Managing university records in the world of governance

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the relationship between corporate governance and records management in the context of higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Design/methodology/approach – This is a qualitative research taking the form of a collective case study of six institutions.

Findings – That good records management can and does contribute to effective corporate governance and accountability. However, this relationship is not necessarily present in all circumstances.

Research limitations/implications – That further corporatisation in higher education is likely to be supported by, and result in, better records management.

Originality/value – The paper proposes governance record keeping as an approach to managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk.

Keywords Corporate governance, Universities, Public sector reform, Risk management, Accountability, Governance record keeping

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The relationships between governance, audit, risk and record keeping are a central concern of the discipline of records management. This study investigated them through a series of case studies of practice in six universities in South Africa and Malawi. Universities have been undergoing a process of corporatisation in recent years, and this has profound implications for governance, audit, risk and record keeping. By focussing on higher education institutions in Southern Africa, this study reveals some interesting patterns and contrasts and prompts an innovative conclusion.

The study takes the form of a collective case study in which multiple cases are used to critically explore the relationships between record keeping and governance, audit and risk. As qualitative research that belongs in the interpretive tradition of enquiry, the study is not intended to suggest prescriptive solutions to general record keeping problems but rather to provide an understanding of the challenges and opportunities that arise in managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk. Of particular interest are the questions:

(1) what goes on in the workplace;

(2) what are the problems; and

(3) what alternative approaches might address any existing problem situations.

Since the time of writing this article Dr Mathews J. Phiri regrettably died.

The study found that some Southern Africa higher education institutions are using their governance structures and other drivers for record keeping to put in place sound record keeping systems to effectively manage their records and documents. Key governance structures and other drivers for record keeping that were identified include laws and regulations, governing bodies, audit, risk, technology, public sector reforms and workplace culture. Other institutions are not managing their records and documents well, despite efforts to improve their governance systems; characteristically they lacked record keeping capacity.

Research questions and methods
The study endeavoured to answer four research questions:

RQ1. How are records and documents managed?

RQ2. How do external factors impact on record and document management?

RQ3. What relationships can be drawn between the management of records and documents and institutional governance, audit and risk management within universities?

RQ4. What can be a suitable approach to managing records and documents in order to foster good organisational governance?

Methodologically, this study is based on qualitative research techniques. The qualitative approach is best suited to investigate what goes on in the workplace; what the problems are; and how they might be addressed. The processes of qualitative research normally involve literature review, theoretical framework formulation, purposive sampling, fieldwork, data collection and analysis of results (Pickard, 2013). The findings of this study, like any other qualitative research, are transferable rather than generalisable.

The universities in which the case studies were carried out were selected in a purposive manner. They were:

(1) University of Cape Town (UCT);
(2) University of the Western Cape (UWC);
(3) University of Johannesburg (UJ);
(4) University of the Witwatersrand (Wits);
(5) University of Malawi (UNIMA); and
(6) Mzuzu University (Mzuni).

The first four universities are in South Africa, while the last two universities are in Malawi. A brief introduction of each university to contextualise their inclusion is worthwhile.

To begin with, it may be helpful to say that, broadly speaking, there are three categories of universities in Southern Africa:

(1) traditional universities;
(2) universities of technology; and
(3) comprehensive universities.

Traditional universities offer theoretically oriented degrees; universities of technology tend to offer vocationally oriented qualifications; and comprehensive universities offer a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees[1].

UCT, founded in 1829, is a traditional university. UCT's academic disciplines such as the arts, theology, law and medicine are hallmarks of a traditional university. Although the University has evolved into a large modern university and has incorporated changes in technology, its traditional hallmarks are conspicuous.

UWC, which was established in 1959 as a constituent college of the University of South Africa catering for "coloured" students, has a history of creative struggle against oppression, discrimination and disadvantage[2]. The University has seven faculties such as Arts, Community and Health Sciences, Dentistry, Economic and Management Sciences, Education, Law and Natural Sciences. It can also be viewed as a traditional university, as it teaches a wide spectrum of the curriculum.

UJ was formed in 2005 by a merger between the former Rand Afrikaans University (RAU), the Technikon Witwatersrand (TWR) and the Soweto and East Rand campuses of Vista University. The University is one of the largest residential universities in South Africa with almost 50,000 students. Unlike UCT and UWC which are categorised as traditional universities, UJ is a comprehensive university, offering a combination of academic and vocational diplomas and degrees.

Wits was established in 1922. Its origins lie in the South African School of Mines which was established in 1896 in Kimberley, a mining town in the Northern Cape. It transferred to Johannesburg in Gauteng in 1904[3]. Although Wits was associated with mining technology in its earliest form and could be construed as a vocational institution, it has evolved into a large traditional university and now offers a full curriculum.

UNIMA was founded in 1964[4]. Like other national universities born just after independence, UNIMA's main purpose was to produce the human resources required by the nation for the development of the economy. The University has a federal structure and comprises four constituent colleges each on a separate campus. Each college is semiautonomous with a Principal as its chief executive. UNIMA can be viewed as a medium-sized traditional university.

Mzuni was established as Malawi's second national university and admitted its first students in 1999. Although Mzuni's statutes indicate that the University aspires to teach diverse academic disciplines including law, medicine and engineering, for the time being it is best regarded as a small and incomplete comprehensive university.

The individual case studies were carried out using interviews as the primary data gathering technique. Interviews were supplemented by observation and the systematic collection of procedure manuals and other internal documents. Wherever possible, people holding the following positions were interviewed in each university such as Deputy Vice Chancellor (academic), Registrar, Director of Finance, Procurement Manager, Professor, Faculty Manager and Records Manager. In addition, interviews were sought with the following office holders in both South Africa and Malawi: Auditor General, and Director of Higher Education. In framing questions to be asked during the interviews, a toolkit developed by the Pacific Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (PARBICA), the "Recordkeeping for Good Governance Toolkit" (PARBICA, 2007) was found to be helpful. A revised version of this toolkit was developed specially for use in this study.

Findings
How are records and documents managed?
Medium of information. The assessment included identifying the predominant medium of record keeping used. This can determine the position of the university on the *paperless office continuum*. Aspects of universities' functions that were considered included:

- communications within the university;
- admissions processes;
- medium of instructional materials;
- storing students' assessment records;
- use of social media for business purposes; and
- systems for financial and human resource management.

It was evident that the South African universities invested hugely in technology. It helped them to effectively organise their recorded information. Although paper records and documents were predominant in Malawi universities, record keeping was increasingly becoming digital. Personal computers were becoming a common sight in the offices, and local area networks were present in some designated departments. The universities were increasingly making use of digital records.

Technology alone might not be a solution to the record keeping problems: human factors must be taken into account also. Introducing new technology to help improve the work environment requires people to change their approach to work. Some cultural issues in the work place in Sub-Saharan Africa are an impediment to a successful implementation of an IT programme. Tough (2012) has shared his experience on how technology is abused in Malawi and elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. He observed a rampant misuse of IT equipment, including client-server networks, for personal and recreational use such as downloading music and photographs. A similar trend was found at Mzuni. Members of staff were observed using official computers for games and social media that were unrelated to their work[5].

Table I presents the findings on the most frequently used medium of record keeping for the records and documents at the six universities[6].

Notwithstanding the even divide between paper and electronic media, the study revealed that all the universities apply the records lifecycle principle to manage their recorded information. For example, UCT, regardless of having its records and documents predominantly in electronic form, explicitly stated that "all official UCT records must be managed in accordance with the records management lifecycle, file plan and retention plan" (UCT, 2012).

Records management policy. The assessment involved investigating the availability of a records management policy in each university. Table II shows the universities that had

	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Predominantly paper	√	–	–	–	√	√
Predominantly electronic	–	√	√	√	–	–

Table I.
Medium for records and documents

University	Policy	Effective date
UJ	Records management policy	21 July 2009
UWC	Document, records and archives management policy	1 January 2010
Wits	Records management policy	2 February 2012
UCT	Records management policy	13 June 2012
UNIMA	None	Not applicable
Mzuni	None	Not applicable

Table II.
Availability of policies for managing records and documents

policies for managing records and documents, arranged in the order of effective date, starting with the oldest policy.

The records management policies of the four South Africa universities satisfied key requirements of a standard records management policy, including:

(1) signed by the chief executive officer or another senior manager;

(2) issued to all staff in writing;

(3) described responsibilities of all staff in managing the records;

(4) included email and other electronic records in defining records; and

(5) allowed for penalties for staff who did not comply with the policy (PARBICA, 2007).

Records management process. The assessment involved investigating records management processes include classification or file plans, storage and disposition of records. The field study examined the extent these processes were carried out and implemented in the universities. In addition, the role of institutional repositories was examined. Table III presents the principal findings.

The study revealed that each university had a form of classification scheme. Classification schemes and file plans ensure the coherent and consistent arrangement of records and subsequently form the basis for effective retrieval, retention and disposition of the records. They are also essential in assigning security status to users, including restricting access to some classes of records. UWC, UCT, UJ and Wits used functional classification schemes. This approach may have been particularly attractive, as all of them had gone through major re-organisations in the early years of the present century. This tends to confirm a generally held view that organisational structures are fluid in the modern era where change is a frequent occurrence. As Tough (2006) has put it:

> While departmental boundaries often change and teams are short-lived, the underlying functions being delivered tend to remain much more stable. Thus functional classification schemes enable the delivery of services to continue during periods of organisational upheaval (Tough, 2006, p. 17).

UNIMA and Mzuni both used classification schemes that were essentially departmental. The departmental classification schemes worked well with these two universities, as their record keeping was predominantly paper-based, and their departmental boundaries had remained stable over relatively long periods.

Record keeping Process	University					
	UWC	UCT	Wits	UJ	UNIMA	Mzuni
Classification	Classification schemes in use in all universities					
Storage	Physical tools and equipment Electronic media Records centre Outsourced	Physical tools and equipment University managed electronic systems	Physical tools and equipment Electronic media Records centre Outsourced	Physical tools and equipment University managed electronic systems	Physical tools and equipment Electronic media	
Disposition	Use of university-wide retention and disposition schedules				Discretionary	

Table III.
Records management processes

All six universities studied have institutional repositories which are managed by librarians. However, the institutional repositories were not optimally used. Only some members of staff deposited their publications and research data. This study revealed a contrast between records centres and institutional repositories: the institutional repositories were well resourced, not least in relation to staff capacity. In essence, the institutional repositories were all in digital format and technically were working well in an electronic era, albeit encountering human challenges related to workplace culture. The records centres were yet to emulate the resource base of the institutional repositories.

Records management project. The presence of records management projects can indicate perceived challenges and/or imply the university's resolve to improve its record keeping capacity. Therefore, the field research undertaken in connection with this study included checking for the presence of records management projects. Table IV shows some of the major records management projects identified at the universities.

Records management expertise. The assessment included identifying key members of staff who possess the skills and knowledge necessary to ensure that university record keeping systems are working well. In addition, data were gathered regarding awareness campaigns aimed at non-specialist staff whose duties include a modest level of responsibility for record keeping. Accordingly, the investigation involved assessing the levels of record keeping training and awareness. Table V provides the findings.

The university which emerged as a field leader in relation to training and awareness was UWC which had a team of seven record keeping staff three of whom were senior members who had undergone long-term professional training, including university masters' degrees in records management. According to the Archivist/Records Manager, in-house training was also conducted to enable its members to acquire new skills.

University	Records management project
UWC	EDRMS
	Retention schedule
UCT	Governance intranet
	Institutional memory
Wits	Scanning/digitisation
	File plan
	Retention schedule
UJ	File Plan
	EDRMS
UNIMA	Scanning/digitisation
Mzuni	Scanning/digitisation

Table IV.
Major records management projects at the six universities

University	Levels of training and awareness Training	Awareness campaigns
UWC	In-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	Four meetings a year
UCT	*Ad hoc* in-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	*Ad hoc* meetings
Wits	In-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	Two meetings a year
UJ	*Ad hoc* in-house, short-term, and long-term professional training	*Ad hoc* meetings
UNIMA/Mzuni	Short-term professional training	None

Table V.
Levels of training and awareness

The UWC team conducted records management awareness campaigns in different units of the University four times a year. In these meetings, members of staff were sensitised on the importance of records management. It was impressive to learn that the Archivist/Records Manager had made presentations to two key audiences: the Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deans of Faculties; and staff of the Finance Department[7].

At the other end of the spectrum were UNIMA and Mzuni. These two institutions did not have strong records management unit teams. No records management awareness campaigns were conducted in these universities. This was expected because these records management unit teams lacked the capacity to carry out awareness campaigns. Records management team members from these two institutions had not undergone long-term professional records management training save for short courses. This situation is expected to change as a post graduate master of library and information science degree with strong records management components has recently commenced at Mzuni.

Management support. The study assessed levels of senior management support for record keeping from within each university. Factors incorporated in this assessment included:

(1) provision of specific budget lines for records management activities;

(2) effective endorsement of records management projects;

(3) funding of specialist record keeping training; and

(4) approval of formal policies for record keeping.

Table VI gives the results of the findings. The universities are ranked from high to low levels of management support.

Users' views on how to improve record keeping. Last – but not least – in assessing how records and documents are managed, users' views were solicited. Overwhelmingly, the main thrust of feedback from respondents at all the universities was that more investment in technology would enable the universities' records and documents to be managed more efficiently and effectively. There was little indication that respondents had any notion of the harmful effects that ill-conceived IT projects can have.

How do external factors impact on record and document management?
University reforms. A key external factor has been public sector reform. Over the past three decades, countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have been reforming their public sector with a view to improving efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability as part of efforts to improve the delivery of public services (Chanie and Mihyo, 2013). In universities, as in other organisations, reform actions have included:

University	Level of management support
UWC	High
Wits	High
UJ	High
UCT	Medium
UNIMA	Low
Mzuni	Low

Table VI.
Level of management
support

(1) Adoption of private sector approaches in managing public sector bodies – crucially this includes corporatisation of universities. More will be said about this below.

(2) Privatisation – services such as catering, cleaning and security are outsourced; the university concentrates on its core functions such as teaching and research.

(3) Public–private partnerships – the private sector is increasingly becoming an essential stakeholder in the design and implementation of the university curriculum.

(4) Commercialisation – some services of the university are offered on a commercial basis, including health, agricultural and engineering facilities and other services offered by the university-owned registered companies.

It is important that universities in Sub-Saharan Africa are not left out of the reform process. This is notwithstanding the fact that many academic members of staff detest university reforms. The reforms are perceived as tampering with their academic freedom and the university's autonomy. For example, when the South African Government announced major reforms in higher education after the dawn of multiracial democracy in 1994, the academic community were not enthusiastic as they interpreted these changes as state interference rather than supervision (Mthembu, 2009). Similarly, academic staff in Malawi objected to the new University of Malawi Bill of 2012, which would have restructured the operations of the University, on the same premise of fear of state interference. Nonetheless, reforms in the public universities are inevitable in an environment in which governance, audit and risk are important issues. The universities are expected to demonstrate transparency, accountability and value for the taxpayers' money.

Legal and regulatory demands. McLeod and Hare (2006) identified key drivers for record and document management as including the legal and regulatory environment. They argued that managing records for legal and regulatory compliance was an important part of any records management programme. This is true in South Africa and Malawi, as it is in any country where the rule of law is upheld. This is, of course, primarily a matter of taking cognisance of national laws and regulations.

Some of these laws and regulations contain explicit record keeping requirements; for instance, the need to create specific type of records and the need to keep records for specific length of time (McLeod and Hare, 2006). Others contain implicit requirements for record keeping; for instance, the need to promote transparency and accountability. Transparency and accountability can only be demonstrated if records and documents are well managed (Willis, 2005).

However, the existence of well-drafted legislation and regulations does not necessarily deliver good record keeping. Their implementation is as important as their existence. As Ngulube and Tafor (2006) rightly observed, the existence of progressive and comprehensive legislation is not likely to bring about any positive changes in the management of public records unless resources to implement the laws are made available.

This study identified a range of laws, regulations, standards and regulatory bodies which had the potential to drive record keeping, as shown in Table VII.

Of particular significance are the laws in relation to procurement and freedom of information. South Africa's Promotion of Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000 is that country's primary legislation on freedom of information. The South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) enforces the PAIA, and this study found that the South African universities make strenuous efforts to comply with it. Malawi had no equivalent law until

South Africa	Malawi
1. Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended	1. National Council for Higher Education Act No 15 of 2011
2. Council on Higher Education (CHE)	2. National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)
3. Promotion of Access to Information Act No 2 of 2000 (PAIA)	3. Public Audit Act No 6 of 2003
4. South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)	4. National Audit Office
5. Public Audit Act No 25 of 2004	5. National Archives Act of 1975
6. The Auditor General	6. National Archives of Malawi
7. National Archives and Records Service of South Africa Act No 43 of 1996 as amended	7. Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi
8. The National Archives and Records Service of South Africa (NARSSA)	8. Medical Council of Malawi
9. King III	9. National Education Sector Plan (NESP) 2008-2017
10. South African Nursing Council	10. UNIMA Act of 1974 as amended, and Mzuni Act No 12 of 1997
11. Health Professions Council of South Africa	11. Public Finance Management Act No 7 of 2003
12. SANS 15489: Part 1 – General; and Part 2 – Guidelines	12. Public Procurement Act No 8 of 2003
13. Public Finance Management Act No 1 of 1999	13. Comptroller of Statutory Corporations directive: Ref. No. 1/01/03/VII

Parliament passed the Access to Information Bill in December 2016: at the time of writing, this had not been signed into law by the President.

Both South Africa and Malawi have autonomous regulatory bodies for higher education. In South Africa, the Council on Higher Education (CHE) was the regulatory body established by the Higher Education Act No 101 of 1997 as amended. In Malawi, the National Council for Higher Education Act No 15 of 2011 established the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) as a regulatory body for higher education. It is evident that the South African regulatory body, having been in existence more than a decade before its Malawian counterpart, is the more firmly established of the two bodies.

There are other regulatory bodies with a legitimate interest in the universities. Foremost among these are the regulatory bodies overseeing the education and training of health personnel including nurses and medical practitioners. These were the Nurses and Midwives Council of Malawi and the Medical Council of Malawi on the Malawi side. On the South African side, there were the South African Nursing Council and the Health Professions Council of South Africa. All the six universities provided education and training for nurses and/or medical practitioners[8],[9],[10],[11],[12].

Two codes of practice may be regarded as having a particular relevance to this study. These are King III in South Africa, and the Comptroller of Statutory Corporations directive "Internal audits and financial statements" (2008) in Malawi.

King III was the most important code of governance identified in South Africa[13]. It heralded a new era in which risk management, internal auditing and records management were all regarded as important (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2013). The universities explicitly stated their adoption of King III in their annual reports. For example, the UWC Council statement on corporate governance indicated that:

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) is committed to the principles of discipline, transparency, independence, accountability, responsibility, fairness and social responsibility, as advocated in the King III Report on Corporate Governance. Accordingly, the Council endorses the codes and practices as set out in the King III report as they apply to the higher education sector (UWC, 2012, p. 54).

The Comptroller of Statutory Corporations' directive "Internal audits and financial statements" expresses the determination of the Government of Malawi to strengthen the audit function in parastatals, including public universities. It states:

In a bid to improve the performance and accountability in parastatals, Government intends to strengthen its monitoring of parastatals through regular review of financial statements, internal audit reports and inspection visits. [. . .] In view of the above, all parastatals are requested to provide the following information: evidence of the existence of a functional internal audit department within the organisation structure; copies of annual work plans for the internal audit department of the parastatal and evidence showing whether internal audit reports are submitted to the board.

What relationships can be drawn between the management of records and documents and institutional governance, audit and risk management within universities?
A positive correlation between effective governance and record keeping was more clearly evident in the South African cases than the Malawian ones. Concrete instances may help to explain this. The King III code of governance principles in South Africa was among the tools used to improve university governance. Although it was not designed to promote improvements in record keeping, its application resulted in a boost for record keeping (Ngoepe and Ngulube, 2013). Likewise, while the Promotion of Access to Information Act aimed to promote transparency, accountability and effective governance in the public institutions, good record keeping ensured its effective implementation.

Although the study established that governance was a key driver for record keeping, it was not possible to conclude that a university with good governance structures necessarily would have sound record keeping: while this was true of the South African universities, it was not the case for their Malawian counterparts. Similarly, a university with sound record keeping may not necessarily have good governance. This corroborated Hurley's (2005) contention. He argued that effective record keeping was a necessary but not a sufficient condition for governance. In the same context, Mat Isa (2009) argued that record keeping was just a tool that ensured the availability of evidence for accountability which in turn relied on the ethical standards of those involved. The equation of good governance equals good record keeping (and vice versa) works only when:

(1) the executive management teams buy in to the business case for record keeping and are able to provide resources including financial and human resources;

(2) they maintain ethical standards; and

(3) record keeping becomes embedded in business processes and governance structures.

The study established that the universities in Malawi had adequate governance structures to mandate improved record keeping, though further reforms might have made a big difference. They had, among others, well-functioning finance, internal audit and quality assurance units. Nonetheless, the aggregate record keeping capacity of the universities in Malawi was unsatisfactory. A total of two inter-related key factors provide an explanation of this pattern: size and the prevalence of oral communication. The number of staff in the

South African universities studied varied between 1,500 at UWC and 9,935 at UJ at the time that field work was carried out. For students, the equivalent numbers were 19,590 at UWC and 48,466 at UJ. In any institution operating on this scale, formal communication is an absolute necessity. In contrast, the Malawian universities operated on a much smaller scale. Mzuni had only 2,600 students and UNIMA had 8,579 split between 4 autonomous colleges. Staff numbers were similarly much smaller – 350 at Mzuni and 885 at UNIMA. The second factor is reliance on oral communication which, of course, is much easier in smaller institutions. Malawi has a history of orality in public administration which is associated with the dictatorship of Dr H K Banda in particular, as argued by Lihoma (2014) and Tough (2011). Arguably, the Malawian universities require more corporatisation to further improve governance. In particular, Malawi's legislation on universities still gives a great deal of power to the head of state in the governance of the universities, including appointing chairpersons and other council members. It can be argued that in practice the universities are state controlled rather than being under state supervision and that this needs to be changed.

A central contention of this study has been that an organisation's governance agenda would not effectively be fulfilled if its record keeping was side-lined. At first sight, the Malawian cases seem to contradict this contention. The universities were operating without sound record keeping. However, our argument is that if the Malawian universities put in place sound record keeping, they would be able to meet their objectives in a much more efficient manner. Of course, putting in place sound record keeping would depend on senior management support, a condition which has been lacking in Malawi. A sound business case for improved record keeping, supplemented by a stronger regulatory and legislative regime, is essential to change the way of doing things in Malawi. The South African case studies, on the other hand, supported the original contention. There universities had, to a considerable extent, sound record keeping. This contributed to meeting their governance agenda.

The study therefore established that record keeping and governance were closely related. This agreed with a number of authors who have expressed similar opinions. For example, Willis (2005) asserted that record keeping was a vital element of governance, and that governance was a vital ingredient to the survival of an organisation. PARBICA (2005) went further to make a "Declaration on Record keeping for Good Governance" in which it asserted in the strongest terms that record keeping was fundamental for an organisation to achieve good governance.

The study further established that senior management support was a key driver for effective record keeping as it was responsible for providing human and financial resources to effectively manage records and documents.

Figure 1 summarises the web of relationships between record keeping and governance functions and drivers.

Figure 1 is a simplified illustration of the web of relationships between record keeping and governance functions and drivers. Governance is necessary for record keeping (record keeping $\Rightarrow$ governance). In this context, governance structures such as council, senate and executive management team have an impact on record keeping. They ensure that the university has a working record keeping system. Similarly, audit is necessary for record keeping (record keeping $\Rightarrow$ audit). Internal, external and academic audit are key drivers for record keeping. Risk management is also necessary for record keeping (record keeping $\Rightarrow$ risk). Universities' strategic aims such as performing well in league tables can be jeopardised if their claims are not supported by authentic records. Similarly, business risks are unlikely to be properly mitigated through effective management of vital records if there

are no units or bodies or persons responsible for risk management. Finally, the environment is also a key driver for effective record keeping (record keeping ⇒ environment). In this context, factors such as technology, laws and culture have a major impact on record keeping.

Conclusion

The final objective of the study was to propose a record keeping model that can foster governance, audit and risk management. We propose *governance record keeping* as an approach to managing records and documents in the world of governance, audit and risk.

The *governance record keeping* approach considers record keeping as a governance function, viewed in a similar manner to other governance functions – audit and risk management. Its activities include managing governance records, and governing the organisation's recorded information as a strategic resource. When information is managed as a strategic resource, clear policies and procedures are put in place to specify what information is stored; where it resides; who has access to it; how to protect it; and the circumstances in which it should be disposed of. Figure 2 is an illustration of the *governance record keeping* hierarchy.

In Figure 2, record keeping occupies the same position as the other governance functions, *vis-à-vis* audit, risk and governance. It therefore requires the same attention as that given to
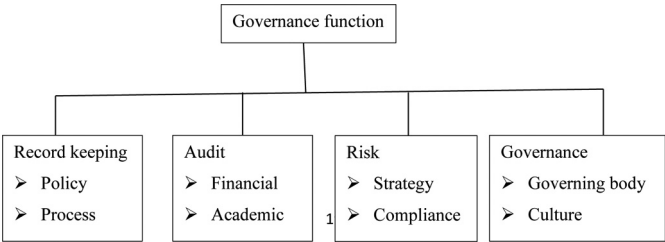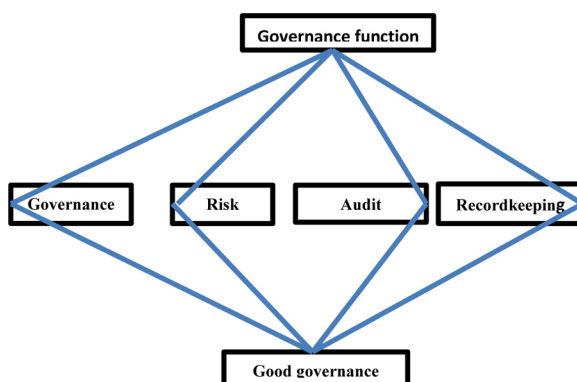
the other governance functions. Thus, the world of governance, audit and risk presents an opportunity to manage records and documents effectively.

Figure 2 is further developed into the Governance Recordkeeping Model in which the governance functions consolidate to achieve good governance as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 is a three-dimension figure with six symmetrical pointed edges. At the top is the governance function; on the sides are the elements of the governance function such as record keeping, audit, risk and governance. The tendency with most organisations is to promote the governance edge and associates such as audit and risk. It should be noted that governance and record keeping are symbiotic elements of an organisation's strategy. Excluding the record keeping edge damages the whole figure which may not stand effectively on the good governance base. Therefore, record keeping is an essential underpinning of governance and forms the basis of the good governance agenda of an organisation such as the university.

Notes

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