

The Capacity of the President's Office, Records and Archives Management Department (PO-RAMD) in Enhancing Records Management Practices in Tanzania Local Government Authorities

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Abstract

The study reviewed existing literature to assess the capacity of the President's Office Records and Archives Management Department (PO-RAMD) to promote records management through its mandated functions within Tanzanian Local Government Authorities (LGAs), in accordance with the Records and Archives Management Act of 2002 and its 2007 regulations. This study employed a systematic review of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, dissertations, theses, and government legislation, policies, and regulations from 2011 to 2024, relevant to the performance of the records management department and the national archives in enhancing records management in local authorities. The findings indicate that PO-RAMD was unable to implement the mandated roles to enhance records management in LGAs. As a result, LGAs are characterised by the absence of appropriate records management systems, lack of written records management policies and guidelines, failure to implement disaster preparedness plans for record security, and delays in the appraisal and disposition of records. The study concludes that PO-RAMD's ability to effectively exercise its mandated functions in LGAs is low. It recommends collaboration between PO-RAMD and LGAs to manage public records, as well as government interventions to strengthen PO-RAMD's capacity to perform all mandated functions effectively.

Keywords: Records management program, Capacity, LGAs, PO-RAMD, National archives

1.0 Introduction

The Records and Archives Management Department and the National Archives contribute to national development by documenting records that support justice, democracy, good governance, human rights, and dispute resolution across countries (Ngoepe, Venson & Ngulube, 2014). Because of this, both developed and developing countries have established records management and archival services through national archives to promote national development by supervising records management not only within national archives but also within public offices (Ngoepe et al., 2014).

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The USA created the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), linking national archives across the country to enhance service delivery and good governance (Berger, 2013). NARA was established by the National Archives Act of 1934, signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt (Ginsberg, 2013). NARA has established numerous national archives across the country to document and safeguard public records. It ensures that 3% to 5% of federal records are transferred and preserved in the archives each year (Hassan, 2022). The Australian government initiated the Archives Act in 1983, which mandated the establishment of the National Archives as an executive agency of the Australian Government (Hennessey & Johnson, 2021). The National Archives is responsible for the effective management of public records and archives in Australian public offices (Hennessey & Johnson, 2021). In Canada, the National Archives was established in 1872 to preserve heritage records for future generations, provide access to records, and promote culture, thereby preserving the memory of the government and institutions (Berger, 2013). Berger (2013) asserts that the National Archives has enhanced national unity and cultural identity.

Similarly, South Africa and Botswana established their national archives at different times (Mhlanga, 2014; Ngoepe & Keakopa, 2011). South Africa established the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARS) in 1996 to promote records and archives management in public offices (Mhlanga, 2014). Similarly, Botswana established the Botswana National Records and Archives Services (BNARS) in 1967 under the Ministry of Home Affairs to preserve public archives (Netshakhuma, 2019). BNARS was established as an independent department responsible for coordinating records and archives management services, including collection and access to heritage archives (Netshakhuma, 2019). Tanzania was also part of this trend. Recognising the importance of records in government operations and the protection of rights, the Tanzanian government established the Records and Archives Management Department (PO-RAMD) (Magaya & Lowry, 2012). PO-RAMD was established and mandated by the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 to coordinate all activities related to records and archives management. It is responsible for inspecting and advising public offices on good records management, establishing procedures for the timely transfer of archives to the National Archives, advocating for public access to archives, and preserving and making archives accessible (Sawala, 2022).

As an independent department, PO-RAMD was established and mandated by the Records and Archives Management (RAM) Act No. 3 of 2002 to oversee the record life cycle within public offices. Section 6(1) of the RAM Act requires PO-RAMD to improve government efficiency by ensuring adherence to good records-keeping practices, establishing procedures for the timely disposal of records without ongoing value, advising on best practices, and establishing procedures for transferring records of enduring value to the National Archives or other repositories under the Director's control. Additionally, the Act mandates PO-RAMD to inspect record-keeping in public offices, ensure compliance with standards for managing public records and archives (Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002), and establish a network of regional offices (Section 14(1)). The National Records and Archives Management Policy of 2011 further requires PO-RAMD to regularly assess records management systems within public offices.

While developed countries have enhanced records management through established records and archives management departments, in Africa and Tanzania in particular, the records management programme has been affected by poor records management practices, especially at local government authorities, despite the availability of mandated departments (Rutta & Ndenje-Sichalwe, 2021). The situation is worse in local government authorities than in central government (Kashaija et al., 2022). Despite PO-RAMD having been established since 2002 and clearly assigning roles, several indicators of poor records management remain in LGAs (Athman, 2019; Kashaija, Chacha, Ngudungi and Dutu, 2022; Maisori, 2022; Rutta & Ndenje-Sichalwe, 2021). These challenges require PO-RAMD to exercise the mandated roles to improve records management in LGAs.

Therefore, guided by the record life cycle theory, the study reviewed the literature to assess PO-RAMD's capacity to enhance best records management practices. It determined the current status of records management in LGAs and examined the extent to which PO-RAMD has fulfilled its mandated roles in enhancing records management in LGAs, addressing the key question of effective records management in LGAs.

2.0 Literature review

2.1 The Current Status of Records Management in LGAs

This subsection reveals records management practices in LGAs for service delivery.

Athman (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study on the state of records management practices at the Ilala Municipal Council (IMC). The findings show that, generally, records were poorly managed because IMC lacked a comprehensive records management policy and because the Council's staff lacked awareness of the need to use ICTs for records management. According to Athman (2019), the IMC records management programme is affected by insufficient storage space, insufficient budget, and insufficient qualified records managers. In the same vein, Rutta and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2021) conducted a mixed-methods study on the current state of records management practices for effective service delivery at the Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) in Dar es Salaam. The findings show that KMC was characterised by poor record management, with records managed without policies or guidelines. Lack of security measures, lack of skilled personnel, and the absence of a keyword file classification system, which could enhance electronic records management, were also identified as setbacks limiting proper record management at KMC. According to Rutta and Ndenje-Sichalwe (2021), KMC faced these challenges due to a lack of guidance from the PO-RAMD.

Leon (2022) conducted a mixed-methods research study on the management of semi-current records at Mbeya City Council (MCC). The study revealed that MCC has not effectively kept semi-current records in the required environment, as they were poorly managed. This is because record practitioners were unaware of the legal requirement to manage semi-current records. This situation underscores the need to study PO-RAMD's capacity to improve record management in local government authorities. Chacha (2024) used a parallel-convergent mixed-methods research design to study how the Disaster

Management Plan (DMP) is implemented among 116 respondents in Singida Municipality (SM), Tanzania. The study found that, despite the availability of the DMP, it is still not effectively implemented for record security due to financial constraints, limited records management infrastructure, lack of knowledge and experience, poor support from management, negligence, lack of coordination among departments, and the absence of a strong disaster management committee.

Kashaija (2022) conducted a qualitative study on electronic records management readiness to improve service delivery at the Singida Municipal Council (SMC). The study found that Singida has not yet prepared to adopt e-record management, as the municipality lacked policies, guidelines, adequately skilled personnel, and security measures. Pessa (2019) assessed the effective management of e-records in local government authorities in Tanzania, focusing on the Kinondoni Municipal Council, Bagamoyo, and Kilosa District Councils. The study found that LGAs' e-record management is under the control of ICT staff who are not professional records management staff. Also, the findings show that e-records are not adequately protected because their management is not guided by policy and records management is given low priority, thereby affecting best practices.

Lunyungu (2024) conducted a case study on the effectiveness of legal frameworks in mitigating records anomalies at Bahi DC. The study found that poor records management practices persist, as records are managed without a records management policy, regulations, or guidelines. The few guidelines available, such as the 2007 Registry Procedure Manual, were not comprehensive enough to meet all records management requirements. Further, the study found that the records management program was affected by low staff competence, limited resources, lack of commitment, and lack of RAMD coordination with public offices. Maisori (2022) conducted a descriptive case study of the implementation of the Retention Records and Disposal Schedule (RRDS) at the Singida Municipal Council in Tanzania. The study found that RRDSs were absent and that staff were unaware of this, and that the implementation was inadequate.

The literature indicates a gap in records management in LGAs, and some limitations were to be addressed by PO-RAMD under the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002; hence, the study assessed PO-RAMD's capacity to enhance proper records management in LGAs and identified areas for improvement.

2.2 The Role of Records and Archives Management Departments in Enhancing Records Management in the Public Offices

This section explains the roles of the Records and Archives Management Department and the National Archives in enhancing records management in public offices. Ginsberg (2013) conducted a literature review, consulting reports on government initiatives to enhance records and archives management. The study found that NARA, in collaboration with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), has issued directives to agencies on paper and electronic federal records management in the USA. The findings indicate NARA's role in collecting archives from public offices for the nation's cultural heritage and the existence of a department to coordinate records and archives management in public offices. In Australia, the report by Hennessey and Johnson (2021) on preservation and digitisation standards

for the digitisation of physical records shows that archival institutions have enhanced the development of policies, standards, and guidelines and have provided training on good record-keeping in public offices. Further, it shows that the National Archives has digitised public records for future use, has preserved records of continuing value, and has provided guidelines for destroying public records. In the U.K., according to the National Archives (2021), the Annual report and accounts of the National Archives between 2020 and 2021 show that the U.K. National Archives enhanced best practices in records management by taking steps to ensure that public offices comply with the Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 for public accountability.

In Africa, Ngoepe et al. (2014) conducted a mixed-methods study on the role of public archives in national development in selected countries in the East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA), specifically in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The findings show that archives have contributed to national development through records and archives management, though awareness of the role of national archives in this regard was low. This is one of the motives for studying PO-RAMD's capability to enhance record management and determine status in LGAs. Mhlanga (2014) conducted a study on the role of the National Archives and Records Service of South Africa in the promotion and protection of human rights. The results show that, despite the mandates and responsibilities NARS is accorded, the government accords it minimal attention. NARS is characterised by the absence of a dedicated budget for records and archives operations and low awareness of its role. Lack of government attention to the Records and Archives Management Department may affect its performance due to insufficient support.

Chaterera (2016) conducted a study on the management of public records and its role in good governance, accountability, transparency, and effective service delivery in Zimbabwe. The study found that challenges in records management continue to hinder transparency and accountability in public offices. Chaterera (2016) also noted that poor records management in public offices is associated with a strained relationship between the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) and public offices. Dinah & Cyprian (2019) assessed the Electronic Records Management Readiness at the Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service (KNADS). Findings show that KNADS, as an independent department for records and archives management, collects, processes, houses, controls, and preserves all bound documents created by any government ministry or department and by local authorities. The department also provides technical advice on all issues pertaining to records creation, capture, classification, maintenance, and disposition.

In Tanzania, Magaya and Lowry (2012) establish that the Director of PO-RAMD is mandated to establish branch offices of the department, each serving one or two regions. Through branch offices in local authorities, the Director shall be responsible for providing professional assistance, advice, and guidance on establishing and managing the filing system; ensuring compliance with standards; offering training; approving and authorising retention and disposal schedules; and reviewing them every 10 years. The Director also arranges the transfer and storage of semi-current records and oversees archives management (RAM Act, 2002). Furthermore, PO-RAMD was mandated by the National Records and Archives

Management Policy of 2011 to evaluate records management systems to promote effective records management in public offices, including local authorities. The quantitative study by Lowry (2012) on the management and preservation of digital records in Tanzania found that PO-RAMD has improved record management across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). PO-RAMD has issued guidance on electronic records management, established a keyword file classification system, developed a retention schedule, and introduced comprehensive file control systems, including file titling rules, location indexes, file censuses, file movement procedures, and access controls across various MDAs. This study provides evidence that PO-RAMD has enhanced records management in MDAs, although its impact in LGAs is less pronounced.

In addition to it, despite the mandated roles, the study of Hassan (2022) on the effectiveness of PO-RAMD for improved records management at the Temeke Municipal Council (TMC), found that PO-RAMD is not effective in addressing issues related to records management systems, training programmes, transferring semi-current records to the director's custody, and file congestion. The study concluded that the role of PO-RAMD in improving records management at TMC is questionable. Daniel & Ndumbaro (2021) conducted a Descriptive Study of Infrastructure Capabilities for Digital Records Preservation at PO-RAMD and the Registration, Insolvency, and Trusteeship Agency (RITA). The findings show that PO-RAMD is affected by funding shortages, inadequate hardware, insufficient IT support, a lack of management commitment, and insufficient infrastructure to support digital record preservation. The results, however, indicate that PO-RAMD has poor capacity to perform mandated functions. In addition, Daniel and Ndumbaro conducted another study in 2023, in which they conducted a descriptive examination of human resource capabilities to support digital records preservation at PO-RAMD and RITA. The study revealed minimal human resource capabilities. It was found that there is a shortage of qualified technical staff to support digital preservation, and that other staff were unaware of this. The findings imply that PO-RAMD lacked sufficient personnel to carry out internal activities. The same challenge could affect PO-RAMD's ability to perform its functions in LGAs.

Newa & Mwantimwa (2019) conducted a descriptive study on E-records management in the Tanzanian public service, focusing on determinants, perceived importance, and barriers at PO-RAMD. The study revealed that PO-RAMD is characterised by insufficient funding for training and infrastructure maintenance, inadequate staffing, and poor implementation of legal tools. The study is alarming about PO-RAMD's capacity to enhance LGAs' policy development and capacity building. Kashaia (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study on the effectiveness of the appraisal of public records at the PO-RAMD in Tanzania. The study found that appraisal and disposition are not conducted effectively in public offices due to a lack of a shared budget between PO-RAMD and Public offices, the absence of an organisational retention and disposal schedule, non-adherence to the General Retention and Disposal Schedule of 2005, and a lack of technical staff.

Kamatula and Kemoni (2018) conducted a case study on a framework for e-records to support the implementation of e-government in the Tanzanian Public Service. The results indicated that PO-RAMD has not fulfilled its responsibilities regarding e-records management due to the failure to develop policies and guidelines for public offices, inadequate staffing

resulting from staff turnover, inadequate facilities, and budgetary constraints. Although the study assessed the capacity for electronic records management, there are still indicators of PO-RAMD's poor performance in exercising its mandated functions within the Tanzania Public Service. The literature shows that while developed countries have benefited from records and archives management through established Records and Archives Management Departments and National Archives, in developing countries, and Tanzania in particular, these roles were not well realised due to limited capacity.

2.3 Theoretical framework

This study was guided by the records life cycle model developed by Theodore Schellenberg in the 1950s (Shepherd, 2010).

2.3.1 The Record Life Cycle

The records life cycle model was created by Theodore Schellenberg in the 1950s to determine the lifespan of records from creation to disposal, based on the idea that records are not static (Shepherd, 2010). Records are born, live, and die through three stages. These stages are: the current stage, where records are active and frequently used by the organisation, managed by the records manager, and stored in the registry. The second stage is the semi-current stage, where records are used less often but are stored in the records centre. The third stage is the noncurrent stage, where records become archives and are stored in an archival repository under the supervision of an archivist (Kashaija, 2019). Regarding the record life cycle theory, the URT government enacted the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 to implement it in the management of public records. This act established the PO-RAMD to oversee and coordinate records management at this stage, including the acquisition and preservation of semi-current records in the record centre and in the national archives (Hassan, 2022). At this stage, public offices are primarily responsible for storing and using records to support daily service delivery operations. PO-RAMD has a legal mandate to inspect, advise, and assist in developing records management practices at this phase in public offices. During this stage, PO-RAMD is responsible for capacity building, implementing the keyword file system, and working with public office heads to develop and review policies and guidelines (RAM Act No. 3 of 2002).

The life cycle of semi-current records falls under PO-RAMD, though cooperation with the creating agency is required. This is because PO-RAMD is responsible for the national record centre, while public offices manage the on-site record centre for sensitive semi-current records (Leon, 2022). Accordingly, public offices are required to transfer semi-current records to PO-RAMD. PO-RAMD is responsible for storage, though ownership remains with the creating agency. For that reason, PO-RAMD is required to establish record centres in the regions to serve local government authorities (RAM Act No. 3 of 2002). Furthermore, at the non-current stage, archives are managed by PO-RAMD at the National Archives, which has branches. The National Archives are responsible for the appraisal, storage, and preservation of archives (Sawala, 2022). All archives collected by PO-RAMD from local authorities are managed by PO-RAMD for the public interest. Figure 1 illustrates the life cycle of records.

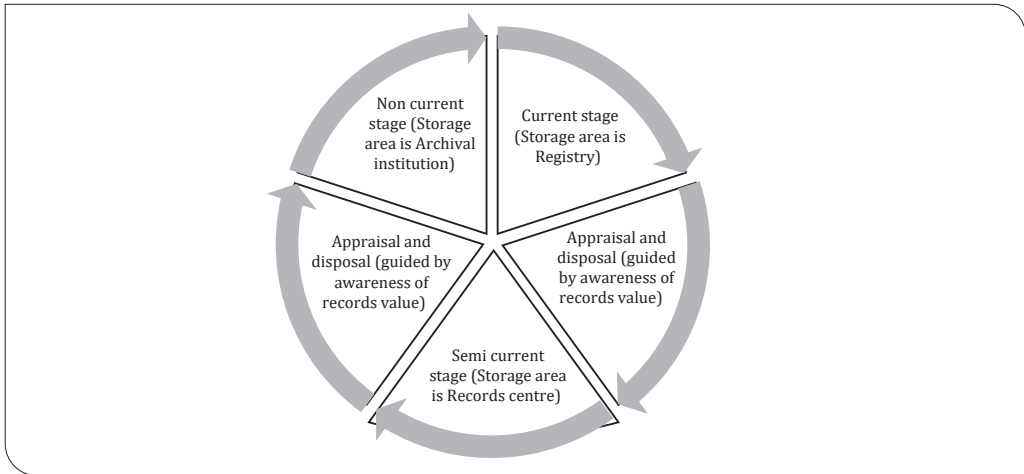


Figure 1: Records life cycle diagram

Source: Modified from Hassan (2022)

This theory was used to assess PO-RAMD's ability to perform mandated functions throughout the record lifecycle. It served as a benchmark for LGAs' records management practices and helped evaluate PO-RAMD's role in improving records management. Through a literature review, the findings were compared with theory by examining how PO-RAMD is supposed to operate relative to actual records management practices in LGAs. However, the theory does not directly specify PO-RAMD's roles in promoting best practices in records management in LGAs. The theory's strengths and weaknesses provided a rationale for formulating the conceptual framework.

2.4 Conceptual framework

This section illustrates the relationships among the variables used in the study. Figure 2 describes the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

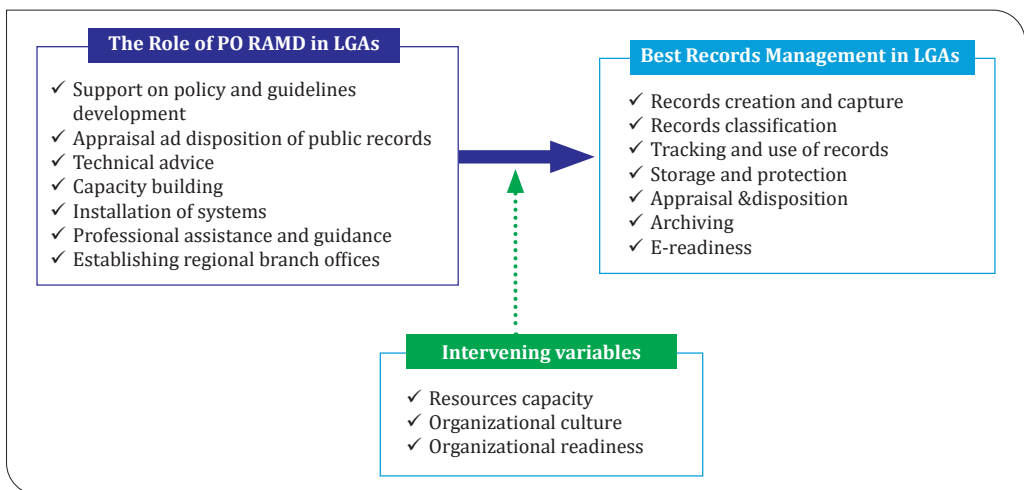


Figure 2: Conceptual framework

Figure 2 shows that effective records management in local authorities depends on the roles of PO-RAMD. PO-RAMD was mandated to coordinate records management in public offices and to monitor and audit the records management programme. It is further responsible for providing technical advice, receiving and preserving public records transferred from public offices for permanent preservation, capacity building, and assisting in the establishment and management of filing systems (Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002). For these responsibilities, PO-RAMD requires resource capacity and legal frameworks to perform the mandated functions and achieve good records management in local authorities, covering records creation and capture, classification, tracking and use, storage and protection, and appraisal and disposition. The researcher was guided by the framework to review literature on records management conducted at PO-RAMD and LGAs, to determine the status of records management and the roles performed by PO-RAMD to enhance records management in LGAs. Therefore, discussion and conclusion have been made based on variables comprised in the conceptual frameworks

3.0 Methodology

The study conducted a desk review of research from PO-RAMD and LGAs to describe PO-RAMD's capacity to enhance records management practices. As mentioned earlier, the study reviewed research conducted in LGAs to assess the state of records management for service delivery and the areas where PO-RAMD has not been able to fulfil its mandated functions. Further, the researcher reviewed studies conducted at PO-RAMD on how the department exercises its duties in Tanzania. This study employed a systematic review of peer-reviewed journal articles, books, dissertations, theses, and government legislation, policies, and regulations, from 2011 to 2024, relevant to the performance of the records management department and the national archives on enhancing records management in local authorities.

4.0 Research Findings

4.1 The status of Records Management Practices in LGAs

It was found that LGAs manage records without records management policies, guidelines and procedures. The same results were found by Athman (2019) and Rutta & Ndenje-Sichalwe (2021) in IMC and KMC, respectively. According to the records life cycle, records should be managed in accordance with policies, guidelines, and procedures to ensure uniformity in records management across all public offices. Also, the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 mandates that the head of a public office develop guidelines to support the Director of PO-RAMD. These practices were not implemented; as a result, good governance and service delivery may be affected by misconduct among records practitioners in LGAs. For instance, an unauthorised person can commit illegal destruction of public records. The legislative framework governing records management, PO-RAMD, should ensure that public offices have policies and guidelines in place. The literature shows that PO-RAMD has not developed policies and guidelines for LGAs. The same findings were reported by Kamatula & Kemoni (2018), who found that PO-RAMD has not fully established electronic records management policies and guidelines for public offices.

Moreover, it was found that the studied LGAs have neither transferred nor preserved semi-current cultural heritage records. Semi-current records are poorly managed in LGAs and are not transferred to an appropriate repository. In implementing records lifecycle theory, the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 and its Regulations direct the head of a public office to transfer semi-current records to the director's custody, except sensitive records, which should be managed in an on-site record centre. Further, the Director of PO-RAMD is mandated to enforce the transfer of both semi-current and inactive records from public offices to the national archives' record centre. These directives were not implemented at the MCC council. Leon (2022) confirmed that semi-current records were poorly managed due to a lack of awareness of the legal requirements for their management. The lack of awareness indicates inadequate capacity building by PO-RAMD in LGAs. The results imply that both PO-RAMD and LGAs have failed to preserve the country's history due to poor management of semi-current records.

In another aspect of best records management, the security of records is not promising in LGAs. It was found that some councils lack security measures to prolong the lifespan of records, as the disaster management plan for records management in LGAs was not effectively implemented. Public records are in danger of being accessed for future reference and social memory. Rutta & Ndenje-Sichalwe (2021) confirmed that KMC lack effective measures to secure records. Along the same lines, Chacha (2024) revealed that Singida municipality has not implemented disaster preparedness measures for security records as intended by legislation. It is further reported that the affected organisation blames PO-RAMD for poor guidance. This claim implies that PO-RAMD has not provided the technical and vice services required by legislation to the studied offices.

Further, the findings show that LGAs have not yet installed appropriate systems in accordance with legislative and lifecycle requirements. ISO 15489 (2016) states that records management systems ensure the entire process of capturing, maintaining, sharing, and the timely appraisal and disposition of records. The 2007 Record Procedures Manual established that public offices should install and use a keyword-based classification system for public records. Also, the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 mandates PO-RAMD to ensure the installation of appropriate systems. The findings from the LGAs studied raise questions, as even the keyword file classification system was not installed. It was further found that the LGAs studied were unable to implement an e-office system to support e-government at the local level. The same findings were confirmed by Rutta & Ndenje-Sichalwe (2021) and Kashaija (2022) in KMC and SMC, respectively.

Therefore, the findings indicate that PO-RAMD has not effectively performed the mandated functions to enhance records management in LGAs, as stipulated by the framework for implementing legislative records management. Records life cycle theory and the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 established PO-RAMD and mandated it to provide support for the development of policies and guidelines, the appraisal and disposition of public records, technical advice, capacity building, and the implementation of appropriate systems. However, the findings showed that PO-RAMD is falling short of the capacity to help LGAs succeed in effective records management.

4.2 The Role Conducted by PO-RAMD in Enhancing Records Management in LGAs

It was found that, due to budget constraints, PO-RAMD has been unable to conduct the appraisal and disposition of records in public offices. The study by Kashaija (2019) confirmed that appraisal and disposition are ineffective in public offices due to a lack of cost-sharing between PO-RAMD and public offices. While LGAs depend on RAMD to appraise and collect archives, PO-RAMD depend on LGAs to share the cost of conducting appraisal and disposition. Also, it was found that although PO-RAMD was mandated to support policy development, system installation, and capacity building in LGAs, the department was still affected by a lack of budget for training and infrastructure maintenance, inadequate staffing, and challenges in implementing legal tools. Newa and Mwantimwa (2019) revealed that the department is unable to implement e-record management due to insufficient budget for training and infrastructure maintenance, inadequate staffing, and ineffective implementation of legal tools. The results imply a lack of financial and personnel capacity to perform the mandated functions of appraising and disposing of public records.

In other aspects of records management, as per the record life cycle, the Record and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002, the National Records and Archives Management Policy of 2011, and PO-RAMD mandate the acquisition and preservation of archives from public offices. Surprisingly, PO-RAMD's capacity to manage and preserve electronic records in the digital era is questionable. Daniel & Ndumbaro (2023); Daniel & Ndumbaro (2021); Kamatula & Maseh (2018) identified that PO-RAMD is affected by a shortage of funds, inadequate hardware, insufficient IT support, a lack of management commitment, a lack of infrastructure to support digital record preservation, and a shortage of qualified and technical staff to promote digital preservation. The findings justify why PO-RAMD has not been able to promote e-record management in LGAs.

A model for implementing a legislative framework governing records management requires PO-RAMD to provide policies and guidelines, conduct inspections, deliver coaching and interventions, and implement corrective measures. These were not achieved due to poor coordination of PO-RAMD across LGAs; records were managed without policies or guidelines.

Furthermore, PO-RAMD was mandated to establish branch offices, one serving one or two regions, to better manage records at the local level. However, the department has established branches only in Dodoma, Mwanza, Arusha, Dar es Salaam, and Mbeya. The scenario demonstrates that PO-RAMD has not implemented legal directives to improve records management in LGAs, unlike the central government, where PO-RAMD has enhanced records management. Lowry (2012) states that PO-RAMD has issued e-record management guidelines and installed a keyword and file control system. This is contrary to LGAs, as Hassan (2022) confirmed that in Temeke, PO-RAMD did not address records management systems, training programmes, the transfer of semi-current records to the director's custody, and file congestion.

5.0 Conclusion and Policy Implication

The capacity of PO-RAMD to perform mandated functions within LGAs is limited. PO-RAMD has not fulfilled the mandated functions in LGAs as outlined in the RAM Act. As a result, LGAs are characterised by poorer records management programmes than those of the central government. The power of PO-RAMD is not being fully exercised, and the requirements of the record life cycle are not being effectively promoted in LGAs. The state of records management in LGAs is alarming, given the government's current requirements to promote good governance and service delivery through e-government at the local level, where citizens are dispersed.

6.0 Recommendations

The study establishes a link between PO-RAMD and LGAs in the management of public records within Tanzanian public offices. The government's initiatives to promote good governance and service delivery through e-government could be achieved by fostering collaboration between PO-RAMD and LGAs to manage public records in accordance with the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002. Most citizens receive services at the local level. Therefore, enhancing effective records management and e-government at the central government, and to a lesser extent at the local government, could affect service delivery and the relationship between the government and citizens at the local level. Therefore, the government should empower PO-RAMD to ensure that all mandated functions are carried out effectively at the local authority level.

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