RECORDS RETENTION STRATEGIES IN REGISTRY DEPARTMENT OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE AWARD OF MASTER DEGREE IN ARCHIVES AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT (MARM)

DEPATMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE,
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ZARIA

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation titled "Records Retention Strategies in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria." was carried out by me in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Information derived from literature are acknowledged and a list of references were provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for the award of another degree at this or any other Institution.

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TANIMU HUSSAINA **DATE**

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled "Records Retention Strategies in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria." by Tanimu Hussaina has met the requirements for the award of Master's Degree in Archives and Records Management (MARM) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria and has been approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

To the blessed memory of my beloved parents: Late Hajiya Hajara Buhari and Alhaji Ahmed Tanimu Shika.

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First and foremost I wish to express my gratitude to Allah (SubhanahuWataala) who gave me the opportunity, courage and wisdom to successfully complete this programmed.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated Records Retention Strategies in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Records are important document found in the possession of either individual or organization. Four (4) research questions were raised to find out the types of records that are generated in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, the types of periods assigned to the records. The strategies used in record retention in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and how the big bucket theory will explain records retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The study was based on the following objectives. To identify the types of record generated in the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, To find out the types of period assigned to records in the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The research method adopted was qualitative; the population of the study comprised of all record officers in registry department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Their total number were six (6). Five of them members of the population were used for the study. Individual interview was used collect data. The data obtained from the interview were transcribed word for word (verbatim), the transcribed data were imported onto a QDA Miner (version 4.1.23) coded, and analyzed. The transcript produced 67 codes, 17 sub-categories and 7 major categories. It is upon these categories and sub-categories that the analysis for this study was based. The findings of the study among others revealed that the types of records generated in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria were mostly staff sabbatical records, visiting file, personal staff records and other records which include day to day staff activities records ,minutes of meetings and mails. On the period assigned to records in the Registry, active service and permanent retention period the strategies for records retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University were permanent retention strategy and staff active service period but no available record retention schedule in the Registry. The study concluded that in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, staff records and other types of records were generated. There was no records retention schedule to guide the retention of different records kept in the registry. The challenges faced were compliance, and tracing of staff records. This means that the records retention strategies employed in the registry were not in line with the yardstick used in this study. It was recommended among others that, aside staff records, other records such as account payroll, payable, account receivable, university administration to mention but few should be generated and preserved in such a way that records that have the same content, series and activities will be grouped together in the Registry of the University as this will ensure easy retrieval and use of such records when the need arise. In order to achieve positive effect on retention period on records in the registry, there is need to adopt records retention schedule as a guide in retaining records in the registry.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Records are important documents found in the possession of either individuals or Organizations. They are documents that contain information which is either generated or received by individuals or organizations in the conduct of their everyday activities. Records guide the activities of individuals or organizations in such a way that, the business engaged by People and Organizations cannot be carried out without a document guiding such activities. Yeo (2011) maintains that records are documents appearing in either Print or Electronic format. Examples of printed records include, Birth certificate, School certificates, Student Admission letters, Bank teller paper among others, while electronic records include individual or organizational information that are stored in an electronic Information devices such as Flash drives, Compact disks read only memory (CD-ROM), Digital versatile disk (DVD) and the rest.

Regardless of their media records are important to the individual or organization that creates or sometimes receives them. Smith, Ginn and Kallaus (2002) established that the importance of records are many and can be looked at from different angles. This means that some records are important administratively. These records help in guiding administrators in conducting their administrative work. Some records are important in terms of their financial Information. These records help in carrying out decisions concerning finance. Also, some records are important because of their Legal Value. These records assist in providing a particular Claim by Individual or Organization. While other records are important because of their Historical nature as contain information that has historical value. Other importance of records

includes Education and Research etc. Many of these records are retained by individual or organization indefinitely after their creation.

Record retention in organizations has to do with keeping of records for a particular Period of time in an organization. Organizations generate and receive different types of records. Aduku (2014) asserted that records that are found in the organization are categorized into short lived and long lived ones. Records that have short life span are not retained by the organization that generates or receive such records. While records that have long life span are retained by the organization because of their economic, administrative, historical, legal, values. For an organization to retain its records with long life span, record retention schedule must be used as a guide.

`Records retention schedule is a tool that guides an organization in retaining its records. Adikwu (2007) maintained that records retention schedule describes the types of records to be retained by an Organization and how such records will be retained. This is because not all the records generated in an organization are needed for future reference.

The purposes of records retention by an individual or organization are many. This is depending on the policy of records retention of that individual or Organization. For example, some individuals retain their Records for the purpose of history, legal issue, and reference purposes, among others. Similarly, many Organizations, Governmental and Non- governmental organization retain their records based on their organizational records retention guidelines. These guidelines contain the purposes in which an organization records should be retained. These purposes can be administrative, legal, historical, reference, fiscal among others.

With regards to organizations, every Organization creates records that guide its daily operations. No Organization can function without records which are either internally generated

or received from external bodies. Records created in the organization can be in print or electronic formats. These records help Organizations in different ways. For example, Kahn and Silverberg (2000) Unger, (2007) Nelson and Simex, (2009) Swartz, (2009) believed that records created in the Organization protect them from the risk of litigation. Also, Joseph, Debowski and Goldschmidt (2014) agreed that records help organizations in planning for their day to day activities.

Records created in an organization are stored in series of National Archives and Records Administration. Series constitute records that are stored in a definite order in the Organization as a group of identical or related records that are utilized and disposed of in the same way. United States National Archives and Records Management (2014) showed that series of records are placed in the file for easy retrieval. Brock (2010) maintained that records created and received by different organizations are retained for future reference. This is done using organizational guidelines such as policy documents. This guideline mostly comes in form of policy showing what, how and when records are to be retained. Similarly, University of Vermont (2012) established that records in every department or unit in the organization are retained through following what is stated in the policy document of the Organization concerning records retention.

Taiwo et al. (2011), Aduku and Olugbeja (2012) showed that records are retained in the Organization following a standard called Records Retention Schedule. This standard clearly shows the type of Records to be retained, how they should be retained and the time the records should be retained. Calabria (2004), Gunnlaughsdottir (2006), Foscarini (2009), Joseph, et al., (2014) indicate that records that are worthy for indefinite retention in the Organization are classified in order to enable that Organization to ease the retrieval of such records.

Records are important documents that carry information about organizational operations. They are the carriers or media in which information about Organizational operations are documented. Healy (2011) defined records as information created, received and maintained by individuals or Organizations whether in print or electronic media in the pursuance of legal obligations or in the conduct of day to day operations of that individual or organization. This means that records are always created by individuals or organizations and they serve as documents that can back the individual or organization as sources of evidence when a need arises. Also, Yeo (2011) maintained that records are primarily in the format of a document because documents are perceived as written or printed text on paper. Joseph et al. (2014) asserted that records encompass documents, working drafts, data, photographs among others. These are also media through which records appear.

A record retention strategy identifies the retention needs of an Organization and encapsulates these into a records retention policy. The strategy also provides guidance to the department in selecting appropriate periods to support the strategy, and associate processes and procedure to manage records. Strategic records retention scheduling is the practical way to build a comprehensive records retention schedule.

With regards to standard that the researcher used as a guide in this study, American Institute for Certified Public Accounts records Retention Guide was adopted. This is because the researcher observed that all the types of Records in that guide are also found in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This research was conducted using Big Bucket Records Retention Theory's constructs of principle of records identification, and period of assignment to find out the records retention strategies used in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria registry department is part of the administrative segment of the University. It is headed by a Registrar. The section is responsible for collection, storage and preservation of the Records generated internally as well as those that are received from the external bodies concerning the University affairs. All the institutions research centers, faculties, departments and other units generate records that are stored in the registry. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Registry is managed by records staff.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Records retention is an important issue in every Organization. Organization that generate records need to retain records for a particular period of time, for example Organizational records such as contract records, purchase order, Sales records and payroll records among others are retained up to seven years depending on the organization's records retention guide. These records are retained by such organization for a period of time during the conduct of organizational daily operations. Some of these records are needed for making decision in an organization concerning the operation of that organization. Smith et al. (2002) maintained that records are retained in the organization because of their value which include fiscal, Historical, Legal, Educational, Research and Administrative value. These records must pass through an assessment before their retention.

Preliminary investigation conducted by the researcher in the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria revealed that staffs are experiencing delay in terms of getting access to the records kept in the registry. This could lead to delay in taking decision such as approval for sabbatical, approval for scholarship, Promotion, Study leave and the rest. (Enwere, 1992; Taiwo et al., 2011; Aduku and Olugbeja, 2012). Could it be as a result of poor records

retention? Could it be due to limited space? Based on the above speculation, the researcher carried out this research using big bucket records retention theory's constructs such as principle of record identification and principle of records period assigning to find out the records retention strategies in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

1.3 Research Questions

The following are the research questions raised:

1. What types of records are generated in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
2. What types of periods are assigned to records in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
3. What are the strategies used in records retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
4. What are the challenges of records retention in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following are objectives of the study

1. To identify the types of record generated in the Registry o f Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.
2. To find out the types of period assigned to record in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.
3. To ascertain the retention schedule used for records in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

4. To investigate the challenges of record retention periods in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is important to the records officers in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in the sense that its recommendations will support records staff in improving the way they retain Records. It will also add to the knowledge of the officers working in this Department concerning the safest and acceptable ways to retained records.

In the same vein, the study is of significant importance to archives and record management officers working in different archival or record centers. For example, the staff working in places like National Archives, National Bureau of Statistics, National Records and Historic Centre among others will find the study useful. This is because from the study they will acquire knowledge on how to improve the way they manage records and archival documents in their various records and archival centers.

Additionally, the study will be of significant importance to teachers of archives and Records management. This is because they are expected to get new ideas from contemporary scholars on records retention. Furthermore, the study, serves as source of literature to other scholars in the field of records and archives, Library and Information Science, distinct and related discipline.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focused only on the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Only records officers in the department were used as the respondents of this study. Therefore, the study focused only on these records officers in the Registry.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

This Dissertation was limited by the experiences of the registry staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. It was also limited by the difficulty faced in convincing the respondents to response to questions.

1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined operationally to ease their understanding and usage in this research:

Records: Documents that contain information

Records Retention: Act of keeping records for a particular period of time such as five, ten, twenty, thirty years etc.

Records Retention Strategies: Systematic ways of keeping records for a particular period of time such as five, ten, twenty, thirty years etc.

Registry: Establishment where records are kept.

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is presented under the following subheadings:

2.2 The Concept of Record Retention

2.3 Records Generation in the Organization

2.4 Records Retention Strategy

2.5 Organizational Guidelines that Governs Records Retention

2.6 Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

2.7 Principles of Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

2.8 Previous Studies that Adopted Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

2.9 Application of Big Bucket Records Retention Theory in the Retention of Organization Records

2.10 Summary of the Review

2.2 The Concept of Record Retention

Various authors have defined record retention from different backgrounds. Records retention has to do with the keeping of records for some period of time. It is the act of storing records of a particular individual or organization for particular period of time. For example, organizations records, such as contract records, purchase orders, sales records, payroll records among others are retained for up to seven years depending on the organization's records retention guide because of their value. These values include historical, administrative, reference, fiscal, information and evidential ones. The retention of record is done based on the a particular judgment on such records. This judgment was based on the appraisal of the records. Adikwu

(2007) maintained that appraisal of a record is a basic function of determining the eventual disposition of records based on their value.

In the record management discipline, records retention comes at the last stage of the life-cycle stages of records. For records to be retained by an individual or organization, such records must contain an intellectual content that will be needed in the future for permanent use. Aduku (2014) asserted that records are retained after following all the life-cycle stages of the record. These stages include creation, distribution, use, maintenance and disposition of the record. At the disposition stage, records will either be destroyed or retained. Records are retained by an individual or organization for a quite a number of reasons. This is depending on the policy of records retention of that individual or organization. For example, some individuals retain their records for the purposes of history, legal and reference purposes, among others. Similarly, many organizations, governmental and non- governmental retain records based on their organizational records retention guidelines. These guidelines contain the purposes for which the organizational record should be retained. These purposes can be administrative, legal, historical, reference, fiscal among others.

On the aspect of organizational records, the organization creates records that guide its daily operations. No organization can function without records which are either internally generated or received from external bodies. Records created in the organization can be in print or electronic formats. These records help organizations in different ways. For example, Kahn and Silverberg (2000), Unger (2007), Nelson and Simex (2009), Swartz (2009) believe that records created in the organization protect it from the risk of litigation. Also, Joseph, Debowski and Goldschmidt (2014) established that records assist organizations in planning and implementing their operations.

2.3 Records Retention Strategy

A record retention strategy identified the retention need of the Organization and encapsulates this into a records retention policy. Strategy also provides guidance to the department in selecting the appropriate period to support the strategy and associated processes and procedures to manage the records. Copyright strategic records retention scheduling (2011) maintained that scheduling records retention is the practical way of building a comprehensive records retention schedule. Strategic records retention schedule approaches retention scheduling one records files type at a time. Instead of substantial and sometimes frightening, upfront investment in both time and resources to schedule retention of records. Records retention schedule is the central component of records retention program, the records retention schedule is the list of all document types produced by your Organization, which is responsible for them, how long they are kept. A records retention program clears away obsolete records and help you stay compliant, reduces records storage cost and allows for more convenient accessibility to needed records. Scalet,(2006) stated that record retention strategies and practices with a measurable value to any Organization which include: Improved access to needed information(document, files and records) Retrieval time can be cut dramatically when improved operating control are in place, Reduced legal audit risks of records lost, missing records and it reduced records storage volumes and cost. Standardized practice and applied retention schedules reduce costs in real-estate labor and capital expense

2.4 Record Generation in the Organization

Mostly in the Organization, there is a central place where the records created in various units of that organization are received for storage. These records are stored in series in the organization's central records storage area (registry). Smith, Ginn and Kallaus (2002) maintained that records series constitute a group of Related Records filed and used together as a unit and evaluated as a unit for retention purposes. (National Archives and Records Administration, 2005; United States National Archives and Records Management, 2014) showed that series of records are placed in the file for easy retrieval. Brock (2010) maintained that records created and received by different organizations are retained for future reference. This is done using organizational guidelines such as policy documents. For example, the document shows the period a particular record should be retained, some records such as contract records, purchase orders, sales records, and payroll records, among others are retained, for up to seven years records depending on the Organization's records retention guide.

Similarly, University of Vermont (2012) established that records in every department or unit in an organization retains their records through following what is stated in the policy document of the organization concerning records retention. Taiwo et al.,(2011), Aduku and Olugbeja,(2012) showed that records are retained in the Organization following a standard called records retention schedule. This standard clearly shows the type of records to be retained, how they should be retained and the time the records should be retained. Calabria, (2004) Gunnlaughsdottir, (2006) Foscarini, (2009), Joseph, et al. (2014) indicate that records that are worthy for indefinite retention in the organization are classified in order to enable that organization to easily retrieve such records

2.5 Organizational Guideline that Governs Record Retention

The record retention schedule captures all the types of records created and used by the organization in the course of its business and indicates how long these records are required to be retained. Record retention schedule is an element in establishing a good faith effort and ensuring sound record retention. Records management guide, (2012) This is because the more a records is retained, the greater the burden of identifying and locating it when needed for reference purposes and Legal compliance.

The purposes of record retention by an individual or Organization are many. This depends on the policy of records retention of that individual or organization. For example, some individuals retain their records for the purpose of history, legal issue, and reference purposes among others. Similarly, many organizations governmental and non- governmental retain their records based on their organizational records retention guidelines. These guidelines contain the purposes for which the organizational records should be retained. These purposes can be administrative, legal, historical, reference, fiscal among other purposes.

With regards to organizations, every organization creates records that guide its daily operations. No organization can function without records which is either internally generated or received from the external bodies. Records created in the organization can be in print or electronic formats. These records help organizations in different ways. For example, Kahn and Silverberg, (2000) Unger, (2007), Nelson and Simex,(2009) Swartz, (2009) believed that records created in the organization protect them from the risk of litigation. Also, Joseph, Debowski and Goldschmidt (2014) agreed that records help organizations in planning for their day to day activities.

Records retention in organization has to do with keeping records for period of time in an Organization. Organizations generate and receive different types of records. Aduku (2014) asserted that records that are found in the organization are categorized into short lived and long lived ones. Records that have short life span are not retained by the organization that generates or receive such records. While records that have long life span are retained by organization because of their values which include administrative, historical, legal, land research values. For an organization to retain its records with long life span records retention schedule must be used as a guide.

There are different types of records created and received by the Organizations. These include receipts, minutes of meetings; contract agreement letters, staff transfer records, records of staff annual leave, maternity leave records to mention but few. Some of these records are short- lived, while some of them are retained by the organization for a long period of time. For example, records such as receipt, invitation cards, bulletins etc. are characterized as short-lived records usually stay in the organization for two to five years depending on the organization's Records Retention guide. Palomino and Vancil (2012) maintained that Organizations' records such as audit reports, fixed asset purchase records, patent/trade mark, etc. are retained for a long period of time usually above thirty five years.

However, before the retention of records for a long period of time, such records must pass an evaluation exercise using a guide called records retention schedule (Smith et al. 2002).Records retention schedule is a tool that guides an Organization in retaining its records. This schedule describes the time when a particular record is to be retained by an organization and how such records will be retained. This is because not all the records generated in the organization are needed for future reference Adikwu, (2007).

2.6 Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

This theory was founded by the United States national archives and records administration in 2003. The theory explains how large amount of records will be grouped into series or buckets in such a way that records that have similar characteristics will be placed together for easy retrieval and use (Cisco, 2008; Cisco, 2008). The resultant group of similar records that contain multiples of such records is called "Big Bucket". Another interpretation of Big Bucket in the context of records management is called record series. The essence of grouping similar records into one bucket or series containing multiple numbers of the same records is for the permanent retention of such records. Retention of records in any organization is expected to be guided by a tool. This tool is called record retention policy. Aduku and Olugbeja (2012) established that records retention policy is a tool that guides records disposal. Records disposal is an exercise involving the judging of the value of the Records. These values include historical, Administrative, informational, fiscal, and evidential ones .At the end of the exercise ,some Records that are judged to have permanent value will be retained while other records that do not have a permanent value will be destroyed.

Similarly, Foscarini, (2009) Taiwo et al., (2011) believe that before record retention takes place, the record must past a particular judgment. This judgment is called record appraisal where the value of the record will be determined before destroying or retaining of such records.

2.7 The Principles of Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

Big bucket records retention theory explains how records are retained in the organization as follows;

1. Principles of records identification
2. Principles of records organization

3. Principles of legal adherence
4. Principle of records period assigning

Principle of Records Identification

This principle discusses the type of records generated in a particular organization Cisco (2012). In any organization, records are generated in either printed or electronic format. Both printed and electronic records need to be retained permanently based on the need of that organization. Adikwu (2014) reported that records that are retained for a particular period of time in the organization are generated during the transaction of businesses in that organization. As a result of that, some records need to be retained for future reference.

Principle of Records Organization

This principle shows that records in any organization are organized for easy retrieval. After identifying group of records to be retained in the organization, the next thing is the organization of such records. United States National Archives and Records Management (2014) reported that organization of records as part of records keeping ensures easy retrieval of such records. During organization of the records activities such as sorting, classifying, arrangement and filling are carried out. These activities serve as the technical aspects or components without which records cannot be organized.

Principle of Legal Adherence

This principle discusses the strict adherence of the laws of the organization concerning records retention. Every organization has laws that guide the activities in such organization. Brock (2010) asserted that records in any organization are retained based on the regulations of that organization with respect to such records created in that organization. In the same vein, university of Vermont Records Retention Policy (2012) established that records in every

department in the organization is retained through following the regulations that are stated in the policy document of that organization concerning records retention.

Principle of Record Period Assigning

This principle shows that each record created in the organization should be assigned period of retention. Retention period has to do with the time of records retention assigned to such a record. Records that are adjudged for a particular retention period, receive their retention period. This is because the time assigned to such records makes it easier for the retriever during retrieval of such records.

2.8 Previous Studies That Adopted Big Bucket Records Retention Theory

A study conducted by Joseph Debowski, and Goldschmidt (2014) titled Paradigm shifts in record keeping responsibilities: Implications for Iso15489's Implementation, adopted the theory. The study stated that the international standards for records management, ISO 15489 has been widely accepted as an influential and critical set of principles and guidelines that ensure records management (RM) systems are fit for purpose. The research questions were what are the techniques used in record keeping? And what standards are in place for records keeping? The study used qualitative methodology; the case study method was used as the instrument for content analysis. The finding is that a new technique for records keeping existed and there is gradual change from old method of record keeping to the modern one. The study recommended that strict adherence to the ISO15489 should be done and the existing techniques of record keeping should be improved through adopting regular techniques.

A study conducted by Kyobe, Molai, and Salie, (2009) titled Investigating Electronic Records management and Compliance with Regulatory Requirements in a South African University adopted the big bucket theory. The study highlighted that electronic records

management has become an essential business activity and an element of compliance with regulation in many countries. The research questions asked were: How electronic records were managed? What is the extent of compliance with regulatory requirements? The methodology adopted was the quantitative method used and survey, questionnaire adopted. The finding of the study showed that there was poor management of electronic records.

A research was conducted by Cisco (2008) titled Big buckets for simplifying records retention schedules. The study's research questions were how does the big bucket theory being applied in record retention exercise? How is the big bucket applied to electronic records? The methodology used was quantitative, the method used was survey, the instrument used was questionnaire. The finding of the study revealed that, the big bucket theory facilitates records retention, and it is found out that electronic records are best retained using big bucket theory as a guide. The recommendations of the study showed that for an organization to effectively retain its records, the use of the big bucket theory is a must. Also it is recommended that electronic records should be retained using big bucket theory as a guide.

A research conducted by Cisco (2013) titled Streamline Retention with the Big Bucket approach adopted the big bucket theory: The study highlighted that records generated in the organization have some values, which include legal, administrative, fiscal, historical, evidential and research values. Research question used was: What types of records are retained using big bucket theory? The methodology used was qualitative, the method used was case study, the instrument was interview, the findings of the study revealed that big bucket theory helps in streamlining organization records, the types of records generated in the organization needed to be retained using big bucket theory as a guide. The study recommended that for organization's

records to be streamlined, big bucket theory is needed and financial, legal, business records need to be retained using big bucket theory as a guide.

Harris (2008) carried out a research on Adapting Retention Schedule to Electronic Records: The Big Bucket Theory. The research introduced that records retention in the organization ensures regulatory compliance in the organization. The research question used were what are Big bucket Categories? How many records series does your current retention schedule have? The methodology used was quantitative, the method used was survey, the instrument used was questionnaire. The findings of the study reported that the organizations large record series were not retained properly, the categories that made up the big bucket were not up to the records retention standards. The study recommended that for organization's records categories to be retained properly, the big bucket theory must be adopted and the organization's records series should be selected based on record retention standards.

A research conducted by National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) (2012) with the title Managing Government Records Directive' adopted the big bucket theory. The introduction of the study was that government record keeping practices determine the success of administration of that government. The research question raised was: how are government records managed permanently? The methodology used was quantitative, the method used was survey. The instrument used was questionnaire. The finding of the study showed that government records are not managed effectively, the study recommended the use of retention schedule for effective retention government records.

McLeod (2012) conducted a study with a title 'On Being Part of the Solution, not the Problem: Taking a proportionate Approach to managing Records' used the big bucket theory. The introduction of the study was that the cloud is our information and records future; the

basement of our information and records legacy. The research question was: what are the future path way strategies for managing records? The methodology used was qualitative, the method used was case study, the instrument used was interview. The finding of the study showed that the traditional method of record management was not efficient and it recommended that cloud technology should be incorporated for effective records management.

Brock (2012) carried out a research titled Federal Electronic Records Management with the introduction of the Association of Records Managers and Administration (ARMA) recently developed principles- based approach to records management emphasizing the use of universal accepted principles of records management. The research questions asked were: why are electronic records difficult to manage? What are the technologies used in managing electronic records? What are the challenges encountered during managing electronic records? The methodology used was qualitative, the method used was case study, the instrument used was interview. The findings of the study revealed that electronic records are not managed effectively, there were few technologies known and used by electronic records manager and lack of expertise was reported as a challenge facing electronic records managers. The study recommended that electronic should be managed using retention guide, more technologies for electronic records keeping should be used and training and re-training of records managers is needed.

Ashley and Cisco (2014) carried out a study with a title M08516- Less is More: How to apply Big Bucket Theory to retention schedule simplification. The study highlighted that retention schedule provides a structured framework for identifying an organization's official records, documenting those records using policies of such organization. The research question of the study was what are the different retention periods in use today? What current strategies are available in the organization? What are the systems used in creating and storing records in the

organization? The methodology used for this research was quantitative, the method used was survey. The research instrument used was questionnaire. The finding of this research was that big bucket theory was not used in many organizations hence their records retention system was poor. The study recommended that for organizations records to be retained properly big bucket theory needs to be adopted as a guide.

William (1997) carried out a study on research issues in records management theory, modeling and practice with the introduction as follows; there is the need for generic models of records classification, records filing, retrieved and retention scheduling for managing records in the organization. The research question asked was: Can logical theories of archive and record management concepts be formulated within the context of set theory? The methodology used was qualitative, the method used was case study, the instrument for data collection used was interview. The finding of the study showed that different organizations need different models as well as theories for retaining their records. The study recommended that for the records generated in various organizations to be retained effectively records retention models and theories are needed.

2.9 Application of Big Bucket Records Retention Theory in the Retention of Organization Records

Big bucket records retention theory is applied in records retention in an organization as follows:

In every organization, records are being created or received on daily basis. These records are made up of financial records, production records (in terms of goods production organization), personnel records, reports of duties, minutes of meetings, records of achievement etc. Some of these records need to be retained permanently.

For these records to be retained, they should first be identified. Identification here means knowing the type of the records to be retained. This is because the records created or received are many. To retain the records identified from different types of records, the principle of identification of records needs to be applied. Records that are essential to the continuation of the operations in the organization are identified because of their importance. These records include legal records, financial records, records of sales administrators' achievement in the organization, records of disasters that happened in the organization, United States Environment Agency Vital Records (2012) Also, the principle of identification of records can be applied to identify records that are created in the midst of many records that are not all vital to the operations of the organization. The University of Washington Records Management Services (2014) reported that records in the organization are identified using certain criteria in order to be retained permanently in the organization. Records are identified in the organization before permanent retention using the policy of records management of that organization as a guide.

The principle of records organization of Big Bucket Theory can be applied in records retention because this principle shows that records are retained in an organized manner. The University of Wisconsin (2014) maintained that records are organized in the organization through filing and arranging of such records for easy retrieval. This means that for records to be retrieved in an easy way, proper organization of such records is needed. This organization is done by experts in the record management discipline.

Similarly, Livestrong (2014) asserted that for an organization to organize its records in an efficient and effective way, three ways need to be followed. These ways are; collecting all the important records of the organization, storage of such records and making a list of all the records organized for easy retrieval. Important records in this case include personnel records, records of

insurance policies, receipt and other bargaining records, security records, health issues records, personnel payment records etc. these records should be organized and kept in a safe place where only individuals that are permitted will have an access to such records. This is because provision of access to the organized records by everybody leads to disorganization of such records which in turn leads to the wastage of time when such records are to be accessed.

Principles of legal adherence is applied in records retention in such a way that before records are retained in the organization, there must be a legal issue backing such retention of the records. This principle holds that when an organization is to retain its records for permanent use, certain laws and regulations affecting records retention of that organization have to be followed strictly. Cisco (2008) believed that after identifying type of records to be retained in the organization and organizing such records, the next thing is the consideration of existing laws of that organization concerning records retention. These laws tell the records manager who is involved in records appraisal what, how and why records are to be retained.

After consulting laws guiding records retention, the next thing is the retention proper. During retention of the records, technical activities will be carried out on the retained records on a regular basis. These activities include preservation, conservation, lamination, encapsulation etc. the important of apply these activities on records to be retained, is that any record that is kept for permanent use must be protected both physically and in intellectual content part. All these are carried out in order to make sure that the record life span of the records is prolonged because of future references.

When appraisal of the records has been done, the records that are adjudged for permanent preservation should be assigned an identification sign that shows that this particular record is kept permanently. Texas State Library and Archives Commission (2014) reported that for

records to be retained, such records will be assigned retention codes. These codes help in the identification of the records to be retained.

Also, records codes can be in different forms. This is depending on the policy of the organization that wants to retain the records. Some organizations policies show that letters of the alphabet should be used. While some organizations use numbers such as Arabic or roman numbers, some use the combination of letters and numbers. This system is called alpha numerical.

2.10 Summary of the Review

This chapter reviewed some of the previous studies that adopted big bucket records retention theory. Ten previous studies were reviewed in the paper. Half of these studies adopted qualitative research methodology and the other part adopted quantitative research methodology. Most of the findings of the previous studies reviewed in this chapter showed that records in many organizations are poorly managed. While other aspects of the literature reviewed in this chapter focused on the management of both print and electronic records and did not specifically cover records retention in organizations, hence this study covered the aspect of records retention in the Organization.

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CHAPTER THREE

REASEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents research methodology adopted for the study, the population of the study, sample and sampling technique, instrument for data collection, procedure for data collection, and procedure for data analysis.

3.2 Research Method adopted for the study

The research method adopted for this study was qualitative. The reason is that it is concerned with in depth understanding of underlying reasons and motivation for an action and establishes how people interpret their experiences and the world around them.

The research design adopted for the study was case study. It encapsulates issues relating to opinion, perception and views of individuals on a particular subject matter. It enables the researcher to study a problem in its natural form and because the respondents of this study are individuals with live experience about pthe issue under investigation, their eye witness and participation information are invaluable to the research. Also, the adoption of the design was additionally informed by the direction of the research (Crowe et al., 2011).

3.3 Population of the Study

Population is a defined collection of individuals or objects known to have similar characteristics and the entire entity of interest to the researcher (Ifidon and Ifidon; 2007) The population of this study were the Record Officers in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Their total population was six (6). This information was obtained from the Management Information System (MIS) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (2015).

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling is defined as selecting a proportion subset (Rudolph; 2002).In qualitative researches, samples are not chosen to be statistically representative of the population, they are chosen for a purpose and all samples in qualitative research have some features in common (Smith and Washburn). The sample sizes are often small but generally are predetermined, and selection is sequential, interleaved with data collection and analysis.

The entire Record Officers in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria were used for this study. This is because the population is small. Bernard (2012) stated that if the population of the study in research is less than two hundred (200), the entire members of that population can be used.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used in collecting data for this research was interview. The reason why the researcher adopted interview was according to Gwaltney (2012) that it allows an interviewer to have an in depth dialogue with the interviewee, enabling the researcher to collect more useful data from the respondents Pathaks, (2012).Also, the interview is in form of individual face-to face interview.

Face-to face interview allows the researcher to collect detailed information from the respondents. Langer (2011) stated that the open-ended questions allow the respondents to give their own thinking about the questions of the research. This is why open ended question was used. Tape recorder and audio cassettes were used during the interview. Jacob (2012) maintained that tape recorder and audio enable the research to remember all the responses of the interviewee after the interview through playing and re-playing of the audio cassette using tape recorder. The interview was guided by the interview guide. This was because the researcher found it easy to

ask question systematically from one to the other (Smith; 2013). The interview guide contained four main research questions. This is because the researcher was more comfortable to handlng four research questions. And the sub-questions of the main research question provide detail information about the main research questions Goldman,(2014).The main research questions were numbered using roman numbers. This was because the reader found it easy to differentiate between main research question and sub-research questions. The interview guide was self-developed by the researcher. Because it is difficult to find out the interview guide that is exactly match the problem as well as the research questions that the researcher is interested. The researcher used memo to jot down important responses of the interviewee.

Noy (2013) showed that using memo to jot down important responses of the interview serves as backup in case if the recording device such as audio cassette that the researcher used is missing. This is why memo is used to jot down important responses of the interviewee.

3.6 Procedure for Data Collection

The researcher informed the respondents of the interview on the purpose of the research. This was because each individual that was selected for the interview needed to be aware of the purpose of the research before the interview date.

On the interview date, researcher introduced herself to each individual that participated in the interview before the interview started. In other to enable each individual that participated in the interview took the interview serious. The researcher alone carried out the interview. This is because the samples of the researcher may need to interview the respondents again as a result of the first interview in order to clarify the question of the first interview

According to Rahimiam (2013) the researcher makes sure that the starting and ending times of the interview were known. Because the researcher showed the duration of each

interview during the final research reporting. Before the interview date, each selected individual that participate in the interview are asked to choose the time and place for the interview within the time frame in which the interview have been completed that is two days. This is because the researcher will not want to interfere with the schedules of each respondent. At the end of the interview, the researcher said thank you to each individual that participated in the interview. This was because to make each respondent happy by thanking him or her at the end of the interview

3.7 Procedure for Data Analysis

The researcher using thematic analysis transcribed and coded the responses collected from each respondent. Transcribing the responses of each respondent allowed the researcher to interpret each respondent's words during the analysis of data Markle; (2011). The reason why code was used during data analysis was that, long responses from each respondent were summarized using a single word of phrase without changing its meaning Ford, (2014). Different columns were used to present each of the research question, it's responses, open code, code, category and sub-category in an organized manner where the first column carried letters such as A, B, and C to represent the five respondents used for the research, the fifth column carried code of each research question, the sixth column carried the category of each research questions. The seventh column carried sub-category of each research question. All were done in order to reach the last column of each research question known as theme or construction of the theory used as a guide for the research. Letters such as A, B, and C were used in the first column of each of the five letters represented to the five respondents that were used to collect data for the research.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected for the study. The data were analyzed and discussed in relation to the research questions raised in line with the thematic qualitative data analysis. Two among the four principles of big bucket records retention theory which are: principle of Identification and principle of period assigning were used as the coding category. The chapter is divided under the following sub-heading:

4.2 Response Rate

4.3 Demographic Information

4.4 Data Analysis

4.2 Response Rate

The entire records offices of the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria were targeted for the study. The total number of the staff was 6(100%) out of which only 5(100%) of them were reached for the study. The high response rate was due to the fact that the researcher informed the respondents about the interview before the day it was carried out. Since the high response rate was achieved, the implication here is that adequate, reliable and detailed information from the respondents were also collected. This in turn makes the findings of the research relied on as established by Ibrahim, (2013).

4.3 Demographic information

The breakdown of gender of the respondents were four (4) males and one (1) female, with working experience of 1 to 21years .The highest qualifications were Diploma in public administration and the secondary school leaving certificate (SSCE).However, for confidential

purpose which the research of course supported, the names of the respondents was retained. It can be deduced that, the respondents are not professionally recognized record officers.

4.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of data was based on the narration of themes that emerged from interviews which lasted for 30min 29 seconds. This analysis is a presentation on records retention in Ahmadu Bello University Registry. The section that follows was a presentation of themes that emerged from the interviews .The emergent themes were highlighted with summarized quotes and excerpts taken from the interview. And then a discussion of the themes were pertinent quotes from the literature that follows.

4.4.1 Types of Records generated in Ahmadu Bello University Registry

Understanding the types of records generated will give a clear knowledge of their existence and their peculiarity to the university's registry .From the semi-structured interview conducted, the types of records generated in Ahmadu Bello University registry include two major categories, staff records with sub categories of staff personal records, Visiting appointment and sabbatical records and other records, with sub categories of other records mail, Daily record, Minutes meetings .etc. From the categories that emerged from the analysis of the narrative, Staff constituted the majority as indicated by one of the respondent.

> *"We deal with staff records"*

These records were appointment letters given to employees who were freshly taking up job with the University .On note two respondent said:

> " *we generated mostly employees when they are employing new staff"*
> *"in terms of new appointment…"*

It can be understood that the Ahmadu Bello University Registry is concerned with staff records, Minutes of meetings and daily records. This finding contradicted that of Poscarini (2009) and Swartz (2009) who indicated that the registry generate many records including financial records, administrative records among others. The implication of this finding is that staff records are the most important among other records such as contract award records, donations records, procurements records among others generated in the Registry section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. However, the least of the finding indicated that, the types of records generated in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, were contract award records, donations records, procurements records among others.

Other records generated, by one respondent said;

"mails for the next of kin"

Similarly, another respondent acknowledged:

"mostly we generate that of ahh mails received"

Daily records are about daily activities surrounding discharge of university functions. They emanate as a result of top-bottom and line communication or transaction between staff and their offices. For example a respondent told the researcher that his job includes maintenance of daily records in that he said:

"…and day to day records"

Sabbatical is a period of leave from work for research, study, or travel or often with pay and usually granted to college or university professors every seven years. Staff of the University does embark on it for the said purpose. On the same hand, the University also accommodates records of visiting lecturers from another university to augment shortage of expertise and

manpower. Records relating to minutes of management meetings are also maintained by the Registry Section of the University. These, two respondents revealed that:

> *"…We deal with staff records and sabbatical leave and visiting appointment from outside people that came from other university to Ahmadu Bello University for visit…"*

And

> *"…then minutes of meetings"*

Personal staff records are records on additional qualifications obtained from further studies, change of name, birth, next of kin as well as association and professional papers. It simply comprises of additional records that are relevant to staff. The responses gotten from this are captured below:

> *"personal records of the staff"*

And

> *"mails for the next of kin"*

Senior staff records are records pertaining information about senior employees of the university. The senior employees include teaching and non-teaching. On this note a respondent said that he mostly generate senior staff records. Excerpt:

> *"I only generate senior staff records right from 6 upward"*

4.4.2 Types of Periods Assigned to Records in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

Assignment of periods to records is an in-house-tradition that has to do with the time a records is to be kept in the Registry after its active period before it is moved to the Archive or disposal. The distinction between periods assigned to records and records retention schedule is that the former is done by non-records managers (qualified) to address immediate local needs and has no relationship with standards, therefore suffers from application limitation. Were as the

later is designed by experts in the field of records management and has been tested and accepted globally as a standard in records management practices.

On the part of interview question on types of periods assigned to records in the registry, it was found out that the periods assigned to the records were time of staff employment to their retirement and their years of service. This is evident that this finding was obtained from the responses of the five respondents. This finding aligned with the submission of Cisco (2008) who established that staff records in the organization are retained through the active period of service of the staff. This implies that none of the records kept in the registry is retained permanently .Except daily records and Minutes of meeting that are retained permanently. And this may lead to the acquisition of full information about the history of the service period of the staff after their death for reasons suchl as post-humors recognition, writing of staff legacies after their death among others. The discussion of this finding, found out that the periods assigned to records in the Ahmadu Bello University Registry was tributary to some of the challenges the Registry face as a section of human resource control which would be subsequently discussed. The periods assigned of course because is not based on standard. For example when the respondents were asked question on the type of periods they assigned to records, one of the respondents stated that:

> *"normally we are not given anything called period we keep the files and give what the management need to and on what action taken on a records in past we normally used to find it and pass it to them (management)"*

In order to adequately x-ray the respondents' responses sub-categories were emerged from their responses. These are discussed below:

Staff Retirement: is a point of completion of circle of job. whereby an employee after they have put in number of years in active service naturally retires or withdraws according to the dictate of system in place. The Nigerian civil service code dictates that staff or employee be

retired when they attained designated years of service or age. In line with this, three respondents said that the periods they assigned to staff records are according to staff retirement period. Excerpt:

> *"records are kept up to the time a staff retires or dies and he applies for all his entitlements and their files are normally sent to Archives. Records are normally kept for as long as staff are still in service up to the time of retirement"*
> *"the only time that we can remove your records from our office here is when you retired and we remove your records to the Archive"*
> *"…The records will be here with us till retirement, till the staff retired before we can fold it and put it aside because as far as the staff is still in the university in service we don't know there will be any problem somewhere a superior officer or head of department will like to see the file, then we will issue the file to the head of department and return when he finish…"*

The years of service in terms of number was also captured, one method of assigning periods to staff records. one respondent stated thus:

> *"files will be with us for at least 35 years when the staff will retire from service that is the period of retention with us then we move it out to another side again but to us the retention is not more 35 years but now government have reviewed the guideline to 65 years of Age"*
> *This is obvious that…*

4.4.3 Strategies of records retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

The researcher sought to find out the strategies for records retention schedule in the Registry section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria .Form the analysis of narratives, two strategies were identified, the period of active service and permanent retention of records. For example, one respondent said.

"we don't have retention schedule of records in the registry"

and another respondents said

> *"records are kept up to the time a staff retires or dies and then applies for all his entitlements and we send the records to archives"* .

Notably another response among the responses which was unclear probably the respondent does not understand what retention schedule is:

> *"nooo.. when recruitment officer receive approval letter for appointment.*

Another respondent also said:

> *"Daily records and minute of meetings are retained permanently in the section."*

This finding contradicts. The Records Management Handbook (2008).Department of General Service Office of State Publishing California. Retrieved on, 18th /07/2016.Reported that records retention schedule is a list of all the title of the records series, length of time each document of a records were retained as an active record, the reason of its retention (administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical value) and scheduling process is also a policy document that is created by record director and department the records is used by and the disposition agreed by the retention committee.

The respondent revealed their contentment with the periods they assigned to staff records due to reasons of quick retrieval and ease. One major category emerged from this. It was:

"Satisfactory?

The satisfaction expressed by the respondents convinced the researcher that things were alright with the way and manner they discharge their job even though the researcher was aware of inappropriateness. However, their satisfaction was to be debunked when some of the

difficulties they encounter in thleir job were later linked to periods they assigned to staff records. When they were asked if they were satisfied with the periods, they all echoed yes we are in their languages but outstanding were the response of this respondent because he stated reason why he is satisfied.

Excerpt:

> *"yes am satisfied because sometimes a need will arise for individual staff to send for another information when files are sent to Archives immediately at times we normally suffer and information will not be gotten as early as possible..."*

4.4.4 Challenges of Record Retention Periods Assigned to Records in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria

Understanding the challenges posed by record retention periods assigned to staff records in Ahmadu Bello University Registry reveals the under lying issues surrounding records keeping practices in that section. In understanding the challenges one major category and three emergent sub-categories emerged. They were;

1. Tracing Staff Records
    i. Compliance
    ii. Misaddress
    iii. Indication of Personnel number

Tracing Staff Records

Record tracing is one of the routine duties of record officers in the Registry. This is because decisions are taken about staff requests for one form of program or the other, for

benefits, transfer, dismissal, disciplinary panel e.t.c. These functions cannot be achieved without referring to staff records because it is a unit of information. Good record tracing practice is predicated upon adherence to standard records retention schedule. In this regard two respondents disclosed that they had challenge with tracing staff records. Excerpt:

> *"tracing records at times is untraceable and because of the challenge now we keep records so that when the need arise we won't suffer not tracing it."*

The above finding related with those of Brock (2010) and Odeyemi et al. (2011) who reported that challenges of tracing the records among others are commonly found in organizations. The implication of this finding is that records in the registry section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria are not properly kept hence the challenge of tracing such records when the need arises.

Keeping records and supplying them when they are requested implies that they are kept in an unprofessional manner and the Registry is often loaded with records that are supposed, if there is standard records retention schedule be kept in an Archive or in other form that will indicate organization and ease of tracing and retrieval. This was why the respondent said further:

> "*for example a staff who retires for over ten years may be his old pension records, some people retire before the age of sixty (60) so they are not entitled to pension until when they reach such years. So after the completion of sixty (60) years they will come apply to be placed on pension, so if you don't have that records that request cannot be traced because all the records like the bursary records will not serve only the registry records will serve to get all the information to confirm whether the person is entitled to such request"*

No doubt because there is no standard followed in staff records keeping policy in the Registry regarding staff that transferred their service to another institution accounted for why the respondent expressed further that:

"staff transfer from A.B.U to another organization who have not served for 35 years or 60 years by Age will go to another university continue his service after when he's due for retirement the organization he transferred to will come back for the staff records so due to long time stay of the staff records it will be difficult to locate or trace"

The second respondent disclosed that staff letters requesting some information from their files often stay without being traced. Excerpt:

"Sometimes a letter will stay here for a long time without tracing the file."

Compliance

Abiding by staff records use is important as it will ensure and secure staff records knowing that they are private materials of staff. The respondents told the researcher that most times the principal officers of the institution will ask for staff records file and fail to return them after use which sometimes takes months leaving them with no option but to remain silent as they are the bosses. This respondent has this to say:

"…they don't listen to us when we say that they should take action on all the files and send it and return for further action"

Misaddress

This has to do with letters written to the Registry by staff of the University without correct and adequate addressing. One of the respondents stated thus,

"some people they will not even put their Department, they will just write the application and put their name and we have many names are the same so we are facing challenges in that aspect and we have been complaining that the management should look onto it"

Another respondent had this to say on the issue. Excerpt:

"the challenges are if a staff was employed in registry department or faculty of education then after some years he was transfer from faculty of education to institute of

education so instead of the staff to address himself from faculty of education his now addressing himself in ehhh institute of education so by the time that they send for us to look for his file we find problem because the address stated there is not the exact address."

Indication of Personnel number

The personnel number commonly referred to as P. number is an identification number issued to employees of the university. This number system of identifying staff of the institution is essential because it avert coincidence of double entry and conflict of names. This is featured in the interview response in that it was revealed that some staff of the university gave them headache when they did not indicate their P. number on their letters. Excerpt:

"we have P number we have JP number, if the JP number is not correct we face problem to get that file and there some files the P and JP number are corresponding the same and sometimes you see the P number but different staffs but the same number that one too is a challenge for us…"

4.4.5 How will the Big Bucket Theory Explain Record Retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?

From the findings of the study, the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria., generates these type of staff records and other records as exemplified by the categories in the analysis of the research question one (1) These categories do not mean they are organized as such .Big bucket theory proposes that records of the same types, series and the same content should be organized into bucket for easy retrieval, use and digitization in the registry. However, records were haphazardly organized.

The finding of this study on period assigned to records in the registry section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria revealed that records were only retained for active period of service (staff)

and permanently for other records. But big bucket record retention theory stated that each records that is created in an organization should assigned period of retention .Retention period has to do with the time of record retention is assigned to such records .This is because the time assigned to such records makes it easier when retrieval of records and disposal.

The study sought to understand the strategies of record retention in Registry section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. The responses obtained were also period of active period and permanent retention of records .The big bucket theory stated that select the categories carefully files to a particular event or files that are related to the same activities or required specific service for example can share a bucket and received the same retention period in that organization.

Analysis of the challenges of records retention in the Registry section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, revealed that tracing of staff records constitutes the major problem. The big bucket theory stipulated that records of the same type ,series and categories should be grouped together into a bucket.

Meanwhile, if the bucket in this situation is staff records and if the period assigned for their retention is the same the challenge will persist. Since from the finding, the tracing of staff records on transfer, staff retirement records and day to day activities on staff records will be difficult .The bucket should be split into staff retirement bucket, Staff transfers bucket and Staff day to day activity bucket. That is way different periods are assigned for their retention.

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CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the summary, conclusion and recommendations of this study. The chapter was divided under the following sub-headings:

5.2 Summary of the Study

5.3 Summary of the Major Findings

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

5.5 Conclusion

5.6 Recommendations

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

5.2 Summary of the Study

The objective of this study was to explore the records retention strategies in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria .In this study, four (4) research questions were formulated. Some of the research questions were: what types of Records are generated in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria? What type of periods is assigned to records in the Registry Section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria? The research design adopted was qualitative. The population of the study was records offices working in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. They were six (6) in number. Five (5) out of the total population of the respondents were successfully interviewed. The data collected from the research questions were analyzed using thematic data analysis. The analysis was done by categorizing, coding, teeming and reporting the number of each case of the interview.

5.3 Summary of the Major Findings

Based on the data collected and analyzed for this study, the following were the major findings.

1. The types of records generated in Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria are personal staff records, Staff Sabbatical and visiting files, Minutes of the meeting, Mails, New appointment, Mails and Daily Records. Staff records were the records that are mainly generated.
2. The type of period assigned to records in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria a period of active service (70years for academic staff and 65years for non-academic) and permanent retention of records.
3. The strategies for records retention in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria are permanent retention strategy and periods of Active service strategy. No retention schedule strategy is available.
4. The challenges of periods assigned to records in the Registry Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria were tracing of staff records, Compliance, Misaddress and Indication of numbers.

5.4 Contribution to Knowledge

1. The study uncovered shortage in the strategies used in handling of staff records which gave raise to challenges in the prompt tracing of staff records compliance in the use, and misaddress.
2. The study proposed a model on records retention schedule for the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for future administrative and historical evidence (see appendix 1).

5.5 Conclusion

Discussion and findings of the study revealed the existing gap in the management of staff records in the Registry of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria are not in line with the best practice obtainable elsewhere in the domain of records management .

The gaps indentified were the absence of standard records retention schedules to guide the significant aspect of records life cycle. This subsequently gave birth to challenges the Registry faces in the prompt tracing of staff records. Furthermore, the researcher also uncovered the types of records generated to be insufficient as it does not given room for expansive classification and identification of records when the need arises

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Considering the volumes of records in the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Records of the same types, series and the same content should be organized into a bucket for easy retrieval, use and digitization. Aside staff records, other records such as general and administrative records , finance payroll and finance accounts receivable, university administration to mention but a few should be generated and preserved in the records office of the registry department of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria as this will ensure easy retrieval and use of such records when the need arises.
2. Periods assigned to records in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria should be based on the nature and value of the records to the university not only throughout active service of a staff and permanent retention of other records for future

administrative activities and historical evidence.(See appendix 1 for the proposed record retention schedule by the researcher).

3. There is need to employ record retention schedule as a guide in retaining records, so that the retention period can be assigned to their file or records that have particular events or activities will receive the period retention in the Organization.
4. In order to address the challenges faced in the Registry department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria concerning record retention, a records retention schedule should be adopted as a guide. (See Appendix 1)

5.7 Suggestions for Further Study

The following are suggested for possible further studies:

1. Assessment of Record Retention Strategies in the Faculties in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
2. Assessment of Records Retention Strategies in the Institutes and Research Centres of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

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APPENDIX I

Proposed retention schedule models for the registry section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria

Area	Examples	Suggested Retention Period
Employee records	Benefit plans	Permanent
	Employee files (ex-employees)	7years
	Employment applications	
	Employment taxes	3years
	Payroll records	7years
	Pension/profit sharing plans	7years
		Permanent
Accounting Records	Accounts Payable	7years
	Accounts Receivable	7years
	Audit Reports	Permanent
	Chart of Accounts	Permanent
	Depreciation Schedules	Permanent
	Expense Records	7years
	Financial Statements (Annual)	Permanent
	Fixed Asset Purchases	
	General Ledger	Permanent
	Inventory Records	Permanent
	Loan Payment Schedules	7years
	Purchase orders (1 Copy)	7years
	Sales Records	7years
	Tax Return	7years
		Permanent
General and Administrative	Administrative materials, personal files, meeting agenda, project notes, proposals, announcements (Bulletins), correspondence.	1-2years
Finance Payroll	Payroll registers, multi-state payroll deductions, deduction balances, tax balances	Permanent
Finance Accounts Payables	Client payments, A/R notes, deposits, bank statements	7years
Work-papers and Reports	Permanent files, work-papers	7 to 10years
Treasury and cash management	Treasury daily reports, lockbox, meal and entertainment analysis, tax returns	7years

Tax Reporting	Statutory tax filings, cash accruals, meal and entertainment analysis, tax returns	10years to permanent
Quality and Risk Management	Client communications, change acceptante, indépendance and conflict check	7years
Human Resources	Pre-employment evaluations, self-assessments, ethic compliance	4years Note: Industry specific or regulatory may require longer retention period, i.e. OSHA up to 30years

APPENDIX II
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Department of Library and Information Science,
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Dear Respondent,

I am a master student of the above named department carrying out a research titled assessment of records retention strategies in registry section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. I need information from you to be able to carry out this research. This information will be used purposely for this research.

Thank you.

NEME……..

RESPONDENTS PERSONAL INFORMATION……

GENDER……..

QUALIFICATION(S)……

……

POSITION IN THE REGISTRY…….

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What types of Records are generated in Registry Section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
    a. Can you tell me the types of records you generate in your registry?
    b. How do you generate these records?

2. What types of periods are assigned to records in Registry Section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria?
    a. Please tell me the types of periods assign to records your office?
    b. Are you satisfied with such retention periods assign to the generated records?
3. What are the strategies used in records retention in Registry section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria?
    a. Do you use retention schedule in your registry?
    b. If yes, can you tell me the benefit you drive from it?
    c. Do you review your retention schedule?
    d. If yes, how often do you review it?
4. What are the challenges of records retention in Registry Section of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
    a. Do you face any challenge in the retention of records in your registry?
    b. What are those challenges you face in the retention of records in your registry?

Thank you for your time.

Tanimu Hussaina,
The Researcher

APPENDIX III

CATEGORY CLASSIFICATION

	Category	Sub-category	Collapsed
R1	Staff Records:	Files Mails New appointment Daily records Sabbatical leave Visiting appointment Minutes of meeting	Mails New appointment Daily records Sabbatical Visiting appointment Minutes of meeting Personal staff records Senior staff records
	Vice chancellor grants Approval:	Direct approval Advertisement Number generation Mail approval	Number generation File
	Registrar/registry	Next of kin External mails from staff	
R2	Retention Schedule		
R3	Retention period assignment	Staff retirement Entitlements Age/years of service	
	Satisfaction		
R4	Staff Records Tracing	Records tracing Compliance Misaddress Personnel number	

APPENDIX IV

CODES

Code A	Code B
Absence of retention period	Satisfied
Admitted there is challenge	Untraceable records
Admitted there is challenge to records retention	Non compliance
Instruction	Uncleared response
New staff/routine records	Senior staff records
Non compliance	
Personnel or staff records	Personnel records of staff
Personnel records of staff	Vice chancellor grant direct and indirect approval for creation of staff records
Records are kept within staff active service with the University	Satisfied with periods assigned to records due to timely response to request
	Personnel or staff records
	new staff/routine records
	Staff records
Satisfied	Admitted there is challenge to records retention
Satisfied with periods assigned to records due to timely response to request	Admitted there is challenge
Senior staff records	Instruction
There is no retention schedule for records	Records are kept within staff active service with the University
Uncleared response	Absence of retention period
Untraceable records	
Vice chancellor grant direct and indirect approval for creation of staff records	There is no retention schedule for records

APPENDIX V

GROUP CODES

]	Group 1	Group 2	Similarity
1	no problem	Records kept for period of staff active service	1
2	Misaddress	Node 1	1
3	Mails	Next of kin	1
4	Losing job	Satisfied	1
5	Losing files	Node 4	1
6	General records	Mails received	1
7	External request	Node 6	1
8	Employees Records	Node 6	1
9	Challenges	Node 2	1
10	Node 1	Node 5	1
11	Absence of records retention schedule	Node 8	1
12	Node 11	Node 7	1
13	Node 12	Node 9	0.188
14	Node 11	Node 10	0
15	Node 14	Node 14	0

APPENDIX VI

CODES BY DESCRIPTION

Code	Description
Employees Records	General staff records
General records	Staff records, files, mails and minutes of meetings
Next of kin	Mails for next of kin
Mails received	Records generated most in this office were mostly staff mails
Mails	Next of kin mails received from the registry in three copies
External request	Mails were received from staff which will be taken to the registrar for approval and further processing
Absence of records retention schedule	
Records kept for period of staff active service	Staff records remain with the registry staff until staff retirement periods
Absence of records retention	No records retention schedule
Active service	Staff records are kept for atleast 35 years
No problem	Indicated absence of problem with periods staff records stay with them(staff)
Satisfied	Indicated absence of problem with periods assigned to staff records
Challenges	Problems of periods assigned to staff records
Misaddress	Miss addressing of letters by A.B.U staff sometimes create problem of records tracing
Losing files	Mails lose from files and retracing becomes difficult
Losing job	Staff may be sacked due to losing staff records

APPENDIX VI a

NARRATIVE WORDS FREQUENCY

Nb Words	% Words
9	1.10%
14	1.60%
6	0.70%
8	0.90%
37	4.30%
61	7.20%
6	0.70%
97	11.40%
13	1.50%
56	6.60%
7	0.80%
6	0.70%
82	9.60%
70	8.20%
65	7.60%
16	1.90%

APPENDIX VII

CASES AND NARRATION

Personnel or staff records	
New staff/routine records	Newly recruited staff and daily records
Staff records	Staff records, sabbatical leave and visiting appointments
Personnel records of staff	
Senior staff records	Senior staff records right from 6 upwards
Vice chancellor grant direct and indirect approval for creation of staff records	
Instruction	Received instruction to open staff file and give staff number/page number
There is no retention schedule for records	
Uncleared response	Respondent did not get the question when recruitment officer receive approval letter for appointment
Records are kept within staff active servie with the University	
Absence of retention period	There was no formal retention periods to staff records in the registry
Satisfied with periods assigned to records due to timely response to request	
Satisfied	Satisfied with keeping records for as long as they were needed
Admitted there is challenge	
Admitted there is challenge to records retention	Indicated there were challenge to records retention
Untraceable records	Due to staff that were not entitled to pension and staff transferred to another organization
Non compliance	Authorities do not send back staff records after use and difficulty in tracing staff records

APPENDIX VII a

CASE AND WORDS FREQUENCY

Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases	Nb Words	% Words
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	4	0.20%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	10	0.50%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	58	2.70%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	5	0.20%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	10	0.50%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	112	5.30%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	50	2.40%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	11	0.50%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	9	0.40%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	46	2.20%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	41	1.90%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	55	2.60%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	4	0.20%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	28	1.30%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	51	2.40%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	165	7.80%
1	5.00%	1	100.00%	26	1.20%

APPENDIX VIII

CODE SUMMARY BY ADMINISTRATOR (CODER)

	Comment	Category	Code	Coder	Date	Text	Variable
0	Dominantly generate personnel records, what about other records with exception to financial records because of its sensitivity	Case #1	Personnel or staff records	Admin	2/19/2016	Personnel or staff files	THESIS
2	Almost a monotonous way of Records generation	Case #1	Vice chancellor grant direct and indirect approval for creation of staff records	Admin	2/19/2016	Normally generate files when approval of the staff is sent from the vice chancellor to the registry? There are two types of approval: direct approval from the vice chancellor and secondly advertisement on call for interview which is sent to vice chancellor for final approval which is later sent to registry to generate records on it. Alternatively when approval has been given by the vice chancellor to recruit a staff either academic or non academic their records will be generated in	THESIS

						the registry. How the records are generated- generation of numbers which starts from 001 up to the last number of recruitment. Senior staff records are at 23,000 and above currently.	
4	From all indications the staff in Ahmadu Bello University Registry were not Professional Records and Archive managers and boils down to challenges facing Records Retention Schedule?	Case #1	there is no retention schedule for records	Admin	2/19/2016	We don't have retention schedule of records in the registry	THESIS
3	Retention periods assigned to records is an in house idea which does not conform with international records standards hence the challenges in simple records keeping practice in the registry	Case #1	records are kept within staff active service with the University	Admin	2/19/2016	Records are kept up to the time a staff retires or dies and he applies for all his entitlements and their files are normally sent to Archives. Records are normally kept for as long as staff are still in service up to the time of retirement	THESIS
0	Despite indication of satisfaction by the respondents they yet maintained	Case #1	satisfied with periods assigned to records	Admin	2/19/2016	yes am satisfied because sometimes a need will arise for individual staff to	THESIS

	challenges to records keeping?		due to timely response to request			send for another information when files are sent to Archives immediately at times we normally suffer and information will not be gotten as early as possible. that is why records are kept for as long as a staff is still in service	

APPENDIX IX

1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you face challenge in the retention of records in your registry: hmm we face challenge and our challenge is many people will wrote letter without their P. Number some people they will not even put their Department, they will just write the application and put their name and we have many names are the same so we are facing challenges in that aspect and we have being complaining that the management should look onto it
1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you face challenge in the retention of records in your registry: yes there some challenges, the challenges are if a staff was employed in registry department or faculty of education then after some years he was transfer from faculty of education to institute of education so instead of the staff to address himself from faculty of education his now addressing himself in ehhh institute of education so by the time that they send for us to look for his file we find problem because the address stated there is not the exact address
1	Case #1	THESIS	The retention periods assign to each records: files will be with us for at least 35 years when the staff will retire from service that is the period of retention with us then we move it out to another side again but to us the retention is not more 35 years but now government have reviewed the guideline to 65 years of Age
1	Case #1	THESIS	The retention periods assign to each records: the only time that we can remove your records from our office here is when you retired and we remove your records to the Archive
1	Case #1	THESIS	How do you generate the Records: when we receive the mails from the staff outside it will be taken to the registrar from registrar back to us. When it comes back to us then we have a file. The file we filed it inside and kept it aside when there is a need then we would it back again and then there is a period for that
1	Case #1	THESIS	How do you generate the Records: we collect mails of next of kin from registry in three copies. Registry will have one, then bursary, and then VC's will have one. I only collect the one that will remain in bursar's office
1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you face challenge in the retention of records in your registry: there situation where mails were losing from files and we have to go back to the source where we put inside our safe to save those documents and if it happens we open our safe the file is there and the mails is still not there then we have to go back to where we get from. Those are the real challenges we are having
1	Case #1	THESIS	Type of records generated: about the staff records as are files and then mails then minutes of meetings
1	Case #1	THESIS	How do you generate the Records : we open register for new staff them when we receive mail approved by the vice chancellor we open the file and we gave them a new P. JP number
1	Case #1	THESIS	What are the challenges faced: we have P number we have JP number, if

			the JP number is not correct we face problem to get that file and there some files the P and JP number are corresponding the same and sometimes you see the P number but different staffs but the same number that one too is a challenge for us we have to go back to trace where the mistake is coming from.
1	Case #1	THESIS	Type of records generated: all the A.B.U staff files. employees files
1	Case #1	THESIS	What types of Records are generated in Registry Section of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria? This is eh Bursary referring room
1	Case #1	THESIS	Are you satisfied with such retention periods assigned to records: yes we don't have problem here
1	Case #1	THESIS	Are you satisfied with such retention periods assigned to records: yes
1	Case #1	THESIS	Are you satisfied with such retention periods assigned to records: yes I am satisfy with it
1	Case #1	THESIS	What are the challenges faced: when a record is lost in a file the challenge is he may lose his job.
1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you use retention schedule in your registry: we used retention schedule but we are not using it as per now
1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you use retention schedule in your registry: there is no any retention schedule
1	Case #1	THESIS	Do you use retention schedule in your registry: no we don't have
1	Case #1	THESIS	Which ones do you generate most: we generate mostly employees when they are employing new staff
1	Case #1	THESIS	Which ones do you generate most: mostly we generate that of ahh mails received
1	Case #1	THESIS	What are the challenges faced: P and JP numbers
1	Case #1	THESIS	Which ones do you generate most: mails for the next of kin