably the minutes and agenda of board meetings, correspondence with Salisbury, Cape Town, the Colonial Office, the High Commissioner for South Africa and others (Central African Archives, 1947). This explains the administrative environment under which the BSAC records were managed during its reign. Evidently, records were created and managed but many of them were sent overseas for their long-term preservation.

In 1922, when BSAC rule was coming to an end and preparations were underway for the coming of Responsible Government, there were increased concerns on what to do with the records of the BSAC (Central African Archives, 1947; Manungo, 2012; Ngulube, 2012), that is, those that had remained in the country. In the wake of a new system of administration as a full-time colony of Britain, a position on the records was needed as it was realised that these records of the colony were clearly regarded by the BSAC as private property not national assets.

The question on what to do with BSAC records brought increased pressure for the establishment of archival services, and this was particularly felt after the 1933 historical exhibition to mark the 40th anniversary of the conquest of Matabeleland (Central African Archives, 1947). The exhibition, rousing considerable interest in archival work, comprised of books, private manuscripts and public records. This raised concern that the "pioneers of Rhodesia were passing away…and their letters, diaries, and objects would not be available to future historians…they must be preserved for the good of the colony before they disappear" (Dristas & Haig, 2014, p. 42).

Soon after the exhibition, a provisional committee to bring before the public the importance and necessity of forming a permanent national historical collection and national archives was formed. The committee received official status in 1934 and became known as the National Historical

Committee. Its work and efforts resulted in the promulgation of the Archives Act on 12 April 1935, paving the way for the formation of the National Archives on 1 September 1935 (Central African Archives, 1947). The institution was named the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia; a department under the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Thus, technically, from 1935, the National Archives began collecting documents created earlier on by the BSAC administration, and many other records created later by the various governments that came into place. The archives also collected early records of missionaries, explorers and hunters who had worked in the country including records of the pioneers and the settler community. These make up the bulk of the present day 'Historical Manuscripts' collection at NAZ.

As mentioned before, the British colonial system expected that records were created and managed to allow accountability to the Colonial Office in London and this was done through sending all vital records of colonial activities and transactions to London. Before the establishment of the National Archives in Southern Rhodesia, clearly the main repository was overseas, as was with most British colonies; while a certain category of records, probably a smaller percentage and of lesser value, remained in the country. In the case of Southern Rhodesia, these were some of the records that were later collected from the departments and some from the Parliament Librarian when the archives was opened in 1935 (Central African Archives, 1947).

The establishment of the National Archives in Southern Rhodesia in 1935 was a first in British colonial Africa (Mazikana, 1988; Tough, 2009). Its establishment was peculiar in that at that time the British colonial system was content with having their archival repository in London. In fact, many of its other colonies in Africa remained without a national archival institution in their countries until just before or just after independence – for instance, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania (Dristas & Haig, 2014; Musembi, 1988). The initiative to establish the National Archives in

Southern Rhodesia mostly came from the local European settlers rather than it being an initiative of the British colonial administration on its own. The Southern Rhodesian Chief Archivist reported that "the motive behind the establishment of the Government Archives of Southern Rhodesia was an interest in national history" (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 6). Concerned citizens pushed for the records to remain inside the country as they strongly felt that those already sent to Britain should not have gone there in the first place (Central African Archives, 1947). Colonel H. Marshall Hole, the Colonial Secretary in Southern Rhodesia also expressed the same sentiments by remarking that:

> strictly speaking the records they sent to London may have legally been the property of the Company, it is to be regretted that they were allowed to leave the country as many of them were of great … historical interest in the years to come" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1925).

It was during these discussions that the push for the establishment of an archival service began to surface prominently, with the need to preserve historical records in the country being the main driving force. This 'archival movement', which led to the establishment of the National Archives in Southern Rhodesia, is attributed to concerted efforts by a group of devoted individuals who had a passion for the preservation of history (Dristas & Haig, 2014; Tough, 2009). These included the head of the Bulawayo Public Library, Dugard Nivern who offered to build the state archives at that point; John Gaspar Gubbins, a South African private collector of 'Africana' who believed in the collection and preservation of historical materials; and Vyvian Hiller, an expert on Rhodesian history who had also built his own collection of 'Rhodesiana' (Dristas & Haig, 2014). According to Dristas and Haig (2014), the main concerns with all these people were "about preserving the heritage of the new country" and a "drive for cultural development: within a settler community as well as a form of colonial nationalism" (p. 41).

A few years later, the exigencies of the Second World War and the need for closer economic co-ordination, as well as a vigorous political campaign for closer association, drew the three Central African countries, Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, more closely together, and soon after in 1945, the Central African Council came into being. The new body attempted to unify various technical services, of which archives was one, and in 1946 the Southern Rhodesian government Archives was asked to assume responsibility in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In the next year, depots were opened at Livingstone and Zomba, and the national archival institution, while still a department of the Southern Rhodesia Government, became known as the Central African Archives (CAA) (Central African Archives, 1947). This move was also in anticipation of the coming of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which eventually came into existence on 1 August 1953. Thereafter, on 1 July 1954 the Central African Archives became a Federal body, and was renamed the National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The Federal government operated for a decade and at its dissolution in 1963, Southern Rhodesia became Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia became Zambia, while Nyasaland became Malawi. At this point, the National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland ceased to exist and the national archival institution in Rhodesia became known as the National Archives of Rhodesia (with similar but separate institutions opened in Zambia and Malawi). In 1980, when the country attained independence, the institution became known as the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ). Today, it is located in the capital city, Harare, in the suburb of Gunhill, the same premise that it occupied since 1961.

On the basis of the above account, it is evident that archival services incorporating both records and archives management were introduced fairly early in Zimbabwe and by the time of independence, a lot of investment had been put into it. This can be seen as an advantage in that at

independence, the country inherited well-established archival systems that had already been operating for many years.

2.4. Records management work during the colonial period

As discussed earlier in section 2.3 above, the issue of records in Southern Rhodesia only started surfacing during discussions by individuals interested in the preservation of history who raised concern on what to do with the BSAC records when its rule was coming to an end in 1923 (Central African Archives, 1947; Dristas & Haig, 2014; Tough, 2009). This on its own was an indication that the Company's administrative structures as the administrators of the colony created and maintained, to some extent, records of activities and transactions as was expected of all British colonial administration. The administrative structure under the British colonial system in many of its colonies began at the level of the Governor who had the highest executive office in the country. His office had centralised records in the office of the Chief Secretary (Manyambula, 2009; Tough & Lihoma, 2012). Operating under the centralised registry system, shared integrated registries were created for various departments, though there were also separate registries in several other locations. The creation of confidential registries during that time was driven by the need to maintain security, and ensure that communications and information reached the metropolitan centre in London (Tough & Lihoma, 2012). For these reasons, the Governor was instructed to "report to the Secretary of State in all matters of interest; …and furnish accounts at regular interval, of receipts and expenditure" (Tough & Lihoma, p. 193). The new colonial government had to be accountable to the colonial master, and thus, from the onset, reporting structures were explicit – they were required to create records of transactions and to forward them to Britain. Tough and Lihoma (2012) also noted that imperial control over records made stipulations about recordkeeping and confidentiality, and further observed that the colonial government "demanded that written documents were generated and maintained, which explains the adoption of efficient

recordkeeping systems right from the beginning of colonial administration" (p. 203). In Southern Rhodesia, the BSAC also operated a similar system for records whereby records of transactions were expected to be created and forwarded to London. Similar registries and/or central registries were also opened within the various administrative departments of the BSAC. This concept of the centralised registry system, introduced by the British, continued to operate in Zimbabwe up to the time of independence.

Despite the provisions that were present as explained above, the system to manage records created and used by the colonial administrations, it appears the system operated without proper or standardised guidelines, especially in the earlier period until the 1950s when a records management programme was established at the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia (Baxter, 1963). In particular, the state of the BSAC records that came to the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia at its establishment became a subject of concern for the archivist sorting them who noted their disorderly state as well as lack of standardisation within the different departments (National Archives of Zimbabwe, n.d.). The archivist also noted the same chaos with the records of the Responsible Government, which came after the BSAC, and recommended that "a decision was required regarding the policy of future deposits" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, n.d.). In addition, a questionnaire sent to all government departments in 1935 also showed an unprecedented accumulation of disorganised records (Central African Archives, 1947).

Clearly, during these early years of colonial administration, creating departments were left to decide on their own how to manage their current records and the intervention of the National Archives in the 1950s brought a certain level of control into how records were managed particularly in their current and semi-current stages. Things improved with the involvement of the National Archives whereby some guidelines were immediately issued; notably those governing the

destruction and transfer of records which were issued in 1947. With such guidelines in place, departments were now expected to follow structured ways of managing their records as opposed to the haphazard ways of the previous years. A new system was designed which called for closer cooperation from departments (Baxter, 1963). This influence from the National Archives, however, remained limited as shown by the failure to implement the Chief Archivist's recommendation for the appointment of an inspector or liaison officer attached to the staff of the archives with the "task of initiating a uniform system of record-keeping throughout the service" (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 16). The Chief Archivist reported that "the influence of the archives on records-keeping issues continues therefore to be indirect" (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 16). He, however, recognised the efforts that were being made and remarked that:

> There is no doubt that Central Africa enjoys in this respect unique opportunities. The mistakes of over fifty years are doubtless burdensome, and all change is painful. But the three countries have taken thought for their records at an early stage, and have therefore a chance to put record-keeping on a sound footing (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 18).

Notable also, accounts of recordkeeping in most British colonial establishments at the beginning of colonial administration mention the use of the card system, and that filing was initially based on "one letter, one subject, one reference" but this later shifted to "one file, one subject, one reference" system – a notable shift from handling individual papers as discrete units towards the aggregation of papers through files" (Tough & Lihoma, 2012, p. 194). The latter saw such record series as 'original correspondence', 'registers of correspondence', 'entry books', registers of out-letters', 'acts', 'sessional papers', 'government gazettes', and 'miscellanea' and these became a common feature in most British Colonial records (Banton, 2008). Evidently, chaotic records had accumulated in the government departments as noted by the Government Archivist in 1947 as mentioned above. Lovering (2010) described this as the "true extent of metropolitan British

influence" whereby "an absence of centralised advice, and a consequent dependence upon individual innovation" (p. 1) was the order of the day. Similarly, Tough and Lihoma (2012) remarked that "[u]nevenness and local initiative continued to be characteristic in this field, at least until the British Government began to take direct interest after the World War II" (p. 198).

In essence, both the BSAC administration and the later governments of Southern Rhodesia insisted on the creation and preservation of records but clearly left the decision on how to manage the records in the hands of the creating offices. This only changed later in the 1950s with the involvement of the National Archives when guidelines where issued to ensure standardisation.

2.5.   Legal and regulatory framework

The Archives Act of 1935 became the first legislative instrument to be enacted for the purpose of managing public records and archives during the early colonial era. Drawing a huge influence from neighbouring South Africa, and the writings of Sir Hillary Jenkinson, a renowned British archivist, the Act defined archives as "all such public records, documents and other historical material of every kind, nature and description as are in custody of any other government departments, or as may be transferred to or acquired by the archives office" (Baxter, 1963).

The Act has, however, been blamed for failing to address directly the management of current and semi-current records. However, it should be noted that the main driving force for the establishment of the National Archives, as explained earlier on, had been to safeguard those records that were seen to have historical value at the end of their life-cycle not while they were in current or semi-current status. Thus, it is not strange that the Act focused more on the archival preservation of those records of enduring value only; a weakness noted by many authors (Dube, 2007; Kamba, 1987; Murambiwa, Ngulube, Masuku & Sigauke, 2012; Ngulube, 2012). Murambiwa et al.,

(2012), described this direction taken as a 'custodial approach' and argued that such an approach appeared more feasible to the settler government at that time in the face of possible loss of important records through either destruction, theft, purchase or relocation to Britain as had been the fate of earlier records of the colonial administration. The Act gave power to the Government Archivist to control the disposal of government records. It took care to ensure that the archival record was looked after but it remained silent on the day-to-day management of current and semi-current records. Following a survey through a questionnaire by the Government Archivist in November 1935, which revealed poor management of records, an instruction, Circular No. 2 of 1936 was issued forbidding the destruction of government records before inspection by the Government Archivist. In particular, the survey noted a worrisome accumulation of records without any disposal plan, and in this regard, Government Notice No. 356 was also issued on 15 July 1938. It regulated the destruction and transfer of public records. The regulation also provided for the preparation of schedules of records to be destroyed, and also for the consideration of the schedules by the Records Destruction Committee, a committee which consisted of the Government Archivist, the Auditor General (and later also the Government Statistician), and a representative of the department concerned (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 32).

Another piece of legislation was only passed in anticipating the coming of the Federation, when the Central African Archives assumed the management of records of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland with the passing of the Archives Amendment Act in 1946. It enabled the Chief Archivist in Salisbury to perform duties in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. When the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was eventually formed in 1953, the Central African Archives became a Federal institution.

Another Act, the National Archives Act was promulgated at the break-up of the Federation in 1964 leading to the formation of the National Archives of Rhodesia. With this, the territories of Zambia and Malawi, formerly Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, respectively, took over custody of their own territorial records. The Act continued with the legacy of taking a custodial approach in managing the archives of Rhodesia; explicitly proclaiming the role of the National Archives to be that of managing non-current records only (Dube, 2011). This unfortunately remained unchanged up to the time of independence. Any subsequent repeals to these Acts (Archives Amendment Act, 1947 and the National Archives Act, 1958) were mostly meant to address added territorial responsibilities and political changes in government (not necessarily recordkeeping issues). The amendments could not be avoided as it became necessary to re-define, through legal instruments, the physical constituencies brought in by the changes from National Archives of Southern Rhodesia to Central African Archives and, also from Southern Rhodesia to the Federation, and then to Rhodesia.

Therefore, recordkeeping during the colonial period operated with the backing of an archival legislation although it was found with some weaknesses, especially in the later period when it increasingly became apparent that it lacked emphasis on the management of records but focused more on archives.

At the time of independence in 1980, the push for new legislation had become more prominent, with the weaknesses of the1935 Archives Act increasingly being felt, particularly in the area of records management, and especially the relationship between the National Archives and the rest of the Public Service. According to the first director of NAZ after independence:

> While the National Archives had been providing a records management service to government
> departments and to local authorities and statutory bodies since the mid-1950s, it had of late

become very clear that the existing legislation made it difficult to pursue a dynamic policy in the management of these records. (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1986, p. 3).

The 1935 legislation had assigned to the National Archives a passive role so that the initiative lay with the ministry or department and quite often, by the time the National Archives was called in, "irreparable damage had already been inflicted on the records" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1986, p. 3). It was therefore necessary that the National Archives improved from its passive role to directly involve itself in the whole life-cycle management of a record, from the time that the record is created until it is disposed of by way of destruction or preservation as a public archive. The new legislation, the National Archives Act of 1986 gave the National Archives more influence in the decision-making process as well as the enforcement of recordkeeping activities at the departments. It gave more impetus to the new government's drive to expand and reach out to the whole country in terms of records management.

The main provisions of the National Archives Act of 1986 covered records management in the sense that the National Archives was put in position to pursue an active role in the management of records of central government, local authorities and parastatals (Section 7(1). The Act empowered the National Archives to inspect and examine any records held by any ministry and to give advice or instruction concerning the filing, maintenance and preservation of records (Section 6(1) (a-b). This was a significant improvement from the 1935 legislation which limited the role of the National Archives to mere advisory with no power to enforce. The National Archives could now give instructions for records to be transferred to the National Archives (Section 6(1) (c). Other provisions concerned the access policy where the period of closure of public records was reduced from 30 to 25 years (Section 2(a) (i). The Act also saw the enlargement of the composition of the Records Committee to achieve wider consultation in the appraisal of records for retention or

destruction. It also introduced measures to identify and make provision for the preservation of nationally valuable records held in private hands (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1986).

With all these new provisions, the National Archives Act was seen to bring far-reaching consequences for archival development in the country. The new legislation gave the National Archives more influence in decision-making at the creating offices. According to Njovana (1993), the Act put the National Archives of Zimbabwe on a sounder footing with regard to its responsibility for semi-current records, particularly those that were still at the creating departments. Without the Act, "it would have been difficult for the National Archives of Zimbabwe to deal with public records, let alone stand its ground as an archival authority in the country" (Murambiwa et al., 2012, p. 5). The playing ground had been laid in so far as legislation was concerned. The passing of the Act was a positive development, as this laid the first step towards marrying the stages of the life-cycle of records, something that was weak in the previous dispensation. Previously, the focus was more on the end of the life-cycle, which are the archives, and from which the National Archives certainly earned a good reputation. Clearly, the new legislation strengthened records management work because it now became mandatory for Ministries to manage their records in certain ways rather than it being an optional activity for them. However, with the growth of information technology, records management faces new challenges, which are not addressed in this legislation, and questions have been asked in the current scenario regarding the overall capacity of the National Archives to oversee this growing area of responsibilities in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Today, almost three decades after the passing of the Act, many new issues are emerging which are not adequately addressed by the 1986 Act. This study revealed that NAZ only received power on the legal front but not the resource capacity.

The study, therefore, recognised two issues regarding the legal and regulatory framework. Firstly, that colonial recordkeeping in Zimbabwe operated under the guidance of an archival legislation that tended to pay more attention to archives than current and semi-current records. This is evidenced by the guidelines issued from the 1950s, which addressed mostly issues of disposal of non-current records. Secondly, the new archival legislation enacted after independence brought about significant improvement in the country's recordkeeping work particularly the increased power given to the National Archives regarding its relationship with the government institutions on records management issues.

2.6.   Resources, facilities and tools

From the time the colonial administration agreed to the formation of an archival institution for the country which led to the formation of the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia, the need to provide appropriate facilities for archival preservation was made clear, though not immediately addressed. When the Archives opened in 1935, the government provided two rooms in a converted dwelling house at the corner of Central Avenue and Fifth Street, Salisbury (now Harare), and this became the first home of the National Archives. Four months later in 1936, the Archives moved to the third floor of Bechuana House, Manica Road (now Robert Mugabe Way), Salisbury, a typical block of offices (and certainly not suitable for archival services). In 1938, the Archives moved to Milton Buildings (now Munhumutapa Buildings). Throughout these movements, the premises were taken as temporary housing for the archives, as the need for a purpose-built archival facility had been made clear from the beginning in 1935 (Central African Archives, 1947). As noted in the National Archives director's first report:

> Only a specially designed detached building would be adequate. Since the beginning of the
> Archives in 1935, the Archivist and the Commission have never lost sight of this requirement
> and have never relaxed their determination not to rest content until the country's records are

housed in a building designed for that purpose and not merely adapted thereto. (Central

African Archives, 1947, p. 15).

By the 1940s, serious planning had begun for the construction of an archives premise at the present

site of NAZ (Central African Archives, 1947, p. 15). Eventually, the opening in 1961, of the

purpose-built facility at the Gunhill headquarters in Harare, particularly earned the NAZ the

reputation of being one of the best archival institutions in Africa (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000;

Mnjama, 2005; Tough, 2009; Mazikana, 1988). Resources and facilities for archival preservation

were put in place and archival practices were based on international standards, mostly of British

influence, but increasingly in the 1960s, of North American influence also (Central African

Archives, 1947; Ngulube, 2012).

However, storage facilities for semi-current records remained inadequate even after the new

archives building was opened because the building was meant for public archives, not as a records

centre. To ease the problem, a satellite repository was opened in 1965 at Craneborne, a few

kilometres from the headquarters, and this was soon relocated to Southerton. In 1966, a branch

repository for semi-current records was opened in Bulawayo to cater for the western region of the

country. In the post-Federation period from 1964, "the records management programme continued

to grow and consolidate the progress that had been made" (Mazikana, 1988, p. 144). In essence,

from the onset, when recordkeeping was introduced in the country, the administration recognised

the need to provide resources, facilities and tools for the management of records and archives, and

even though these were not adequate, facilities were put up to run archival services in the country.

In the postcolonial period, while carrying out its functions and the added records management

responsibilities, NAZ faced the challenge of growing responsibilities versus inadequate resources.

However, the newly independent nation also became a favourite spot for international donors, and saw the National Archives receiving quite a number of grants that "enabled projects to be undertaken which could not otherwise have begun" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1984, p. 3). These were projects such as the microfilming of the Federal archives through an International Development Research Centre (IDRC) grant, and the oral history programme funded by a Ford Foundation grant (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1984). Such support enabled the National Archives to respond positively to the expansion of government. In this regard, the direction taken by the new government regarding the management of records and archives was a positive one.

The new drive to expand records management services backed by a new legislation also saw increased government support for the National Archives. The construction of a huge records centre in 1988 was to cater for the extended responsibilities. The new records centre building was considered the biggest in sub-Saharan Africa at that time, with a maximum capacity of 78 180 square meters within 28 repository units, each unit having a capacity of 8712 cubic feet of records (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1988, p. 3). With the extended mandate to cover the whole country, the National Archives, over the next few years from 1980, restructured and decentralised its services from Harare to set up four new sub-centres in Mutare (1986), Gweru (1988), Masvingo (1987) and Chinhoyi (1999), in addition to the already existing ones in Bulawayo and Harare (Njovana, 1993). Under this arrangement, today the Harare Records Centres is responsible for the Harare, Mashonaland East, and Mashonaland Central Provinces; the Chinhoyi Records Centre for the Mashonaland West Province; the Bulawayo Records Centre responsible for the Bulawayo, Matabeleland North and Matabeleland South Provinces; the Mutare Records Centre for the Manicaland Province; the Masvingo Records Centre for the Masvingo Province; and the Gweru Records Centre for the Midlands Province. This covered the entire regions of the country. The year 2000 also saw the opening of the new purpose-built archives building in Bulawayo, which now

catered not just for records management but also archives management, similar to the Harare headquarters. Construction of the Masvingo Records Centre had also started before the Zimbabwean crisis of the 2000s. Land was identified for similar construction in Mutare, Gweru, and Chinhoyi (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 2002). In this way, recordkeeping was not just centred in the capital city, but spread throughout the country. The impact of this was that many other parts of the country could now be catered for in terms of recordkeeping activities.

A further positive development during the first decade of independence was the establishment of the Audio Visual Unit to house the growing audiovisual collections of the National Archives. The unit was equipped with environmentally controlled vaults of international standards. In addition, the oral history programme was intensified by expanding the oral testimonies in the two main local languages of Shona and Ndebele (Njovana, 1993). This was in response to new user needs after having realised the gap in the archives created by lack of materials on Africans. Thus, the African oral history programme was a deliberate attempt to fill gaps or, in some instances, correct wrong impressions of the past (Njovana, 1993).

All in all, while resources, facilities and tools were put in place during the colonial period for the establishment and execution of recordkeeping work, the period after independence witnessed a lot of growth and expansion, as more facilities were put in place for records management, particularly the opening up of records centres throughout the country. There was a deliberate records management expansion drive, which was invigorated through a lot of marketing of the role of the National Archives as well as outreach programmes by the National archives to the various government offices on records management.

2.7.   Skills, training and awareness

Any effective records and archives management system depends largely on the existence of a skilled, knowledgeable and capable work-force. Policies, guidelines, regulations and instructions require staff to implement. It was important in this study to look at staff skills at both the level of Ministries and at the NAZ because the Ministries create, maintain and use records while the NAZ had the national responsibility to ensure that all vital records are preserved for the future. Both records management and archives management require certain skills for their successful implementation.

Being a British colony, the system of administration assumed by the BSAC first, and the various colonial administrations that followed after were modelled along British recordkeeping systems (Tough, 2012). With time, North American trends whose approach favoured more with the life-cycle approach were emulated (Ngulube, 2012). Clearly, at the beginning of colonial administration, records management and archives administration were distinct processes whereby the role of the archives would only come at the end of the record life-cycle. This was evidenced by the way the NAZ was formed including the legislation crafted to back archival work. The National Archives, then, played a very small role at the creating departments. With more and more American influence, especially after two senior archivists received training from USA, this line of thinking shifted towards managing records at the point of creation. This lead to the establishment of a records management service at the National Archives in 1954 (Baxter, 1963).

In terms of the human resources, from the time that it was opened, NAZ witnessed significant growth in terms of staffing beginning with three staff members in 1935, rising to 24 in 1954 and 47 in 1962 (Baxter, 1963). The earliest professional training recorded was that of two staff members

who received American fellowships in 1955 and 1956 to study archival sciences in the USA (Baxter, 1963).

At the departments, as Tough (2012) noted for many colonial British administrative set-ups, it was common to see most appointees to administrative posts in the Southern Rhodesia government seconded to the registry upon arrival in Southern Rhodesia from where they would advance upwards to other administrative positions. Such a system ensured that all administrative staff had knowledge of filing and general recordkeeping. In later years of colonial administration, local clerks were employed to carry out recordkeeping work under the supervision of European administrators (Lovering, 2010; Tough, 2009). The system was based on clerical staff and operated like that up to the time of independence.

In essence, one can deduce that in so far as archival skills were concerned, NAZ operated with ideal archival expertise, relying mostly on overseas training for its staff, especially from the 1950s when archivists were sent out for training in USA. For records management, the government offices operated with no specialised records personnel but relied on clerical staff who received on-the-job training. These are the people who operated records management throughout the colonial period in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

At Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, as with any changes in governments, generally the transition period also witnessed changes in government administration. However, the situation was generally stable at the NAZ, as noted by the Director of the Archives, Angeline Kamba in her various annual reports from 1981 to 1986. Notably, the new government made a deliberate effort to ensure that the government continued to run without major changes and disruptions. The outgoing Director of the National Archives at the time of independence, R. S. W. Turner, noted -

"much thought has been given during this period to ensure that the National Archives identified itself with the new nation" (National Archives of Zimbabwe, 1981, p. 3). Turner also wrote in the same report that in order to demonstrate this new identity, various visits by the government's high-level officials, distinguished persons and members of the diplomatic corps, etcetera, were arranged in an effort to raise the awareness of the general public of the existence of NAZ. However, during this transitional period many white civil servants voluntarily left government service or the country for reasons ranging from fear, mistrust, uncertainty or failure to accept change (Njovana, 1993). Others, however, chose to stay. Notably, for the National Archives, in the director's reports for the years soon after independence there is no report of any major disruptions to activities, but in fact show that activities continued to operate the usual way. Njovana (1993) also alluded to this when he noted that the National Archives had not been negatively affected by the political and constitutional changes that took place in the country at independence. According to Njovana (1993), the character of the institution had in fact not changed but broadened and "the professionalism of the National Archives [was] strengthened considerably during the postcolonial period" (p. 4).

Further to this, the new independent nation became a favourite spot for donor support and NAZ also received various forms of support, including scholarships for overseas training. Having previously relied on expensive overseas training and donor funding, efforts were made to establish local training facilities for recordkeeping personnel. In terms of staffing, the first early and significant change was the appointment of the first African Director, Angeline Kamba, who was a trained and experienced information practitioner. With time too, an accelerated intake of African staff was also witnessed as the government deliberately wanted to "bring the archives to the people" (Kamba, 1987) since the National Archives had previously been regarded as a privilege of the white people. According to Njovana (1993), such publicity actions, as in 'bringing the archives

to the people' were carried out through radio, television and print media. They were largely public relations exercises aimed at publicising the existence as well as the functions of the National Archives thereby raising awareness to the general public on the existence of the NAZ and its work.

This fairly stable state of affairs, which characterised the period into independence, took a down-turn towards the end of the 1990s. By then, a notable decline in funding resulted in continuous staff turnover. King (1998) observed that there were savage cuts in funding, which affected staffing levels and morale. Much of this situation has been attributed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), which prescribed cuts in expenditure and reduction of wage bills to developing countries (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000; Murambiwa, 2012; Tough, 2009). Murambiwa et al. (2012) alluded to the same staffing instability and pointed out that while there were excellent staff development opportunities that were being offered, the environment did not have complementary staff retention schemes. Thus, even though there was sound investment towards staff development over a long time, it was difficult to control staff leakage due to poor remuneration. From this period, staff retention became a problem, and many trained and experienced staff left the institution for 'greener pastures' thereby drying up the pool of trained and experienced staff.

Therefore, it appears there was a steady growth and improvement of archival skills at NAZ in the first two decades after independence but this stagnated towards the end of the 1990s and the situation got worse from then on during the 2000 to 2010 political and economic crisis. More on the crisis period will be covered in the next section of this chapter.

In terms of records management, the registries within the Public Service of Zimbabwe were, at the time of independence, operated by clerks who had no professional training other than the Public

Service induction training and on-the-job training. This continued like that until 2005 when the minimum entry level was raised to a certificate in records and archives or library sciences. Lovering (2010), while analysing recordkeeping personnel in Nyasaland (Malawi) before 1940, raised an issue which could apply even in later years of colonial administration in Africa including Zimbabwe. He commented about the calibre of 12 African clerks who had been described as 'poor performers' by their European supervisor by saying that this negative comment could have been an indication of "the inadequate training and low status of registry practitioners, factors whose deleterious effects have been noted in many contemporary recordkeeping regimes" (p. 14). The use of such low calibre of African records clerks in Zimbabwe continued even after independence.

Today, in terms of training, the country has several records and archives training institutions established at various places in the country and at different levels of training from certificate, diploma and degree, including post-graduate level. The National University of Science and Technology (NUST) is the main training institution offering degrees in records and archives management as well as library and information sciences. Recently the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU), the Midlands State University (MSU) and the Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) also started offering records and archives management courses. Several polytechnic colleges established in four different towns in the country also offer certificate and diploma training in records management (Noko & Ngulube, 2014). Other government affiliated institutions include the Zimbabwe Institute for Public Administration and Management (ZIPAM) in Darwendale, the Management Training Bureau (MTB) in Harare, and the two Public Service Training Centres - the Highlands Training Centre in Harare, and the Elangeni Training Centre in Bulawayo. All these offer induction, refresher and short courses to government employees, with those at Highlands and Elangeni compulsory for all registry personnel in the civil service.

The establishment of all these training facilities in the country can be seen as a positive development in postcolonial Zimbabwe. However, the quality of it has been questioned. For instance, a study on professionalism and ethics in the Public Service of Zimbabwe concluded that the training afforded to recordkeeping personnel was unsatisfactory and "piecemeal" (Ngulube, 2000, p. 169). According to him, it was 'piecemeal' in the sense that it hardly addressed the life-cycle concept but rather focused more on registry procedures, mail management and supervision, and records classification. In a way, these are the practical activities expected of recordkeeping staff, and technically this should be the right direction to take. However, it needs to be supplemented by in-depth formal training in order for one to be fully conversed with the life-cycle concept as Ngulube (2000) suggested. He also observed in the same study that there was no form of continuing education provided for the registry personnel apart from these short courses. However, this issue was later addressed by the introduction of records and archives courses at NUST in 2002 as well as the various Polytechnic colleges offering certificate and diploma training.

Ngulube (2000) also noted another flaw in the system whereby 72% of the respondents did not have an Ordinary Level certificate (and therefore would not qualify for any formal training to upgrade the qualification) while only 23% had para-professional certificate in records management. This meant that the level of education for recordkeeping staff was extremely low.

All in all, it is evident that there was a steady and significant growth in archival skills at NAZ from the colonial period into the first two decades of independence. In terms of records management, the colonial government employed clerical staff to manage the records of the government, a system which continued into the postcolonial period.

2.8. Effects of the 2000 – 2010 Zimbabwe's political and economic turmoil on recordkeeping

A specific mention of this period is necessary in this study in order to try and understand some of the problems currently faced in the country. This is because a lot of government services, including archival services were affected during this period, and it is necessary to separate national crisis issues from the general postcolonial problems identified in this study.

At the end of the first two decades of independence the unresolved issues of land and other economic inequalities stemming from the colonial era increasingly re-surfaced and heightened with the politics and elections in 2000. These issues soon developed into a major crisis, which drew the attention of the international community. This marked the beginning of political and economic problems for the country. This political crisis culminated in a huge economic and social decline, which continued for the next decade. The National Archives was equally affected by this crisis. The researcher noted a trend of negative reports starting to appear in the director's annual reports for this period beginning from the 1990 and gradually worsening. These included problems with funding to sponsor major activities; critically low staff levels; transport and fuel problems; stagnation of building projects, etcetera. This negative trend continued to increase as the decade progressed, and a number of authors have alluded to this downward trend (Matangira, 2012; Moyo, 2012; Murambiwa, 2012). The National Archives found it increasingly difficult to carry out activities particularly the records management outreach programmes. This obviously was bound to compromise recordkeeping activities at the departments that had to operate without the guidance of experts from the National Archives. The momentum that the new government had started off with at independence was beginning to erode and so were recordkeeping activities throughout the country. Matangira (2012) described this period as a disaster situation, which required some kind of international intervention in the same manner as other disasters such as those caused by war or

earthquake are treated by international organisations to protect cultural heritage institutions. The impact of the crisis period was also described by Murambiwa (2012) as "catastrophic to archival services as Government support to culture and heritage sector declined" (p. 61).

Based on the literature reviewed here, the study concludes that the political and economic crisis in Zimbabwe had huge negative effects on the management of records and archives. However, the researcher was also interested in finding out which problems were due to postcolonial downfall, as witnessed in other African countries, or were due to the crisis of this decade, which evidently derailed much of the gains of the past, both before and after independence. Many of these issues are covered in the findings section of the study.

2.9.   Summary

The chapter showed that postcolonial Zimbabwe in many ways inherited strong archival and record management systems including infrastructure from the colonial period, modelled initially along the British registry system but later on with more American influence. The British system followed the concept of leaving records management to record creators, while the American system advocated for the involvement of archivists at the point of creation. The National Archives in Zimbabwe was created mainly with archival purposes in mind but with increased American influence of the 1950s had the added responsibility to oversee recordkeeping in the creating offices. This was to present problems throughout the colonial period as NAZ successfully became the centre of excellence in archives management but remained insignificant in so far as recordkeeping in the government offices was concerned. The area of records management at NAZ remained under-resourced. Notably, the establishment of NAZ was in contrast to many of the former British colonies whose archival institutions were only established after or just before independence even though they had recordkeeping systems that were relatively running. However,

the country's recordkeeping systems needed to be strengthened, especially legislation, as that inherited from the colonial period made recordkeeping activities difficult to carry out particularly regarding the advisory role and the much-needed expertise from the National Archives. The independent government of Zimbabwe realised this shortfall and took action that resulted in the 1986 legislation. The new legislation backed up the new expansion drive. Technically, it brought archival expertise from the National Archives into the forefront of government recordkeeping, but as this study reveals, the role of NAZ remained subdued for many years after the passing of this Act. The chapter also examined archival skills and concluded that skills for archives management were sound from the colonial period into independence but those for records management remained low-level and not professionalised throughout the colonial period and for many years after independence.

The next chapter covers the literature review.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1.   Introduction

Literature review is done in order to place the research questions in the context of previous work so as to explain or justify the decisions to undertake the study, especially regarding how and why the research questions were formulated (Locke et al., as cited in Punch, 2006). It shows the relationship between the study and pervious related research. A literature review is important to convey what has been written about the subject, its strengths and weaknesses, and to stimulate the current study within the body of literature (Oliver, 2012). Thus, a literature review should be defined by a guiding concept, for instance, the research objective and the problem.

A good literature review should give a summary of what is known and what is not known about the subject under study; it should identify areas of controversy in the literature; and formulate questions that need further research (Silverman, 2010). It should focus on those studies that are relevant to the current study in order for it to fit into a broader context (Oliver, 2012). Furthermore, it involves the selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular standpoint to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed (Hart, 2001).

Thus, a literature review helps the researcher to do some preliminary thinking about what they are doing before beginning the search itself and the researcher is required to focus on those studies that are relevant for defining their research problem (Silverman, 2010).

3.1.1. Structure and organisation of the literature review

This literature review has two main divisions. First, is the theoretical framework, which discusses the concepts and theories in records and archives management and how they were applied to this study. The second part is a thematic review of related literature consisting of studies made earlier. It looks at other studies through an empirical review of research articles and general discourse on the phenomenon of records and archives management processes in Africa including Zimbabwe. The general African perspective in the literature was important in order to give insight into common problems that tend to be shared in Africa including Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean case could not be an isolated case without global significance, and the more reason for examining the experiences of other African countries, particularly those of the former British Empire as well as those from the Southern African region where Zimbabwe belongs. The study then examined literature on archival development in Zimbabwe, which is directly linked to the focus of the study. In order to accomplish all these aspects, the researcher did a thematic review of the literature, which, according to Kemoni (2008) is basically structured around different themes or perspectives, and often focuses on debates between different schools. In this manner, emerging themes from the literature were noted and used as discussion points for this chapter.

The literature was drawn mainly out of peer-reviewed journal articles, especially those that dwelt on African recordkeeping experiences. Literature covering records and archival theory was mainly taken from published books and peer-reviewed journal articles. Reports from research carried out by international organisations were also utilised. Documents and archival resources provided vital information regarding policy, legislation, and other mandatory expectations in managing records and archives including background information on archival development in Zimbabwe.

Aspects of records and archives management which guided the literature review included the legal and regulatory framework; resources, facilities and tools; training, skills and awareness. The researcher focused on what the literature said regarding these aspects within the broad thematic areas emerging from the study. The chapter is therefore divided as follows:

- Theoretical framework
    - o The records life-cycle model
    - o The records continuum model
    - o ISO 15489: International Standard for Information and Documentation – Records Management
- Review of literature on records and archives management in Africa
    - o Colonial recordkeeping
    - o Postcolonial recordkeeping
    - o Colonial legacy
    - o Records and archives management in Zimbabwe
    - o Records and archives management best practice and standards
- Overview of literature review and its application to the study

3.2. Conceptual framework

In every research project, the conceptual or theoretical framework determines how a researcher formulates his/her research problem; how they go about investigating the problem, and what meaning they attach to the data accruing from such an investigation (Imenda, 2014). Cooper (2008) states that the use of concepts and theories ensures that researchers are more in control of the direction, meaning and implications of their work. A theory is a set of propositions which together describe and explain the phenomenon being studied (Punch, 2006). It is an abstract generalisation that systematically explains the relationships among phenomena. A theory is also

defined as an "image or symbolic representation of an abstract idea" (Liehr and Smith, cited in Imenda, 2014, p. 188). The basic components of a theory are concepts whereby a set of statements expresses a relationship among concepts.

A theoretical framework refers to the theory that a researcher chooses to guide him/her in his/her research. Thus, a theoretical framework is the application of a theory, or a set of concepts drawn from one and the same theory, to offer an explanation of an event, or shed some light on a particular phenomenon or research problem (Imenda, 2014). It provides support to studies by presenting known relationships among variables and sets limits or boundaries for the proposed study. The researcher, therefore, cites previous research, names theories presented by previous researchers, and explains how these theories tie to current problems and purpose of study. In essence, a theoretical framework provides a particular perspective or lens through which to examine a topic, while a model, which is a simplified representation of a real situation, can be used to explain a theory (Kemoni, 2008).

A conceptual framework is an end result of bringing together a number of related concepts to explain a given event, or give a broader understanding of the phenomenon of interest. The study began with three theories and from these the researcher used concepts or constructs drawn from these theories to come up with a conceptual framework that guided the study. Therefore, the conceptual framework surrounding records and archives management was the foundation on which this study was based. This study was guided by the records life-cycle theory, the records continuum theory and the ISO15489 standard for records management. In order to identify the core set of connections within the topic of this study, and how they fit together with related and previous studies, the researcher looked at models in the field of records and archives management. Numerous records management models have been developed internationally over the years. These

include the Records Life-cycle Model; the Records Continuum Model; the International Council on Archives Electronic Records Management Model; the Design and Implementation of Record Keeping Systems (DIRKS) model; and the Model Requirements Specifications for the Management of Electronic Records. However, most of these models originated from the records life-cycle and the records continuum models which have dominated archival discourse over the years (McKemmish, 2001; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; Upward, 2000).

Several international standards, guidelines and toolkits have also been developed that guide various records and archives management aspects. They include those from such organisations as the International Council on Archives (ICA), the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and the International Records Management Trust (IRMT). For instance, the ICA produced the General International Standard for Archival Description (ISAD (G) while the ISO produced the International Standard for Information and Documentation – Records Management (ISO 15489). Both are widely used internationally for records and archives management.

Although there are various records and archives management models such as those mentioned above, the records life-cycle model, the records continuum model, and the ISO15489 Records Management Standard guided this study. While the records life-cycle model appeals mostly to paper records and the manual system, the records continuum model was considered as a possible explanation to some of the challenges brought about by the emergency of electronic records; an area which is not addressed in the records life-cycle model. In addition, the ISO 15489 standard for Records Management is the standard that is commonly used to benchmark archival practice and this study utilised it too to assess records management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The records life-cycle model was selected because records and archival practice during the colonial and postcolonial periods in Africa, including Zimbabwe, were mainly based on the concepts of this

model especially from the 1950s onwards. Kemoni (2008) stated that the life-cycle concept has influenced the archival development of records and archives management in many parts of the world. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) concurred that the records life-cycle model is universally acceptable among archivists and records management professionals as it is the most integrated and comprehensive approach to records management. This explains why it is popularly used as a framework for managing public sector records in Eastern and Sothern Africa region (Ngulube & Tafor, 2006). This study, therefore, followed the same approach to assess recordkeeping processes in Zimbabwe. It traced the stages of the life-cycle model which portray the progression of actions taken at different times in the life of a record; typically covering its creation, capture, storage, use and disposal (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; Yusof & Chell, 2000). Thus, the study of the Ministries was done in line with these life-cycle stages so as to discover how they have been handled by the government of Zimbabwe. The records continuum model was only considered as a possible solution to some of the challenges faced in managing electronic records particularly considering their existence in virtual spaces which may not be physical as with paper records.

In view of these two models and standard selected, the study was carried out under the notion that records need to be systematically managed throughout their life-cycle. That is: from creation to disposal in a continuous and integrated way. Generally, if this does not happen, there are bound to be problems. The study therefore, acknowledged the relationship between systematic, continuous and integrated life-cycle management of records as advocated collectively by the records life-cycle and continuum models as well as international archival management standards, particularly the ISO 15489 standard for records management. Such factors as the legal and regulatory framework; resources, facilities and tools; and training, skills and awareness, which form the backbone of any recordkeeping practice, were examined within the context of these models and standards mentioned above. Thus, the researcher looked at the presence or absence of elements such as Acts,

policies, guidelines, manuals, registries, records centres, preservation tools, storage facilities, training activities and general awareness within the Zimbabwe government Ministries as well as compliance to best practices as guided by these models and standards.

A discussion of the models which guided this study follows below:

3.2.1. The records life cycle model

The records life-cycle concept originated from T.R. Schellenberg's original thoughts from 1956, when he presented a clear distinction between records management and archival management (Schellenberg, 2003; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). The concept was developed to model how the functions of; use of; and responsibility for records change as records age and move from the control of their creator to the physical custody of the archives, thus marking the disparity between records and archives management. The records life-cycle concept became prominent from the 1960s onwards (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). In this theory, records are created and actively used in relation to the purpose of their creation. When the record is no longer useful for its main purpose, a decision is taken to preserve or destroy the record. Thus the life-cycle model implies a separation between records management and archival management (McKemmish, 2001; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; Yusof & Chell, 2000). The model portrays the life of a record as going through stages of creation or receipt of information in the form of records; classification of the records or their information in some logical system; maintenance and use of the records; and their disposition through either destruction or transfer to an archives (Atherton, 1985; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; Yusof & Chell, 2000). The records life-cycle concept is thus regarded as the model which provides the framework for the effective operation of records management programmes.

According to the life-cycle model, records are considered as living organisms which have a life. It is drawn from the concept of a living organism which is born, lives and dies (Gordon, 2011; Roper & Miller, 1999a; Yusof & Chell, 2000). The life of records is such that they are created, received, disseminated, used, maintained and disposed of after their period of use. Records management therefore exists as a process through which records are controlled from their birth (creation) to their death (disposal). Thus, the life-cycle of records is divided into four major stages, that is, (i) creation or receipt of the record; (ii) organisation, maintenance and use of the record; (iii) disposition of the record, either by destruction or transfer to the permanent holdings of an archives; and (iv) archival management state (Borglund & Oberg, n.d.; Kemoni, 2008; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). The life-cycle model, whose basis is mainly on physical records, sees records as existing with a linear and decreasing grade of usage or activity that ends up with a decision whether the records should be destroyed or preserved (Borglund & Oberg, n.d.; McKemmish, 2001).

The life-cycle model is divided between records management and archival stages. Below, is an overview of the records management stages of the records life-cycle adapted from Atherton (1985):

- **Creation or receipt and capture of information in the form of records:** The first stage of the records life-cycle involves records being created, collected or received through the daily transactions of an organisation or an individual and can include a wide range of records such as printed or electronic reports, mails, receipts, and documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of the organisation or individual.

- **Organisation, maintenance and use of the records:** The second stage of the life-cycle can include classification and filing, retrieving, use, duplication, printing, dissemination, release or exchange of the information in the record.

- **Disposition through either destruction or transfer to an archives:** The third stage, the disposition stage records are assessed to determine their retention value using set records disposal schedules. This leads to either the preservation or destruction of the record.

The above processes usually constitute what is commonly referred to as records management. Thereafter, the next stage, the fourth stage of the life-cycle of records involves taking care of those records that, after appraisal, have not been destroyed but are selected for permanent preservation due to their enduring and long-term value. The activities that follow at this stage of the life-cycle make up the archival stage or the archives management stage. They consist of:

- **Selection and acquisition of the records by an archives:** Selection is the process of choosing appropriate items to add to the collection. Acquisition is the subsequent step of ensuring that the selected material is added to the collection.

- **Description of the records in inventories, finding aids:** This is the process of recording information about the nature and content of the records in archival custody.

- **Reference and use of the information by researchers and scholars:** This involves the provision of facilities and services that enable the researcher to use the archives and its records once access to them is approved.

- **Preservation of the records:** This refers to the totality of processes and operations involved in the protection of records and archives against damage or deterioration.

The study traced the activities outlined in these stages while assessing records and archives management processes at the Ministries and the National Archives in Zimbabwe. Documents supporting these stages were also analysed.

3.2.2. The records continuum model

The records continuum concept was formulated as an archival model in the 1990s by Frank Upward of the Monash University in Australia at the influence of Jay Atherton's theories. Atherton had questioned the distinct stages of the life-cycle model, and proposed the use of an integrated approach for records and archives (McKemmish, 2001). In his original ideas, Atherton postulated that all stages of the records are interrelated forming a continuum in which both records managers and archivists are involved, to varying degrees, in the on-going management of recorded information. Yusof and Chell (2000) also argued that the life-cycle concept is not applicable to technology-generated records but is more appealing to paper-based records. This is because records in the electronic environment are no longer tangible objects, and for this reason, the Australian Society of Archivists (as cited in Yusof & Chell, 2000, p. 137) asserts that it is the content of the record and no longer the medium that becomes the concern in records management in the technology environment of today. The content for technology-dependent records is prone to transformation and conversion, for instance, during the life of a record, systems can be upgraded and new products and services introduced. Many records will need migration to new forms and issues of compatibility and readability arise (Yusof & Chell, 2000).

Thus the continuum model has been propagated especially to address the challenges of managing electronic records in order to guarantee their reliability, authenticity and completeness throughout their useful life. Many authors including McKemmish (2001) and Upward (2000) found the continuum model's strength coming from its emphasis on consistency and coherence as well as integration of processes. These qualities tend to be weak in the records life-cycle model, which has been criticised for creating a distinction between the roles of records managers and archivists during the life of a record (Atherton, 1985; McKemmish, 2001; Tough, 2006). In particular, McKemmish (2001) stated that the continuum model "challenges the traditional understandings which differentiate 'archives' from 'record'" (p. 335). Thus the records continuum model takes a different approach from the life-cycle model in that records managers and archivists are involved with records from the design of electronic records management systems (ERMS). They establish the requirements for appropriate maintenance of the physical records and, monitor compliance by records creators. The continuum model expands the role of the archivists from being mere recipients at the end of the life of a record to include participation in the production and use of records. It has gained substantial acceptance worldwide as the best practice model for managing records and archives, especially for electronic records (Kemoni, 2008). While the continuum model recognises the stages of the life-cycle concept, it advocates for an integrated approach to managing records rather than one made up of separate stages. Closely aligned to the life-cycle principle, the continuum concept suggests that four actions continue or recur throughout the life of a record: identification of records; intellectual control of them; provision of access to them; and physical control of them, but the distinction between records management and archives management need not be rigidly maintained (Roper & Millar, 1999b). It encourages archivists to be proactive rather than reactive as was their traditional role where they only dealt with records at the end of their cycle.

In this study, while examining recordkeeping processes at the Ministries and the National Archives of Zimbabwe, the researcher paid particular attention to the presence or absence of integrated approaches to managing records and archives; and to the interrelationships within the various life-cycle stages; as well as the continuous management of records and archives as advocated by the records continuum model. Thus, the continuum model was used in the study as a solution to some of the challenges of the manual recordkeeping system which previously operated well with the records life cycle model during the manual era.

3.2.3. ISO 15489: International Standard for Information and Documentation – Records Management

The International Standard on Records Management, ISO 15489 was launched in October 2001. It was designed to meet the on-going generic needs for recordkeeping in government and non-government or any organisation. The standard has two parts: Part 1 generally gives a high-level framework for recordkeeping and explains the benefits of good records management, the legal considerations and the importance of making someone responsible for recordkeeping. This part also looks at what is needed for good records management, designing recordkeeping systems, records management processes, auditing and training (Crockett & Foster, 2004). Part 2 gives guidelines on putting the advice given in Part 1 into practice as well as providing specific detail on developing records management policy and responsibility statements and suggests a process for developing recordkeeping systems. Also provided is advice on developing records processes and controls such as thesauri, disposal authorities, and security and access arrangements. It discusses how these tools may be used to manage records including capturing, registering, classifying and storing them. Specific advice is also given on setting up monitoring, auditing and training programmes. The standard is intended to provide a framework for planning and implementing a records management programme, and institutions may use this standard as an auditing tool or for

compliance assessment (Crockett & Foster, 2004). In this study, the standard was used as a bench-mark to assess records management practices in Zimbabwe, with the ISO 15489 standard acting as the desired framework, as it spells out what is required for good records management. The standard was helpful for the study as it provided check points on records management practice issues.

3.3.   Review of literature on records and archives management in Africa

In order to make a comprehensive assessment of records and archives management in Zimbabwe, this literature review was organised according to key concepts that emerged from literature surrounding the management of records and archives in Africa, of which Zimbabwe is part. Such information on Africa and the southern African region was particularly important so as to situate Zimbabwe in a broader context which enables better and in-depth understanding of the Zimbabwean case. Thus, the literature review included studies carried out in other African countries that reported on recordkeeping problems or phenomena. Examples of other African experiences are presented not in any particular order but at random from former British colonies and from the southern African region both of which Zimbabwe is part. Furthermore, literature from studies or projects carried out by international organisations such as the International Records Management Trust (IRMT) and the World Bank was also reviewed as these organisations have spearheaded archival development initiatives in Africa for many years.

The researcher paid attention to literature that gave insight on the way records and archives have been managed in both colonial and postcolonial African nations, particularly identifying the strengths or weaknesses of the systems. It was necessary to look at the colonial recordkeeping systems to provide comparison with the postcolonial period using empirical sources. The experience of other African nations has been widely covered in many studies (Abioye, 2007;

Barata, Bennet & Cain, 2001; Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000; Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos, 2009; Harris, 2002; Luyombya & Sennabulya, 2012; Mnjama, 2003, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006). This experience was important to the Zimbabwean case study because experiences, problems and challenges have been similar in most African countries. Furthermore, the case of Zimbabwe has been part of some of these regional and general African studies, which provided important insights on Zimbabwe. Below are some of the emerging themes that were prominent in the literature on records and archives management in Africa including Zimbabwe and they form the subdivisions of this section of the literature review.

3.3.1. Colonial recordkeeping systems in Africa

Two distinct issues emerge from the literature: the first acknowledges the presence, in the colonial period, of recordkeeping systems that were functional and effective to serve the purposes for colonial administration. The second issue views colonial archival systems as not so fully developed to enable their continued sustenance in later years when colonialism ended.

Several authors (Dristas & Haig, 2014; Mazikana, 1988; Musembi, 1988; Namhila, 2014, Tough, 2009, Wamukoya, 1994); have written on colonial recordkeeping systems in Africa. However, before analysing what these authors wrote about, it is imperative at this juncture to note that while many countries in Africa, for example in East Africa, did not have established archival institutions in their countries at independence, some systems were in place for the management of records and archives even though they may not have been fully developed as noted by Wamukoya (1994). This study looked at the operating systems that were in place, regardless of the existence of a formal archival institution or not in each of the countries. This is because in the modern sense and in many countries, the institution of the national archives usually takes care of both the records and the archives of its country. Whereas, in the earlier years of colonial administration, the national

archives existed more for the management of non-current records; the archives, while the current and semi-current records were largely the responsibility of the creating department. Such situations were observed in Zimbabwe by the Chief Archivist at the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia (Baxter, 1963) and at the Nigerian National Archives by Abioye (2007). Failure to make this distinction has resulted in some archivists not realising the different roles played by the creating departments and the national archives. As a result they have measured a country's success or failure with the presence or absence of a national archives. For example, Musembi's (1988) assessment the situation in East Africa was on the basis of the non-availability of a national archival institution in each of the countries of that region and concluded that the state of archival development (including record management) in those countries was very low. Of course, the presence of the national archives is necessary to complete the journey of the record but a distinction between records and archives management services is necessary in order to pin-point the actual source of problems.

The two issues mentioned above were crucial to this study, as they set the pace for the investigation on postcolonial Zimbabwe's records and archives management. Knowledge of the former dispensation (colonial) was necessary to enable the researcher to draw the colonial-postcolonial dimension of the study. This perspective provided the foundation for investigating the reasons for any recordkeeping problems in Zimbabwe's Public Service, as insinuated in many of the regional and African studies mentioned earlier in this chapter. This was done by identifying the factors that were strong in the past but were weak or absent in the later period. It was meant to assist in finding possible solutions perhaps through redesigning recordkeeping strategies to suit current conditions because the systems of the past could be irrelevant in today's set up. This is the essence of what this study sought to find out. The two emerging issues are discussed below.

First, the existence of good record and archives management systems in the colonial period in Africa has been reported in many studies (Barata, Bennett, Cain & Routledge, 2001; Mazikana, 1996, 2009; Tough, 2009; Musembi, 2000; Nengomasha, 2009). For instance, Mazikana (1996, 2009); and Tough (2009) noted that similar and efficient systems were set-up in most of the African colonies, in particular those of the British Empire which shared common administrative and archival heritage and were built along the central registry concept. Nengomasha (2009) also made the same observations for Namibia. She found evidence that there once were good recordkeeping systems in place in the Namibian ministries and departments confirming earlier studies on Namibia by Barata, Bennett, Cain and Routledge (2001).

The same view is supported by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) for Zimbabwe while Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) and Musembi (2000) made similar observations in the case of Kenya. They all noted that there were well-established systems in the two countries, Kenya and Zimbabwe during the colonial period. Meanwhile, Ngoepe (2008) also noted that recordkeeping was highly appreciated by the former administrators in South Africa, but this had since declined in the post-apartheid era. All the authors cited above alluded to the fact that recordkeeping systems were good during the colonial administration but they ceased to be so after independence. In Zanzibar, a purpose-designed archives building was completed in 1964 and according to Musembi (1988), the Zanzibar archives were "well housed in their permanent home, which has air conditioned storage, some facilities for repair by lamination and microfilm equipment" something he described as "a very encouraging beginning" (p. 118).

The case of Zimbabwe was in one way similar to other British colonies in the sense that recordkeeping systems were modelled along the central registry system. However, it was slightly different in that it had an established national archives as early as 1935 including archival

legislation in the form of the National Archives Act of 1935. Thus, the case of Zimbabwe became slightly different from other African countries, which only got their national archival institutions established just before or soon after independence. For instance, Tanzania got its independence in 1962, and National Archives in 1965; Nigeria National Archives in 1954; independence 1960; Kenya National Archives in 1955 and independence in 1962. Zimbabwe's independence was in 1980, but throughout the colonial period, Zimbabwe was renowned for having one of the best archival establishments and archival operations in sub-Saharan Africa (Dristas & Haig, 2014; Magaya & Lowry, 2012; Manyambula, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; Tough, 2009). This study reveals that good systems continued into the postcolonial period in Zimbabwe but with challenges. These issues will be covered more in chapters to come covering findings.

The second issue emerging from the literature is that some of the colonial recordkeeping systems were not fully developed. Musembi (1988) supported this view when he analysed colonial recordkeeping systems in East Africa. According to him, throughout the colonial period in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika (now Tanzania) and Zanzibar, the British Colonial Office showed very little interest in the management of official records; they:

> did not show any serious attempt to set up proper archives services…colonialism was satisfied with sending the most vital documents to Britain for preservation, destroy others or letting them just rot...as a result of this situation, proper archives keeping was not, almost throughout the colonial period, recognised as a necessary function for an efficient public service (p. 116).

The national archives in these countries were established either just before or just after independence as observed by Tough (2009), who wrote that many national archives had not been established until it became clear that independence was imminent. Clearly, Musembi based his assertions on the establishment of the institution of the national archives as the basis for all records

and archival work and for him, when it was absent; then recordkeeping was doomed. However, there is a need to look at the management of current and semi-current records on its own. Several authors (Barata, Kutzner & Wamukoya, 2001; International Records Management Trust (IRMT), 2011a; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; World Bank & IRMT, 2000), established that systems were in place to capture, use, and manage records in their current and semi-current stages during the colonial period. Where national archival institutions were not established as in East Africa, the archives repositories for vital records were overseas, as presented by Musembi (1988). However, for Musembi, such administrative structures as the ones he described, which did not recognise the importance of good records and archives management became "one of the dubious gifts from colonial administration to the independent governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika" (p. 118). Similarly, Asogwa (2012) concluded that "[t]he failure of the colonial imperialist to enact strong and credible archival legislation in their colonies contributed to deficient physical facilities and marginalisation of national archives and records" (p. 199). Wamukoya (1994) stated that whether the archives were established or not before independence, what is largely true is that "the nascent archives centres during the colonial period failed to develop beyond serving the interests of colonial administration" (p. 204).

Therefore, in this regard, literature seems to agree that there were systems in place to manage records in current and semi-current stages in most African countries, even though some of them were informal (Barata, Bennett, Cain & Routledge, 2001; Mazikana, 1996, 2009; Tough, 2009; Musembi, 2000; Nengomasha, 2009). What seems to have been absent, particularly in some East African countries were facilities for the management of archives leaving the countries to rely on overseas repositories as explained by Musembi (1988). Other authors (such as Magaya & Lowry, 2012; Mazikana, 1988; Tough, 2009) agreed that there were established archival systems especially in the Southern African region during the colonial period. Except for South Africa,

Namibia and Mozambique, many of the countries in East and Southern Africa were British colonies that shared similar colonial experiences and types of administration. However, some authors such as Musembi (1988) did not specify clearly if they referred to records or archives. There was a tendency to group together records and archives management in the assessment of recordkeeping processes. All in all, the state of archival development for both records and archives management as presented in this section was important as the study established a direct relationship between the colonial and postcolonial experiences even though the experiences could have been different depending on the country. For instance, both Namibia and Zimbabwe had functional recordkeeping systems but in Namibia these collapsed at independence while in Zimbabwe they survived.

3.3.2. Postcolonial recordkeeping in Africa

Another prominent issue emerging from the literature is with regards to the collapse of recordkeeping systems in the postcolonial period. With this, general crisis situations in the manner in which records and archives are managed have been reported in many postcolonial African nations. According to Mazikana (1996, 2009), the symptoms of this failure have been evidenced in situations of registry systems barely functioning or out-dated; the non-availability of basic registry equipment and supplies; antique or inappropriate file classification; little or no training for registry staff; problems of files which cannot be located; no records centre facilities in the regions; overcrowded records centre spaces; non-existent record appraisal; no retention/disposal schedules; poor or non-existent records transfers; backlogs in archives processing; poor physical wellbeing of collections; and equipment breakdowns. Such is the general picture painted of many postcolonial recordkeeping systems in many African nations where Zimbabwe is also insinuated.

The problems faced by many postcolonial African countries, as articulated above have also been extensively covered by various other authors (such as Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000; Burns et al., 2009; Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008; Mnjama, 1993; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; World Bank & IRMT, 2000). In particular, the World Bank and the International Records Management Trust (World Bank & IRMT, 2000) described public sector recordkeeping systems in many developing countries as weak, and noted that some have actually collapsed to the point where they barely function. This situation "is particularly evident in countries that were part of European-dominated colonial regimes… and in the years following independence, this situation deteriorated progressively as part of a general decline in public administration" (World Bank & IRMT, 2000, p. 7). As a result, many of the IRMT's research projects in Africa were meant to address some of these problems. For example, the study done on the East and Southern African region's public sector systems (2006); the Tanzania case study (2007); and the assessment of the East African regional situation (2011). In 2000, the IRMT attempted conducting a similar case study in Zimbabwe (though focusing on financial records), but only managed to carry out the first of the two project phases, which was abandoned before completion (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000). The study established that postcolonial Zimbabwe had registries to manage all other records except financial records. They also noted that it was a source of best practice especially in the area of evaluating and monitoring of recordkeeping systems but lacked the capacity to fully implement some of the processes.

A survey of archival institutions in the ESARBICA region (including Zimbabwe) by Mnjama (2005) revealed many challenges which led him to pose the question: "is there hope for archival institutions in the ESARBICA region?" This became a crucial question for this study as it sought in-depth explanations on recordkeeping processes in Zimbabwe. Ngulube and Tafor (2006) also conducted a similar study on the same region and corroborated Mnjama's findings when they

noted "gross inadequacies in the management of records" (p. 57) due to limited resources, absence of standards, inadequate training, neglect of electronic records and a general lack of legislation and guidelines. They identified problems ranging from funding, lack of skills and standards to manage records and archives, poor appraisal practices, preservation challenges and ethical issues, among others. Burns, Ferris and Liatsopoulos (2009) described most postcolonial African recordkeeping situations as that of 'collapse', 'decline' or 'relative non-existence'.

Kemoni and Ngulube (2008) noted that in postcolonial Kenya there actually were sufficient records management platforms to all government structures but implementation was poor. Similarly, Ngoepe (as cited in Kemoni & Ngulube, 2008) identified a notable decline in recordkeeping standards and drew a remarkable distinction between the apartheid period in South Africa and the post-apartheid era.

As for Tanzania, the national archives was only established three years after independence in 1965 but, according to Musembi (1988), it also inherited a "culture of indifference to archives keeping during the colonial period [which] was passed on to the independent countries, and must be the causes of indifference to demands by archives for greater official support during the post-independence era" (p. 118). Manyambula (2009) also identified problems in postcolonial Tanzania and confirmed many of the common problems faced in postcolonial Africa. He wrote:

> Although there were early efforts to control and manage records from their creation to their final disposition, the situation deteriorated year after year. Files continued to increase, clogging the most valuable office spaces. Incidences of lost files, poor services to the public, and ghost workers continued to increase. Closed files were not separated from the current ones. Hundreds of thousands of files which had for a long time ceased to have administrative, financial, legal or historical significance continued to be held in registries and offices (p. 25).

He however, acknowledged the efforts put by the government through its Public Service Reform programme launched in 1997 where the Records Management project was one of its sub-components. Magaya and Lowry (2012) also mentioned this move as one of the most significant developments in Tanzania's recordkeeping after independence which brought significant improvements to the country's records and archives management. In their Tanzania Country Report, the IRMT (2011a) similarly acknowledged the progress that had been done in Tanzania since 1997 and listed key reforms accomplished particularly in the areas of legislation; establishing a records and archives division under the President's office; creating a records cadre across government; developing and introducing new file classification, file control systems, retention and disposal schedules; upgrading the records offices, and developing professional training facilities (p. 9-10). Thus, the study acknowledged these positive developments in Tanzania but also noted the postcolonial collapse that was experienced before these developments.

Other than the Tanzanian project, the IRMT also carried out records management improvement programmes in The Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leon between 1990 and 2006 (IRMT, n.d.). In these projects, they worked on various projects including conducting workshops to restore order and to clear backlogs in registries of the National Archives of the participant countries; assisting the governments in all aspects of records management including the drafting of related legislation; developing records management reform programmes; conducting records management needs assessment; and developing new systems for managing personnel and subject files for key government agencies.

Problems were noted for postcolonial Uganda. Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) found that a significant volume of archival records from independence in 1962 to 2011 remained with creating departments due to lack of policies and procedures for records scheduling and transfer (p. 77).

They noted that the Uganda National Archives lacked the capacity to guide the ministries and departments and these in turn had devised ad hoc means of managing their records. Musembi (1988) further remarked that the archives in Uganda "fell into a coma after 1957 when the expatriate archivist left…and in my view, it is still in that state [in 1986]" (p. 117). Recent studies by Luyombya, 2011; Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) and Okello-Obura (2012) have revealed that although there have been significant legislative and structural changes from 2001 to the Ugandan archival system; recordkeeping still lacks effective implementation due to lack of funding and personnel and as a result, good records management still remains a challenge.

In the case of Zanzibar, Musembi (1988) gave the example of the expatriate archivist who after he left at independence in 1964 "thereafter, the Zanzibar Archives entered a new phase of degeneration…by early 1980's the situation had reached a disaster level" (p. 116). Musembi further remarked that:

> What is in fact a much more worrying situation is that Zanzibar was not alone in this state of advanced archival underdevelopment and helplessness…the Ugandan archives service, if there is now such a service, must have gone through greater disorientation and confusion after independence (p. 115).

From its independence in 1954, Nigeria also witnessed collapsing recordkeeping systems as reported by Abioye (2012), who conclude that:

> Despite the gains of the past, archives administration in Nigeria is still faced with enormous challenges. These include a lack of appreciation of the importance and value of archives, particularly in the public sector, poor funding for public archival institutions, shortages of requisite personnel for archives administration, and low staff morale (p. 25).

He further noted that in the National Archives of Nigeria "facilities have decayed over the years, equipment is out-dated, repositories are congested and holdings are disintegrating" (p. 25), indications of infrastructure decay. Similarly, Asogwa (2012) also noted that at independence, most recently established national archives, including Nigeria, found themselves in challenging situations and the state of records and archives management in most countries deteriorated progressively, a scenario he described as archival underdevelopment.

Nengomasha (2009) highlighted the poor status of records management in the Public Service of Namibia. She found problems of lack of trained records management personnel; low salaries; lack of records management awareness among staff; absence of registries; absence of filing systems, confirming the research findings of other studies such as those by Barata, Kutzner, and Wamukoya (2001); Barata, Bennett, Cain and Serumaga, (2001); and Keakopa, (2007). All the above researchers concurred to this distinct decline of previously working systems in Namibia and gave evidence of the postcolonial nation struggling to provide basic records and archives management services. In particular, the IRMT's Namibia Case Study (Barata, Bennett, Cain & Serumaga, 2001) reported that there "was no active government-wide records management programme" and as a result "the records management function as a whole has virtually no presence throughout government" (pp. 4-5).

All the above studies are examples of some of the accounts that show the general picture painted of many postcolonial African nations. However, while these studies provided a good understanding of the nature of records and archives management in Africa, none of them focused directly on investigating why recordkeeping problems persisted as well as tackling the problems from a perspective of colonial legacy. At most, the studies managed to investigate and acknowledge the existence of recordkeeping problems, the nature of the problems, where they were located and how

prevalent they were. Though writing about electronic records, Asogwa (2012) confirmed that a lot of writers on records and archives management in Africa and have revealed a terrible state of archives and records underdevelopment in the continent. Similarly, Namhila (2014) categorised studies on problems of decolonised countries and observed that there was a tendency to focus on problems of current and semi-current records management, issues of maintenance, and preservation, training, and occasionally on displaced archives. Her opinion is that while African archivists are lamenting the lack of recordkeeping culture among postcolonial governments, they fail to realise the shortcomings of colonial recordkeeping and archiving practices. Such shortcomings were also of interest to this study as it sought to contextualise the management of records and archives in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service. Some of the shortcomings of the colonial period identified in this study are discussed in Section 3.3.3 below.

In summary, some of the prominent findings from the studies cited above include: poor implementation of recordkeeping systems; decline in recordkeeping standards or systems; gross inadequacies in the management of records and weak or collapsing recordkeeping systems. However, these studies did not deliberately investigate why these recordkeeping problems were prevalent and persisted in postcolonial Africa. Taking this investigative angle was critical for this study in an effort to find deeper explanations to some of the issues raised in the literature and how they apply to the Zimbabwean context of this study. This study aimed to fill this gap in knowledge, and as the study reveals, the concepts of colonial recordkeeping and postcolonial experiences are, to some extent, interrelated to the transitional processes, which also tended to determine the collapse or survival of colonial recordkeeping systems.

3.3.3. Colonial legacy

While other authors such as those cited earlier on in this chapter found good aspects in the colonial system, Harris (2002) held contrary views to those that saw strength in the colonial systems. He viewed colonial circumstances of oppression and rapid transition to democracy as poor foundations that negatively impacted on postcolonial recordkeeping operations. Tough (2009) viewed current development issues in Africa in "a wider political and economic context" (p. 187) whereby he acknowledged failure by some colonial administrations to fully develop recordkeeping systems. However, he also noted other peculiar cases such as that of South Africa where the colonial administration "delivered effective records management to the Apartheid state" (Tough, 2009) yet the post-apartheid South Africa faced some recordkeeping challenges. He then cautioned on what he termed the 'foundation myth' and raised issues of poor staffing, politics and political conflicts, inadequate resources, lack of interest in accountability issues, economic downturn in the postcolonial period as the reasons for poor recordkeeping. Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos (2009, p. 4) also cautioned that in such legacy discussions, there is need to "distinguish between the cause and symptom" thereby raising questions on the colonial-postcolonial discourse. According to these authors,

> [f]ault for the failure to create appropriate records and information schemes lies largely with the colonial administrators; recognising the power associated with written records, they often had no interest in detailing the records of the African people; instead desiring to detail their own actions for their controlling governments (p. 4).

Namhila (2015) however, identified 'colonial gaps' in Namibia's postcolonial archives. In her view such gaps emanated from the colonial administrators' lack of interest in documenting records of the colonised people. She argues that this has made it difficult for current archival system to provide an effective service to its citizens. In this case, she suggests a link between the past and the present.

It is critical to note, however, that colonial administrations operated on limited budgets and were required to be self-sponsoring for them to be worth it to the colonial master. This does not however, justify failure to fully develop recordkeeping systems but it provides better understanding of the various circumstances under which they operated. The consequences of such poorly developed recordkeeping systems were described by Burns, Ferris and Liatsopoulos, (2009):

> An additional burden upon countries emerging from colonialism was that they were not given the appropriate systems to run their new countries' governments; there was no creation of adequate record keeping systems, and the ones created by the colonial powers were not maintained (p. 4)

However, contrary to this view, Kukubo and Seabo (1992), while acknowledging the presence of a bad colonial past, they also maintained that Africa's postcolonial governments should not continue to dwell on the colonial past because "there are no colonialists to blame for our shortcomings" (p. x). Earlier on Musembi (1988) had raised similar sentiments for Uganda when he said that "after about 25 years since Uganda got its independence, it would be futile to keep on blaming colonialism for the non-existence of archives service" (p. 121). This view suggested that colonial legacy cannot be held accountable for today's problems, but rather that many of the problems faced today emanate purely from the weaknesses of the postcolonial administrators. Therefore, such legacy issues as those raised in this section, need to be carefully considered in any colonial-postcolonial discourse so that they are put into perspective of the whole matter of postcolonial recordkeeping.

All in all, the two views expressed above were interesting as they insinuated the origins of recordkeeping problems from two different perspectives: the first blaming the colonial era for current problems, while the second pointed to the own weaknesses of current administrations for

the collapsing recordkeeping systems. This provided critical points of investigation for this study in an effort to find in-depth explanations to recordkeeping processes in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service. Notable also from Chapter 2, the context chapter, the study suggests that the colonial period created good recordkeeping system, especially in Zimbabwe. This information provided guidance on how colonial legacy could be tackled in the Zimbabwe case study. The sections below examine in detail what the literature says regarding the Zimbabwe situation.

3.3.4.   Records and archives management in Zimbabwe

This section covers literature on records and archives management in Zimbabwe. As previously noted, the case of Zimbabwe has been reported in many regional and African studies which insinuated the presence of recordkeeping problems in postcolonial Africa (Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos, 2009; Garaba, 2007; Mazikana, 1996, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; Tough, 2009; Wamukoya, 1994; World Bank & IRMT, 2000). In light of the issues highlighted from the colonial period, below are some of the issues that emerged from the literature on Zimbabwe.

3.3.4.1.   Colonial period

Recordkeeping during the colonial period in Zimbabwe has been covered extensively in Chapter 2. However, in summary, the literature shows that there were well-established recordkeeping systems in the country particularly archival systems in the form of the National Archives of Southern Rhodesia, which was established in 1935. The institution took care of the archival records of the country and did so very well to earn itself a good reputation up to the time of independence. The National Archives Act of 1935 was the legal basis for archival operations. The records management system that operated was modelled along the central registry system. Although there were challenges in the records management service, as early as 1948, positive developments were

noted as observed by Wallis (as cited in Dristas & Haig, 2014), who noted that "from 1935, the Archives grew slowly, expanding its efforts in records management, and intending to provide a very progressive and modern service…the driving goal…was to build the most efficient and well-organised public archives in the southern hemisphere, and many observers thought he [head of archives] had succeeded" (p. 43). Similarly, Magaya and Lowry (2012) while writing about the establishment of the National Archives of Tanzania in 1965 remarked that Tanzania "looked to the Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (the Central African Archives) as an example of a well-functioning archives service" (p. 49). Many other authors such as Dristas and Haig (2014); Mnjama (2005); and Tough (2009) concurred that archival services in colonial Zimbabwe were managed fairly well.

3.3.4.2.   Postcolonial period

A search for literature on Zimbabwe revealed a general scarcity of published information sources relating specifically to Zimbabwe in the area of records and archives management, and especially those that did in-depth analysis of the entire cycle from creation to disposal of the record. However, the limited literature available on Zimbabwe relates to studies done as part of regional or general African studies, which include Burns, Ferris, and Liatsopoulos (2009); Mazikana (1996, 2009); Mnjama (2005); Ngulube and Tafor (2006); and Tough (2009). Other studies that covered Zimbabwe focused on specific recordkeeping issues (as opposed to looking at the entire records life-cycle). For instance, the study on financial records by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000); Ngulube (2000)'s study on professionalism and ethics; Garaba (2007)'s study on appraisal and Chaterera, Ngulube and Rodrigues (2014) whose study focused on records surveys. This study attempted to conduct an in-depth and comprehensive analysis of the entire records and archives processes of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. This allowed the researcher to make a broader assessment of 'failure' or 'collapsing systems' as reported in other studies. Cited below, are some

of the studies that have looked at some aspects of the records and archives management processes in Zimbabwe.

In the IRMT case study on Zimbabwe's financial records, Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000), observed that postcolonial Zimbabwe was a source of best practice especially in the area of evaluating and monitoring of recordkeeping systems but lacked resources to fully operate and meet demand from across the whole country. This observation was interesting as it came in the midst of reports of ultimate failure to manage records and archives in most of postcolonial Africa, Zimbabwe included. Ngulube (2000), while focusing on professionalism and ethics among the Zimbabwe Public Service's recordkeeping staff, noted a general lack of professionalism which he attributed to training problems. Garaba (2007) found challenges in the appraisal system while Chaterera, Ngulube and Rodrigues (2014) concluded that records surveys were failing to fully attain their intended goal of enhancing proper records management practices in Zimbabwe confirming what Dewah and Mnjama (2013) had also found earlier on. In their study of the Gweru Records Centre in Zimbabwe, they also found low funding of the NAZ, which they attributed to its low status as a department within the Ministry of Home Affairs. A book published to celebrate 75 years of the existence of the National Archives of Zimbabwe (Ngulube, 2012) traced archival development from the colonial to the postcolonial period. The book acknowledges the huge investment that had been put in archives and records management both during and after the colonial period but pointed out the shortcomings of both eras.

Mnjama (2005) also noted that Zimbabwe had "long established and highly developed [recordkeeping] institutions" (p. 457). Tough (2009) wrote that the Central African Archive (CAA), which was born out of the archive in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), was "the outstanding archive repository in sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 189).

Even though Zimbabwe's postcolonial experience has not been covered as extensively as other countries in the region, these studies suggested that pre-independence systems in Africa, Zimbabwe included, were stronger than that of the postcolonial period. In light of this, the study sought to find out, in detail, the status of the complete cycle of records from creation to disposal in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service; the reasons behind any recordkeeping problems and why they persisted. In addition, the study sought to find out if the situation reported in other African countries is applicable to Zimbabwe and to what extent. These issues are further revealed in the findings in Chapter 5.

3.3.5. Records management best practice and standards

This section examines what the literature says about the experiences of African countries regarding best practice and the application of standards as guided by recordkeeping models and standards.

Wamukoya and Lowry (2013) produced the Regulatory Framework for the Management of Records, a product of an IRMT research project conducted in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania from 2009 to 2011. It set out the basic elements that must be in place at the national level for the management of public sector records. The elements include legislation, policy, standards, procedures, staffing, infrastructure and facilities, and capacity building (training). In the same vein, Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) also postulated that "[a] successful public archives development initiative requires the establishment of infrastructure to manage archives, from creation. This involves developing legislation; policies and procedures; systems and structures; and preparing long-term strategic plans that prioritise public archives management" (p. 67). These issues raised by these authors are examined in this section covering the broad themes which guided the study; that is, the legal and regulatory framework; resources, facilities and tools; and, training, skills and awareness for both records and archives management.

Many authors (Barata, Kutzner & Wamukoya, 2001; Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos, 2009; Mazikana, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; Tough, 2009, World Bank & IRMT, 2000) found challenges in the management of the entire record life-cycle in many African countries. In particular, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) identified problems that included limited resources, lack of standards and ethics, inadequate training, incomprehensive legislations and a benign neglect of electronic records in the ESARBICA region. They maintained that these problems prevented institutions from managing records throughout their life-cycle. However, in the case of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, Wamukoya and Lowry (2013) acknowledged that while procedures for the life-cycle management of records have been developed, they are all for paper records. They also identified challenges, which have stifled effective life-cycle management of records and these include lack of space, poor records storage conditions, lack of senior management support, absence of procedures for the life-cycle management of digital records, and lack of mandate to enforce compliance with schedules. In addition, they identified a lack of professional qualifications and experience to manage digital records.

Writing about Nigeria, Abioye (2007) noted that "for a very long time, the institute's [National Archives of Nigeria] emphasis had been on archival preservation at the expense of records management" (p. 60), and further underscored that the quality of archives depends largely on the records management practices at the various stages of the record life cycle. His conclusion was that the National Archives of Nigeria had shown little concern for the management of records at the current and semi-current stages of the life-cycle. In the same vein, Akussah (2005) wrote that prior to 1997 the National Archives of Ghana was largely responsible for managing only the archival stage of public records, leaving the active and semi-active stages to be managed by government offices through their registries. Records management responsibilities were only added to the institution when in 1997, the Public Records and Archives Administration Act, No. 535, was

passed. Similarly, Mazikana (2009) also raised the issue of archival institutions being "involved in front end records management…[yet] records management should be about getting it at the point of creation of the records" (p. 48). His concern was that by the time the record comes to the next stage "everything will have gone wrong" (p. 48). All these authors point to poor life-cycle management experiences.

Regarding training, skills, and awareness, though efforts have been put in recent years to open training facilities in the region and Africa in general. Despite this, archival skills in many African countries remain inadequate due to staff shortages as a result of lack of funding to recruit more staff (Abioye, 2007; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006). In addition, there is a serious lack of technical skills to employ the use of ICTs in the management of records as alluded to by many authors such as Mazikana (2009); Mutiti (2001); Nengomasha (2009, 2012); and Wamukoya and Lowry (2012). In particular, Mutiti (2001), in a survey of e-records management in the ESARBICA countries found that there was limited progress in the management of electronic records by public institutions. Her study revealed that countries in the region lacked legal and administrative frameworks within which to operate in order to develop and implement electronic records management programmes. Almost 15 years later, there is no evidence in the literature of any significant progress since then in many of the countries covered by Mutiti. Using the example of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania as explained by Wamukoya and Lowry (2013), inadequacy in skills is mostly felt in the area of the management of records in electronic format. The National Archives in these countries do have professional archivists as well as training institutions for capacity building but they all lack the digital aspect; they focus more on paper records. Mazikana (2007) noted that the curricula of most archival training institutions in Africa still focus on paper records with very little attention on electronic records and if ever it exists in the curricula, it is just theoretical – it lacks the practical elements that widely address issues of actual practice when faced with real life scenarios at the

work place. He suggested that the curricula be more practical oriented in the field of electronic records and IT issues.

Other authors who have written about the management of electronic records in Africa such as Asogwa (2012; Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya, (2001); IRMT (2011a); Nengomasha (2009) maintained that the continuum model, which mostly applies to records in electronic format, has not been diligently practised in Africa due to lack of facilities and tools to capture and manage such records in electronic format even though they are being produced every day. More specifically, Okello-Obura (2012); Mazikana (2009); Wamukoya and Lowry (2013) collectively pointed out to inadequate resources for the management of electronic records for Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Wamukoya and Lowry (2013) saw no integration between records management issues and ICT or e-government initiatives – "Those managing such initiatives have no point of reference to guide them in ensuring that records management considerations can be respected" (p. 154). Such lack of coordination defeats the whole point of both the life-cycle and the continuum concepts because records in all formats are not managed in all stages in a continuum manner.

Regarding the legal and regulatory framework for archival work in Africa, many authors (such as Luyombya & Sennabulya, 2012; Mnjama, 2003; Tough & Tough; 2012; Wamukoya & Lowry; 2013) collectively acknowledged positive developments that have been made in the area of enacting or overhauling of archival legislation in Botswana, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in the 1990s. However, particularly for Uganda, some of the provisions put forth by the Records and Archives Act of 2001 have not been implemented fully (Luyombya, 2012; Luyombya & Sennabulya, 2012). In addition, none of the East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania has the mandate and tools to enforce compliance with schedules that have been set (Wamukoya & Lowry, 2013). The same could also apply to other countries in Africa, as no

evidence has been provided in the literature on which country has successfully dealt with enforcement and monitoring of compliance effectively. In Zimbabwe, Dube (2011); Mutsagondo and Chaterera (2014) highlighted the inadequacies of the National Archives of Zimbabwe Act (1986) in relation to managing electronic records.

Wamukoya and Lowry (2013) raised another issue on the positioning of the national archival institution within government and opine that so far "only the national archives in Tanzania is well positioned in the government to carry out its legislated role" (p. 153). They maintained that "its position in the Office of the President gives it the profile and visibility to enable it to have influence over the management of records across the government" (p. 153). The positioning of the national archives within the structures of a government is raised as an issue due to the role it plays in the management of the national records and archives in many countries. If the national archives is poorly placed, it may remain ineffective for most of the time without the power to work with the rest of the government arms. Abioye (2007) wrote about the several ministries to which the National Archives of Nigeria has been moved to over the years and commented that "most of these ministries have had little or no interest in archives with a consequent slide in the fortune of the institution" (p. 58) – one of them being receiving little or no budgetary support at all. He suggested placing the national archives in the Presidency "where proper funding and due attention can be guaranteed" (p. 58).

To sum it all up, it is evident that best practice as guided by the life-cycle and continuum models as well as international standards, policies and procedures for records and archives management has been a mammoth task for many African countries. Where such frameworks are available, they apply mostly to paper records leaving out the electronic formats. In addition, proper implementation is hampered by lack of resources, specialised skills and power to enforce thereby

rendering many recordkeeping processes ineffective to achieve a full cycle management of all records regardless of format. Full compliance to standards, policies and procedures is also a challenge in many of the African countries. These are the same challenges upon which the situation in Zimbabwe was examined.

3.4. Overview of literature review and its application to study

Looking at the range of literature cited above, the main question that has been asked the most has focused mainly on how African countries performed in terms of records and archives management since the end of colonialism. Answers to this question have tended to concur to a downward trend as performance was observed to be generally unsatisfactory, at least to the levels expected or to the levels of best practice in records and archives management and, in conjunction with records and archival theories. In response to this question, some authors have traced the foundations of recordkeeping system and found them either strong or weak. In particular, those who found weaknesses in the colonial systems found them in the management of archives as opposed to records management, as with the case of East African countries. Some found the absence of a national archive as a sign of poor archival system.

As for the Zimbabwean case, the literature tended to agree that the country had strong foundations in both the management of records and archives during the colonial period, elements of which were also found in postcolonial Zimbabwe as noted by a few of the case studies reviewed here (Barata et al, 2000; Mazikana, 1988; Ngulube, 2000). Generally, in comparison with other countries, particularly those of the East African region, Zimbabwe inherited well-established recordkeeping systems in the form of relatively functioning records management and archival systems even though the records management aspect was not as developed to the same level as the archival services.

In view of the above insights, the researcher made use of all these varying views so as to make a thorough investigation on the status of the management of records and archives in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service. The chapter also sought to establish if the situation reported in other countries was also applicable to Zimbabwe and to what levels particularly in view of it being part of the struggling decolonised nations of Africa. Therefore, the route to investigate Zimbabwe's recordkeeping problems in this study stemmed from the observations that good recordkeeping systems are reported to have existed in the colonial period, while acute recordkeeping problems had been identified in the postcolonial period. Through the information gathered in this chapter, it became pertinent therefore in this study to find out what could have contributed to the current state of affairs, particularly if recordkeeping systems have collapsed yet they were good during the colonial days. The argument of a poor colonial legacy was also considered in this study in order to determine if it set the pace of archival development in the independent countries such as Zimbabwe. All these dimensions were crucial so as to find explanations and possible solutions to recordkeeping challenges in Zimbabwe as reported by the regional and African studies presented in this literature review. The researcher was particularly interested in either confirming or dismissing the colonial-postcolonial argument in an effort to give deeper explanations to some of the recordkeeping problems as well as identify other non-legacy issues that contributed to poor performance in the management of records and archives. As it turned out, some issues emanating from the colonial times still haunt current practices, while others are purely postcolonial failures and challenges. More insight into these issues is revealed in the findings chapter.

3.5. Summary

The chapter traced what the literature says about both colonial and postcolonial recordkeeping in Africa, Southern Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. It showed that persistent postcolonial failure has been reported in many African nations including Zimbabwe, as is shown by the country,

regional and African studies cited in this literature review. These studies confirmed the existence of problems and show their symptoms. On the other hand, the literature also confirmed that unlike some of the African countries in particular those of East Africa, Zimbabwe inherited strong recordkeeping foundations but at the same time the country is also put in the same bracket of postcolonial failures. Thus the chapter brought to the fore issues emanating from the colonial to the postcolonial periods to get a better understanding of the case study on Zimbabwe. The chapter also concludes that many African countries in the postcolonial period have struggled with following the life-cycle and continuum concepts as well as adhere to archival standards that prescribe best practice.

The next chapter covers the methodology employed in this study.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1.   Introduction

This chapter covers the research methodology, paradigm, approach and design of the study. The term methodology refers to the form of data collection, analysis and interpretation that can be used in a study (Creswell, 2009). In methodology, attention is given to the nature and kinds of processes that are followed to attain a research objective. It is also seen as the overall approach to research which is linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It describes what was done to answer the research questions and how the research was done. It also justifies the design and in particular, explains why the selected methods were appropriate for the research aims and research questions, including the feasibility of the whole study process (Bak, 2003; Kothari, 2004; Mouton, 1996; Wellington & Szcerbinski, 2007; Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). In addition, it also explains how the results were analysed and gives full details on how the researcher was able to come up with the solution to the problem statement. Basically, it answers the 'how' and the means to which knowledge was gathered – that is the means that scientists employed to reach their goal of valid knowledge (Mouton, 1996). According to Mouton, researchers have referred to these means by various names such as methodologies, research approaches, methods, techniques, processes and instruments. The methodology of the research is based on philosophical ideologies on which all scientific research is based. A discussion of these philosophical ideologies is presented below:

4.2.   Philosophical assumptions and research paradigm

In researching social reality, there are key items that need to be specified and these include ontological ideologies and how they influenced the methodology, paradigm, approach, design, techniques or methods employed in the study. Ontology has been defined as the nature of reality under investigation (Mouton, 1996). In it, researchers are mainly concerned with the issue of what

exists and they focus on the fundamental nature of reality (Neuman, 2011). The realists in ontology assume that the 'real world' exists independently of humans and their interpretation of it and they believe that "what you see is what you get" (Neuman, 2011, p.92). Ontology is associated with a central question of whether social entities need to be perceived as objective, which is associated with positivism; or is subjective, which is associated with constructivism or interpretivism (Mouton, 1996; Neuman, 2011). Positivism and interpretivism are considered to be the broad frameworks or paradigms in which research is conducted (Ngulube, 2015). Positivists see reality as everything that can be perceived through the senses; and that reality is 'out there', independent of human consciousness; is objective, rests on order, is governed by strict natural and unchangeable laws, and can be realised through experience (Sarantakos, 2005). In contrast, interpretivists believe that reality is not 'out there' but in the minds of people and is socially constructed through interaction and interpretation (Sarantakos, 2005). The interpretive social science ideology is related to hermeneutics, a theory concerned with text interpretation and understanding of social life (Sarantakos, 2005). It emphasises the need to conduct a very close, detailed reading of text to acquire profound, deep understanding of the issue under study, whereby the text can mean a conversation, written words or pictures (Neuman, 2011).

In epistemology the focus is on how we know what we know or what are the most valid ways to reach the truth (Neuman, 2011). Researchers gather empirical evidence and this can be used to verify ideas while other ideas can be false because they lack supporting evidence (Neuman, 2011). With it, one can produce objective knowledge. According to Pickard (2013), it is the responsibility of the researcher to demonstrate objectivity during the discovery process with all descriptions being context-bound. Epistemology also looks at the relationship between the researcher and reality (Carson, Gilmore, Perry & Gronhaug, 2001). The epistemological dimension sees research as the pursuit of valid knowledge which is verified by facts (Mouton, 1996).

Based on the ideology of constructivism ontology, the study followed the interpretivist paradigm. This is because the researcher was interested in understanding human experience associated with managing public sector records with the overall objective of establishing the status of records and archives management from the perspective of real life experiences of the persons involved. Such kind of research as this one allows researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The goal was to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation being studied (Creswell, 2014). Interpretivist researchers focus on specific contexts in which people live and work, and in this study, it is the recordkeeping settings of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The researcher then used those experiences to construct and interpret his/her understanding from the gathered data as explained by Mackenzie and Knipe (2006).

The methodology of positivism is quantitative while that of interpretivism is qualitative (Blaikie, 2010; Creswell, 2014; Davies, 2007; Ngulube, 2015). This is because the choice of constructive ontology leads to the selection of interpretivism epistemology, hence inductive approach applying qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The interpretivist paradigm is concerned with understanding the world of human experience through extracting knowledge from interviews, observation and analysing documents. Sections 4.3 to 4.8 below discuss the research approach, design, population, sample and instruments used in the study.

4.3. Research approach

While there are three main types of research approaches: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods, the selection of the research design is based on the nature of the research problem or issue being investigated (Creswell, 2014; Mouton, 1996; Kruger & Mitchell, 2005). This study employed a qualitative research approach in order to make an in-depth assessment of the records

and archives practices in Zimbabwe's Public Service. The researcher was mainly interested in drawing a broader picture of the manner in which records and archives were managed in the Public Service of Zimbabwe including how good or bad; and how strong or weak it has been from the colonial to postcolonial period. Such kind of inquiry is best addressed through a qualitative study because qualitative researchers can make use of multiple sources of data gathered from interviews, observations and documents (Niewenhuis & Smit, 2012; Patton, 2002; Quartaroli, 2009; Yin, 2009). This is in order to understand complex social processes, and to capture essential aspects of a phenomenon from the perspective of study participants (Curry, Nembhard, & Bradley, 2009). In particular, the major aim of qualitative research is to "explore individual or situational perspectives and gain an in-depth understanding of personal feelings and experience" (Davies, 2007, p. 190). This suits well within an interpretivist paradigm.

4.4. Justification for selecting qualitative approach

According to Patton (2002) and Neuman (2011), complex phenomena such as organisational processes, change processes over time, and social interactions underlying specific outcomes may be difficult to measure quantitatively. Such phenomena as those explored in this study are more suitable in qualitative research whereby data is generated for a comprehensive understanding of a problem and to gain insight into potential causes. Qualitative research can illuminate the potential causal mechanisms that are associated with a given outcome (Curry et al., 2009). For instance, in this study the researcher was interested in identifying factors that have influenced the management of records and archives, and more so, the reasons why it has been like that. Observations took place in real-world settings; in the actual registries. According to Creswell (2014), such qualitative research is more likely to give a true picture of what the situation is like on the ground.

The intention in this study was therefore, not to quantify findings, as in quantitative research but to discover the meanings that participants attached to their recordkeeping behaviour; how they interpreted their situations; and what their perspectives were on particular recordkeeping issues. Creswell (2014) and Yin (2009) pointed out that qualitative procedures mostly rely on text and image data rather than figures and calculations, which are central to quantitative research. In quantitative research, the researcher will count and classify, and build statistical models to explain what is observed. For example in this study it was not so much about how many cases of lost files were experienced, but rather finding reasons why they were lost. This kind of interactive investigation resonates with qualitative research. The strength of such interactive relationship in qualitative research is that the researcher obtains first-hand experience providing valuable meaningful data.

The qualitative approach was appropriate especially in answering the 'why' question, which formed part of the objectives of this study, as it sought in-depth explanations to recordkeeping practices found in Zimbabwe's Public Service Ministries. The 'why' question, as also noted by Yin (2009) was of particular interest in this study in order to understand the nature and complexity of the recordkeeping processes taking place within the Ministries; particularly the change from colonial to colonial eras. Qualitative research ensures a more comprehensive understanding of such phenomenon. An explanatory study, such as this one, addresses questions of 'why' and 'how' (Yin, 2009).

Nengomasha (2009) observed that many of the studies that have been done on records management in Africa have been mostly quantitative making use of the questionnaire method. Such studies have managed to confirm the existence of recordkeeping problems and describe them but without explaining the problems in great depth. While self-administered questionnaires are

strong in describing the problem under investigation, they are not good in explaining and do not reflect on the context (Gilbert, 2008). Nengomasha (2009) cautioned on the reliability of questionnaires in some cases based on her experience whereby respondents gave information on what should happen and not what is actually happening. This study therefore, sought to, through qualitative methods, find in-depth descriptions and explanations on specific recordkeeping processes in which the researcher could probe further and ask to be shown some of the issues the respondents spoke about in the interview. Such probing cannot be done effectively with questionnaires.

The focus of qualitative research is on contemporary events (Patton, 2002; Shank, 2006, Silverman, 2010). This resonates with this study on recordkeeping practice in Zimbabwe, where the knowledge and perspective of current records and archives staff was examined as well as that of other stakeholders in the Ministries including users of the records and management staff. Thus, the researcher focused on capturing the actual experiences at the Ministries.

4.4.1. Limitations of qualitative research

Despite its advantages as discussed above, researchers have been cautioned on the drawbacks of qualitative research. Most qualitative research results have been questionable due to their being based on personal interpretations, personal opinion and individual interpretations (Creswell, 2009; Kothari, 2004; Patton, 2002; Silverman, 2010). Olsen (2012) cautioned that findings from qualitative research are "shaped by someone" (p. 65). Nevertheless, findings from qualitative research are designed to provoke reasoned debate and although they cannot be ordinarily generalised to fit the whole population, they can still provide very useful insights into the state of affairs of the whole population of the study.

## 4.5.	Research Design

Research design is the plan or proposal to conduct research which provides specific direction for procedures in research (Creswell, 2014). Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005) defined it as the plan according to which the researcher obtains research participants and collects information from them, while Mouton (1996) described research design as a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing a research problem.

There are several qualitative research designs: ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenological research and narrative research. Influenced by the overarching aim of the study, this research took a case study design. Punch (2006) described a case study as a "method of studying social phenomena through the analysis of an individual case which may be a person, a group, an episode, a process, a community, a society or any other unit of social life" (p. 153). The case study design was feasible for this study in order to show the current situation regarding the management of records and archives within the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The case study methodology is useful when a natural setting or focus on contemporary events, as in this study, is needed (Benbasat et al., 1987). In case study research, researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collections procedures. Punch (2006) contended that such findings from a case study can be put forward as being potentially applicable to other cases and what is important is to learn from the study of a particular case.

However, although a case study will potentially allow the thorough examination of a particular situation, the results of such a study are more difficult to generalise beyond that single case with any degree of certainty (Gilbert, 2008). It is however appropriate for documenting experiences of practice, and is well-suited for capturing the knowledge of practitioners as well as providing in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell, 2014). In addition, the findings from a case study can

be put forward as being potentially applicable to other cases (Punch, 2006). A case study design is most useful when an individual case appears to produce new insights that might be transferred to a larger group of cases or activities. For instance, the case of the Public Service of Zimbabwe could provide useful insights for the Southern African region and Africa at large.

4.5.1. Limitations of case study research design

One of the limitations of case study research is that the research may lack available or reliable data as well as prior studies on the topic. According to Creswell (2014), not having "enough information to present an in-depth picture of the case limits the value of some case studies" (p. 102). The researcher may also face problems of access to people, organisations or documents – either denied or limited. In this study, the researcher experienced a similar problem when access to some of the Ministries was denied. However, where authority was granted, the people were generally cooperative, and in the end the 14 Ministries covered were sufficient to provide valuable data. Ultimately, a case study approach is an invaluable scientific tool, as long as the researcher understands these limitations from the start (Blaike, 2010; Christians, 2009; Creswell, 2009). In addition, in this study, the researcher made use of multiple sources of data to counter these potential drawbacks. For example, where the respondents gave particular information, the researcher would also ask, where appropriate to see the things they were talking about in the registries. In this way, one method would corroborate the other.

4.6. Population

Population is "the study objects and consists of individuals, groups, organisations, human products and events, or the conditions to which they are exposed" (Welman et al., 2005, p. 52). It is the area in which a researcher is trying to get information on a research problem from. A research problem therefore relates to a specific population and the population encompasses the total collection of all

units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions. All individuals or objects within a certain population usually have a common and binding characteristic or trait. It is for the benefit of the population that research is done. A population is thus, a full set of cases from which a sample is taken, and is comprised of potential participants to whom the researcher wants to generalise the results of the study (Welman et al., 2005). It possesses "the attributes or characteristics in which the researcher is interested" (Keyton, 2011, p. 121). In this study the population was the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Units of analysis refer to members or elements of the population, for example humans, groups, organisations, institutions, or events (Welman et al., 2005). The units of analysis in this study were all the 24 government Ministries excluding departments, regional branches and other government entities. It however included the department of National Archives of Zimbabwe for its national role in records and archives management.

4.7. Sample

Due to the large sizes of populations, researchers often cannot test every individual in the population because it is either too expensive and/or time-consuming and may not be feasible to accomplish. Consequently, a representative sample is taken as a miniature image or likeness of the entire population (Welman et al., 2005). In this way, generalisation becomes legitimate if the sample is representative of a larger population (Miller, 2007). The relationship between the population and the sample is best described by Castillo (2009), who observed that it is much like a give-and-take process whereby the population 'gives' the sample, and then it 'takes' conclusions from the results obtained from the sample.

In this case study, it was also not feasible, due to the large size of the population, to interview every member of the vast Public Service covering all ministries, departments, regional branches, parastatals and local authorities. Thus, a reasonable sample comprising selected staff from the Ministries was drawn from the entire population based on a non-probability sampling procedure of purposive sampling.

Purposive sampling is the process whereby the researcher selects a sample based on experience or knowledge of the group to be sampled. In purposive sampling, the researcher samples with a purpose in mind, and usually has one or more specific predefined groups they seek. This method is useful in situations where the researcher needs to reach a targeted sample and where sampling for proportionality, as in most quantitative research, is not the primary concern. The aim of purposive sampling is to identify information-rich participants who have certain characteristics, detailed knowledge, or direct experience relevant to the phenomenon of interest (Curry et al., 2009). According to Lapan and Armfield (2009), purposive sampling is used "where data sources such as people and documents are sought because that is where the answers to the study questions are likely to be found" (p. 177). With a purposive sample, the researcher is likely to get the opinions of the target population.

There are various subcategories of purposive sampling including modal instance sampling, heterogeneity sampling, and expert sampling. Expert sampling, which was used in this study, involves the assembling of a sample of persons with known or demonstrable experience and expertise in some area - that is persons with acknowledged experience and insight into the field or topic of study (Research Methods Knowledge Base, 2006). In this case it was expertise in records and archives management issues; those who use records, and top-level management who are

accountable to all ministry business including records. Thus, the sample was comprised of the following categories:

(i)   Top level management staff at the Ministries – Permanent Secretaries

(ii)   Records staff at the Ministries – Records Supervisors

(iii)   Records users at the Ministries – Action Officers

(iv)   NAZ management staff

(v)   Key IT person in the MICTPCS Ministry

The researcher was confident that the sample selected would achieve the desired goals of the study for two reasons. First, purposive sampling in the form of expert sampling was used to select recordkeeping personnel (including IT personnel) and other stakeholders in the Ministries who are the users of records; and management staff who are accountable for ministry business including records. The procedure involved purposively selecting participants who best helped understand the problem and the research question, as explained by Creswell (2014) and Patton (2002). The expert sampling method was appropriate for the research aims and questions of this study as it represented all the people who matter for this records management investigation. In this case, recordkeeping staff were consulted for the execution of records management processes and activities; Permanent Secretaries on management and policy issues; the key IT person on electronic records and general IT issues; and Action Officers on policy implementation and ministry administration issues which involves creating and using records. Second, the target population was drawn from Ministries for the reason that they are the higher offices in the Public Service, and decisions are usually made at this level after which they cascade down to departments, regional branches and other smaller government entities. For these reasons therefore, the researcher could confidently make inferences to the rest of the Public Service population based on the findings from this sample.

The total targeted sample was 76 interviewees distributed as follows: three persons from each of the 24 Ministries comprising the Permanent Secretary, the Records Supervisor, and one Action Officer; three from the National Archives of Zimbabwe comprising the Director, Head of Records Management section and Head of Public Archives section; and one key person from the Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Postal & Courier Services (MICTPCS) responsible for ICT issues in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Initially the researcher hoped to interview one IT person from each of the 24 ministries, but during preliminary investigations, discovered that there were no such persons in the Ministries except for IT Technicians whose main responsibilities included hardware and software procurement; repair and maintenance of computers. It the end, only person from the MICTPCS was interviewed on IT issues.

4.8. Data collection methods

The study made use of qualitative research techniques of interviews, observations and documents. These were appropriate in order to investigate, in-depth, the attitudes towards records management; people's behaviours, their values, concerns, motivation and general culture in managing records. Several authors including Christians (2009); Davies (2007); Patton (2002) recommend these techniques for studies requiring detailed explanations. In this regard, open-ended questions on interviews followed by probing where necessary were used in order to find out about people's experiences, perceptions, opinions, feelings, attitudes and knowledge, while observations were made on activities, facilities, tools, and organisational processes on records and archives management; and documents were used to complement information from interviews and observations. Taking such an investigative approach enabled the researcher to extract meanings from the explanations given by respondents as well as that gathered from observations and documents. The techniques are discussed below.

4.8.1. Interviews

The interview method of collecting data involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses (Kothari, 2004). Such interviews involve the use of a set of pre-determined questions, which can yield more information in greater detail. Through probes, there is opportunity to restructure the questions to a more suitable way of finding answers that relate to the research problem. Interviews, being highly interactive, allow for the exploration of individual experiences and perceptions in great detail (Patton, 2002).

Interviews were individual, face-to-face and semi-structured in order to pursue the same line of questions. The main advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they provide similar topics and subject areas to explore and probe; they list questions or issues to be explored but also bring in a degree of flexibility (Kothari, 2004; Yin, 2009), especially through probes.

The interviews were in-depth in order to allow individual perspective on responses and in order to yield detailed responses about people's experiences, perceptions, feelings and knowledge (Niewenhuis & Smit, 2012; Patton, 2002; Punch, 1998; Silverman, 2006). Through probes, the researcher asked respondents about facts of matters they raised as well as their own opinions about the issues as recommended by Yin (2009). The researcher used prompts and probes to clarify concepts, elicit detail and extend the narrative where it was necessary. Through this, the respondents provided vital historical information and generated useful information about their experiences with managing or using records in the Ministries. The researcher took notes during the interviews and also tape-recorded where it was allowed.

Nevertheless, Kothari (2004, p. 99) cautioned on one major limitation with interviews in that respondents may give distorted responses due to personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics and simple

lack of awareness. In this study, the researcher was cautious to avoid leading questions or suggesting outcomes, especially in view of the fact that information from the literature review was already painting a negative picture of records and archives management in Africa, Zimbabwe included. The researcher also experienced cases where some respondents gave answers as if they were talking to a journalist: especially a few of the Permanent Secretaries who felt they had to give 'correct' answers to disassociate themselves from poor performance. Where this happened, the researcher followed up with more specific questions which required evidence-giving responses not just general statements. The researcher was also cautious to tendencies to be negative considering the crisis environment in the country whereby staff worked under demoralising conditions and they might not see anything positive in their surroundings.

4.8.1.1. Instruments

Seven interview guides (Appendices G-M) were formulated, each with questions specifically targeting a particular group of persons according to their categories as explained above; that is for Records Supervisors; Action Officers; Permanent Secretaries; the key IT person; and three NAZ management, records and archives management staff. The interview guides listed the questions or issues that were to be explored in the course of the interview. This ensured that the same line of inquiry was pursued with each interviewee as noted by Patton (2002). Even though the researcher used semi-structured interview guides, there was room to alter the sequence of questions and the researcher could engage in probes for more information (Fielding & Thomas, 2008, p. 246). In this study, questions were designed to get information on records and archives management issues, focusing on their knowledge, actions, experiences, perceptions, and opinions. The interview guides were designed in categories that addressed key issues of the research problem at hand involving the management of records and archives. These were:

- General records or archives management function

- Legal and regulatory framework

- Resources, facilities and tools

- Training, skills and awareness

4.8.2. Observation

Observation "is used in the social sciences as a method for collecting data about people, processes and cultures" (Kawulich, 2012). Although there are a variety of ways of observing social phenomena, many authors (Curry et al., 2009; Kothari, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Patton, 2002; Kawulich, 2012; Wellington & Sczerbinski, 2007; Yin, 2009) agree that observation is a way of gathering data by watching behaviour, events, or noting physical characteristics in their natural settings. There are many types of observation, direct or indirect, participant or non-participant, obtrusive or non-obtrusive, structured or non-structured. This study made use of the direct observation method whereby the researcher needs to know about a physical setting and is trying to understand an on-going process or situation (Yin, 2009). Observations were done on resources, facilities and tools for recordkeeping activities in the registries at the Ministries as well as NAZ. This provided an opportunity to document activities, and physical aspects on records and archives management processes and facilities.

The main strength of observation is that it provides direct access to the social phenomena under consideration (Angrosino & Mays de Perez, 2003; Kawulich, 2012; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Patton, 2002). For instance in this study, instead of relying on interviewing people only, the researcher also made observations on specific situations in the registries. The researcher gained a lot of insights through observing the recordkeeping environment in the registries visited. Observations were done on what happened and what did not happen; what was present and what was absent in relation to the expected recordkeeping function as it is stipulated in the life-cycle

model, the records continuum model and the ISO 15489 standard – the tools on which this study was based.

However, Olsen (2012) and Ratner (as cited in Kaluwich, 2012), cautioned of a potential weakness of all observation by saying that it is susceptible to subjective bias on the part of the observer. This can happen if the observer fails to record what actually happened, but what they either wanted to see, expected to see, or merely thought they saw thereby undermining the trustworthiness and credibility of the data gathered. In this study, the researcher was aware of preconceived opinions of general collapsing systems derived from literature review and tried to avoid interpretations based on such predetermined information but based on hard facts and what was observed on site. Olsen (2012) suggested "balance" and "tolerance" and "getting an overview" as useful ways to offset observer bias (p. 65). In addition, observations in this study were not on people or actual actions by people, but on objects in the form of facilities and tools for recordkeeping, thereby limiting the chances of observer bias.

Observations were done on physical settings, the environment (the room, space, and suitability), the recordkeeping systems, equipment, tools and the general outlook of registries. Narratives were written on what was observed. Where necessary, the observations were done in conjunction with interviews, for instance, the researcher could ask to see what the interviewee had spoken about where it was appropriate, for example, ask to see actual file covers in order to observe the classification system used in that particular registry. The main observation of the registry was scheduled after interviews in order to corroborate information garnered from the interview. This helped verify some of the information gathered from interviews and collected from documents. Patton (2002) concurred with this method where interviews and observation are often fully

integrated, and points out that this also simplifies data analysis as information from the two could easily be compared and synchronised.

4.8.2.1. Instruments

Kothari (2004, p. 96) cautioned that when using the observation method, the researcher should keep in mind things such as what should be observed, how the observation should be recorded and how to ensure accuracy of observations. In order to address this concern, an observation checklist (Appendix N) was used as the research instrument for recording descriptions of activities, facilities, tools, and organisational processes, and this was consistently followed throughout each registry. For instance observations were made on filing systems, storage areas, record types; filing and classification; storage boxes and conditions. Notes were written down while making observations and photographs were sometimes taken where permission was granted.

4.8.3. Documents search

Documents are a useful source of data in qualitative research. They constitute a rich source of information about an organisation. In addition, documents can provide valuable information that may not be accessible through other means. The most important use of documents is to corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. Documents can generate ideas for questions that can be pursued through observation and interviewing. Patton (2002) stated that "documents can be stimulus for paths of inquiry that can be pursued only through direct observation and interviewing" (p. 294). A major advantage of documents is that they were generated contemporaneously with the events they refer to; hence, they are less likely to be subject to memory decay or memory distortion compared with data obtained from an interview (Patton 2002; Yin, 2009). In most cases, documents also represent data which is thoughtful in that the writer has given attention to writing them. However, Yin (2009) cautioned that it is important when reviewing documents to understand

that they were written for some specific purpose and for some specific audience other than those of the case study being done. For these reasons, they have to be contextualised within the circumstances of their creation, and in that way, documents can help reconstruct events, and give information about social relationships. Another disadvantage of documents is that they may be incomplete, inaccurate, or may lack detail. In order to counter this, in this study the researcher sourced various documents including written materials, official publications, and policy documents from the Ministries and the National Archives so as to make the sources as exhaustive as possible. In addition, this was not a major problem since documents search was triangulated with other methods of interviews and observations.

4.8.3.1. Instruments

A checklist (Appendix N) was used as the research instrument for searching documents. It specified what kind of information to look for from the Ministries such as filing or classification systems, procedures manuals, guidelines, policies, retention schedules, job descriptions, and reports etcetera. This was in line with the objectives of the study to establish the status of records and archives management as well as investigating the factors that could contribute to any recordkeeping challenges. However, the researcher had difficulties getting documents as many participants were rather reluctant to provide copies of documents. This was probably due to the general 'confidentiality' rule on all government records in Zimbabwe. As a result, only a few supporting documents were provided such as job descriptions, procedures manual and a few national policy documents such as the ICT policy and the ZIMASSET (Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation). In some cases, the researcher was only shown a few classification systems but not provided with a copy. Where copies were given, some of the documents were superficial, lacking official outlook, for example, some of the procedures manuals given to the researcher. However, in most of the Ministries, the researcher was granted permission

to photograph some of the registry facilities such as the filing cabinets and index files and these provided valuable supporting documentation particularly to show state of facilities.

Archival search was also carried out at the National Archives of Zimbabwe where the researcher consulted archival records particularly on the foundations of the archives in Zimbabwe. This helped to gain vital background and historical information, especially on the development of archival services in Zimbabwe. The researcher made use of archival documents and annual reports, especially on the historical development of archival systems in Zimbabwe from the early days of colonialism up to independence.

4.9.   Establishing rigour of the study

In any scientific research, the rigour of the study needs to be established in both quantitative and qualitative studies, and this includes issues of accuracy, reliability, validity or trustworthiness. Gilbert (2008, p. 32) saw validity as "accurately measuring concept", while Proctor (2008, p. 217) said validity is about "whether the right concept is measured". For some authors (Creswell, 2009; Patton, 2002; Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005; Yin, 2009), reliability relates more to the credibility of the findings as well as consistency from one measurement to the next. However, many other authors (Creswell, 2014; Niewenhuis & Smit, 2012) contended that issues of validity and reliability are more applicable with quantitative research whereby figures and statistics can validate findings. They asserted that in qualitative research, validity and reliability are often referred to as trustworthiness and credibility. This is because reliability is not as easily applicable to qualitative studies as in quantitative studies where figures are the basis for making claims. Meanings and interpretations that people give to their behaviour cannot be measured and dealt with statistically (Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2005).

In order to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of findings in this study, the researcher employed the triangulation method as recommended by many authors (Creswell, 2014; Niewenhuis & Smit, 2012; Patton, 2002; Quartaroli, 2009; Yin, 2009). It involved combining all the three main qualitative research methods of interviews, observations and documents. By doing so, the research built on the strengths of each type of data collection method while minimising the weaknesses of any single approach. This also helped to cross-check findings. Furthermore, the triangulation method was meant to check and establish trustworthiness in the study through analysing a research question from multiple perspectives. Any case study finding or conclusion is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboration mode (Yin, 2009). Thus, triangulation encourages collection of information from multiple sources but aimed at corroborating the same fact or phenomenon (Patton, 2002). For example, in cases where the respondent gave information on numeric and alphanumeric file classification, the researcher would also ask to see the classification and indexing books as well as observe the actual file covers showing the same classification. In other cases, the respondent would talk about certain operational procedures that they followed and the records procedures manual would also be checked if it had been provided to the researcher or in some cases, check if it appeared on the performance evaluation form provided. This way, the researcher was able to compare interview accounts with information from documents and information from observations as recommended by Silverman (2010). This allowed a cumulative view of data drawn from different contexts. The selection of this method was driven more by the need to get different types of information on one issue from the three methods employed. Such representation allowed the researcher to make broader inferences.

In addition to triangulation, before starting the actual data collection, a pre-test of the research instruments was carried out in January 2013. This helped to detect flaws in data collection

instruments and enabled researcher to refine them as recommended by many authors (such as Welman et al., 2005; Yin, 2009). The researcher particularly noted ambiguous and repeated questions, rendering them redundant. These were rectified early in the research process. The pre-test also ensured that the data collected from respondents did not give ambiguous statements but could be relied on. The use of the interview guide also provided a platform for consistency during the data gathering process, and the researcher ensured that observations were recorded accurately to ensure that the data is trustworthy.

Further to this, Shank (2006) also suggested that the researcher should verify facts and information with other informants, and also verify facts between multiple sources to ensure accuracy. Member checking involves the researcher checking the accuracy of the accounts given by respondents. In this study, this was done through verifying information with interviewees well after data collection where it was necessary through telephone or e-mail follow-up. For instance, in some instances, the researcher noted while listening to the interview that the respondent did not mention something in particular that should have been mentioned during their response. Another example is in cases where the Registry Supervisor and the Permanent Secretary gave conflicting statements on the issue of missing files and depending on who was interviewed first, the researcher requested further information from the other interviewee in order to see which information was credible.

4.10. Procedure

Researchers require permission to collect data from individuals and sites. Procedure refers to the steps taken to gain entry to the setting and to secure permission to study the participants or situation (Creswell, 2009). In this study, in order to begin data collection, the researcher was issued with a research permission letter from the University of Namibia (Appendix A) to authorise the research. In addition, the researcher also received a supporting letter from the University of

Namibia (Appendix B); and another supporting letter from NAZ (Appendix C). These were used together with the researcher's own letter (Appendix D) to seek authority to research from each individual ministry to: (i) carry out research at each of the ministry; (ii) to interview staff at the Ministries; (iii) to observe recordkeeping and archival facilities; and (iv) to get access to recordkeeping documents at the ministry In addition, permission was sought to: (v) carry out archival search at the National Archives of Zimbabwe and to interview its staff. Once authority was granted, this was followed by making appointments to meet specific individuals for interviews. Getting authority from some of the Ministries was problematic, as they became suspicious that the researcher's intentions were to 'access government records'. Where the researcher was given an opportunity to explain that the documents being referred to in (iv) above were just recordkeeping documents such as guidelines, procedures and manuals, and not government files, authority was granted eventually. However, some Ministries never gave researcher opportunity to clarify and in the end authority to research was refused on grounds that 'government records were confidential and not accessible to members of the public' even though this was not the intention and the letter clearly stated so. Eventually, authority was granted in 14 (58%) out of the 24 Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Access was denied in five Ministries while the other five Ministries simply did not respond despite several follow-ups by the researcher.

The interviews were held at the Ministries in offices of the participant or any other room they provided if theirs was not conducive. A tape recorder was used to record the interview, and these were transcribed by the researcher at her own time. During the interview, besides the recording, the researcher also wrote down notes on the sections of the interview guide.

4.11. Data Analysis

Data analysis entails "converting the notes into write-ups which should be intelligible products that can be read, edited for accuracy, commented on and analysed" (Welman et al., 2005, p. 209). It involves "creating categories, indexing or coding documents, sorting data to locate patterns, describing patterns, generating theories from data and validating these theories" (Blaikie, 2010, p. 26). Most qualitative research studies such as this one result in large volumes of raw data, which must be reduced into homogenous groups in order to get meaningful relationships out of them. The research outputs or products after data gathering in this study included hand-written notes, audiotape recordings, observation notes, interview transcripts, photographs and documents (copies of documents or notes about the documents).

To analyse the data gathered, the researcher employed the content analysis method. Content analysis involved data reduction, a process, which Miles and Huberman (1994) described as "a form of analysis that sharpens, sorts, focuses, discards, and organises data in such a way that 'final' conclusions can be drawn and verified" (p. 11). Content analysis followed stages adapted from Creswell (2009, p. 185). The stages are given below:

- Putting together raw data (transcripts, field notes, images, etcetera);
- Organising and preparing data for analysis;
- Reading through all data;
- Coding the data (hand and computer);
- Themes and Description;
- Interrelating Themes/Description (for example grounded theory, case study); and
- Interpreting the Meaning of Themes/Descriptions.

After reading textual data over and over, the data analysis process started with entering into the system, *Atlas.ti*, all the primary documents gathered from the data collection, that is, the audio recordings, the transcripts, the observation notes, the documents and photographs. The next step was to code all the documents. Codes are tags or labels that help catalogue key concepts while preserving the context in which these concepts occur (Curry et al., 2009). The researcher followed both deductive and inductive coding. Deductive coding involved the use of pre-determined codes and with this, the researcher used themes and categories garnered through analysing the data manually and insights gained while still collecting data. Curry et al., (2009) explained that themes are one of the many products generated through qualitative inquiry. They are recurrent unifying concepts or statements about the subject of inquiry. Inductive coding involves coding while analysing the data. In essence, through deductive and inductive coding, the researcher was able to reduce and integrate interview replies, observation notes and documents gathered to a small number of classes, which contained information required for analysis.

Coding was followed by identifying what *Atlas.ti* refers to as 'families' which are drawn out of the codes. In qualitative research, families are commonly known as categories, and categories should speak to the original conceptual framework. The categories form the basis for emerging issues. With the use of families or categories, the researcher was able to come up with themes that were related to the original ideas and objectives of the study. Welman et al. (2008) described the themes as 'umbrella' constraints, which are usually identified by the researcher before, after, and during data collection. The researcher then grouped together through families or categories, similar responses from interviewees and this helped to determine the main emerging issues. A printout of the families and their codes is on Appendix O.

The outcomes of the data analysis from *Atlas.ti* were drawn out as outputs, for each family or category. From the various families or categories, the researcher was able to extract or pick out themes, patterns, understandings and insights on records and archives management processes in Public Service of Zimbabwe. An example of a category output on the 'capture of records' drawn out from the *Atlas.ti* is on Appendix P.

The one huge advantage of using *Atlas.ti* was that the system merged similar codes taking from different source documents. The outputs from the system are therefore integrative thereby enabling triangulation.

The researcher also analysed some of the data quantitatively, particularly in cases where it was required to assess the extent to which any particular recordkeeping processes were performed, in an effort to establish in-depth explanations on those processes. This was done through analysing outputs extracted from the *Atlas.ti*. In such instances, through the use of figures and percentages, the researcher was able to establish the prevalence of the issues under analysis in order to establish the extent to which they were experienced.

4.12. Research ethics

This section summarises ethical issues relevant to qualitative research. Research ethics deal primarily with the interaction between researchers and the people they study. It is important to consider ethical issues in research in order to minimise the risk of abuse or making mistakes, which are of real consequence to the people under study. For these reasons, it was important for the researcher to explicitly consider the needs and concerns of people under study and that a basis of trust was established between researcher and the study participants.

Various authors (Benbasat, et al., 1987; Fielding & Thomas, 2008; Olsen, 2012, Sarantakos, 2004; Welman et al.; 2008; Yin, 2009) have recognised that the basic ethical issues in social science research generally include issues of informed consent by participants, the respect for privacy, and the safeguarding of the confidentiality of data. Informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate.

The researcher was sensitive to the perspectives of all participants. Through the use of a data gathering protocol (Appendix E) the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the rights of the participant, as well as asks for their consent before starting the interview. A consent form (Appendix F) was signed by all interviewees, after full explanation on purpose, and use of data; risks and implications, as recommended by authors such as Christians (2009; Patton (2009; and Silverman (2010). This secured written consent for the researcher. Even though authority had been granted for the researcher to carry out research at ministry level, the researcher still had to approach each participant individually and obtain their individual consent. The consent form also stipulated in writing the rights and welfare of the participants, their identities and interests, as well as confidentiality of the information given to the researcher as recommended by Christians (2009) and Israel and Hay (2006). Although all the other participants agreed to recording of the interview, one refused completely, and as a result no recording was done for him and note-taking was the only method used. Respondents were interviewed in their official, not private, capacity and in an environment of their choice. The researcher took time to explain that information gathered would remain anonymous and would not be used for any purposes other than for study. Taking on from Kothari (2004)'s recommendation, the researcher made an effort to create a friendly atmosphere of trust and confidence so that respondents felt at ease while carrying out the interview. However, the

researcher felt that most respondents were comfortable with going ahead with the interview once they established that authority had been granted at Ministerial level.

4.13. Evaluation of research methodology

While the study found advantage in using interviews over questionnaires in order to get an in-depth account on recordkeeping from the selected sample, the method carries a disadvantage that it mostly relies on securing appointments and respondents' commitment to meet those obligations. The researcher experienced a lot of frustration in getting ministries to cooperate just to give permission to carry out the research; to secure appointments, and sometimes even honouring the appointments. This made the research process too time consuming in comparison to the questionnaire method and, in some cases respondents asked if there was an option for a questionnaire instead of an interview. Such challenges meant going back to one ministry several times. The other challenge encountered was with documents search whereby many respondents were reluctant to provide copies of documents and at times the researcher had to do with the few documents availed. However, with this type of research, the effects of such shortfalls are reduced due to the use of the triangulation method. Perhaps for such a study as this one, the use of both questionnaires and interviews could be done so that the two can complement one another and fill the gap where the other is lacking. The questionnaires can cover the statistical information while interviews provide in-depth explanations.

4.14. Summary

This chapter covered the methodology of the study; that is, the methods employed by the researcher to carry out this research. The study took the interpretivist paradigm and followed the qualitative research approach in the form of a case study design. The data collection methods used included interviews, observations and documents search. The population was the Public Service of

Zimbabwe and a sample of 76 participants was drawn from the 24 Ministries of the Public Service. Participants comprised of records personnel, users of records and Permanent Secretaries. The researcher applied for authority to carry out research at the Ministries; authority to interview and observe as well as getting access to certain recordkeeping documents. The researcher ensured that the research was trustworthy and credible through the use of triangulation, pre-testing, and member checking. Data gathered was analysed through content analysis with the aid of qualitative data analysis software, *Atlas.ti*. Since the research involved people, ethical considerations were handled through the use of a consent form after explanation of rights and intended use of research data.

The next chapter presents the data collected in the study.

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research data gathered through interviews, observations and documents search from 14 Ministries and one department (National Archives) of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The data sought to address issues surrounding the first objective of establishing the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service. The second objective of finding out if the situation regarding recordkeeping systems, as observed in other countries, is applicable to Zimbabwe and determining the reasons for this situation is covered in the discussions chapter, while the last two objectives, which were to formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for the entire Public Service; and to make recommendations that would strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service are covered in the last chapter under recommendations.

Interview respondents included Permanent Secretaries, Records Supervisors, Action Officers, one key Information Technology (IT) person from the ministry responsible for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Zimbabwe as well as three management and professional staff from the National Archives of Zimbabwe. In order to maintain confidentiality, names of institutions have been withheld. Reference to individual Ministries is by number (for example, Ministry 1 - M1, Ministry 2 - M2 etcetera), while respondents were prefixed according to category of interview respondent in the ministry and the ministry number. The National Archives of Zimbabwe is prefixed as NAZ with respondents from there prefixed NAZ1, NAZ2, and NAZ3.

Table 5.1 below shows the distribution of interview respondents by institution and their positions as well as the prefix assigned to each category of respondents.

Table 5.1: *Interview Respondents List*

Ministry/ Institution Identifier	Permanent Secretary Identifier [In brackets: Number of years in that position)	Records Supervisor Identifier [In brackets: Number of years in that position)	Action Officer Identifier [In brackets: Number of years in that position)	Other
1	PS1 (8)	RS1 (6)	AO1 (30)	
2	PS2 (3)	RS2 (14)	AO2 (6)	
3	PS3 (6)	RS3 (9)	AO3 (4)	
4	PS4 (12)	RS4 (20)	AO4 (12)	
5	PS5 (12)	RS5 (2)	AO5 (5)	
6	PS6 (5)	RS6 (5)	A06 (5)	
7	PS7 (2)	*RS7a (38) RS7b (18) RS7c (5)	AO7 (3)	
8	PS8 (3)	RS8 (6)	AO8 (5)	
9	PS9 (7)	RS9 (10)	AO9 (10)	
10	PS10 (4)	RS10 (3)	AO10 (5)	
11	PS11 (1)	RS11 (5)	AO11 (4)	
12	PS12 (2)	RS12 (32)	AO12 (6)	
13	PS13 (4)	RS13 (8)	AO13 (6)	
14	PS14 (2)	RS14 (2)	AO14 (8)	
NAZ				NAZ1 (14) NAZ2 (5) NAZ3 (4)
				KIT (5)
MICTPCS Ministry				
Total	**14**	**16**	**14**	**4**
Grand Total	**48**			

* This ministry had 3 Registries due to merger of Ministries in 2013

KEY:
PS: Permanent Secretary
RS: Records Supervisor
AO: Action Officer
KIT: Key IT Person
NAZ: National Archives of Zimbabwe

Source: Field data, 2015

The data below were presented in the form of integrated descriptive narratives by the researcher incorporating information gathered from interviews, observations and document search. They are

presented following the stages of the records life-cycle but also bring in other aspects related to managing records and archives.

5.2. Response rate

The study aimed to cover all the 24 (100%) Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe, but 14 (58%) Ministries granted the researcher permission to carry out the research in their Ministries. The target sample selected for the study from both the 24 Ministries and the National Archives totalled 76 (100%). However, because only 14 Ministries were eventually covered, a total of 48 (63%) people were interviewed made out of the Permanent Secretaries, Registry Supervisors, Action Officers, Key IT Person, and National Archives staff.

5.3. Management of current records

This section presents data gathered on activities surrounding the management of current records within the first and second stages of the records life-cycle including the role of NAZ during these stages.

5.3.1. Structure and position of Registries within the Ministries

In order to reach the objective of establishing the status of records management in the Ministries, one key point of investigation was on the structure and positioning of the records function in the Ministries and respondents were asked to comment on this issue.

Respondents raised concern on the placing of the records function within the Ministries. The records function in each ministry falls under the Department of Administration and Finance, which is headed by a Director. Operating through a centralised registry system, the records offices (previously known as registries) are headed by a Records and Information Supervisors (previously

known as Registry Supervisors but commonly referred to as Records Supervisors). Respondents RS1, RS2 & RS4, RS5, RS11 and PS11 felt that the records function was misplaced under administration and finance because the people supervising that function were not information specialists; and the reporting structure was poor. In particular, RS4 noted,

Currently, no one is taking our problems up because the Deputy Director is not well-versed in records management issues because he is not a records person; he cannot defend our problems because he doesn't understand. Previously, we were reporting to the HR [Human Resources] Director, who also did not know about records.

PS11 particularly felt that other support functions such as finance, administration and human resources were headed at director level by experts in the respective fields while the records function was headed by a person with a diploma qualification and occupies a much lower level position within the professional grades in the Ministries and remarked "there is a gap there, the registry [records] is at the bottom of the ladder and this is a problem… It doesn't carry any weight".

Figure 5.1 below illustrates the position of the records function within the Ministries; an interpretation by the researcher based on information given by respondents.

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                        ┌──────────────┐
                        │  Permanent   │
                        │  Secretary   │
                        └──────────────┘
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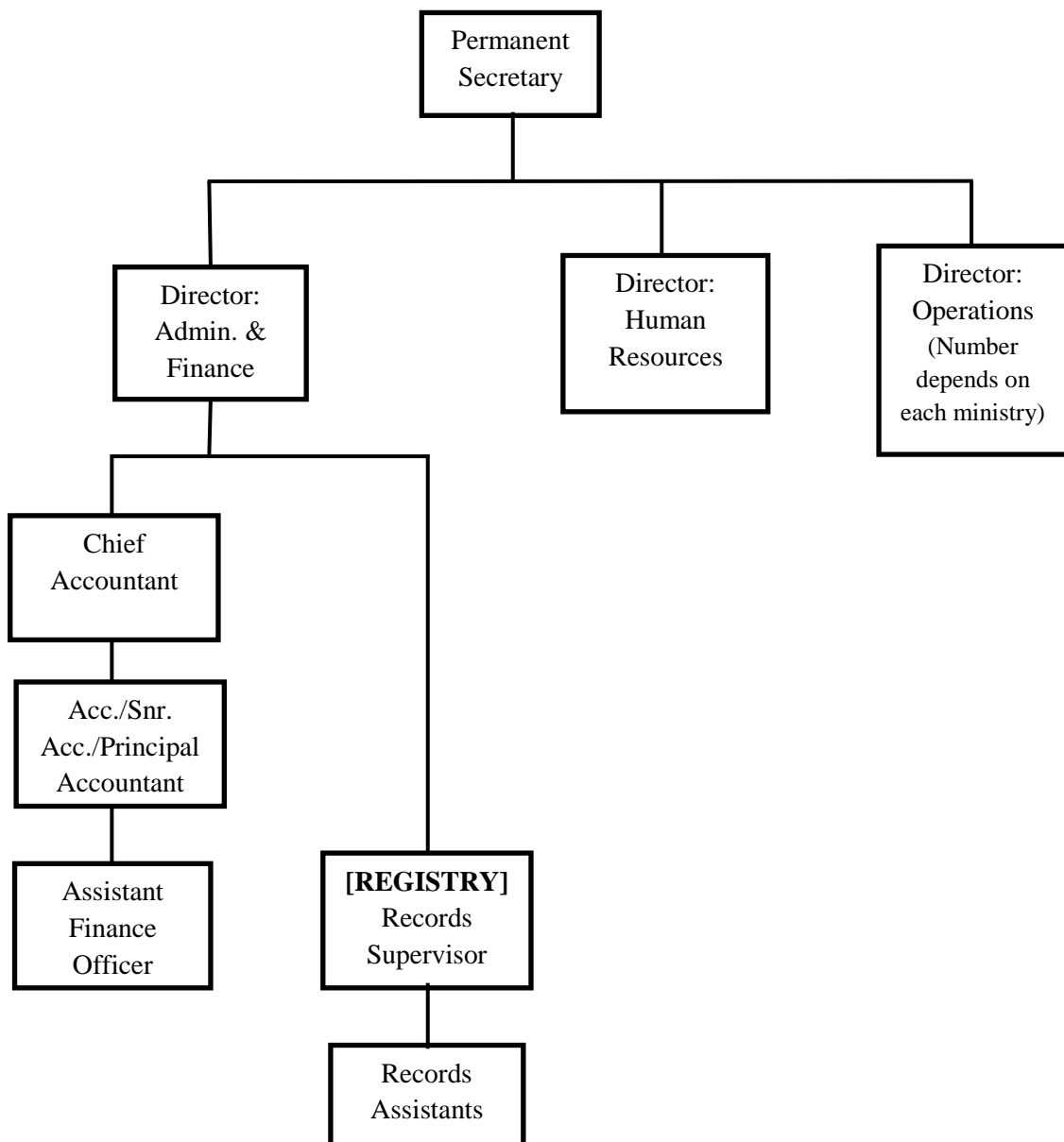
Figure 5.1: Illustration of position of Registries within the Ministries.

Source: Field data, 2015

5.3.2. Capture of records created or received

In the first stage of the records life-cycle, records are created and received. The study sought to

establish how records were handled at this point at the Ministries where they were created or

received. Questions "What activities do you do regarding records management?" and "What

provisions are there to ensure that all official records are captured and secured in both physical and electronic formats?" were posed to the records staff; while Action Officers were asked the question "When you have created or received records what specific actions do you take in order to maintain them?". In addition, documents such as manuals or guidelines were analysed, if available, to see if they were provisions to guide staff on specific actions to take when they generated or received records. The issues gathered regarding this are presented below.

5.3.2.1. Operation of the central registry system

The study established that each of the 14 Ministries had a central registry and the Public Service Procedures Manual was the main operating tool used to manage records. The Procedures Manual from M7 stipulated that "All incoming documents must be received by the registry. Where mail is delivered to an individual officer by a client, that correspondence should be immediately sent to registry for classification and filing". All 14 Action Officers interviewed as users of records confirmed that they used the records office and were aware of the procedure regarding incoming mail. The following remark by AO11 expresses the general view held by all the other Action Officers on the procedures for mail-flow - "Received items from outside go via the Registry. There they create a file or file in a file already existing. It goes through the Permanent Secretary then it comes to departments such as us for actioning. This is the procedure". The same Action Officers also confirmed that for any records that they generated, they always printed a filing copy further confirming that they were well aware of the centralised registry system. However, it was clear that the system of capturing incoming records in the Ministries was designed to cater for paper or physical records but excluded electronic records. There were no written guidelines to prescribe the handling of electronic records nor were there any software or databases to cater for such records. A performance appraisal form acquired from M5 (Appendix Q) mentioned only the capture of paper

records but not electronic records, further confirming that records in electronic format were side-lined from the centralised registry system.

5.3.2.2. The process of capturing records into the records management system

The process of capturing incoming mail in the Ministries starts with the recording of all incoming mail in registers known as 'Incoming Mail Register' or 'Source Book', as explained by all the Records Supervisors. In these registers, the records staff record the date when the mail was received, its place of origin, subject matter, where to, and reference of where it is coming from, if available, and sometimes which file it goes to. The 'Date-stamping' system is also used in the Ministries whereby anything received is date-stamped to acknowledge and formalise the capturing of the incoming mail. This system was used by all the Ministries covered in this study. However, problems arose when incoming mail was hand-delivered directly to Action Officers, who in turn chose not to follow laid down procedures of bringing the item to the records office, surprisingly by the same category of Action Officers who claimed to be aware of registry procedures. In such cases, the letter may only come to the records office well after actioning, and the concern of the Records Supervisors was that some letters never found their way to the records office for filing. In M7a, there was a notice to all staff with the instruction: "All official mail addressed to individuals should be send to records immediately" as a way to make the correct procedure very clear to all staff. RS6 complained that sometimes incoming letters were sent directly to the Permanent Secretary's office where they were forwarded to Action Officers often by-passing the records office and when this happened, "the system is already distorted". She attributed this state of affairs to lack of exposure to government systems by the Permanent Secretary, who came from the private sector and had not been adequately exposed to government systems. The case of this ministry was peculiar, as all the other Records Supervisors confirmed that even if the incoming mail was

received at the office of the Permanent Secretary, the items were always brought to the records office for filing before they were given to the Permanent Secretary for his/her attention.

In M12, however, the system of registering mail had not been followed for some time and, according to PS12, this was creating problems for them. To remedy this, they introduced a system which enforced the registering of all incoming mail.

5.3.2.3. The capture of e-mails into the records management system

The other problem cited by the Records Supervisors was in cases where mail was sent to and received through e-mail by individual officers (not records staff) and such e-mails did not follow the registry route as was expected. RS3, RS12 and RS14 explained that because officers used e-mails, the records office sometimes received copies of letters that had already been actioned and complained that this was not the correct procedure. RS2 and RS7b indicated that they relied on the honesty of the officers to print e-mails and bring to them to the records office for filing. In an effort to counter this, M7a's document titled 'The Main Functions of Registry' noted as one of the activities of the registry the "receiving, opening, date-stamping and sorting of all official in-coming mail, whether received by post, hand-mail or electronically", thereby catering for e-mails too. However, there was no evidence that staff in this ministry were fully complying with this instruction because the Records Supervisor for the same ministry also raised the issue of e-mails as being problematic in that ministry.

Out of the 14 Action Officers interviewed, 11 had e-mail facilities while three (27%) (AO1, AO4 and AO9) did not. Of the 11 who had computers, eight (73%) (AO1, AO2, AO6, AO7, AO8, AO10, AO11, AO13, and AO14) said they always printed e-mails and gave copies to the records office for filing. AO5 said at times she printed but other times she did not because there were no

guidelines for her to follow. AO3 said that he never printed e-mails at all, 'they remain between me and my supervisor whom I copy to". AO7 said he insisted on hard-copies from those who sent e-mails.

Respondents AO7, AO10, RS7, PS4, PS10 and PS11 mentioned that their Ministries still regarded the hard-copy as the official record. They said that they only regarded mail as official if it had been printed and in some cases insisted, where necessary, on a letter-head and signature of where the letter is coming from. In particular, PS4 remarked that "even if there is e-correspondence, we insist on a hard copy because no instruction has been issued regarding this [e-mails]", while PS11 expressed reservations on the 'hard-copy' stance and said "we have remained as a government very old fashioned in that we only consider it official if it is in hard-copy or on letter-head". None of the registries had any electronic records that they were managing.

5.3.3. Classification and filing of records

The study sought to establish how classification and filing of records were handled in the Ministries as part of the objective to establish the status of records management.

All the 14 Ministries were found using a standard government classification and filing system, which could be individually adapted to suit specific ministry needs (drawn from the Public Service Procedures Manual). Both numeric and alpha-numeric filing systems were used to file the two main file divisions upon which records were arranged - policy files and staff files. The researcher observed this classification for both policy files and staff files from the filing cabinets that were opened for her to view.

All mail captured in the records office first goes to a central place, which is the classifiers' desks where they are sorted and classified according to the classification system. 'Folioing' or numbering of folios in a folder is also done in order to monitor each individual mail by its chronological number to check for any missing folios. M7a's procedures manual recorded that "All mail, both incoming and outgoing, should be classified by a classifier, using agreed file classifications". The researcher was also shown the indexing books/registers used by the classifiers. An example of such indexing registers from M7a is shown on Appendix R.

The study established that such classification and filing of records as explained above was active in all the Ministries covered. Below are some of the issues that were raised relating to classification and filing.

5.3.3.1. Misfiling

Two Action Officers, AO7 and AO13 complained about misfiling which they attributed to the use of unfamiliar indexing terms by records staff. For instance, AO7 remarked that "you receive a letter personally and you take it to [the] registry. Next time you find it filed in a different file when you expect it to be in a certain file. We see this as a registry problem". RS7b's explanation on misfiling also pointed to indexing and file-titling problems as raised by AO7 and AO13 above. She said that non-records staff were not always knowledgeable on indexing terms leading to a clash of terms used, and this explains why sometimes "officers ask for the wrong file and when they don't find the information there, they blame us for misfiling". PS11 expressed similar sentiments by remarking that "blame is always put on the [records] officer but I don't agree, I think it is a problem of filing and file labelling. If you explain what the issue was about, they [records staff] will find it". PS11 mentioned a specific case when she asked for a 'complaints' file from the records office and it was not found - only to learn later that the records for this issue had been filed

according to the issue of complaint; and with further clarification, the file was found. When asked why the indexing books were not made available to all ministry staff to avoid such problems as explained here, PS11 said that "not everybody can be given the index; it is confidential and this is standard in all Ministries". In the same vein, M7b's procedures manual noted that "File reference is the preserve of the Registry Supervisor. Should an officer believe a document is incorrectly referenced, that officer should approach the Registry Supervisor for possible reclassification. Where a new subject is introduced into the Ministry, the Registry Supervisor will create a new reference for the files required. The final decision for classification lies with the Registry Supervisor". The researcher's efforts to get copies of the filing or classification system or indexing documents were fruitless, as the Records Supervisors were reluctant to provide them, further confirming the confidentiality put to such documents.

5.3.3.2. Mini-registries

The researcher also investigated the issue of 'mini-registries' in order to find out if this was happening in the Ministries. While visiting the various Ministries, the researcher observed files kept in three Action Officers' offices (AO4, AO11 and AO14). When questioned about these files, the concerned officers confirmed that they were for personal use and that the official copies of the same records were at the records office. AO4 and AO11 said they were keeping them just for quick reference purposes, while AO14, an Administrative Officer, said he kept second copies of purchase orders in his office for personal reference. All the Action Officers interviewed were very clear about the official 'record' being the preserve of the records office and thus any files kept in the offices were purely for their own convenience and therefore did not constitute 'mini-registry' in its true sense. Other than this, the researcher also observed that there were a set of records that were kept in the offices of the Permanent Secretaries. However, it was established that provision for such classified and confidential records was catered for in the Public Service Procedures

Manual. Thus, the files kept in the Permanent Secretaries' offices did not constitute 'mini-registries' but could be put in the category of 'confidential registries'.

5.3.3.3. Temporary files

The issue of temporary files was also raised by respondents as a problem on its own. They were described by RS12 as "flying folders" that are opened when a file cannot be located. PS3 admitted that such temporary files were opened in their ministry because the magnitude of files that were handled in a single day in that ministry was very high and as a result "some documents are put on temporary folders because someone is using the original file". RS1 blamed the problem of temporary files to incidences where files were taken to the Minister's office and were not returned on time. She said "it is difficult to pin down on the Minister and this leads to opening of temporary files which are later merged with the original". However, according to RS7b, from her more than 20 years' experience, such extra files opened temporarily were hardly ever merged with the main file thereby creating problems of double files for the same thing. The same records supervisor said she took a firm stand and banned the use of temporary files in her Ministry - "I just insist that the original file has to be found". Before this, they had done a stock-take of their files, which included checking all staff offices where they discovered multiple copies of the same files. PS12 and RS7b also said that they had banned the use of 'temporary files' in their Ministries. In contrast, RS4 said in her ministry they had introduced temporary files as surrogates for files that were in use by others and it worked very well for them as it had eliminated the problems of delays.

5.3.4. Use of records

In the second stage of the records life-cycle, records are managed and used. The study sought to establish how files were managed and used while still in their current status. Records staff were asked these broad questions: "Is the registry system working?" "Do users know the registry

procedures?" "Do they use the registry storage?" Further probing questions on locating files when they are requested and file-tracking systems were asked to Action Officers: "Do you use the registry? If yes, explain how you work with registry staff. If not, do you keep your own files? Kindly explain further" and "Do you always get information from the registry timeously when you require it? Explain your answer."

The study established that Ministries had various ways of recording and controlling file circulation while the files were in use in the second stage of the records life-cycle. All the 16 Records Supervisors interviewed said that they used the 'Outgoing Register' or 'Dispatch Book', which records all outgoing mail or documents and shows date sent out, to whom and at times the register/book is signed upon receipt by the recipient. M7a's records procedures manual stipulated this condition for file use – "No material should be circulated unless it is contained in the relevant subject file". However, some issues were raised by respondents regarding file use and management and they are presented below.

5.3.4.1. File tracking

File tracking was found to be a big problem in all the Ministries, especially when a file was outside the records office and particularly if staff chose not to inform the records office when they passed on files to other officers. The 'Pass-on Slip' or 'Transit Slip' was the facility put in place to indicate to whom a file had been passed on when staff members decided to give it to another staff before returning to the records office. However, all Records Supervisors said that they were no longer eager to use the pass-on-slip or transit slip because the non-records staff were not keen on using it rendering the system ineffective.

Figure 5.2 below shows an example of a Pass-on-slip from M7a.

All pass-on-slips should use the same format as per the example below:

```
                          TO REGISTRY:

File No.........................marked out to...........................has been passed to....................................

Date...................................................................................

Signature.............................................................................
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Figure 5.2: Example of a Pass-on Slip

RS13 said they used a card system which is similar to the pass-on-slip, but again it "was not working well because officers would not sign". RS4 said they used 'Control Cards' where they marked a file to an officer and recorded when the file was back and "that way we know that the file is back on shelf". However, this system did not have a facility to track any further movements of the file before it was 'marked' back at the records office indicating a loophole in the system.

RS2 said that they had software to record incoming mail, which was also used for file-tracking. She explained that they recorded manually into the system but they did not update it every day making it unreliable. In addition, they were still in the process of learning about it so nothing further on it was gathered.

The study established that while Records Supervisors blamed non-records staff for passing on files without informing them, the Action Officers, who are the non-records staff, complained that poor file-tracking sometimes caused delays, which affected their work.

5.3.4.2. Missing files

The study also sought to establish how prevalent the problem of missing files was. The 14 Action Officers interviewed were asked this question: "Do you always get information from the registry timeously when you require it? Explain your answer." Most respondents were of the opinion that

while the problem of missing files sometimes happened it was not prevalent. All, except one, AO2, said they usually got the information they required from the records office quickly, but they sometimes faced delays in getting the information, insinuating that missing files were not a regular occurrence. AO6 remarked that "most of the time we find information, it is rare not to find information" and said the reasons for not finding information quickly were either because a document had been misfiled or staff kept files for too long. RS12 gave the example of disciplinary matters which took time to be resolved, sometimes years and meanwhile the files for such issues were forgotten in staff offices for as long as the issues were unresolved. AO10 said that delays were sometimes due to government protocols that needed to be followed first before any action was taken causing them to hang on to files. Only AO2 said that he had encountered missing files on several occasions but could not cite any particular incident.

From the responses given by the Action Officers, what was more prominent was the misplacement of files leading to delays rather than completely missing files. The same sentiments were also expressed by the Permanent Secretaries who also felt that it was more of delays than completely missing files. In particular, PS1 said, "files don't go missing forever but we experience delays or misplacement of files". He said the files are reported as missing at some point but they are eventually found. PS13 said "delays are not from the registry but from other staff who hold the file until after they action it…registry should follow up files which have overstayed". Similarly, PS9 also decried the lack of active file follow-ups by the records staff. PS3 said, "Missing files, yes, once in a while these things happen" but he could not be drawn to cite any specific incidences where files were lost forever.

The Records Supervisors were also asked to comment on missing files. Nine (RS1, RS5, RS7a, RS7b, RS10, RS11, RS12, RS13, and RS14) of them expressed the same sentiments as the Action

Officers and Permanent Secretaries, as explained above, that it was more of delays than missing permanently. RS3, RS6, and RS7c responded that missing files happened "sometimes"; "here and there". All of them blamed Action Officers for sometimes taking too long with files ending up misplacing them. RS7a cited two instances where two officers took files for meetings one in Kariba and another in Washington DC and did not bring them back. RS7a explained that when asked about the whereabouts of the files the officers insisted that they had returned them only for the files to eventually turn up several months later from Kariba and the USA. RS7a explained that such files as these were labelled as missing but they eventually turned up at some point. The Records Supervisors complained that even if they knew exactly whom they had issued a file to, there was nothing much they could do if the staff member misplaced the file or refused to acknowledge responsibility. They said that when the Action Officers passed on files, the records staff lost track of them during this time when they were outside the records storage. RS14 remarked that besides this problem of records being misplaced while outside the records office, "the registry system works well to a certain extent, it has 98% success rate in locating files in the registry" but as RS3 indicated, the system becomes unreliable when officers kept files for too long. From the responses given by all respondents, the researcher found no problems with files that were physically stored in the registry both in terms of locating and retrieving them timeously. Problems cited mostly pointed to those files that were out on circulation.

While the researcher did not find any evidence from the literature to confirm these problems of missing or misplaced files from the colonial period, long-serving members in the Public Service such as RS7a (38years), RS12 (32 years), RS7b (18 years), RS4 (20years) and AO1 (30 years) alluded to the fact that such problems are only from recent years, suggesting that this could be a postcolonial problem.

5.3.4.3. Deliberate actions

The issue of deliberate actions by staff was mentioned by five respondents. PS3 mentioned that he had heard about such things in other Ministries but it had not been reported in his Ministry perhaps due to the nature of the service offered in that Ministry which did not attract any monetary benefits. PS7 remarked that such deliberate actions had happened mostly in cases of misconduct files, which disappeared under suspicious underhand actions but he said that this was not prevalent. Similarly, RS12 said that sometimes officers deliberately concealed files to hide information and explained a case where a dismissal case file went missing suspiciously. AO12 also said files dealing with controversial matters were the problematic ones. RS7a claimed that officers sometimes hid files especially if they had not done tasks assigned to them.

5.3.4.4. Mail deliveries

Three Records Supervisors (RS7b, RS10, and RS11) cited problems with mail deliveries or file dispatch for local mail. Such deliveries were usually done by Office Orderlies on foot within the city centre. The Office Orderlies used to have bicycles for deliveries but these were not available anymore. RS7b raised concern that if they needed to use a vehicle for deliveries, they had to share one vehicle with other departments of the ministry and in most cases they had difficulties in securing one. PS2 mentioned that in order to deal with this problem, their ministry had plans to purchase motor cycles but they had not been able to do so due to financial constraints.

5.3.5. Storage, protection and security of current records

In order to further establish the status of records in the Ministries in terms of their storage and protection, to Records Supervisors and Permanent Secretaries were asked these questions: "What provisions do you have to secure records in time of disaster?" "What provisions are there to ensure that all official records are captured and secured in both physical and electronic formats?" "In the

event of a fire, flood or any other disaster, can you explain how the records would be safeguarded?" "Are you aware of any cases of disaster at the Department? If yes, please give details." In addition, observations were also made on storage, general protection and security of records in the Ministries. This was in order to establish if records were protected from damage or loss during their active stage. The issues gathered are presented below.

5.3.5.1. External and internal security

The researcher noted that access to all buildings housing the Ministries covered in this study was controlled by the government security services, which provided general security from outside of the building. In addition, security personnel were present at the entrance to all government buildings where they controlled and monitored who was going in and out including recording identification and contact details of all persons going inside the buildings. From the inside of the buildings, the records offices where records are kept were found generally secure in that access was not open to anyone, and records storage areas were lockable. According to PS11, "the building [occupied by M11] is fairly secure; entrance is monitored and the use of the registry is controlled". Generally, the same principle applied to all Ministries covered in the study.

The maintenance of the physical structure for all government buildings is the responsibility of one Ministry (Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing) leaving Ministries with no obligation to maintain the building structures they occupied. However, individual Ministries are responsible for the maintenance and servicing of the fire detectors, extinguishers and water sprinkler systems inside the buildings they occupied. Such fire-detection and fire-fighting equipment were available inside all the government buildings but, from the responses given by the respondents, there was no evidence of regular maintenance of the equipment. PS5 commented that failure to service the equipment was due to sheer negligence by the Ministries and not because of

limited finances. His opinion was that Ministries tended to overlook the servicing of such equipment and admitted that this was a potential risk to records. In particular, PS3 and PS9 raised concern that there was no back-up of active files through, for instance, digitisation. RS3 noted that there were no provisions to protect vital records. Only in M13 whereby PS13 mentioned that their Ministry was working on digitising the Ministry's vital records. They had consulted the MICTPCS on this but had not engaged NAZ.

5.3.5.2. Emergency and disaster situations

Asked about any disaster incidences, none of the Ministries covered had any serious records of disaster situations, except cases of cockroaches and rodents that were reported in five Ministries by PS5, RS1, RS3, RS5, RS11, and RS14. When this happened, remedial actions were taken through pest-control interventions. However, RS14 reported on a disaster incident at their Bulawayo office where files were eaten by rodents and "the records were sent to wastepaper – there was nothing that could be done".

5.3.5.3. Storage facilities

Furthermore, the researcher observed that each Ministry had space reserved for the storage of records but in most cases this was inadequate. Most of the Records Supervisors cited shortage of storage space as a problem. Another observation made was that there was inconsistency in terms of storage set-up, arrangement inside the storage rooms, and the types of cabinets and folders used. In a typical Ministry records storage room, there were different types of filing cabinets and folders, old, new, worn-out: this is the way it was in all the Ministries visited. PS12 commented that "physical space needs attention…the registry is disorganised with documents all over, there is no order in our registries". On the contrary, despite this poor state of records observed by the researcher, PS11's opinion was that "what they [the records office] require is not much apart from

files and filing cabinets". Other than this, the researcher made observations that some records offices in particular M9, M12, and M14 had folders that were looking old, torn and yellowing – a sign of effects of poor storage. Appendix S illustrates some of the deteriorating files.

The study established that while records were generally protected from damage, deterioration and loss; the storage conditions under which they were kept were generally not ideal or up to standard. There was potential for damage or loss from fire disaster or deliberate actions by staff.

5.3.6. Records surveys

The study also looked at the role of NAZ in the management of current records at the creating offices at the Ministries. Questions asked to Records Supervisors regarding compliance and monitoring of the recordkeeping processes in the Ministries included: "Who conducts recordkeeping audits/surveys to evaluate records management practices against set standards?"; "Have record-keeping audits/surveys been conducted in your Ministry? Further probes were made on frequency of audits/surveys and last audit/survey in order to determine how effective this role was being carried out.

The National Archives Act (1986) mandates NAZ to provide recordkeeping advisory services to creating offices as well as monitor compliance. One way NAZ does this is through visiting creating offices for record surveys. Records Supervisors were asked about such visits by NAZ. Ten (63%) Records Supervisors (RS2, RS3, RS4, RS5, RS7a, RS7b, RS7c, RS9, and RS10, RS12) reported that their registries had been surveyed at least once in the past five years by NAZ, while six (37%) (RS1, RS6, RS8, RS11, RS13, RS14) had not. Seven (44%) Records Supervisors (RS1, RS5, RS7b, RS9, RS10, RS11, RS12) said they had also done self-auditing of their records. Those whose registries had been surveyed by NAZ confirmed that reports had been compiled after the

surveys, with recommendations. In particular, RS3 reported on positive developments that emanated from the survey recommendations such as the purchase of new storage boxes and the allocation of an extra storage room to the records office while RS4 said that they did not have funds to implement what was recommended in NAZ. NAZ2 said that visits to creating offices, especially those in the provinces outside Harare were a problem due to lack of transport. For those in Harare, failure to visit them was mostly due to other logistical problems. Thus, the study established that the interaction between NAZ and the Ministries was limited considering that both the Ministries and NAZ are in Harare.

5.4. Management of semi-current records

The study sought to establish how the records disposal process was being carried out so as to determine the status of records at the third stage of the records life cycle. Records Supervisors were asked "How do you deal with records that are no longer active?" They were further probed: "Do you have retention schedules? Explain further". NAZ staff were also asked: "Please comment on retention and disposal activities at the Ministries and Departments" "Who does scheduling and how often?" and "Is the retention and disposal system operating well? Please explain."

The researcher found two major problems regarding appraisal of records, their retention and disposition. Firstly, was the absence of retention and disposal schedules to guide Ministries on the disposition and retention of semi-current records. Secondly, was the shortage of space at NAZ records centres. The information gathered regarding these issues is presented below.

5.4.1. Retention and disposal schedules; and implementation of disposal decisions

In Zimbabwe, retention or disposal schedules are sometimes referred to as 'standing instructions'. Only five (31%) Records Supervisors from M4, M7a, M9, M10 and M12 had some form of

retention schedules in their registries. RS4 and RS7a each said they were using one that was created "long back"; RS9 said "I drafted one myself"; RS10 said "I found it in the system"; RS12 said they were using one that was drafted at one of their branches. However, RS12 mentioned that there were draft schedules which were compiled during a three-day workshop organised by NAZ in July 2012 but these had not been finalised. NAZ2 also mentioned the same workshop organised for records personnel in the Public Service whereby they revised the retention schedules for all generic records common in all Ministries. The process had not been finalised at the time of conducting this study including incorporating other ministry-specific records. According to NAZ2, bureaucratic procedures had delayed the finalisation of the 2012 draft schedules, which have to go through several stages within the government, including the Ministry of Justice and the Records Committee, before they are approved. The rest of the Records Supervisors (69%), who did not have retention schedules in their registries, said that they were aware of a few standing instructions for generic records such as staff files but they did not have any tangible or formal document to base on. For example, RS3 said they did not have any written schedule in their Ministry but were "using old knowledge gained from the system", while RS7b said that they had not destroyed any records but confirmed that they had sent records to the records centre. She said "We tell NAZ that we want to transfer some records and they give us permission to destroy some before sending some to NAZ".

The absence of retention schedules was creating problems. For instance, in one particular case, M4 had a set of records, that, according to the Records Supervisor, were defunct and should have been destroyed but no instructions had been issued regarding their destruction even though they had requested the ministry to take a position on the records. RS4 remarked, "Now we are stuck with the records which clog our storage cabinets".

NAZ1 and NAZ2 also confirmed that the absence of retention and disposal schedules was causing congestion of records centre space because some records that should have been destroyed at the Ministries were instead sent to the records centres. NAZ2 remarked that much of the appraisal was being done at the records centres when this should have been conducted at the creating offices yet NAZ did not have enough staff to actively carry out such appraisal. This has resulted in records staying longer at the records centre than they should and thereby further filling up storage space. NAZ2 felt that the space problem at the records centres was "artificial because records are not coming in and going out as they should".

Action Officers gave varied responses when asked: "How long do records need to be kept in the organisation to meet your specific business?" "What actions do you take to dispose or preserve records". AO10 and AO12 said they had no say over this, while AO2 said he had no idea about disposal of records and AO11 said it depended on the type of record. AO14, an Accounts Officer, said they destroy after audit. AO3 said, "I am aware that after about 5 to 6 years the files are sent to NAZ", while AO5 said she thought files were destroyed after 10 years. AO4 said, "the records office organises this" and AO7 said, "All files are passed on to registry and they are the ones who know what to do with them". With such responses, it was clear that most of the Action Officers were not familiar with records disposal issues even for their own records.

5.4.2. NAZ and the management of records centres

The study sought to establish the role and capacity of NAZ in the management of the semi-current records of the Public Service. The National Archives Act (1986) mandates NAZ to oversee recordkeeping processes in the whole Public Service besides offering archival services. All the Ministries were in Harare and they used the Harare Records Centre for the storage of their semi-current records. A number of challenges regarding the operation of records centres were brought

up by respondents. Some Ministries reported that they could not transfer their records due to shortage of space at NAZ's Harare Records Centre. RS1 said their last transfer was in 2005 and from there on they could not transfer any records due to space shortage at the records centre. In particular, the researcher was shown piles of boxes awaiting transfer in M7c, M12 and M14.

Records Supervisors complained that the visits by NAZ for record surveys were too few. For instance, RS7b directly blamed NAZ for the poor state of semi-current records. She said "It is not the Ministries' fault; it is NAZ's fault that Ministries are sending everything to them because they don't know what to do. They [NAZ] should work according to time. What is needed to be done should be done so that things don't come to a halt as they have. They should have foresight." RS3 also made similar remarks regarding NAZ, "we now know what we are supposed to do because we are now professional and so we know the role of NAZ but they should play their part".

NAZ1 explained that NAZ gets a very tiny portion of the Ministry of Home Affairs' budget in comparison to its counterparts such as the Police, the Registrar-General and Immigration yet NAZ also carries out national responsibilities for both records and archives management covering the whole country. The situation was also the same with the allocation of human resources to NAZ, and as explained by NAZ1, all this made it difficult for NAZ to effectively provide records management services for the country's semi-current records.

The study therefore established that even though records centre facilities were available, they were not being utilised effectively and the role played by NAZ in this was limited, as confirmed by both the records staff at the Ministries and NAZ staff. In addition, storage space was insufficient and sometimes unavailable when records needed to be transferred to the records centres.

5.5.   Management of non-current records

In an effort to establish the status of archives management, respondents at NAZ were asked questions on various archives management processes. Documents such as policies and guidelines were also sought and analysed; while observations were made on facilities and tools available for the management of archival materials. The National Archives Act (1986) mandates NAZ to provide archival services to the whole country's Public Service entities in addition to the records management activities. The main activities covered in this responsibility include acquisition of archives, their preservation, processing and use. Data gathered regarding these issues is presented below.

5.5.1. Structure and position of NAZ

This question was posed to NAZ respondents, "Where is the National Archives placed within the Public Service of Zimbabwe? Can you comment on whether this placement is good or bad, and give reasons?"

The researcher noted concerns from NAZ respondents regarding the positioning of NAZ in performing its double mandate of managing the records as well as the archives of the entire Public Service while it is a department in the Ministry of Home Affairs. Commenting on the positioning of NAZ, NAZ1 remarked, "it is very difficult to place it because NAZ carries responsibilities which are related but are perhaps best handled in different Ministries". He noted that for the records management aspect, the Ministry of Public Service or the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) would be the appropriate offices because they have coordinating responsibilities regarding government administration. His opinion was that NAZ would be in a much better position if the records management functions were under the offices mentioned above, especially when recordkeeping instructions are issued out; it would be much easier to enforce using the

authority of such offices because "compliance is a governance issue". He also felt that for the sake of NAZ being a provider of public information and for educational purposes, perhaps the institution should be placed in the same ministry with libraries and museums; that is the Ministry of Education; while the heritage aspect of NAZ would better suit a heritage ministry such the Ministry of Sports, Arts and Culture. This suggested that the purposes for which NAZ was created was not being realised fully while under its present ministry.

The study also established that the training of records personnel in the Ministries and departments as well as the procedures used has been a function of the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare through its Public Service induction training courses. Yet the National Archives Act (1986) also gives mandate to NAZ to provide advisory services to ministries and departments. Asked what role NAZ plays in the Public Service induction training, both NAZ1 and NAZ2 answered that it did not play any role at all; it was neither consulted nor included in the training or development of the curriculum. NAZ1 remarked "for many [people] they don't understand where National Archives comes in except the storage part – to say when we run out of space we go to the National Archives". This further confirmed that even though an institution of national archives was available in the country, its current structure and positioning was not suitable for it to function effectively. In addition, the study established that NAZ was being side-lined in such vital activities such as the government induction training on records management.

5.5.2. Acquisition of archives

In order to further establish the status of archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, the study also examined the archives acquisition process and NAZ respondents were asked to comment on the issue. The acquisition of archives by NAZ's Public Archives section from government institutions is done through records transfers from the records centres. Only the Harare

and Bulawayo archives offer archival services with Harare receiving transfers from the Harare, Mutare, Masvingo, and Chinhoyi and Gweru Records Centres, while the Bulawayo Archives receives from the Bulawayo Records Centre.

NAZ3 indicated that in the past, transfers were received at NAZ's Public Archives section as and when the records centres needed to transfer records. After notification of intention to transfer, both parties would make the necessary preparations and the transfer was done. However, the current shortage of storage space and shelving at the Public Archives section in Harare has resulted in selective transfers being done and they have resorted to giving priority to acquiring only those materials that were on high demand from researchers. As a result, a lot of archival material which should be available for research is left out of the acquisition process.

5.5.3. Archives processing and access to archives

After acquisition, the archives undergo archival processing to prepare them for access by researchers. The study sought to establish the position regarding archival processing, a vital step which facilitates access to archives. Respondents from NAZ were asked to comment on this aspect and they brought up the following issues:

5.5.3.1. Backlog in archives processing

NAZ3 raised concern on the huge backlog in archives processing which, according to her, had been accumulating from the 1990s mainly due to shortage of staff. In 2012, NAZ tried to tackle this problem by engaging students to process the easier to process single series collections under the supervision of NAZ archivists but this was a one-off project conducted through sponsored funds. This initiative did not bring any permanent solution to the problem of backlogs. NAZ3 also mentioned that instead of processing all archives coming into NAZ, they now did selective

processing by giving priority to materials on high demand such as the deceased estates, civil and criminal cases and immigration records. As a result, there were no backlogs for this class of records. However, a lot of other archives outside this high priority category form the biggest part of the backlog. Section 2(a)(1) of the National Archives Act (1986) says that all public records above 25 years should be opened for public access, meaning that in 2014 all archival records from 1989 going back should be accessible. NAZ3 confirmed that there were no records from the 1960s which were not processed, but a few from the 1970s were still not processed. The largest part of the backlog is of materials from the 1980s which are not been part of the high-priority records as explained earlier. This constitutes a full decade of research material, which remains closed even though the mandatory 25-year closure period had ended. The quantity of archival records awaiting processing, calculated during the time of the study, totalled 17 000 cubic feet of boxes from records centres outside Harare, while that for the Harare Records Centre stood at 18 609 cubic feet.

5.5.3.2. Finding aids

The other challenge found with archives processing was that most of the finding aids at NAZ were still largely in manual format. However, NAZ's Public Archives section had just started work on computerising some of the finding aids, but this had not yet yielded any significant results. Consequently, researchers at NAZ were still using bound volumes and punch cards to search for material, a system emanating from the 1950s. The reading room did not have any computers for researchers to search the few electronic finding aids, nor were there facilities for online search. However, the institution had recently been connected to Wi-Fi. Recently too, the researcher observed that the NAZ website (http://www.archives.gov) listed some online databases with online search facility such as the 'Public Archives Inventory' and the 'Death Register'. The 'Public Archives Inventory' listed several *fonds* from government ministries and departments and gave descriptions at series and sub-series levels but did not give item-level descriptions. The 'Death

Register', a potentially useful finding aid, showed scanned copies of original deceased estates registers with references to individual files. However, the databases were still under construction, according to a note written on the web-page.

The only notable exception, as explained by NAZ1, was the audiovisual collections where finding aids for these collections were on WINISIS, a UNESCO open-source database installed in the 1990s. Though this database was not available online, access to all audiovisual collections was only through search on the database using computers on site at NAZ's Audio Visual Unit in Harare.

The study therefore established that NAZ suffered from a huge backlog of unprocessed archives, which compromised access to archival materials. The non-availability of electronic finding aids and online access facilities also negatively affected efficient access to archives.

5.5.4. Archives preservation

In order to further establish the status of archives management, the study also sought to find out how archival materials were preserved at NAZ. NAZ respondents were asked: "What archives preservation programmes do you have at NAZ?" "What challenges do you have regarding the preservation of archives?"

The study established that NAZ repositories are purpose-built and were previously equipped with air-conditioning from 1961 when the NAZ building was constructed. Unfortunately, as related by NAZ3, the equipment broke down more than 20 years ago and the consequences of this were that "dust levels are increasing". Only the audiovisual collections had working cold rooms. Other than this negative aspect, NAZ uses archival quality storage boxes and carries out regular housekeeping

in the repositories. The conservation laboratory, built in the 1960s, serves to repair and conserve worn-out, damaged or deteriorating items. However, according to NAZ1, the unit had also been negatively affected by the poor economic environment in the country and suffered from procurement challenges in sourcing laboratory equipment and supplies, especially those imported from outside the country. He noted though that despite this, the unit still managed to offer basic conservation work such as binding, cleaning, patching of torn documents and general document protection where required.

Other than this, the absence of a specialist conservator or preservation archivist to oversee all archival preservation work was found a problem at NAZ. NAZ1 noted that the new structure proposed in 2008 included a full Conservation/Preservation unit headed by a Chief Archivist with specialised training in archival preservation and conservation. Furthermore, NAZ did not have resources to carry out any digitisation work. In addition, the microfilm reader had also broken down leaving staff to resort back to using original documents where they could have used microfilm copies thereby further compromising the preservation of the already vulnerable archives. The institution had however installed biometric system in the repositories and, according to NAZ2, this had improved on security.

The study therefore established that the facilities available for the preservation of archives were inadequate to provide a comprehensive platform for both preventive preservation and active conservation of the archival collections.

5.6.   Legal and regulatory framework for records and archives management

This section presents data gathered regarding the legal and regulatory framework guiding the management of records and archives in the Ministries and at NAZ.

5.6.1. Legal and regulatory framework for the management of records

The study sought to establish which legal instruments were available to guide record management work at the Ministries and also to establish the level of awareness among respondents of such legal instruments and their application. After asking all respondents, "What policies and regulations guide the management of records in your Ministry? Please explain", the following information was gathered:

5.6.1.1. Permanent Secretaries

Besides PS2 and the Permanent Secretary whose ministry the NAZ falls under, none of the Permanent Secretaries directly mentioned the National Archives Act (1986) when asked which legal instrument guided their work in terms of recordkeeping. Most cited other government regulatory instruments such as the Zimbabwe Government Standing Security Instructions (1994); Treasury Instructions; and the Official Secrets Act. According to PS13, the Zimbabwe Government Standing Security Instructions (1994) defines classification of records; it determines open, confidential, and top secrets. PS3 said that Treasury Instructions make stipulations which have a bearing on the way records should be handled and its audit requirements compel staff to create a clear audit trail, which is accomplished through handling records in a certain manner but this mostly applies to finance records. PS12 mentioned that the Official Secrets Act basically hinges on information disclosure and specifies how information should be accessed and by who, as well as who it should not be given to, making it partly a recordkeeping process. PS5 and PS11 mentioned the Results Based Management (RBM) system – a computerised reporting structure for government operations. They mentioned that the RBM guides and controls as well as provides a monitoring platform for performance, which indirectly calls for proper recordkeeping. In particular, PS5 said that the RBM framework entails maintenance of records so that one can show activities through documents indirectly making records management an auditable issue.

It was evident that most of the Permanent Secretaries, who are the accounting officers for all ministry business, did not directly relate the National Archives Act (1986) to records management work at the Ministries yet ministries are required to comply with it.

5.6.1.2. Action Officers

Action Officers AO13, AO2, AO3, AO5, AO10 and AO11 mentioned that they did not have any guidelines for recordkeeping activities except the information they were told through induction or from supervisors when they joined the government. The rest cited the Official Secrets Act, Treasury Instructions, and Accounting Officers' Manual. AO12, an officer in the human resources division said they use the EC number (Employment number) as the basis for any filing or recordkeeping work for any staffing issues they handled. Therefore, the study found no direct and written guidelines for non-records staff to guide them in carrying out their day-to-day recordkeeping responsibilities.

5.6.1.3. Records Supervisors

All the 16 Records Supervisors interviewed were familiar with the Public Service Procedures Manual and cited it as the main instrument that guided them in their records management work together with the National Archives Act (1986). They said that they received orientation to the records procedures manual through the mandatory Public Service induction courses. Most Ministries had something that they called a 'procedures manual' in the form of either a formal document or simply a list of instructions to guide staff. Seven Records Supervisors (RS1, RS6, RS7a, RS7b, RS7c, RS9 and RS10) said that they had drafted the procedures manual for their Ministries, while three (RS11, RS12 and RS13) said they had copied the manuals from other Ministries. Four (RS3, RS4, RS5 and RS14) used one they got from the Public Service training, while two (RS2 and RS8) said they used one they found already present in their ministry.

However, the procedures manuals shown to the researcher were not standard in their structure and presentation even though the Records Supervisors said that they were drawn from the Public Service Manual. In addition, there were no standard day-to-day guidelines to direct records staff at the Ministries on how to handle issues such as appraisal, disposal or records and electronic records.

5.6.1.4. NAZ role at the Ministries

The National Archives Act (1986) gave more power to NAZ over recordkeeping processes in the creating departments, and as pointed out by NAZ1 "it gave more authority to NAZ to influence records management at the point of creation, not just as a recipient of records…previously the National Archives was just receiving semi-current records without reaching out to creating offices". However, NAZ1 felt that NAZ faced challenges in implementing effectively some of the provisions of the Act. The concern was that while NAZ had the legal instrument to enter government institutions, in most cases it was not easy to do so as its staff were "often regarded as intruders whose mission was to 'appraise' another institution". He noted instances where NAZ was refused access "mainly because of perception, – where people fail to understand the role of NAZ and I know of cases where we had to seek the intervention of higher offices just to gain access". This, according to NAZ1, resulted in tendencies by NAZ staff to prioritise those departments which did not give them problems neglecting the difficult ones.

Another area of weakness in the National Archives Act (1986) cited by the respondents was in cases where a dispute arose. Section 6 (2) of the Act says that should there be a dispute, the matter is referred to the minister in charge of the department with the records under dispute and that Minister's decision is final. For instance, as explained by NAZ1, if a department insisted on destroying or retaining certain records and NAZ had different views, the Minister for that department has the final say. NAZ1 remarked that "it is like giving power to the accused…and

there are no penalties when people disregard instructions given by NAZ Director". Similarly, NAZ2 remarked that "some departments refuse to cooperate. Nothing is being done to them and the Act is not empowering us to act on such cases". Thus, the study established that though NAZ had the authority to enter government offices for records management issues, it had no power to monitor and enforce compliance and at times faced resistance from uncooperative offices.

5.6.2. Legal and regulatory framework for the management of archives

The study also sought to establish the legal and regulatory framework upon which archives were being managed. The question posed to NAZ respondents was "What legislation guides the work that you do relating to records/archives management?" with further probing on how adequate the legislation was.

The researcher established that while there have been significant improvements in archival legislation from the colonial times, there were challenges in implementing the mandate brought in by new legislation after independence. The key legal instrument guiding the operations of NAZ is the National Archives Act (1986), which replaced the National Archives Act of 1935. Other legislation, which are not directly under NAZ but have an impact on its work, include Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPA) (2000), Copyright Act (Chapter 26: 1), Official Secrets Act, the ICT Policy, Cultural Policy on top of various other Public Service regulations and statutory instruments that regulate the conduct of specific actions within the Public Service. They all have implications on how government records are handled.

The study paid attention to the National Archives Act (1986), which has a direct bearing on records and archives management. Respondents from NAZ were asked to comment on the current National Archives Act (1986). NAZ1 remarked that the 1986 Act had consolidated some of the

main records management and archival responsibilities of NAZ but felt that "it should have been matched by structural changes in terms of human and other resources in order to support the expansion drive and added responsibilities".

NAZ1 also noted that there is no direct mention of electronic records even though the Act acknowledges that records can be in any format. However, according to him, it may be more of NAZ not having the capacity to manage electronic records rather than not having the legal power – "there is no explicit mention of issues of electronic records, but yet I cannot cite any example of instances where this has made it difficult for the National Archives to carry out its mandate". He added that "generally, very few of our problems can we directly ascribe to the weaknesses of the Act…for example someone cannot say that we could not transfer this e-record because the Act does not allow…meaning that appraisal work for e-records should not be affected at all". The researcher gathered that NAZ had not issued any guidelines on the management of electronic records even though the National Archives Act (1986) mandates the institution to advice and guide on the management of records in any format.

The study therefore established that the current legal framework available to support the management of archives was weak in the area of electronic records and in particular lacked vibrant guidelines to prescribe day-to-day activities on managing archival materials in electronic format.

5.7.   Resources, facilities and tools for managing records and archives

The study also aimed at finding out what resources were available at all the stages of the life-cycle to manage records and archives. A question was posed to Records Supervisors and Permanent Secretaries, "What resources, facilities and tools are available to carry out record-keeping

processes at the Ministry/NAZ?" In addition, the researcher made observations of registries at each ministry visited. The data collected regarding this is presented below:

5.7.1. Resources, facilities and tools for managing current records

The researcher observed that the government supported the establishment of a central registry in every ministry by providing resources, facilities and tools for managing records in paper format. Data gathered on this is presented below.

5.7.1.1. Management support

The records function is a support service in the same manner as finance, human resources and administration are regarded. Budget for recordkeeping work in each of the Ministries is catered for under the Administration and Finance department, which allocates the records office resources upon request and as and when finances were available. PS3, PS4 and PS12 explained that the core business of the ministry takes precedence over the records function; hence resource allocation to it is secondary. PS4 clearly explained this position: "there are so many operational priorities which are urgent and records tend to get a back seat". However, all the Permanent Secretaries said that they recognised the key role of records in the Ministries and they indicated that they always tried to provide resources whenever possible, but the current economic problems faced by the country made it difficult to fully support records management. Regarding this, PS4 remarked that it was particularly difficult to prioritise recordkeeping in the current environment where the economy battled with hunger, diseases and many other social evils. In contrast, the general opinion gathered from the Records Supervisors was that resources were always poorly allocated to the records function by management not because the funds were limited but because management underrated the records department and had less appreciation of it. They felt that while the government had established records offices in its institutions, it did not fully support their operations as much as it

should. Exceptions were M3 and M11, whose Records Supervisors openly acknowledged the support they received from their management despite the economic hardships.

5.7.1.2. Filing cabinets

While visiting the records offices in the Ministries, the researcher observed that all Ministries provided basic resources for recordkeeping in the form of filing cabinets, folders, and related accessories such as registers, index cards and index books for the management of paper records. All Ministries had filing cabinets though some of them were not adequate and some were still using old and dilapidated cabinets including the old type steel cabinets and some that were not of good quality. Some Ministries had the more modern wooden cabinets known as the Easy-File cabinets. These are compact and take more files. The Easy-file product came with a whole package of filing folders, and mark-out cards for files taken out. Appendix T shows an example of the Easy-File cabinets and other modern type of cabinets found in the Ministries.

5.7.1.3. Filing folders

The researcher observed that Ministries also used the standard government folders written 'Zimbabwe Government', which they got mainly from a government printing company or sometimes from private suppliers but Ministries pay from their own budgets. RS7b and RS7c complained of the poor quality of some of the folders that were recently bought from private suppliers. One ministry (M3) had documents piled on the floor due to shortage of folders. The documents were however neatly piled on the floor in the Records Supervisor's office in alphabetical order for each year represented. According to the PS of that Ministry, this was a big Ministry with over 20 000 staff files, including approximately 1600 policy files throughout the country and therefore the "magnitude of files handled in a single day is very high". However, the

Records Supervisor for the same Ministry explained that it was easy for them to locate and retrieve files because the documents had been arranged in both chronological and alphabetical order.

Figure 5.3 below shows the documents found piled on the floor in M3 without file folders:

Figure 5.3: Unfiled documents on the floor in M3

5.7.1.4. Storage facilities

While all the Ministries had storage rooms set aside for storing paper records, the main challenge, as observed by the researcher, was the limited and sometimes inappropriate storage spaces. Particularly, M9 had critical space shortage due to its merger with a former stand-alone ministry, which brought with it files which were more than what the original ministry held on its own thereby filling up all its space. In M9, M12, and M13 some of the cabinets were old, dilapidated, and not user-friendly. They crammed storage areas with different types of cabinets in use in the same area making it look disorganised. In M13, there were however, new cabinets that had recently been bought to add on to the aging ones. However, despite the poor outlook, the Records Supervisors said that this did not mean that the records themselves were disorganised; they still maintained the filing order in those old-looking and mixed type of cabinets. The Records

Supervisors confirmed that they could easily locate and retrieve files with no difficulties from those cabinets, and even demonstrated to the researcher how they retrieved files stored in there. Appendix U shows some of the mixed and disorganised storage facilities found at the Ministries. Below (Table 5.2) are summaries of the observation notes made by the researcher while observing the records offices at the Ministries:

Table 5.2: *Extracts from Handwritten Observation Notes by the Researcher*

Ministry	Observation notes
M1	Space is adequate and neat with Easy-file cabinets
M2	Fair looking conditions with files arranged systematically
M3	All files are in cabinets but some records are piled on the floor due to shortage of folders
M4	Steel cabinets and a few new cabinets bought are overloaded, some cabinets are falling apart
M5	Space not adequate; crowded but with some order
M6	Not observed due to time not granted to researcher
M7a	Large space for records management; cabinets adequate
M7b	Space and cabinets fairly adequate
M7c	Room not ideal for records keeping; storage room is also the office area; use steel cabinets, steel shelves and a few wooden cabinets (old type); open shelves; no fire extinguishers
M8	Not observed due to time not granted to researcher
M9	Have a strong-room with lock and key somewhere within the building away from the records office; records office space is small and crammed up with old-looking cabinets and files
M10	New ministry still in process of setting up place; files still on the floor waiting to be put in cabinets still to be bought
M11	Cabinets used are not ideal; some are open shelves which expose records to light and dust
M12	Records office crowded and not well-organised; very old-looking files
M13	Records office fairly organised; no records on the floor; old steel cabinets plus new Easy-File cabinets
M14	Cabinets dilapidated and outdated; a few new Easy-file cabinets; boxes waiting transfer taking up space; old looking files

Source: Field data, 2015.

The data gathered revealed that while the government still embraced the central registry system and provided basic facilities for its operation, the resources availed to this researcher were mostly inadequate, as evidenced by the poor outlook found in the registries. In addition, there were no ICT resources for managing records. The data gathered regarding ICT resources is presented below.

5.7.1.5. ICT resources

The researcher noted that all the resources, facilities and tools present in the Ministries were intended for the manual system. While 11 (79%) of the records offices had computers, three (21%) did not. Of the 11 that had computers, only four (M1, M2, M3 and M4) were using them to operate rudimentary databases for staff files. However, the four Ministries also operated the manual system.

All the 14 Action Officers interviewed had computers. From this group, those in administration, human resources and operations used computers mainly for word-processing and e-mail but most of their records were filed manually. The only division of government administration which used computerised systems in the Ministries was the finance division which operated the Public Finance Management System (PFMS).

When asked to comment on the provision of ICT resources and facilities to government institutions for the management of records, KIT spoke about the overall government plans for ICT issues in the Public Service through the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services (MICTPCS), which was created in 2009 to oversee all government ICT development matters through its e-governance and e-government drives. The e-government project formed the basis for the e-governance platform. The e-governance drive is modelled along the lines of the PFMS, the computerised finance system, which has been used in all government

ministries and departments in Zimbabwe since 1999. According to KIT, the government's strategy on this was to first computerise government services and functions because for the government, it did not make sense to computerise the records offices when the records produced were still mostly in physical format. In other words, the plan was to automate the records function once the facilities for creating and using records were also in electronic form. They needed to prepare the ground first before embarking on electronic records management for the Public Service. The researcher was informed that the PFMS is a component of the main Systems Applications Processing (SAP) and this SAP platform has a records management function. SAP is part of the flagship projects, which the government is tackling sector by sector. The government's plans were also to establish a data centre where all government information from the ministries and departments were to be stored and shared from. Thus, the idea was to computerise government functions first before records management. When this happened, the registries were to be linked to the data centre. The MICTPCS's 2010-2014 'Project 12' is described as "Linking of Databases (SSB, Pensions, and Registrar General)", but it was not established if any databases were linked by the time the project ended in 2014.

Therefore, with regard to ICT resources, the study revealed that there had not been proper investment in this area. While the government has some long-term plans regarding this issue, the direct involvement of NAZ in these plans was found absent. In addition, the study found out that electronic records were being generated and had been used for a long time but there was nothing tangible found to deal with such records except for the government's long-term plans. There was no evidence of any plans to pre-design systems for the management of electronic records before their creation to the last stage of their life-cycle as advocated by the records continuum theory.

5.7.2. Resources, facilities and tools to manage semi-current and non-current records

This section presents data gathered on human and material support provided to NAZ for the management of semi-current records. The following questions were asked to NAZ respondents: "What level of support in terms of resources does NAZ receive in comparison with other Departments within your Ministry?" and "Do you consider this support adequate for the task of managing records and archives of the entire Public Service? Please explain".

5.7.2.1. Records centre facilities

NAZ1 explained that on top of the six records centres in the country, the plan was to have a records centre in each of the 10 provinces. Of the present six records centres, only two, the Harare and Bulawayo Records Centres are purpose-built with the Bulawayo Records Centre also having a Public Archives section while the rest used rented property. As indicated on the 2009 NAZ organogram (Appendix V), the Harare and Bulawayo records centres were each headed by a Chief Archivist, while the other provincial records centres were each headed by an archivist. The staff complement for the records centres, taken from the NAZ organogram is shown on Table 5.3 below:

Table 5.3: *NAZ Records Centre Staff*

Records Centre	Staff	Total
Harare RC	1 x Chief Archivist 1 x Archivist 4 x Records Assistant	6
Bulawayo RC	1 x Chief Archivist 2 x Archivist 2 x Records Assistant	5
Gweru RC	1 x Archivist 1 x Records Assistant	2
Mutare RC	1 x Archivist 1 x Records Assistant	2
Masvingo RC	1 x Archivist 1 x Records Assistant	2
Chinhoyi RC	1 x Archivist 1 x Records Assistant	2
TOTAL		**19**

Source: Field data, 2015.

The 2009 NAZ organogram also shows the total staff establishment at 116, including support staff and covering all centres around the country. Out of this, 76 were professional staff (including administrative staff). NAZ1 explained that this was too low for the institution to effectively operate and this was the reason why a new structure for NAZ was proposed in 2008. Though the new structure had been approved in principle, it had not received treasury approval mainly due to the unstable economic environment the country was facing. The new structure proposed additional staff thus boosting the capacity of NAZ to handle national responsibilities. NAZ1 indicated that the total establishment for NAZ had expanded by only about 25% since independence and this was mostly due to new posts created for the new records centres yet the magnitude of records coming into the records centres had increased tremendously. The new structure also sought to strengthen the records management function by separating the administration of the life-cycle stages so that

there are stand-alone units for current records and semi-current records. Commenting on the current structure of NAZ, PS5's remarked that "even if NAZ is fully equipped with all resources and personnel, it will still not be able to deliver because the structure is inadequate to service the whole Public Service. We have involved the Public Service about this and they agree that they need to relook at the NAZ establishment". In addition, as noted by NAZ1 and PS5, NAZ is supposed to cover parastatals and local authorities but had not been able to go that far due to limited capacity.

5.7.2.2. Transport and fuel for records management work

In addition to infrastructure and human resources, NAZ also requires vehicles and adequate fuel in order to reach all government institutions spread across the country. NAZ2 said that the records management department in Harare relied on a small pool of vehicles which were shared with the rest of the department's operations, while the Bulawayo Records Centre had one vehicle and the rest of the other provincial records centres used hired transport from the Central Mechanical Equipment Department (CMED) - a government department responsible for managing the government's vehicle fleet. Transport for records management work was found to be a challenge.

5.7.2.3. Electronic Records Management Systems

None of the Ministries covered in the study were found using any electronic records management systems (ERMS), neither were there plans to design systems for their management. According to what the researcher gathered from KIT, the plan was to put provisions for the management of electronic records only when all government services were already computerised – "The government's plan is to computerise other government services along the same line as the finance system… It's in progress, but is being done sector by sector due to limited funds. The registry offices throughout will be linked to a data centre".

All records management operations as found at the Ministries were manual. The researcher observed that though the Harare Records centre operated a database to record transfer information, they still recorded the same information manually most likely because the system was not highly developed to be solely relied on.

5.7.2.4. Resources for the management of archives

NAZ requires resources in order to carry out its mandate to manage all the government archives effectively. These resources are both human and material. The study sought to establish what resources were available at NAZ to manage the archives of the Public Service and the following questions were asked: "What level of support in terms of resources does NAZ receive in comparison with other Departments within your Ministry?" and "Do you consider this support adequate for the task of managing archives of the entire Public Service? Please explain".

Looking at the human resources, the expansion drive brought in by the National Archives Act (1986) needed to be complemented by a proportional human and material resource base but according to NAZ1, the structure remained basically the same from the period before 1986 yet there were added responsibilities to NAZ's overall functions. The few additions to the structure were mostly for when new records centres were opened and nothing much for archives management. The NAZ organogram shows the total staff complement at NAZ including records centre branches at 116 (incorporating both administrative and support staff). Out of the 116, only seven archivists were designated to actual archives processing work with six at Harare and one at the Bulawayo branch. NAZ3 expressed that even if all the archivist posts were filled, these were far from what was required to handle all the archival records coming into NAZ every year covering the whole country.

5.8.   Training, skills and awareness

In order to establish the status of records and archives management in the Ministries and at NAZ, the following questions were posed to the various levels of respondents: "Is there an induction programme for new employees joining the Ministry targeting records management? If yes, explain"; and "What other records management training, awareness activities or outreach activities are given to: records management staff and, all staff routinely?" The researcher established that there were four platforms for staff training and skills acquisition for civil servants. These are (i) the formal educational qualification required as an entry point for all professional staff. (ii) the compulsory Induction Courses offered by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Child Welfare; (iii) the ministry-level induction from the human resources and on-the-job training by supervisor upon joining the government or ministry; and (iv) exposure through short courses, seminars, workshops and conferences. These four levels, together with other related issues are presented below.

5.8.1.   Formal educational qualifications

A number of issues were gathered regarding the issue of educational qualifications. These issues are presented below.

5.8.1.1.   Records management skills at the Ministries

The study established that since the professionalisation of the records management field from 2005 in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, the minimum entry level for staff to the records field was set at certificate in records, archives or library management for the Records Assistant, and diploma for the Records Officer. This had been successfully implemented in all Ministries, as the researcher found that the records staff in the Ministries held the required qualifications. However, a few Ministries were found with one or two of their records staff without these required qualifications.

These were people who joined the civil service before professionalisation and their level of education was too low to allow any further learning, and in most cases they were too old to start on anything new. Other than these few cases, all the 14 Ministries complied with the new educational requirements.

Table 5.4 below illustrates the number of records staff in each of the Ministries covered including those who were unqualified tabulated from data gathered by researcher.

Table 5.4: *Schedule of Records Staff at the Ministries*

NB: Minimum requirement is a certificate in records and archives management for the lowest grade, the Records Assistant; and a diploma for the Records Supervisor post.

Ministry		Number of Records Supervisors	Number of Records Assistants	Unqualified staff
1		1	8	0
2		1	2	0
3		2	19	1
4		2	17	2
5		1	8	2
6		1	3	1
7	Registry a	1	14	0
	Registry b	1	13	4
	Registry c	1	4	0
8		1	6	0
9		1	11	2
10		1	3	0
11		1	4	0
12		1	9	5
13		1	5	0
14		1	10	0
Total		**18**	**141**	**21**

Source: Field data, 2015.

The table above shows that out of a total of 180 records staff from the 14 Ministries, 159 (88%) had the required educational qualifications while only 21 (12%) did not. Therefore, regarding formal training, the study established that records personnel in the Public Service were qualified in the field of records management.

5.8.1.1.1. Quality and competence of staff

Another notable dimension that emerged from the issue of training was the calibre of newly trained staff, as opposed to those who were trained in the years before. Some respondents felt that the newer staff were not as proficient as their older counter-parts. For instance, RS4 remarked that "some of those who are just coming from school are full of theory; they need practical experience", and RS12 commented that "There is too much focus on theory with no practical orientation…the staff with their degrees do not seem to realise and appreciate what they will be doing on the ground". According to AO7, "incidences of misfiling are always traced to new staff". New non-records staff were also put in the same category of poor performance by the Records Supervisors – for instance, RS3 commented "The staff are not always inducted enough, especially the new staff and this creates problems when they use files from the registry" while PS11 also said "new people are just different from the old guard; they really need induction". These comments suggested the lack of experience and induction.

5.8.1.1.2. Career progression

Although some of the records staff in the Ministries had degrees, according to NAZ1, the degree was not recognised for any advancement or promotion within the current structure and this was a source of demotivation for the staff concerned. One Action Officer (AO4) said she had moved from records to administration where there was potential for her to advance up to director position while the degree would not see her advancing any further in the records section. Therefore, even though records management staff in the Ministries held advanced qualifications in the form of degrees and master's degrees, the line of progression did not recognise these higher qualifications with the highest post in the field requiring just a diploma.

5.8.1.1.3. NAZ staff skills

Further to this, the study also sought to establish the kind of skills that were available at NAZ to manage records and archives in order to fulfil its mandate. According to NAZ1, training at NAZ is measured in two aspects: the formal training and experience. Archivists and records managers at NAZ were recruited with degrees from different sectors – history, library and information sciences, and recently, records and archives management from the recently established local universities. The new recruits relied on both mentorship from experienced archivists and records managers, and post-graduate training supported by NAZ. However, the freeze on posts and brain-drain had affected both the mentorship programme and archival skills at NAZ.

Regarding records officers, who are the diploma products from the polytechnic colleges in the country, NAZ1's opinion was that these were highly skilled due to the training they received, which is very practical oriented. However, he noted that there was a problem of retaining them because they were also attracted to other institutions outside government. Other than this, NAZ3 also raised the issue of lack of IT specialists at NAZ because the current structure did not have positions for IT staff. Therefore, the study found that while staff at NAZ were qualified, the current crop lacked experience, technical and IT skills.

5.8.2. Public Service induction

The study established that the Public Service's main form of training for all public servants comes from the induction system run by the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare for all new employees entering the Public Service mainly targeting support and administrative staff. This programme, offered at Highlands Training Centre and Management Training Bureau (MTB) in Harare, and Elangeni Centre in Bulawayo, covers all facets of government administrative operations including records management and is mandatory for all the targeted personnel. For the

records staff, the two main induction courses of 'Records Procedures' and 'Records Classification' introduce and set parameters for handling records in government. The certificates attained are considered for promotion. RS3 and RS14 felt that those staff members that had attended induction courses performed better than those who had not.

However, the researcher gathered that the Public Service induction was not running regularly and at some point it discontinued during the period from about 2008 due to resource constraints during the Zimbabwe crisis period but was re-introduced in 2013. Each ministry pays for its staff from its own budget, unlike in previous years when it was provided for free. Thus, failure to secure funding to attend induction courses was given as one of the main reasons for non-attendance by some of the respondents. Three Records Supervisors (RS10, RS11, and RS12) confirmed that some of their staff had not attended induction training. RS11 said they had not been able to send staff for training since 2009 due to lack of resources, while RS12 also said those employed in 2008/9 had not yet attended induction for the same reason. However, according to PS10, the payment was minimal, "only $20" suggesting that this could not be the main reason for failure to send staff for training. RS1 and RS9 cited logistical problems and other costs such as transport and subsistence if the courses were held outside Harare.

Regarding the role of NAZ in the Public Service induction training, NAZ1 remarked that "there is no marriage between our [NAZ] mandate as advisers and the training part within the Public Service…we are not involved at all except as clients; not in the curriculum or even as guest presenters".

The study therefore established that while the Public Service induction training was very important and effective to guide the conduct of records management processes in the Ministries, its running

faced challenges due to the crisis in the country. The direct involvement of NAZ was found lacking yet the institution holds the expertise and is tasked with advising and monitoring Ministries on records management issues.

5.8.3. Ministry level induction

The study also established that other than the formal educational training and induction courses, all new employees receive on-the-job training from the human resources department as well as from their supervisors who explain and expose new staff to basic recordkeeping expectations. The records staff receive on-the-job training on classification, filing and issues regarding file use. The other support staff from finance, human resources and administration also receive on-the-job training, which has aspects of records management for handling records in their line of work including filing and making of copies. In particular, financial transactions require certain documentation to be created, captured and maintained in certain specified ways following audit trail requirements for all financial transactions. However, PS12 mentioned another problem that new staff could work for a year or two without induction because "recruitment is slow making group training far in between because you cannot run a course for one person".

The researcher noted that there was no provision for the formal training of non-records staff in recordkeeping except for the brief interaction they have with human resources at the time of joining the Public Service as well as the instructions they receive from their supervisors on how they should handle certain official records and how they should work with the records office. At most, their contact with records management was when they requested a file or when looking for particular information or when a file could not be located as alluded to by PS11: "no one talks about records until something is missing or there are problems". In order to address this problem, RS7b reported that they had initiated dialog with the non-records staff in their ministry to educate

them on their recordkeeping responsibilities through group workshops given to individual departments within the ministry. This records supervisor confirmed that file management had improved significantly after this. Similarly, RS7a also said that they had so far addressed one department in their ministry and relations had improved between them but they were still waiting to do the same with other departments.

However, RS3 and RS6 were of the opinion that the support services staff from human resources, finance or administration were better knowledgeable on recordkeeping issues than the operations staff such as engineers. Such support staff were taught, through induction how to handle certain records within their line of work and this put them at a different level of understanding records management. PS1 remarked that "the administration and human resources staff undergo training on how they should handle records because they are expected to handle them in a certain manner. In accounting, recordkeeping is a pre-requisite". The researcher got the impression, though not confirmed, that the operative staff do not go for Public Service induction and these were the same category of staff Records Supervisors identified as most problematic in their use of records.

The study found no deliberate interaction between records staff and Action Officers in a formal way, which would inform and direct all Action Officers in their records management responsibilities. Thus, the information on recordkeeping held by the non-records staff, especially the non-support staff was very minimal.

5.8.4. Short courses, seminars, workshops and conferences

In addition to induction, the researcher established that the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) organises staff training workshops throughout the Ministries but none of the Records Supervisors could cite any particular one that had been conducted which focused on

recordkeeping. Private players where the ministry pays for the attendance of its staff such as the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute (ESAMI) also provide short-term training to records staff. PS5 spoke about the Human Resource Development Plan which serves to identify and cover the training gaps within staff and said that "whenever possible the training requirements are addressed through this". However, most Records Supervisors cited financial constraints as the main hindrance to such training even though they were identified and captured in the human resource development plan. PS4 said "If records staff identify a course which they think is relevant, and if funds are available, they can go but it's not like there is money set aside for this". Nine (56%) (RS2, RS3, RS5, RS6, RS7b, RS7c, RS10, RS11 and RS12) out of the 16 Records Supervisors interviewed had attended a workshop at least once while in government, while the remaining seven (44%) had never. Among those who had attended, two of them (RS2 and RS7b) had more than 15 years' experience and had attended workshops for not more than four occasions. The study found that short courses, seminars and workshops were treated as secondary and of no tangible value to operations.

5.8.5. Funding for training and skills upgrade

Funding for training came up from all the different categories of respondents as one of the main challenges faced in the Ministries, according to all respondents' response to general question, "What are the problems that you see regarding general records management at the Ministry?"

The study established that generally the government prioritises formal training for staff across the different fields in the Public Service, including the records field, over other informal short-term training such as workshops, seminars or short courses. Evidence was there that staff received government assistance to acquire certificates, diplomas and degrees. RS7b remarked that "the government gives you a choice: if we pay for you to attend a workshop at a hotel and eat cakes, we

will not pay for your formal course". Given this option, most people opted for formal training where they got a certificate in their name. RS7b confirmed "the government paid for my certificate, diploma and degree". From a management point of view, in a scenario where funds were limited, the government would rather pay for formal training where tangible results are produced in the form of a certificate rather than the other whereby staff attend workshops or seminars and no direct benefit may be realised.

All the Permanent Secretaries interviewed agreed that their records management staff lacked the necessary exposure to ICTs due to absence of, not only skills, but the resources as well. They attributed the absence of ICT resources to the negative economic environment in the country, which had made it difficult to invest in ICTs including training. Despite this deficit in ICT skills, the study found that most of the funding budget was directed towards formal qualifications at the expense of other forms of exposure including IT skills which were critical.

5.8.6. ICT skills

Most respondents raised concern on the absence of IT skills among the records staff. The researcher gathered that a few staff who got IT training opportunities to address issues of records management processes did not bring any tangible benefits. For example, a Records Supervisor in M2 was sent for an electronic records management workshop and the PS for that ministry remarked that they were "worried that the workshop was theoretical not practical; they did not come back with a package to adopt". Similarly, in M11, all records staff received International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) training but, according to the Records Supervisor for that Ministry (RS11), "this did not help much on records management, it just helped to know the computer". KIT, on the other hand, also mentioned training as one of the government's strategies

to improve ICT literacy among the civil servants and the ICDL course was one of the strategies employed.

On the contrary, some Records Supervisors (RS1 and RS3) felt that they or some of their staff had the necessary IT skills from their formal records management training but had not been given the opportunity and resources to venture into technology-based records management systems. They strongly felt that given adequate resources, they were capable of driving ICT initiatives in the management of records in their Ministries. In fact, RS1 was one of the four who had initiated a database in his Ministry.

Taking a broader national point of view, KIT, PS6 and PS11 commented that Zimbabwe had one of the highest literacy rates in Africa, but sadly the opposite was true for ICT. For this reason, KIT said the government could not succeed in any ICT drive (including records management) with people who were illiterate when it came to computer use – "people need basic ICT skills for them to effectively make use of computers and you don't just give computers and introduce computer systems to people who are illiterate". Therefore, issues of training and mind-set change were critical and top priority for the government. As a strategic move, the training was being given across the board – from the top level staff - ministers, deputy ministers, Permanent Secretaries, principal directors and directors to the bottom level staff. Training of top level management was complemented by the provision of ICT equipment such as laptops and computers to cabinet ministers, deputy ministers, heads of ministries, principal directors and directors – some of whom were coming from the old school era where they had never used computers before. The MICTPCS's 2010-2014 'Project 4' is listed as "Provision of computers to all members of parliament, Senators and Parliament Secretariat".

Besides this training for government staff, the MICTPCS also had plans for overall ICT skills improvement in the whole country. This was being done through targeting rural communities including schools and other tertiary institutions throughout the country. The understanding was that these were the same people who will occupy government and other positions (including records management) at some point in the future and they should be ICT-prepared by the time they got to such positions that require ICT skills and exposure. In this regard, the MICTPCS, in partnership with other players, had various projects running in the country such as the Community Information Centres (housed at Post Offices) and the MICTPCS's 2010-2014 'Project 11' is described as "Establishment of Community Information Centres". According to KIT, this was a macro-level strategy to raise the level of ICT literacy in order to empower people to drive ICT initiatives throughout the country including recordkeeping issues.

The study established that the area of ICTs in records management lacked support at all levels as evidenced by the absence of any tangible initiatives throughout the Ministries and at NAZ. The government's overall ICT plans which included the government-wide ICT programmes such as ICT literacy and community development from grassroots level were all long-term plans. There was nothing immediate to address the management of records that were being generated now including electronic records.

5.8.7. Awareness to records management

In order to establish the status of records and archives in the Public service, the study also sought to establish the level of awareness on recordkeeping and its importance among records staff and non-records staff including top level officials in the Public Service. The following questions were asked: "Do you think records-keeping /non-records staff have the requisite skills to manage records effectively in your Ministry? Explain"; "Have you received any training or awareness

activities on how to manage records? If yes, please explain". This section presents what respondents felt about the level of awareness on recordkeeping issues among records staff, non-records staff, management and the government at large.

5.8.7.1.   Awareness of records staff to records management

Generally, the Permanent Secretaries felt that the records staff were skilled and knowledgeable on the management of manual records. None of them expressed doubt on the level of skills for the manual system other than PS2 and PS7, who held reservations with a few of the newer staff. Their biggest concern was the lack of IT skills and failure to embrace technology to enhance and modernise on the manual system. PS11 remarked, "I am not happy with the records staff because they have old skills. We need people with new skills otherwise we keep on doing things the old way". KIT also mentioned the general concern that the government had over low ICT literacy in the country. This was the reason why the government had opened an ICT training facility for civil servants as well as the other programmes involving training at grass-roots level in schools and communities.

However, most Records Supervisors felt that the records management profession was not appreciated and they were looked down upon. Other non-records staff, who agreed with the records staff, included PS11 who said "records management is lowly rated though it is a critical arm of the ministry. The area is highly neglected; it does not get any attention at all". Similarly, PS3 said "the ministry needs to treat them [records staff] as vital resources not to treat them like they were in the past" while AO3 remarked "most of these top guys [sic] don't understand or appreciate records staff; they treat them like office orderlies [general hands] but they are professional".

The study established that the records management staff at the Ministries were aware and knowledgeable on recordkeeping operations but lacked IT skills to move from the manual system to ICT-based operations. In addition, even though the records management field had been professionalised, the staff were still lowly rated and treated as they were before professionalisation.

5.8.7.2. Awareness of non-records staff to records management

Asked about the awareness of the non-records staff on recordkeeping issues, most of the Records Supervisors felt that non-records staff were a problem. Some of the responses were:

- Non-records staff are aware but their knowledge is not adequate (RS12)

- Yes, they are aware but they don't take it seriously (RS13)

- In general, HR staff are aware; finance staff are aware (RS3)

- They are not very much aware, but professionalisation [of the records field] has helped, they are now beginning to recognise the profession (RS5)

- Some non-records staff are aware but others are not. You have to keep informing them (RS6)

- Non-records staff are not very much aware and this is why we have asked to speak to departments (RS7a)

- Yes, they are knowledgeable through the comprehensive in-house training all staff in the ministry receive (RS9)

In an effort to remedy lack of awareness by non-records staff, PS13 indicated that they had sent out two circulars to all staff "to fix internal recordkeeping problems and things have improved since then". In M7, they had designed a training programme targeting non-records staff in the Ministry, which sought to address issues of lack of understanding of the records management system. One of the key objectives listed on the training programme was to seek to "gain

understanding of the importance of records and the registry". AO7 from the same Ministry acknowledged this training too and said "registry staff have been doing awareness regarding these issues and have produced guidelines for staff". Thus, the study established that generally non-records staff, particularly the non-administrative/support staff were not very much aware of their recordkeeping responsibilities and how important this was to their work.

5.8.7.3. Awareness of management and government perception to records and archives management

RS1, RS5, RS10, RS12 and RS14 strongly felt that the top management at the Ministries were generally not aware of the importance of records management. RS5 though, acknowledged that professionalisation had helped a lot in terms of raising awareness and appreciation by management "they are now beginning to recognise the profession though this still remains a challenge". PS10 also saw this challenge when he said even though at ministerial level they may value records "Treasury may not see it in this light; so Ministries have to continuously lobby". RS7c recalled an occasion when NAZ asked records staff in the Ministries to bring along their directors for a records management workshop. She remarked that their Deputy Director, who had attended the workshop, acknowledged that she now had a better understanding of records and appreciated the importance of records management. She particularly indicated that they were receiving better attention from their management since then.

NAZ2 commented that even though the government had professionalised the records field, the managers continued to give records a low-profile – "they see records and archives as the low-end of their needs". PS11 admitted that records management is lowly rated though it was a critical arm of the ministry, while PS12 called for more commitment to recordkeeping issues by senior managers. However, in contrast, PS5 felt that management support was very high because "there is

realisation that work-flow depends on records but finances are the stumbling block". PS3 acknowledged the progress done by the government through professionalising the records field and commented that "in the past they would take somebody who has been rejected by other sections. We allowed records to be led by blind people but this has changed now".

Regarding the perception of the government towards records and archives, NAZ1 felt that even though the government had established a registry in all the Ministries, "the institution of a 'registry' was the government's understanding of records management, and as long as registries are created and are running, then the goal is achieved". While interviewing the Permanent Secretaries of the various Ministries, the researcher tended to agree with NAZ1 because none of the Permanent Secretaries linked problems in their registries to the role of NAZ. To them, it was more of incompetence of some of the staff, which had resulted in, for instance, misfiling or misplacement of files; creation of temporary folders; and failure to follow procedures. However, none of them had consulted NAZ for guidance or sought solutions to these problems; even the most problematic e-mail management and general e-records management. When asked about the role of NAZ, PS3 spoke about sending their records to NAZ whenever they had space problems while PS13 spoke about NAZ repositories serving as a back-up for their records. Other than the Permanent Secretary for the ministry under which NAZ falls, none of the Permanent Secretaries correctly articulated the advisory and supervisory role of NAZ towards the Ministries. NAZ1 remarked "my own view is that there is a lack of broader understanding of records management, which they see confined to the registry", and added that "there should be recognition that the expertise lies with NAZ".

The study established that while management and the government at large were aware of the existence of the registries and the activities done there, they did not fully recognise the important

role they played in all facets of government administration, as evidenced by treating the records function just as another support function. In addition, the expertise brought in by NAZ was not fully utilised.

5.9.   Summary

This chapter presented the research data that was gathered from the data collection exercise of this study in order to reach the main objective of establishing the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The study established that the positioning and structure of the records functions at the Ministries was as source of contention, as it was felt that it was not strategically positioned and structured to offer an effective service. Records management operations were guided by the Public Service Procedures Manual, which is also backed by the Public Service Induction training courses as well a regulatory framework which, however, lacked vibrant guidelines to prescribe day-to-day operations. There were facilities to capture records in manual format but the system in place relegated those in electronic format. Classification and filing of manual records was done based on a standard system throughout the Ministries but some problems were noted regarding the use and management of files. The study also found file-tracking a big challenge in all the Ministries and this culminated in misplaced, delayed or missing files. Cabinets and folders were available for the storage and protection of records but these were inadequate and in most cases the records offices were in poor state. The record disposal system for semi-current and non-current records lacked vibrant tools and, while record centre storage facilities were available to take some of the disposed records, they were not being utilised effectively. The role of NAZ at the Ministries was found limited and challenges on the management of archives were mainly due to this limited capacity to handle all archival materials generated in the Public Service. NAZ's limited capacity also affected the acquisition, processing and preservation of archives. Access to archives was drawn back by the absence of computerised finding aids as well

as computer equipment. Above all, the data gathered in this study shows that there was a huge deficit in funding, facilities, infrastructure and skills for ICTs in the management of both records and archives. In addition, there was a general low awareness and appreciation of the importance of records and archives by non-records staff, management and the government at large.

The next chapter discusses the research findings.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses and interprets the research data presented in Chapter 5. The purpose of the discussion is to state the researcher's interpretations and opinions, explain the implications of their findings, and make suggestions for future research. Its main function is to answer the questions posed in the introduction, explain how the results support the answers and, how the answers fit in with existing knowledge on the topic (Evans, Gruba & Zobel, 2011). The objectives of this study, as reflected in Section 1.4 of Chapter 1, were to establish the current status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe; to find out if the problems reported in other African countries were applicable to the situation in Zimbabwe; to formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for the Public Service; and to make recommendations that will strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service. The sections of this chapter are organised according to the emerging issues surrounding the first two objectives.

Therefore, each of the subheadings below highlights the status of records and archives management to cover the first objective; presented following the stages of the records life-cycle. However, in some sections, the issues of the colonial-postcolonial dimension will be discussed where they are applicable to cover the second objective.

6.2. Operation of a centralised registry system

One of the aims of this study was to explain recordkeeping in Zimbabwe from a postcolonial perspective against a background of reports of collapsing recordkeeping systems in many postcolonial African countries including Zimbabwe as explained in the literature review in Chapter

3. All these studies (Asogwa, 2012; Barata, Bennett, Cain & Routledge, 2001; Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos, 2009; Mnjama, 2003; Mazikana, 2009; Nengomasha, 2009, 2013; Ngoepe, 2008; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; the World Bank & IRMT, 2000) found one of the biggest problems in Africa being that of failure to maintain the status quo of the colonial period whereby recordkeeping systems were previously functional and operational. The following discussion will show that certainly, the problems found in Zimbabwe were not about failure to maintain the recordkeeping status quo of the colonial era but were associated with using an archaic system, which had not seen any significant developments since its establishment, particularly in response to modern ICT developments. The system remained operating as it was during the colonial period despite that fact that times have moved; and there has been an information revolution.

The study found the recordkeeping systems that were established during the colonial period in Zimbabwe and operated through the centralised registry system still actively functional. The government of Zimbabwe had managed to maintain the concept of the registry system as it was operated from the colonial period and all Ministries were found with functional registries. There was no evidence of policy shift in terms of what system to use by the government, which still embraced the central registry system as adopted from the colonial times. The only change was in name from Registry to Records Office but the manner in which they operate did not change at all. Evidence from data gathered in this study suggests that the transition to independence in Zimbabwe allowed previous recordkeeping systems to continue to operate in the postcolonial period. This was unlike, for example, the situation of transition to independence in Namibia whereby experienced staff were immediately replaced by inexperienced ones soon after independence in an effort to redress the imbalances of the previous apartheid system which side-lined the Black people both in terms of training and work (Nengomasha, 2009).

The situation found in Zimbabwe also differed from the experiences of for instance, Malawi and Uganda where staff at the creating offices did not trust their registries (Lihoma, 2012; Luyombya, 2012); and in Namibia where civil servants tended to "view the records they create and receive as something personal" (Barata, Bennett, Cain & Routledge, 2001, p. 40), thereby finding no need to use the registries. In Zimbabwe, all non-records staff interviewed were aware of the registry as the official records management focal point for all official records and confirmed that they actively used it in their day-to-day operations. Even those who kept their own files in some kind of 'mini-registry' were quite clear about the official record being with the registry and theirs just being for personal convenience, further confirming the full operation of the centralised registry system. This study sees mini-registries as a symptom of non-functioning or malfunctioning registry systems and this was not the case in Zimbabwe.

However, much as it has remained intact from the colonial times, the recordkeeping system in Zimbabwe was found with its own problems. Identifying the type of problem is crucial because it is only through it that proper solutions can be prescribed. Perhaps, based on the findings of this study, the generic solutions that have been prescribed to African countries as postcolonial recordkeeping problems could take a different approach. Today, the information field has evolved from the simple typewriter, typing pool and the centralised registry era, and as expressed by Mazikana (2009), "it is not possible to hope that you can still centralise the records keeping or hope to maintain a complete and comprehensive central registry" (p. 49). Unfortunately, the current registries within the whole Public Service of Zimbabwe were designed to serve the old school type of set-up, a "remnant of the medieval ages whose time is way past" (Mazikana, 2009, p. 49). A lot of the other problems identified and discussed later in this chapter stem from this continued use of an archaic system which evidently required renovation for it to be relevant to current demands.

6.3.   Positioning and structure of the records and archives functions in the Public Service

In order to establish the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, the study also looked at the positioning of the records function within the Ministries and this emerged as an issue of concern in this study. According to Thurston and Cain (1995), in all public sector records and archives management, there is need for the registries and national archives to work hand in hand to produce efficient systems. The World Bank (2000) also recommended that the National Archives should be placed within an office which plays a central governing role within the country such as president or prime minister or the ministry responsible for the civil service (World Bank, 2000). All this can only happen if these two arms are strategically positioned within the Public Service set-up as they are the most important structures that make the backbone for any records and archives function within the government (Thurston & Cain, 1995). They need to be strategically placed and structured so as to be effective. The positioning and structure are particularly important in an African set-up where resources are limited and the more powerful and appreciated Ministries get the bigger share of the national cake. Having surveyed many postcolonial African countries to assess their recordkeeping programmes, Thurston and Cain (1995) concluded that in most of them there was a "gap between the national archives and government record creating departments" (p. 200). The findings regarding these issues are discussed below:

6.3.1. Position of registries

The above conviction was found true for Zimbabwe as it emerged in this study that the positioning of the records function in the Ministries of Zimbabwe under the Director, Administration and Finance was not tactical because it left the records function under the leadership of persons who were not records professionals and thereby had no vital knowledge to effectively drive recordkeeping at policy and management levels. In addition, the records office (registry) itself was

positioned at a very low-level in comparison with other support functions because it was headed by a Records Supervisor whose post was pegged at diploma level while other support units were headed at director level by degree holders. Occupying such a low level position could pose problems due to lack of visibility and influence within the ministry; an argument also raised by Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011), and Magaya and Lowry (2012) when they looked at the positioning of national archival institutions in South Africa, Botswana and Tanzania. Therefore, from this perspective, the study found a huge gap existing between the records offices (registries) and top management because the directors who represented records management issues were not experts in that area, while also the Records Supervisor position was pegged at a low level which could affect the overall influence of the records function within the Ministries. This calls for restructuring of the registries which includes their upgrading and repositioning.

6.3.2. Position of the National Archives

The positioning of the National Archives within the Public Service set-up has also been a contentious issue in archival discourse for many years and this also applied to the case of NAZ. Its placing under the Ministry of Home Affairs was found to be problematic. Earlier on Mazikana (1990) argued that "archival institutions need the backing of the highest authority in order to carry out their mandate and to be seen to be above or across the government service organisation rather than just be seen as a segment or component of one ministry only" (p. 63). Mnjama (2007) also reported that in its early years, ESARBICA passed many resolutions urging national governments to consider the placement of national archival institutions under Ministries with wider ministerial powers and noted that without such powers, the operations of the national archives tended to suffer. Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) concluded that both the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa under the Department of Arts and Culture; and the Botswana National Archives and Records Services, under the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture carried a low

status. They argued that with such positioning "archival institutions are seriously under-resourced because their significance is largely unacknowledged" (p. 150). Abioye (2007) too expressed the same sentiments for the National Archives of Nigeria, which has been moved from ministry to ministry over the years seeking for a good position and remarked "For a very long time, the National Archives of Nigeria has been treated like the proverbial orphan passed on from one uncaring relation to another…most of these Ministries have had little or no interest in archives" (p. 58). In Namibia, studies by Barata, Bennett, Cain and Routledge (2001); Nengomasha (2009) all confirmed that the National Archives of Namibia, as a sub-division within the Ministry of Education was poorly situated within government to take any active role in co-ordinating records management because the authority of the head of archives to enforce compliance was neither widely recognised nor respected.

This study notes that before independence, NAZ was under the Ministry of Internal Affairs which became the Ministry of Home Affairs at independence; thus technically there has not been any change in terms of its placing. However, the problems identified in Zimbabwe were stemming from NAZ sharing the Ministry of Home Affairs with other departments such as the Police, Immigration and Registrar for Birth, Marriages and Death, which are more security-related departments and were seen as more powerful in comparison to the way NAZ was perceived. This tended to influence resource allocation within the Ministry; an impression given by some respondents as the reason for getting the least funding in the Ministry. Earlier on, Mwiyeriwa (1985) wrote that "the health of a budget much depends on the standing of the archival institution within the government hierarchy and how much support the director can elicit from his superiors" (p. 225). However, one could argue though that from the perspective of security, NAZ is well-placed because government records are security items which should be safe-guarded at all costs. Nevertheless, looking at this issue from a records management perspective, the records

management aspect is a cross-cutting administrative function, which could be better handled through a ministry such as the Public Service or the Office of the President and Cabinet who have the authority and mandate to regulate and enforce general government administrative processes over other Ministries. As it is, NAZ lacked the power to enforce the records administrative processes in the Ministries when it was just a mere department within the Public Service set-up, and "other Ministries cannot see the relevance [of it] when the archival institution seeks access to their records and tries to impose controls" (Mazikana, 1990, p. 63).

The Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Postal & Courier Services in Zimbabwe also faces the same fate in that it requires power to enter other government offices so as to drive ICT issues, but fortunately for it, as explained by one respondent from that Ministry, the Ministry was strategically partnered with the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC) - "they [OPC] make the national policy, facilitate development and supervision; and when you are a ministry that cuts across, this is necessary for the power to implement because it will be difficult to speak to other Ministries on your own". Such partnerships as this would also work for NAZ.

Abioye (2007) suggested placing the National Archives under the Presidency "where proper funding and due attention can be guaranteed" (p. 58). A typical example where the national archives has been moved and positive results have been realised to a certain extent is the case of Tanzania where its National Archives was moved to the President's Office, as part of public sector reform programme in 1997. Its effectiveness is reported to have improved significantly particularly that there is more direct involvement of the archives with the creating offices and this has given it the "profile and visibility required to enable it to have an influence over the management of records across the government" (Magaya & Lowry, 2012, p. 153). The IRMT (2011a) also commented that the Tanzanian records and archival function had now been positioned centrally

within government so that it can fulfil its "crosscutting function" (p. 3). Through this the Tanzanian National Archives appears to have acquired the necessary power to enter creating offices. However, it still remains to be seen if real influence and change on the ground has occurred.

In light of the above accounts on registries and the National Archives, it is clear that records management is an administrative issue and under the current set-up in Zimbabwe, both NAZ and the Ministry of Home Affairs do not hold jurisdiction over other Ministries or departments and this makes it difficult for them to execute this mandate. The work could be better handled with a ministry with overall authority over others. Such challenges as those found in Zimbabwe have also been reported in Kenya whereby the Kenya National Archives is placed within a ministry with cultural responsibilities and this "diminishes the potential impact that it could have in influencing or overseeing records management from across government (Magaya & Lowry, 2012, p. 153).

6.4.   The capture of records created and received

The study also sought to find out how records were captured so as to establish the status of records management regarding this aspect. It emerged that while there were some fairly efficient controls over the capture of physical records generated and received in the Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe through the manual registry system, the capturing of electronic records was handled rather haphazardly if not non-existent. Such problems with e-mails and e-records experienced in Zimbabwe have also been reported in many other African countries. For example Mukotekwa (2002) pointed at the minimal activities on e-records management going on in many African countries, while Nengomasha (2012) concluded that "many electronic information systems in use in government offices in Southern Africa generate transactional records that are not captured and maintained in recordkeeping systems" (p. 101).

The management of e-mails and other technology-generated documents remained largely unaccounted for in all the Ministries covered in this study due to absence of rules and guidelines that direct the day-to-day handling of such records. The ISO 15489-1 Records Management Standard directly includes electronic records - Section 7.1 (b) stipulates that organisations should decide "in what format and structure records should be created and captured, and the technologies to be used" (ISO 15489, 2001). The records continuum theory too which directly addresses issues of electronic records stipulates that "…a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records [and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems] through to the preservation and use of records as archives" (Cunningham, McKemmish, Roberts, & Reed, n.d.). On the other hand, the ICA also defines the continuum concept as "a consistent and coherent process of records management throughout the life of records, from the development of recordkeeping systems through the creation and preservation of records, to their retention and use as archives (Cunningham, McKemmish, Roberts, & Reed, n.d.). All the above definitions suggest an ideal integration for documents, records and archives management; thereby defining the critical role of the national archival institution and its involvement with the creation and management of current, semi-current and non-current electronic records starting with the designing of systems to manage such records. The current framework in Zimbabwe does not promote the integration of recordkeeping systems and processes. With the continuum theory, instead of being reactive, recordkeeping becomes proactive and the model emphasises cooperation beyond the traditional repository (Atherton, 1985; McKemmish, 2001; Upward, 2000). All this was not found in the Zimbabwean context.

In their study on the management of e-mails in six Zimbabwean universities, Sigauke, Nengomasha and Chabikwa (2015) confirmed that there were no formal systems to manage e-mail records and NAZ had no ICT-related infrastructure to preserve the records generated from e-mails.

They promulgated for a public sector policy for electronic records as matter of urgency. This study also found the same regarding e-mails in the Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. In other studies, Asogwa (2012); Nengomasha (2012); Ngulube and Tafor (2006) also concluded that many African countries were haunted by the absence of strong regulatory frameworks for electronic records including e-mails. There were no tangible provisions or plans to deal with this issue at the Ministries in Zimbabwe even though e-mails and e-records were being used for everyday official correspondence by means of either official or private e-mail addresses; a situation also reported in Namibia by Nengomasha (2012). Ministries, registries and even individuals were left to deal with this set of records on their own with neither guidance nor any official tools to enforce recordkeeping practices for such electronically generated records. The 'print and copy' option or the 'hard copy' stance taken by some Ministries were neither persistently followed nor strictly enforced. In this regard, the findings of this study point to a common problem in many postcolonial African countries whereby governments adopt the use of ICTs to generate, use and share information without putting provisions in place to bring the records created thereon into formal recordkeeping systems. Katuu (2009) revealed that almost 60% of information within government in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific was electronically generated. However, in Zimbabwe, the government remained stuck in the old manual system and ignored electronic records, as if they did not exist. It still used a system which was designed before ICTs and nothing had been done to incorporate the new media into the formal recordkeeping systems. While the recordkeeping framework found in Zimbabwe fitted well with the records life-cycle model, it did not comply with the records continuum framework, confirming the same issues of the inadequacy of the life-cycle as an operating model on its own for managing records and archives in today's technology set-up. These were the same concerns that were raised by those who advocated for the continuum model.

6.5.   Classification and filing of records

The study also sought to establish the status regarding classification and filing of records because antique or inappropriate file classifications have been cited as some of the problems in many postcolonial African countries (Mazikana, 1996, 2009; Mnjama, 2005; the World Bank & IRMT, 2000). They noted in particular the problem of fragmentation of official records in some African countries due to absence of vibrant and active classification and filing systems. Thurston and Cain (1995) observed that in some African countries "the classification systems that had been the basis for arrangement under colonial bureaucracies were breaking down and no one was managing systems for the creation, use and storage of these records" (p. 200). Nandain (2006) observed poor filing and classification systems in Kenyan registries. A typical example of a malfunctioning system is reported by Tsabedze, Mutula and Jacobs (2012), who also found extreme cases of classification and filing inconsistencies in Swaziland whereby the majority (63%) of the Ministries were using different systems to classify and file records while the remainder (37%) did not use any system at all.

Data gathered in this study was a departure from the collapsing classification and filing systems, as reported in some postcolonial African countries cited above. This study confirmed the active use of classification and filing systems throughout the Ministries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe though the system originated from a system now considered 'antique' from the colonial times. This 'antique' system was considered appropriate and effective by all Records Supervisors interviewed who also expressed that they were not prepared to abandon it but just modernise it. However, although the classification and filing systems were praised as adequate and efficient, incidences of misfiling, missing files and incomplete files were noted in all Ministries covered in the study. Notably, these were attributed not to the incompetence of records staff but to those staff members who had not participated in induction, as well as the non-records staff who were not privy to

indexing terms used by the registry. Where non-records staff were found not familiar with indexing terms, it was established that the indexes that were used to control the vocabulary for file titling were treated as confidential documents which could not be given to any staff members outside the records office. Given this circumstance, the problems with indexing terms were likely to continue for as long as there was no harmony on terms to use between the records office, on the one hand, and Action Officers or users of records, on the other. The use of a common thesaurus and direct interaction between records staff and non-records staff, which would clear such misunderstandings was lacking.

The other problem found associated with fragmentation of official records was that of temporary folders opened when original files could not be found or were being used by other staff. While this was reported to be happening in some Ministries, a few of them reported that they had put a stop to this habit. This study sees the opening of temporary files as a symptom of poor file-tracking and if the tracking system is sorted, there is no need to open such temporary files. Lihoma (2012) also reported on the same problem in Malawi whereby temporary files were opened to replace missing files; incidences of which were very high among the government Ministries of Malawi. This study also confirms the same problem of temporary files in Zimbabwe even though many of the Ministries reported that they were trying to fix the problem.

Other than this, one other area of possible fragmentation of records was in the case of records in electronic format. Poor e-mail management was prevalent in all Ministries, and therefore, in this regard, the possibility of fragmented records was high. Once again, the situation found in Zimbabwe was far from complying with the requirements of the records continuum theory which has provision for e-records to ensure that there is no fragmentation of records.

6.6.   File use and maintenance

The study also sought to investigate file use and maintenance in an effort to further establish the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Poor file-tracking systems have been identified in many postcolonial African countries (Barata, Bennett, Cain & Routledge, 2001; Lihoma, 2012; Luyombya, 2012; Nengomasha, 2009). These manifest in cases of missing, misplaced, or delays in finding files. Luyombya (2012) and Lihoma (2012) reported of high incidences where files could not be retrieved in Uganda and Malawi, respectively, due to improper or absent tracking systems. Barata, Bennett, Cain, and Routledge (2001) also found that in the Namibian Public Service "there are no tracking systems in place to record the movement of records outside the creating or processing section" (p. 6), while (Nengomasha, 2009) further confirmed the same problems in Namibia.

Evidence gathered in this study confirms that difficulties with file tracking were mainly with those files that had been issued out to Action Officers and had been physically withdrawn from the registries. Those that were retrieved directly from records storage by records staff were retrieved 'timeously' as alluded to by most respondents. The issues raised surrounding this issue point to poor file tracking and these are further discussed below.

6.6.1. File tracking

There were no proper file-tracking systems that addressed current file use and maintenance once files were outside the registry. Old tracking tools such as the 'Pass-on-slip', the 'Card system', and the 'Signing system' proved to be no longer effective, as they were not being practised diligently by all staff. They probably worked before when Ministries were smaller and dealt with fewer files and a few staff. In those days, records were received, created and circulated from one point - the registry via the typing pool and no one else in the ministry had the means to receive or create

documents except the records office and typing pool. The situation is different today whereby the points of receiving, creating and sharing records in an organisation could be as many as the computer ports available in an institution. When files cannot be tracked and are not found at the time they are required, they are categorised as 'missing'.

The biggest challenge within the registries of Zimbabwe was that the system still relied on archaic file-tracking systems, which no longer worked. This resulted in delays in finding files and many of these ended up with the label of 'missing'. This could also point to issues of awareness and appreciation - people are simply not interested in following laid down procedures; provisions of which are in the Registry Procedures Manual. Perhaps governance issues where enforcement provisions were weak also come into play. Furthermore, the issue of accountability for missing files was not taken seriously, as there seemed to be no consequences to staff when they misplaced files, an observation also made by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) when they assessed the management of financial records in Zimbabwe. In essence, based on the situation found in the Ministries, this study concludes that the entire records management system in the Public Service of Zimbabwe has failed to put in place a robust file-tracking system and this is why files continue to be misplaced once they are taken out of the registry storage causing delays in actions until the files are found. On its own, poor file tracking poses a real threat to the records management of the Public Service of Zimbabwe in the same manner that it has brought problems in other African countries, as reported in other studies (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000; Lihoma, 2012; Luyombya, 2012; Nengomasha, 2009).

6.6.2. Missing files

The problem of missing files is prevalent in many African countries (Lihoma, 2012; Mnjama, 2007; Musembi, 2000). This problem also applied to all the Ministries in Zimbabwe. While earlier

on Ngulube and Tafor (2006) also reported on high incidences of missing files in government ministries and departments in Zimbabwe, this study, however, contends that many of the files that were labelled as missing were in actual fact not permanently lost because in most cases they were eventually found, as alluded to by many of the records staff interviewed. Instead, what was clearly rampant were delays in finding files due to poor file-tracking systems and these were the same files that were labelled as 'missing'. This study, however, did not particularly focus on quantifying the missing files but rather on finding reasons behind their missing or delays. Nevertheless, judging from the various responses from the study participants, the majority of the so-called 'missing' files were files that were actually lying somewhere in offices having been moved from one office to another with no proper recording of their further movement from the time the files left the registry storage to 'missing'. Perhaps this is the unauthorised access that Mazikana (2009) and Ngulube (2000) referred to in their studies in the sense that the third-party holder of the file is 'unauthorised', as the files they held had not been sanctioned by the records office. When files are stuck somewhere in offices, actions cannot be taken, decisions cannot be made and processes cannot be implemented. Such situations have given a bad label that files are forever missing in most government institutions in Zimbabwe when in fact, the files had simply fallen out of the tracking system and were lying somewhere with someone unknown. Upon probing for further clarification on the issue of missing files, the records staff explained that such files eventually pitched up unless they had been concealed for some underhand agenda. The records staff explained that sometimes when files had gone out of the tracking system for too long, if they had time, they moved around physically checking offices, and in most cases when they did this they found the 'missing' files.

The issue of delays in finding also files came up as a big problem throughout the Ministries and it stood out as a potential threat to records management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Unfortunately, the distinction between 'delay' and 'missing' and the interpretation of the two becomes difficult especially if actions cannot be taken for as long as the file has not been found. The file-tracking system lacked fool-proof provisions, which would identify where files were physically located at any given time particularly when outside the registry and this resulted in 'delays' that could also be labelled 'missing' depending on how long the delay was.

All in all, while many studies have identified and confirmed problems with file-tracking, delayed, missing and misplaced files; this study puts emphasis on the fact that file-tracking, as it was during the manual system days and as it is currently being executed, does not work anymore. There is need for a re-design of the file-tracking systems and to inculcate new recordkeeping culture among all staff. In addition, there is also need to device new fool-proof ways that make tracking of file movements more effective while at the same time making staff accountable for files disbursed to them with consequences if they misplace or fail to follow laid down procedures.

6.7. Risks to current records

In order to further establish the status of records and archives management, the study looked at potential risks to current records. Earlier on, Mazikana (2009) listed misuse of records, such as unauthorised access to or alteration of records as some of the problems in many African countries; while Ngulube (2000) found similar tendencies in Zimbabwe. This study found no evidence of unauthorised access to records or any serious threats to records at the Ministries in terms of their physical protection and security because the records offices were closed areas even to other staff of the ministry who did not work in the registry. No one could walk into the records office and personally retrieve a file from its storage; retrieval of files is done by records staff only. The Official Secrets Act actually regulates this and everyone interviewed was fully aware of it. The Records Procedures Manual also regulates the handling of confidential records which may be

classified as confidential, secret or top secret. This also includes other records whose files are not kept in the records office but only in the offices of the Permanent Secretaries. However, suspected cases of sabotage or deliberate actions to conceal or destroy information were reported in the Ministries and these posed a potential threat to records although they were not quantified or investigated further in this study. In an earlier study, Ngulube (2000) described similar incidences as "use of records for criminal activities" (p. 170).

Other than cases of sabotage or deliberate actions, the other potential threat to records could come from unexpected events such as fire due to non-servicing of fire-fighting equipment. The fire-detection and fire-fighting facilities were available at all the Ministries but there were no active programmes to maintain and service the equipment making the risk of fire disaster a possibility. Section 9.6 of the ISO15489-1 on 'Storage and Handling' implore institutions to provide storage facilities "designed to protect records from unauthorised access, loss or destruction, and from theft and disaster". Issues of fire-fighting facilities are part of this (ISO15489, 2001, p.14).

6.8.   Retention and disposal of records

The study looked at the appraisal and disposal of records in order to establish the status of records at the semi-current stage of the records life-cycle. Garaba (2007) stated that a "good records management programme makes it possible to identify the period of usefulness of information and to give appropriate instructions as to the fate of the information" (p. 60). This period of usefulness is determined through appraisal and use of retention and disposal schedules. In the absence of these tools, it is very difficult for institutions to carry out any records appraisal and disposals. Several studies have found problems in the appraisal and disposal of records in many postcolonial African countries. For instance, in their study, Ngulube and Tafor (2006) reported that most countries in the ESARBICA region conducted records disposal only when the need arose and not

systematically according to scheduled times, while Garaba (2007) also found a large accumulation of unappraised records in the ESARBICA region. In Uganda, Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) reported that even though the government of Uganda had issued retention and disposal schedules, no transfers had been done since independence in 1962 and "records are stuck in storage rooms without being organised" (p. 73); raising another problem of implementation. Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) also noted that in South Africa and Botswana the national and provincial archives were battling with appraisal backlogs due to limited human resources. Similarly, out of the 176 Namibian institutions studied by Nengomasha and Nyanga (2012), none had retention and disposal schedules. In Tanzania, the IRMT (2011a) reported that retention and disposal schedules for paper records had been in use since the 1990s but they were not working effectively because of lack of understanding of their use and staff were not confident to destroy records.

The main challenge found in Zimbabwe was the absence of proper and up to date retention and disposal schedules. A total of 69% of the Ministries did not have retention and disposal schedules. Even though efforts had been made to address this in 2012, the draft schedules were still not finalised at the time of the study having been caught up in government bureaucratic delays, as established in this study. Furthermore, the appraisal of electronic records was non-existent, as these records were not captured formally in any of the Ministries' recordkeeping systems; making this another area of non-compliance to the records continuum theory – there is a break in the continuum management of records. The major consequences of lack of guidelines, as witnessed in the Ministries in Zimbabwe, were that the appraisal system was not carried out proactively. In most cases, records were appraised and transferred in reaction to space shortages at the Ministries; a situation alluded to by most of the Records Supervisors. This gave the impression that as long as space was adequate, there was no need to dispose or transfer semi-current records. However, ironically, space came up as one of the biggest challenges in almost all the Ministries; the more

reason why records should be disposed systematically and proactively. Instead, it was done as a reactive process rather than a proactive activity, which would follow set guidelines and procedures occurring at scheduled times. Implementation of the disposal system was haphazard and was more of an individual ministry's perspective rather than it being a government-wide standard activity. In a worse scenario, Ministries simply transferred everything to the records centres including trivial records which should be destroyed at ministry level. Further to this, and due to the poor appraisal and disposal systems, the records centres in turn were filled with un-appraised and ephemeral records. When Ministries needed to transfer records to the records centres, space was not readily available to enable the transfer. Evidently, the whole records life-cycle concept was affected by such poor appraisal and disposal systems. If one process is not undertaken, the other is affected, and this is the reason why the life-cycle and continuum concepts advocate for a full cycle management in a continuous manner (Atherton, 1985; Gordon, 2011). Similarly, the ISO15489-1 records management standard, Section 8.3.5 'Retention and disposition' states that "Records systems should be capable of facilitating and implementing decisions on the retention or disposition of records. It should be possible for these decisions to be made at any time in the existence of a record" (ISO15489, 2001, p.10).

This situation found in Zimbabwe confirms Thurston's (as cited in Tough, 2009, p. 226) findings that "records centres were filled with ephemeral material which should have been destroyed"; a scenario also cited by NAZ staff as one of the contributing factors to the filling up of the Harare Records Centre. Thus, the study concluded that even though a records appraisal and disposal framework as prescribed by the records life-cycle model was available in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, it was not being fully implemented and some of the tools were out-dated if at all available.

However, the problems in Zimbabwe could certainly not stem from the absence of retention schedules only because even in the 31% of the Ministries that had some form of retention and disposal schedules, the appraisal and disposal processes were not smooth-sailing. The same problem whereby retention schedules were available but not being implemented actively was reported in Tanzania (IRMT, 2011a). In Zimbabwe, there were serious implementation problems both on the side of the registries and the records centres. Whether the schedules were there or not, no one really took responsibility for non-action. Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) hinted on the same issue when they noted that no one was claiming responsibility for poor implementation of disposal between registries and records centres and this problem "has been allowed to continue for some time" (p. 17). This resulted in congested registries and records centres with material which should not be in either. However, it was not clear in this study whether the old schedules found in the Ministries were drafted before or after independence. Nevertheless, the situation found in Zimbabwe confirms what has been reported in other postcolonial African countries – that of lack of vibrant disposal tools and poor implementation of the disposals (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000; Garaba, 2007; IRMT, 2011a; Nengomasha & Nyanga, 2012; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006).

6.9. Storage space

The study sought to further establish the status of records and archives management by looking at the provision of storage space for records. The ISO 15489-1 records management standard states that "Appropriate storage environment and media, physical protective materials, handling procedures and storage systems should be considered when designing the records system" (ISO15489, 2001, p.9). Mazikana (2009) identified inadequate records centre facilities as a big problem in postcolonial Africa, and this was applicable to countries such as Botswana, Malawi, Namibia and Uganda, which for many years after independence operated without records centres (Lihoma, 2012, Luyombya & Sennabulya, 2012; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011; Nengomasha &

Nyanga, 2012) even though they may be available now. However, this study contends that the situation in Zimbabwe was not so much about the inadequacy of the records centre facilities but rather a failure to make effective use of available facilities. There were facilities in the form of the six records centres in the country out of the desired 10, but the whole records centre operation was negatively affected by the absence of the retention and disposal tools as well as poor implementation of the entire appraisal and disposal system. This situation contributed to space shortages at both the creating offices and the records centres. This study further confirmed the same problems found earlier on in Zimbabwe by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) whereby they observed that creating offices were congested with semi-current and non-current records, which should have been at records centres, while the records centres had many records that did not have disposal decisions on them. Having made this observation 15 years ago, Barata et al. (2000) warned that "this situation will ultimately lead to a breakdown in the records management process" (p. 17). This study confirms this breakdown one-and-a-half decades later. Both registry staff at the Ministries and NAZ records staff cited difficulties in the records transfer system, which was attributed to three things: absence of proper appraisal and disposal tools; shortage of storage space; and inadequate NAZ staff. Some respondents even blamed NAZ for this breakdown. Space problems were also confirmed at the Gweru Records Centres by Dewah and Mnjama (2013) and at Masvingo, Gweru and Mutare Records Centres by Bhebhe, Masuku and Ngulube (2013). This defeats the whole purpose for which the records centres were created; further stifling the smooth operation of the stages of the records life-cycle concept.

It should be noted though that most (four out of six) of these records centres found in Zimbabwe were opened after independence, in the 1980s and 1990s; making it a positive development in the postcolonial era. However, other than the Harare and Bulawayo Records Centres, the rest were not purpose-built but simply adapted for recordkeeping and had been operating like that for more than

a decade. This confirms the same problems as those identified by Bhebhe, Masuku and Ngulube (2013), who concluded that "African archival institutions face a plethora of challenges and the lack of purpose built premises is one of them" (pp. 47-48). The economic crunch in Zimbabwe during the crisis period stalled plans that were in place to build proper records centre facilities to replace the make-shift facilities at the provincial records centres.

While the expansion drive adopted in the period after independence in Zimbabwe (through the opening of more records centres) is recognised and appreciated, the full benefits of the decentralisation of records management has not been fully realised due to poor appraisal systems. In comparison however, the cases of postcolonial Uganda and Malawi were different from Zimbabwe because in these two countries there were no records centre facilities at all for many years after independence; whereas in Zimbabwe, the records centre facilities were actually expanded soon after independence. For instance, Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) found in the Ministries of Uganda vast backlogs of semi-active records "improperly stored in wherever space could be found" (p. 74), because there were no records centre facilities to house records. A worse case of neglect was that of Malawi, as reported by Lihoma (2012) who wrote about "unmanageable accumulations of dormant files, both ephemeral and valuable, which were dumped on desks, on top of cupboards, on shelves, on floors, in office corridors, in the ceilings, in storerooms and other warehouses" (p. 187). In the case of Zimbabwe, records centre facilities were available but were not being used efficiently due to poor appraisal systems; making it a different type of problem but the overall effect of it is the same – that is poor disposal of records both by those with records storage facilities and those without. When the Harare Records Centre was opened in 1988, it was reported to be the largest records centre in sub-Saharan Africa (Mazikana, 1988), but a decade or two down the line the records centre was already facing shortage of space. This could only be a result of poor management of space, as evidenced in this study, and

confirming what Musembi (as cited in Mnjama, 1996, p. 31) argued that "the greatest weakness of the third world national archives is not the lack of adequate resources, but rather their mismanagement". In addition, while the decentralisation of records centres was a positive move in postcolonial Zimbabwe, a situation also acknowledged by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000), it has been done in 'piecemeal manner' due to poor implementation of the appraisal system making the intended effect of it minimal.

6.10. NAZ capacity to carry out records management functions in the Public Service

In order to further establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe, the study also looked at NAZ's capacity to carry out its mandate within the Public Service of Zimbabwe. According to Mwiyeriwa (1985), a vibrant records management programme by the National Archives involves "constant record surveys, inspection tours, review of disposition schedules and the routine and technical records centre work" (p. 226). He concluded that due to poor capacity "the archival situation in Africa is far from being steady. Lots of work is done haphazardly" (p. 226). In Botswana, Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) also noted that the Botswana National Archives and Records Service was not sufficiently resourced in both material and human terms, while in Namibia Barata, Bennett, Cain and Routledge (2001); and Nengomasha (2009) reported that the staffing levels at the National Archives of Namibia was very poor and as a result the records management function as a whole had virtually no presence throughout the country. These observations and many other examples in Africa apply to the situation found in Zimbabwe. The resources at the dispensation of NAZ, both human and material, were grossly inadequate to enable it actively carry out the processes as explained three decades ago by Mwiyeriwa cited above. For instance, the institution had a total of only 19 records management staff as well as those at the branches to service the whole country's Public Service institutions including local authorities, parastatals and statutory bodies. NAZ has not been able to effectively offer records management

services to all the Ministries covered in this study, leaving them in most cases to operate without proper guidance, let alone all other departments and government-related bodies. This study found NAZ's visits to Ministries too infrequent leaving the overall monitoring and supervision of the records management services to administrative directors who had minimal knowledge of records management. This could explain some of the problems found at the Ministries such as the poor appraisal and disposal systems as well as the failure to deal with e-records. NAZ is the institution that should ensure the professional execution of these functions but without adequate human capacity and material resources to outreach the Ministries and departments, it is difficult for it to carry out the work effectively.

Therefore, the study established that NAZ had no capacity to effectively carry out its mandate, especially its records management responsibilities; a situation carried over from colonial times but which worsened in the postcolonial period considering the rapid increase of records generated due to expansion of government. In this regard, the study finds the overall government perception of records management and the role of NAZ in the whole spectrum of managing government records somehow flawed. According to Mwiyeriwa (1985), the way a department is perceived influences the way resources are allocated to it. This poor perception could explain why NAZ has not been fully capacitated for a long time even if holds the legal mandate to be in the Ministries for records management work. It has been in existence for more than 75 years but its capacity has not grown significantly over the years despite the growth in government processes and records generated from these processes. The same situation was also observed by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000), who concluded that the Zimbabwe Government's achievements in expanding services to its people after independence had been impressive but this was beginning to "fade with capacity constraints and lack of resources" (p. 7). They also found the role of NAZ "too irregular and unsystematic" and they recommended that it should become "more proactive in its role as inspector and seek

greater powers of enforcement otherwise it will be reduced to a 'fire-fighting' role" (p. 7). This minimal archival intervention also explains why the records management field has not seen any innovation in the way it is conducted from the colonial times. It is apparent that records management in Zimbabwe failed to develop from archaic manual systems of the colonial times and NAZ's low capacity contributed to this. In essence, the government has not allowed NAZ to fully play its critical role at the Ministries even though it has been in existence for many years. It has only managed to do so in bits and pieces and its influence has, as a result, remained minimal.

Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) also found the relationship between the Uganda National Archives and the creating departments weak. They noted in particular the view of the national archives' parent ministry, the Ministry of the Presidency and Public Service, which saw archives as "just a Ministry of Public Service programme rather than a cross-cutting programme for all government sections" (p. 74). Similarly, the government of Zimbabwe does not seem to see NAZ beyond it being just a small department within a ministry, yet Public Service records management is a massive programme, which cuts across all government bodies and this requires an adequate material and human resource base.

6.11. Acquisition of archives

In order to establish the status of records and archives management, the study also examined the archives acquisition process in the last stage of the records life-cycle. The life-cycle concept entails the proper execution of one stage so as not to negatively affect the other stages and in this case, the archives acquisition process stands at the last and receiving end of the cycle. According to Mazikana (1990), the acquisition process starts at the time the archivist involves himself in the management of current and semi-current records for it is at that point that decisions are made as to how the records will be organised, what will be destroyed, at what point they will be destroyed, and what will be retained permanently as archives. Archival records that are "the residue of a

planned and systematic records management process are bound to be of an enhanced quality in comparison to those that have survived by accident rather than by design" (Mazikana, 1990, p. 38). Abioye (2007) observed that the "quality of archives depends to a very large extent on the records management practices at the various stages of the records life cycle" (p. 60) while Garaba (2007) also agreed that wrong appraisal decisions constitute a barrier to accessing archives.

In Zimbabwe, since there were challenges found with the appraisal of records at the Ministries, which in turn affected retention and disposal activities, the acquisition of archives was bound to be affected too in the same manner as explained by Mazikana (1990). Data gathered in this study confirmed that due to shortage of records centre space and poor disposal systems some records remained at the Ministries when they were supposed to have been transferred to the records centres before transmission to the archives, while some records, which should have been destroyed at the Ministries were also transferred to the records centres. This further confirmed what Mazikana (1990) saw when he asserted that "the danger in this [poor recordkeeping] is that by the time the archives reach the archival institution irreparable harm may have already been done" (p. 38). There was a possibility that unworthy records also found their way into NAZ when they should have been destroyed. While this study did not go as far as assessing the quality of the archival records held at NAZ and how often they are used in order to determine their archival value for them to be worthy of being in archival custody, there is a possibility that ephemeral materials were getting their way into the archives considering the appraisal and disposition challenges witnessed at the Ministries while the records were in the third stage of the life-cycle. In addition to this, the practice of selective acquisition confirmed by NAZ staff also meant that some archival records were being left outside of the archives, compromising the overall effectiveness of the institution as the custodian of all deserving archives. Lack of shelving at NAZ headquarters in Harare further contributed to NAZ's Public Archives Section failing to absorb all matured records from the

records centres. Therefore, the framework to execute all the life-cycle stages up to the last stage of archiving was available but poor implementation of disposal affected this flow.

6.12. Archives processing

The study also examined the processing of archives so as to further establish the status of archives management at the last stage of the records life-cycle. Archives processing involves arrangement and description of archival materials to produce finding aids, which allow collections to be accessed and used. Generally, if archival materials are not processed, it is difficult and cumbersome, if not impossible, to use them besides also being a security risk, as the records cannot be accounted for before they are listed. Backlogs in archival processing have been identified as one of the problems affecting many postcolonial African countries. For instance, Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) reported that the processing of archives at the Uganda National Archives was extremely low with only records from 1890 to 1928 processed and the rest of them remaining unutilised. In a study of the ESARBICA countries, Mnjama (2005) reported the absence of finding aids as one of the problems as archival collections remained unprocessed for a long time.

There were huge backlogs in archives processing found at NAZ's Headquarters in Harare, which stood at 35 609 cubic feet in 2015. Ngulube, Sibanda and Makoni (2013) also found a 20 000 cubic feet backlog at the Bulawayo Archives even though they noted that the centre sometimes used records and archives university students from NUST in Bulawayo to assist with clearing the backlog, as part of their training. Looking at the NAZ organogram (Appendix V), there were 76 professional staff and among these, only seven archivists (six in Harare and one in Bulawayo) were designated to archival processing of all archival materials in paper format, including the historical manuscripts collections which NAZ receives through donations. Paper records constitute the bulk of records at NAZ. The rest of the archivists/records staff are distributed within

other sections of NAZ designated as follows (excluding the Chief Archivists): records management for all centres (17), audiovisual archives (two), oral history (one) and the legal deposit library (four).

While the backlog of unprocessed archives at NAZ in Harare stood at 35 609 cubic feet in 2015, the number of archives processed in the 10 years from 1999 to 2009 totalled a mere 3924.5 cubic feet. Annual statistics of incoming records versus processed archives at NAZ in Harare are given in Table 6.1 below, compiled from NAZ annual reports (Murambiwa, 2012, p. 64):

Table 6.1: *NAZ Statistics for Archives Acquired and Processed*

Year	Processed Archives (in cubic feet)
1999	297
2000	217
2001	188
2002	232.5
2003	312
2004	762 (Full staff complement)
2005	569
2006	788
2007	161 (Economy grinding to a halt; high staff turnover and rising staff absenteeism)
2008	167
2009	237
Total	3924.5

Source: Murambiwa (2012, p. 64)

A graphical plot representing the annual archives processing figures is presented on Figure 6.1 below.
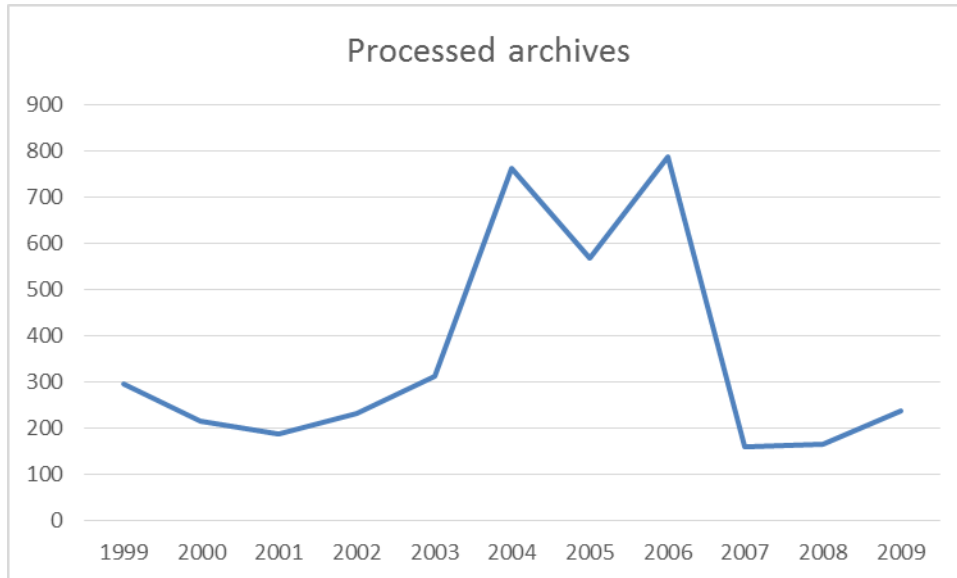
Figure 6.1: Graphical presentation of the annual archives processing statistics from figures shown in Table 6.1.

The graph shows that archive processing was low between 1999 and 2003; then suddenly shot up between 2004 and 2006. However, this high archive processing rate could not be maintained as it sharply fell even below its initial figures. Overall, the average for archives processing was 259 cubic feet; and in good years such as 2004, 2005, and 2006, the average rate of archives processing went up to 706 cubic feet per year. Using these two extreme cases, the study calculated the number of years it will take to clear the current backlog of 35 609 cubic feet of archives. The results show that using the average for the general years of 259 cubic feet, it will take a total of 138 years to clear the backlog, which is appalling. Using the good years' rate of 706 cubic feet, it will take 50 years to clear. Using the same formula, in order to clear the backlog in 25 years, the average processing per year should be 1 424 cubic feet.

The above statistics serve to show that NAZ's capacity to process archival material was very low even when all current staff posts were filled as shown by the good years' average processing rate. In the thirty years from 1980, it is estimated that NAZ has grown only by about 25% mainly to cater for new records centres that were being opened as alluded to by some respondents. In comparison, NAZ increased by 96% when staff were increased from 24 in 1954 to 47 in 1962. Such statistics as these are vital in order to determine and be sure if "processing backlogs are a result of too much archival material being accessioned and requiring processing and not the result of an inefficient processing system" (Mazikana, 1990, p. 54). While the quality of archival processing was not assessed in this study, the problems identified were clearly due to too much material coming into the archives with no matching staff numbers to carry out the work, as evidenced by the annual processing figures versus the backlog figure.

The study therefore confirms the same problem of huge backlogs in archival processing, as reported in other postcolonial African countries (Luyombya & Sennabulya, 2012; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube, Sibanda & Makoni, 2013). While the backlog at NAZ had been accumulating over the years, the problem is compounded by a grossly inadequate staff complement, which does not match the volumes of archival material coming into the archives from the whole Public Service. Ministries and departments have expanded since independence, and records generated have also increased tremendously but NAZ's structure has remained stagnant for almost 30 years. It seems the Zimbabwe government successfully addressed the records management staffing position at the Ministries in terms of their training and numbers, but has not done the same for NAZ, particularly the job opportunities at NAZ which remain very low. The proposed restructuring would have addressed some of these problems of inadequate staff numbers and without it, archival collections will remain inaccessible for many years while waiting for their turn to be processed.

6.13. Access to archives

In an effort to establish the status of records and archives management, the study also examined the issue of access to archives. The provision of access to archival material is carried out through the use of finding aids produced during archives processing. Without these, access to archives is difficult and cumbersome if not impossible. For this reason, archivists therefore employ a variety of finding aids, which facilitate communication between users and archival repositories (Garaba, 2010). Traditionally, finding aids were in manual format in the form of printed inventories, guides, card catalogues and descriptive lists. Today, such finding aids are considered archaic and many archival institutions world-wide have adopted the use of computerised and online finding aids. These make access to archives easier, faster and more convenient for the user as finding aids or materials can be accessed remotely without having to physically visit institutions or using manual finding aids so as to know what the archives holds. While the use of archaic manual finding aids has been reported as a problem in many African countries (Lihoma, 2012; Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006), their complete absence has also been reported in some of them. For instance, Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) reported on the lack of comprehensive finding aids even in manual format at the Uganda National Archives. On such cases, archival collections remain unprocessed with no descriptive lists to them rendering the archival collection not usable.

At the time of this study, the majority of the finding aids at NAZ were in manual format, with no electronic or online search facilities. The study noted though that NAZ's website had a few online search facilities, which only offered fond-level descriptions but did not go down to item level descriptions; a drawback also noted by Ngulube, Sibanda and Makoni (2013, p. 144). The information given on the website was not very useful to the researchers though the website mentioned that it was still under construction. In essence, the biggest challenge found at NAZ was the failure to introduce ICTs to its access and reference services in line with modern archival

trends. Although the current efforts that were underway are acknowledged, they were long overdue, as computerised finding aids have been in use world-wide for more than two decades now. In this case, the study confirms a common problem found in many postcolonial African countries.

6.14. Preservation of archives

The study also sought to establish the status regarding the preservation of archives in the last stage of the records life-cycle because, according to Ngulube and Tafor (2006), archival preservation is critical to the future of archives and is key to the archivist's ability to facilitate long-term continuing access. It entails providing proper storage rooms; the use of archival quality boxes; the provision of adequate and appropriate shelving; temperature and humidity controls; regular housekeeping; conservation and restoration activities; and the employment of expert skills in preservation and conservation (Roper & Millar, 1999c).

Many archival preservation challenges have been identified in Africa. For instance, Abioye (2007) reported on the problem of decay in preservation infrastructure in Africa and cited the case of Nigeria where preservation facilities provided in Nigeria in the 1980s and 1990s had deteriorated and become non-functional. Ngulube and Tafor (2006) also concluded that access to public records and archives in the ESARBICA region was "likely to diminish rapidly largely due to inadequate strategies and a dearth of knowledge of archival preservation techniques" (p. 68). This study reveals that while Zimbabwe also experienced the same preservation challenges witnessed in other African countries, as explained above, its conservation work was strong for some time in the postcolonial period but the work suffered a serious drawback during the Zimbabwe crisis.

This study also found a lot of preservation activities going on at NAZ such as use of purpose-built repositories, use of archival quality storage boxes, proper shelving equipment, conducting basic conservation work; carrying out regular house-keeping and maintenance of facilities etcetera. However, many of the problems identified at NAZ were to do with preventive or passive preservation, which encompasses activities undertaken by an institution to prevent damage or deterioration to collections (Roper & Millar, 1999c). Some critical areas for preventive preservation were found lacking and these included lack of appropriate preservation equipment to control temperature and humidity; lack of preservation skills; absence of a robust and rigorous preservation programme backed by technical expertise; and poor funding. Due to shortage of adequate shelving at NAZ in Harare, some archives boxes awaiting processing were stored on the floor - a situation also found at the Bulawayo Archives by Ngulube, Sibanda and Makoni (2013). The air-conditioning system in the main repository had stopped working more than 25 years ago, and without it, "facilities become furnaces" (Murambiwa, 2012, p 64). The cold rooms housing the audio-visual collections were regularly affected by power-cuts exposing collections to the more damaging fluctuations in temperature and relative humidity. The microfilm reader had also broken down for some time resulting in researchers using original documents where they could use microfilm copies for access, as a way of preserving the original items thus exposing them to further damage. In addition, the institution did not have professional preservation specialists or conservators to monitor collections conditions in a proper scientific way so as to determine and deal with potential threats and risks to collections as well as carry out expert restoration work. All this is evidence that collections at NAZ were at risk of accumulated damage and deterioration through many years of neglect, further confirming what Ngulube and Tafor (2006) concluded for the ESARBICA region.

Conservation and restoration work constitute active preservation, which is described as "the intrusive protection of archival material, by the minimal physical and chemical treatments necessary to resist further deterioration" (IRMT, 1999). NAZ offers basic conservation and repair to archival materials through its Conservation Unit. The unit was, however, also affected by the economic crisis of the 2000s and had challenges particular with the procurement of foreign supplies of chemicals, equipment and other accessories as established in this study. However, it is imperative to note that some of the reprographic problems in Zimbabwe were mostly felt during the crisis period of the 2000s. Before that, postcolonial Zimbabwe was "known for its excellent conservation and reprographic facilities" (Mnjama, 2007, p. 28). The country even hosted other archivists from the region on work placement internships (Mnjama, 2007). While assessing countries in the East and Southern African region, Thurston and Smith (1996, p. 2) concluded that "only Zimbabwe has a fully operative conservation unit". It appears therefore that in the period after independence, Zimbabwe had been making efforts to consolidate and improve on conservation work from the colonial period, but nevertheless, much of this effort was lost during the crisis period. However, many of the preventive preservation facilities were inadequate even before the crisis years and yet any successful preservation programme is strongly dependent on continuous availability of adequate infrastructure and expertise in the field (Roper & Millar, 1999c).

6.15. Legal and regulatory framework

The study also looked at the legal and regulatory framework, which supported the records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, so as to further establish the legal status under which records and archives were managed. Section 5 'Regulatory Environment' of the ISO15489-1 Records Management standard states that "All organisations need to identify the regulatory environment that affects their activities and requirements to document their activities"

(ISO15489, 2001, p.4). Such a regulatory framework defines the rights of archival institutions and provides them with the authorisation necessary for them to carry out their records and archives functions (Mazikana, 1990). In earlier studies, Wamukoya and Mutula (2005), Ngulube and Tafor (2006) identified the absence of legislation, policies and procedures to guide the management of both paper and electronic records as one of the biggest problems in the ESARBICA region.

From the data gathered in this study, it was evident that the current National Archives Act, passed six years into independence in 1986, already needed to be revised to incorporate new trends and new technology as well as strengthen the role of NAZ within the Public Service set-up. In any case, the records continuum model advocates for a continuum of interaction between the stages since in the virtual set-up there is no physical distinction of one stage from the other. Thus, in order to comply with records continuum model, NAZ needs to be involved with e-records from their creation. This will allow its effective interaction with the creating offices; an area found weak in this study. However, it should be noted though that Zimbabwe had archival legislation quite early enough in the colonial period in comparison with other African countries, having had its first Archives Act in 1935, which was then revised and strengthened in the postcolonial period. Thus, Zimbabwe had an opportunity to improve on its archival legislation in the postcolonial period and this is seen as a positive development. However, three decades down the line, the 1986 Act is overdue for revision, especially considering new trends, new thinking; new information technology; and in particular, the need for an explicit inclusion of electronic records. While many authors (Mazikana, 1990; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; Wamukoya & Mutula, 2005) have emphasised on the lack of legislation to cover e-records, this study argues that in Zimbabwe it is more of operational guidelines that are required than just legislation. Some of these findings regarding the inadequacies of the current legal and regulatory framework are discussed in detail below.

6.15.1. Power to enforce and monitor compliance

Mazikana (1990) contended that at the minimum, archival institutions require "the right and ability to inspect records while they are still held by the creating agencies" (p. 60). This study concluded that even though NAZ had the mandate to advice and monitor records management processes in the Ministries, an improvement gained from the 1986 National Archives Act, it still did not have enough power to influence recordkeeping processes in the ministries and departments as well as the power to enforce compliance, in particular when creating agencies were not cooperative or had different views. Earlier on Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) also concluded that where problems occurred at the creating offices in Zimbabwe, "there is no recognised authority that can enforce compliance with records legislation or pursue disciplinary action" (p. 3). Mazikana (1990) emphasised that this right to enforce is needed in cases where "mismanagement of records and archives is identified; where the records and archives are clearly in danger" (p. 60-61). Magaya and Lowry (2012) also reported that none of the three East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania had this mandate to enforce compliance in particular with retention schedules. In Kenya, despite there being provision in the law for records disposal, where Ministries were found flouting the rules, the National Archives argued that "it is difficult for one department to prosecute a sister department" (Mnjama, 2003, pp. 97-98), further confirming the problem of lack of adequate power by the National Archives.

6.15.2. Operational guidelines

The study also established that while the Records Procedures Manual was present in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, Ministries did not have a formalised, updated or standard document which they called a manual. The absence of guidelines in most of the ESARBICA countries has also been reported by other authors such as Ngulube and Tafor (2006); Mnjama (2005). However, recently in Tanzania, deliberate efforts by the government of Tanzania have seen the development of

guidelines and tools for the day-to-day activities within the creating offices and records centres (IRMT, 2011a; Magaya & Lowry, 2012).

Each ministry in Zimbabwe had its own kind of Records Procedures Manual document, which was differently structured; lacking standardisation. Besides, most of them were out-dated, probably drafted a decade or two ago. Ideally, the manual should clearly define the mandate from the National Archives Act, define records and records management; what is to be done by whom, when and how. In support of the manual there should be guidelines for appraisal, transfers, destructions, e-mail, e-records and e-records management but these were non-existent to prescribe day-to-day recordkeeping operations at various stages of the records life-cycle as well as give direction for electronic records management as stipulated in the records continuum model.

Furthermore, this study notes that the Public Service Procedures Manual in Zimbabwe did not consider other government regulatory pieces such as the Zimbabwe Government Standing Security Instructions; Treasury Instructions; Accounting Officers' Manual; the Official Secrets Act as well as the RBM, all of which have some bearing on recordkeeping to a certain extent. Elements drawn from these could be incorporated into the manual so that staff may directly relate to them and this can be an opportunity to bring together recordkeeping and other related government legislative administrative provisions. As it was found in this study, they were used separately with no common goal and respondents related and interpreted the records management aspects differently.

6.15.3. Electronic records

Failure to directly include electronic records in archival legislation has been identified in some African countries (Magaya & Lowry, 2012; Mutiti, 2001; Mutsagondo & Chaterera, 2014; Nengomasha, 2012; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011; Wamukoya & Mutula,

2005). In particular, Magaya and Lowry (2012) noted that even though some of the East African countries had policies in place on the management of current records, these typically addressed paper records only. The Botswana National Archives Act, 1978, amended in 2007, has also been criticised for its failure to directly address the issue of electronic records (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011). In Tanzania, Government Circular No. 6 directs all civil servants to apply retention schedules for paper records to electronic records as well (IRMT, 2011a). However, the drawback on this rather positive development is that the National Archives of Tanzania lacked capacity to manage those electronic records if they were brought to the institution (Magaya & Lowry, 2012), making the instructions given ineffective.

One major shortfall that has been raised with Zimbabwe's National Archives Act of 1986 is its failure to directly deal with issues of electronic records (Dube, 2011; Mutsagondo & Chaterera, 2014; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006). However, this can be expected considering that when the Act was passed in 1986, there were not many electronic records at that time in Zimbabwe though the world had begun talking about machine-readable records and automation. The exclusion of direct mention of electronic records in the Act has been seen as a contributory factor to poor or non-existent e-records management, and some respondents in this study raised it too. However, this study contends that in the case of Zimbabwe, this could not have been a major limitation to dealing with electronic records because it could still be done under the present Act, which recognises records in any format - Section 2 states that "record means any medium in or on which information is recorded". Technically, other than paper records, this definition also includes photographs, maps, videos, films and electronic records. It is surprising that those who raise this issue of electronic records not being specified in the Act, have not raised the same concern on other formats included above, which they have diligently managed without any regulatory-related problems using the same Act. Sections 7(a) instruct the Director of NAZ to "inspect and examine

records"; 7(b) to give "advice relating to the filing, maintenance and preservation of records"; and 7(c) makes "recommendation with regards to the retention or destruction of records". It does not say paper records or audiovisual records; but when it comes to electronic records, there are claims that the Act does not cover such records. However, this misconception does not seem peculiar to Zimbabwe only as Barata, Bennett, Cain and Routledge (2001) also observed that civil servants in Namibia were not aware that electronic records were defined as public records under the Archives Act of Namibia, 1992.

In essence, what this study found seriously flawed is not the Act itself but the operational guidelines for the day-to-day management of electronic records in all the three stages of the life-cycle: the current, semi-current and non-current stages. The records procedures manuals found in the Ministries served mostly the manual system for the management of paper records. There were no guidelines to inform staff on how to capture the e-records they generated or received; how the records staff should deal with the same records; or how to appraise and dispose of e-records. There were no guidelines to deal with the same records if they were to be transferred to the records centres or to NAZ. The study revealed that Zimbabwe is far from complying with the expectations of firstly; the Records Management Standard ISO 15489-1; which prescribes that facilities should be put in place to ensure the capture and management of records in all formats throughout their life-cycle. Secondly, systems have not been designed for an integrated and coherent regime of management processes of creation, capture, organisation and management of electronic records as advocated by the records continuum theory from the time of the creation of records (and before creation) through all life-cycle stages. Therefore, while this study acknowledges the need to revise the National Archives Act of 1986 in order to directly incorporate new trends and media as well as put provisions for the designing of systems, it argues that what is really required are guidelines for day-to-day operations for use by staff in the creating offices; and more importantly, those

functional requirements of pre-planning, designing and integration of processes in line with the records continuum theory. Such guidelines were not available at all under the current legal framework and Ministries and their staff were left to deal with the e-records on their own. Even if the Act is revised and incorporates e-records, as advocated by many people; without operational guidelines to support the legislation, as well as specific continuum tools, problems are likely to continue that cut through virtual spaces.

In addition, the absence of a legal and regulatory framework that addresses electronic records puts the country into an undesirable position to embark on e-government, e-governance and open data initiatives. There is more emphasis globally on citizens' access to information, and reliable records form the backbone to the information.

Today, governments are increasingly and inevitably using electronic records for their day-to-day activities; are being pushed into adopting FOI and Open Data as vital tools for democracy and good governance. The success of initiatives rests ultimately on governments' ability to create and maintain reliable, trustworthy and accurate information (records and data) and on people's ability to access it (Thurston, 2012). Thus, the records management profession needs to shift from the supply driven orientation and to find what triggers governments to make them react in a positive that provides the vital link between recordkeeping on the one hand, and electronic records, FOI and Open data. The bottom line to this is the realisation that the move to electronic records, FOI and Open Data is doomed to fail if there is no proper records management. Because of this, archivists need to make strategic moves move at this stage in order to ensure that the link that was absent previously is established; and the beginning of this is a sound legal and regulatory framework. This is the framework from which all other processes can begin.

6.16.   Resources, facilities and tools

The study also looked at the resources, facilities and tools available for managing records and archives in an effort to also establish their status in Zimbabwe's recordkeeping. Material resources are required in order to successfully execute any records and archives management programme in the form of infrastructure, facilities, tools and resources. Various authors including Abioye (2007); Burns, Ferris and Liatsopolous (2009); Mnjama (1996); Wamukoya and Mutula (2005) have bemoaned the lack of resources to carry out aspects of recordkeeping in Africa. However, Wamukoya and Mutula (2005) identified the key challenge in the ESARBICA region as being the absence of budgets dedicated to records management. Some of the findings discussed below also point to issues of budget deficit.

6.16.1. Storage facilities for physical records

Storage facilities for physical records were available in all the Ministries visited but many of them were either inadequate or, if available, not ideal. Ministries in Zimbabwe provided resources such as filing cabinets, storage boxes, and folders etcetera, but the study found that there was no systematic allocation of such resources: it was more of 'when funds were available'. As a result, typical records storage rooms were found in different shapes, with old and new cabinets together, and some dilapidated. A lot of them were overcrowded with some getting extra make-shift storage rooms, which in most cases were not ideal for records storage. Generally, the state in which the records offices were in most of the Ministries was that of continuous neglect over many years amid the current economic challenges, which only worsened a long-standing problem. Though in some Ministries, new filing cabinets were bought, these were just added on to the old dilapidated ones without actually replacing them. The general outlook of the records offices in the Ministries in Zimbabwe confirmed the 'infrastructure decay' reported in many other African countries (Abioye, 2007; Burns, Ferris & Liatsopolous, 2009). Judging by the poor outlook of most of the registries

visited, it is not surprising that many people regard them lowly. However, it was interesting to hear the Records Supervisors saying that even when the records storage areas looked unpleasant and in poor state, the records kept in there were in good order and it was easy for them to identify and retrieve files quickly. This could be an improvement from what was reported 15 years earlier by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) in their study of the management of financial records in Zimbabwe where they reported of registries piled with records, which had "fallen over and spilled records across and doors no longer open because records block them" (Barata, Cain & Serumaga, 2000, p. 17). They attributed this to lack of staff. In this study, registries were found with adequate staff who were also trained and this could explain why there were relatively some improvements in the general outlook of the registries from the gross descriptions given earlier on by Barata et al. in 2000 even though it still was not a pleasant sight. However, what could be more interesting is whether a new person could easily identify and retrieve from those storage areas, which looked disorganised - because good records management entails continuity even with staff changes.

6.16.2. Funding and investment in ICTs

The current manual records management system within the Public Service of Zimbabwe was found to be archaic even though it was a good system. Although recordkeeping problems were attributed to economic challenges currently experienced in the country, it appears also to be a policy direction problem because there has been no government policy shift for it to move from manual to electronic systems, hence the non-funding for ICTs in records management. In the absence of an official policy stance, IT issues in records management were left in the hands of low-level IT-illiterate records staff, who wielded neither influence nor power to bring significant changes. The study found most of the computers in the registries being used like typewriters mainly for word-processing, a situation also observed more than a decade ago in many government institutions in Africa by Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya (2001). Though the prevailing economic challenges of

the 2000s have genuinely affected recordkeeping processes, the state of the records offices showed that the neglect in terms of resources had been slowly accumulating over the years and the current economic woes only exacerbated a situation that was already unfolding. In this regard, the study concludes that the government of Zimbabwe had failed to make policy shift from the manual systems of the colonial era, which would see more active government support for ICTs in the management of records including the management of e-records. This violates the provisions put forth by the ISO 15489 Standard for Records Management, which prescribes that resources need to be provided for the creation, capture and management of records in all formats throughout their life-cycle. As it is, the Zimbabwe government does not comply with the recommendations of the record continuum model if there is no commitment to fund the correct way of managing electronic records. This has left electronic records that are being generated at risk.

At a broader level, investment in ICT resources is a crucial component of the whole paradigm shift from manual systems to technology-based recordkeeping systems. This is particularly so in light of the increased global push for governments to such initiatives as the Open Access/Open data and Freedom of Information. These rely on records but more so electronic or digital records. However, digital records are extremely fragile and their integrity depends upon a quickly changing array of hardware and software (Thurston, 2012). Therefore, unless these records are carefully managed and protected, governments cannot guarantee their availability, authenticity, and usability over time and across sites, with the result that data will be incomplete and untraceable (Thurston, 2012). This is why this study emphasises on this challenge of poor investment in ICTs noted with the government of Zimbabwe.

6.16.3. Resources for archives management

The study concluded that NAZ was grossly underfunded both in human and material resources to enable it to deliver its double mandate of managing both the records and archives of the Public Service. This confirms Dewah and Mnjama's (2014) conclusion that NAZ was underfunded for it to execute its records management programme. Similarly, the findings resonate with Mnjama's (2005) earlier findings that archives in the ESARBICA region were lowly funded and carried a low status. However, the literature review in Chapter 3 showed that in the first decade after independence, NAZ received a lot of support from the government and international donors, which enabled it to carry much of its post-independence expansion drive. In the current scenario, NAZ was certainly heavily affected by the economic crunch faced in the country which Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) described as a 'fiscal crisis' at the time that it was just starting. During this crisis period, much of that which was invested before and after independence was lost including the support NAZ enjoyed in the first years after independence. The few resources that had been availed to the institution soon after independence were now even more difficult to get due to the economic crisis. A similar situation was also reported by Abioye (2007), who noted that Nigeria's economic recession of the 1980s and 1990s had also heavily affected the National Archives of Nigeria and the institution had not recovered fully from this crunch; while Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) reported similar problems in Uganda during the 1980s. Matangira (2012) described the situation in Zimbabwe during this crisis period as a 'disaster situation', which took a heavy blow on archival programmes as if there was an earthquake. Thus, the study sees inadequate resources in Zimbabwe as both a common postcolonial African problem and a Zimbabwe crisis issue too.

6.16.4. NAZ's digital capacity

This study notes that even if Ministries were to dispose of their e-records through transfer to NAZ records centres or to its Public Archives section, NAZ did not have the capacity or infrastructure to manage such e-records in their semi-current or non-current stages. There were no facilities for digital preservation including migration where required; as required by the records continuum theory. The institution itself was not e-ready in terms of infrastructure even though the manual system for managing records had prepared the ground fairly well for the move to electronic systems. Magaya and Lowry (2012) reported the same for Kenya and noted that the National Archives of Kenya remained responsible mainly for archival records in paper format. Similar IT challenges were also reported in Uganda by Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012), who cited "lack of funding, technical facilities and expertise" (p. 74). The IRMT (2011a) also concluded that Tanzania had little capacity in the area of electronic records management and had no digital repository. In the same vein, Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) also noted the absence of facilities for storage and preservation of electronic records in South Africa and Botswana. Burns et al. (2009) too identified lack of sufficient funding and infrastructure particularly for ICTs in many countries while Mnjama, 2005; Mutiti, 2001; Ngulube and Tafor (2006) concluded that electronic records were in danger of being lost due to a benign neglect of records in electronic form. Therefore, while electronic records were being generated, NAZ, like many other archival institutions in Africa, lacked the capacity to handle such records, leaving the archival records in electronic format neglected. The challenge of managing records and archives arising out of governments adopting ICTs remained big in Zimbabwe confirming what Wamukoya (1994) asserted a decade ago that many national archives in Africa have "failed to respond to the needs and challenges of modern administration" (p. 204). In essence, the Zimbabwe government has failed to comply with the ISO15489 standard and the records continuum theory which advocate for the management of records in electronic format.

6.17. Training and skills

In order to further establish the status of records and archives management, the study examined the issue of training and skills. The absence of trained records personnel and qualified archivists has been cited as one of the main challenges faced by many African countries for many decades with earlier studies by Thurston and Cain (1986); Mazikana (1988); Mwiyeriwa (1985); Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya (2001) bemoaning the same problem. Other recent studies by Lihoma (2012), Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012), Nengomasha (2009), Ngulube and Tafor (2006), Wamukoya and Mutula (2005) also concluded that records management work in most creating offices in the ESARBICA region was still operated by unqualified people making it one of the main reasons for poor recordkeeping. Luyombya and Sennabulya (2012) further noted that although there was provision for the appointment of records officers in the Ministries in Uganda, as specified in the National Records and Archives Act of 2001, it had not been effectively undertaken due to lack of skilled personnel in the country resulting in some posts being filled by non-professionals. In Malawi, Lihoma (2012) reported that records management work in the Malawi Public Service was carried out by very low-calibre staff, who ranged from messengers, cleaners, clerks, typists to secretaries and he concluded that this "low quality of records personnel in the Public Service has affected the quality of recordkeeping" (p. 188). Such staff of low rank "have little or no means to enforce registry regulations in offices, nor do they have influence to encourage officials to file their records in the registry" (Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya, 2001, p. 40). Earlier on Ngulube (2000) found the records field in Zimbabwe suffering from lack of professionalisation with registries run by unqualified clerks. Nevertheless, Nengomasha (2013) pointed out that the issue of training had been on the agenda of African archival development plans for many years, and acknowledged the efforts that had been made so far regarding establishing training facilities in Africa and that many graduates have been produced from them. However, she raised concern that despite this growth in the records and archives profession, recordkeeping problems have persisted

and she posed these questions – "Why does training feature most amongst the recommendations by researchers? Are these graduates failing to make it into the industry? Are training institutions emphasising too much on theory in the curricula?" (Nengomasha, 2013, p. 7). Some of these questions also apply to the situation found in Zimbabwe but this study reveals that the issue of basic training in records is no longer the biggest problem in Zimbabwe but the type of training. In addition, in relation to archival skills, the experience of Zimbabwe was another point of departure from the experience of other countries mentioned above in that NAZ operated with trained archivists for many years after independence until recently due to the effects of the Zimbabwe crisis. The issues are presented and discussed below:

6.17.1. Professionalisation of the record management field

The study established that since Ngulube's (2000) study, the government of Zimbabwe had made significant strides towards the professionalisation of the records field particularly from 2005 onwards when they made it mandatory for all records staff to have professional qualifications in records and archives management. This study found that all Ministries had complied with this professionalisation move and records management staff were trained and qualified in the records field although they remained skilled in the manual system. Even though the professionalisation of the records field in Zimbabwe only came two decades after independence, this study argues that the current problems at the Ministries in Zimbabwe could no longer be a result of lack of records management skills anymore but rather a lack of IT skills. The problems found in Zimbabwe could be explained in the same manner as those found in Tanzania whereby a cadre of records management staff was now available but lacked electronic records management skills (IRMT, 2011a; Magaya & Lowry, 2012).

While the government in postcolonial Zimbabwe had succeeded in improving records management skills, and continues to support formal training among its staff, ironically the study still found problems that were associated with training and skills but for managing records in electronic format. Despite the fact that the records staff at the Ministries in Zimbabwe were highly trained in records and archives management theory, and no one doubted their knowledge and skills regarding the manual system, many respondents still asked for more training for the records staff because to them the records offices had problems. This brings in the same issues raised by Nengomasha (2013) when she queried the continued reference to a training deficit yet many tertiary institutions in Africa have been producing records management graduates for quite some time now. A similar question was also raised in this study – Is it still a problem of records training in Zimbabwe? The answer to this question that this study found is that the records staff in the Ministries had no problems in understanding the operations of the manual system including such processes as classification, filing, retention and disposal. The records staff were qualified to carry out all these processes. The biggest challenge found with the records personnel in Zimbabwe was not about training in records management theory but that they remained operating using old skills of the manual era. They had not managed to introduce technology to their records management operations despite having acquired professional qualifications. In a recent tracer study of records and archives graduates from Zimbabwe's tertiary institutions, Noko and Ngulube (2014) found the graduates highly employable and knowledgeable in records management theory but they expressed that they needed more exposure to ICTs. Therefore, while training has been advocated for in many postcolonial African countries as a solution to recordkeeping problems, the training currently supported by the government of Zimbabwe is misdirected in the sense that it focuses on just attaining higher qualifications instead of the IT aspect of records management. The training and exposure desperately needed is in the use of ICTs in records management as opposed to just acquiring higher qualifications in the form of higher diplomas or degrees covering traditional

manual systems of managing records which they all, including the government, seem to focus on. Asogwa (2012) argued that "the management of electronic records may not succeed if policies and infrastructure are not supported by far-reaching financial and human resources measures" (p. 205). He gave an example of how the Australian electronic records management programme was successfully implemented because over 80 per cent of the Australian National Archives budget was dedicated to staff training alone. Barata, Kutzner and Wamukoya (2001) noted that the world's wealthiest nations were investing substantially in electronic records management programmes, including training, and this is the reason why they have made great strides in this area. It is critical that staff acquire relevant IT skills that equip them with the ability to operate within the framework of the records continuum model. This includes skills in designing systems, integrated management of records, as well as issues of digital preservation and migration.

6.17.2. Archival skills and job opportunities

Studies conducted on many archival institutions in Africa confirmed that many of them operated without adequate archival skills. Three decades ago, Mwiyeriwa (1985) commented that "manpower provision is the one thing which will make or break African archivology…very few institutions in Africa have the requisite number of staff to man all sections of the ideal repository, administration, records management, public archives, historical manuscripts, oral history, technical services etc." (p. 224). Many other studies conducted in the last decade (Barata, Kutzner & Wamukoya, 2001); Mnjama, 2005; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006) still found inadequate archival skills in Africa. The literature review in Chapter 3 established that for many years after independence, NAZ operated with a strong and skilled staff base. At that time the institution relied on overseas training and a reliable pool of scholarships. The pool of qualified and experienced staff provided on-the-job training and mentorship to incoming young archivists, which provided a steady transfer of practical skills over many years even after independence. However, problems in the country

from the late 1990s (King, 1998); and worsening in the 2000s, led to drying up of scholarships as well as brain drain (Matangira, 2012). Invariably, even though tertiary institutions had been opened locally for the training of archivists and records managers, NAZ still faced challenges in employing and retaining the archival skills. This is because the effects of such local training had not been really felt as the institution then also suffered from a general government freeze on posts, which was also compounded by poor remuneration during the crisis period resulting in high staff turnover. This left NAZ with young inexperienced archivists to lead archival processes in the midst of other problems in the country. The benefits of the previous mentorship from experienced archivists were lost and made worse by vacancies which were not filled for a long time (Matangira, 2012). Thus, this study confirmed the same postcolonial problem of poor staff retention as reported in Nigeria by Abioye (2007); Botswana and South Africa (Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011); and the ESARBICA region in general (Ngulube & Tafor, 2006). However, the study takes cognisance of the fact that the experience of postcolonial Zimbabwe is different in that for many years after independence, NAZ actually consolidated its archival skills through an active recruitment and continuation of the overseas training programme. Whereas some African countries such as Namibia, were still struggling to build an archival skills base even up to now. Nevertheless, for Zimbabwe, the crisis of the last decade had broken down this skills base that had been built and consolidated in the period after independence. The institution is still to recover from this loss.

Magaya and Lowry (2012) raised a related and important issue when they noted that Kenya and Tanzania had staff with strong professional qualifications with degrees including postgraduate degrees and certificates but few of them held professional qualifications and experience to address the management of digital records. Similarly, Asogwa (2012) concluded that there is a "serious problem of technophobia in most offices in Africa" (p. 202). The same was also found to be the case in Zimbabwe. There were no IT specialists at NAZ neither in the Ministries to assist on records or archives management issues, nor were the records and archives staff found

knowledgeable in the use of ICTs in records and archives management. In other studies, Nengomasha (2012) and Ngulube (2010) confirmed the existence of what Nengomasha termed 'IT-illiteracy' in many African countries, while Luyombya (2012) identified a resistance to the use of ICTs in Uganda. This situation contributes to challenges in executing the expectations of the records continuum framework – the current staff in the registries, records centres and the National Archives are not fully equipped to drive the e-records initiatives.

6.17.3. Induction into government processes

The study established that in Zimbabwe induction is strongly used as another form of training, which is specifically designed to orient employees to government rules, regulations and conduct. The Zimbabwe government's Public Service induction courses were found to be extremely effective as practical tools to understanding government operational systems and particularly the practice of government recordkeeping. This is because those who attended them were found to be highly knowledgeable in government recordkeeping practice while those who did not were struggling even though they had good theoretical records management skills gained from their formal training. However, the direct involvement of NAZ in induction was found lacking both in the formulation of the curricula and the actual training component yet it is the institution mandated to advice, supervise and monitor recordkeeping processes in the Public Service. Thus, in most cases the much-needed guidance of experts from NAZ was found lacking in the same manner that it was during the colonial period.

Abioye (2007) reported that the National Archives of Nigeria had made strides and was now directly involved at the creating offices through organising training programmes for departmental Records Management Officers in the public sector. Such direct intervention on skills development by the National Archives was found lacking in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. This created a gap

in that while NAZ had the expertise and provided advice and monitoring services, and the Public Service offered induction training to all public servants, NAZ was not part of the training of the same things that it advised and supervised on. The study found a break in the tripartite relationship of these stakeholders; a situation carried over from the colonial period and which had not changed. Incorporating NAZ would perhaps create an opportunity for it to train, for instance, on retention and disposal issues and electronic records management. These are some of the critical areas that were found problematic.

6.17.4. Non-formal training

The study established that other non-formal training platforms such as short courses, seminars, workshops and conferences were not being done systematically or according to any plan including the Human Resource Plan because they were generally not given high priority. For this reason, attendance to such forums by records staff only happened as and when funds were available. The researcher got the feeling that these were treated as a luxury and seen as too theoretical to bring any tangible benefits. However, such workshops and conferences could be more relevant and beneficial if they were organised as a collaborative effort of the Public Service, NAZ and the tertiary institutions that train records and archives management in the country. That way, they could bring together theory and actual practice on the ground as well as standardisation throughout the Public Service whereby workshops could be organised again on practical issues such as appraisal, retention and disposal and management of electronic records.

6.17.5. Non-records staff training and exposure to records management

It was clear in this study that records management work in the creating offices requires, to some extent, the cooperation of non-records staff who come in as creators and users of records. The study however, found very little exposure given to non-records staff on their recordkeeping role

and their interaction with records staff was very minimal if not entirely absent. Earlier on, Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000) had made the same observation for accounting clerks in the Zimbabwe Ministries when they noted that "accounting clerks do not receive training in how to manage records properly" (p. 3). They observed that while accounting procedures were comprehensive in describing the purpose, creation, use and distribution of certain financial records within the system, there was little or no guidance on the control, storage and disposal of records. Akotia (2000, as cited in Wamukoya & Mutula, 2005, p. 69) observed that in the Ministry of Finance in Uganda, although ICT was considered as an indispensable tool, very little attention was paid to the management of records generated from the ICTs. This study also found a deficit in this area in that while non-records staff were taught how to create records for their specific fields of operation, it was mostly intended to facilitate the conduct of their work and the records management aspect was rather by default, as many of them did not appreciate or see the bigger picture of it. Since non-records staff are expected to perform certain records management tasks; it makes sense that they receive orientation on this.

6.18. Awareness to and appreciation of recordkeeping

The IRMT (2011b) proposed the development of a sound regulatory framework that recognises records as valuable assets in government administration. In this study, in order to further establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe, the study also examined the level of awareness and appreciation of the role and importance of records and archives, which have been identified as the main source of recordkeeping problems in many African countries. (Abioye, 2007; Akotia, 2003; Kemoni & Ngulube, 2007; Nandain, 2006; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011). Such issues of awareness and appreciation are important as they have a direct bearing on operations considering that the management of records, apart from the direct records management staff, also requires the cooperation of all staff who use records as well as managers who allocate resources

and make policy decisions. These are people who are not trained in records management but are experts in their own fields, yet they are expected to carry out, to a certain degree, some form of recordkeeping activities within their line of work. Records officers rely on the cooperation of users of records and if this cooperation is absent, recordkeeping work can be a futile exercise. Similarly, the overall awareness and appreciation of the government is also important as it is the government which gives overall direction and funding for the management of government records. If this appreciation and direction from the government is absent, much of what happens on the ground can be wasted.

This study also found the same low awareness and poor appreciation of record and archives management field within the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Many of the recordkeeping problems experienced in the Ministries were attributed to lack of awareness and appreciation on the role and importance of records management within the Ministries and the government in general. The study observed that while the government professionalised the records field in 2005 and officially recognised records management as a professional field, it had not been able to fully support recordkeeping processes and this can be attributed to the low status that it carries despite professionalisation. As a result, the government had failed to provide modern facilities and tools that are expected in today's records management programmes including IT infrastructure and skills to manage electronic records or to manage records electronically. Despite professionalising the field, records practitioners were treated as low-level unskilled staff as they were in the past. The argument of a poorly performing economy as the reason for lack of ICT resources is in many respects just a scapegoat for an awareness issue on the part of the government rather than it being solely a funding challenge. This is because the government provided computers to generate and operate records over the years well before the crisis period but it did not bother to provide facilities for managing the records created there on. For example, the management of all government

finances has been fully computerised from 1999, but the records created thereon have not been managed within the records management systems, a situation also observed by Barata, Cain and Serumaga (2000). These two – the creation of e-records, and their management, should rather be handled concurrently but this was not the case.

All the Records Supervisors in Zimbabwe bemoaned the lack of awareness and a general lack of appreciation by non-records staff including management on the importance of records management. In other studies, Mazikana (2009) remarked that "whichever country you go to in the [Southern African] region you will be told that registries are very much looked down upon…and staff who work there are not recognised at all" (p. 49). Nengomasha (2012) also found "negative attitudes towards recordkeeping and a lack of commitment" (p. 104) and she further observed that recordkeeping staff were "looked down upon and that no one listens to their advice" (p. 104). Unfortunately, what Mwiyeriwa (1985) wrote back in 1985 could still apply today in Zimbabwe – "few governments realise that archives is the basis, the beginning point, of all progress" (pp. 222-223). This study concluded that the records field in the Public Service of Zimbabwe has increasingly in recent years been lowly-rated and poorly recognised as a strategic partner in overall government administration. In addition, the system lacked effective provisions to raise the awareness of non-records staff to actively play their part in recordkeeping and make it an obligation for them to do so as a way of accounting for their activities and actions. The system also did not have enough provisions to reach out to the non-records staff to compel them to play their part in recordkeeping, or at least to raise their awareness on the importance of records and their critical role as administrative tools. It lacked provisions to enforce and check compliance to recordkeeping expectations among non-records staff thus contributing to the records management field being less appreciated within the ministry structures. However, it is also possible that such

low status is a result of the records function's general failure to upgrade its operations from archaic systems of the colonial period resulting in poor service.

6.19. Overview of life-cycle and continuum management of records in Zimbabwe

In order to also establish the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, this study was done on the basis of the records life-cycle and the continuum concepts, which put emphasis on the systematic management of all stages of the records life-cycle from the first stage to the last.

The ISO 15489-1 Records Management Standard prescribes that facilities, tools and provisions should be provided by institutions that enable the management of records through all their stages (ISO 15489, 2001). If this does not happen, the end products, which are the archives are flawed or non-existent inside of the national archives. According to Thurston (2012), unless all records are carefully managed and protected, governments cannot guarantee their availability, authenticity, and usability over time, rendering the Open Access and Freedom of Information initiatives more difficult to achieve. Previously, many African countries including Zimbabwe were known to focus on managing only the last phase of the records life-cycle (Keakopa, 2013; Mazikana, 1990; Mnjama , 2003; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2012; Ngulube & Tafor, 2006;), but many of them have now realised the need for them to be involved from the point of creation of the records (Mazikana, 1990). Research that has been conducted suggests that most national institutions have not been able to manage records continuously throughout their lie life-cycle (Burns, Ferris & Liatsopoulos, 2009).

The historical development in the context Chapter 2 noted in particular that NAZ's foundation was highly driven by the need to document colonial nationalism and celebrate European ancestry

history in Africa. In many respects the institution had achieved this, as evidenced by the spirited collection of historical manuscripts on the settler community (Dristas & Haig, 2014). It is apparent that NAZ's glory was drawn from archives management rather than records management, raising the same flawed life-cycle management issue as shown from the institution's colonial foundations. The change of focus in the postcolonial period through the records management expansion drive was not matched by the same vigour on the side of archives management and NAZ increasingly became irrelevant to the postcolonial focus on records management. In essence, the postcolonial experience increasingly relegated on the semi-current stage of the records life-cycle model.

The study further established that while some recordkeeping processes were being undertaken successfully, the life-cycle management was somehow flawed as processes were being done haphazardly. Ngulube and Tafor (2006) concluded that although archival institutions in the ESARBICA region "were committed to managing their documentary heritage, they have taken a piecemeal approach to the management of records and archives" (p. 75). Keakopa (2013) also observed the same in Botswana whereby recordkeeping practices remained marginally developed with only a few organisations making efforts to design records management policies and procedures. She concluded that "most of these efforts are still fragmented in approach and do not cover the whole life-cycle of records as guided by the International Standard for Records Management, ISO 15489" (p. 38). Mnjama (2003) earlier on had described scenarios such as those witnessed in Zimbabwe as "piecemeal [and] bottom-up approach" (p. 100) and emphasised that they needed to be changed. He noted that the records management programme in Kenya had failed simply because the "Kenya National Archives has attempted to manage records without ensuring that all the necessary elements for an effective programme are in place" (p. 100). Similarly, Ngoepe and Keakopa (2012) identified the problem of "national archives not playing a meaningful pre-archival role" (p. 151). Ngulube and Tafor (2006) observed that most archives in the

ESARBICA region "emphasised on the custodial and preservation role of archivists at the expense of the management of records throughout their life-cycle" (p. 62).

An exceptional case, however, is that of Tanzania, which has been recognised for working towards strengthening its records management systems and not focusing on archives only (IRMT, 2011a; Magaya & Lowry, 2012). For nearly a decade and decade-and-a-half from 1997 to 2001, through a funded project, a number of key reforms have been realised in Tanzania, which cover important aspects of the records life-cycle. These include the passing of new legislation; establishing the Records and Archives Division under the President's Office; creating records cadre across government; developing and introducing a new file classification system; introducing a full range of file control systems, including file titling rules, location indexes, file censuses, file movement procedures and access control; developing records retention and disposal schedules; improvement to registries; and developing training facilities (IRMT, 2011a; Magaya & Lowry, 2012). However, the sustainability of these initiatives in Tanzania is questionable based on the fact that they were donor funded and what happens after the support diminishes can derail progress if the government does not provide adequate support.

The Ghana Civil Service records reform programme of the 1990s sought to re-structure and integrate the management of records in the registries and archival services through the National Archives (Akotia, 1994). Even though Ghana attained independence in 1957, it was clear at time that these reform programmes were instituted that records and archives management had challenges. There were no clear life-cycle management facilities in the country.

In Zimbabwe, this study concluded that the life-cycle management of records was not treated as a cycle at all: it was done in bits and pieces involving some aspects in the four stages but leaving out

other parts. For instance, there were loopholes at the first stage of the records life-cycle whereby electronic records were not captured into the recordkeeping system yet a lot of records were being generated and used electronically. File management and use in the second stage had serious problems due to ineffective or non-existent file-tracking systems; presenting another break in the life-cycle of records. In the third stage, tools for records appraisal and disposal were also either out-dated or non-existent. Records storage space was not always available when needed for semi-current records even though records centre facilities were available. In the fourth and last stage of the records life-cycle, selective acquisition of archives meant some potential archival records were left out; processing backlogs prevented access to public archives and preservation and conservation challenges threated the long-term and permanent survival of archives. Therefore, even though the life-cycle framework was available, the life-cycle management of records was found riddled with problems as not all processes were being done even though some activities were successfully carried out in between the stages of the life-cycle. The fundamental issue found in Zimbabwe is that while there is a government-wide facility for life-cycle management of records up to archives in the form of established registries and an operational manual system, records centre facilities and an archival institution, which would normally coordinate all these processes, the situation on the ground did not allow the effective functioning of these institutions. In many aspects, good structures were in place, but there was no strong hand to ensure that systems, procedures and processes were fully implemented and updated where necessary.

In addition, the study reveals that when it comes to electronic records, the Public Service of Zimbabwe is far from complying with the expectations of the records continuum model, which prescribes the designing of systems before records are even created to ensure their creation, capture and management while they go through their life-cycle stages in virtual spaces. The study confirms the same findings of a study on six Zimbabwean universities by Sigauke, Nengomasha

and Chabikwa (2015) whereby they reported that NAZ was not playing its part to establish partnerships with the creating offices to design and implement systems that ensure the capture and continued access to electronic records. A system developed for the paper environment such as that currently operating in Zimbabwe is no longer applicable to the management of electronic records. According to Yusof and Chell (2000), new recordkeeping systems must be based on "functional requirements in order to ensure that credible, reliable and authentic records are created, preserved and usable over time" (p. 139). The processes involved in this include "capturing, maintaining and migrating the content, structure and context of records for the creation and preservation of evidence" (Yusof & Chell, 2000). There was no evidence of any of these continuum concepts in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) recommended that "where an embryo records management service already exists; it is often helpful to evaluate it by means of a SWOT analysis" (p. 252). SWOT is an acronym, which refers to the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation's service and the opportunities and threats which faces it (Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). Thus, a SWOT analysis was done on existing records and archives management processes in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, as part of further investigation on the status of records and archives management. The results of the SWOT analysis are represented in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: *SWOT Analysis of Recordkeeping in the Public Service of Zimbabwe*

INTERNAL FACTORS	EXTERNAL FACTORS
Strengths - Established and working registries - Good manual system - Educated and skilled staff - Committed records staff - Established systems for controlling access and maintaining confidentiality - Functional manual system as good foundation for computerisation (E-readiness) - Legal framework for recordkeeping available - National ICT Policy draft - MICTPCS and E-Government Section	**Opportunities** - Government support for training - Staff willingness to study, learn and upgrade skills - High literacy rate - ICT revolution - New Privacy, Freedom of Information and Open Access legislation highlights the importance of effective records management systems - Advocacy for democracy, good governance and human rights
Weaknesses - Archaic manual system - Poor file management and tracking systems - Lack of resources for records management - IT illiteracy - Lack of IT skills for managing electronic records - Lack of IT resources - Lack of integration between electronic records and paper records - Lack of preservation skills - Lack of funding - Inadequate preservation resources - Lack of operational guidelines - Inadequate legal framework	**Threats** - ICT revolution [failure to keep pace; more records generated] - Unstable economic environment - Little regard for records management in many IT solutions (Software and hardware packages are chosen by computing specialists with little regard for records management implications) - Politics

Note: This SWOT analysis was carried out by the researcher.

The SWOT analysis above helped to identify and highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the existing recordkeeping operation in the Public Service of Zimbabwe while also identifying the opportunities and threats in its external environment. Such an analysis provides an in-depth and

broader perspective of the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe and will help in the formulation of sound solutions to some of the challenges identified. It provides a tabulated summary of the findings of this study and was used as the basis for making recommendations.

Based on the SWOT Analysis as explained above, Figure 6.2 below shows a framework of facilities and activities that were being done and those that were not in the Public Service of Zimbabwe; further explaining the status of records and archives management from the perspective of the life-cycle concept and the records continuum theory.

FRAMEWORK FOR RECORDKEEPING FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES IN ZIMBABWE

X E-records not captured
X No email management policy/guidelines
X Non-servicing of fire-fighting equipment
X No ICT resources and skills
X   No systems designed
X No hardware/software conceptualization

STAGE 1

✓ Registries
✓ Paper records captured
✓ Classification and filing
✓ Records staff

STAGE 4

STAGE 2

✓ Acquisition of archives
✓ Archives processing
✓ Purpose-built archives building
✓ Use of archival storage boxes
✓ Manual finding aids
✓ Audiovisual preservation facilities
✓ Archivist skills

✓ Dispatch Book/Outgoing Register
✓ Pass-on slip

X Inadequate storage space
X Inadequate shelving
X Processing backlogs
X No air-conditioning
X   No electronic and online finding aids
X No ICT resources and skills
X Inadequate conservation
X No preservation expertise
X Inadequate archivists
X No digital preservation strategies

X Poor file tracking
X Staff overstaying with files
X Missing/Misplaced /Delayed file
X   Use of temporary files
X Deliberate acts of sabotage
X No migration and continuation plan

✓ Records Centres available
✓ Records Committee available

STAGE 3

X No retention schedules
X Inadequate and inappropriate storage space
X Outdated schedules
X   Irregular disposal
X Inadequate Records centre staff
X No e-records policy/guidelines
X No ERMS

Key:
✓ Facilities that were available or activities that were being carried out in the Ministries
X Facilities that were not available or activities not being carried out

Figure 6.2: Framework of facilities and activities in the management of records and archives of the Public Service of Zimbabwe

Figure 6.2 above represents what can be termed a records life-cycle wheel. In the wheel, all key functions of every stage of the life-cycle require to be conducted or else there are gaps in the cycle. Those activities outside the wheel, represented by an 'x' have been identified as the causal factors to poor records and archives management. They also provide the gaps identified in the life-cycle management framework in Zimbabwe. Those that are inside the wheel, represented by a tick, are the positive factors in the recordkeeping systems of Zimbabwe identified by the study. The study recommends taking advantage of these positive attributes in the system in order to strengthen it. It is also important to take note that many, if not all, of the IT, e-records and ERMS issues are outside the wheel. With this illustration in Figure 6.2, the study builds up a strong case of extremely poor structures for the management of technology-generated records. It is on this basis that the argues that the poor status of recordkeeping in Zimbabwe is not due to collapsing postcolonial systems, but due to the absence of IT facilities and skills in the system.

6.20.   Summary

The chapter presented and discussed the major findings of the study that show the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, as well as the discussion on how the experiences in Zimbabwe were similar or different from the experiences of other postcolonial African countries. It emerged that the problems in Zimbabwe were not due to colonial systems collapsing, but rather hanging onto an old system without improving it so that it moves with the times. The positioning of the records function within the Ministries as well as the positioning of NAZ did not promote effective recordkeeping. The current legal and regulatory framework needs to be revised to incorporate new trends and new information technologies. It also lacked operational guidelines that prescribe day-to-day operations for staff including guidelines for the management of e-records. Other problems associated with running an archaic system included exclusion of records in electronic format in the records management system; poor file-tracking

systems; and missing or delayed files. The records appraisal and disposal system was also found to be flawed leading to congestion of both registry and records centre spaces. This also ultimately affected the acquisition of archives. Archives management processes were affected by, firstly, the huge backlogs in archives processing due to acute shortage of staff and, secondly, absence of modern finding aids, which compromised quick and faster access. The preservation of archives was done in bits and pieces due to inadequate infrastructure and resources on top of absence of preservation and conservation specialists. With regards to training and skills, the chapter shows that while trained records personnel were now available in Zimbabwe, they desperately needed ICT skills and exposure to electronic records management systems. Awareness and appreciation of the role of records and archives by the government, the Ministry management as well as other non-records staff was also found to be a huge challenge. Many of these challenges were also experienced in other African countries. However, this chapter argues that some of the problems are at a different level particularly issues of collapsing recordkeeping colonial system and the training of records and archives personnel. Moreover, the chapter argues that a good and solid framework to operate records and archives management exists in Zimbabwe. The system was inherited from the colonial past and strengthened in the postcolonial period. However, effective operation of recordkeeping programmes is subdued by lack of capacity and general poor implementation. The situation is also compounded by the low status that is generally accorded to recordkeeping in the Public Service of Zimbabwe as well as the economic and political crisis of the past decade, which presented a huge blow to archival operations in many respects.

The next chapter summarises and concludes the research; and makes recommendations for improving records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter summarises and concludes the research; and makes recommendations for improving records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The objectives of the study were to:

- Establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service.

- Find out if the situation regarding recordkeeping systems as observed in other countries is applicable to Zimbabwe and determine the reasons for this situation.

- Formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for Zimbabwe's Public Service.

- Make recommendations that will strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service.

The chapter is divided as follows, presented following the objectives mentioned above:

- Summary: it gives an overview of the main findings of the study.

- Conclusions: it outlines the main conclusions of the study and it is organised according to the original research objectives.

- Recommendations: the section presents the recommendations of the study including a model to improve records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

7.2. Summary

A qualitative method was used in order to carry out this research. The population was the Public Service of Zimbabwe and the sample comprised of the 24 government Ministries of the Public

Service of Zimbabwe, but in the end, only permission to research was only granted in 14 Ministries. Other than literature review, face-to-face interviews, observations and document search were used to gather data. Below is a summary of the findings:

7.2.1. Registries and the operation of the manual system

It emerged from this study that recordkeeping systems in Zimbabwe did not actually collapse or deteriorate in the same manner as was witnessed in other postcolonial African countries. Registries and the manual system survived and continue to operate in the Public Service of Zimbabwe in the same manner that they were operated before independence. This includes an active classification and filing system also adopted from the colonial period and whose concept still operates in the same original manner.

7.2.2. Records management personnel and the professionalisation of the records management field

The professionalisation of the records management field was successfully implemented throughout the Public Service of Zimbabwe particularly in the period after 2005 and all registries are now operated by qualified records staff. Therefore, the issue of the absence of trained records personnel can no longer be cited as a problem in postcolonial Zimbabwe's Public Service even though in the first two decades after independence, its registries were operated by unqualified clerks whose main source of training was the Public Service induction programme and an active mentorship programme.

7.2.3. Archival skills and job opportunities

For many years postcolonial Zimbabwe operated with qualified archivists backed by an active overseas training programme. However, in recent years, the loss of qualified and experienced

archivists derailed the pool of investment of the first two decades after independence. The situation was exacerbated by slow recruitment due to a general government freeze on vacant posts. As a result, the benefit and impact of local training through the establishment of records and archives management training at university level at NUST, ZOU and a few others have not been felt due to the freeze on posts. However, the study noted that even if the posts were to be opened, NAZ can only take a few of the graduates due to its limited structure. Therefore, the government's move to localise training as a solution to the skills deficit is half-backed because the actual benefit of it has not been fully realised. It would only be felt when many of the graduates can be absorbed into NAZ's archival system and play their part in managing the records and archives of the country. As it is, the need for archivists at NAZ is there, and the facilities for training are now available in the country, but the current NAZ structure cannot absorb many of the graduates.

7.2.4. Absence of IT skills

For more than two decades after independence, registries in the Public Service of Zimbabwe were operated by unqualified clerks who had no formal training in records management, but backed up by an active induction programme. The mentorship and induction training rendered the clerks capable of running the manual and paper-based system. The situation of unqualified registry staff has also been reported in many other postcolonial African countries particularly in their early years of independence. Although the records staff in Zimbabwe are now trained and qualified, they remain skilled in the manual system. They lack IT skills to tackle new challenges brought about by the ICT revolution. This makes them largely irrelevant in today's information set-up. Due to this, the critical areas of managing electronic records and computerisation of the entire records management field remain unaddressed on top of other challenges such as lack of IT resources.

Similarly, records management staff at NAZ do not have requisite IT skills to drive electronic records management in the registries. NAZ lacks IT specialists and as a result the institution lags

behind in the use of computerised archives management systems. The current NAZ structure does not have IT positions to support archivists in the drive to computerise archival management activities including the use of electronic finding aids and online access tools. The effects of the absence of IT skills at NAZ are evidenced by the continued use of manual finding aids and failure to adopt electronic records management systems at the creating offices. NAZ staff, who could lead and drive these processes, also do not have the ICT skills to do so.

Thus, the study found the absence of IT skills standing out as a major drawback to Zimbabwe's recordkeeping systems.

7.2.5. Public Service induction programme

The study found the Public Service induction training to be very good for in-depth orientation to government administrative systems including records management but it lacks the direct involvement of NAZ which would bring expertise to government recordkeeping work. There is a gap in the tripartite relationship of the registries, the Public Service and NAZ. Even though NAZ is the expert in this relationship, it is tasked only with advisory and supervisory roles to the registries, while the training part is done by the Public Service. NAZ is not involved in this training yet it is expected to advise, supervise and monitor on issues such as appraisals and disposal of records at the registries. This situation does not promote effective records and archives management and the country would benefit more by directly involving NAZ in the training or curricula development. South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, and Nigeria are good examples where the national archives is increasingly getting involved more directly in induction training through organising training programmes for government records staff. The framework to execute such collaboration in Zimbabwe is there but has not been formally constituted as a strategy to improve recordkeeping.

7.2.6. Electronic records

Even though the manual system from the colonial days survived; the system operates on archaic platforms, which completely exclude electronic records. Virtually, the whole records management system in Zimbabwe has not been modernised to incorporate the use of ICTs; making this the main source of recordkeeping problems in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The system requires a major overhaul by introducing ICTs to it including designing systems for managing electronic records as advocated by the records continuum theory. This confirms a common problem which has been found in many other African countries.

7.2.7. Legal and regulatory framework

The 1986 National Archives Act presented a major boost to the country's records and archives management immediately after independence. However, even though the Act strengthened records management in Zimbabwe, three decades down the line, it is outdated particularly because it does not directly address records in electronic format. While this might not be a major limitation since the Act recognises records in any format including electronic records, a direct mention and specific incorporation of electronic records management issues would eliminate uncertainties and specify clearly what is to be done at the different stages of the electronic records. More importantly, the current legal framework lacks guidelines to prescribe day-to-day operations for managing electronic records as well as guidelines for carrying out such processes as appraisal and disposal of records. This leaves registries and Ministries operating without adequate backing of formal guidelines. In addition, the Act lacks provisions which would prescribe at the legislative level, the designing of systems for the creation, management and digital preservation of electronic records as outlined in the records continuum theory.

7.2.8. Decentralisation of records management

NAZ successfully decentralised records management operations in the period after independence backed by the government's deliberate expansion drive adopted soon after independence. This saw the opening of four new records centres including the construction of the huge records centre in Harare in 1988, which at that time became the largest records centre in sub-Saharan Africa. This is seen as a positive development in postcolonial Zimbabwe's records management.

7.2.9. Conservation work

Conservation work, carried out through the Conservation Laboratory, was consolidated in the period after independence. NAZ became renowned in the region for its conservation work and even offered internships to other archivists from the region. In this regard, conservation work was, in many respects actually consolidated in the period after independence rather than collapse even though the current crisis has negatively affected many of the conservation programmes.

7.2.10. Management of audiovisual collections

The opening of the Audio Visual Unit in 1988, which was equipped with proper infrastructure and equipment to manage audiovisual collections, was a departure from the years before when audiovisual materials were housed and managed in the same facilities as paper records. The audiovisual collections are stored in purposely built storage vaults with controlled temperature and humidity. Thus, the formal management of audiovisual collections was a positive development in the postcolonial period. However, in recent years, the audiovisual unit faces challenges of equipment breakdown and obsolence as well as incessant power cuts which are mostly attributed to the economic and political crisis faced in the country.

7.2.11. Oral history collections

The Oral History Unit, which was mainly conducted in the English language before independence, was expanded in the period after independence to include two other major indigenous languages of Shona and Ndebele with the aim of capturing the unrecorded histories of the local people whose history had been side-lined in the past. The recording of such histories became active and vibrant after independence in the 1980s and 1990s through a deliberate effort to 'take the archives to the people' including the project 'Capturing a Fading National Memory' – a project set-up in 2003 to document oral testimonies on experiences of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Thus, the oral history programme was strengthened in the period after independence. Nevertheless, in recent years, it has also suffered from the effects of the Zimbabwe crisis.

7.2.12. Classification and filing

The study found that a standard classification and filing system is used throughout the Public Service of Zimbabwe though the system originated from a system now considered 'archaic' from the colonial times. However, even though the system still operates fairly well, its operation is drawn back by a number of challenges including:

- Problems with the use of indexing terms between the records office and non-records staff due to lack of coordination between the two. This causes confusion and delays in finding information.

- There was a possibility of fragmentation of records due to operation of temporary files. In addition, poor e-records management created a possibility for fragmented records because the system does not guarantee their capture into formal recordkeeping systems.

- Poor file-tracking systems pose a threat to records management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, as they lead to high incidences of delays in finding information including missing or misplaced files.

- Suspected cases of sabotage or deliberate actions to conceal or destroy information pose a threat to records management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe if left unmonitored. In addition, the risk of fire is high due to non-servicing of fire-detection and fire-fighting equipment; a problem attributed to sheer negligence and not due to budget constraints.

Many of the issues mentioned above have also been cited in other studies as the symptoms of collapsing recordkeeping systems in many African countries. However, the extent to which they were found in Zimbabwe cannot be termed 'collapsing' because the manual recordkeeping system is still actively used. Apart from poor file-tracking, which was quite rampant, the other challenges cited above such as problems with indexing terms; the use of temporary files; and suspected cases of sabotage were not reported in alarming numbers. Based on this, the study therefore argues that the evidence gathered showed more symptoms of archaic systems rather than collapsing systems.

7.2.13. Appraisal and disposal of records

Even though facilities were available in the records management system for the systematic movement of records from current to semi-current and non-current stages, poor and inconsistent records appraisal and disposal systems throughout the Public Service of Zimbabwe affected this flow. In the long run, it led to congestion of storage spaces at the registries and the records centres by either un-appraised or ephemeral records. This problem has been cited in other studies and has been given as one of the reasons contributing to collapsing systems in Africa. However, this study contends that even though records centre facilities were not enough, the problems in Zimbabwe were not about the absence or shortage of records centre facilities but more of their misuse and failure to implement set disposal procedures. The records destruction that should happen at the creating offices or records centres did not regularly take place. This led to congestion of storage spaces and ultimately a breakdown in the records disposal system. Therefore, even though

postcolonial Zimbabwe started off with a good framework for the disposal of records, it has also joined other countries with collapsing disposal systems not because of absence of facilities but mainly due to poor implementation.

7.2.14. Acquisition of archives

Archives are the residue of the first three stages of the records life-cycle and in Zimbabwe, poor appraisal and disposal of records in the second and third stages contributed to inconsistencies in the acquisition of archives by NAZ. In addition, shortage of storage space and shelving at NAZ also contributed to poor acquisition of archival materials because some records cannot be taken in at the time that they are due for transfer to the archives, further stifling the archives acquisition process. However, even though NAZ has continued to receive transfers of matured records, in recent years, the institution increasingly showed a reduced capacity to absorb all records that are due for transfer. NAZ's current capacity does not match the inflow of records.

7.2.15. Archives processing

The study attributed the huge backlog of unprocessed archives to inadequate archivist posts within the current NAZ structure. The backlog situation can never be contained under this current structure unless the institution's capacity is raised tremendously. This is because even if the institution operates on full capacity with all staff positions filled, the amount of archives that can potentially be processed in a year is just a drop in the ocean. Other than structural and capacity changes to NAZ, some form of intervention measure perhaps in the form of a special project with dedicated funds is recommended to specifically clear the backlog that has already accumulated. Such archives processing backlog problems found in Zimbabwe have also been confirmed in other African countries, for instance, in Uganda and many of the ESARBICA countries. These were also attributed to lack of capacity by the countries' national archival institutions.

7.2.16. Finding aids

The majority of NAZ's finding aids are still in manual format. These manual finding aids were inherited from the colonial period but the system is no longer a favourable option particularly for researchers in the face of huge quantities of archival materials that are open for access. Electronic and online finding aids are more convenient, faster and user-friendly for both users and reference staff. NAZ lags behind in this area and needs to tackle the issue of finding aids. Similar archaic finding aids have also been reported in other African countries. A special project is required which is dedicated to converting the current manual finding aids to electronic-based systems.

7.2.17. Preservation and conservation of archives

Facilities for the preservation of archives at NAZ are inadequate; a situation also reported in other African countries. In particular, the critical temperature and humidity controls were absent, posing a threat to the long-term preservation of collections. The current economic crisis in the country has grossly derailed conservation work, which had been consolidated in the period after independence but now suffers from procurement and funding challenges. In addition, the absence of preservation and conservation specialists at NAZ compromises the effective preservation and conservation of collections.

7.2.18. NAZ capacity and resources

The current economic crisis presented a bigger challenge to the already strained resources for the management of records and archives. While a framework for NAZ to operate is available, the institution remains with no adequate resource capacity to cover the whole Public Service including all other state-affiliated institutions. This situation of resources challenges has also been cited in many other African countries, particularly, in Uganda and Nigeria during their crisis years of the 1980s which were similar to the Zimbabwean situation regarding recordkeeping.

In addition, the study reveals that NAZ's focus changed after independence from one which mainly concentrated on archives management to incorporating more of records management yet its structural capacity has not been significantly increased to enable it to operate within the new focus. Furthermore, NAZ neither has the capacity or infrastructure to manage e-records in their semi-current or non-current stages; nor the capacity to manage electronic records in the manner recommended by the records continuum theory. The futile proposal to restructure the institution in 2008 was in the right direction as it sought to increase the institution's capacity including its e-records management capacity. The postcolonial government of Zimbabwe realised the need to empower NAZ regarding its records management role but only addressed the legal aspect through enacting the 1986 National Archives Act and paid little attention to the resource requirements which would enable it to perform its expanded duties. This situation of inadequate capacity by the national archival institution has also been cited as a big problem in many other African countries.

7.2.19. The position of NAZ and the registries within the Public Service set-up

NAZ positioning as well as that of the registries within the Public Service is not favourable for the effective management of records and archives. Due to this, NAZ and the registries do not have much authority and influence within the Public Service structures and their recognition by other stakeholders in the Public Service is generally low. In addition, there is a gap between the records office and top-level management at each ministry, while NAZ, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, is not strategically placed to enable it to have authority and influence over recordkeeping in the Ministries. This affects the overall effectiveness of NAZ and the registries with the result that recordkeeping activities are never taken seriously by other non-records stakeholders. The impact of their presence in the system is very little. The same issues of poor recognition and placement of national archives as well as its overall influence within the Public Service set-up have

been raised in many other African countries such as Botswana and South Africa as cited earlier in this study.

7.2.20. Awareness and appreciation of records and archives management

There is a general low awareness and less appreciation of the role of records and records management within the Public Service of Zimbabwe; a situation also reported in many other African countries. Even though the government professionalised the field, the profession still carries a very low status and this affects its overall influence within government administrative systems. Even though there is a scheme of service for the records staff in the Public Service, which paves the way for one to progress from the lowest grade of Records Assistant up to Records Supervisor, there are no higher career progression opportunities within the registries for those who have acquired degrees and higher degrees and this demoralise the staff too. In addition, there are no systems in place to raise the awareness of non-records staff on their recordkeeping responsibilities yet they also perform indirect but critical recordkeeping activities in their role as creators, receivers and users of records. The system does not make non-records staff accountable for the actions they take or fail to take when they handle records, and hence they tend not to take recordkeeping issues seriously.

7.3.   Conclusions

This section presents the conclusions derived from the study and it is arranged according to the two main research objectives which were to:

- Establish the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's postcolonial Public Service;

- Find out if the situation regarding recordkeeping systems, as observed in other countries, is applicable to Zimbabwe and determine the reasons for this situation;

7.3.1. The status of records and archives in postcolonial Zimbabwe's Public Service.

The study concluded that recordkeeping systems set up in Zimbabwe during the colonial period did not collapse in the same manner as reported in other African countries. It concluded that the situation in Zimbabwe's Public Service is a result of archaic systems rather than collapsing systems. This is because the same manual systems from the colonial times were still actively operating in the registries of the Public Service of Zimbabwe; in particular, the capture, classification and filing of physical records. However, the continued use of traditional manual recordkeeping systems was identified as the main source of problems in Zimbabwe. There have not been any attempts to modernise records management in the registries and the systems are running on archaic platforms, which completely excludes records in electronic format. The symptoms found were of an overwhelmed archaic manual system, which manifested as complications with file-tracking, delays in finding files, missing or misplaced files, opening of temporary files etcetera. Thus, the study concluded that the absence of ICTs was the biggest challenge in the country's records and archives management framework rather than that of collapsing systems.

A legal and regulatory framework for managing records and archives is available in the Public Service of Zimbabwe but it is weak and inadequate, particularly because it does not directly address new issues of electronic records. Even though the current Act recognises records in any format, a direct mention of electronic records would leave no doubt particularly regarding the designing of systems and formulation of integrated approaches to managing electronic records. More importantly too, the current framework is not backed up by up-to-date guidelines that prescribe day-to-day operations for activities such as the management of electronic records, appraisal and disposal of records.

The study also concluded that a strong framework exists in the Public Service of Zimbabwe for the management of records and archives but the government's capacity to fully execute recordkeeping work has been drastically reduced over the years due to failure to recognise the increase in records that the government generates. As a result, the current system faces problems, which include poor file-tracking; poor records disposal; congested storage spaces; archives processing backlogs; inadequate archival preservation; and poor conservation programmes. Notably, these are the same issues that have been cited as symptoms of collapse in other African countries but the magnitude that these were experienced in Zimbabwe was not at the same level as they are depicted in other African countries where systems ultimately collapsed to the point of not functioning at all. Nonetheless, they still have a negative impact on recordkeeping operations in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

In addition, the study concluded that poor implementation of appraisal and disposal procedures contributed to the current breakdown in the disposal systems. The breakdown was a cumulative process because the space and facilities were provided for early enough into independence with the opening of four new records centre facilities and at some point retention schedules were available. The records centre facilities are congested due to irregular disposal of records, which would clear space at the different stages of the life-cycle.

The study further concluded that the problem with archives processing backlog is not due to collapsing systems at NAZ but mainly attributed to low capacity at the institution. With its current structure, NAZ cannot cope with the growing quantities of incoming archival materials. The number of staff on the NAZ structure is too low in comparison with the material that needs to be processed.

Resources, facilities and tools for the management of records and archives have never been sufficient in the postcolonial period, as evidenced by the poor outlook of the registries in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The situation is even worse for ICT resources that are essential in today's technology-driven era. Such ICT resources are completely absent in the current recordkeeping systems. This stood out as the biggest challenge in the country's recordkeeping systems.

Records management personnel in the Public Service of Zimbabwe are qualified but they lack training and exposure to ICTs; the essential elements in today's information management sector. Similarly, Archivists at NAZ are qualified but they also do not have IT skills. This also explains why issues to do with ICTs in the management of records remain largely unexplored in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

The study further concluded that while NAZ employs qualified archivists and records managers, the institution's current skills base is unstable due to a high staff turnover and poor staff retention. In addition, NAZ's current organisational structure has a few professional archivists and records managers in comparison with the work load at its disposal. This situation, coupled with poor funding for ICT training and resources, have made the institution ineffective.

The study also concluded that records and archives management carries a very low status within the Public Service of Zimbabwe. The registries do not have much authority and influence within the ministries and departments as well as within government due to the low status they carry. In addition, NAZ has not been fully capacitated to effectively execute its mandate within the Public Service because the government views it as a small individual department without considering the universal part it plays within the Public Service realm.

Above all, the current country crisis in Zimbabwe has severely affected recordkeeping processes. The capacity that the country had before has been reduced to very low levels particularly in the areas of staff stability, records surveys, construction of scheduled records centre facilities across the country, and the provision of ICT resources which is long overdue.

7.3.2. Comparison of Zimbabwe with the experience of other African countries.

In line with the objective of finding out if what was reported in other countries is applicable to Zimbabwe and the reasons for this situation, the study concluded that the situation in postcolonial Zimbabwe was different from the experiences of some of the African countries where recordkeeping systems collapsed soon after independence. This is because the manual recordkeeping systems in Zimbabwe did not collapse but survived and continued to operate in exactly the same manner as they operated before independence. The survival of colonial recordkeeping systems is attributed to the following reasons:

- Postcolonial Zimbabwe inherited strong recordkeeping systems, which had been well-established and were operating for more than four decades before independence.

- In terms of government administration, the country witnessed a smooth transition at the time of independence. This is because there were already local clerks who were working in registries before independence. They continued working in the post-independence period and the active mentorship programme continued with no major disruption.

- Zimbabwe had a strong induction programme, emanating from the colonial period, which prepared registry staff to effectively operate the manual system. The programme actively continued operating in the period after independence allowing recordkeeping work to continue too.

- Immediately after independence, there was a deliberate government move to expand records management and 'take the archives to the people'. This was a strategic move by the new

government whose foresight helped to consolidate the foundation that had been laid in the colonial period.

The situation explained above on Zimbabwe's transition to independence provides a platform for comparison with other countries that had had strong recordkeeping systems during the colonial era but which collapsed immediately after independence. For example, in Namibia, the desire to re-dress colonial imbalances of the apartheid system saw an immediate replacement of experienced staff with inexperienced ones, who then worked without the benefit of mentorship. This led to an immediate collapse of recordkeeping systems. This study therefore sees the issue of transition to independence as one of the deciding factors in the sustenance of recordkeeping systems in decolonised countries. More importantly, such issues need to be taken into consideration when designing solutions to recordkeeping problems.

However, much as the manual system has survived in Zimbabwe, this became the main source of problems in Zimbabwe. Many of the problems identified in this study are attributed to the continued use of archaic manual systems and the grave absence of ICTs in the country's recordkeeping systems. The manual system proved to be good but it is overwhelmed by too many records generated due to the information revolution. The expansion of government after independence also meant that more records were generated and there were also more records users than before. With more records generated, their circulation also became cumbersome and difficult to control manually. At the same time, the manual system has not been upgraded to incorporate the new challenges of records created in electronic format. In this regard, the experience of Zimbabwe is similar to that of many other African countries, which are also struggling to move away from manual systems to IT-based operations cited in Section 7.2.10 above.

Furthermore, the neglect of electronic records witnessed in Zimbabwe is prevalent in many other African countries. Electronic records are a new phenomenon in this technological era. They were not there during the colonial days when manual registry systems were set up making this a non-legacy issue but purely a failure by current African governments to tackle this new challenge. In Zimbabwe, the challenges with managing electronic were not only about ICT resources but also IT skills. On top of this, there is also a lack of serious commitment by the government to embrace ICTs in the management of records and archives. The economic and political crisis Zimbabwe alluded to earlier in this study exacerbated a situation that was already a problem and cannot be cited as the sole reason for failure to introduce electronic records management systems. Computers were availed by the government to computerise many government processes from the early 1990s but no thought was put on designing systems to manage the e-records generated by the computers in the manner propagated by the records continuum theory. Similar neglect and lack of serious commitment by the government has also been reported in many African countries even though they have introduced computers and many of their administrative services generate electronic records.

The study further concluded that resources, facilities and tools for the management of records and archives in postcolonial Zimbabwe are inadequate; confirming a common problem in many decolonised countries. The situation in Zimbabwe has been exacerbated by the current economic instability in the country; and under such situations of hunger, disease and a general fiscal deficit, recordkeeping tends to be neglected. The same situation was also experienced in Nigeria during the country's crisis years in the 1980s and 1990s; and in Uganda during the crisis of the dictatorship rule of Idi Amini. Unfortunately, for Zimbabwe, the economic down-turn threatens to destroy much of the strong foundations laid in the past including that which was strengthened in the postcolonial period.

Other than infrastructure, skills, and many other requirements, one of the functional requirements for the move to electronic records management systems is to have basic records management systems running in the manual system. On this aspect, it could be said that Zimbabwe is e-ready because it has functional classification, indexing and filing systems that could be easily transformed to electronic systems. Other African countries with collapsed manual systems may not be able to meet this single e-readiness requirement.

The study also noted that while Zimbabwe inherited a strong recordkeeping legacy, it also took over a National Archives whose roots and glory were drawn mostly from archives management. The institution had been thriving for many years in the management of archives at the expense of current and semi-current records. The postcolonial government changed this focus, especially in 1986, with the promulgation of the National Archives Act, which added and defined more directly the records management role of NAZ. Consequently, NAZ's role was shifted from one dominated by archival preservation to more participation in records management at the current and semi-current stages. However, the government failed to increase NAZ's capacity in order to match this new undertaking. Thus, even though legally NAZ's mandate was extended, technically it remained operating more as a 'keeper of archives', its original focus without fully playing its records management role. This half-baked solution in Zimbabwe resulted in the national archival institution of the country failing to perform to its full capacity in its records management role. Such a situation whereby the National Archives continues to play just a post-custodial role has also been reported in other African countries, even though some of them such as Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania did not have well-established National Archives in their countries before independence. However, Tanzania is on record for making efforts to redress this so that its National Archives now participates more in records management right from the creating stage and has introduced measures to ensure this. NAZ's capacity to fully participate in national records management

programmes is very low and thus shares the same problem with other countries in Africa which are struggling to fully execute their records management roles.

7.4. Recommendations

Two of the objectives of the study were to formulate a model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for the entire Public Service, and to make recommendations that would strengthen records and archives management systems in Zimbabwe's Public Service. The following sections cover recommendations to the government of Zimbabwe including the National Archives of Zimbabwe; a proposed model for records management in the Public Service; and recommendations for further studies, as well as the contributions that this study has made. The recommendations cover broad issues, which are subdivided as follows: 1) policy, 2) resources, 3) skills and 4) awareness; and 5) the proposed model for the management of records and archives in Zimbabwe. They are presented below.

7.4.1. Policy, legal and regulatory framework

1) The Government of Zimbabwe needs to make a policy shift from manual to computerised recordkeeping systems including engaging in long-term strategic plans that recognise and prioritise public records as strategic resources. In essence, the government needs to take a serious position and completely overhaul the recordkeeping system to incorporate IT-based systems in the management of both physical and electronic records. This should include processes that effectively capture into formal recordkeeping systems records in all formats; designing of e-records management systems; incorporation of records management aspects in e-government platforms such as the PFMS; classification and indexing of all records formats; effective file tracking; record disposal and active digitisation of selected archives. A paradigm

shift by the government of Zimbabwe is the starting point for all other measures that follow such as drafting of policies, regulations and guidelines. Above all, the government needs to put together all the e-government initiatives, National ICT Policies and strategies through an integrated process that recognises the role of records management in all these processes.

2) There is need to revise the current National Archives Act of 1986 in order to incorporate new trends and thinking in the information sector. This includes incorporating records in electronic format and all its facets.

3) Formulate guidelines for day-to-day operations covering different aspects of records and archives management. This involves revising current retention and disposal schedules or drafting new schedules where they are lacking in the current system. New guidelines are required for many other recordkeeping processes such as the capture of e-records, appraisal, records destruction or transfers etcetera. A good example from the Southern African region is that of South Africa where there are many guidelines openly available for government staff to refer to and use, for example, the Records Management Policy, Registry Procedures Manual, Guidelines for Records Managers, Guidelines for the Management of Electronic Records, Application and Maintenance of a File Plan, Schedules for the Disposal of Records etcetera. (National Archives and Records Service, n.d.).

4) In order to for NAZ to become more effective, there is need to re-position it within the Public Service set-up. Being the institution that holds the expertise in records and archives management, it should be strategically placed in a position where it can exercise the legal authority vested upon it as well as create platforms that allow it to have influence and authority over recordkeeping activities throughout the Public Service. Lessons could be learnt from the case of Tanzania where positive developments have been realised since placing its National Archives under the Presidency particularly its influence over recordkeeping in the Ministries

and departments. NAZ could operate under the same arrangement as with the Auditor-General's department in Zimbabwe.

5) Restructuring NAZ is critical and essential in order to enable it to fully play its role within the Public Service and to widen its spectrum so as to cover the whole country. This would provide NAZ with the opportunity to increase its capacity on the structure by incorporating those positions and skills that are not available on the current structure but are essential. The restructuring should address two issues: creating additional positions for archivists and records managers; incorporating the absent skills, that is, IT skills, preservation, conservation and other technical skills. NAZ's restructuring proposal of 2008 needs to be revisited as it was in the right direction.

6) Registries should be upgraded to a higher level than where they currently are including upgrading the position of the head of the registry to a level higher than where it currently is as Records Supervisor. It is suggested that the Records Supervisor post is upgraded to a Records Manager post at degree level. Through this, the registries can become more recognised and their influence more accepted throughout the various government structures. This would also provide platform for career progression in the registries.

7) In order to create a good working relationship between records staff and Action Officers, guidelines for indexing and classification should be created including the creation of a common thesaurus for standardisation of indexing terms. The thesaurus should be an open document shared with all staff – records or non-records - in order to achieve harmony between records staff and users of records.

8) Devise new and effective file-tracking system; perhaps operated through archival software in the same manner as library circulation is handled. Such a system would improve file-tracking and make staff more accountable to files issued to them as this would be recorded through a computerised system.

7.4.2. Resources

The study noted that many of the problems identified in the Public Service of Zimbabwe are resources-related; and that under the current economic problems in the country, many of the strategies recommended below may be difficult to realise if there are no resources. The national crisis is beyond the control of the records management field, thus, some of the recommended strategies in this section are made on the assumption of all things being equal.

1) Government buy-in, support and commitment to fund ICTs is critical and this is the most effective way to addressing the problem of e-records management. Without this, it is unlikely that any meaningful improvements to the system would be realised. Other than hardware and software, funding for consultants and trained experts to develop appropriate e-records strategies, drive their implementation and provide training to staff is also required. Creating dedicated funding for this is recommended.

2) Upgrade of registries from manual to computerised systems by equipping them with appropriate and sufficient IT resources for both the electronic management of physical records and the management of electronic records.

3) Government should set up a specific fund for the training of technical expertise within the whole Public Service particularly training in ICT skills. There is need to invest heavily in staff training, preferably local training to allow sustainability, continuous built-up and upgrading of IT skills.

4) Government commitment is required to revive and re-activate the original plans to construct purpose-built records centre facilities at the provincial centres in the country.

5) Provide resources in the form of hardware and software for the computerisation of archives management systems such as search and retrieval of archives (access to archives) so as to move away from manual finding aids to computerised systems.

6) A special project is required to clear the huge backlog in archives processing perhaps through a special dedicated fund to sponsor consultants.

7) Provide adequate resources, facilities and tools for preservation of archives; particularly for infrastructure and the installation of a new air-conditioning system at NAZ. This also includes the purchase of shelving, humidity control equipment and environmental monitoring tools.

8) Lobby and carry out fundraising for specific records and archives management activities so as to support government efforts. The study recommends finding other sources of funding through partnerships, donor-funding, and signing of cooperation agreements to cater for specific projects. For instance, direct intervention can be done on specific activities such as drawing up of retention and disposal schedules; records appraisal; staff IT training; purchase of software and hardware; and clearing of archives processing backlogs.

7.4.3. Skills

1) There is need for NAZ to invest in those skills which are missing from the current establishment; that is, IT, preservation and conservation specialists. Once its structure is revised to include these missing posts, the institution can recruit experts in the required fields and also invest in the training of staff in those skills. ICT skills are required at the creating offices and NAZ to cover areas such as handling of current records, digitisation, digital preservation and migration.

2) As a long-term plan, the government should continue with the country-wide ICT-literacy programmes. This promotes ICT use from a macro-level point of view in the country and indirectly benefits other e-government programmes including records management in that there is an IT-literate society, which can easily adopt and adapt to IT-based administrative systems. These would gradually diminish the current manually oriented records management staff. Furthermore, it is recommended that IT literacy training should be continued among Action

Officers because with such skills they have more control over recordkeeping work particularly with the e-records they work with.

3) Revise the government induction programme to directly include NAZ. The curricula should also be revised to incorporate practical training on appraisal, disposal, and ERMS software training. Induction of non-records staff should also have an aspect of records management to provide direct training on recordkeeping issues to this calibre of staff.

7.4.4. Awareness, marketing and promotion of records and archives management

1) NAZ should employ dynamic marketing and awareness-raising activities on the role of records in government administration including how good records management facilitates accountability and good governance. The role of NAZ also needs to be marketed through the same platforms. In order to address the problem of lack of awareness by non-records staff to the recordkeeping processes expected of them, it is recommended that a formal platform to train and inform non-records staff including IT personnel about recordkeeping is created. In addition, some aspects of recordkeeping can be made part of non-records staff's performance appraisal. This would make them more accountable for their recordkeeping actions and compel them to take it more seriously.

2) The government, through NAZ should spearhead activities to lobby, fundraise and source for partnerships with international archival organisations to support records and archives management work including capacity building and special projects such as clearing the backlog in archives processing.

7.4.5. Model programme of records management strategies, policies, procedures and guidelines for the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

Considering that a framework for the management of records and archives already exists in the Public Service of Zimbabwe, the proposed model below includes things that can be done to strengthen the existing recordkeeping facilities; revamp those activities that were not being done even though they could have been implemented under the current system; and introduce new strategies particularly issues of ICTs, which have been distinctly absent in the recordkeeping systems of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. In a broad sense, the main problems identified in Zimbabwe border around lack of capacity, inadequate resources, poor implementation, inadequate legislation, absence of guidelines, misdirected training, low awareness and poor appreciation of record management. These are the issues which the proposed model aims to address which are also taken from the recommendations in section 7.4.1-7.4.3 above. The model also draws influence from the models and strategies proposed by the IRMT (2011b), the ICA (2008a, 2008b, 2013) and the World Bank (2000). Addressing these issues would significantly close the gaps that presented problems to the life-cycle management of records in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. It should be noted that the situation in Zimbabwe, except in the area of ICTs, does not require only introduction of completely new concepts but rather re-vamping, modernising and increasing the capacity on already existing systems, which are seen as its strengths. This conviction forms the basis for the proposed model. The model also takes into consideration the issues captured in Figure 6.1 of Chapter 6, which illustrates some facilities and activities that were not available in the current records management system.

The model is illustrated in Figure 7.1 below:

MODEL TO STRENGTHEN RECORDKEEPING

INTERVENTION CATEGORIES	KEY STRATEGIES	DESIRED STATE

1. Strengthening existing structures

1. Strengthen/Revise legislative and policy framework
2. Re-position and restructure registries
3. Re-position and restructure NAZ
4. Improve performance of records centers
5. Market and Improve awareness of recordkeeping
6. Increase material resources
7. Monitor and evaluate compliance to recordkeeping
8. Revise training curricula and induction
9. Create strategic partnerships

➢ A functional, strong, modern, effective, recognised, supported and influential recordkeeping system which recognises and manages records as strategic resources.

2. Incorporating record and archives management aspects overlooked

Special Projects:
1. Clear appraisal backlog
2. Clear disposal backlog
3. Clear archives processing backlog
4. Revise and finalise retention schedules
5. Computerise all manual finding aids at NAZ

Routine implementation points:
1. Implement appraisal of records periodically
2. Implement disposal of records periodically
3. Revise Records Procedures Manual
4. Redesign/computerise file-tracking system
5. Service fire equipment periodically
6. Purchase NAZ air-conditioning system

➢ Periodic and systematic appraisal and disposal of records
➢ Opening up of records storage spaces and facilitation of the records cycle
➢ Quicker access to mature records (archives)
➢ Appropriate environment for archival preservation

3. Incorporating new aspects

1. Government policy shift from manually-based to computerised recordkeeping systems
2. Design systems; acquire IT infrastructure & ERMS
3. Create guidelines for management of electronic records
4. Create new positions at NAZ for IT, preservation and conservation specialists
5. Provide IT training to all records and archives staff; and IT literacy to action officers

➢ Operation of a modern recordkeeping system which incorporates new media formats at all stages
➢ Continuous availability of technical expertise for computerised records management and e-records management as well as expertise for archival and digital preservation
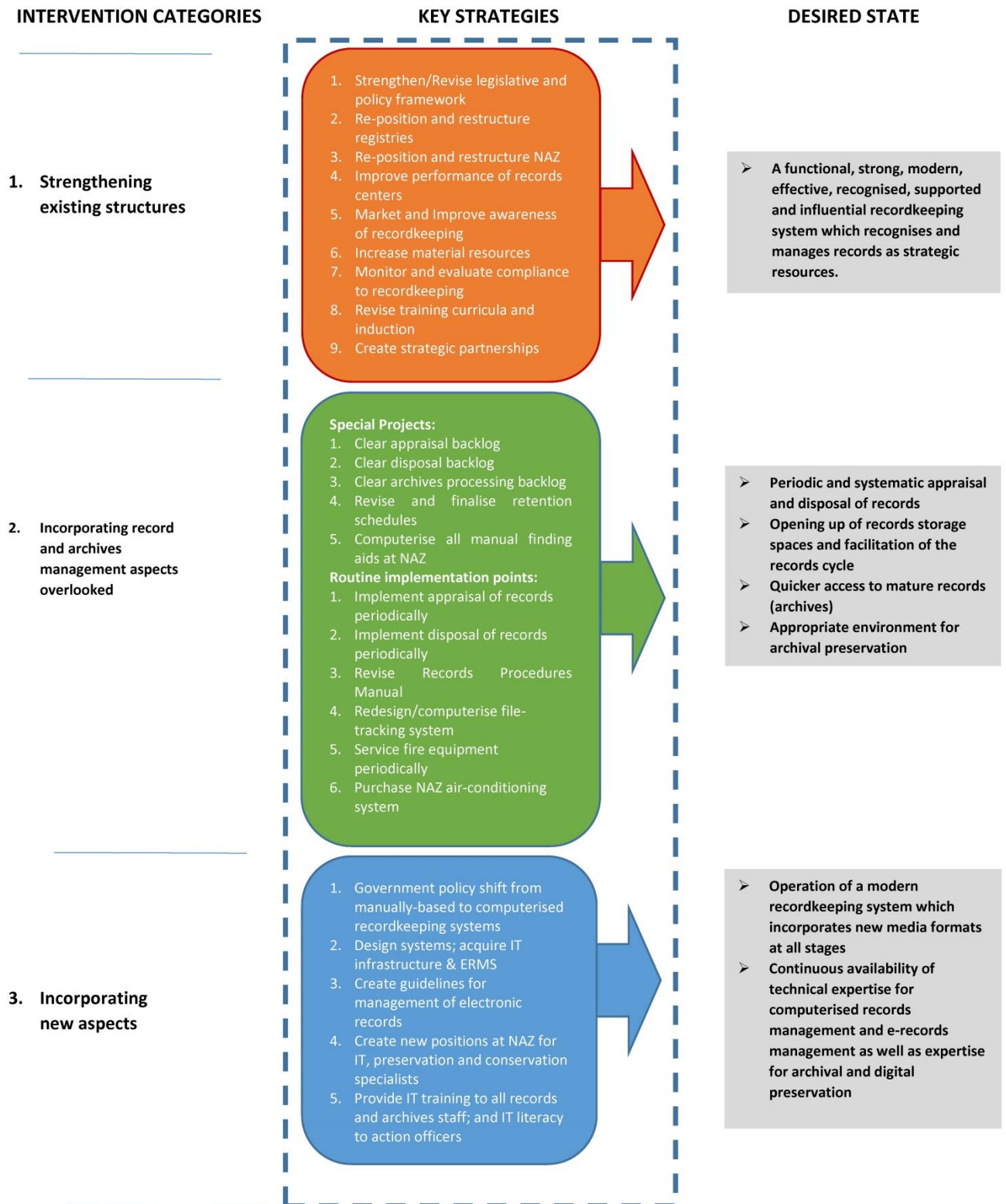
Figure 7.1: Proposed model to strengthen recordkeeping in the Public Service of Zimbabwe

The above model bears the following approaches as points of intervention:

1) Strengthening existing structures

The government of Zimbabwe should take advantage of the existing structures indicated as strengths in this study's SWOT analysis on Table 6.2, Chapter 6. These are, for instance, the availability of functional registries and a good manual system; a pool of qualified records staff; the availability of records centres; the presence of a well-established National Archives. The proposed improvement strategies would include restructuring the registries from manual to computerised systems, improving the operations of the current records centres, and restructuring of NAZ. The current framework in place in Zimbabwe is in line with the records life-cycle model, and through these points of intervention, the country's recordkeeping systems can be strengthened.

2) Incorporating those aspects left out in the current system

This includes aspects that were overlooked in the current recordkeeping set-up and are identified as weaknesses in the SWOT analysis in Section 6.2, Chapter 6. These are issues mainly to do with poor or non-implementation of processes, which could have been done under the current set-up but somehow were not even though they were not directly linked to resource challenges. These include participating actively in appraisal and disposal of records; review of retention schedules; operating a robust file tracking system; and servicing of fire equipment. This point of intervention addresses issues that are constituted in the ISO15489 standard for records management as the basic requirements for any records management programme. The other intervention points that address issues noted here relating to the management of archives are in line with the records life-cycle model.

However, as per proposed model, it is suggested that some of the challenges identified in this study be handled through special projects. These are, for instance, clearing the records appraisal and

disposal backlogs at the registries and the records centres. This would clear up storage spaces and allow the disposal system to operate more actively. A special project is also required to finalise the drafting of retention and disposal schedules, which are the tools necessary for appraisal and disposal. Another proposed point of intervention in the proposed model through special projects is that for clearing the archives processing backlog. The study proved that the current backlog cannot be cleared in many years to come even if all staff were present. Special intervention is also necessary to convert the current manual finding aids at NAZ to computerised systems. The purchase and installation of the air-conditioning system is also another project which needs urgent and special attention. Sorting out all the damage that has occurred to the recordkeeping system would certainly bring Zimbabwe's records and archives management to a level where it can perform better.

3) Introducing new aspects of ICTs

This strategy involves introducing new aspects, particularly the ICT issues, which were completely absent and not part of the current manual system. These were also identified as part of the opportunities and threats in the SWOT analysis. For example, the opportunities brought in by ICTs and the challenges of preserving such formats as well as guaranteeing continued access to them. Thus, the government of Zimbabwe and NAZ can take advantage of the opportunities brought in by the ICT revolution to improve on recordkeeping. Introducing ICTs to the country's records management system is critical because many of the problems identified in this study are due to the continued use of a manual system and an acute absence of ICTs. With this, the country can create a platform to meet the requirements of both the records life-cycle and continuum models. This point of intervention addresses issues to do with the records continuum model.

Taking such a strategy as indicated in points 1-3 above would close the gaps identified in this study. It would bring a more complete life-cycle management of records as well as an integrated approach in compliance with the records continuum model. The introduction of ICTs would also pave way for the government to satisfy the requirements of Open Access and Freedom of Information drives, which are being advocated for today. Open Access and Freedom of Information facilitate citizens' rights to information but this can only be accomplished if related records are properly managed. When records are properly managed and easily accessible beyond the borders of manual systems, they tend to open avenues for citizens to access information and services. Furthermore, the special projects to clear backlogs would clear the way for a smooth operation of any improvements in the recordkeeping systems.

7.4.6. Recommendations for further research

The study made an in-depth examination of the challenges being faced in Zimbabwe's recordkeeping systems but did not investigate the direct consequences of poor recordkeeping to service provision and governance. This area could be looked at in another study in order to bring out a direct relationship between poor recordkeeping practices and service delivery by the government of Zimbabwe to its citizens. This may include, for example, quantifying and investigating further the issues of missing and misplaced files or delays in finding files and the impact thereof. These are symptoms of poor recordkeeping and have direct impact on service delivery by the government. Such an examination would help to show the direct effects of neglecting some aspects of recordkeeping and how half-baked processes can be costly to the government as records management works in a cycle. Through this, it would also show the benefits of good records management and how well-managed records are the backbone to granting citizens their right to information and other government services. Such information can be used to lobby

for increased government support for recordkeeping work and assist in recognising records as strategic resources.

7.4.7. Contributions of the study

7.4.7.1. Contribution to African archival discourse

While in many respects, the study confirmed many of the problems that have been identified in other African countries, it also highlighted some challenges that were of a different nature and require a different approach to understand and resolve. In particular, the issue of non-collapse of recordkeeping systems in Zimbabwe but the maintenance of archaic recordkeeping systems became the point of departure from the experience of some of the postcolonial African countries whose recordkeeping systems collapsed at the onset of independence. The study also reveals that there is a direct relationship between recordkeeping and transitional processes to independence. All this gives an in-depth understanding of some of the postcolonial recordkeeping scenarios as those cited in this study. In the case of Zimbabwe, the fairly smooth transition in government administration, to some extent worked in favour of the country. A comparison of Zimbabwe's experience can be made with those countries such as Namibia whose transition was not in this manner and this could be one of the reasons why recordkeeping systems collapsed at independence.

In addition, the issue of training has been cited as one of the major problems in Africa including Zimbabwe. However, this study proved that this was no longer the main problem in Zimbabwe though the country also experiences other problems particularly staff instability and recruitment challenges for archivists as well as lack of IT skills. This is because a solution to the recordkeeping skills deficit has been put forth through the establishment of local training institutions in the country but this has not been matched by a favourable employment structure.

Therefore, simple training in records and archives is not a permanent solution to the kind of problem at hand in Zimbabwe. Thus, the study helps to reveal that some solutions that have been prescribed may not have been enough on their own; some of them were half-backed making the effect of the whole training effort minimal. The study contends that the solution of training that has been prescribed to many postcolonial African countries would not on its own solve the problems in Zimbabwe. The solution to the skills problem particularly in Zimbabwe should focus on the type of training as well as the facilities to absorb the graduates so that there is real change on the ground. Issues of staff retention also need to be looked at if the benefit of local training is to be fully felt. All this could apply to many other African countries which also face similar problems. Furthermore, the study made significant contributions to the colonial-postcolonial debate which has tended to see de-colonised African nations struggling in the management of records and archives. In an effort to unveil the situation in Zimbabwe, the study traced the background to archiving in Africa so as to establish any links between the past and the present. It revealed that in countries where strong recordkeeping systems were inherited such as Zimbabwe, the current problems experienced there should be perceived differently so as to prescribe more effective solutions. Notably, the study revealed that many other countries in Africa had recordkeeping systems that were not so well-established at the time of independence and the same countries struggled with maintaining the systems running in the period after independence while others had strong recordkeeping systems which collapsed at independence. Poorly established recordkeeping systems at the time of independence therefore became the source of problems for these countries as they could not cope, especially faced with many other postcolonial administrative challenges. However, in the case of Zimbabwe, the country inherited strong archival systems, and many other recordkeeping processes were strengthened in the period after independence. Even up to now, a fairly good recordkeeping framework exists in the country and this study maintains that this should

be taken as an opportunity to strengthen and improve the current recordkeeping system. The government of Zimbabwe could actually take advantage of this.

The study also contributes to the African postcolonial archival debate by shedding light on the colonial versus the postcolonial practices and the colonial legacy issues versus non-legacy issues. It helped to distinguish between problems emanating from colonial experiences and those that are purely postcolonial weaknesses. In particular, the current Zimbabwean crisis has contributed to a large extent to the current poor state of recordkeeping in Zimbabwe. This, however, is not colonial legacy or a postcolonial tendency anymore but just a crisis situation.

7.4.7.2. Implications for practice

A key lesson learnt from this study is that countries such as Zimbabwe that had strong recordkeeping systems and whose manual systems were still operational in the postcolonial period also have their recordkeeping systems failing mainly due to failure to adopt ICTs in the management of records and archives. Therefore, this should be a lesson to Zimbabwe and many other African countries. They cannot afford to continue to side-line technology-generated records and the adoption of technology in the management of records and archives. The problem is not just about manual systems that collapsed at independence because even those that survived like the case of Zimbabwe still need to make paradigm shifts that embrace evolving systems as well as organisational changes. Without doing this, even the 'good' manual systems are bound to fail. African archival systems should just accept that technology is here to stay and they need to redesign their recordkeeping systems. Governments need to make full commitment to support this new venture.

7.5.   Final Conclusion

The study achieved its main aim of establishing the status of records and archives management in Zimbabwe's Public Service and particularly provided in-depth explanations from a colonial-postcolonial perspective. The study managed to show that the case of Zimbabwe was different in many respects particularly the fact that the country inherited a strong recordkeeping system and even consolidated some of its archival processes in the period after independence. Nevertheless, despite the strong foundation, the country also experienced recordkeeping problems similar to those experienced in many other postcolonial countries. However, in the case of Zimbabwe, the problems were mainly attributed to the continued use of old recordkeeping systems and not necessarily collapsing systems. Other challenges found in the Zimbabwean system are non-legacy factors but purely postcolonial ones. The study further distinguished those challenges that were a direct result of the current economic problems in the country. These either worsened the situation on problems that were already there or derailed a lot of the gains of the past, both colonial and postcolonial. The study singled out the acute absence of ICT resources and skills in the recordkeeping systems of the Public Service of Zimbabwe as one of the main contributory factors to poor performance in the country's records and archives management. However, the study cautioned that this is not just a resources or skills challenge issue but also an overall government policy direction issue. The study also touched on issues of mind-set change; government commitment; and awareness and appreciation of the whole spectrum of technology in today's information sector. It identified these as key to a successful recordkeeping programme. In the end, because of the nature of the challenges found in Zimbabwe, the approach taken in addressing these challenges involves a cocktail of interventions that recognise the strengths of the current system, and the opportunities at hand, as well as the clearing of huddles that have been blocking the movement of records in the various stages of the records life-cycle. All in all, the study provided an in-depth account of the status of records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe. In particular, it explained the strengths and challenges of the recordkeeping system from a colonial-postcolonial

perspective, which provided a better understanding of the current situation in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Research Permission Letter

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

Private Bag 13301, 340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pionerspark, Windhoek, Namibia

The School of Postgraduate Studies
P.Bag13301
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: 2063523

E-mail: cshaimemanya@unam.na

Date: 29 October 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER

1. This letter serves to inform that student: VIOLET MATANGIRA (Student number: 201201694) is a registered student in the Department of Information Studies at the University of Namibia. His/her research proposal was reviewed and successfully met the University of Namibia requirements.
2. The purpose of this letter is to kindly notify you that the student has been granted permission to carry out postgraduate studies research. The School of Post Graduate Studies has approved the research to be carried out by the student for purposes of fulfilling the requirements of the degree being pursued.
3. The proposal adheres to ethical principles.

Thank you so much in advance and many regards.

Yours truly,

Name of Main Supervisor: Dr. C. T. NENGOMASHA

Signed: _____

Dr. C. N.S. Shaimemanya

Signed: _____

Director: School of Postgraduate Studies

APPENDIX B: UNAM Data Collection Support Letter

P.O. Box 13301
Windhoek
Namibia

16 July 2013

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST TO COLLECT DATA ON A RECORDS MANAGEMENT STUDY

We wish to introduce Ms. Violet Matangira, a doctoral student in the Department of Information and Communication Studies, University of Namibia, conducting research on records management in the public service of Zimbabwe. The research will involve interviewing some members of staff and observing some records keeping practices and related issues.

Although the study is in fulfilment of the requirements for a PhD in Records and Archives Management, there is no doubt that the recommendations emanating from the findings of the study would go a long way towards enhancing the practice of records management in the public service of Zimbabwe.

We therefore seek your assistance with this study in one form or other but most importantly, by taking part in the study.

We can assure you that as part of the University's ethical requirements, all information will be confidentially treated.

If you need further clarification please contact the undersigned, who is the student's main supervisor.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours Faithfully

Dr C T. Nengomasha
Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Information and Communication Studies
Tel: 2063641, Fax 2063806, cell 0812787617, e-mail cnengomasha@unam.na

APPENDIX C: NAZ Support Letter

ZIMBABWE

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF ZIMBABWE

15 August 2013

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

**RE: RECORDS MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN THE ZIMBABWE PUBLIC SERVICE:
V. MATANGIRA**

Ms **V. Matangira**, a Doctoral Student at the University of Namibia, has requested us to endorse her research work on records and archives management in the Zimbabwe Public Service.

Having gone through her research synopsis and having interviewed her we find her proposal beneficial to records management in Zimbabwe. Specifically we note the following:-

- Findings from her research will aid us in ongoing improvements to records management in the country.
- Nationally this is ground breaking research at this level whose outcomes will be of interest to records management practitioners and academics.

Consequently we recommend that maximum cooperation and support be extended to her by all key stakeholders.

I. M. Murambiwa
DIRECTOR

APPENDIX D: Request for Permission to Carry Out Research

20 July 2013

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of ------------------
Harare

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RECORDS MANAGEMENT RESEARCH IN THE MINISTRY OF XXX

I am a PhD student studying at the University of Namibia. I am conducting research on records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe.

The research will involve interviewing records-keeping staff at the ministry namely: the Permanent Secretary; one Administrative staff; and the Registry Supervisor or Clerk. It will also include making observations of record-keeping facilities and tools including any supporting documents.

The major aim of this research is to establish the status of the management of records and archives within the Public Service of Zimbabwe with a view of coming up with recommendations for the improvement of record-keeping processes for the Zimbabwe government. All research data gathered will be used solely for academic purposes.

I therefore seek authorisation to **(1) carry out interviews**; **(2) make observations on record-keeping facilities**; and **(3) consult relevant record-keeping documents** at your ministry. Once permission is granted, I will make appointments with the relevant officers as mentioned above at your ministry. I shall be available from the month of August 2013 to carry out the research or any other time suitable.

The National Archives of Zimbabwe is aware of this research and I attach a copy of their letter of support.

I look forward to your consideration of my request.

Yours Faithfully,

VIOLET MATANGIRA
Tel: +263776400157 (Zim); +264814457467 (Nam mobile); +264612063692 (Nam Office); E-mail:
vmatangira@yahoo.co.uk

APPENDIX E: Data Gathering Protocol

Researcher Commitment
This researcher commits to follow the protocol as outlined below.

Researcher Introduction to Respondent
My name is Violet Matangira. I am conducting research as part of my PhD study on records and archives management in Zimbabwe's Public Service. I am particularly interested in establishing the status of the management records and archives in Zimbabwe throughout their life-cycle from records to archives. I would be looking at records and archives management processes and how they are handled at the ministry.

Respondent Consent
I have been granted authority to carry out research at this ministry. However, I seek your consent to be interviewed. If you agree, kindly sign in the consent form I am giving to you now, which also requires your authority to record the interview or not.

[If they do not agree to be interviewed, thank them and leave]

[ASK] - Do you have any questions at this point? If not, then we proceed with the interview.

Explanation of research procedure by Researcher
I will go through a series of questions with you that are pertinent to the issue of records and archives management. Please try to answer fully as much as you can, preferably with deeper explanations but brief. You can also provide any documentation that support issues under discussion. As I we are interviewing, I may also have to observe and consult supporting documents and this can only be done with your permission.

The Interview
I am now starting the interview [Switch to tape if respondent has agreed on Consent form].

APPENDIX F: Consent Form

TITLE OF RESEARCH: From colonialism to independence: the status of records and archives
in Zimbabwe's post-colonial Public Service.

RESEARCHER: Violet Matangira
Department of Information & Communication Studies
University of Namibia
Tel: +264612063692; +263776400157; Fax: +264612062876
E-mail: vmatangira@yahoo.co.uk

Research Information

This research aims to establish the status of records and archives management in the government of
Zimbabwe. You have been selected for this research in your official capacity as the person working with or
responsible for records or archives in your ministry. All responses are confidential and your privacy will be
protected. It is expected that the interview would take about 45 minutes.

Please note that participation is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any point. However, you are
urged to participate in this research in order to make contribution to record-keeping processes in Zimbabwe.
All interactions, responses, and feedback would be treated with utmost **CONFIDENTIALITY** and
ANONYMITY at all times. The research would benefit your Ministry, the Government and individuals as
it would contribute to improved records management in Zimbabwe.

For any questions or further clarifications with any aspect of this research, you may contact my research
supervisors, in the Department of Information & Communication Studies, University of Namibia: Dr
Catherine Nengomasha Tel: +264612063641, e-mail: cnengomasha@unam.na Or Dr Ruth Abankwah Tel:
+264612063851, e-mail: rabankwah@unam.na .

If you voluntarily agree to participate in this research, kindly indicate your consent by signing below:

Tick selection:
- Agree to be **interviewed**:   **YES** ☐   **NO** ☐

- Agree to be **tape-recorded: YES** ☐   **NO** ☐

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

APPENDIX G: Interview Guide 1 – Accounting Officer: Permanent Secretary

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:

Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding records management in the Public
                               Service.

Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.
_____

SECTION A: MANAGEMENT LEVEL FUNCTIONS
1. Where is records management placed within the Ministry?
2. Who is responsible for giving direction regarding the way records should be managed at the
    Ministry?

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
3. What policies and regulations guide the management of records in your Ministry? Please
    explain
4. How does the Ministry manage compliance issues – managing its performance in relation to
    regulatory environment, audits, standards and best practice?
5. Are you aware of any cases where files could not be found? If yes, please explain any cases
    where files or records could not be found.

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
6. What level of prominence, resources and management support does record-keeping have
    within the Ministry?[Probe - Budget allocation]
7. What provisions do you have to secure records in time of disaster?

SECTION D: TRAINING, SKILLS AND AWARENESS
8. Is there an induction programme for new employees joining the Ministry targeting records
    management? If yes, please explain further.
9. What other records management training, awareness activities or outreach activities are given
    to: records management staff and, all staff routinely?
10. Do you think records-keeping staff have the requisite skills to manage records effectively in
    your Ministry? Please explain further.
11. Do you think records-keeping staff have the requisite skills to manage records effectively in
    your Ministry? Please explain further.
12. Do you think staff, in general are aware of their record-keeping responsibilities? Explain your
    answer.
SECTION C: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
13. What are the problems that you see regarding general records management at the Ministry?
    What are the reasons for these problems, if any.
14. How can the records management function at the Ministry be strengthened?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX H: Interview Guide 2 - Registry Supervisor

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:

Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding records management in the Public Service.

Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

SECTION A: GENERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
1.   Can you please explain the structure this office? [Ask for a copy of job description]
2.   What activities do you do regarding records management?
3.   What provisions are there to ensure that all official records are captured and secured in both physical and electronic formats?
4.   Is the registry system working? Probes:
     - Do you always get information from the registry timeously?
     - Do users know the registry procedures?
     - Do they use the filing system and the registry storage?
     - Do you know of any cases where files could not be found? If yes, please give details.
5. How do you deal with records that are no longer active?" Probes:
     - Do you have retention schedules? Explain further.

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
6.   What guides record-keeping staff in the management of records?
     - [Probe - policies, procedures manual, guidelines, classification scheme] [Request for copies]
7.   To what extent does the legal and regulatory framework meet records management standards?
8.   Have record-keeping audits/surveys been conducted in your Ministry?
     - [Probe – if yes, please explain. Ask for a copy of audit/survey report if available]
9.   Who conducts record-keeping audits/surveys to evaluate records management practices against set standards? Probe – frequency of audits/ surveys, last audit/ survey]

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
10. What resources, facilities and tools are available to carry out recordkeeping processes at the ministry? [Probe - filing cabinets, arch-lever files, hanging folders, electronic folders/electronic records management system]
11. Do you think the resources, facilities and tools are adequate? Please explain.
12. In the event of a fire, flood or any other disaster, can you explain how the records would be safeguarded?
13. Are you aware of any cases of disaster at the Department? If yes, please give details.

SECTION D: TRAINING, SKILLS AND AWARENESS
14. Is there an induction programme for new employees joining the Department targeting records management? If yes, please explain.
15. What other training, refresher courses or awareness activities are given to staff routinely?

16. Do records-keeping staff in the Ministry have the requisite skills to manage records effectively in your ministry?
17. Are the staff in the Ministry aware of their records management responsibilities? Please explain further]

SECTION D: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
18. What are the problems that you see regarding general records management at the Ministry? [Probe - reasons for these problems if any]
19. How can the records management function at the Ministry be strengthened?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX I: Interview Guide 3 – Action Officer

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:

_____

Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding records management in the
                               Public Service.

Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.
_____

SECTION A: GENERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT

1. What records do you receive, refer to, or create?
2. What records management procedures and/or systems are in place to manage records that you work with?
3. Do you use the registry? Probe:
    -   If yes, explain how you work with registry staff]
    -   If not, do you keep your own files? Kindly explain further.

SECTION B: RECORDS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

4. What guides you to carry out records management work?
    -   [Probe]: policies, guidelines, instructions, manuals
5. When you have created or received records what specific actions do you take in order to maintain them?
6. Do you always find information when you require it timeously from the registry? If not, give examples of when files have not been found when you required them and explain.
7. How long do records need to be kept in the organisation to meet your specific business?
8. What actions do you take to dispose or preserve records?

SECTION C: SKILLS, TRAINING AND AWARENESS

9. Have you received any training or awareness activities on how to manage records? If yes, please explain.

SECTION D: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

10. What are the problems that you see regarding general records management at the Ministry? Please explain the reasons for these problems, if any.
11. How can the records management function at the Ministry be strengthened?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX J: Interview Guide 4 – Key IT Person

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:

_____

Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding records management in the
                               Public Service.
Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

_____

SECTION A: GENERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
1. Can you please explain the functions of this office?
2. What aspects of your responsibilities cover records management?
3. What is your understanding of e-records?
4. What is the relationship between your office and the MICTPCS in the Public Service?
5. What ICT initiatives have been done regarding improving records management in the Public
    Service? Please explain.
6. Is there any deliberate consultation with the National Archives of Zimbabwe's records
    management staff regarding introduction of new IT systems that relate to records management?
    If yes, please explain further.

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
7. What guides you to carry out ICT work? [Probe: policies, guidelines, instructions, manuals]
8. Do these include any elements related to records management?

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
9. What ICT resources and facilities are in place for the management of records?
10. Are these resources adequate? Please explain.

SECTION D: TRAINING, SKILLS AND AWARENESS
11. Have you received any records management training to raise your awareness on records
    management issues as an IT person in your Ministry? If yes, please explain.
12. What level of awareness do staff in your Ministry have regarding ICT issues and records
    management?

SECTION E: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
13. Are there any ICT problems that relate to records management in the Public Service?
14. [Probe] – If so, what are the reasons for these problems?
15. Do you have any other comments or suggestions regarding records management in general?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX K: Interview Guide 5 – National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Director

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:

Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding the role of NAZ in the management of records and archives of the Public Service of Zimbabwe. Research Objectives:

o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

SECTION A: GENERAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
1. Where is the National Archives placed within the Public Service of Zimbabwe?
2. [Probe] Can you comment on whether this placement is good or bad, and give reasons]
3. What relationship exists between the NAZ and the ministries/departments? Explain.
4. Can you please comment on the structure of NAZ?
5. [Probe] What are the strengths and weaknesses of this structure in relationship with its role in the entire Public Service?
6. What is the government's perception of records management in general? Explain.

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
7. What policies and regulations guide the work of NAZ?
8. [Probe]What are the strengths and weaknesses of the policies and regulations?

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
9. What level of support in terms of resources does NAZ receive in comparison with other Departments within your Ministry? Please explain.
10. Do you consider this support is adequate for the task of managing records of the entire Public Service? Please explain.

SECTION D: SKILLS, TRAINING AND AWARENESS
11. Do the NAZ recordkeeping staff have the requisite skills to oversee the management of records in the Public Service of Zimbabwe? Please explain your answer.
12. Do recordkeeping staff have the requisite skills to manage records and archives effectively at the NAZ? Please explain your answer.
13. Do recordkeeping staff at the ministries and departments have the requisite skills to manage records effectively? Please explain your answer.
14. What role do you play in the Public Service induction training? Please explain.

SECTION E: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
15. What do you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the current records and archives system at the National Archives, and the entire Public Service?
16. What do you think needs to be done in order to improve or strengthen records and archives management in the Public Service of Zimbabwe?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX L: Interview Guide 6 – National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Chief Archivist:

Records Management Section

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:
_____
Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding the role of NAZ in the management of

records and archives of the Public Service.

Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.
_____
SECTION A: GENERAL MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS
1. Can you please explain the functions of your office
2. What is your relationship with the ministries and departments regarding recordkeeping
    matters? Please explain in detail this relationship. [Probe - policy, guidelines, monitoring,
    advice]
3. Is your Department consulted when new electronic records management systems are purchased
    or developed in the Public Service? Please explain

SECTION B: LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
4. What legislation or standards guide the work that you do relating to records management?
    [Probe - Policies, procedures manual, standards, guidelines] [Request for copies]
5. Are there formal record-keeping procedures for all Public Service staff to follow? [Probe - if
    yes, are these up to date and adequate? Please explain [ask for samples]

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
6. What resources are made available to the NAZ for the records management programme?
7. Are these resources adequate for effective records management the ministries and
    departments? Please explain.

SECTION D: SKILLS, TRAINING AND AWARENESS
8. Do the NAZ recordkeeping staff have the requisite skills to manage the records of the entire
    Public Service effectively? Please explain.
9. Do the recordkeeping staff at the ministries and departments have the requisite skills to manage
    the records of the entire Public Service effectively? Please explain.
10. What training or awareness activities do you carry out to the records-keeping staff at the
    ministries and departments?

SECTION E: RECORDS MANAGEMENT FUNCTION

11. Are the records centre facilities in the country adequate? Please explain.

12. Are the records centre facilities being utilised effectively? Please explain.

13. Please comment on retention and disposal activities at the ministries and departments. [Probe – who does scheduling; how often]

14. Is the retention and disposal system operating well? Please explain.

15. How often do you carry out record surveys in ministries and departments? [Probe – establish if survey reports are available]

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

16. What are the challenges faced by the NAZ in carrying out records management work?

17. What are the records management challenges faced by the entire Public Service of Zimbabwe?

18. What should be done in order to improve or strengthen records management at the NAZ?

19. What should be done in order to improve or strengthen records management at the ministries and departments?

Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX M: Interview Guide 7 – National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) Chief Archivist:

Public Archives Section

Name of Respondent:
Department:
Designation:
Number of years in current position:
_____
Issues to be investigated: Current situation regarding the role of NAZ in the management of records and archives of the Public Service.

Research Objectives:
o   Investigate the status of records and archives management in post-colonial Zimbabwe.
_____
SECTION A: GENERAL MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
1. Can you please explain the functions of your office?

SECTION B: LEGAL & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
2. What legislation guides the work that you do relating to archives management?
 [Policies, procedures manual, guidelines] [Request for copies]
3. Probe - Do you think these are adequate for an effective archives management programme? Explain why you think so.

SECTION C: RESOURCES, FACILITIES AND TOOLS
4. What resources are made available to NAZ for archives management?
5. Are these resources adequate for effective archives management? Please explain.

SECTION D: SKILLS, TRAINING AND AWARENESS
6. Do staff in your section have the requisite skills to manage archives effectively at the NAZ? [Probe – ICT, Technical skills]

SECTION E: ARCHIVES MANAGEMENT FUNCTION
7. Can you comment on the acquisition of archives?
8. Do the essential records of the Public Service of Zimbabwe find their way to the NAZ for permanent preservation? Why do you say so?
9. What is the position regarding the processing of archives? Please explain.
10. What is the position regarding access to public archives?
11. What are the challenges regarding access to public archives? Please explain in detail the reasons for problems.
12. What archives preservation programmes do you have at the NAZ?
13. What challenges do you have regarding the preservation of archives?

SECTION F: RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS
14. What challenges is the NAZ facing regarding the management of archives?
15. What should be done to improve or strengthen archives management at NAZ?
Thank you for your time and contribution.

APPENDIX N: Observation and Documents Search Checklist

Observation protocol

Upon visit to each ministry, researcher would particularly make observations on facilities, tools and documents for the record-keeping function as listed below:

Records Function	Specific area of observation	YES	NO	Remarks
Filing	• File classification on actual files			
	• Filing cabinets			
	• Hanging files			
	• Arch-lever files or			
	• any other files used			
	• File labelling			
	• General condition of office			
	• Electronic filing facility – software			
Documents	• Filing System			
	• Procedures manual			
	• Guidelines			
	• Policies			
	• Access			
	• guidelines/regulations			
	• Retention/Disposal Schedules			
	• Reports			
	• Minutes			
	• Circulars			
	• Memoranda			
Records Security	• Access – Registry Counter			
	• Disaster prevention			
	• General preservation			

APPENDIX O: Printout of Families Code from Atlas.ti

_____

Code Families

_____
HU: atlas_records_management_data_analysis
File: [C:\Users\student\Desktop\atl...\atlas_records_management_data_analysis.hpr7]
Edited by: Super
Date/Time: 2014-10-26 23:04:49

_____
Code Family: ACQUISITION OF ARCHIVES
Created: 2014-10-22 14:32:44 (Super)
Codes (1):   [Acquisition]
Quotation(s): 2

_____
Code Family: ARCHIVES PRESERVATION
Created: 2014-10-22 14:34:01 (Super)
Codes (2):   [Conservation] [Preservation]
Quotation(s): 3

_____
Code Family: ARCHIVES PROCESSING & ACCESS
Created: 2014-10-22 14:33:07 (Super)
Codes (3):   [Access & reference services] [Finding aids] [Processing of archives]
Quotation(s): 4

_____
Code Family: AWARENESS & APPRECIATION OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT
Created: 2014-10-22 14:28:39 (Super)
Codes (2):   [Appreciation (RM)] [Awareness - non-records staff]
Quotation(s): 53

_____
Code Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS
Created: 2014-10-22 14:15:49 (Super)
Codes (5):   [Capture of physical records] [Email capture] [Email printing] [E-records] [Hard copy]
Quotation(s): 28

_____
Code Family: CLASSIFICATION & FILING
Created: 2014-10-22 14:17:10 (Super)
Codes (4):   [Classification] [Filing system/manual system/Registry system] [Indexing terms] [Misfiling]
Quotation(s): 62

_____
Code Family: GOVERNMENT ICT PLANS
Created: 2014-10-22 14:30:35 (Super)
Codes (5):   [E-governance] [ICT & RM] [ICT funding] [ICT literacy & training] [ICT stakeholders]
Quotation(s): 37

_____
Code Family: ICT STATUS AT MINISTRIES
Created: 2014-10-22 14:29:14 (Super)
Codes (4):   [Computers - availability & use] [Databases] [Digitisation] [E-mail availability & use]
Quotation(s): 31

_____
Code Family: LEGAL & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK (AM)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:35:06 (Super)
Codes (2):   [NAZ Act (AM) - strengths] [NAZ Act (AM) - weaknesses]
Quotation(s): 4

_____
Code Family: LEGAL & REGULATORY FRAMEWORK (ministries)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:22:47 (Super)
Codes (9):   [Compliance] [Guidelines (General)] [NAZ Act (RM)] [Official Secrets Act] [Public Service Procedures Manual] [RBM] [Records Management Policy] [Treasury Instructions] [Zimb Govt Standing Security Instructions 1994]
Quotation(s): 54

_____
Code Family: MINISTRY RECORDS APPRAISAL SYSTEM
Created: 2014-10-22 14:21:08 (Super)
Codes (6):   [Appraisal] [Records transfers] [Retention & disposal] [Storage space - ministries] [Storage space - records centres] [Surveys]
Quotation(s): 65

_____
Code Family: NAZ RESOURCES, FACILITIES & TOOLS (RM & AM)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:36:27 (Super)
Codes (6): [ERMS] [NAZ funding] [NAZ Human Resources] [NAZ infrastructure] [NAZ storage space] [NAZ transport issues]
Quotation(s): 11

_____
Code Family: PROTECTION & SECURITY OF RECORDS
Created: 2014-10-22 14:20:29 (Super)

Codes (1): [Records protection & security]
Quotation(s): 44

_____

Code Family: RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS (ministries)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:39:30 (Super)
Codes (1): [Problems (RM)]
Quotation(s): 26

_____

Code Family: RESOURCES, FACILITIES & TOOLS (ministries)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:25:04 (Super)
Codes (5): [Budget/Funding/Support (RM)] [Filing cabinets] [Folders] [Index books] [Storage room condition (ministry)]
Quotation(s): 81

_____

Code Family: STRUCTURE & POSITION OF RM IN MINISTRIES
Created: 2014-10-22 14:15:06 (Super)
Codes (3): [Organogram - ministry] [Records structure and position in ministry] [Registry staff]
Quotation(s): 25

_____

Code Family: STRUCTURE, POSITION & ROLE OF THE NAZ
Created: 2014-10-22 14:31:51 (Super)
Codes (4): [NAZ organogram] [NAZ RM function] [NAZ role] [NAZ structure & position]
Quotation(s): 16

_____

Code Family: SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS (ministries)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:40:38 (Super)
Codes (2): [Positives/Strengths (ministries)] [Suggestions & recommendations (ministries)]
Quotation(s): 50

_____

Code Family: TRAINING SKILLS & EXPOSURE (RM)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:26:26 (Super)
Codes (8): [Calibre of rm staff] [Educational qualifications] [Experience] [Ministry induction] [Public Service induction] [Records Management skills] [Short courses, seminars, workshops, conferences & others] [Training funding]
Quotation(s): 141

_____

Code Family: TRAINING, SKILLS & EXPOSURE (AM)
Created: 2014-10-22 14:37:55 (Super)
Codes (1): [Archivist skills & training]
Quotation(s): 2

_____

Code Family: USE OF RECORDS
Created: 2014-10-22 14:18:09 (Super)
Codes (14): [Delays] [Deliberate actions/sabotage] [File management and use] [File misplacement] [File tracking] [Get info timeously] [Mail deliveries/dispatch] [Mail flow] [Mini-registries] [Missing files] [Remedial actions] [Temporary files] [Transit slips] [Uses registry]
Quotation(s): 155

APPENDIX P: Print out from Families output from Atlas.ti

_____

Code Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS

_____

HU: atlas_records_management_data_analysis
File: [C:\Users\student\Desktop\atl...\atlas_records_management_data_analysis.hpr7]
Edited by: Super
Date/Time: 2014-10-24 19:25:48

_____

Created: 2014-10-22 14:15:49 (Super)
Codes (5): [Capture of physical records] [Email capture] [Email printing] [E-records] [Hard copy]
Quotation(s): 28

_____

P 4: AO10.docx - 4:5 [The response depends...sometimes..] (23:23)   (Super)
Codes: [Hard copy - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

The response depends…sometimes is through e-mail especially acknowledgement of receipt, but mostly we use the hard copy which we sign

P 6: AO11.docx - 6:3 [If I receive it as soft copy, ..] (18:18)   (Super)
Codes: [Email printing - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

If I receive it as soft copy, I print a hard copy and send to registry.

P14: AO2.docx - 14:3 [With e-mails, we print and fil..] (11:11)   (Super)
Codes: [Email printing - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

With e-mails, we print and file with the records office.

P16: AO3.docx - 16:1 [No mail comes direct except em..] (13:13)   (Super)
Codes: [Email capture - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

No mail comes direct except emails. These don't go to registry; they come direct through personal email. If email is not copied to director, I copy it to him.

P16: AO3.docx - 16:2 [I do not print and file. The e..] (13:13)   (Super)
Codes: [Email printing - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

I do not print and file. The email remains between me and the director. I am now concerned that this information should be captured officially.

P20: AO5.docx - 20:1 [I print copies for the registr..] (16:16)   (Super)
Codes: [Email printing - Family: CAPTURE OF RECORDS]
No memos

APPENDIX Q: Performance Appraisal Form for a Registry Staff Member from M5

M5

DEC 2006

NAME:... MEMBER CODE.............................. PERFORMANCE PERIOD..

1. AGREED NEW WORK PLANS
(To be completed at the beginning of the review period)

2. REVIEW OF OFFICERS/MANAGERS WORK PLAN
(to be completed at the end of the review period)

1.1. KEY RESULT AREAS	1.2. OBJECTIVES (Use SMART* guidelines) (Include Priority Rating expressed as a %)	1.3. ACTION PLANS (to achieve objectives)	1.4. STANDARD/OR MEASURABLE OUTCOMES AND/OR COST IMPLICATIONS	2.1. COMMENTS ON PERFORMANCE ACHIEVED/NOT ACHIEVED	2.2. RATING ON PERFORMANCE
1. Receiving incoming mail from the post office, diplomatic missions and all hand delivers from other ministries, Swift and other mail services.	1. To distribute mail received to the relevant sections for actioning daily.	1.Empty the contents of the mailbag in the presence of the person who has brought the bag from the post office. 2. Sorting out mail into personal and business categories. 3. Acknowledging receipt of the registered mail by signing on both slips, when satisfied, return original to the post and file the other for record purposes. 4. Opening mail as per Registry procedures. 5. Recording and date stamping mail ensuring that all attachments are present. 6. Handing over the classified mail to the classifier desk, registered mail for recording in the registered book and those with money in the remittance books.	- Immediately when the mailbag is received from the Post Office. - Soon after opening the bag. - Within 15 minutes - Immediately after opening the mail - Immediately after opening the mail. - Daily	achieved	5 . 116

APPENDIX R: Indexing Registers from M7A
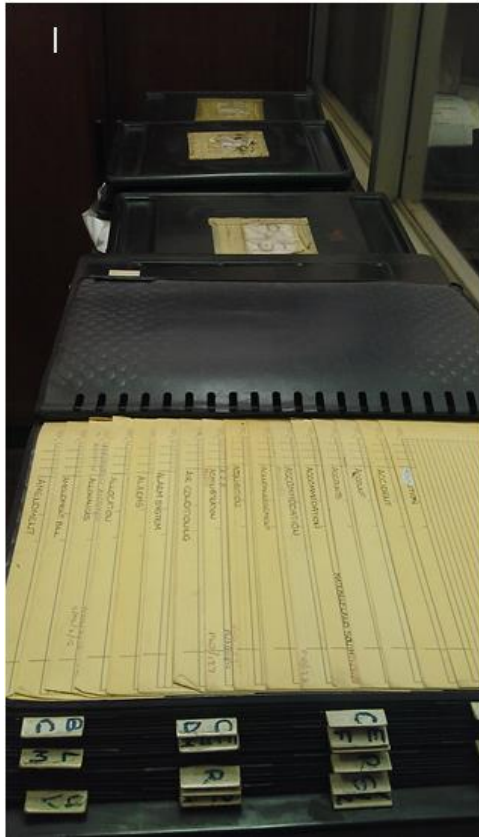
APPENDIX S: Files showing signs of damage and deterioration

APPENDIX T: Examples of modern type of cabinets found at the ministries
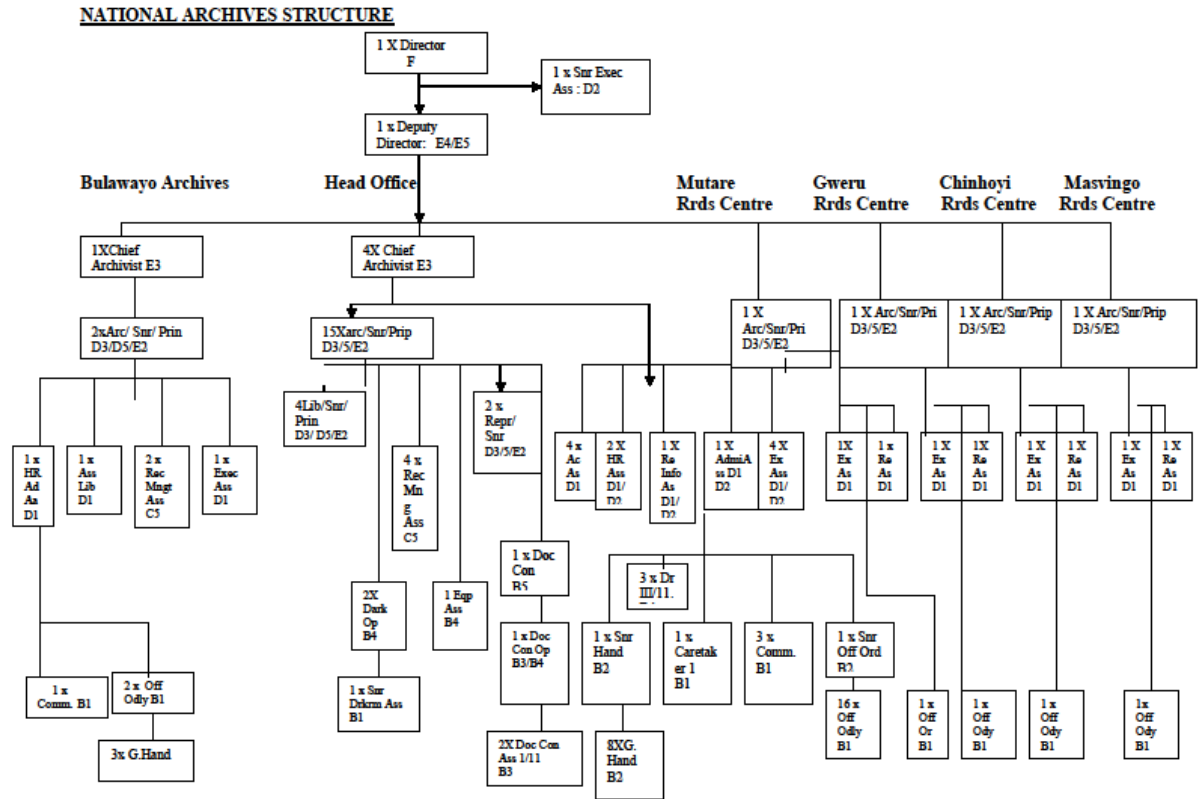

Easy-File cabinet, M1

Other types of modern cabinets, M1

APPENDIX U: Examples of disorganised records offices

APPENDIX V: NAZ Organogram (2009)

Source: National Archives of Zimbabwe