**UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA**

**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES**



**DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION STUDIES.**

**MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS RECORDS AT BOTSWANA SUPREME FURNISHERS**

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Masters Degree in Archives and Records Management

# DECLARATION

I, Boniface Moatshe, hereby confirm that the work contained in this dissertation is my original work and has never been submitted either in whole or part to any other University for a similar or for any other award. All sources used in this study have been acknowledged in the reference section.

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# ACKNOWLEGEMENT

# DEDICATIONS

I dedicate this dissertation to my loving wife Mrs. Thapelo Gosegomang Moatshe for the encouragement, understanding and support she gave me during the time I spent working on this project.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to my loving parent Mrs Florence, MmaBakwena, Moatshe, for the love, care and support she has rendered me throughout my life. Lastly I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my daughters and sons namely Moitse Kemelo Moatshe, Abale Rotlhe Moatshe, Ditso Neelo Moatshe and Baagi Gaetsho Moatshe for the inspiration they gave me during my studies.

**ABSTRACT**

This study examined management of business records at Supreme Furnishers in Botswana and recommends strategies for managing them for easy access and preservation in future. The objective of the study was to determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework (ISO, policies and procedures) of managing business records in Botswana; determine the nature of records created and retained at Supreme Furnishers; examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers; establish the challenges encountered in handling records at Supreme Furnishers; and propose solutions aimed at improving records keeping at Supreme Furnishers.

The respondents in this research study were employees of Supreme Furnishers. These respondents included Regional Managers, Business Managers, Credit Managers, Credit people, Sales people, Cashiers and Stock Controllers. This survey was informed by the Hybrid model (a combination of the Record Life Cycle and Record Continuum models). A combination of data collection instruments were used, namely, questionnaire, interviews and personal observations. In this regard, about 40 questionnaires were administered and 35 were successfully filled and returned. SPSS was used to analyse the data obtained from these instruments. Furthermore, quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches were also employed.

The key findings of the study revealed that majority (68.6%) of Supreme Furnishers employees were not aware of Botswana Company's Act 2008: Chapter 42:01, section 218, which requires keeping certain company records. Nonetheless, the organisation complied with the Hire Purchase and the Income Tax and VAT Acts, although some departments in the organisation did not comply with them. It was further discovered that Supreme Furnishers was not guided by ISO 15489:2001 in managing its records. Instead internal procedures such as classifying records, particularly invoices according to dates were employed. Stock records were also classified alphabetically. There were shortages of records management resources mainly, records storage spaces and equipment such as cabinets, boxes and shelves. The study further revealed that there were no classification schemes and file tracking systems in the organisation. Besides, Supreme Furnishers did not have either a records management policy or a records management Committee.

This study therefore recommends that Supreme Furnishers should employ best records management practices by complying with the legislation especially Companies' Act and records management international standards. The study further recommends that Supreme Furnishers should establish a records management policy, an access policy as well as a records management committee.

This study further concludes that the records management programme will function effectively and efficiently if it is developed as part of the strategic management of the organisation. It will enable Supreme Furnishers to have a competitive advantage over its competitors if it is considered as an organizational asset.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACARM: Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers

BNARS: Botswana National Archives and Records Service

E-mail: Electronic Mail

E-Records: Electronic Records

ERMS: Electronic Records Management System

ESARBICA: Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch of International Council on Archive

ERPRAC: Electronic Records Project Rockefeller Archive Centre

ICA: International Council of Archives

ILO: International Labour Organisation

IRMT: International Records Management Trust

OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

NECC: National Electronic Commerce Coordinating Council

PEFA: Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability

UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

# DEFINITION OF TERMS


Audit trail:                    data that enables attributes of a change (such as date, time or operator) to be stored so that a sequence of events can be determined in the correct chronological order.

Backup:                        the activity of copying files or databases so that they will be preserved in case of equipment failure or other catastrophe.

Disposal:                      the act of implementing appraisal decisions which includes transferring records to the archives or destruction.

Document:                    A unit of recorded information

E-records:                    records held in digital form on magnetic or optical computer storage media

Information:                  content of records

Record:                        recorded information in any form, created or received and maintained by an organisation in the transaction of business and kept as evidence of such activity (i.e. paper, electronic, audio-visual or microfilm)

Record classification:      assigning a code, number or index term that can be used to retrieve the record

Records access:              providing records users with search retrieval and displayable tools

Records appraisal:          a process of assessing records for their value to determine to preserve or dispose off

Records storage:             providing a reliable storage location and ensuring that records are protected to avoid alteration or unauthorised access

Records disposal schedule:   a timetable used to determine when certain records should be disposed.

Records Life Cycle:          a full span of record's existence from its creation, use, maintenance, to disposition

Records tracking:            tracing the current custody and location of records

Retention:                   the process of preserving and maintaining records for a given period of time
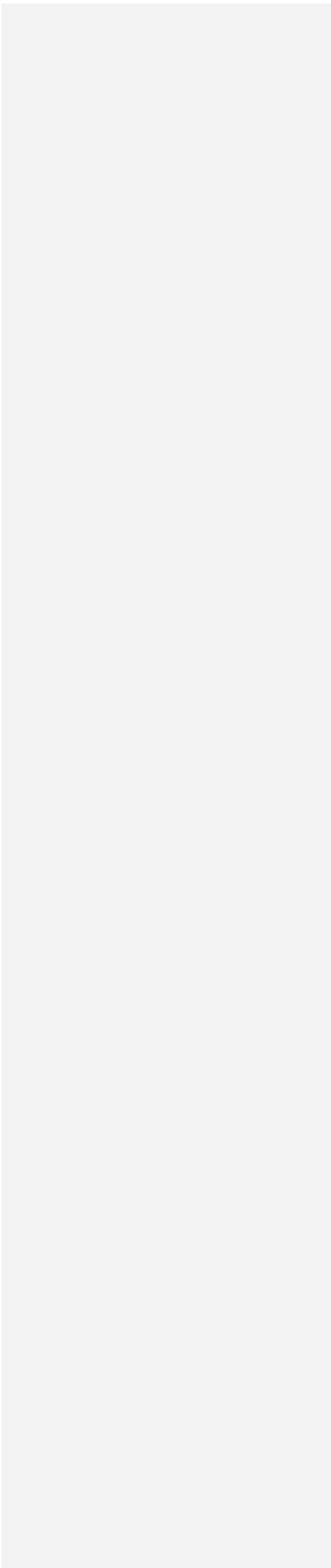
**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.1. Background to the study**

Records management is necessary for all private and public organizations in carrying out their daily activities. Records are the corporate memory of the organizations in supporting their daily business activities. Records management facilitates proper decision making and formulation of policies. McBratney (1998) emphasises that professional records management has existed as an important business management system for almost 50 years. In addition, Roberts (1995) highlights that records management has identified three domains that make records essential in any organisation. These are the business domain, accountability domain and cultural domain.

➢ The business domain highlights that records management supports daily business needs and expectations. For instance, the business needs records to retain and recruit employees as well as to plan effectively and inefficiently. Furthermore, Makhura (2005) reports that the business domain requires that records must be produced and maintained in such a way that they support activities of an organisation such as:

- Serving as the basis through which decisions are taken for purposes of consistency and reliability

- Providing evidence of the organisation's daily operation

- Ensuring competitive performance

Records assist business organisations to make consistently informed decisions. The decisions should be reliable and serve as reference points in the future. They also should serve as evidence of what has transpired, as well as improve competitive performance within the industry.

➢ The accountability domain states that accountability enables an outside organization to exchange information with the current business in order to hold someone responsible for an activity. It is important that best records management practices should be employed in order to hold the person who has performed a particular transaction accountable.

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Accountability can only prevail if records are easily accessed, retrieved and used within the specified period of time. Makhura (2005:21) also highlights that without records there can be no accountability and no rule of law. In this situation, activities will be performed haphazardly with no direction.

➢ The cultural domain stipulates that some records in the business organisations also have cultural values. Therefore, these records should be archived as they have historical and cultural values to the society they relate to. They also serve as an organisational memory which is consulted in times of need.

It is also be very important for organizations to consider records as their valuable assets like buildings, vehicles, money, stock and staff. These are organisational assets which are always included in the balance sheets. Accountability enables the business organisations to perform duties, including financial and operational responsibilities in a way that will comply with legislation, policies, objectives and expected standards of conduct (IRMT, 1999).The best records management practices enable the business organisations to be responsible for their actions. Businesses keep records for various administrative, historical and archival purposes. Besides, businesses mostly keep records to fulfil legal requirements as these may be used as evidence of what has transpired.

Records management has become increasingly recognized as an administrative tool, vital for the efficiency of an organizational management (Yusof and Chell, 2002). This administrative management in the organisation involves creating, maintaining, using and disposing of the business records .This enables the organisation to be effective and efficient in its daily activities. For administrative management to be employed effectively and efficiently, business organisations should manage their records according to the Record Life Cycle model. The records should be managed according to all the stages they undergo in their life cycle, for proper administration to prevail in the organisation. The Record Life Cycle model stipulates that there are current, semi-current and non-current records (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). The current records are those documents which are regularly used in the business. On the other hand, semi-current records are not used frequently in the business. While, non- current records are those records that are no longer needed by the business on a daily basis. Therefore, those non–current records with long-term value to the organisation may be preserved. Businesses produce millions of records

and documents each year when they are pursuing their daily activities. For that reason, it is necessary that they should implement an effective and comprehensive records management plan to sort, store and access records (Thomas, 2009). A comprehensive records management plan is a master or general plan that guides organisations to follow policies and principles when conducting records management activities. It also promotes the creation, maintenance, storage and usage of records. This is done by ensuring that records storage space is used economically. In addition, it ensures that the records management equipment is provided.

Businesses produce records on a daily basis when carrying out their activities or processes. For this reason, it is ideal that business organisations take care of their records. It goes without saying that performing business activities leads to the creation of records. Chinyemba and Ngulube (2005) assert that "proper records management involves establishing systematic controls at every stage of the record's life cycle, in accordance with established principles and accepted models of records management. Practising proper records management leads to good private sector management because business activities are based on accessing information contained in records and this may lead to better customer service. It is essential for the private sector to integrate records management more effectively with other information management functions so that records management becomes a strategic management function towards reaching a competitive advantage (De Wet and Du Toit, 2000). In other words, to ensure that records management receives the attention it deserves, it should be a strategic objective in the private sector's strategic and business plans. Records management can be a strategic function by linking records management policies with the strategic plan of the entire organisation (Hughes, 2003). This will enable the records management policy to share the same strategic goals as those of the organisation. According to ISO 15489 (2001), a successful Records Management Programme must be closely aligned to the needs of the organisation and in particular to the organisation's strategic and policy objectives. It must be seen as a means of furthering the aims and objectives of the business organisation in order to contribute critically to the   success of the business.

King (2003) argues that business companies could have a competitive edge by designing well maintained records management systems. This may involve designing active filings, classifications, indexes and policies in the business. Proper records management programmes enable the organisation to have a competitive advantage over its competitors. Myburgh (2004)

asserts that records managers are capable of ensuring that appropriate information is identified as key intelligence and is communicated to organisation's decision-makers proactively. Furthermore, the records and information management professionals should be involved in coordinating and analyzing the strategic information contained in records which originate outside the organization. Therefore this information may be transformed into intelligence on which to base decisions. This intelligence derived from the records managers may be used for competitive purposes. Porter and Millar (1985) cited in Makhura (2005) also asserts that information affects the competitive environment in three ways:

- It changes the structure of industry and assets competition rules
- It creates a competitive advantage by giving organisations new ways of outperforming their rivals
- It spawns wholly new business, often from within an organisation's existing operations

In this regard, information in an organisation should enable it to change the structure of industry in which it operates. An organisation which reliably accesses information before its rivals in the industry will ultimately have a competitive edge. In support of this, Mehra (2010) asserts that successful businesses were those who control information by developing, accessing, analysing and presenting it. In this regard, the organisations will be able to make informed decisions ahead of their competitors. Furthermore, information may enable an organisation to generate new business ideas by assessing records from outside the organisations.

In a situation where proper records management practices are not practiced organisations are compelled to use human memory. For example, this occurred when the Department of Lands in Botswana could not retrieve records relating to land allocations. As such, the commissioners had to rely on the Directors for information (Sebina, 2004). Therefore, relying on human memory is extremely dangerous as it may be subjective, ambiguous as well as defenceless. This could even lead to service delivery being hampered due to biasness of human beings. It is clear that records management plays a significance role in managing of business in both public and private sectors. There is a serious concern raised by various researchers that many government departments and private sectors pay very little attention to the management of records ( Chachage and

Ngulube,2006;Chinyemba & Ngulube, 2005; Mnjama, 2004:6; Ngulube, 2004:6; Wallace, 2004:6).

A lot of studies in Botswana have been written about records management in public and parastatal organizations. For instance management of land records in Land Boards (Ramokate, 2008); Managing Records at the Botswana Meat Commission (Mnjama, 2000); Management of High Court Records in Botswana (Motsaathebe and Mnjama, 2009); Management of electronic records in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa (Keakopa, 2006); and E-records Management and governance in East and Southern Africa (Wamukoya and Mutula, 2005). However, very little is known about records management practices in the Botswana private sector. The current study investigates how records management processes and practices are performed in the private sector in Botswana, particularly in the retail industry.

**1.2. Records management in the retail industry**

Bench Marks Foundation (2009) states that the retail industry carries business activities that produce records that include registering of income, recording of daily sales, making of payments for tax, electrical bills, water bills, salaries, rentals and many more. Therefore, these records must be kept for a specific period of time before disposal. Retailers also have records that have information on their personnel. The information on the personnel may be on their gender, qualifications, skills and departments. The State of Victoria (2010) identified the retail industry records to include: records of money coming into the business, records of money leaving the business (payments), general banking records, general accounting reports and tax records, personnel and employees records. Longenecker, Petty and Palich (2006) assert that a good accounting system should permit quick comparison of current data with prior years' operating results, offer financial statements for use by management, bankers, and prospective creditors, facilitate prompt filing of reports, tax returns to regulatory, tax-collecting government agencies, and reveal employee fraud, theft, waste, and record keeping errors. Therefore, it is highly important that the business records for retailers should be kept in such a way that access of records will be quick. The records should also be in good conditions at all times.

**1.3. The Value of Retailing in Botswana**

Retailing is the sale of goods and services for personal, family or household use (Berman and Evans, 2004). The retail industry is the middleman between the manufacturers, wholesalers and the consumers. Therefore, it plays a vital role in availing goods and services to the consumer to buy in single units. Retailers deal with a number of wholesalers/manufacturers who produce different products. Retailers, then bring these goods into one point for consumers to select from. Mehra (2010) indicates that the retail industry is a sector of economy that is comprised of individuals and companies selling finished products to the end users. It contributes significantly to the growth of Botswana's economy. UNCTAD (2003) cited in Themba et.al (2014) points out that retailing is one of the major economic activities that have employed more people than manufacturing and mining in Botswana, and as such it contributes towards poverty eradication. This is supported by Emongor and Kirsten (2009) who assert that in Southern African Development Countries (SADC), Botswana has the fourth highest concentration of retail outlets. Retailing in Botswana is capable of employing more citizens, as there are many retail outlets that are owned by both locals and foreigners. Iyanda et.al (2011) further report that retail trade in Botswana offers the highest level of employment, particularly on the formal, informal and self-employment. Formal employment is where there is an employee and employer and where people work to receive a regular wage and are assured certain rights and their wages are also taxed. Formal employment operates within the formal structure where employees are expected to abide by the stipulated rules and regulations. On the other hand, Huitfeldt et.al (2009) argue that informal employment concerns jobs that are performed outside the formal structures that govern taxes, workplaces regulations and social protection schemes. This means that informal employment is the part of the economy that is not taxed or monitored by any form of government. Unlike in the formal economy, activities that are engaged in the informal economy are not included in the Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country. Informal employment may involve individuals who are small entrepreneurs, who are in the process employ others.

The retail industry in Botswana is classified under private sector investments. African Economic Outlook (2012) states that private sector investments account for a significant share of Botswana's economic growth and provides 50% of employment. The private sector plays a

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significant role of providing Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Botswana. Foreign Direct Investment is whereby foreign companies invest in Botswana and by so doing create employment for the citizens. Iyanda et.al (2011) assert that the retail sector in Botswana attracted more FDI than the financial, hospitality and construction sectors put together in the National Development Plan 9 of 2003/2008.This is supported by Miller, Nel and Hampwaye (2008) cited in Makgosa et.al (2014) that Botswana has experienced a substantial flow of foreign direct investment in retailing mainly from South Africa. Botswana has benefited a lot from the FDI as most of the retail outlets (clothing, food and furniture) are from other countries, especially South Africa. The fact that more local people are employed by these companies serves as a boost to the country's economy. In addition, other economic benefits obtained from the FDI are stipulated by Javorcik (2004) as increased competition, lower prices of food products, much needed capital, new technologies, technical and business skills as well as knowledge of export markets. The FDI is essential to the country as it contributes to competition amongst the retailers. Competition enables the customers to acquire goods and services at lower prices. The FDI also contributes to technological and skill developments to the country.

OECD (2008) highlighted that retail trade (hotels and restaurants) was the third largest sector of economy in Botswana and generated 11.2 per cent of the GDP. The African Economic Outlook (2012) further assert that the retail industry (wholesale, retail, hotels and restaurants) trade increased in growth rate from 11.1% to 14, 4% between 2006 and 2011. The AT Kearney report (2013) states that Botswana saw nearly 6 per cent GDP growth in 2012, and the retail industry was now the economy's second–biggest job provider. The increase in GDP has also led to the growth in the retail industry, which seconded mining in terms of employment in Botswana. The retail industry has greatly grown as an employment provider as indicated by OECD (2008) African Economic Outlook (2012) and AT Kearney (2013).

ILO (2009) reiterates that retail trade in Botswana is estimated to have employed about 45.4% of the labour force within the informal sector. These are the local people who are engaged in Small Scale Medium Enterprises. This indicates that, the retail industry is one of the sectors that increase the economy of Botswana. The AT Kearney report (2014) further states that the retail industry in Botswana contributed 30% of the country's GDP and created many jobs. Food and

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apparel (clothing) are the most attractive market segment, with recent growth coming in furniture and hardware.

According to Iyanda et.al (2011) the growth in retail industry in Botswana has led to several regional retail giants mostly from South Africa, such as Game Discount Stores, OK Stores, Spar, and Pick n' Pay etc being established in the country. Makgosa et.al (2013) highlights the retail giants like Cash Bazaar stores(clothing) have same ownership as Taku-Taku (shoes),Topline (clothing), Homecorp(Furniture), and Furnmart(Furniture), while Choppies (food) ,OK(food) and Fruit and Veg are owned by the same family. The A.T. Kearney Global Retail Index (2012) reported that Botswana was the only African country ranked in top 20 of the most attractive retail destinations in the developing world ahead of continental giants such as South Africa and Nigeria. This shows that the retail industry in Botswana has grown significantly and as such has also boosted the economy in terms of job creation.

According to Iyanda et.al (2011) majority **(%)** of furniture retailers in Botswana were in the medium size in terms of annual sales. However, they were the smallest in terms of the number of people employed as compared to the clothing and food retailers. Although, the furniture retailers had employed fewer people in their outlets, they generated higher sales per employee than food retailers. This also contributed significantly to the economy of Botswana. According to Republic of Botswana's Companies Act (2008) chapter 43:02 a furniture shop means a shop selling movable household furnishings. The operators in the furniture retail industry sell a variety of home furnishing goods that include furniture, upholstery, carpets, wall coverings, bedspreads and other bed related items such as linen, table cloths and candles. The industry also sells electrical appliances such as refrigerators, and microwaves.

The furniture retailer industry in Botswana is made up of large chain retail stores such as the Ellerines Holdings (Town Talk, Furn City, Savells Fair deal Furnishers), Supreme Furnishers, Lewis Stores, Morkels Store Furnishings, Beares, Home Corp, OK Furnishers, Furnmart Furnishers and many more. According to Iyanda et.al (2013) the furniture sector is capable of employing about 14 employees per outlet on average. Therefore, this means than each furniture sector is capable of employing many people in the country hence increasing Botswana's economy.

### 1.3.1. Background information of Supreme Furnishers (Pty) Ltd

Supreme Furnishers is the largest furniture retailer in Southern Africa. According to JD Group Annual report (2010) Supreme Furnishers had 58 stores in the region and it had employed 990 people. It is one of the largest furniture retailers in Botswana and Namibia. It also trades in countries like Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia. Its main head office is located in South Africa in Johannesburg (Braamfontein). The Botswana Head Office is located in Gaborone (Supreme Furnishers Manual 2012). According to the JD Group Annual report (2010) Supreme Furnishers was established in 1989 in South Africa and was taken over by JD Group in 2003. A JD Group is a retailing group that operates a number of furniture chain stores in Southern Africa.

Supreme Furnishers has sister companies such as Barnetts, Price and Pride , Russells, Joshua Doore, Bradlows, Morkels, Electric Express, Hifi Corp, Incredible Connections, Hardware Warehouse, Penny Pinchers, Title House and Timber City. Supreme Furnishers in Botswana has 17 chain stores. The Organisational structure of Supreme Furnishers is shown in Figure 1.1 on page 10.

**Figure1.1: Organisational structure of Supreme Furnishers**

| | |
|---|---|
| **General Manager** | |
| | Human Resource Manager |
| Financial Manager: North | |
| Financial Manager: South | |
| | Retail Manager: South |
| Regional manager: Retail North | |
| Branch manager | |
| Credit Manager | |
| Sales staff | |
| Delivery Crew/General Assistants | |
| Cashiers, Stock and Credit Controllers | |
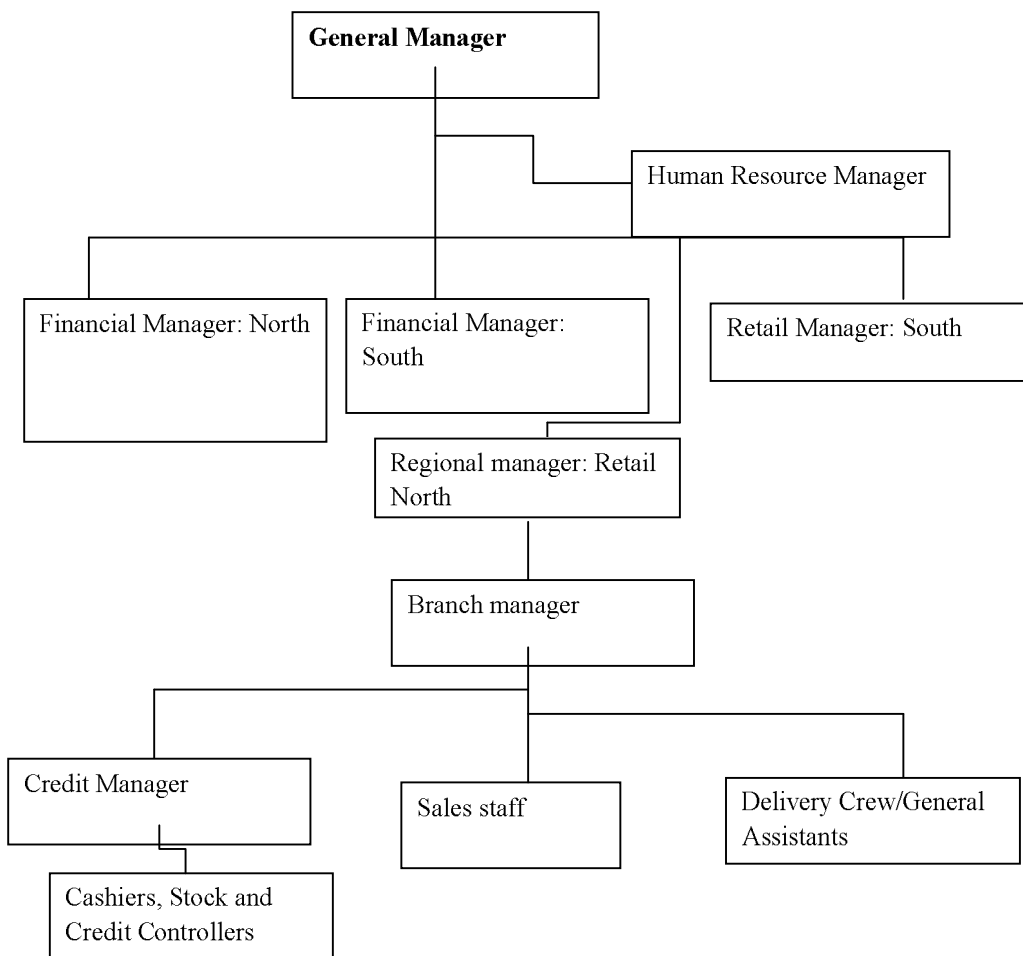
Source: Supreme Furnishers Manual, 2012.

Supreme Furnishers' chain stores in Botswana are found in Gaborone, Francistown, Lobatse, Jwaneng, Letlhakane, Serowe, Molepolole, Mogoditshane, Selibe- Phikwe, Mahalapye, Mochudi, Palapye and Kanye. They have employed about 350 Batswana (Supreme Furnishers Manual, 2012).

## 1.4. Statement of the problem

Records management has gained attention and interest among corporations due to compliance regulations and statutes. No organisation can operate without records, as they document its daily activities and actions. However, the nature of records created depends on both the legal status of the corporate bodies and the kind of goods or services produced (Bilotto, 2003).The kinds of records produced by an organisation depends on the industry it is in. It also depends on the legal status of an organisation. This also depends on whether a company is a joint-stock company, limited company or individual firm. Hence, business records should be managed in such a way that they comply with the regulatory and legal requirements (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). Compliance in the private sector fosters accountability and good corporate governance. Compliance to legislation impacts on how records are created, transmitted, used, stored, indexed, retrieved, controlled retained and preserved (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). The legislation requiring proper records management procedures in most private companies in the world is not reflected in practice (Bilotto, 2003; Hughes, 2003, Roos, 2003, Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). According to Lan (2003) lack of proper records management is aggregated amongst others by the following factors:

- Poor management systems

- Lower levels of professional skills in records management

- Poor records management structures

ESARBICA (2005) in a conference held in Gaborone indicated that there was common negligence of business records in Southern and Eastern Africa .The records management practices are not quite pleasing in most of the private organisations in ESARBICA region which includes Botswana.

Private sector organisations in Botswana are required to comply with the provisions of Botswana Companies Act sections 217, 218, 219-221 and 270. These require the maintenance of complete and accurate records. Other laws that require business organisations to maintain records include Botswana Income Tax Act, Hire purchase, Value Added Tax, Employment Act and Prescriptions Act. These Acts require organisations operating in the country to maintain certain records. Iyanda et.al (2013) indicated that there was common failure of retail outlets in Botswana to keep records which are essential for VAT calculation. The absence of such records denies retailers deductions that would have reduced their VAT indebtedness. PEFA (2009) further stated that Tax compliance was poor in Botswana. Madibana (2013) emphasized that a Zimbabwean owned company called FCZ timbers owed BURS Millions of tax. Pitse (2013) reiterated that some big local companies were being investigated by BURS for evading tax.

This study was motivated by the fact that Kayawe (2009) in Botswana Mmegi Newspaper reported that Supreme Furnishers was accused of not complying with Section 6 of the Purchase Act of 1974. Section 6 of Purchase Act expects Credit Furniture stores like Supreme Furnishers to produce Advertisement records on goods to be purchased to stipulate the total amount to be paid as deposit, and installments to be disclosed, frequency of installments, the total number of installments and the total amount to be paid by way of deposit. In addition, very little has been studied concerning business records management in Botswana. It is worth mentioning that no study has been carried out on Botswana private sectors' compliance with Botswana laws that require certain records management procedures.

However, most of research studies on records management have been carried on public organisations. For instance, the earlier studies on public sector records management in Botswana were conducted by (Tembo and Stimela, 2004), (Motsaathebe and Mnjama, 2009), (Moloi and Mutula, 2007). These studies revealed problems such as:

> Lack of guidelines and policies

> Poor records management practices

> Absence of proper records management systems

No study has done an in-depth analysis of management of business records in the retail industry. Therefore, this research study will enable Supreme Furnishers to develop a well informed records management programme. Chibambo (2003) asserts that a good records management frame work consists of information–related laws, policies and programmes, records management standards and practices and necessary qualified human resources to implement and manage the systems. By so doing, Supreme Furnishers will have a competitive edge over its rivals in the same industry.

Based on the above legal requirements, this study intended to find out whether Supreme Furnishers complied with the record keeping requirements provided for in some laws of Botswana, particularly Companies Act, section 218.The research study also found out about compliance with other laws such as Hire Purchase Act, Income Tax Act, Value Added Tax and Employment Act as well as the guidelines stipulated by the international standard (ISO 15489:2001).The researcher also investigated some branches of Supreme Furnishers. Various data collection instruments such as interviews, questionnaire and observation were administered. The data was analyzed and possible solutions to records management challenges identified at Supreme Furnishers were proposed.

## 1.5. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study was to find out whether Supreme Furnishers complied with records keeping requirements provided for in the various laws (Botswana Income Tax Act, Hire purchase, Value Added Tax, Employment Act) of Botswana. The main focus was particularly on Botswana Companies Act section 218. The specific objectives of the study are:
1) To determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework of managing business records in Botswana.
2) To examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers.
3) To determine the format and nature of records at Supreme Furnishers
4) To establish the challenges encountered in managing records at Supreme Furnishers
5) To propose solutions aimed at improving records keeping at Supreme Furnishers

## 1.6. Research questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of adherence in managing records in accordance to laws and regulations, polices and standards at Supreme Furnishers?

2. What resources are available for the records at Supreme Furnishers?

3. What are records created by Supreme Furnishers?

4. What major challenges are faced by Supreme Furnishers in managing business records?

5. What are the possible solutions to records management challenges identified at Supreme Furnishers?

## 1.7. Scope and Limitations of the study

This study looked at the management of business records at Supreme Furnishers in Botswana. As a result, data was collected at Supreme Furnishers' Head office and some branches in Botswana located in Gaborone (Bus Rank and Broadhurst). Botswana Supreme Furnishers was selected because it is one of the largest furniture shops in retailing industry in Botswana.

The first limitation of this study is that Supreme Furnishers has other furniture retailing outlets in different parts of Southern Africa such as Namibia, Zambia, South Africa and others. This study was focused on Botswana Supreme Furnishers' outlets because of finance and time constraints. Furthermore, the finance and time constraints restricted the researcher to select two branches to research on in Botswana. These branches were selected due to the fact that operations at Supreme Furnishers' branches are the same throughout the country.

The second limitation of the study was not being able to include all the employees of Supreme Furnishers. For instance, the organisation has employed 350 people in Botswana. The study concentrated only on employees who were thought to be engaged in managing records. These included General Managers, Regional Managers, Branch Managers, Human Resource Manager,

Credit Managers, Cashiers, Salespeople and Stock Controllers. Meeting top management such as General Managers and Regional Managers was a challenge as they always had tight schedules. In most cases, they were outside the country on organisational duties at the main Head Office in Johannesburg. This delayed obtaining data at the stipulated time.

## 1.8. Significance of the study

This study is important because:

1. It reveals the strengths and weaknesses of managing records at Supreme Furnishers and suggests records management strategies and procedures that may be used to improve record keeping practices.

2. The study makes the Government of Botswana aware of record keeping practices in the private sector. The policy makers should ensure that the private sector in Botswana complies with records requirements stipulated in Company's Act, Hire Purchase Act, Employment Act and others. Hence, the Government will encourage the private sector in Botswana to consider records management practices and procedures as critical to the efficiency of service delivery.

3. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on business record keeping in Botswana.

4. The study enlightens anyone intending to venture into any business to be aware of the role of records in the business environment (profit-making organisations) play. For those already in the business environment this research study will bring about change of behaviour and attitude towards managing records. Individuals who have been neglecting business records they will now consider them as organisational assets and those who have been caring for their records will be motivated to continue their behaviour.

5. This study provides significant information on how to manage records according to the requirements stipulated in the Company's Act, Hire Purchase Act, Employment Act and others. This will ultimately lead to compliance, accountability, transparency and good corporate governance.

Finally, this study is unique because it focuses on business records management, particularly in the retail industry. Much has not been covered in this area. Many studies have been conducted on records management in the public sectors such as Land Boards (Tembo and Stimela, 2004), High Court records (Motsaathebe and Mnjama, 2009), Electronic records in Government Departments (Moloi and Mutula, 2007), Public Sector Information Systems (IRMT, 2008) and others.

## 1.9. Organisation of the study

This study is organized into five (5) chapters. Chapter One contains background information, historical background, statement of the problem, aim and objectives of the study and research questions, significance of the study and limitations. Chapter Two provides literature review and focuses on benefits of proper records management in general, records management in Botswana, benefits of proper records management in business, records management and compliance with legislation, business records management and ISO 15489:2001, records management policies and procedures, records creation and capture records classification in the business sector, records management resources in the private sector, challenges that might be encountered in the retail industry and summary of the literature. Chapter Three, deals with the methodology of the study and it focuses on the research design, data collection approaches, location and the population of the study, data collection instruments ethical issues and summary. Chapter Four, deals with data presentation, analysis and interpretation and finally Chapter Five, which focuses on summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

# CHAPTER TWO

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1. Introduction

The purpose of the literature review is to provide the foundation for one's research. It involves locating and reading published works relevant to the research topic and packaging them together in a new way that helps in explaining the research problem better (Oates, 2006:71). The ideas in the literature are used to justify the problem the researcher wants to research on. This chapter discusses literature on the management of business records in the retail industry. The chapter is organised according to the following themes: main benefits of records management in the business, records management and compliance to legislation, records management policies and procedures, records management resources in the private sector, management of records in the private sector (paper and electronic), challenges encountered in managing records in the private sector, records management models and summary of the literature review.

## 2.2 .Benefits of proper records management in general

ISO 15489:2001:3 defines records as information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. On the other hand, Kansas (1996) states that records are in different forms such as documents, reports, maps, drawings, charts, indexes, plans, memoranda, sound recordings, microfilms, photographic records and other data, information or documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, storage media or condition of use, made or received by an agency in pursuance of law or in connection with the transaction of official business. Kansas (1996) agrees with ISO 15489:2001:3 that a record contains information about the daily activities (business transactions) of which should comply with laws of the country. As such, any record that the business produces should have a legal obligation and will ultimately serve as evidence. The standard ISO 9000:2005 states that a record is a type of document which

provides evidence that activities have been performed or results have been achieved. Records always document the past. On the contrary, Balovich (2007) states that a record under Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 (SOX) is any material that contains information about the company's plans, results, policies or performance. Anything about the company that can be represented in words or numbers is considered a business record. Therefore a record provides evidence that certain activities have been performed. On the other hand, ISO15489:2001:3 defines records management as "the field of management responsible for the maintenance, efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about the business activities and the transactions in the form of records."

Wamukoya (1995) asserts that records management has led to rapid development and contributed a lot to public and private sectors' productivity in the countries of North America. In Africa, the acceptance of records management policy within organisations is extremely rare and very few organisations are starting to appreciate its benefits .Therefore, lack of good records management in an organisation slows down the flow of information, which ultimately causes records to pile up in offices, corridors, storerooms and in registries leading to inefficiency. Laserfiche Institute (2008) outlines that records management enables more informed decision making, by making information readily available. In addition to this, it helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner. Records management also facilitates effective performance of activities throughout an organisation. It is capable of protecting records, the rights of organisation, its employees and its customers. Proper management of records leads to protection of records from inappropriate and unauthorized access (Massachusetts Archives 2012).

The study carried out by Laserfiche institute (2008) concurs with Wamukoya (1995)'s view on the benefit of records management. Both are in agreement that records management enables more informed decision making because of information which is readily available. Consequently, this helps deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner. The above statement is reiterated by Massachusetts Archives (2012) that protection of records is vital for purposes of making informed decisions as well as improving productivity.

## 2.3. Benefits of proper records management in the business

Records management is an organizational function of managing records that permits the organisation to meet its daily operational needs, accountability, requirements and community expectations and systems (Kennedy and Schaunder, 1998). However it must be practised accordingly based on the appropriate procedures of creating, storing, retrieving and disposing of records.

Record keeping provides the business owner with information on the income tax that he/she is expected to pay. This information must be easily retrievable and verifiable (Pinson, 2004). Therefore, a good record keeping system helps the firm to check whether it is doing well in the business or not. Efficient and effective service provision, accountability, security and integrity, completeness, and others are issues that need to be addressed, whether records are in hard or soft copy environments (Pember, 1998). Good service delivery, accountability, integrity, security in the organisation should always prevail regardless of the records' status. Therefore, appropriate recordkeeping is essential for any business (whether government, non-profit or profit making) organisations.

Robek, Brown and Stephens (1995) indicate that records management controls the creation and growth of records, reduces operating costs, improves efficiency and productivity, assimilates new records management technologies, ensures regulatory compliance, minimizes litigation risks, safeguards vital information, supports better management decision making, preserves the corporate memory and fosters professionalism in running the business. Furthermore, proper records management contributes to accountability, transparency and good corporate governance. Accountability ensures that organisations and individuals should be able to explain their actions to others (Ngulube, 2004). Accountability may be achieved only when top management in the organisation supports the records management programs. State of Victoria (2010) asserts that an executive in an organisation must support the records management policy which states accountability of staff on handling organizational records. In this regard, the top management must be aware of the importance of records management programs. IRMT (1999) states that without good records management practices, officials are forced to take decisions on an ad hoc basis. Fraud cannot be proven, meaningful audits cannot be carried out, and actions are not open

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to review. In the modern business environment records are to be kept in various formats, for example electronic, paper, microfilm and others. This will enable quick retrieval of information for decision making. Tousey and Adkins (2007) point out that preserving and maintaining access to records that have long-term business value will lead to a variety of benefits. For instance, many companies will obtain business benefits in the areas of litigation, support for patent and other intellectual property issues, trademark protection, media relations, brand marketing, internal communications, speechwriting and presentations for internal and external use. Archives add value to all these business activities and more. They can be used to enhance the reputation of a company, preserve organisational knowledge and build on a corporate culture.

On the other hand, Gunnlaugsdottir (2002) indicates that a well designed records management programme will enable the organisation to:

➢ Manage risk by insuring that the organisation can survive despite events of disaster. Records security and emergency planning are important part of records management

➢ Make an initiative in quality and environmental management. Good records management is necessary if organisations are to fulfil the demands of the ISO 9000 quality standards and 14000 environmental standards.

➢ Meet the wishes of customers and needs of employees. Records management makes it easier for an organisation to provide good service in a consistent and equitable manner. Such a place of work is also more likely to offer employees an interesting job and pleasant work environment.

Records are an essential aspect in the running of business in the sense that there is no organization whether public or private that can run without records. It is further argued that every organisation needs records in order to conduct current business to enable decision making that has to be followed immediately (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). In other words, records are the corporate memory that has to be taken care of. Furthermore, every organisation produces records on its daily business activities, whether it likes or not, and these are to be preserved accordingly. Records are a means of providing evidence of business activities or of remembering events and transactions that have occurred (Wamukoya, 2005). Therefore for records to be considered trustworthy they must be containing reliable evidence of decisions made, rights acquired and

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commitments made (Thomassen, 2002). This means that without records there will be no assessment on individual, public or private organisations on the actions and the transactions they have been executing as well as being sure that they have been performing activities of value. Records are also essential for the effective and productive functioning of private and public organizations. Records document decisions and activities of governments and private institutions, and serve as a benchmark by which future activities and decisions are measured (World Bank, 2013). This means that records can be used as a reference point for research in order to do things better.

**2.4. Compliance with regulatory framework of managing business records**

Literature also shows that business records must be managed in such a way that they will comply with regulatory, legal and ethical requirements. Compliance in records management requires information integrity, privacy and records retention (Marobella, 2005.18). Chachage and Ngulube (2006) emphasises that compliance with legislation and standards will has an impact on how records are created, stored, used, retained and preserved. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) agree with Marobella (2005.18) that records are to be stored in privacy governed by the legislation. Records storage areas that are governed by privacy laws prevent alterations of records and make them trustworthy and confidential. They also agree that the records should be retained and their retention schedules should guided by legislation. Retention schedules must be in place, to determine the period for keeping organizational records. This will enforce accountability, transparency and good corporate governance in the retail industry.

A good records management frame-work consists of information–related laws, policies and programmes, records management standards and practices and necessary qualified human resources to implement and manage the systems (Chibambo, 2003). For records management, to be a success in an organisation it must be governed by the statutory laws. It is also important that the records management policies should be in place to serve as guides on how to manage records properly. Qualified personnel in records management are necessary in business organisation to handle and manage records professionally.

Okello-Obura (2011) argues that laws have a direct impact on the ways governments, organisations and individuals carry their daily activities. Therefore the laws affect ways in which the private sector carries its daily activities of creating, capturing and managing of records to form the basis for legal evidence. Whether a record is in paper or electronic format, retention period and its content should be indicated to determine its value (Electronic Records Project Rockefeller Archive Centre, 2008). Organisations should keep the records according to the regulatory or legal system required by the country in which they are operating. This will save the organisation from the legal penalties whenever there are audit queries. Organisations without a records management programme run the risk of destroying records too soon and consequently not being able to produce them when legally required. This is a practice that can also backfire in legal proceedings. The organisation is then required to produce everything it has. At the very least, producing all related records is time-consuming and expensive (Diamond, 1995). Without effective records management, it is time consuming to access records within the stipulated time. It is also important that the retail industry must design the retention schedules that will guide them on when the records can be kept or be disposed. Business records must be managed in such a way that they comply with regulatory, legal and ethical requirements. Compliance in records management concerns information integrity, privacy and records retention (Marobella, 2005). Compliance fosters accountability and good corporate governance in the private sector where business activities are not open to the public to scrutinize. Compliance in the records management also ensures the availability of practices and procedures such as capturing, or creating, transmitting and using, storing, indexing, retrieving are availed when needed.

**2.4.1. Compliance with regulatory framework of managing business records in Botswana**

In Botswana    private and public companies are expected to abide by legislation to provide proper management of records. Some of the pieces of the legislation that enhance records management in Botswana's private sector are:

- Botswana Company's Act 42:01 of 2008
- Botswana Income Tax Act 62:01 of 2006
- Valued Added Tax of 2002

- Botswana Hire purchase Act of 1974
- Botswana employment act 47:01 of 2003

## 2.4.1.1. Botswana Company's Act 42:01 of 2008

Botswana Company's Act (2008:42:01), Section 218(1) (c) states, that a company shall keep records for inspection purposes. These records include: certificate of incorporation or registration of the company, the constitution of the company, share register, full names and residential addresses of the directors, register of charges, copies of instruments creating or evidencing charges which are required to be registered. Failure to comply with this section warrants a penalty not exceeding P10000 (Section 492(1). In addition, a company director shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding P10 000. OCED (2010) asserts that keeping records according to section 218 makes it easy for the Registrar's office to access company records. It makes it easy for the registrar to locate the records rather than relying on the individual company secretaries.

Furthermore section 217 of the Company's Act (2008) requires external companies to file annual returns in which the information contained in them should include the name and the address of each shareholder of the company. Non-profit and profit making organizations need to retain certain records beyond their current use, according to regulatory, legal, financial, and operational requirements. OECD (2010) further reiterated that, Companies Act, Section 217 expects all companies limited by shares, including those formed under the Companies Act and those registered as external companies (i.e. foreign companies doing business in Botswana) to file an annual return that includes the name and address of each shareholder. Section 217 only emphasises that records can be maintained beyond their current use according to the regulatory, legal, financial and operational requirements, without stating the retention period that could be internationally accepted. Therefore, it is unclear on how long these records may be kept.

The Company Act section 270 highlights the importance of keeping accounting records as they fairly present the state of affairs and the business of the company. These records should show the assets, liabilities, members' contributions, undrawn profits, revaluations of fixed assets and amounts of loans to and from members. These records must also reveal clearly the nature of the

transactions as well as state the parties involved in these transactions (Section 270(1) (c). Furthermore, Section 270(5) emphasizes that a company fails to comply with what has been stated shall be guilty of an offence. Section 219 (1)(a) (b) highlights that the records that should be available to the shareholders of the company for inspection include minutes of all meetings and resolutions of shareholders, copies of annual reports, financial statements and group financial statements. Therefore failure to comply with the provisions of this act shall lead to penalty not exceeding P20 000 as stipulated by Section 492(2) of the Companies Act.

Although Sections 217,218, 219 and 270 of the Companies Act have pointed out some penalties for failure to comply they do not stipulate the periods on which the records are to be kept by the organisations. Besides, the sections do not indicate the records management procedures and processes that could be employed by the private organisations.

### 2.4.1.2. Botswana Income Tax Act 62:01 OF 2006 and Value Added Tax

Pinson (2004) notes that business owners keep records to provide income tax information which should be retrieved and verified easily. Business records are kept to provide information needed to satisfy tax requirements. Therefore various documents needed to support any information on tax return should be retained. OECD (2010) indicates that corporate income tax is levied on the Botswana source taxable income on all companies, other than tax exempt bodies and small companies that elect to be treated as partnerships or sole proprietorships. This elaborates that local and foreign business entities win Botswana are liable to pay tax.

Section 26(1) of the Income Tax Act stipulates that any person carrying on any business shall keep proper records of his/her business transactions. On the other hand, Section 26(3) states that the commissioner general of Botswana Unified Revenue Services (BURS) may direct the method of accounting or manner in which payments should be made or commercial transactions should be recorded. Ramesh (2005) further reports that BURS expects any registered person to retain records for at least seven (7) years after the end of the tax period. Failure to do that constitutes an offence or imprisonment. The records to be maintained are:

- Original tax invoices, tax credit notes and tax debit notes
- Copies of all invoices, credit notes and tax debit notes

- Customs documentation relating to imports and exports
- Accounting records and any other records as may be prescribed by commissioner-general

According to OECD (2010) Botswana has harmonised the VAT and Income Tax Act to fall in line with VAT which states that original invoices, credit notes and debit notes should be maintained. In addition, the Commissioner General has the powers to enter premises and seize documents where necessary in relation to the liability of any person to tax (Income Tax Act, section. 70). In this scenario, the act only emphasises that the records are to be retained without stipulating the processes, procedures and best practices of maintaining the records. However, the act does not state the number of years one would serve for failure to comply with its requirement. In contrast with Sarbanes–Oxley Act of 2002(which monitors compliance to records management on public companies in US) failure for the business community to follow SOX records retention requirements results in an imprisonment of 20 years (Balovich, 2007).Furthermore, Iyanda et.al (2011) highlights that some retail outlets in Botswana fail to keep records which are essential for VAT calculation. In addition, Madibana (2013) emphasizes that a Zimbabwean owned company called FCZ timbers owed BURS Millions of tax. Pitse (2013) reiterates that some big local companies were being investigated by BURS for evading tax. PEFA (2009) further reiterates that Tax compliance was poor in Botswana. It is a common practice that both local and foreign companies do not comply with VAT requirements.

### 2.4.1.3. Botswana Employment Act 47:01 of 2003

Like other statutes the Employment Act requires any employer to keep his/her employees' records including personal information, nature of employment, wage details, leave data and others. Section 9(2) states that the employer may be required by commissioner of labour to provide written information concerning the number of employees employed by him or her in any particular employment. It should also include their basic pay or wages and the conditions generally affecting such employment and within such a period of time as may be specified in the notice. Section 9(5) indicates that anyone who fails to comply with section 9(2) of the Employment Act (Chapter 47:01) shall be liable to a fine stipulated on section151(c) of the same act. He/she will be fined P1500 for imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or both.

Although the employment Act stipulates that the employer should record the number of employees and their wages and keep the employees' pay slips, it does not indicate other types of records such as annual leave, qualifications, sick leave, and employment tax returns. It is unclear on how long records such as payrolls should be kept by the employer. On the contrary, Balovich (2007) asserts that Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 expects payrolls to be kept permanently. However, New Jersey Labour and Workforce Development (2009) indicated that the employer must keep wage and hour records (include regular hourly wage, gross to net amounts with its itemised deductions and basis on which wages were paid) for six years.

According to New Jersey Labour and Workforce Development (2009) the employer is required to keep all pertinent employees' records available for inspection by authorized personnel division of taxation. These include among the list:

> Amounts and dates of all wage payments subject to gross income tax,
> Names ,addresses and occupations of employees
> Periods of their employment
> Their social security numbers
> Record of weekly, monthly, quarterly remittances and annual returns.

In comparison with the Botswana Employment act the abovementioned workers' records were not clearly stated.

### 2.4.1.4. Botswana Hire Purchase Act of 1974

Section 6 of the Hire Purchase Act of 1974 states that where goods are sold on hire purchase terms or by credit sale or on other terms as deferred payment, it is important that the following conditions should be taken into consideration: The amount of any deposit, each instalment and the frequency of the instalments, the total number of instalments and total amount to be paid by way of deposit and instalments shall be displayed.

On another note, Kayawe (2009) reports that Supreme Furnishers and Furnmart did not comply with section 6 of the Hire Purchase Act. Their advertisements did not disclose the total amount to

be paid as deposit, each instalment, and frequency of the instalments, total number of instalments and the total amount to be paid. This is also an indication, that some local and foreign organisations hardly comply with some laws and this was further emphasised by Ramesh (2005) who asserts that there was lack of compliance in Botswana.

**2.4.1.5. Business records management and ISO 15489:2001**

Hughes (2003) points out that the companies' willingness to manage records according to the best practice of records management is demonstrated by their use standards. This is further supported by Chachage and Ngulube (2006) that though ISO 15489 on records management is not mandatory on business entities, it is important for private sector to adopt, as most of the international companies are likely to do business with organisations whose activities are governed by standards.

McLeod and Childs (2005) on their project of assessing the impact of 15489 in the UK organisations outlined the changes made by the international standard as:

- Development or review of records management policy or procedures

- A higher profile and importance of records management in their organisations

- Greater awareness of records management issues and/or more discussion of issues

- Recognition that record keeping was part of everyone's job

- Records being seen as an organisational asset.

It appears that the implementation of the ISO15489:2001standard has contributed significantly to the understudied UK's organisations. It should be noted that that the standard enabled these organisations to recognise records as an organisational asset. The organisations understood that records should receive the same level of attention and commitment as other corporate resources. De wet and Du Toit (2000) indicates that records are an enterprise's resources just like any other

resource within the enterprise such as people, money and real estate. Gross (2002) has further reiterates that managing records is a vital part of any business operation.

Furthermore, for the retail industry to accomplish proper service delivery to its customers, it must first of all employ the ISO 15489:2001 records management practices. Adopting the ISO 15489 standard by the business will really indicate that records management is taken seriously as a critical business function as it is an international profession that is committed to improving service delivery and high quality services (Hughes, 2003).Improved and high quality services within the retail industry may be provided only when the ISO 15489 records management practices are applied. Furthermore, the retail industry should avail records management resources to improve service delivery as the retrieval of information will be done quickly.

The personnel responsible for managing records in the retail industry must be trained.ISO 15489:2001 states that records management includes: setting policies and standards; assigning responsibilities and authorities; establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines, providing a range of services relating to the management and use of records; designing, implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records; and integrating records management into business systems and processes. Therefore, the establishment of ISO15489:2001 by the private sector (business entity) in managing its records will enable it to set up records management policies as a priority. By so doing the business entity will be able to engage trained personnel in the management of records. IRMT (2000) and Chachage and Ngulube (2006) have reiterated that records management should be performed by well trained and qualified staff. It should be noted that McLeod and Childs (2005) asserts indicates that the standard is non–context specific, which means that polices and guidelines need to be created based on it.

Gunnlaugsdottir (2002) points out that those organisations which pursue the ISO15489:2001 create records which are authentic, reliable, and useful. This will enable the organisations to protect the integrity of the records and employees will be held accountable for the actions. The records should be managed in compliance with the regulatory environment (ISO15489:2001

section 8.2). Compliance with the regulatory environment helps the business to avoid the burden of being charged penalties for failure to comply.

The establishment of the standard in the retail industry will enable it to institute a records management programme that will integrate records management into the business systems and processes. This will help all businesses to manage their transactions professionally. In addition to this, records will then be recognized as evidence of an organization's activity. The standard will also enable organisation to decide on the form of records to create as well as the appropriate technologies needed to support this creation.

The ISO 15489:2001 indicates that organizations should have formal guidelines regulating permission to access to records. The organisations are also expected to set out clearly the circumstances under which the access will take place. The regulatory environment in which the organization operates should establish broad principles on access rights, and conditions or restrictions that should be incorporated into the operation of records systems (ISO 15489-1 Section 9.7). Although the standard mentions that  user identification protocols may be utilized it is not clear how that can be performed in an internationally accepted way.

Foscarini (2009) argues that the ISO 15849 international standard must be applied globally but he or she does not give detailed guidance on which legislation or regulation should be used to manage its records. Nevertheless , it is still ideal for the business organisations to employ the standard as it has some many benefits as stipulated by IRMT (2000), Gunnlaugsdottir (2002), (Hughes, 2003), McLeod and Childs (2005), Chachage and Ngulube (2006).

**2.4.1.6. Records management policies and procedures**

ISO 15489-1:2001, (Section 6.2:5) states that organisations should define and document a records management policy, which will create and manage | authentic, reliable, and usable records. The records management policy will give guidance on creating records that are reliable, authentic as well as useable to support the different business functions and activities.

A records management policy is a document that serves as a mandate for managing records in an organisation. It is a statement that describes what the organisation does and intends to do with

respect to its records (Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers, 2007). According to Cole and Kelly (2011) policy statements pronounce on what the organisation will and will not do in pursuance of its overall purpose and objectives. The Policy further indicates the purpose of the organisation and states clear objectives of the organisation. Therefore a records management policy should be clearly state the objectives of the organisation and its records management practices.

The records management policy should outline the roles and responsibilities of the staff members in the records management function. The policy should also inform the staff and management about the importance of records management in the organisation.

NECCC (2004) stated that an effective records management policy will ensure that only records that are required by law and those needed for business continuity are retained. National Archives (2010) also maintains that a records management policy is a cornerstone of effective management of records in an organisation. It provides a framework for supporting documents such as procedures, business rules, and disposal schedules. Both NECCC (2004) and National Archives (2010) agree that a records management policy should ensure that other documents that are valuable to the running of the organisation should also be taken care of. Records management policies in organizations should ensure that records with utmost value are retained, to allow business continuity. The records management policy should also ensure that the organisation complies with relevant legislation. Furthermore, the policy may enable the organisation to keep the records that may be required by laws of the country in which it is operating. This will enable the business organisation to avoid litigation costs.

Records management policies must be clearly articulate and promulgate throughout the organisation. The records management policies must also be enforced (Moore, 2004). NECCC (2004) supported this by highlighting that the policies and procedures must not be static. They should be distributed accordingly to all personnel in the organisation. Furthermore, the personnel must be trained in using these records management policies. A recent study carried out by NECCC (2004)) corroborates Moore's (2004) recommendation that all stakeholders in the organisations should be aware of records management policies. In other words, records management policies must be disseminated to all the functions of the organisation. As such, it should be compulsory that each function/department have the records management policy.

Lastly, the records management policy must clearly to be understood by all employees. According to Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007), it is important that the management of records must be supported by clear policies, procedures and guidelines if they are to retain their evidential values. Moreover, ISO 15489:2001 (Section 6.2) indicates that organisations should ensure that the policy is communicated and implemented at all levels in the organisation. Furthermore, the standard articulates that policies should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they reflect current business needs.

Moore (2004) advises that records management policies should be enforced the organisations. Before enforcing these, business organisations should train their personnel on how to use these policies before enforcing them. The records management policies may be enforced only when the personnel has been trained on how to use these policies. Once staff members are educated on the records management policies they would appreciate and acknowledge them.

It should be noted that, NECCC (2004) points out that policies and procedures should not be static. They must always be changed to suit appropriate environments in which the organisation is operating under. This may involve reviewing polices on a routine basis, preferably yearly, to make them more effective and efficient. However, this may occur particularly when the records management policies are guided or linked to the international standards and the legislation of the industry and the country in which the organisation is operating within.

McDonald (1998) articulates that there is lack of policy, legislation, systems, standards and practices for ensuring the protection and management of electronic records. According to State of Florida (2010), asserts records management policies should specifically apply to all organisational records in any format, including electronic. It is ideal that records management policies should cater for all records in the organisation, not only covering paper format like it is always the case in most organisations.

Many organisations do not address the costs associated with lost, missing or mis-information until something goes wrong of which it will be too late. King (2003) declared that clear records management policies and good records management practices at all levels of the organisation will minimize cost of missing information.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) pronounced that records management policy should be supported by more specific policies on creation, capture, retention, access or other aspects of the records management programme. This is further reiterated by NECCC (2004) that quality records management policies and procedures should have the retention schedules, classification procedures, and records storage procedures, back-up procedures and system documentation. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) together with NECCC (2004) share the same opinion that, for records management policy to be useful it should be accompanied by other policies or procedures on creation, capture, retention, classification, back-up and many more.

King (1997) asserts that business organisations value their traditional resources more than records. This has led to them coming up with financial policies, expenditure programmes, human resources or personnel policies, staff development programmes and other, rather than records. This was further echoed by Wamukoya (2005) who noted that lack of awareness of records management is widespread in many public and private sector organisations. This is noticed through inadequate policies, standards and guidelines, as well as inefficiency and lack of management continuity. Wamukoya (2005) and King (1997) agreed that both public and private sector organisations lack records management policies. It could be concluded that many public and private sector organisations are not aware that records management is an important organizational function. This may have resulted in these organisations lacking well defined information policies.

## 2.5. Records Management resources in the private sector

Effective records management in the private organisation may prevail, provided there are sufficient resources in place. Resources are a prerequisite for a records management service, as such accommodation, equipment and staff with specialist skills are usually required (Shepherd and Yeo 2003).

### 2.5.1. Staffing training

Records work must be seen as a worthwhile career, not as the posting of the last resort for those who are not qualified, incompetent or idle (IRMT, 2000).Records management should be managed by individuals who are qualified in the discipline. According to the international

records management practice (ISO 15489-1: Section 11), an organisation should establish an ongoing programme of records training. Therefore, organisations can set up their own records management training programmes or can set up the training programmes with external bodies. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) point out that to manage records according to the Life Cycle, Records Continuum theory or the Hybrid Model the staff should be trained to manage records.

Furthermore, Lan (2003) points out that the private sector has a lower level of professional skills in records management. This is, an indication that records management in the private sector is not yet taken seriously. It is still at its infant stage as there is lack of skills, professionalism and knowledge in records management (Hughes, 2003). Due to the fact that, there is unskilled manpower and technical know-how of managing records in the private sector, this indicates that records management is compromised.

King (2003) asserts that most of the senior management and board of directors in organisations have business–related qualifications. They may not be aware that records management is a recognized strategic business function. Top management in private organisations are qualified in business related courses and for this reason they may not take records management as an important business function. IRMT (2003) asserts that lack of training of personnel in organisations on records management may lead to lack of competencies in managing records and archives. It should be noted that Lan (2003) and Hughes (2003) do not highlight the relevant records management qualifications suitable for an organisation in the business environment even though they opine that organisations lack trained personnel. As King (2003) has already emphasised that the most of the personnel in the business environment have business-related qualifications. It would be ideal that they also take records management courses. Furthermore, the companies may also provide in–service training to their personnel.

On the other hand, it is important to note that Chachage and Ngulube (2006) argued that human resource that is fully trained in the handling of records in the organisation will definitely deliver quality service and will be highly productive. As such, it is important that records management must be pursued in highly recognised institutions or universities. No records management programme, no matter how well designed it is, can function without an adequate number of suitably qualified support staff.

### 2.5.2. Records management equipments and materials

IRMT (2000) asserts that sufficient and appropriate equipment and materials should be provided for handling, storing and preserving records throughout their life cycle. The use of sufficient and appropriate equipment reduces costs and waste in the organisation. Harvey (1993) cited in Ellis (1997) states that materials of high quality which are not harmful to the items/records should be used. Furthermore, paper and board should be permanent acid free or alkaline buffered with Ph 8-10. Materials that meet these requirements prevent the rapid deterioration of records. Some of the records management equipment and materials are further discussed below:

**a) Shelves**

Shelves should be used in storing records effectively and efficiently, and therefore, steel shelves that are sufficient for projected growth, should be used to store records (Bicknese and Hendry, 2006). The depth and width of shelves should fit standard boxes or files efficiently and meet security needs, and safe and easy access for users (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). It is also essential that the installation of shelves should be cost-effective, and easy to maintain and use.

**b) Cabinets**

Filing cabinets may be used to store current records and they are useful for small quantities of records where only one user requires access at one time (Bicknese and Hendry 2006). Cabinets used in offices to store records should be locked to secure the records.

**c) Boxes**

It is recommended that standard boxes of about 375mm (15 inches) deep, 300 mm (12 inches) wide and 250mm (10 inches) high should be used to store records. The boxes should have an integral or separate lid and hand holes at each end (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).On the other hand, Bicknese and Hendry (2006) suggest that flat boxes should be used because they allow weak, flimsy, damaged or oversize archival records to lie flat for storage, rather than upright. They also have a removable lid, metal-reinforced corner and optical drop front bottom to allow insertion and removal of records with less chance of bending or damage.

### 2.5.3. Records Storage/Accommodation

IRMT (2000:35) stated that adequate accommodation is essential for proper functioning of records service. Records storage areas should be able to accommodate adequate organisational records. Furthermore World Bank (2000) recommends that to manage records effectively the following accommodation is required:

- Registries or records offices for the storage and use of current records;
- Records centres for the storage and retrieval of semi-current records; and
- Archival repositories for the preservation and use of archival record

Records should be kept in a reliable storage location and should not be altered or tampered with to protect their integrity (Van Garden, 2003). The records storage centres are places where security of records protection should be taken into consideration. The records accommodation must be strong and secure so that it can bear the weight of the records (IRMT, 2000:35). Furthermore storage centres should be safe, secure, clean, efficient and economic. Records centres serve as storage facilities that receive and administrate all records in whatever format; provide a reference service based upon the records; and dispose of records in accordance with the disposal schedules and plans (IRMT, 2000). The records centres are the areas where effective and efficient management of records is performed professionally. In addition, the climatic conditions (temperature and humidity) should be kept at controlled levels. Bicknese and Hendry (2006) states that the records storage area should have a central heat and air conditioning to provide adequate environmental protection for the records. The ideal temperature for archival storage is 67degrees Fahrenheit (19.44 C), plus or minus 2 degrees Fahrenheit, relative humidity of 47 percent, plus or minus2 degrees. The fluctuations in temperature and humidity are harmful to records.

### 2.5.4. Records management committee

Chachage and Ngulube (2006) assert that records management committees are essential for designing a records keeping system and sharing information about appraisal decision making

between various shareholders. Records management committees are crucial for coming up with decisions on appraisal procedures as well as creating records keeping systems for sharing information in the organisation. In addition to this, Formtek Incorporation (2012) reports that the records management committee should be made up of a records manager, representative from the legal counsel, IT technical staff, finance/accounting, tax, human resources and risk management to provide oversight for the program. In other words, the records management should be made up of personnel from different departments of the organisation. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) indicate that various stakeholders should be in the records management committee to reduce conflict and suspicion among stakeholders about the value of records and their disposal. Furthermore, top management should be in the management committee so that they can be educated on how the business should manage its records according to best practices. In this regard, top management will have positive influence on how records are to be managed fruitfully. Formtek Incorporation (2012) outlines duties of the records management committee as follows:

- It should meet regularly to assess the state of the records management program to assure that it is properly staffed and operating well.
- It is responsible for creating the records management policy, approving records retention schedules, and making recommendations to the top management on the disposal of records.
- It further communicates key records management problems or issues to organisational management.

According to University College Cork (2014) the records management committee is also responsible for establishing a vital records management programme for the organisation. This means that, the committee controls the records management activities in the Organisation. Once the programme has been launched, the specific functions of the committee should include:

- Approving records retention schedules
- Making recommendations to the Top management on disposal of records following sanctioning from the records retention schedules

- Assisting and communicating key records management problems or issues and assisting in the establishment of a vital records management programme for the organisation.

Yusof and Chell (1999) cited in Chachage and Ngulube (2006) assert that there is lack of records management committees in many companies in Malaysia. This is further supported by Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2008) in their research study on corporate records management of companies in Iringa region (Tanzania) who indicate that corporate records management models lacked records management committees to set up policies and procedures to oversee the appraisal and retention schedules as well as overall management of the corporate records management systems. Therefore it is common practice that many companies in the business sector do not have records management committees.

## 2.6. Records creation and retention procedures

### 2.6.1. Records Creation and capture

Public or private organisations create and receive records in various formats. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) advised that organisations should create and capture records for every activity that involves more than one party. Irrespective of the format, any record which is created must be a full and accurate account of an activity to which it relates. As such, the main purpose of creating records is to provide evidence of activities that have been completed. Records capturing involves identifying business information and putting it aside for future use and reference. Each record should be assigned a unique identifier and entered into a record profile (Van Garden, 2003). However, irrespective of the format, each record must be a full and accurate account of an activity to which it relates.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003:102) argue that in many organisations, decisions about whether to create and capture records are left to individuals or workgroups but this is not recommended. Therefore, it is essential that a policy on creating and capturing of records be established. On the other hand, the International Council on Archives (2008) advises that records are created in a diverse range of formats. They may comprise multiple individual objects (compound records), and may be transmitted by a wide range of communication channels (workflows, email, postal mail).Therefore , electronic records management systems must capture the content, structure and

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context of records to ensure that they are reliable and authentic representations of the business activities or transactions in which they were created or transmitted. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) also stated that organisations should create and capture records for every activity that involves more than one party. It is ideal that, the records created and captured in the business organisations should have characteristics of authenticity, usability, reliability and integrity. The business records with these characteristics will be useful to the business users, lawyers, auditors and regulators.

On the other hand, IRMT, (2009) points out that records that document activities, transactions and decision-making processes (such as instructions, procedures, reports and approvals) should be filed and kept in safe and secure places or systems.

### 2.6.2. Records Classification in the business sector

According to IRMT (2000) asserts that classification organizes records into categories, based on functions and activities the records represent, so that decisions about their organisation, storage, transfer and disposal may be made on a category-wide basis, and not file by file or item by item. This is further supported by Morelli (2007) who states that a classification scheme is a conceptual structure intended to group information together into standard groupings so that policy decisions can be made on how to manage the information throughout its life cycle. IRMT (2000) and Morelli (2007) agree that classification of records involves grouping them together according to their similar classes. As such, this grouping leads to making decisions on how the records may be managed in the organisation. Therefore, the main purpose of having a classification scheme is to make policies and manage information.

ISO 15489-2001 recognizes that classification establishes "linkages between individual records which accumulate to provide a continuous record of activity." The classification of records links them together as evidence of the activities that the organisation has performed. On the other hand, IRMT (2009) states that a classification scheme is a hierarchical tool that can 'facilitate the capture, titling, retrieval, maintenance and disposal of records.' The classification scheme is one of the important foundations for any electronic or paper records management programme. It is the central tool used to describe, categorise and control records. The classification also organises

records into categories so that there can be no doubt about the appropriate place for an individual item. If records are filed logically, information can be retrieved by anyone at any time according to a consistent set of rules and guidelines.

On the other hand, Bilotto and Guercio (2003) define classification as an instrument for organising records developed in the modern era to support the recordkeeping function of administrative apparatuses that are more complex. The main purpose of the classification scheme is to come up with rules or ways of managing records. It also serves as a guide of records that have been created and are kept in specific files. The classification scheme avoids duplication of efforts and opening of files that have already been opened.

Without a functional organization of classification system, many basic activities are impossible or very expensive to deal with; particularly the appraisal task (Bilotto and Guercio, 2003).The functional classification of records in an organization promotes the appraisal of records. Therefore, without a classification system, the process of appraising records will be impossible or extremely expensive.

A classification system in organisations can work well as long as it is based on functions and macro-activities and not on staff flowcharts that keep on changing in public and in private areas (Bilotto and Guercio, 2003). Classifying records and business information by functions and activities has moved away from traditional classification based on organizational structure or subject. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) concur with Bilotto and Guercio (2003) by stating that functions and activities provide a more stable framework for classification than organizational structures that are often subject to change through amalgamation, devolution and decentralization). A functional classification of records is appropriate in the sense that organisations keep on changing due to merging or decentralization purposes.

Nevertheless, Foscarini (2009) argues that functional classification fails to reflect the way end users of such a classification system carry out their work on a day to day basis. This could be contributed by the fact that users do not understand and dislike function-based classification schemes because it is hard to use. Morelli (2004) further reiterates that users may find functional classification strange. Therefore, people working with functional classification in different parts

of the organisation must understand it fully. Training in the form of seminars, working meetings and workshops must be employed. This may ultimately enable the employees to use the classification without supervision.

Commonwealth of Australia (2003) stated that a record should be classified according to why it exists and how it functions rather than by what it is about or its subject. The idea of classifying records according to functions is important in the sense that it allows the organisation to identify records that should be created for their evidential value for the business as well as giving a priority to the business records that must be captured. In addition, classification of records enables one to understand what the organisation is doing, and hence gives a full description of it.

ISO 15489-2001 outlined that classification assists in determining appropriate retention periods and disposition of records. Van Houten (2010) indicates that classification categories records should have common attributes on retention periods and disposition. The classification scheme can assist organisations to apply retention policies to a group of records. This involves assigning a disposal authority that can be used to determine the record's retention period and its eventual disposal (destruction or preservation). Functional based classification assists those who have the responsibility of managing records to make decisions on the retention schedules of records. Furthermore records classification may be used for the disposal of records.

ISO 15489-1: 2001(Section 9.5.2:14) states that "Classification systems reflect the business of the organization from which they are derived and are normally based on analysis of the organization's business activities. Macintosh and Real (2007) supports this by highlighting that classification scheme is evidence of those transactions (letters, e-mails, receipts) that create records. The ISO 15489-1: 2001(Section 9.5.1:13) emphasises that the classification of business activities may determine the security, protection and access to appropriate sets of records. Van Garden (2003) reiterates that a security classification code should be assigned to determine who may access the records and under what conditions. In this regard, one may highlight that records classification plays a pivotal role in the retrieval and protection of records. Records classification makes it possible to manage records retention, assign access privileges, protect records confidentiality, retrieve records in context, and manage the work flow.

Although classification plays a significant role in managing organisational records, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) caution that records management systems are poorly structured in many organisations, and it is often difficult to gain contextual information from them. Blitto and Guercio (2003) support Shepherd and Yeo (2003) by highlighting that there is lack of experience in the business sector on building the classification scheme that makes records management a serious challenge. Records classification is not a priority in some public and private organisations .As such each business unit may have its own classification system with no consistency across the organisation.

### 2.6.3. Records disposition and retention of business records

NECC (2004) affirms that the best time to dispose of records are at the end of a fiscal or calendar year, or at the end of an audit for companies only when the retention of the records has expired and legal permission has been granted for destruction. In addition, records should be destroyed when their retention periods have elapsed and when the legal procedures have been followed and authorisation to do so has been given.

Records disposition involves appraising groups of records (disposal classes) and assigning them a common retention period and final disposal (preservation or destruction).This involves identifying and monitoring the retention periods for records and triggering a disposal event when the retention period expires. The aspect involves transferring records to semi-current or archival repository for storage and securely destroying them (Van Garden, 2003). Effective management of records requires that there must be procedures for timely disposal of records that are no longer needed to support the current organisational business. On the other hand, State of Florida (2010) emphasised that disposition and retention periods of records are determined by the content, nature and purpose of records. Disposition and retention periods are mostly based on legal, fiscal, administrative and historical values, regardless of physical format.

Nonetheless, Van Garden (2003) mentioned that retention and disposition involve ways or methods, in which the records can be transferred or destroyed securely or safely. However, Van Garden does not mention the methods which are environmentally safe for destroying paper records. On this note, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) mention that paper records can be destroyed by shredding or more securely by pulping or incineration. These are considered to be the

environmentally friendly methods of destroying records. However, State Records of New South Wales (2005) overemphasises that pulping is a more secure method of destruction. Burning of records should not be accepted as it is harmful to the environment. It should be noted that State Records of New South Wales (2005) advises that both paper and microforms should be recycled where possible. This may also include some of the electronic records such magnetic tapes, compact disk, memory sticks and others.

Bowden (2004) suggests that companies need to know with full legal confidence when they can delete their electronic records. The destruction of records should be based on the legal framework. Contrary to this, State Records of South Australia (2014) asserts that records in electronic format must only be destroyed by reformatting or rewriting as it ensures that data is completely destroyed in the system. Deletion of electronic records is not adequate as data may be restored or recovered. Overwriting is a software process that replaces the data previously stored on magnetic storage media with a predetermined set of meaningless data. Sarbanes Oxley Act (2002) points out that in Balovich (2007) reported that financial records, especially accounts payable should be kept for a period of 7 years as indicated in figure 2.1below. However the companies should abide by the legislation. This requires confirming on whether the records are not on legal hold before they are disposed. In this regard, the records would be kept longer than the 7 years period until the legal hold has elapsed. Furthermore, section 9.2(b) of ISO 15489:2001 articulates that records retention should be managed to:

- Meet current and future business needs

- Comply with legal requirements by ensuring that regulatory environment applicable to records for specific business activities is documented, understood and implemented.

- Meet the current and future needs of internal and external stakeholders

Records retention may meet current and future needs by retaining information on past and present decisions. It will also assist in retaining evidence of the past and present activities to meet accountability. Records retention should comply with legal requirements and this must be written, comprehended and used. Records retention should meet the current and future needs of internal and external stakeholders by identifying the interests of stakeholders in preserving the records for longer than they are required by the organisation.

Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2008) assert that some companies in Tanzania did not appraise or make inventories or establish retention schedules. On the other hand, Kalusopa and Ngulube (2012) found that labour organisations in Botswana did not have clear rules and procedures that authorise the retention and disposal of records. Furthermore, Ramokate and Moatlhodi (2010:75) highlight that policies for retaining and disposing of records in the public sector were non–existent in Botswana. All the research studies produced by Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2008), Ramokate and Moatlhodi (2010:75) and Kalusopa and Ngulube (2012), revealed that some companies in the private and public sectors (Botswana and Tanzania) did not have proper rules or regulations concerning the appraising and retention of records. Appraisal assists the organisations to retain records based on organisational values such as administrative, evidence and research. ISO 15489-1:2001(Section 9.9:16) points out that disposition may involve the retention of records for a further period within the business unit.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) further reiterate that it is necessary to utilise appraisal techniques to support decisions about retention indicating which records can be destroyed at an early stage and which ones can have indefinite retention. Furthermore the disposition may involve the transfer of records to an appropriate storage area /medium under organisational control. According to ISO 15489-1:2001 (Section 9.9:16) emphasises that the destruction of records should always be authorized. Furthermore, the exercise of records destruction should also preserve the confidentiality of any information they contain. ISO 15489-1 (Section 8.3.7:10) demands that records systems should be capable of facilitating and implementing decisions on the retention or disposition of records. It should be possible for these decisions to be made at any time in the existence of records, including during the design stage of records systems (ISO 15489-1 Section 8.3.7:10). Disposition authority that governs the removal of records from operational systems should be applied in a systematic and routine basis, in the course of normal business activity. No disposition should take place without assurance that the records are no longer required, that no work is outstanding and that no litigation or investigation is current or pending which requires the records as evidence (ISO 15489-1 Section 9.9:16). Records retention and disposition are fundamental to efficient and effective records management. They help the organisation to control the growth of records, achieve compliance with records retention legislation and reduce financial liability resulting as a result of missing information (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006).

Organisations must evaluate their records and determine retention periods based on the life cycle of the records. This must be based on active use, semi–active use and disposition stages of the record (Bicknese and Hendry, 2006). Business organisations and public sectors should manage their records according to the Record Life Cycle model. Proper disposition eases the records management burden by reducing storage volumes and controlling potential sources of future liability and discovery expenses (Kahn and Blair, 2004). Records disposition enables the organisation to save costs of keeping large volumes of records. Balovich (2008) indicates that SOX (Sarbanes Oxley) has accepted retention periods of the various businesses as shown on table 2.1

**Table 2.1: Retention period for business records**

| Document type | Retention period |
| --- | --- |
| Accounts payable ledger | 7 years |
| Accounts receivable ledger | 7 years |
| Bank statements | permanent |
| Charts of accounts | permanent |
| Contracts and leases | permanent |
| Correspondence(legal) | permanent |
| Employee payroll records | permanent |
| Employment applications | 3years |
| Inventories of products | 7 years |
| Invoices from customers | 5years |
| Invoices from vendors | 5years |
| Payroll records and tax returns | 7years |
| Purchase orders | 5 years |
| Time cards and daily reports | 7 years |

Source: Balovich, 2007

### 2.6.4. Managing electronic records

Businesses today seek formal structured recordkeeping for their electronic documents and content to comply with regulations and laws (Bowden, 2004).This requires the installation of the electronic records software for formal and structured recordkeeping practices. E-records may be categorized as text files produced by word processing ; data files stored in numbers that can be manipulated using arithmetic processes; analogue audio and visual records ;disaggregated data ;databases; machine instruction sets; image files and digital documents (Wamukoya and Mutula, 2005). Electronic records are in a variety of forms that are processed through the use of computer technology.

MacDonald (1998) articulates that there is lack of policy, legislation, systems, standards and practices for ensuring the protection and proper management of electronic records. This means, some organisations lack policies, legislation and standards on how to manage their electronic records. Bowden, (2004) highlights that electronic recordkeeping provides a means by which a company can begin to demonstrate its recordkeeping accountability to shareholders, customers and regulators. It should be easy for all the stakeholders to access electronic records when it is appropriate.

### 2.6.5. Records security/security of electronic records

Security of records should aim to minimize unauthorized, addition, modification, alteration, erasure or deletion of data, records and documentation. Only authorized personnel should have access to records (Massachusetts Archives, 2012). Securing of electronic records allows authorized persons to access them, as well as creating back-ups of those records. Disaster recovery back–ups for electronic records such as tapes or other media should be kept solely as a security precaution and are not intended to serve as a records retention tool (State of Florida, 2010). Electronic records should be secured against loss or damage through the creation of back-ups. This involves converting the electronic records into other media such as tapes, paper or microfilm. It is important that the records should also be stored in accessible storage device, so that the back-up is not used as a records retention tool.

In order to minimize unauthorized access or alteration of data, records and documents, NECCC (2004) asserts that authentication technologies are used to verify the identity of the user to ensure that they are legitimate. The users may be required to use their passwords to access the information from the computers. In addition to this, the controls should provide and maintain audit trails or other methods to demonstrate that the records are effectively protected from unauthorized use, alteration or destruction (ISO 15489-1, Section 8.3.6:10). Bicknese and Hendry (2006) further assert that appropriate storage environment, handling procedures and media are essential for records' security throughout their life cycle. Records are liable to damage from natural as well as man-made disasters. Bantin (2002) indicates that most of the organisations typical strategy for protecting data is to generate daily back-ups of the system to protect data and to support the disaster recovery and ensure business continuance. Some software applications may be used to protect the electronic records. The software will allow the users to access the records without editing or deleting them (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).The software application does not allow the patrons to alter the records, and they always remain authentic. Audit trail may be used to automatically log on to the date and the identity of the operator, when capturing or assigning metadata. Any changes made will be logged to show that they are authorized (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).Back-ups can be created by making copies of the electronic records that can be stored at the off-site records centres or in other buildings occupied by the organisation (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).On another note, retention of backup media should also be aligned to the organisation records management disposal and retention policies. In order to limit unauthorized access to confidential records, organisations should use passwords to access information in the computers. Scarfone and Souppaya (2008) define a password as a secret character or code that a claimant uses to authenticate its identity. Using a password with a user identifier, such as a user name, is one form of identification and authentication. The passwords are to be kept secret by the users.

## 2.7. Challenges that might be encountered in the retail industry

Mnjama and Wamukoya (2007) points out that emergence and growing importance of records as a means of communicating and preserving corporate information poses new challenges. The

IRMT (2003) stipulates that the absence of organizational plans for managing records is a big challenge, as well as low awareness of role of records management in support of organizational efficiency and accountability. Furthermore, the absence of legislation and budgets dedicated for records management and the absence of core competencies in records and archives management contribute to the major challenges. This indicates that most of the policy makers in the African countries have not yet realized the importance of records management as a vehicle to deliver good governance, transparency, accountability and good decision making. Lastly, there are poor security and confidentiality controls

Roos (2003) argues that managers and staff in the business sector keep company records in their desk drawers, PC memories, databases and e-mails. This means that the company's records are not safe as they can be destroyed easily. This shows that the business records are stored individual person's office. As such, these different departments keep records anyway they prefer. Parker and Smith (1997) criticize a system in which records management is left to individual departments because it can lead to 'a subjective approach to retention. This may lead to departments corrupting the company records. IRMT (2003) also stipulates that the challenges of records involve not having organizational plans for managing records. Most companies do not preserve their documentary heritage to guarantee their historical heritage (Bilotto and Guercio, 2003). The preservation of the corporate memory is not taken seriously, as such that this information may be lost. Lan, (2003) argues that most of the business companies are faced with challenges such as having no special repositories or equipment, no professional personnel and inadequate budgets. They are also faced with lack of relevant records management resources that will allow smooth running of the programme.

Webster, Hare and McLeod (1999) highlight that most companies lack in-house records management expertise and as such they are manage their records haphazardly. Another challenge of keeping electronic records is that some individuals create and manage information objects independently of the corporate programmes which may result in the information being inaccessible. There is a likelihood that the retail industry may be faced with the challenges of keeping more electronic records than paper records (Benfell, 2002). It should be noted that organisational electronic records should not be kept in some individual computers. All records should be kept in the organisational server to be accessed by authorised personnel.

## 2.8. Strategic value of records

Records play a strategic role in guiding and framing the policies and decisions in an organisation. They enable the business organisations to comply with regulations and to produce evidence. Hawley Committee (1995) cited in Hughes (2003) states that effective records management links its employees and other stakeholders to the organizational knowledge and intellectual capital and therefore it should be taken as a valuable and strategic organizational resource. Records will inform the strategists on the weaknesses and strengths on the current activities the organisation is performing .Then that is when the executives can think of appropriate strategies that lead to the success of the organisation.

King (1997) advises that high ranking officers in companies should be aware of the importance of managing proprietary information in the same way as they are managing other resources. For records management to have a strategic value, it is ideal that information must be taken as an organisational asset in same way as other assets are regarded. According to Oppenheim, Stenson and Wilson (2001). Information assets comprise of organisational assets are documents such as: customer information, competitor information, product information, business processes, management information, people management, Legal and regulatory and Organisational information. Therefore it is important that records containing the above mentioned assets should be managed essentially as other organisational resources.

Sutcliffe (2003) further highlights that for business organisations to be successful, corporate records management functions should play a broader role than merely providing records management policy, guidance and acting as the main depository for information. This suggests that records play a pivotal role and they are the heart of every organisation, as there can be no business running without them. Therefore, it is very crucial that the businesses should establish records management functions/departments. The departments should coordinate and guide other functions such as Finance, Human resource, Procurement and others in managing records. For records management to be considered a strategic resource, it is important that records management policies should be linked to the strategic plan of the entire organisation (Hughes, 2003). For this reason, the records management policy will share the same strategic goals as those of organisation. The greatest need in the retail industry or any other organisation is to

develop strategies for managing records as a strategic resource for competitive advantage. King (1997) indicates that many organisations do not address the costs associated with lost, missing or misinformation until a disaster occurs. As such they have policies on finance, human resource capital and expenditure rather than information.

Records management should be seen as a dynamic activity which develops and changes with the business and changes (Diamond, 1995). Therefore any change in the organisation should also affect the way records management is practised. It is therefore imperative that top management in the organisation must support the records management programs. Hawley Committee (1995) cited in Hughes (2003) states that an executive committee, which is made up of senior management across all departments should be formed. The committee should introduce records management best practices which include retention, policies and procedures, accessing, indexing, compliance, accountability and disposal. The committee will have the responsibility of initiating appropriate records management practices that will allow easy access of records. As the executive is already in the strategic level of business organisation, this will also place records management in strategic management level.

## 2.9. Records management models

As indicated above, this study investigated records management practices at Supreme Furnishers, covering the processes from the creation to the disposal of records. Ngulube (2009) states that organisations usually do not base their records management practices on existing theories or principles of records management. On the other hand, Yusof and Chell (2000) assert that management of records should be guided by three main models, namely the records Life Cycle Model usually suitable for paper based records management, the Records Continuum and Hybrid Models which are suitable for electronic records environment. In addition to this, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) emphasised that the Hybrid Model is suitable for managing both the paper and electronic. This means that the Hybrid Model consists of some elements from both the Record Life Cycle Model and records continuum models. Therefore, this study was guided by the Hybrid Model because records of business records at Supreme Furnishers are in both paper and

electronic formats. The section that follows provides a review of the literature on all the records management models.

### 2.9.1. Record Life Cycle

In this model records are compared to the lives of organisms which are born, grow and eventually die. The first stage of record management is called the creation stage (current phase). At this stage the record is created and used more often in the organisation because it is active, valuable and has the highest value, and contains information which can be used as evidence. The next stage is the semi–active or semi-current phase. In this stage the record is now less used and has less information value or relevance. However, this record must still be kept for legal, evidential and historical value. The last stage is the non-current phase in which the record becomes inactive and is no longer used. Most records at this stage are destroyed but few are archived in the depositories for preservation (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). The stages of the Records Life Cycle Model are depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

**Figure 2.1: Life cycle Model**
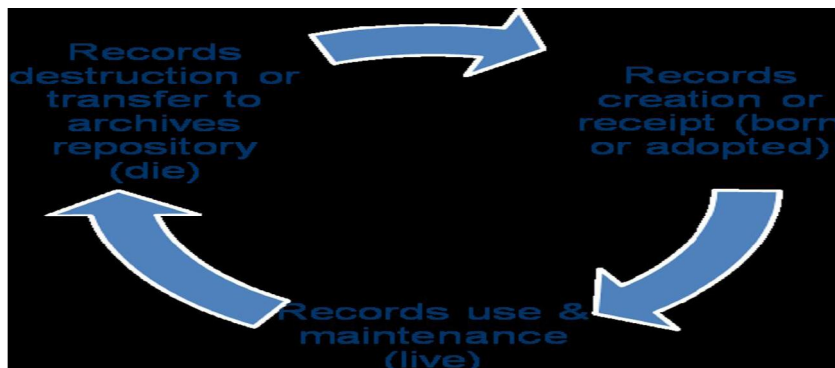


Source: IRMT (1999:19)

The Life Cycle Model does not only describe what will happen to a record but defines who will manage the record at each stage. During the creation and active periods (current phase), the record creators have primary responsibility for managing the record, although records managers may well be involved to various degrees (Bantin, 2002). In the semi-active stage, the records

manager takes centre stage and assumes major responsibility for managing the records. Finally, in the inactive stage the archivist takes the lead in preserving, describing, and providing access to the archival record.

### 2.9.2. The Record Continuum Model

AS4390 (1996) cited in Flynn (2001:8029), defines records continuum as a consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping system) through to the preservation and use of records as archives. In this model, the record does not pass through three stages as is the case with the Life Cycle Model. The life cycle model sees records passing through stages until they eventually 'die', except for the 'chosen ones' that are kept as archives (McKemmish, 1997). The continuum model allows the integration of dimensions through time-and space. In this scenario, records are 'fixed' in time and space from the moment of their creation, and recordkeeping systems will carry them forward. This will enable the records to be used for multiple purposes as they will be delivered to people living in different times and spaces. The Record Continuum was developed by Frank Upward and his colleagues. This was developed mainly to support the archivists to be accountable in their recordkeeping programs (Upward and McKemmish, 2006). In this model, a record is considered not to be having an end in its life time. A continuum is something continuous of which no separate parts are visible, and has a continuous series of elements passing into each other.

The difference of this model from the Life Cycle Model is that it is based upon an integration of the responsibilities and accountabilities associated with the management of records that must be displayed by both the records managers and the archivists. The Life Cycle concept is considered to be too focused on paper records (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003: 7). This indicates that life cycle model only caters for the paper records and as such it does not cater for the electronic records which the continuum model takes care of. The Record Continuum model is an integrated approach that sees the management of records as an archival business aimed at customer satisfaction, service delivery, cost effective management and adds value to records management.

The continuum model is customer driven and as such it may be suitable for managing business records (An, 2003).

The Records Continuum Model consists of four co-ordinated and integrated dimensions namely create, capture, organise and pluralize which are called the rhythm of the information processing continuum (Upward and McKemmish, 2006). These dimensions are further clarified below.

**Create** – This is the area where the business of action (all action) happens including representations of actions in documents. This occurs when the document is created.

**Capture** – This involves the routine storage and linkage of documents and/or data in systems in ways that enable sharing and re-use in the immediate business.

**Organise-**This dimension allows the documents and records to be organised, so that those who are not directly involved in the specific business or social processes, but have supervisory role as stakeholders in the organisation, can access and use what has already been created and captured.

**Pluralise-**Involves taking out information points beyond organisational contexts into forms of societal totalities, still more distant from the organisations, community totalities, and whole of person views. The first and second dimensions of the continuum model can be used as strategic and tactical approaches for controlling corporate recordkeeping.

**Figure 2.2: The records continuum model**
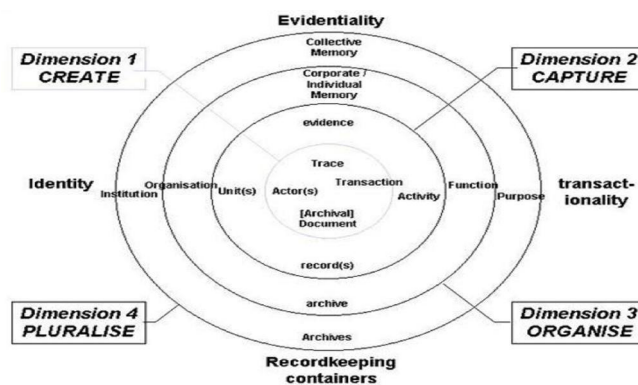


Source: Upward; (1996)

All the stages of records management in the continuum model are interrelated forming a continuous process in which the records managers and archivists are involved in various ways in the ongoing management of records (Atherton, 1985). There is a serious interaction of the dimensions unlike in the life cycle model where there is no interaction. Records continuum model enables the record to be used for multiple purposes. It provides recordkeeping systems that are able to connect the past to present and present to the future.

### 2.9.3. Hybrid Model

The Hybrid model is suitable for business organisations in the sense that electronic and paper based records are managed simultaneously. This results in high productivity and service delivery (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). This model allows for the management of both electronic and paper records. A Hybrid file is defined as a set of related electronic and physical records which are stored partly in electronic file within the Electronic Records Management System (ERMS) and also stored partly in the paper file outside the ERMS (Howard, 2002).This simply means that both the electronic and physical records are to be classified under the same classification scheme because they are similar except that they are in different formats which must be managed together hence the word Hybrid.

The Hybrid model allows the use of both electronic and paper records, where an electronic system may be used to locate the paper records. This model is appropriate for any business as it is not time consuming. Through the use of the electronic systems, various options can be used to retrieve duplicates of the filed documents in different headings. Paper records are filed physically in storage places (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). This reveals that paper records can be used for backup purposes by being stored in safe places. On the other hand the electronic records may be manipulated to provide quality service. The attributes of the Hybrid model (modified life cycle model) as stated by Chachage and Ngulube (2006) are:

**Prenatal phase:** This is a participatory design approach where records managers and archivists, management and other stakeholders participate in designing the records keeping systems.

**Current phase**: This is a records creation or receipt, storage and maintenance for administrative use stage which involves creating, capturing and accessing of records.

**Semi-current phase**: This involves an on-site or off-site storage of records in records centres. These activities involve transferring records to the centres or intermediate storage.

**Non-active phase:** This is a stage where records are no longer active, no longer needed and they must be disposed off, by either being destroyed or transferred to the archives. The transfer of records to the archive will depend on their value to the organisation.

This study is guided by the modified Life Cycle Model (Hybrid model). This model is relevant to this study in the sense that Supreme Furnishers manages both paper and electronic records. This modified Life Cycle Model was once recommended by Chachage and Ngulube (2006), in their exploratory case study of selected companies in Tanzania. The model is internationally accepted and it is used to manage records in all formats. The modified Life Cycle Model strikes a balance between Record Life Cycle and the Continuum models (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). It further ensures consistency in classification, security, access controls and retention policies on both paper and electronic records (Howard, 2002). The use of modified Life Cycle Model in the business organisation allows audit trails for transactions and it also reduces duplication of efforts as the paper records and electronic records are integrated.

The Hybrid **M**odel allows the enterprises to manage paper and electronic records within the same Information Technology (IT) systems and this assists the organisation during times of disasters and litigations (Sprehe, 2002). This means that information is held in electronic records. It should be similar to the one held in the paper format. Hence this will enable an enterprise to easily recover documents during disasters and litigations. Howard (2002) asserts that section 10 of MoReq states that ERMS should be able to register physical files under the same classification scheme as electronic records and provide.

**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1. Introduction.**

The previous chapter discussed the literature review on records management. This chapter discusses the methodology that was used to collect data on the management of business records at Supreme Furnishers in Botswana. Research is the creation of new knowledge, using an appropriate process, to the satisfaction of the users of the research (Oates, 2006).This means that a research study should create knowledge that is beneficial to the users. In addition, it is a way of thinking that leads to the generation of new knowledge (also called Scientific Knowledge). It also involves recording of observations as well as documenting analysis as a way of solving a phenomenon. Wilson (2009) asserts that research methodology is the plan of action which informs and links the research methods used to collect and analyse data, as well as answering research questions.

This chapter stipulates the types of research methods or techniques which were employed in this research study. Various steps that were adopted in studying the research problem are outlined. Furthermore, the logic behind employing these steps is stated. Myers (2009) states that research method is a strategy of enquiry, which moves from the underlying assumptions to research design, and data collection. This used qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Data collection techniques used in this study, include observations, questionnaires and interviews.

Also discussed in this chapter are the research design, the data collection instruments, data collection techniques, reliability and validity of data collection instruments, data analysis, ethical issues and summary of research methodology. The chapter has also highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of every data collection instrument used and how it was administered.

**3.2. Research design**

Research design is defined as the plan or strategy for conducting the research (Wiersma and Jurs, 2009). It is a plan that involves identifying the participants for the research and preparing data collection activities that involve the research processes. According to Bhattacherjee (2012:37 ~~research)~~ research design is a comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research

project. It is a "blueprint" for empirical research aimed at answering specific research questions. The research design is a plan that enables the researcher to come up with solutions to problems being investigated. It also guides the researcher on the various stages of the research. The research design further ensures that the evidence obtained enables one to answer the initial questions as clearly as possible by specifying the type of evidence needed to answer research questions, to test a theory, to evaluate a program or to accurately describe some phenomenon (Gimblett, 2006). The research design assists the researcher to obtain relevant evidence in the study, which will answer the research questions appropriately.

Research designs are classified into two general categories such as positivist and interpretive. Popular examples of positivist designs include experimental research, surveys and others. Examples of interpretive designs include grounded theory, case study, action research, survey, ethnography and others (Bhattacherjee, 2012). These research designs are further explained below.

Leedy and Ormrod (2009) point out that grounded theory study begins with collecting data which will be used to develop a theory. It uses a set of prescribed procedures for analyzing data to construct a theoretical model. Data is collected in qualitative manner using interviews, observations and documents to build theories about a social phenomenon (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Usually this approach starts without the formation of an initial theoretical framework. Theories will be initiated from a series of observations and interviews.

Berg (2007) highlights that a case study involves gathering enough information about a particular person, a social setting, a group or event in a systematic way. It further enables the researcher to understand how the subject operates. A case study also focuses on one entity that is being investigated for example, a department in an organisation, an information system and so on. It is also defined as "a detailed examination of something: an organization, or a school system" (Wiersma and Jurs, 2009:241). It involves an in-depth study of an individual, organisation or even a community (Aina, 2002).

Ethnography involves everyday behaviours of people in a group with intent to identify cultural norms, beliefs, social structures, and other cultural patterns (Leedy and Ormrod, 2009). It is associated with the field of anthropology that focuses on a culture (or subculture) of a group of

people in an effort to understand them better. In this type of research participants studied are observed over a time period.

On the other hand, experimental research involves testing a phenomenon under controlled conditions, which is made to demonstrate a known truth or examine the validity of a hypothesis (Muijs, 2011). Experimental research intends to find out whether something is true or not. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) state that in an experimental research, an independent variable is manipulated to examine its effects on the dependent variable. This is a research strategy where the investigator controls (manipulates) conditions in order to find out the effect of one variable on the other.

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003), highlight that action research is a research strategy that is concerned with the management of a change and it involves close collaboration between practice and research. Bhattacherjee (2012) states that action research assumes that the social phenomena are best understood by introducing interventions or actions and observing the effects of those actions. Therefore, the researcher initiates actions in response to a problem and observes the results of those actions in the society under study.

Survey is considered to be a research method which involves the use of standardized questionnaires or interviews to collect data about people and their preferences, thoughts, and behaviours in a systematic manner (Bhattacherjee, 2012:37). This is further supported by (Muijs, 2011) who states that survey research can use data collection instruments such as standardised questionnaire forms, which might be administered by phone, face-to-face, postal pencil, paper questionnaires, web based and e-mail. Therefore, survey is the research design that attempts to collect data from a larger population that may be widely spread.

The selection of the type of research design depends on the nature of the problem under study (Aina, 2002). This research used the survey research method because Supreme Furnishers is a chain store with a number of branches/stores located in different parts of Botswana. Therefore, the survey allowed the researcher to visit some branches in Gaborone and Head Office in Botswana .The survey strategy involves the structured collection of data from a sizeable population (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2003). Data collection tools such as questionnaires, interviews and observations were used to gather the data. For instance, questionnaires were used

to collect data from the branches while top management were interviewed face to face contact. Observation was also used to identify the records management practices employed in the organisation. The survey was used due to the fact that, it allowed the researcher to use a variety of data collection instruments such as standardised questionnaire forms, face-to-face interviews and observations (Bhattacherjee, 2012). It also enabled the researcher to gather a large numbers of data at a reasonably low cost. The survey was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to get information straight from the horse's mouth. This resulted in the researcher obtaining information that was based on what was actually happening on the ground by conducting observations (Denscombe, 2003).

## 3.3. Data collection approaches

The data collection approaches used in this study to collect data were quantitative and qualitative. The Quantitative approach is based on meanings derived from numbers and allows data to be analysized meaningfully using diagrams, charts and tables (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2003).The quantitative approaches help a researcher to collect facts and study the relationship between them. Furthermore, large volumes of quantitative data can be analysed and researchers can also interrogate the results relatively quickly (Denscombe, 2004:264). This is due to the fact that computer programmes are used to analyze the data quantitatively. The research designs in quantitative approach include experiments, surveys, content analysis, causal-comparative, experimental and single subject experimental research (Gay, Mills and Airasian, 2009). Data collection methods used in this approach are closed questionnaire among others. The disadvantage of quantitative approach is that, it uses numbers which cannot be used to express experiences, feelings or observations of a phenomenon (Berg, 2007:3). It will be extremely impossible for one to describe the feelings or how something looks by using numbers. Therefore in such situations, a qualitative approach will have to be employed to express feelings, as it is based on non-numeric data.

Qualitative approach assists the researcher to understand individuals' perceptions on the themes under investigations rather than statistical perceptions (Bell, 2005). It is used to uncover and understand phenomenon that are very difficult to explain using quantitative approach. The

different research designs in qualitative approach are case study, action research, ethnography, phenomenological study, grounded theory and content analysis (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Data collection methods involved in qualitative include: observation, interview and appropriate written documents. Berg (2007) highlights that other data collection methods that may be used in qualitative research are: observations of experimental of natural settings, document and textual analysis, photographic techniques, sociometry, sociodrama and enthnomethological experimentation. Myers (2009) also emphasises that qualitative data sources include observation and participant observation (fieldwork), interviews and questionnaires, documents and texts, and the researcher's impressions and reactions. In qualitative research, different knowledge claims, enquiry strategies, data collection methods and analysis are employed (Creswell, 2003).Therefore, it possible that data analysis processes are performed in qualitative research.

Qualitative research approach is subjective and liable to human error and bias (Bhattacherjee, 2012).Qualitative data may be biased as it is based on the researcher's own judgement.

### 3.4. Location and the population of the study

A population is the group that the researcher wants to generalise his/her findings to (Muijs, 2011). The population of this study were the employees of Supreme Furnishers. These participants were based at Head Office and 2 branches in Botswana (Broadhurst and Bus Rank).The target population included General Manager, Regional Managers, Human Resource Manager, Branch Managers, Credit managers, Stock Controllers, Cashiers, Credit controllers and Salespeople.

i) The General Manager is included because he is the top officer in the organisation. He deals with large volumes of records for different branches in Botswana.

ii)The Regional Manager ( retail) is in charge of retail operations at head office and oversees retailing procedures. The Regional Manager also inspects retail records of the region at Supreme Furnishers.

iii) The Regional Manager (Finance) is responsible for the finances of the company including custody and maintenance of financial records.

iv) _The Human Resource Manager is responsible for managing Supreme Furnishers' employee files/records.

v) The Branch Managers are at operational level where retail records are created on a daily basis.

vi) The Credit Managers supervise the credit controllers. Therefore they see to it that records for creditors are well maintained and managed.

vii) The Stock controllers are involved in creating, maintaining, using and storing of stock records at Supreme Furnishers. They are in charge of the warehouse hence managing records of incoming and out–going stock.

viii) The Sales people are involved in creating and maintaining records of those customers who buy goods at Supreme Furnishers. They also keep records of potential customers.

ix) The Credit controllers create records of those customers who have bought goods on credit. They also make follow-ups on them, if they default to make payments.

### 3.5. Sampling

Sampling is the statistical process of selecting a subset of a population of interest for purposes of making conclusions about the population (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) also state that, a sample is a group of individuals, items or events which represent the characteristics of a larger group. Several techniques may be employed to select a sample, for example, simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling, purposive sampling and others (Aina, 2002). Simple random sampling is the process of selecting a sample in such a way that all individuals in the population have an equal and independent chance of selection for the sample (Gay, Mills and Airasian, 2009).

Systematic sampling is a modified form of simple random sampling. It involves selecting subjects from a population list in a systematic rather than a random fashion (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). On the other hand, Oates (2006) asserts that systematic sampling is built on random sampling by adding people at regular intervals in the sample frame. This sampling method allows an element of randomness where random numbers are used to select the one to start with. In this kind of sampling the first unit is selected randomly, while rest of the units are

chosen at a fixed interval. In stratified sampling the sample frame is divided into homogeneous and non overlapping subgroups called strata and a simple random sample is drawn from each subgroup (Bhattacherjee, 2012). The population is divided into several sub-populations (strata) which have the same characteristics. Then the item is selected from each division randomly to make up a sample. Cluster sampling involves dividing the population into clusters or groups where a sample is drawn from these groups. The total population is sub-divided into numerous relatively smaller subdivisions, which are made up of clusters or groups. As soon as clusters are made, all members of each cluster may be either selected or a sample of individuals from each cluster is chosen.

Purposive sampling refers to a judgemental form of sampling in which the researcher, based on his/her knowledge of the population, handpicks certain groups or individuals for their relevance to the issue being studied (Aina, 2002). Purposive sampling is used mainly where the researcher wants to obtain in-depth information from the respondents (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2009). In this study, the researcher used the purposive sampling technique in selecting the respondents at Supreme Furnishers. Purposive sampling was employed at both Head Office and branches .The reasons behind using purposive sampling in this study are discussed below.

This technique enables the researcher to select the individuals who were thought could provide valuable information. Purposive sampling is a type of sampling in which particular settings, persons or events are deliberately selected for the important information they can provide (Teddlie, 2007). Purposive sampling was used to select the Regional Managers, Human Resources Managers, Branch Managers, Credit Managers, Credit controllers, Sales people and Stock Controllers who were considered to be well informative, articulate and experienced in records management aspects. This sampling technique excluded other staff members such as Delivery Crews, and Cleaners as they considered to be less informed in organisational records management. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007) indicate that in many cases purposive sampling is used in order to select knowledgeable people or respondents with in depth knowledge of a particular issue. In this study Managers were purposely sampled as they are considered to be knowledgeable in records management. Therefore, the probability of them providing appropriate information was very high. As argued by Wiersma and Jurs (2009) that,

there is no assumption that all members of the population are equivalent data sources, but those selected are believed to be information-rich cases.

Random sampling was used to select the branches of Supreme Furnishers. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) point out that each member of the population under study has a chance of being selected in random sample. Therefore, in this regard, each branch had a chance of being equally represented or selected.

### 3.6. Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires, interviews, and personal observations were used as data collection instruments. This approach of using several data collection tools is called triangulation (Aina, 2004). Reliance on one method may bias the researcher's picture of a particular slice of the reality being investigated (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). In addition, triangulation also has the benefit of avoiding personal biases that might arise from using single methodologies (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996). Therefore, this strategy overcame the deficiencies of employing one method. Triangulation results in obtaining more accurate, reliable and valid information. A data collection table is shown in Table 3.1 at the end of this section.

Furthermore, the use of triangulation in research improves the researcher's confidence. This is elaborated by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) that different data collection instruments which reveal the same results increase the researchers' confidence. For example, if the outcomes of the questionnaire correspond with those of the observation, the researcher will be more confident about the findings. Triangulation has the merit of counterbalancing the threats that are inherited by one method (Wilson, 2009). For instance, a questionnaire may limit the participants to develop their own thoughts and express themselves when answering the questions they have been asked. Therefore, this threat may be corrected by also using the interviews.

### 3.6.1.Questionnaire

Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) asserted that questionnaire is an instrument which asks an each person to respond to the same set of questions in predetermined order. In this study only one type of questionnaire was administered to all the participants except those who were

interviewed. Bhattacherjee (2012) asserts that questions in a questionnaire may be unstructured or structured. Unstructured questions allow respondents to respond in their own words, while structured questions request the respondents to select an answer from the set choices.The unstructured and structured are also known as opened and closed questions respectively. As such this study used a questionnaire that is made up of both the open and closed questions (see Appendix 1).

Open ended questions reflect the full richness and complexity of views held by the respondents (Denscombe, 2003:156). Open ended questions enable the respondents to give out well thought answers. However, open ended questions have disadvantages of providing information which does not answer the stipulated research questions or objectives. They may require a lot of time to answer and as such they may put some respondents off (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). They also take time to analyze (Muijs, 2011).

On the other hand, the closed questions enable the respondents to choose either YES or NO or to select one of the options to indicate the level of agreement in a rating scale (Muijs, 2011).The rating scale can have response categories  such as strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, and don't know. Closed questions also provide the researcher with information which is uniform and can be quantified and compared nicely (Denscombe, 2003). Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) further state that it is very quick and easy to analysis closed questions. Closed questions may be answered easily and quickly by the respondents and can provide the exact information needed by the researcher. Unfortunately, closed questions provide very little scope for respondents to provide answers which reflect the exact facts or true feelings (Denscombe,2004).They also limit the respondents to express their feelings easily and may provide biased answers as the respondents are forced, to choose alternatives given. Nachmias and Nachmias (1996) assert that the respondents are likely to provide bias answers, as they might have been given alternatives that did not come to their minds. In this research study, the researcher used both opened and closed questions in the questionnaire (see Appendix 1).

The advantages of using questionnaire are that they are less expensive and could be self-administered. Cohen, Manion and Morison (2007) reiterated that there are two types of self–administered questionnaires. Those that are completed in the presence of the researcher and the ones filled up in the absence of the researcher. In this research study, the researcher preferred

self- administered questionnaire without the presence of the researcher. In this regard, the researcher distributed the questionnaire in person, to Supreme Furnishers outlets which were easy to reach. Furthermore, the respondents may also be more frank and honest in answering sensitive issues. They are able to take time to think about their responses, hence giving well thought answers.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) assert that there are two methods (2) of self-administering a questionnaire. The first involves completing the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher and in the second is completing it in the absence of the researcher. In this research study the researcher employed both ways of self-administering questionnaire. At Broadhurst branch the questionnaires were filled in the presence of the researcher, while at Bus rank the questionnaire was completed in the absence of the researcher. Filling the questionnaire in the presence of the researcher improves the return rate. This type of administering questionnaire also avoids loss as the questionnaire is collected from the respondents as soon it is completed. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003) collecting a questionnaire in person prevents loss and delays.

On the other hand, self–administering questionnaire without the presence of the researcher was also used to avoid pressure and threat caused by the presence of the researcher. This helped the respondents to complete it in privacy and to have enough time to complete it. The researcher continuously reminded the non-respondents through the telephone to avoid the low return rate of the questionnaire. In addition to this, the respondents were given at least two (2) weeks to have answered the questionnaire.

### 3.6.2. Interview

Oates (2006) defines an interview as a particular kind of conversation or dialogue between people. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) further asserted that an interview is an oral, in-person question and answer session between a researcher and individual person. The answers/responses to these questions are then recorded or noted down.

Interviews are advantageous because they permit the researchers to obtain important and detailed data that cannot be acquired through questionnaires or observations (Gay and Airasian, 2003). It also captures emotions, experiences or feelings that cannot easily be observed or be described via predefined questionnaire responses (Oates 2006:187). Therefore, interviews allow the research to discover the ways in which the respondents react when answering certain questions. During the interview the researcher can sense if the interviewee is giving false information or not (Denscombe, 2004:8).The direct contact between the researcher and the respondents allows the interviewer the opportunity to adjust the language according to the status and educational level of the person being interviewed.

Unfortunately the interviewees lack anonymity and may feel threatened or intimidated by the interviewer (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996).They are also time consuming and highly subjective. Denscombe (2003) argues that data from interviews are based on what the respondents say rather than on what they do. Therefore, it is ideal that the interview should be combined with other data collection methods such as observation.

Interviews were useful in this study because, they allowed the researcher to obtain in-depth information. Furthermore, the researcher used structured interview (see Appendix 2).A structured interview allows respondents to talk about what is of central importance to them and give their views (Bell, 2005). An interview guide was used to gather data from top management (General Manager, Regional Managers, and Human Resource Managers). Appointments were made in advance, as these people always have tight schedules. Questions were read out to the interviewees and their responses were noted down. The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder to assist in the smooth flow of the proceedings.

### 3.6. 3. Personal Observation

Onyango (2002) identifies two main types of observation techniques namely participant and non-participant observation. In participant observation the researcher is directly involved in the activity under observation while in non-participant observation, the researcher is not a direct participant, but is in a position to use observation to collect data. The researcher used non-participant observation at Supreme Furnishers. He visited Supreme Furnishers' stores to identify

the systems used to manage records in their different departments. Supreme Furnishers' records management resources such as cabinets, boxes, hardware, software and repositories, where records are kept were also observed. All observations were recorded objectively in a checklist form for data analysis and interpretation (see Appendix 3). Furthermore, photographs were captured as proof of what was observed in some instances.

Observations help researchers to discover whether people do what they say they are doing or behave the way they claim to behave (Bell, 2005). Unfortunately it can be quite hard for the respondents to reflect on and to know what they are actually doing (Muijs, 2011). Therefore, observation gives the researcher direct access and insights to what is precisely happening in the organisation. Furthermore, observation gives the researcher opportunities to socially interact with the respondents. The observation may have the disadvantage of being biased by misinterpreting things that one will be observing. The other disadvantage of observation is that people are aware that they are being observed and as such they may modify their behaviour (Oates, 2006:204). This may affect the validity and reliability of the data collected.

**Table 3.1: Collection of data**

| Research question | Data Instruments |
|---|---|
| Q1 What are the levels of adherence in managing records in accordance to laws and regulations, polices and standards at Supreme Furnishers? | Questionnaire, interview |
| Q2. What are the resources available for the records at Supreme Furnishers? | Questionnaire Interview Observation |
| Q3.What records created by Supreme Furnishers? | Questionnaire Interview Observation |
| Q4. What are the major challenges faced by Supreme Furnishers in managing business records? | Questionnaire Interview Observation |
| 5. What are the possible solutions to records management challenges identified at Supreme Furnishers? | Questionnaire Interview |

## 3.7. Reliability and Validation of Data Collection Instruments.

A pilot test was administered in order to identify the mistakes in the questionnaire. The pilot test was carried out at Mochudi Supreme Furnishers branch. All the employees involved in creating, using and maintaining records were requested to fill in the questionnaire. Onyango (2002:88) states that ''a pre-test is an opportunity to identify questionnaire items that might be misunderstood by the participants or do not obtain the needed information.

This piloting exercise assisted the researcher to correct the mistakes in the questionnaires (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2003). Refining of the questionnaire also assists in avoiding problems when recording the data. Pilot testing also makes sure that respondents understand the research questions adequately. Oates (2006) also stated that pre-testing assists the researcher to identify how long it takes the participants to complete the questionnaire. This also enabled the researcher to refine the questionnaire so that it can be answered within an appropriate period of time.

**3.8. Data Analysis**

The researcher used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to analyze quantitative data. In addition tables, pie charts and graphs were used to give better meaning of data. In analyzing quantitative data the researcher started by coding the questionnaires. Coding is a process of classifying and categorizing text data into segments, concepts or codes (Bhattacherjee, 2012:113). The researcher then numbered the variables which were given names or themes. A code book was designed, in which all the interview responses were numbered. Furthermore the descriptive statistics through the use of the SPSS was used to analyze the data.

Qualitative analysis is organised around concepts or key ideas that should be relevant to the research questions (Oates, 2006). In this study, the researcher read the data several times in order to identify key concepts to come up with suitable themes. The researcher counted how many times a certain phrase was used, before quantifying it. Furthermore, the words, text and pictures (photos) were coded and interpreted to give meaning and diagrams were used to visualise the relationships between concepts. The qualitative data was classified according to the nominal scale which involved assigning numbers to objects or people. These numbers have no mathematical value but show that these people or objects belong to categories or groups (Churchill, 1999).

## 3.9. Ethical Issues

The researcher collected data from the organisation fairly and honestly. Firstly, the researcher requested for permission from the relevant authorities at Supreme Furnishers to carry out this research study. This involved writing a letter to request for permission (see Appendix 4). Furthermore, the participants were kindly requested to participate in this research study, without pressurising or forcing them and this promoted respect for persons' rights.

The participants were also informed about the nature of this research study and how it would benefit their organisation as far as records management practices and procedures are concerned. In addition, the authorities were assured that they would be provided with a completed copy of the dissertation. The researcher also assured the participants that the information obtained from them would be used solely for academic purposes. Moreover, the information obtained was treated confidentially as the participants were not requested to write their names on the questionnaire. In addition, confidentially was displayed by not disclosing some sensitive publications from Supreme Furnishers to the public. To avoid plagiarism the researcher acknowledged all sources of information and respected intellectual property. Therefore, the key ethical issues addressed in this study, included confidentiality, honesty, fairness, respect for persons and respect for intellectual property.

## 3.10. Summary of research methodology

The survey was used as the research design to examine the management of business records at Supreme Furnishers in Botswana. This study, used questionnaires, interviews and observation to collect data. Furthermore to obtain validity and reliability from the questionnaire a pilot test was administered. The qualitative and quantitative methods were used to analyse the data collected. The sampling methods employed include purposive and random sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents while random sampling was used to select Supreme Furnishers branches. In addition, the research study was conducted under some ethical issues such as respect for persons' right, respect of intellectual property, confidentiality, honesty and fairness.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the records management research that was undertaken at Botswana Supreme Furnishers (Pty) Ltd. Data for the study was collected using questionnaires, interviews and personal observations. The findings are presented in numbers, percentages, tables, graphs and charts. The objectives of this research are:

1. To determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework of managing business records in Botswana.
2. To examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers.
3. To determine the format and nature of records created and retained at Supreme Furnishers
4. To establish the challenges encountered in managing records at Supreme Furnishers

### 4. 1. Response Rate

The response rate is the percentage of respondents in the sample who return completed questionnaire (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1996:226). 40 questionnaires were self-administered to the selected branches of Supreme Furnishers (Broadhurst and Bus Rank) located in Gaborone. The questionnaire was administered to the Credit Managers, Business Managers/Branch Managers, Stock Controllers, Credit Controllers, Sales people and Cashiers. The study interviewed 5 employees of Supreme Furnishers involved in top management. These were General Manager, Regional Managers and Human Resources Manager.

Out of the 40 questionnaires, 35 were completed and returned giving a response rate of 87.5%. The response rate was considered to be adequate in accordance with the statement made by Babbie and Mouton (2001:261) that "the consensus in survey research, is that a response rate of 50% is considered adequate for analysis, while 60% is good and 70% is considered excellent".

Therefore, the 87.5% response rate of this study was considered excellent. This research study was able to reach this high response rate due to the fact that, the researcher made some follow-ups telephonically to persuade the respondents to return the questionnaire.

During data collection the researcher experienced several challenges. Quite often, he was unable to meet some of the respondents, even though he had appointed with them. Some were outside the country on organisational business and other either did not fill the questionnaires in time or misplaced them. The researcher was compelled to re–distribute the questionnaire and pleaded with the respondents to complete it.

## 4.2. Findings of the study

### 4.2.1. Compliance to legislative and regulatory framework

The first objective of the study sought to determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework. Section 5 of ISO 15489-1 (2001), requires all the organizations to "identify the regulatory environment that affects their activities and the requirements to document these activities". These are usually mandatory statutes, standard practices, ethics, codes of best practice and conduct.

#### 4.2.1.1. Compliance with Botswana Companies Act (2008:42:01)

Section 217 of the Company's Act (2008) requires the external companies to file annual returns, which should include the names and the addresses of shareholders of the company. Non-profit and profit making organizations need to retain certain records beyond their current use, according to regulatory, legal, financial, and operational requirements. Section 219(1)(a)(b) states that the records such as minutes of all meetings and resolutions of shareholders, copies of annual reports, financial statements and group financial statements should be available to the shareholders of the company for inspection . Section 270 of the Botswana Companies Act (2008:42:01) expects companies to keep accounting records which reveal assets, liabilities, members, contributions and amounts of loans. It further requires companies to file annual returns which contain information on the name and address of each    shareholder of the company (OECD, 2010).

This study was interested in finding out about compliance pertaining to section 218 of Company's Act. The reason behind this is that these records may be inspected by the registrar's office at any time to confirm compliance. Section 218 of the Botswana companies Act (Chapter 42:01-p136) states that a company shall keep records for inspection purposes. Furthermore, (OECD, 2010) emphasizes that Section 218 (1) makes it easy for the Registrar's office to access company records. When respondents were asked to indicate whether Supreme Furnishers was keeping its records in accordance with section 218 of Botswana Companies Act, the majority 24 (68.6%) of the respondents were not aware that they were supposed to keep records according to the requirements of section 218 of Botswana Companies Act, while 11(31.4%) of respondents, stated that they complied with section 218 of the Company's Act. These results are shown in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Keeping records according to section 218 of Botswana companies act:**

| Respondents (35) | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 11 | 31.40% |
| No | 24 | 68.60% |

Source: Field data, 2013

### 4.2.1.2. Inspection of records by Registrar's Office

According to Section 14 of the Companies Act, the Registrar of Companies has the power to call for the production or inspection of any book required to be kept by the company. This is a way of ascertaining that companies are complying with requirements of the Companies Act. This study sought to investigate the frequency to which registrar's office inspected records. The findings, show that Supreme Furnishers' records at the branches were not often inspected 28(80.0%) by the authorities from Registrar of Companies' Office. While 5 (14.3%) stated that the inspection was done on other items rather than records. The findings showed that Supreme Furnishers' records at the branches were never inspected by the Registrar of Companies' Office. These results are shown in Table 4.2 below

**Table 4.2: Inspection of Records by registrars of companies' office**

| Respondents (35) | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------|-----------|------------|
| No | 17 | 48.60% |
| Don't know | 18 | 51.40% |

Source: Field data, 2013

The interview further revealed that inspection processes were carried out by the BURS authorities from the Department of Compliance. The interview further revealed that internal auditing on financial records was carried out on a regular basis at Supreme Furnishers. This exercise was performed by the Regional Managers (Finance), who expected the records to be arranged according to the organisational standards for easy retrieval. The expectation was that, the records should be filed in the arch lever files and should be classified according to dates as indicated in Figure 4.13.

### 4.2.1.3. ISO 15489:2001 certification

Many organizations in Botswana are aspiring to be ISO Certified. Though compliance to the ISO 154889:2001 is considered optional, it may have some positive impacts. For instance, ISO 154889:2001 provides guidance on how records should be captured or created, transmitted and used, stored, indexed, retrieved, controlled retained and preserved (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). For this reason, the respondents were asked to state if Supreme Furnishers was ISO Certified. The interview revealed that Supreme Furnishers was not guided by ISO 154889:2001. Based on these findings it can be concluded that Supreme Furnishers did not manage its records according to ISO 154889:2001.

### 4.2.1.4. Compliance to Botswana Income Tax act/VAT requirements

Furthermore, BURS expects any registered person to retain records for at least seven (7) years after the tax period (Income Tax Act, 18, 2006). Failure to comply with this requirement will

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lead to penalties. Section 26 of the Botswana Income Tax Act 18, 2006, demands that tax returns for any business shall be accompanied by a copy of the business and books of accounts. The law on the Income Tax Act states that the Commissioner General of Botswana Unified Revenue Service (BURS) may require business records or books of accounts to be kept reasonably in order to reflect the true and full nature of transactions. It further, stipulates that the Commissioner may also direct the manner in which payments or commercial transactions should be recorded (OECD 2010).

Based on this, respondents were asked to state if they kept records according to VAT and Income Tax requirements. As shown in Figure 4.1 below, out of 35 respondents 10(28.5 %) agreed that they kept records according to VAT and Income Tax requirements; 20(57.1%) respondents stated that records were not kept according to VAT and Income Tax requirements; while 5(14.3%) did not know. A few in the organisation did not know whether it was important to comply with VAT and Income Tax requirements.

**Figure 4.1: Recordkeeping according to VAT and Income Tax**
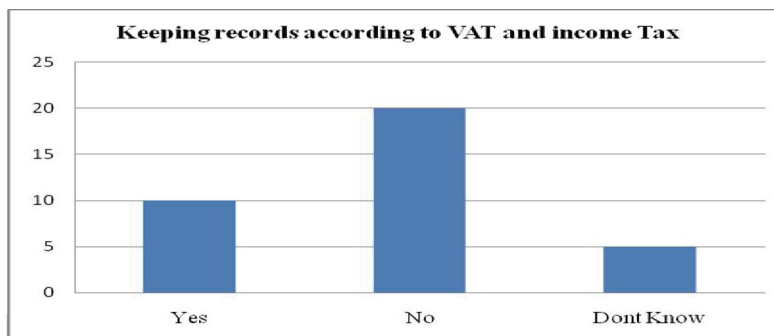


Source: Field data, 2013

The interviews revealed that respondents who kept records according to VAT and Income Tax requirements were mostly from the Finance Departments. This was so because internal auditing on financial records for all branches was done regularly to check whether the branches were making profits or not. The financial records were also kept properly for the purposes of taxation. The findings further showed that, the respondents who did not comply with VAT and Income Tax regulations were from Sales and Stock Control, as they did not deal with financial records

directly. The interview findings indicated that some departments kept records for a period of five (5) years, after which they disposed them. Finance Departments kept records for more than 5 years, until Head Office (Gaborone) instructed that they must be disposed.

### 4.2.1.5. Keeping records according to Hire purchase Act 1974

According to Kayawe (2009) in the Botswana Mmegi Newspaper, Supreme Furnishers did not comply with the hire purchase act. This act requires that goods sold on credit sale should indicate the amount of any deposit, each instalment and the frequency of the instalments, the total number of instalments and total amount to be paid by way of deposit and instalments shall be displayed. This research study, intended to find out if Supreme furnishers complied with Supreme Furnishers. The Observation showed that the advertisements made on hire purchase items complied with the act as shown in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2: Compliance with Hire purchase Act**



Field source: 2013

### 4.2.1.6. Keeping records according to the Employment Act

The interview findings revealed that each branch kept its staff's personnel records in the business managers' offices, who then store them in the cabinets. Some employees' files were

kept at the Head office, while head quarters in Johannesburg kept electronic records. The observation findings showed that the cabinets, in which the employees' records were kept, were not properly locked to secure them.

### 4.2.1.7. Records Management Policies and Procedures

The study further sought to establish whether Supreme Furnishers had formulated a records management policy. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) assert that, all organisations should have a formally agreed policy for the management of their records. The intensions of the policy should be to create and manage authentic, reliable and usable rerecords capable of supporting business functions and activities .In addition to this, NECC (2010) highlights that a quality records management policies and procedures should have the retention schedules, classification procedures, and records storage procedures, back-up procedures and system documentation.

The Respondents for this were therefore asked to state if Supreme Furnitures had a documented records management policy. Seventeen (48.6%) Twenty-six (83.9%) of the respondents indicated that the company did not have a records management policy, while 7(20%) indicated that they did not know whether the Company had it or not. Five (16.1%) indicated that there was a general policy on keeping records. Personal observations revealed that the policy on records management was just a brief document. The document only stated that records were to be kept for five (5) years. It was not detailed to indicate which types of records were to be kept for this period. It was assumed that the policy referred to paper records, as the interview revealed that they were kept for 5 years. Furthermore, the interview findings revealed that the general policy did not state how the records were to be disposed. It also did not state who was responsible for managing the organisational records at the branch level. It was also observed that some branches did not have a general policy on records. Furthermore, the observation findings also revealed that there were some specific, policies such as the cheques policy. The results are presented in Figure 4.3 below.

**Figure 4.3: Records management policies and procedures**
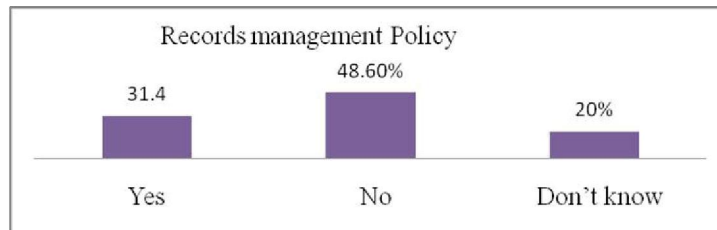


Source: Field data, 2013

 The results of the interviews indicated that there was no clear and detailed records management policy that was set according to international standards at Supreme Furnishers.

### 4.2.2. Records maintenance

 The third/second objective sought to examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers. The findings to this objective are presented under various sections below:

### 4.2.2.1. Records Storage

 Storage is important for managing records as it ensures that  they  are secure, intact and accessible for as long as users need them (Shepherd and Yeo 2003). Storage refers the physical space in which records are stored ISO 15489-1 states that "records should be stored on a media that ensures their usability, reliability, authenticity and preservation for as long as they are needed. The Records require storage conditions and handling processes that take into account their specific physical and chemical properties. Based on this, the study sought to determine whether Supreme Furnishers operated a centralised storage facility for its records in its branches and Head office.

The findings indicated in Figure 4.4, reveal that 35(100%) of the respondents stated that there was no central registry at Supreme Furnishers to store organisational records. Personal observation findings   also revealed that each department kept its own records at branches. These records were kept in the managers/heads of sections' offices.

**Figure 4.4: Central registry for storing records**
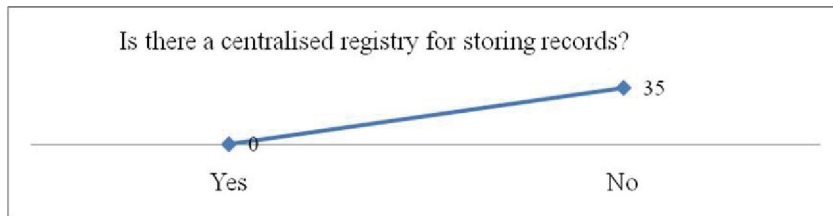


Source: Field data, 2013

## 4.2.2.2. Transferring of records to storage areas

NECC (2004) indicates that organisations have a tendency of transferring records to the offsite records centre or warehouses. These areas are the dumping ground of records, which are ultimately forgotten. Based on this, the researcher wanted to find out if there were areas in which the records were transferred to, when they were no longer needed in the workplaces.

The findings revealed that records in the non-current stage were transferred to the storeroom at the warehouses in order to create space at the managers' offices. The records were stored in these areas for a period of five years. In addition there were no specific personnel responsible for managing records. As a result the storerooms were used as dumping grounds for those records that were no longer needed. Figure 4.5 shows how records were stored in some of the storerooms.

**Figure 4.5: Files dumped in the storerooms**



Source: Field Data 2013

The observation findings further showed that the storerooms did not maintain environmental and physical standards of protecting physical records. For instance, the temperatures, light and humidity were not controlled. The shelves were not adequate for shelving all records. The storerooms were merely closed with unsecured doors. Furthermore, these storage areas did not have heat or smoke detectors as well as portable fire extinguishers. However, the study found out that almost all branches offices had smoke detectors. These smoke detectors were always inspected by government authorities. The interview findings also revealed that records management and archiving practices and standards were done at Head Office in Johannesburg in South Africa. It further highlights that no proper records management was practised in Botswana.

### 4.2.2.3. Records storage capacity

Storage conditions and handling processes should be designed to protect records from unauthorized access, loss, or destruction, and disaster" (ISO 15489-1). The respodents in this study were asked whether the storage areas were enough to accommodate all records. The findings indicate that 15(42.9%) of the respondesnts felt that the storage areas were not very adequate,11(31.4%) stated that the areas were not adequate while 9(25.7%) were of the view that the areas were adequate. These results are shown in Figure 4.6 below.

**Figure 4.6: Adequacy of records storage areas**
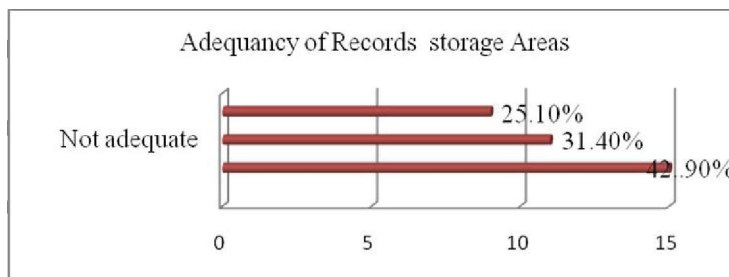


Source: Field data, 2013

The findings showed that majority of the respondents agreed that the records storage areas were not adequate to accommodate all the records being produced at the branches. The observation findings showed that the records were stored in the storerooms at the branches. It was further realised that some branches did not have storerooms to store current records. It was also revealed that these storerooms were not only being used for storing records, but for keeping other items being sold. This has been illustrated in Figure 4.7. The observation findings further revealed that the store rooms were too small to accommodate many records. The storerooms did not have burglar doors to secure the records. Some records at the warehouses were dumped on the floor and were mixed up with other items which were not related to records.

**Figure 4.7: Records dumped on the floor and mixed other items kept at warehouses**



Source: Field data 2013

#### 4.2.2.4. Records equipment

IRMT (2000) asserts that sufficient and appropriate equipment and materials should be provided for handling, storage and preservation of records throughout their life cycle. The use of sufficient and appropriate equipment reduces costs and waste in the organisation. Based on this, the study wanted to find out the records equipment used at Supreme Furnishers. The respondents were asked to state the records equipments they were using to store records. The findings revealed that 14(40%) used shelves, 10(28.6%) boxes, and 11(31.4%)/ cabinets, as shown in Figure 4.8.

**Figure 4.8: Records equipments at Supreme Furnishers**



Source: Field data, 2013

**(a) Shelves**

As shown in Figure 4.8 above, 14(40%) of the respondents used shelves as facilities for storing records in the storerooms. The observation findings revealed that, the shelves used to store records but there was not enough space to accommodate all files, as shown in Figure 4.9 below.

**Figure 4.9: Insufficiency of shelves in store rooms**



Source: Field data, 2013

It was also observed that some storerooms in which the records were kept did not have shelves at all. As a result, the records were kept in boxes, which were dumped on the floors as shown in Figure 4.7. The findings also showed that Stock Control was the only department that arranged the records in an alphabetical order, and most of the records they kept contained details of suppliers and the items they had supplied.

**(b) Cabinets**

The results of this study showed 11(31.4%) of the respondents used cabinets to store their records. The observation findings revealed that some records were kept in unlabelled and unlocked cabinets. Therefore this compromised the security of the records, as employees could easily have access to confidential record

**(c) Boxes**

The results also showed that out of 35respondents, 10(28.6%) agreed that they used boxes to store their records in the storerooms. The observation indicated that the records were kept in the boxes at the storerooms. Some boxes were not labelled to indicate what kinds of records were contained in them. The observation findings revealed that archival boxes were not used to store the records. Instead ordinary boxes which had contained items sold at the retail stores were used to store the records. Furthermore, there were no accession lists inside the boxes, to indicate the records in them. It was also observed that there were no accession registers at branches to indicate the records that had been sent to the storerooms.

### 4.2.3. The nature of records created and retained at Supreme Furnishers.

The third objective sought to determine the nature of records created and retained at Supreme Furnishers. The findings to this objective are presented under various sections below:

### 4.2.3.1. Creating and capturing of records

Like other organisations whether public or private, Supreme Furnishers created and received records in various formats. Shepherd and Yeo (2003) advise that organisations should create and capture records for every activity that involves more than one party. Irrespective of the format, any record must have a full and accurate account of an activity to which it relates. Based on this, the study sought to find out the types of records that were created at Supreme Furnishers.

Observations and interviews findings revealed that about 60% of the records were held in paper, while about 40% were in electronic format. It was further observed that Supreme Furnishers used other modern information and communication technologies such as e-mail and fax in conducting its business which fall under in the electronic format. This information was later printed onto paper and filed. There is also a tendency to store such information in individual desktops or on removable flash disks or memory sticks. The observation findings further revealed that different types of records at Supreme Furnishers included accounting records( income and sales records, records of purchases and expenses), banking records, reports, personnel and employee records,

minutes of meetings held, income tax records, goods and services tax records, records of assets, debtors and creditors registers

**4.2.3.2. Managing mail at Supreme Furnishers**

Managing mail in an organisation is an important aspect of managing records. Mail must be handled in a timely and cost-effective manner in order to maintain service –delivery in an organisation. Mail includes letters, postcards, electronically transmitted messages, documents, publications, directives, forms, packages and any written communication created or received for distribution or dispatching (BNARS, 2009). Most organisations have a central mailroom, which either opens the mail or distributes it unopened to the action officers. Mailrooms activities are associated with the registry services of entering incoming letters in a register or database before being sent to action officers (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).

In relation to this the respondents were asked to state what happened when they received mail or correspondences. The findings revealed that all the respondents did not send the correspondences to the central registry as it did not exist in the branches. Instead, 21(60%) of respondents forwarded the correspondence to other areas (such as cabinets in their managers' offices) rather than to the central registry while about 14(40%) of the respondents stated that they had never forwarded correspondences either to the centralised registry or managers. Figure 4.10 shows how the mail was managed.

**Figure 4.10: Managing of mail/correspondences**
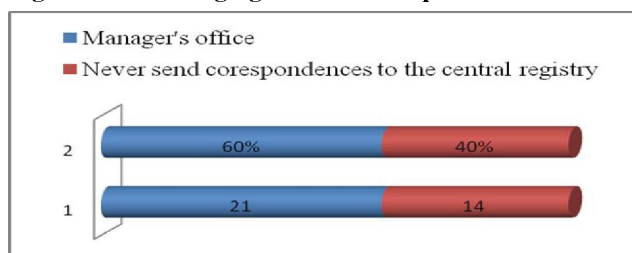


Source: Field data, 2013

Some of The respondents indicated that they kept the records in their offices. The observation findings revealed that the staff at branches sent the correspondences to their supervisors who

instead kept them in the files in their offices. The interview findings also revealed that the Finance and Stock Control Department that dealt with correspondences on a daily basis while the Sales Department dealt with correspondences on a weekly basis. This involved dealing with internal and external correspondences. The observations also revealed that there were no central registries at the  Head  Office as well as in the branches that were visited. The interview and observations revealed that incoming or outgoing mail is not registered in any register.

### 4.2.3.3. Records management system supporting capturing of records

According to the International Standard Organization (ISO 15489-1), any strategies adopted by an organization for documenting its business activity should determine what records are required when, how, where and which should be captured into the records systems. Likewise, appropriate environment and media, physical protective materials, handling procedures and storage systems should be considered when designing the records system.

This study therefore sought to determine various aspects of records creation, maintenance, use, and disposition at Supreme Furnishers.  In relation to this, the respondents were asked to state whether the system used to create and capture records at Supreme Furnishers was satisfactory. The findings on Figure 4.11 show that 12(38.71%) of the respondents stated that it was not very adequate, while 6(19.4%) highlights that it was not adequate. On the other hand, 10(32.26%) of respondents stated that it was adequate and 3(9.7%) very adequate. The results indicated that the majority of the respondents 12(38.71%) and 6(19.4%) were not satisfied with the system in the functions of the organisation.

**Figure 4.11: Creating and capturing records at Supreme Furnishers**
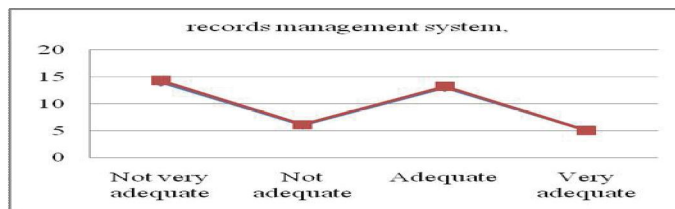


Source: Field data, 2013

**4.2.3.4. Classification and Arrangement of records**

Another aspect this study sought to determine was the manner in which records are classified and arranged at Supreme Furnishers. As stated by ISO 15489-1: 2001, section 9.5.2 "Classification systems reflect the business of the organization and are normally based on analysis of the organization's business activities. The system can be used to support a variety of records management processes." IRMT (2000) states that the classification organises records into categories, based on functions and activities the records represent, so that decisions about their organisation, storage, transfer and disposal may be category-wide, not file by file or item by item. Proper classification influence how records will be stored, transferred and disposed. For this reason, respondents were asked to indicate the file classification system used in their organisation. The observations revealed that there was no file classification scheme in the different branches and at the Head Office of Supreme Furnishers. The findings also indicated that Supreme Furnishers did not have a classification scheme. As such the classification practices there were not according to the required standard of managing records. 35(100%) agreed that each section in the organisation developed its way of classifying records that was convenient to it. As such the classification was not done by either the records committee or records manager, since they were not available. Interview findings revealed that Departments developed their own filing systems convenient to them. These results are summarized in Figure 4.12 below.

**Figure 4.12: File Classification**
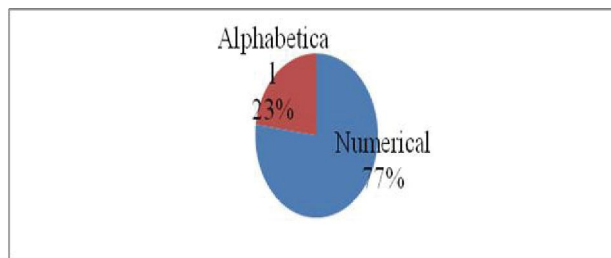


Source: Field data, 2013

Moreover, the findings also indicated that majority of the respondents 27(77%) kept their records according to the numerical order, while, 8(23%) arranged their records in alphabetical order. Furthermore, observation findings revealed that departments such as Sales and Finance filed

records numerically while Stock Control arranged them alphabetically. For example, Sales department arranged its records according to the customers' account numbers. Some Finance departments filed their records according to dates, for example 06/03/2012 – 07/04/12 as shown in Figure 4.13 below.

**Figure 4.13: Numerical classifications of files (according to invoice numbers)**



Source: Field data, 2013

### 4.2.3.5. Accessing and retrieving of records

ISO 15489:2001, section 8.3.6 states that records systems should provide timely and efficient access to, and retrieval of, records in the continuing conduct of business. Furthermore, ISO 15489:2001 demands that organizations should have formal guidelines regulating whoever is permitted access to the records. Organisations are also expected to set out clearly the circumstances under which the access will take place. The regulatory environment in which the organization operates establishes broad principles on access rights, and conditions or restrictions that should be incorporated into the operation of the records systems (ISO 15489-1 Section 9.7). In relation to this, the respondents were asked to state the preferred areas where records can be kept at Supreme Furnishers for easy access and retrieval.

The findings in Figure 4.14 showed that 5(14.3%) of the respondents stated that records were to be kept in the individuals' office, 20(57.1%) of them highlights that the records were to be kept in the central place (Records Management Unit) and 10(28.6%) of the respondents stated that the

records could be kept in the senior staff offices. These findings are illustrated in Figure 4.10 below.

As shown in Figure 4.14 below, the majority 20(57.1%) of the respondents preferred a central records management unit to store records for easy access. The interview findings showed that the records should be stored in central places, and individuals would be assigned to take care of the records as records officers. The findings also revealed that officers spent considerable time searching for records and information which ought to be readily available.

**Figure 4.14: Preferred areas for keeping records**
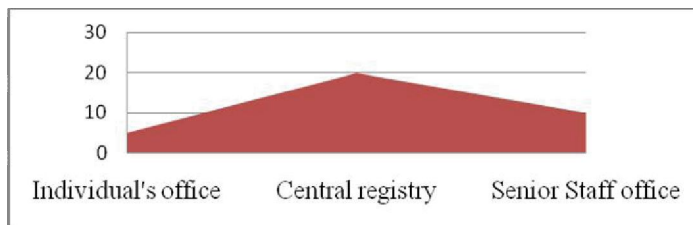


Source: Field data, 2013

### 4.2.3.6. File Movement /File tracking

1SO 15489 highlights that file tracking system, involves creating, capturing and maintaining information about the movement and use of records in an organisation. According to ISO 15489-1 (2001), records should be documented to ensure that items can be located when required. Tracking mechanisms may record the item identifier, the title, person or unit having possession of the item and the time /date of the movement. The respondents were asked to state whether they had a file tracking system, to monitor the movement of the file. The results are shown in Figure 4.15 below.

**Figure 4.15: File tracking system**



Source: Field data

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The findings indicated that all 35(100%) the respondents stated that they did not track the movement of files in the organisation. The findings are further illustrated in Figure 4.15 above.

It was observed that file movement cards were not used at Supreme Furnishers. The interview findings revealed that files records were exchanged among the supervisors without being registered. It was further stated that when officers wanted to use a file they would have to check it physically at shelves. When the file could not be allocated on the shelves, the officer would then have to move from one office to another trying to locate it. This prolonged access to records to make appropriate decisions. The interview further revealed that lack of the file tracking system in the organisation lead to the problems of missing files.

### 4.2.4. Records disposition

Section 8.3 of ISO 15489-1 demands that records systems should be capable of facilitating and implementing decisions on the retention or disposition of records. It should be possible for these decisions to be made at any time in the existence of records, including during the design stage of records systems (ISO 15489-1 Section 8.3.7). Disposition authority that governs the removal of records from operational systems should be applied in a systematic and routine basis, in the course of normal business activity. Methods of destroying records involve ways in which they are eliminated. The Records may be destroyed by employing physical methods such as overwriting and deletion (ISO 15498-1:2001). On the other hand, Shepherd and Yeo (2003:171) assert that paper records can be destroyed by shredding or more securely by pulping or incarnation. The State Records of South Wales (2005) prefers pulping as the most secure method of destroying paper records. According to ISO 15489:2001, semi-current records should be appraised and a retention schedule prepared.

The respondents were asked to state the methods that they used to destroy records that were no longer needed for administrative, historical or financial purposes. The findings indicated that 9(25.7%) of respondents used other methods of disposing records; 16(45.7%) burnt them, and 10(28.6%) did not dispose of the records. Observation revealed that inactive records were kept storerooms. The interview findings revealed that departments used different methods of disposing the records. For instance, the Sales Department and Personnel Departments preferred

burning them. Stock Control Department preferred dumping of records and the Finance Departments on the other hand did not dispose of their records. It was also observed that paper records were retained for 5 years before they could be disposed, while electronic records did not have retention period. Figure 4.16 provides a summary of the methods used to destroy the records no longer needed to support the business of the company.

**Figure 4.16: Records disposal methods**
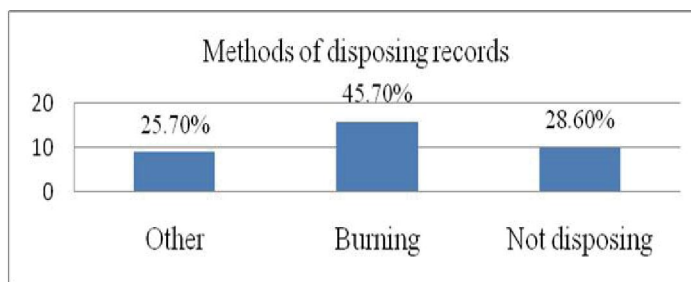


Source: Field data, 2013

Further observations indicated that there were no retention and disposition policies. In this case, instructions came from the Head Office in Gaborone informing branches to dispose their records. In addition, the interview findings revealed that only paper records were disposed of, while electronic records were not disposed or destroyed.

It was further observed that branches did not keep lists of records they had destroyed. Furthermore, it was observed that there was unnecessary keeping of records as the Finance Departments did not dispose of their records. South Carolina Department of Archives (2004) emphasises that keeping unnecessary records will create unnecessary costs in the long run.

**4.2.5. Records management committee**

A records management committee is responsible for creating the records management policy, approving records retention schedules, and making recommendations to the top management on the disposal of records. The committee further communicates key records management problems or issues to organisational management. The records management committee is also responsible for establishing vital records management programme for the organisation (University College Cork, 2014). The records management committee should be made up of professionals from

different department of the organisation such as a records manager, a representative from legal counsel, IT technical staff, finance/accounting, tax, human resources and risk management to provide oversight for the program (Formtek Incorporation, 2012).

This study therefore sought to find out whether a records management committee was available at Supreme Furnishers. The findings revealed that there were no records management committees at the branches and Head office as shown in Figure: 4.17.

**Figure 4.17: Records management committee at Supreme Furnishers**
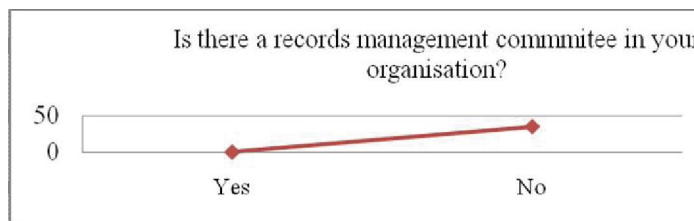


Source: Field data, 2013

The interview findings revealed that records management committees were not available in all the Supreme Furnishers branches and head office in Botswana.

### 4.2.6. Training in records management

According to the International Records Management Standard (ISO 15489-1: Section 11), an organisation should establish an ongoing programme of records training. Therefore, organisations can set up their own records management training programmes or can set up the training programmes with external bodies. In relation to this the respondents were asked to state whether they had qualifications in records management. Figure 4.20 reveals that 35(100%) of the respondents at Supreme Furnishers did not have qualifications in records management. Figure 4.18 has also reveals that 35 (100%) of the respondents were neither sent to workshops nor seminars. The interviews revealed that staff was trained in other courses such as Accounting, Sales management, Procurement, Human Resource Management, and Retail Management

The interview findings revealed that there were no records management training programmes at Supreme Furnishers. This finding is similar to those reported by IRMT (2003:5) where as there was lack of competencies in managing of records and archives in the ESARBICA region.

**Figure 4.18: Training in records management**
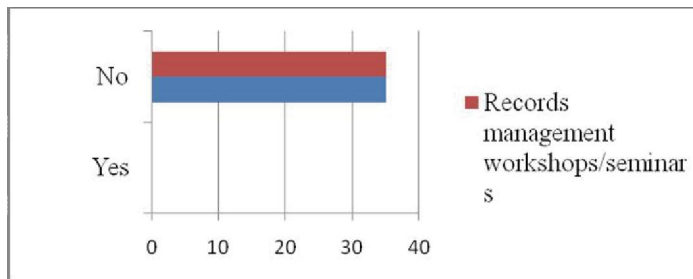


Source: Field data, 2013

## 4.2.7. Managing Electronic records at Supreme Furnishers

E-records may be categorized as text files (files produced by other software), data files (computer processable files that store numeric and sometimes textual information), analogue audio and visual records, disaggregated data (information collected through remote sensing systems), databases (structured collection of interrelated data), machine instruction sets: image files and digital documents (files consisting of numeric data, images or sound recorded digitally in one uniform structure ( Wamukoya and Mutula, 2004)

The current study sought to find out the types of electronic records kept at Supreme Furnishers. Figure 4.19 on page 100 shows that 19 (54.3%) of respondents use database and 16(45.7%) spreadsheet as electronic records in the organisation. The findings indicated that electronic records were used at Supreme Furnishers to perform daily business transactions. The interview findings also revealed that different departments in the organisation used different packages to store information. For instance, Sales Departments used databases to keep the customers information and the types of products they had purchased. Finance Departments relied on the spreadsheet to keep their information. The  interview revealed that there was no retention plociy on electronic records at Supreme Furnishers.

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**Figure 4.19: Types of Electronic records at supreme Furnishers**
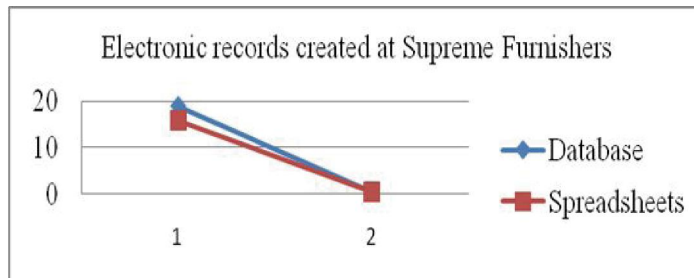


Source: Field data, 2013

### 4.2.7.1. The electronic system used to manage records at Supreme Furnishers

ISO 15489-1:2001 section 9.6 states that systems for electronic records should be designed so that records will remain accessible, authentic, reliable and useable through any kind of system. In this study, the respondents were asked to state the types of electronic systems used in their organisation. Furthermore, Shepherd and Yeo (2003:21) assert that the electronic systems are used to effect transactions such as the transmission of a document to its recipient, automate work processes and for the retention of records. The respondents were asked to state the types of electronic systems that are used in their organisation.

The interview findings revealed that the electronic system used at Supreme Furnishers' by different departments is called Ceres. Ceres was used in different departments such as Sales, Stock control and Finance to capture information. This system was programmed at the Head Office in Gaborone and it linked all the Supreme Furnishers' branches in Botswana. It was further highlights that the system kept track of stock, customers, due and overdue payments, profitability and bank accounts in one integrated system that operated on a single pc or a network. The observation findings showed that the system had components such as Stock entry, accounts enquiry, customers complaints, Proforma order capture, label menu (codes for products), price boards and dial to brand (stock enquiry). The system enabled one to check whether an item that was not available in one branch could be found in another. It also helped the

managers to monitor and control the budget, as well as to check on whether the sales people are used the right prices. When asked to state if they were satisfied with the system used to capture records, 14(40%) respondents stated that the system was not very adequate, 6(17%) revealed that it was not adequate.13 (37.1%) highlights that it was adequate and 2(5.7%)  very adequate. This has been shown in Figure 4.20 below.

**Figure 4.20: Electronic system used at Supreme Furnishers**
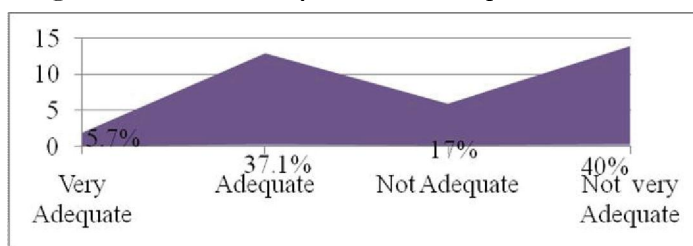


Source: Field data, 2013

The findings showed that the Ceres system was not adequate for performing all of the organisation activities, and therefore another system called vision plug was introduced. This system was capable of integrating all functions in the organisation. It was also revealed that vision plug was currently being used by human resource management to capture all the human resources information. Ceres could not capture information concerning human resource in the organization.


### 4.2.7.2. Security of electronic records at Supreme Furnishers

Security of electronic records is aimed at minimizing unauthorized, addition, modification, alteration, erasure or deletion of data, records and documents. Furthermore, the security controls employed should provide and maintain audit trails or other methods to demonstrate that records are effectively protected from unauthorized use, alteration or destruction (ISO 15489-1, Section 8.3.6). Audit trails may be utilised to secure electronic records and the users may be required to enter the date and identity when accessing information. Furthermore, Kahn and Blair (2004) further argue that creating highly available backups of digital information in organisations supports disaster recovery and business continuance purposes. For this reasons, respondents were

asked to state the strategies they employed in securing electronic records at Supreme Furnishers. Seventeen (48.6%) of the respondents highlight that they used passwords to limit access to confidential documents, while 18(51.4%) of them made back- ups to protect electronic records. The findings shown in Figure 4.21 revealed that majority (51.4%) of respondents used back- ups to protect electronic records.

**Figure 4.21: Securing electronic records**
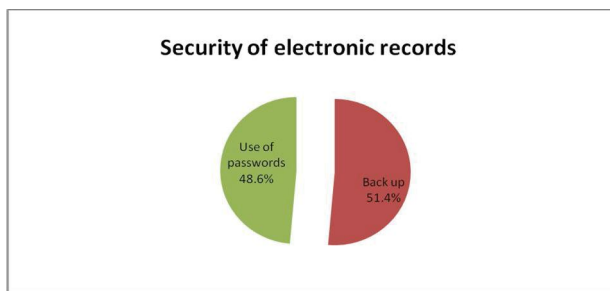


Source: Field data 2013

Observation findings revealed that creation of back- ups involved converting electronic records into paper format. For instance, financial transactions such as petty cash ledgers and journals were always printed out every mid and end of month, without failure. This involved keeping records in both electronic and paper formats. The interview also revealed that the creation of back-ups at Supreme Furniture was the best records management programme in place.

**4.2.8. Challenges in managing records at Supreme Furnishers**

The fourth objective sought to find out the challenges encountered in managing records at Supreme Furnishers. Webster, Hare and McLeod (1999), observe that most of the companies lacked in-house records management expertise and as such managed their records haphazardly. The respondents in this study were asked to state whether they encountered challenges in managing records in their organisation. They were also requested to state whether they discussed these challenges with senior management. The findings of this study showed that 30(85.7%) stated that they faced some challenges while 5(14.3%) reported that there were no problems. The findings also revealed that majority 20 (57.1 %) of the respondents stated that they did not discuss the challenges with top management.  These results are presented in Table 4.3.

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**Table 4.3: Records management challenges at Supreme Furnishers**

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Any challenges in managing records: Yes | 30 | 85.70% |
| No | 5 | 14.30% |
| Discussing challenges with senior management: Yes | 15 | 42.90% |
| No | 20 | 57.10% |

Source: Filed data, 2013

The interview findings revealed that, challenges were not discussed with top management due to the fact that proper records management was considered to be done at headquarters in Johannesburg. Furthermore, it was highlighted that there were no proper plans for records management in Botswana, hence discussing challenges with top management would not help in anyway. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to state the major challenges they encountered in managing records. The findings in Figure 4.22 revealed that out of 35respondents,12(34.3%) indicated inadequate storage space, 9(25.71%) inadequate/unskilled staff, 6(17%) lack of equipment, lack of promotion 5(14.29%) recordkeeping culture within the organisation and 3(8.6%) cited others as challenges in managing records at Supreme Furnishers.

**Figure 4.22: Records management challenges at Supreme Furnishers**
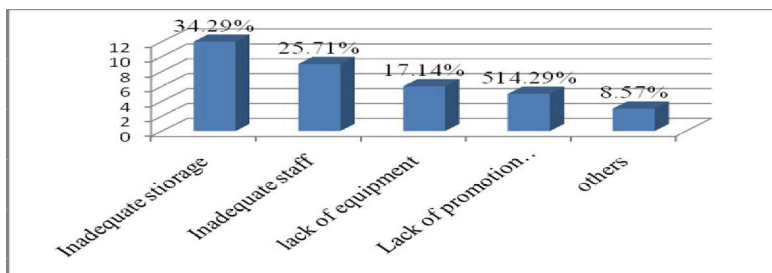


Source: Field data, 2013

The interview findings indicated that were no personnel trained in records management in the entire organisation. The observations made at Supreme Furnishers revealed that the organisation did not have a central depository or records management unit, and that each branch kept its records in the storeroom. Some branches transferred their records to the warehouses.

Furthermore, the interview findings revealed that there were other challenges of missing files at the branches. The organisation was faced by this challenge, as it was a common practise that all the physical files were kept at the branches. Furthermore, staff files were kept at the branches and some employees' records were always missing. This was mostly experienced when there were disciplinary hearings at the head office. The missing of files showed that some employees had easy access to their personal files, without authorisation.

# CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

## 5.1. Compliance to legislative and regulatory framework

In view of the findings in chapter 4, it is clear that the Supreme Furnishers records management practices were below the required standards. It has been realised that there were no common records management practices and procedures. The findings showed that a majority 24 (68.6%) of staff at Supreme Furnishers agreed that records were not kept according to the Company's Act section 218, while a few11 (31.4%) agreed that they are kept according to section 218 of the Company's Act. This is an indication that not all employees at Supreme Furnishers were aware of the records management programmes in their organization.

## 5.2 Inspection of records by Registrar of Companies

The findings in Table 4.2 reveal that inspection on records at Supreme Furnishers was never done at the branches or Head Office, by the Registrar of Companies. Instead the inspections were done on other items such as fire detectors and fire extinguishers, as a way of protecting goods being sold. It was further revealed that BURS officers were the ones who did the inspections at the Head Office particularly on financial records in their audit processes. Therefore, the rest of the records were not inspected. This shows that the records management at Supreme Furnitures was not really valued as an organizational asset. This was supported by King's (2003) argument that organisations do not recognize records management as valuable assets as compared to other resources such as money, staff and company assets (buildings, vehicles and others).

## 5.3. Is Supreme Furnishers ISO 15489-1:2001 certified?

The interview findings revealed that Supreme Furnishers did not manage its records according to the guidelines of ISO 15489-1:2001.This is an international standard for records management which provides guidance on good practice in managing records. Chachage and Ngulube(2006) emphasise that though the ISO 15489-1 2001 may be optional, compliance to it may foster accountability and good corporate governance, especially in the private sector where business activities are not always open to public. Furthermore, it improves service delivery in the organisation through proper management of records. This is further highlights by Hughes (2003)

who asserts that for the business sector to adopt the ISO 15489, indicate that records management is taken seriously as a critical business function, as it is an international profession that is committed to improving service delivery and high quality services . ISO certification will also have some positive impact on how records are captured or created, transmitted and used, stored, indexed, retrieved, controlled retained and preserved (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). Since Supreme Furnishers is not guided by ISO 15489-1:2001 records management is run haphazardly, without policies, records management committees and insufficient records storage areas, indexes and others.

## 5.4. Compliance to VAT and Income Tax requirements

The findings in Figure 4.1 show that the majority (57.1 %%) of the respondents did not keep the records according to the BURS requirements. BURS expects business organisations to keep records for a period of 7 years after each tax year. Prison (2004) supports the idea of keeping records for tax purposes, by stating that various documents needed to support any information on tax returns should be retained. In addition the observation findings showed that there was inconsistency in managing records at Supreme Furnishers. Some of the staff members were not even aware that they had to comply with VAT and Income Tax requirements. This revealed that staff members were not well informed, and that compliance VAT and Income Tax requirements required proper keeping of records.

## 5.5. Records Management Policies and Procedures

The study findings showed that there was no records management policy at Supreme Furnishers, as indicated in Figure 4.2.The majority(57.1%%) of respondents stated they were not aware of any records management policy in the organisation. This confirms Wamukoya's (1995) who highlights that the lack of awareness of records management in many public and private sector organisations is widespread. This is noticed by inadequacy of policies, standards and guidelines, as well as inefficiency and lack of management continuity.

Furthermore, King (2003) asserts that business organisations should come up with financial policies, expenditure programmes, human resources/personnel policies, staff development

programmes, rather than records management policies. This is due to the fact that they value these business assets more than records. For the policy to be effective, it has to be endorsed by the top management team. It should also be communicated and implemented throughout the organisation. Moore (2004) emphasises that the records management policy must be enforced so that the staff may be aware of it in order to follow it.

## 5.6. Records Maintenance

Bicknese and Hendry (2006) assert that current records should be arranged and filed for efficient retrieval and handling. This means that records maintenance involves continuous monitoring, updating and ensuring that records are well protected. Records should be easily located when needed as well as being handled properly for effective and proper records management to prevail.

### a) Records storage and records equipments

The survey results revealed that Supreme Furnishers did not have a Central records management repository where all the records from different branches in Botswana were archived. Instead, the branches kept their records in the storerooms while others kept them in the warehouses. In addition there were no well–resourced records management units at Head office and branches. Some officials kept some records in their offices. The study has further revealed that the storerooms in which records were kept were not locked for protection. The storage capacities were also not enough to accommodate all the records. On the other hand, IRMT (2000) asserts that the records which are not well protected throughout their Life Cycle Model will not survive long enough to serve their administrative and cultural purposes.

### (b) Records Equipment

The findings showed that the records management resources at Supreme Furnishers such as shelves and cabinets at the storerooms were not enough to accommodate all the records. This supports Lan (2003) who states that many private companies are faced with problems and difficulties of not having special repository and records management. Figure 4.7 shows that some

boxes were just dumped on the floor probably because of insufficiency of shelves in the storerooms. Figure 4.9 also shows that files are piled against on one another probably because of insufficient shelves. The study further revealed that there were no labels on the boxes to indicate which department they belonged to.

## 5.7. Creating and capturing of records

The findings of this study showed that Supreme Furnishers managed about 60% paper and 40% electronic records. The types of records managed at Supreme Furnishers include accounting records (income and sales records, records of purchases and expenses), banking records, reports, personnel and employee records, minutes of meetings held, e-mail , income tax records, goods and services tax records, records of assets, debtors and creditors registers.

## 5.8. Managing mail at Supreme Furnishers

The findings showed that there was no proper way of managing mail at Supreme Furnishers. There was no mailroom or central registry as indicated in Figure 4.4. The findings further revealed that there were no incoming or outgoing mail registers. Instead respondents highlighted that any mail/correspondences, were sent to the supervisors. They further stated that their supervisors kept the mail in their offices. These findings are similar to those reported by Roos (2003) who argues that managers and staff in the business sector keep records in the desk draws, personnel computers and databases.

## 5.9. Records management system supporting capturing of records

The findings in Figure 4.11 show that the majority (38.71%) of the respondents indicated that the system used to capture records was unsatisfactory. There were no record creation guidelines and policies at Supreme Furnishers. This is not a new phenomenon in ESARBICA, as found by Kemoni (2007) that some records management units in Kenya did not have policies for creating records. ISO 15489-1 2001:7 asserts that a policy for creating records is important as it stipulates the requirement for capturing, registering, classifying, retaining, storing, tracking, accessing and disposing of records. In addition Supreme Furnishers, like many private or public sectors, lacks

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proper records management practices and programs. For instance, there were no central registries, no records classification schemes, no disposition policies and no professional staff in managing records.

## 5.10. Classification and arrangement of records

The findings of this study have revealed that there was no file classification scheme used at Supreme Furnishers, as indicated in Figure 4.12. The interview and observation findings have revealed that different sections at Supreme Furnishers used numerical 27(77.1%) and alphabetical 8(22.9%) ways of arranging files. For instance, in the Finance sections files were arranged according to payment voucher numbers, as illustrated in Figure 4.13, while other finance sections in some branches arranged files according to dates. This finding is consistent with observations made by Shepherd and Yeo (2003) that in many organisations records management systems are poorly structured and it is often difficult to gain contextual information from lists. Furthermore, each business unit may have its own classification system with no consistency across the organisation. In addition, it was also found out that, departments at Supreme Furnishers employed different records management practices and procedures of classifying records. This way of not having common standards of managing records, has been criticised by Parker and Smith (1997) who argue that it may lead to subjective approaches to the retention of records.

The interviews and observations findings also revealed that Supreme Furnishers did not have an inventory or an index for all its files in all the branches visited and at the Head office .The creation of an index helps in determining files that are in use and avoids opening files that already exist. Since Supreme Furnishers did not have a classification scheme, it was not easy for them to appraise record. This is observed by Bilotto and Guercio (2003) who state that, without a functional organization of classification system, many basic activities are impossible or very expensive to deal with, particularly the appraisal task.

Records classification in private sector/business environment is essential in the sense that, it helps in proper management of records. Commonwealth of Australia (2003) highlights that the

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process of classification helps describe, organise and control information. It creates order in understanding what an organisation does and how it does it. Classifying records in an organisation actually enables it to be able to manage its information accordingly. Besides, this classification of records enables one to understand what the organisation is doing, hence giving a full description of it. ISO 15489-1: 2001 further supports this by stating that "Classification systems reflect the business of the organization from which they are derived and are normally based on analysis of organization's business activities.

## 5.11. Access and retrieving of records

The findings of this study revealed majority 20(57.1%) of the respondents preferred a central records management unit to store records for easy access, as shown in Figure 4.14. It was also stated that the records should be stored in central places, and individuals would be assigned to take care of the records officers. The interview findings indicated that officers spent considerable time searching for records and information which ought to be readily available.

## 5.12. File tracking system

This study has revealed that there were no files tracking systems at Supreme Furnishers as shown in Figure 4.15. For example that there were no file movement cards and File transit slips. Van Garden (2003) argues that a records tracking system allows one to trace the current location of the records. It also enables one to maintain audit trails on the access and use of records. As such it is not easy for personnel at Supreme Furnishers to easily locate files that move from one action officer to another without recording or registering it.

## 5.13. Records disposal

The best practices of Records management emphasise that it is necessary to utilise appraisal techniques to support decisions about retention indicating which records can be destroyed at an early stage and which ones can have an indefinite retention (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).

The interview and observation findings revealed that Supreme Furnishers lacked appropriate procedures for retiring and transferring of records from active storage areas (storerooms) to inactive storage. There was lack of a standard system that guided the retention periods of records at Supreme Furnishers. According to ISO 15489-1 Section 9.9, no disposition should take place without assurance that the records are no longer required, that no work is outstanding and that no litigation or investigation is current or pending which requires the records as evidence.

Different departments at Supreme Furnishers used different methods of disposing records as indicated in Figure 4.16. Records at Supreme Furnishers are burnt and dumped. However Shepherd and Yeo (2003) consider methods of destroying paper records such as shredding and more securely by pulping or incineration as environmentally friendly .The choice of the methods of destroying will be determined by security needs, costs and environmental impact.

The findings also revealed that Supreme Furnishers did not have appraisal processes to determine which records were to be destroyed at an early stage and the ones to be kept permanently. This observation is supported by IMT (2003) who states that ESARBICA is faced with serious challenges of having no records retention and disposal policies. However, in Botswana, Ramokate and Moatlhodi (2010:75) highlight that policies for retaining and disposing of records in the public sector were non–existent. Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2008) assert that some companies in Tanzania did not appraise or make inventories or establish retention schedules. Kalusopa and Ngulube (2012), though they focused on labour organisations in Botswana, discovered that most of these organisations had no clear rules and procedures that authorise the retention and disposal of records.

These findings suggest that there is likelihood that most of the public and private sectors in Botswana do not have policies for retaining and disposing records. The study further revealed that there were some inconstancies in disposing of records. For instance, some departments kept records for a period of five (5) years, Departments such as the Finance Department kept records after which they would be disposed them. However, according to the SOX some of the financial records recommended that records such as should be kept for a period of 7 years for example accounts payable ledgers and accounts receivables. While others such as bank statements and

charts of accounts are to be kept permanently. On the other hand, invoices from customers are to be kept for 5 years.

## 5.14. Records management committee

The findings of this study revealed that there was no records management committee at Supreme Furnishers, as indicated in Figure 4.17. Other studies which revealed that most of the private companies did not have records management committees include a study by Yusof and Chell (1999) conducted on Malaysian companies and another by Chachage and Ngulube (2006) on Tanzanian private companies. Records management committees in private organisations are essential for designing records keeping systems and sharing information about decision making between stakeholders. This will reduce conflicts and suspicions among stakeholders (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006).

## 5.15. Training in records management

To manage records according to the Records Life Cycle, Records Continuum and Hybrid Models, it is important that the personnel should be trained properly in records management (Chachage and Ngulube, 2006). However the findings of the study revealed that no one at Supreme Furnishers had been trained in records management. See Figure 4.18. Most (100%) of the staff members had other qualifications rather than records management. According to King (2007) most of the senior management, board of directors and the employees of the business related organisations have business qualifications only, rather than records management. This has resulted in lack of professionalism and knowledge in records management at supreme Furnishers. IRMT (2003) further asserts that lack of training of personnel in records management leads to lack of competencies in managing records and archives in the ESARBICA region.

The findings also indicate that records management in the private sector is not yet considered an essential function that can boost the profitability of the organisation. This also shows that, records management in the private sector is still at its infant stage as there is lack of skills, professionalism and knowledge (Hughes, 2003). This is further supported by Lan (2003) that the

private sector has a lower level of professional skills in records management. Therefore, it is important that the creators of records should be equipped with the necessary skills to capture and manage records.

## 5.16. Managing Electronic records

The findings of this study showed that used packages at Supreme Furnishers were commonly used such as the database 19(54.3%) and Spreadsheet 16 (45.7%), as shown in Figure 4.19. Each department used a specific package suitable for performing its activities. For example the Sales Department used databases management while Finance preferred spreadsheet. These are packages found within the Ceres information system used at Supreme Furnishers. The study further revealed that there was no policy concerning the management of electronic records. This is further echoed by Kahn and Blair (2004) who state most organisations are good at applying retention policies to paper records rather than to digital information. The findings of this study also revealed that electronic software used at Supreme Furnishers called Ceres was not sufficient to integrate all the business activities. For instance, it was unable to capture and store information on human resource management. Therefore it is being replaced by another one called vision plug.

### 5.16.1. Security of electronic records
### (a) Backups and passwords

This study has further revealed that backups (51.4%) 17(54.8%) and passwords (48.6%) 14(45.2%) were used to protect data, as shown in Figure 4.21. Majority of the respondents revealed that they used backups to protect data. A similar observation is made by Bantin (2002) who asserts that most of the organisations typical strategy for protecting data is to generate daily back-ups of the system data. This creation of back-ups supports the disaster recovery and business continuance purposes. As such the creation of backups at supreme Furnishers printing the spreadsheet by Finance department was a form of disaster recovery and business continuity. It was realised that other ways of creating backups such as using backup tapes, Compact Disk-Read Only Memory (CR-ROMs), disks, flash memory and CD/DVD were not employed. This means that if a disaster (flood) may affect both printout and computers, then it will not be easy to

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recover the data. However, Bicknese and Hendry (2006) assert that back up programs are not records management programs. The study has further revealed that passwords were used at Supreme Furnishers to prevent unauthorised access of records by officers. Each officer had his/her own secret password to access information and this was monitored by management in the organisation. NECCC (2004) supported this by stating that authentication technologies may be used to verify the identity of the user to ensure that the users are the ones who claim to be. Scarfone and Souppaya (2008) are used in many ways to protect data, systems and net works. Using a password with user identifier such as a username is one form of identification and authentication.

The study revealed that Supreme Furnishers was faced with challenges in managing records. The major challenges involved inadequate storage spaces 12(34.3%), unskilled staff 9(25.7%) and lack of promoting recordkeeping culture 5(13.4%) as shown on Figure 4.22. According to Lan (2003) most business companies are faced by challenges of not having special repositories, equipment, professional personnel and inadequate budgets. Insufficient records management storage space posed challenges for Supreme Furnishers has challenges in preserving its documents appropriately. This was emphasised by Billotto (2003) that most the private companies have a problem of preserving their documentary heritage to guarantee for historical reasons.

The challenge of not promoting records management at Supreme Furnishers that records management is not taken as an important organisational resource. In this regard, Okello-Obura (2011) highlights that records are valuable business assets and as such they must be treated with utmost care. The observation findings have also showed that the records at Supreme Furnitures were kept in poorly facilitated storerooms. The records in the storerooms were poorly arranged and described making retrieval a problem. A similar observation is made by Mnjama (2005) that some challenges facing archival institutions in Africa, are poor storage facilities for records, as well as inadequate retrieval tools in the archival areas.

In addition, interviews also revealed that other challenges (14.30%) 2(6.5%) affecting the management of records at Supreme Furnishers included, lack of skilled manpower in records management, trained personnel, insufficient records protection measures and missing of files. It was highlighted that some records always in the employees' files. This is a serious challenge in

the sense that, the information that may be at the Head Office in Johannesburg might be different with that at the branches. It was reported that the branches kept physical files including those of the employees. While the Head Office in the Johannesburg kept the electronic formats. The problems and challenges identified above were also noted by other researchers such as Mnjama (2005); Ngulube (2009); Ngulube and Chachage (2006); and Ngulube and Tafor (2006) in their studies of records management in the ESARBICA region and in Africa. This was further supported by International Records Management Trust (2003) statement that the challenges of records are due to the absence of organizational plans for managing records. Besides this, there is also low awareness of the role of records management in support of organizational efficiency and accountability.

# CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1. Introduction

In chapter 5, data collected through the use of questionnaires, interviews and observations was interpreted. The findings of the study were also discussed and summarised. This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of the study. The objectives of the study were:

1) To determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework of managing business records in Botswana.
2) To examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers.
3) To determine the format and nature of records created and retained at Supreme Furnishers
4) To establish the challenges encountered in managing records at Supreme Furnishers
5) Propose solutions aimed at improving records keeping at Supreme Furnishers

This chapter also addresses the fifth objective of the study which aims at proposing solutions aimed at improving records keeping at Supreme Furnishers.

## 6.2. Summary of findings

The first objective of the study was to determine the company's level of compliance to legislative and regulatory framework. The interview findings revealed that Supreme Furnishers complies with the Botswana Employment Act because the employees' records that are required by the Act are kept. Furthermore, the findings revealed that Supreme Furnishers complied with Botswana Hire Purchase Act, as its advertisements displayed all the requirements according to the Act. On the other hand, the study found out that Supreme Furnishers kept records according to the Income Tax Act as financial records were kept for a longer period than 7 years required by the Act. In addition, Supreme Furnishers (Financial sections/departments) also kept records needed by VAT which states that original invoices, credit notes, debit notes and others should be maintained. However, the study identified that Supreme Furnishers was not guided by the ISO 15489 in managing its records. Although ISO 15489 is not mandatory, it directs organisations on how to maintain their records in a more professional, manageable and cost-effective. The study

has also found out that majority of the respondents (68.6%) were not aware that the Supreme Furnishers records were to be kept according to the Company's Act particularly section 218.This could be the case, because the study findings also revealed that the Registrar of Companies' Office rarely inspected the organisation's records as section 218 of the Company's Act requires. In addition, it was realised that Supreme Furnishers did not have a records management policy. On another note, Supreme Furnishers is compliant to some regulatory laws such as Hire Purchase Act, VAT and Income Tax. Compliance to Hire Purchase Act is intensified by Consumer Watchdog Group which sees to it that companies selling on credit comply with this act (Kayawe,2009),while BURS Compliance department enforces VAT and Income Tax..

The second objective of the study was to examine the resources available in managing records at Supreme Furnishers. The major findings revealed that there was insufficiency of records management equipment such as boxes, cabinets and shelves. Furthermore, the records were stored in storerooms or warehouses. Besides, the areas in which the records were stored did not accommodate all the records. This means that Supreme Furnishers does not have adequate records management resources. For instance, there was also lack of trained personnel in records management indicating that records management is still at its infant stage at Supreme Furnishers.

The third objective of the study was to determine the nature of records at Supreme Furnishers. The findings revealed that different types of records were created and retained at Supreme Furnishers. These included accounting records (income and sales records, records of purchases and expenses), banking records, reports, personnel and employee records, minutes of meetings held, e-mail , income tax records, goods and services tax records, records of assets, debtors and creditors registers. The findings further revealed that these records were managed in both paper and electronic formats.

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the challenges encountered in handling records at Supreme Furnishers. The findings revealed that the main challenges were: insufficiency of records management storage space, lack of skill manpower in records management, lack of trained personnel in records management and insufficiency of records protection measures. However, it seems that Supreme Furnishers is still faced with various challenges as far as records

management is concerned. Therefore, this means a lot has to be done in this area to improve records management.

The fifth objective of the study was to propose solutions aimed at improving records keeping at Supreme Furnishers. This objective was discussed thoroughly under the recommendations in section 5.4.

## 6.3. Conclusions

It has emerged from the study that records management is an important discipline that has international attraction. However, based on the findings of the study, it is ideal to conclude that records management practice at Supreme Furnishers is still at its infant stage. The study has revealed that there are no records management policies at Supreme Furnishers. Furthermore, records are not managed according to ISO15489-1:2001.

The organisation is also faced by other challenges such as lack of records management units, insufficiency of records management equipment and materials. Besides, the organisation does not have file tracking systems. There were different types of records at Supreme Furnishers which include: accounting records (income and sales records, records of purchases and expenses), banking records, reports, personnel and employee records, minutes of meetings held, income tax records, goods and services tax records, records of assets, debtors and creditors registers. However, lack of trained records management professionals hindered the proper management of records at Supreme Furnishers. There was no single person at the branches and Head Office qualified in records management. The Staff at Supreme Furnishers was qualified in business courses rather than records management. In addition, there was no records management committee at Supreme furnishers.

Despite above challenges there are some lessons learnt. For instance, the study findings revealed that the paper records were kept for a period of 5 years. As such there was no record that could be destroyed before this period. Most of the records kept for this period were for customers. In addition, the organisation kept financial records according to the requirements of VAT and Income Tax. Access to some electronic records was restricted through the use of passwords. Furthermore back-up of electronic records was done, through printing of documents on a daily

basis to avoid disasters. Back-up system employed at Supreme Furnishers involved printing out some documents. This means the electronic records were converted to paper format.

## 6.4. Recommendations

### 6.4.1. Legislative and policy framework

This study recommends that all sections of Supreme Furnishers should comply with the laws in the statutes that require the business sector to maintain proper management of records. These are: Botswana Companies Act, Botswana Income Tax Act, Value Added Tax Employment Act, and others. Once these laws are fully enforced in the private sector, records management will be playing a major role in protecting legal interests, as well as promoting the interests of shareholders and citizens. Hence, this will increase organisational transparency, accountability and efficiency (Kahn and Bair, 2004).

The study further recommends that Supreme Furnishers should be aware of, and comply with any legislative requirements that relate to records management. Supreme Furnishers has to develop records management policies, adopt the international standards for records management and procedures, and manage records according to the best practice in order to improve operational efficiency in the organisation.

### a)ISO 15489-1:2001 Certification

The findings have revealed that Supreme Furnishers does not manage its records according to the records management international standard. The researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should manage their records according to the standard. The standard covers all aspects of records management, except archival records within archival institution (Gunnlaugsdottir, 2002). Once in place, the ISO 15489-1:2001 will assist in making sure that the records created at Supreme Furnishers are authentic, reliable, integral and useable. Some staff members who are not aware of the (ISO15489:2001) should be taught about it. This will develop confidence and competencies among the staff. The use of the ISO15489:2001 will also enable Supreme Furnishers to improve in the area of total quality management, which improves customer satisfaction.

**b) Records management policies and procedures**

Supreme Furnishers should establish a records management policy which should be adopted by all the departments in the branches and at the Head Office. All the employees of Supreme Furnishers should be made aware of the records management policy. The policy will ensure that records management becomes a component of the job description of every employee at Supreme Furnishers. The policy statement should include the following aspects:

1) All official records should be created or received by Supreme Furnishers

2) All official records should be incorporated into the Supreme Furnishers records systems and private or individual record keeping will not be allowed

3) Official records should not be destroyed without proper authorization

4) A Records Manager should be recruited and will be responsible for all aspects of records management from creation to disposition

5) Access to Supreme Furnishers' records should be governed by rules and regulations, which are formulated and approved by Supreme Furnishers.

6) Supreme Furnishers should keep records that are no longer in use at offsite depositories such as Document Bank Botswana or Crown Records Management Centre and Logistics Botswana.

The policy will bring to the forefront, the importance of records management to the work of staff at Supreme Furnishers. Furthermore, the introduction of the records management policy will promote the culture of accountability and adherence to some of the laws governing the private sectors operations. It is further recommended that the records management policy should compel officials to practise proper records management. For example the policy can state that all line managers should only approve documents with file plan reference numbers.

**6.4.2. Records maintenance**
**a) Records Storage**

The findings revealed that Supreme Furnishers' branches and the Head Office lack a central storage for semi-current records (closed records). Instead each branch uses store rooms or

warehouses to keep records that are not needed to support their day-to-day activities. It is recommended that Supreme Furnishers should consider outsourcing records management. Outsourcing is defined as the engagement of an external service provider by virtue of a contract or agreement to perform records management activities on behalf of the organisation (State of Victoria, 2010). This involves allowing a commercial organisation that specialises in managing records for clients or third parties to manage them on behalf of Supreme Furnishers. Therefore, all closed records at the Head Office and branches should be transferred to the commercial records centres for storage.

Supreme Furnishers should utilise the services of commercial records such as Document Bank, where proper use of retention schedules will ensure that records of ephemeral nature are disposed of, at the expiry of agreed retention periods. Keeping records in off-site records repositories which are commercially managed is often cheaper and more flexible than using in-house storage areas (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003).The commercial off-site centres always have higher levels of security .Furthermore they have larger capacity for storing records as compared to the very small storerooms used at Supreme Furnishers. Furthermore, a qualified outsourcing vendor like Document Bank is capable of keeping records in the paper format as well as scanning and digitizing them on demand. In addition, it is capable of storing data in various media which include back-up tapes, CDs, DVDs and many more.

The findings revealed that storerooms at Supreme Furnishers lacked air conditioners, humidifiers or dehumidifiers meaning that temperature and humidity were not controlled. It is recommended that the records storage area should have a central heat and air conditioning to provide adequate environmental protection for the records. The ideal temperature for archival storage is 67degrees Fahrenheit plus or minus2 degrees Fahrenheit, relative humidity of 47 percent, plus or minus 2 degrees (Bicknese and Hendry, 2006). It is also important that security measures should be in place. Areas where records are kept should always be locked to avoid loss and damage.

**b) Records Equipments and materials**

The study has revealed that Supreme Furnishers did not have enough shelves in the storerooms to accommodate the records (files). The researcher recommends that enough steel adjustable

shelves should be installed that are sufficient for the projected growth of the records quantity (Bicknese and Hendry, 2006).

The study further identified that boxes used to store records were not archival boxes. The researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should use Flat storage boxes that allow oversize archival records to lie flat for storage. They should also use a removable lid, metal-reinforced corner and optical drop front bottom to allow insertion and removal of records with less chance of bending or damaged (Bicknese and Hendry, 2006).

The researcher also recommends that Supreme Furnishers should use mobile filing cabinets. Mobile cabinet filing systems will create enough record storage spaces in the storage areas and offices. The cabinets should always be locked and the keys should be kept by someone responsible for managing records.

### 6.4.3. Creating and capturing

The study revealed that Supreme Furnishers lacked policies on creating and capturing of records. There were no standards for indexing, classifying or describing records in such a way that they would be organised in a systematic way for easy retrieval. Therefore, the researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should develop policies for creating and capturing records that will state the requirements for capturing, registering, classifying, retaining, storing, tracking, accessing and disposing of records (ISO 15489-1:2001:7). The establishment of these policies will ensure that the records are accessed easily. The policies will also guard against unauthorised access of records. This will also ensure that records are kept securely in the organisation. A procedures manual will be required to provide step by step measures to be undertaken in handling records from creation to disposition.

### a) Mail management

It was observed that the procedure for processing incoming and outgoing mail was inadequate. It was also noted that Supreme Furnishers did not register incoming mail and outgoing mail. The researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should introduce an incoming mail register which will indicate metadata such as: creator's reference number, date of creation, creating

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agency/author, receiver's reference number and the subject matter. On the other hand, the outgoing mail register should contain the following, the reference, date of creation, author/designation, subject and the receiving agency. The registration of the incoming and outgoing mail will establish the relationships of the correspondences in some files, and serve as proof that a record has been created and or captured into the records system (Gunnlaugsdottir, 2002).It is also recommended that the mail should be processed in the Mail room/Central registry. Therefore, it is ideal that Supreme Furnishers should also establish a mailroom /central registry. In addition, it is recommended that the mail received through fax should be registered before it is delivered to the staff. It is also suggested that all mail received through the fax should be filed in order to guard against loss of information by action officers.

Lastly, the researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should establish a mail circulation box. This involves sharing information in the organisation by circulating mail received on a daily basis amongst departments/divisions/units using a circulation box. The mail box will be circulating mainly amongst the senior management in the organisation (BNARS, 2009).The mail circulation box should circulate among the Branch Managers, Finance Managers and Credit Managers at the branch level. While at the Head Office, mail box may circulate amongst Regional Managers and Human Resource Managers.

**b) Records classification**

The survey has revealed that classification procedures were left to individual departments. Each department used its own way of classifying records. Parker and Smith (1997) criticized a system in which records management is left to individual departments because it can lead to 'a subjective approach to retention. Therefore, it is recommended that Supreme Furnishers develops and adopts a uniform file classification scheme. Furthermore, in the absence of qualified personnel in records management, the company may engage records management consultants.

This uniform file classification should be adopted by all the departments, branches and head office in the country. Furthermore, the researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should also design policies and procedures for organizing, numbering and describing records. In developing a classification and a filling system, Supreme Furnishers should use the functions and activities performed in the organisation (Shepherd and Yeo 2003; Bilotto and Guercio, 2003;

IRMT, 2000). Functional based, classification system will also assist in making decisions on the retention schedules. Once the functional classification scheme is in place it must be made available to all staff members in the organisation. The organisation has to appoint the records manager or consultant, who should monitor that all departments in the organisation have adopted the classification scheme. Ultimately, this will promote the culture of acceptance and ownership within the staff.

### 6.4.4. Accessing and retrieving of records

**a) File movement/File tracking**

The study has revealed that there are no files tracking systems at Supreme Furnishers. As such it is recommended that Supreme Furnishers should implement effective systems for tracking files both on paper and electronic records. For instance, the file tracking systems to be employed on paper based records, may include file movement cards and transit slips. File movement card and transit slips will work together in informing officers on the whereabouts of the files. The card should contain as minimum the date the file is being retrieved, the file reference number, and the name of the officer to whom it is being handed, the date it is returned. In the case of confidential files, the officer should be asked to sign the file movement cards as proof of receipt of a file (BNARS, 2009).

### 6.4.5. Establishment of a Records management committee

The study has revealed that there is no Records Management Committee at Supreme Furnishers. Therefore, the researcher recommends that, it is ideal for Supreme Furnishers to appoint a records management committee. Once appointed the committee will communicate key records management problems or issues to organisational management. The records management committee will also be responsible for establishing vital records management programme for the organisation (University College Cork (2014). Records management committee will make recommendations to Regional Managers on the disposal and retention schedules of records.

The Committee will ensure that Supreme Furnishers pursues the aims and objectives set out in the policy statement. The main function of the Committee will also be to approve measures

designed to set up the Records Management programme. The duties and roles of Records Management Committee should include the following:

1) Approving records retention schedules

2) Making recommendations to the Regional Manager on disposal of records

3) Committee members should ensure that proper records management is practised in their departments

4) Assist and communicate records management problems or issues to Supreme Furnishers top management (General Manager and Regional Managers)

5) Assist in establishing a records management programme at Supreme Furnishers.

It is further recommended that the records management committee should be made up of professionals from different departments. These members include Regional Managers, Business Managers, Finance Managers, IT officers, Records Manager (once appointed) and Human Resources (Formtek Incorporation, 2012).

### 6.4.6. Records disposition

The study has revealed that the ways of disposing records at Supreme Furnishers are very weak and are not according to the international standards. ISO 15489-1:2001 emphasised that the destruction of records should always be authorized. The study recommends that before records can be disposed, they must be appraised first.

The study further recommends that Supreme Furnishers should undertake destruction of records confidentially and certificates of destruction should also be produced after this act has been performed (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). This means that not anyone may be assigned to destroy the records at Supreme Furnishers. It should be performed by people with positions of responsibility, as there might be some confidential records. For instance, the destruction of records at Supreme Furnishers should be assigned to officers in management such as the Branch Managers, Credit Managers and Finance Managers. It is recommended that a list of records to be destroyed should be submitted to top management (Regional managers, General Managers and

Executives). The study further recommends that, the list should be submitted after the records management Committee has made some recommendations on the disposal of records. In addition to this, the list of records destroyed should be maintained and a certificate of destruction should be filed. The certificate should show the date, the place and the officer who actually witnessed the destruction of records.

The study further recommends that before records can be destructed, retention schedule should be in place. The retention schedule should have been approved by top management. The retention schedule should further state retention period for each type of record created and received, as well as the final disposition. No record should be destroyed without proper authorization. As such lists of all records destroyed after the expiry of agreed retention periods, should be maintained.

### 6.4.7. Records preservation

The findings have revealed that the methods of preserving records at Supreme Furnishers were very weak. It was observed that records were just dumped in the storerooms where there was no one assigned to them. The storerooms did not have proper records management facilities and equipments. From the findings above, the study recommends that microfilming, scanning and laminating of records may be used, to prolong life of records that have continuing value.

### 6.4.8. Training of staff in records management

According to the international records management standard (ISO 15489-1: Section 11), an organisation should establish an ongoing programme of records training. Therefore, organisations can set up their own records management training programmes or can set up the training programmes with external bodies.

Supreme Furnishers should develop records management training programme for all officers. It is ideal that Supreme Furnishers' staff members should be sent to workshops or seminars on records management. These are some of the activities that can be done in order to equip staff with records management skills. Employees must be taught the reasons for recordkeeping and must be held accountable through measurable objectives (McLaughlin, 2004). Furthermore, it is

recommended that Supreme Furnishers should recruit qualified personnel in records management, since it is an international organisation operating in most of Southern African countries. As such, it has to employ personnel with Masters in Archives and Records management. The person, who will be holding the post of Records Manager, should be assisted by other personnel with diplomas or certificates in records management. The suggested duties of the Records Manager will be to:

1. Direct, plan and administer Supreme Furnishers' records management programme;

2. Design and implement procedures for capturing,

3. Storing and retrieving records;

4. Day-to-day administration of the records centre;

5. Developing standards for the management of records;

6. Developing and up-dating records retention schedules, and

7. Maintaining records storage facilities.

It is also recommended that proper records management can also be enforced by mainstreaming it in the balance scorecards of all employees at supreme Furnishers. By so doing Management will ensure that the records management vision is shared, understood and embraced by all staff.

Shepherd and Yeo (2003) further indicate that distance learning courses are increasingly available. In case of Botswana there are various institutions such as University of Botswana which offers both diploma and masters in archives and records management. Diploma in Archives and Records Management is offered on a full time basis and Masters in Archives and Records Management is on part-time basis. Furthermore, Institute of Development Management (IDM) is another institution that offers both Certificate and Diploma in Archives Administration and Records Management on part time basis.

### 6.4.9. Managing electronic records

The study has revealed that the two electronic systems (Ceres and Vision plug) are employed at Supreme Furnishers, which operate separately. In addition to this, none of them is adequate to capture all the activities of the organisation. As a way forward, the researcher recommends that Supreme Furnishers should install electronic records and document management system (ERDMS). Electronic records management system should be designed to manage the maintenance and disposition of records. It will be able to maintain the content, context, structure and links between records to enable their accessibility and support their value as evidence (International Council on Archives, 2008).

The study recommends that Supreme Furnishers should procure an ERDMS which conforms to standard like Model Requirement for managing electronic records (MoReq). MoReq is comprehensive specification of the functional requirement for electronic records management. It is an electronic records keeping system that specifies classifications, records, document, retention schedules of both electronic and paper– based records (Cornwell Management, 2004).

The study further recommends that procurement of ERDMS must be based on a needs assessment and formulation of a statement of User Requirements. MoReq focuses mainly on the functional requirements for the management of electronic records by an Electronic Records Management System (ERMS). It is equally applicable to public and private sector organisations which wish to introduce an ERMS, or which wish to assess the ERMS capability they currently have in place (European Communities, 2008).

It is also recommended that Supreme Furnishers should dispose electronic records which are no longer needed. It is stated that electronic records can be erased by reformatting, degaussing or physically destroying their storage media (Shepherd and Yeo, 2003). However, before the records can be disposed off. It is important that they must be appraised first. Appraisal is the process of determining the value of a record, which may lead to either retaining or disposing it State of California (2008) asserts that appraising of records is determined by the value a record has in the organisation. Records are appraised based on their values of administrative, evidence,

research and others. Since Supreme Furnishers is a business entity in the retail industry, it is recommended that it should employ functional appraisal method, in appraising its records. This has been supported by Bantin (2002) who argues that in the modern world of high volume documentation and of electronic records that exist as logic not physical entities, it is appropriate to appraise them using the functional appraisal approach. Therefore, this involves examining the business function, the activity and the transaction that created the record, rather than examining the record and content in it to appraise it.

It was also realised that there is no electronic records management policy at Supreme Furnishers. It is recommended that Supreme Furnishers should design electronic policy. Once in place, the policy will emphasise issues specific to electronic records, such as the challenges associated with capturing and preserving electronic records (Bantin, 2002:8). The study has also revealed that back-up system at Supreme Furnishers involves printing electronic records to paper format. This is not an adequate way of employing back-up, as Kahn and Blair (2004) argue that digital business content often contains information that is lost or altered when it is reduced to printed form. For example the lost information may include metadata indicating title, author, reviewers, edits and storage locations. Therefore, the researcher recommends that adequate back-up procedures should be put in place. This involves converting the electronic records into other media such as back- tapes, CDs, DVDs and microfilm. The software used at Supreme Furnishers should be able to read these back-ups. For instance the back–up tapes would be used in the case of a disaster to restore lost records (State of Florida, 2010). The study further recommends that Supreme Furnishers should back-up electronic records on a regular basis to guard against the loss of information, due to human error, equipment malfunctions or other disaster. It is also recommended that Supreme Furnishers should use magnetic tape or cassette as storage of electronic records. National Archives of South Africa (2000) highlights that the anticipated life expectancy of a magnetic tape is 12-20 years, if it is stored under optimal conditions. Therefore magnetic tapes/cassette will allow electronic records at Supreme Furnishers to stay longer.

Over sometime, records and aggregations may be transferred from one storage medium or location to another (for example, migration), as their activity decreases and/or their use changes. A tracking feature is needed to record the change of location for both ease of access and to meet regulatory requirements (ICA, 2008). Migration involves the transfer of electronic records from

one hardware or software in order to preserve their integrity as well as retaining their accessibility in the rapid changing of technology.

### 6.4.10. Records management as strategic resource

In order for records management to receive the attention it deserves at Supreme Furnishers, this study proposes that it should be a strategic objective in the different branches and Head office's strategic plan. In this case, the study proposes that Supreme Furnishers should formulate a records management programme. The starting point is usually promoting an awareness of records as a corporate resource just like other valuable assets such as buildings, vehicles, stocks, human resource and finance (King, 1997).It is recommended that Supreme Furnishers should appoint a Records Manager to drive the records management programme. The Records Manager will see to it that records management programme is aligned to objective of the organisation. This is supported by ISO 15489 (2001) that, for a RM programme to succeed, it must be closely aligned to the needs of the organisation and in particular to the organisation's strategic and policy objectives.

Furthermore, before establishing a records management programme, it is ideal that a survey should be carried out. The survey will reveal the good and bad ways in which the records are managed at Supreme Furnishers, in order to give an appropriate advice. This is echoed by Mnjama (2004:9) that the effective RM programme must begin with a records survey, supported by well-defined policies and procedures, a team of well qualified and competent staff and support from top management.

### 6.5. Areas for further Research

This study has examined records keeping in one company only. It is recommended that other studies be conducted in Botswana, to determine the extent to which companies in the country are managing their records. The studies will also have to determine the extent to which these companies are complying with the Botswana Companies Act, Employment Act, VAT and Income Tax and others which specify the types of company records to be maintained. Other future research studies to be pursued may include:

- The role of records managers in Botswana's private sector
- Impact of Botswana laws governing records management in the private sector
- Competitive advantage contributed by records management in Botswana private sector
- The importance of business records management on retail industry specialising in other product categories such as Clothing, Food, Auto mobile, Banking ,Insurance, telecommunications and informal sector
- The significance of records management procedures and resources (human, records management unit/storage depository, equipments etc) in private sector in Botswana
- Role of records management in good corporate governance in Botswana
- Best practices in the storage and accessibility of records in Botswana private sector

## 6.6. Proposed Model for Managing records at Supreme Furnishers Botswana

As already stated in section 2.9.3, the Hybrid model (also called modified Record Life Cycle model) guided this research study. This model was adopted from the study conducted by Chachage and Ngulube (2006) when studying Tanzanian companies. This Hybrid Model was considered to be suitable for managing records in the African business. Since Supreme Furnishers Botswana is in Africa, the researcher found it appropriate to use Hybrid model to guide this study.

The Hybrid model is a combination of the traditional life cycle model and Record Continuum model. Life Cycle Model is considered to be suitable for paper records. While Record Continuum model is appropriate for electronic records. Therefore, Hybrid Model would enable Supreme Furnishers to manage both paper and electronic records. Howard (2002) asserts that the Hybrid Model ensures consistency in classification, security, access controls and retention policies on both paper and electronic records. In this regard, the model attempts to comply with best practices by employing policies, methods, procedures, tools and processes to address challenges' facing Supreme Furnishers. In this regard, it was found to be relevant to this research study. As mentioned in Section 2.9.3 Supreme Furnishers has to go through various stages to strengthen its management of both paper and electronic records, to maintain authentic and

reliable records for transparency, accountability and good corporate governance. These stages are:

- Prenatal phase
- Current phase
- Semi-current phase
- Non-current phase

**Prenatal phase**

Though the study has find out that there are no records managers or archivists at Supreme Furnishers. There are stakeholders in the management positions who are highly involved in the records keeping procedures. In this case, the Business Managers and Credit Managers at the branches keep the records, which have been created by other officers. Furthermore, Financial Regional Managers conduct internal audits and they expect the financial records to be classified according to dates. Furthermore, the stakeholders such as Regional Managers, Human recourses, Business, Credit Managers, Stock Controllers and others should meet to design the records management programme at Supreme Furnishers. In designing the records management programme, there is a need that the professionals such as records management consultants and IT specialists be engaged at this stage. In addition to this, Nengomasha, Mchombu and Ngulube (2010) asserted that the roles of the stakeholders have to be clearly defined to make the records management programme successful. ISO 15489-1:2001 reiterated that records management programme includes setting records management policies (retention and disposition policies, establishing the records management committee, designing the records management training programme as well as establishing records management procedures such as classification, indexes, file tracking system according to the best records management practices. At this stage, the stakeholders will have to formulate records management committee. The committee will be involved in reviewing records management policies and procedures on a routine basis. This ideal as NECCC (2004) reiterates that that records management policies and procedures should not be static. As such, they are to be improved on a regular basis. Furthermore, Chachage and Ngulube (2006) asserted that records management committees are essential for designing records keeping system and sharing information about appraisal decision making between various shareholders. Chachage, Ngulube and Stilwell (2008) reiterate that records management committees are to set

up policies and procedures to oversee the appraisal and retention schedules as well as overall management of the corporate records management systems.

**Current phase**

The research study has indentified that various sections/departments are involved in the creating and capturing of records. In this situation, both paper and electronic records are created. An electronic system called Ceres is used to capture electronic records. This system also links Supreme Furnishers' branches in Botswana. Furthermore, some electronic records are converted to paper formats especially financial transactions such as petty cash ledgers and cash journals. Therefore, Hybrid model will enable Supreme Furnishers to set up records management system that will integrate both paper and electronic records. Furthermore, the model will require all stakeholders to be well trained in the managing of records. Chachage and Ngulube (2006) emphasised that to manage records according to the Life Cycle, Records Continuum theory or the Hybrid Model it is essential that the staff be trained in the field of records management.

**Semi-Current phase**

Semi-current records at Supreme Furnishers are transferred to the storerooms where they can be accessed in times of need. Furthermore, shelves and cabinets are also used to store the records. This model will enable Supreme Furnishers to provide adequate financial budgets to provide sufficient records management resources. This requires providing specific resources, relevant boxes, movable cabinets, files, shelves for storing records as outlined by IRMT(2000), Shepherd and Yeo(2006), Bicknese and Hendry(2006). Furthermore, at this stage the organisation will be in a position to provide on-site storage centres with environmental conditions suitable for records (Bicknese and Hendry (2006). Records will also be in safe places where alteration will be avoided (Van Garden, 2003).

**Non-current phase**

This is a stage where records which are no longer needed are disposed. While those records that are considered valuable are archived. In the case of Supreme Furnishers those records which are no longer needed are disposed of after 5 years. Therefore, the Hybrid Model will enable Supreme

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Furnishers to dispose both paper and electronic records according to the disposition and retention policies. The methods employed in disposing records at Supreme Furnishers include burning, dumping among others. Therefore, the model will also guide the organisation on employing environmentally safe methods of disposing records. State Records of New South Wales (2005) recommended that pulping is most safe method of destroying paper records. While State Records of South Australia (2014) asserts that electronic records could be destructed by reformatting or overwriting.

The findings have also revealed that there are no disposition policies at Supreme Furnishers. Therefore at this stage, the disposition policy will indicate which records can be destroyed at an early stage, and which ones can have an indefinite retention (Shepherd and Yeo,2003).Furthermore, the retention and disposition policies will prevent Supreme Furnishers from keeping records unnecessarily to avoid uncalled for costs (South Carolina of Archives,2004).

In conclusion the Hybrid model is suitable for managing records in an enterprise in the sense that the organisation may employ an Information Technology that is appropriate for managing both paper and electronic records simultaneously (Sphere, 2002). Therefore, an ERMS (Electronic records Management System) will be established to manage both paper and electronic records. Furthermore, Howard (2002) outlines that Hybrid records management system reduces duplication of efforts to ensure that there is consistent classification, security, access, controls and retention policies that applied across the broad. Therefore, the model will guide Supreme Furnishers to adopt an ERMS that is able to register physical files under the same classification scheme as electronic records. As such management of both records (paper and electronic) will easy and appropriate for a business entity.

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**APPENDICES**

APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE


RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AT SUPREME FURNISHERS BOTSWANA

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Dear Respondent

I am a Masters student (student N0.9700034) in the Department of Library and Information Studies at the University of Botswana, conducting a study on records management practices at Supreme Furnishers Botswana.

You are kindly invited to voluntarily participate in the study by completing the questionnaire. All the information supplied will be used for this study only. A copy of the findings will be made available to Supreme Furnishers, Botswana.

I will be grateful if you would complete and return the questionnaire by 24th May, 2013. Should you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Telephone: (+267) 71627963or email: bonifacemoatshe@yahoo.com.


Thank you in anticipation for your time and mutual co-operation.


Yours Sincerely,


Boniface Moatshe

# RECORDS MANAGEMENT QUESTIONAIRE

Kindly pay attention to the following instructions when filling in the questionnaire:

- Tick or mark applicable answer(s) clearly in the spaces provided for.
- Use spaces provided to write your answers to the questions.
- Please, do not leave blank spaces. If the question does not apply please indicate "N/A".

May you kindly respond to questions below.

State your designation_____

State your department_____

**A) COMPANY'S LEVEL OF COMPLIANCE TO LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK OF MANAGING BUSINESS RECORDS IN BOTSWANA.**

**Laws**

1. Do you keep your organisational records according to the requirements of section 218 of Botswana Companies Act?

Yes [ ]                                             No [ ]

2. How often are your records inspected by company registrar office?

Most of the time        [ ]

Sometimes            [ ]

Not often            [ ]

Others (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

3. Do you keep records for period of 7years after tax period, as is expected by Botswana Unified Revenue Service?

     Yes [  ]              No [  ]

**Policies**

4. Does your organisation have a record management policy?

     Yes [ ]              No [ ]

5. Does your organization have written policy document in form of:

i. General policy for records management?

     Yes [  ]              No [  ]          Don't know [ ]

ii. If the answer is Yes, Which types of records is the policy design for?

     Policy for paper [ ]       Policy for electronic [ ]     both [ ]

6.  Are Supreme Furnishers Staff members compelled to practice proper recordkeeping?

     Yes [ ]              No [  ]

    i.   If Yes! What measures are in place to ensure that this happens?

     _____

     _____

_____

_____

**Procedures for Managing Records**

7.  How are records organized in your office?

    i.    Alpha-numerical        [ ]

    ii.   Numerical           [ ]

    iii.  Alphabetical        [ ]

    iv.  Other(please specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Does your office maintain a register or index of all records that have been created or received by your records system?

         Yes [ ]               No [ ]

9. Who developed the classification system?

    i.    Records Management Committee    [ ]

    ii.   Records Manager              [ ]

    iii.  Records Officers             [ ]

    iv.  Other, (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____
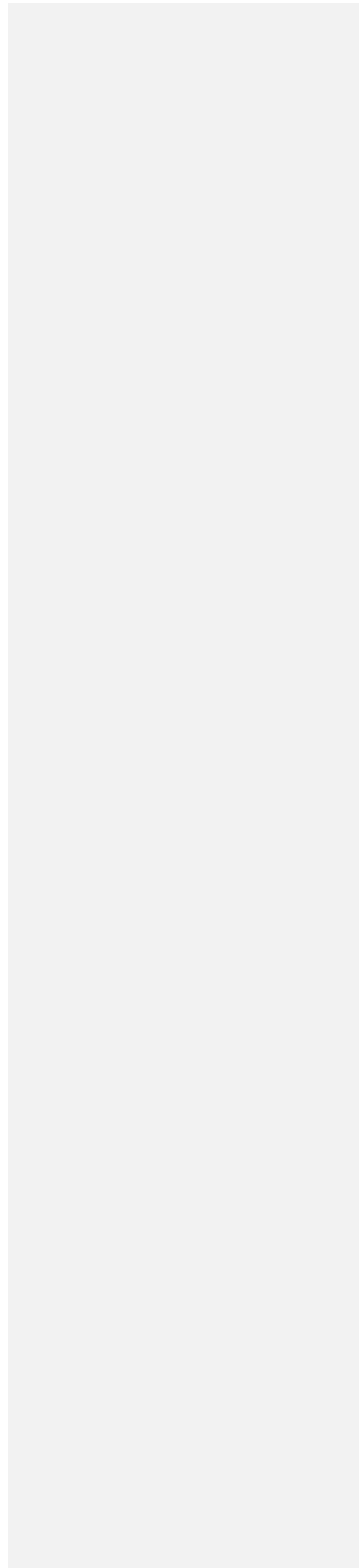
10. Are the recordkeeping systems operating in your organization adequate to meet the requirements of the organization?

   Yes [ ]        No [ ]

11. Does your records management system support the capture of records created under all functions of the organization?

  i.    Not very adequate  [ ]
  ii.   Not adequate    [ ]
  iii.   Not sure      [ ]
  iv.   Adequate     [ ]

12. How frequent do you deal with correspondence in the performance of your duties?

  i.  Daily    [ ]
  ii.  Weekly   [ ]
  iii.  Monthly  [ ]
  iv. Never    [ ]

13. Do you have a centralised registry for storing records?
   Yes [ ]      No [ ]

14. How often do you forward correspondences generated by yourself to the centralised registry for storing?

  i.  Always    [ ]
  ii.  Sometimes  [ ]

iii.    Never                    [ ]

iv.    Others(please specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you consider records as one of the important resources that would enable Supreme Furnishers to carry out its mandate effectively?

    Yes [ ]                    No [ ]

16. In your view, where should records be kept for easy access?

    i.    Individual office              [  ]
    ii.   Centralized in (RMU)           [  ]
    iii.  Senior staff offices           [  ]

17. Do you keep track of the movement of files from your office?

    Yes [  ]                   No [  ]

18. If Yes, which of the following methods do you use? (Tick all appropriate answers)

File movement card          [ ]
Computerized system         [ ]
Other (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____

19. What happens when records are found missing?

a. Open a new file

b. Check on the system where it can be found

c. Others (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

**B) RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR MANAGING RECORDS AT SUPREME FURNISHERS**

20. Is your records storage space adequate?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| i. | Not very adequate | [ ] |
| ii. | Not Adequate | [ ] |
| iii. | Not sure (neutral) | [ ] |
| iv. | Adequate | [ ] |
| v. | Very adequate | [ ] |

21. Does your Records Management Unit have proper facilities and equipment for proper management of records?

Yes [ ]                    No [ ]

22. Indicate the available storage facilities and equipment in your organization.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| i. | Shelves | [ ] |
| ii. | Boxes | [ ] |
| iii. | Cabinets | [ ] |
| iv. | Others, specify | |

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Staff training**

23. Are you trained in records management?

Yes [ ]                               No [ ]

24. If the answer is Yes! What qualifications do you have?

   i.    Certificate in records management    [ ]

   ii.   Diploma in records management      [ ]

   iii.  Degree in records management       [ ]

   iv.   Any other qualification

        _____

        _____

        _____

25. Does your organization ever send staff on workshops/courses/seminars to equip them on records management knowledge?

        Yes [ ]                       No [ ]

**C) THE NATURE OF RECORDS CREATED AT SUPREME FURNISHERS**

26. What kind of electronic records does the organization produce?

Emails                [ ]

Data base             [ ]

CD and DVDs           [ ]

Tapes                    [ ]

Others (please specify)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

27. How do you manage e-records produced in different departments?

_____
_____
_____
_____

28. How do you ensure the security of e-records in the organization?

   i.     Through use of password for access [ ]

  ii.    Back up                    [ ]

 iii.    Tracking devices on exit door      [ ]

 iv.    Others(please specify)

_____
_____
_____
_____

## D) CHALLENGES IN MANAGING RECORDS

29. Is Supreme Furnishers facing any challenges in managing its records?

Yes [ ]                                    No [ ]

30. What challenges do you usually face when managing records in the organization?

**You may tick as many as, are applicable**.

  i.     Inadequate staff                    [ ]
 ii.     Inadequate storage space            [ ]

iii.     Lack of facilities and equipment    [ ]

 iv      Decentralized registries within the organization [ ]

  v.     Lack of promotion of recordkeeping culture within the organization [ ]

 vi.     Others, (please specify)

_____
_____
_____
_____

31. What are the measures being undertaken to overcome these challenges

_____
_____
_____
_____

32. Do you ever discuss the identified challenges with senior management?

        Yes [  ]                            No [  ]

**E) PROPOSE SOLUTIONS AIMED AT IMPROVING RECORDS KEEPING AT SUPREME FURNISHERS**

33. Are there any strategies available to maintain records for continuing value?

Yes [ ]                                              No [ ]

34. How does Supreme Furnishers destroy records the company no longer require?

  i.     Burning             [ ]

  ii.    Shredding      [ ]

  iii.   Incineration    [ ]

iv     Others, specify

_____

35. Who authorizes the disposal of records?

_____

_____

_____

36. In your own opinion what should Supreme Furnishers do? In order to:

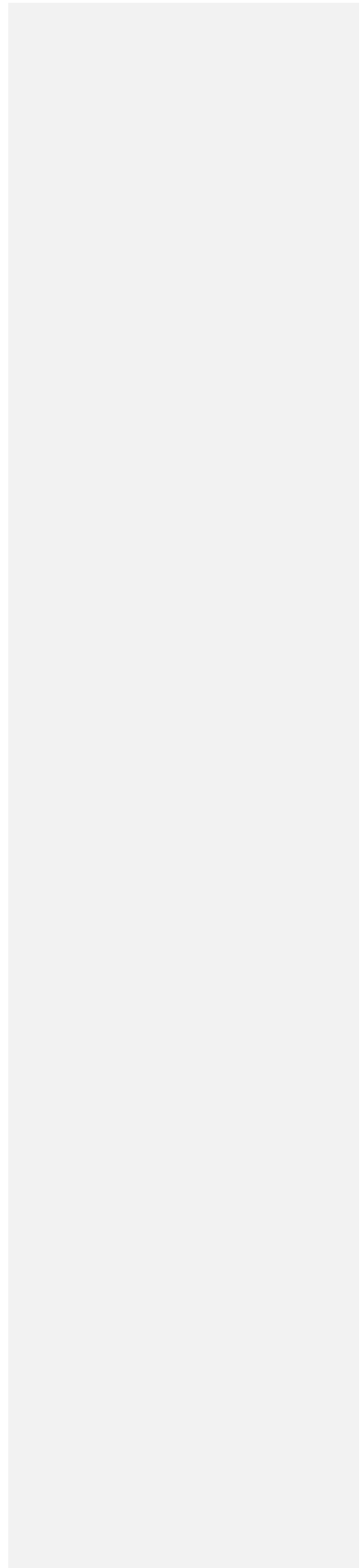   i. improve record keeping in  the entire organisation

_____

_____

_____

   ii .improve the long preservation of records

_____

_____

**APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TOP MANAGEMENT**

**(General Managers, Regional Manager and Human Resource Manager) at Supreme Furnishers.**

1. Is your organisation guided by any international standard?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

2. How often do you use Botswana Companies Act requirements of section 218 in managing your records?

_____
_____
_____
_____

a) What are the legal and regulatory frameworks that guide the management of records at Supreme Furnishers?

_____
_____
_____
_____

b) What are the internal financial audit requirements on records at Supreme Furnishers?

_____
_____
_____

_____

_____

3. For how long do you keep records according to VAT and Income Tax requirements?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Where you store the records of the employees in organisation?

_____

_____

5. How often do Botswana Unified Revenue Service (compliance department) officers request for your organisational records?

_____

_____

_____

6. International Records Management standard the ISO15489:2001 guides organisations in the world on how to manage their records according to the international standard. Do you use the ISO15489:2001 to manage your records?

_____

_____

_____

_____

**POLICIES**

7. Has your organisation developed and implemented a records management policy throughout the organisation?

_____

_____

_____
_____

8. How are the records arranged and controlled in your organization?

_____
_____
_____
_____

**PROCEDURES**

9. Does your company have a records management committee, and if so what is its role?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. What type of policy does your organization have in relation to records keeping requirements?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Which fire detectors are used to protect the records?

_____
_____
_____

_____

_____
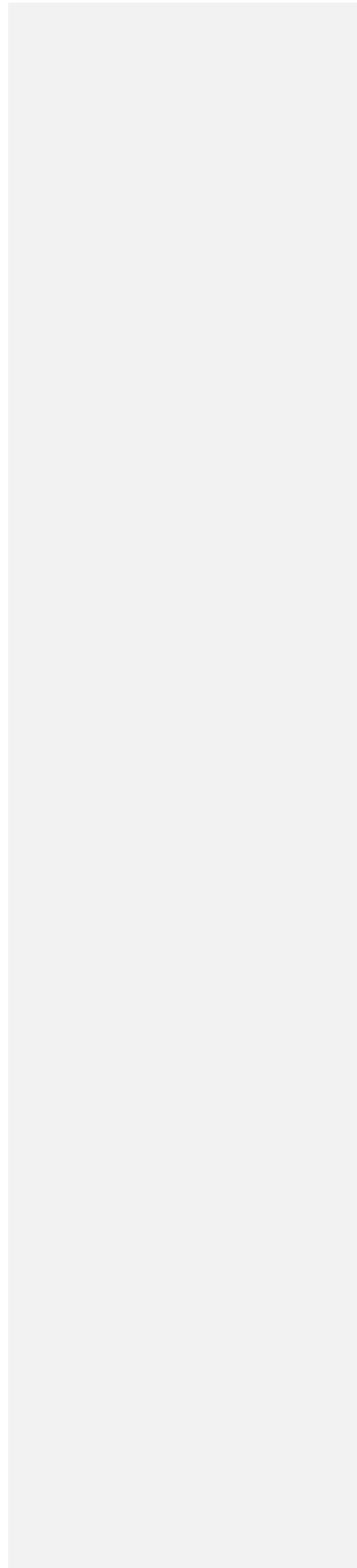
12. Which method to you use for destroying records?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. How often does your organization send staff on workshops/courses/seminars to equip them on records management knowledge?

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. How much budget do you allocate to records management activities?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Where do you keep records that are no longer in use?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
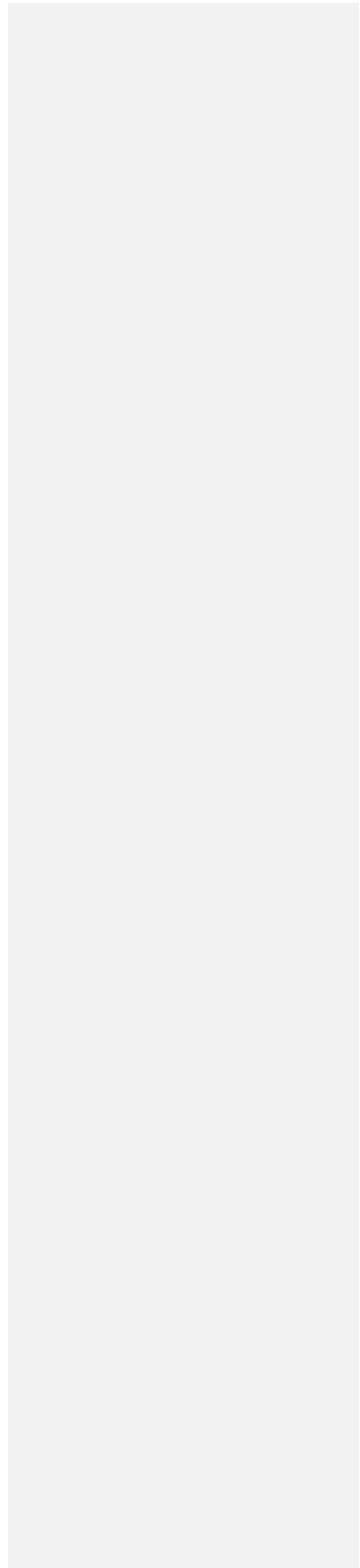
16. When do you transfer the records to the off-site storage?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17. In which format are the records created in your organisation?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

18. What challenges do you usually face when managing records in the organization?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

19. What suggestion would you like to see?, that will

    i)      Improve the recordkeeping in the entire organisation

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
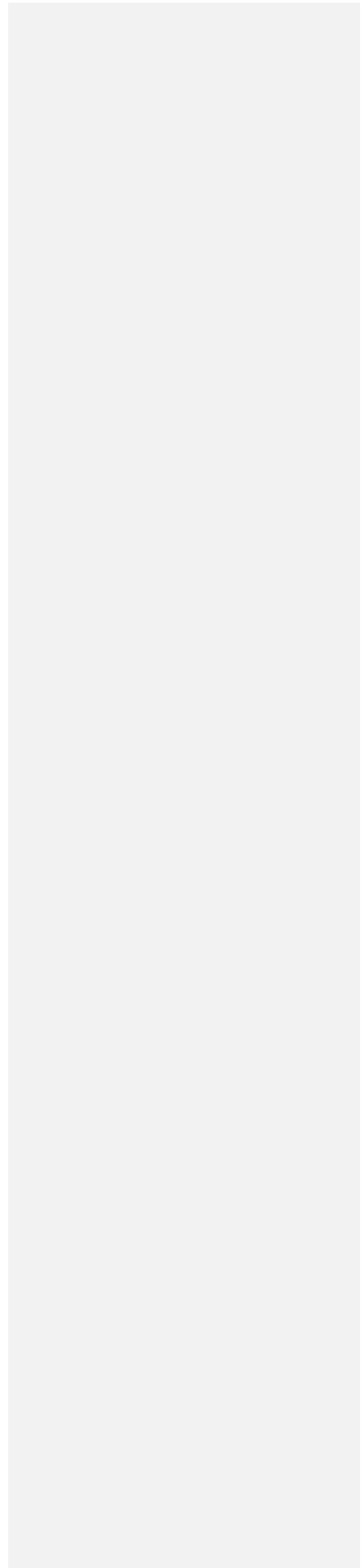
ii)     Improve the long term preservation of Supreme Furnishers records

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
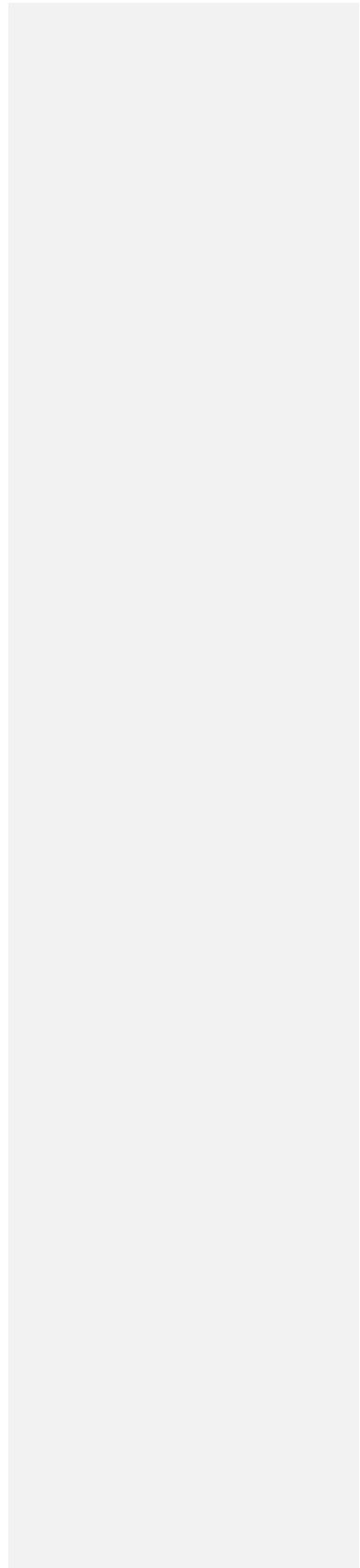
**APPENDIX 3: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

**OBSERVATION CHECKLIST SUPREME FURNISHER (PTY) LTD RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES.**

A) COMPLIANCE TO BOTSWANA HIRE PURCHASE ACT

1. Is Supreme Furnishers complying with Botswana Hire Purchase Act?

YES [    ]    NO [    ]

**B) AVAILABILITY OF RETRIEVAL/ CONTROL TOOLS**

2. File Indexes     YES [    ]    NO [    ]

3. Registers    YES [    ]    NO [    ]

4. File movement cards    YES [    ]    NO [    ]

5. Recall slips    YES [ ]    NO [ ]

6. Passing slips    YES [ ]    NO [    ]

7. File diary    YES [ ]    NO [ ]

8. Catalogues      YES [ ]        NO [ ]

9. Hand list       YES [ ]        NO [ ]

10. Item lists      YES [ ]        NO [ ]
11. Inventories YES [ ]    NO [ ]

**C) AVAILABILITY OF PRESERVATION REGULATORY FRAMEWORK**

12. Is there a written disaster policy in place? Can I See a copy.
  YES [ ]          NO [ ]

**D) ARRANGEMENT OF THE RECORDS**

**Levels of records arrangement at Supreme Furnishers**

13. Group  YES [ ]                NO [ ]

14. Subgroup      YES [ ]                NO [ ]

15. Series  YES [ ]                NO [ ]

16. File    YES [ ]                NO [ ]

17. Items   YES [ ]                NO [ ]

**E) RESOURCES USED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS**

Where are the records kept?

18. Boxes  YES [ ]        NO [ ]
19. Files    YES [ ]        NO [ ]
20. Labels on boxes YES [ ]      NO [ ]
21. Labels on files YES [ ]        NO [ ]

**F) TYPES OF FILLING EQUIPMENTS**

22. Steel Cabinets     YES [   ]    NO [   ]

 Number and quality

————————————————————————————————

23. Wooden Shelves      YES [   ]    NO [   ]

 Number and quality

————————————————————————————————

24. Boxes         YES [ ]     NO [    ];

Quality_____

25. File covers    YES [  ]   NO   [   ];

Quality_____

26. Others

_____

_____

## G) THE NATURE/TYPES OF RECORDS CREATED

What types of records are created in the organisation?

27. Correspondence      YES [ ]        NO [ ]

28. Personnel records     YES [ ]        NO [ ]

29. Customers         YES [ ]        NO [ ]

30. Inventory          YES [ ]        NO [ ]

31. Business          YES [ ]        NO [ ]

## H) FORMATS

In which format are records in?

32. Paper format      Yes [ ]            No [ ]

33. Digital format     Yes [ ]            No [ ]

34. Audiovisual      Yes [ ]            No [ ]

## I) PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE RECORDS

How is the physical condition of the records?

35. Excellent      [ ]

36. Good         [ ]

37. Poor         [ ]

## J) CONDITION OF FILING EQUIPMENT/ SECURITY

38. Lock and keys to records' offices     YES [   ]    No [   ]

39. Fire detectors     YES [    ]         NO [    ]

40. Fire extinguishers   YES [     ]      NO [     ]

41. Fire alarms     YES [    ]     NO [      ]

42. Strong rooms YES [     ]   NO [     ]

43. Leaking roofs/windows     YES [      ]   NO [     ]

44. Dusts     YES [    ]   NO [    ]

45. Smoke detectors YES [    ]   NO [    ]

**K) SPACE**

46. Is there any space for storing records?
        YES [ ]               NO [ ]

47. If available, is it enough?
        YES [ ]               NO [ ]

48. Is the records storage area clean and safe?

      YES [ ]          NO [ ]

 49. Number of offices/registries_____

**L) ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS**

50. Ventilation of records rooms/ offices   YES [   ]   NO [   ]

_____

51. Lightning   YES [   ]    NO   [   ];

Quality_____

52. Humidifiers   YES [   ]    NO   [   ]

_____

53. Air conditioning   YES [   ]   NO [   ]

_____

**M) RECORDS STORAGE SITUATION**

Arrangement/volumes of files:

54. Large bulged files   YES [   ]    NO [   ]

   _____

55. Small standard files   YES [   ]   NO [   ]

_____

56. File cabinets/shelves scattered YES [   ] NO [   ]

   _____

57. Records piled up and difficult to retrieve YES [   ]   NO [   ]
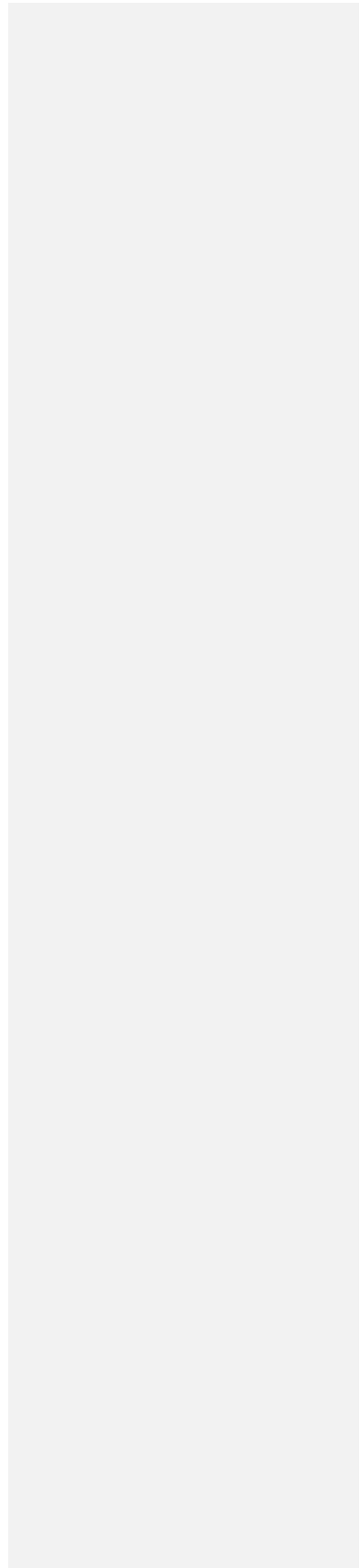
_____

58. Space/Working tables misused YES [   ] NO [   ]

_____
_____
_____

## APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF REQUEST

P.O. Box 568

Gaborone

27<sup>th</sup> August 2012

Manager

Supreme Furnitures

P/Bag BR 133

Gaborone

Sir/Madam

## R.E REQUEST TO PURSUE A MASTERS RESEARCH IN YOUR ORGANISATION

I am a master's student (student NO.9700034) at the University of Botswana in the Department of Library and Information Studies, where I am doing Masters in Archives and Records Management. I would like to conduct a study to assess records management practices in your organisation with a view to improve records management practices. This research project is compulsory for me to complete my masters program. I do promise that the information obtained from your organisation will solely be used for research purposes. I wish to assure you and the organisation that all the information supplied will be treated in the utmost and strictest confidence and will be used solely for this study and academic purposes. I will, however, endeavour to share with your organisation the findings of this study.

Thank you in anticipation for your time and mutual co-operation.

Yours Sincerely


Boniface Moatshe

**APPENDIX 5: LETTER OF PERMISSION**



**Supreme FURNISHERS**

**Value and Quality You Trust**

08 October 2012

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to confirm that we have allowed Mr. Boniface Moatshe to come and do his research in supreme.

We hope that we will meet his requirements.

Yours Faithfully

LIZEL MEKWE
COLLECTIONS MANAGER
BOTSWANA CONTACT CENTRE
GABORONE

Lizel Mekwe

Collection Manager

Supreme Furnishers

Botswana Contact Centre

Tel: 3915924

Fax: 3975932

27 Stiemens Street, Braamfontein 2001, P.O.Box 4208 Johannesburg 2000