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Challenges Associated with Records Management in Sunyani Technical University

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ABSTRACT

The paper investigate the challenges of record management in Sunyani Technical University using standard Ordinary Least Square method (OLS), One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and the central tendency (Mean). The findings of the study show that record management in the institution is challenged by improper records management; inadequate proper security for records; inadequate professionally trained records managers; there are inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution; insufficient space for records management; misplacement of vital records in the institution; loss of vital records in the institution; inadequate computer terminals; lack of record keeping policy; lack of record retention; lack of disposition schedule in the institution; ineffective means of retrieving record; improper records management in the institution. The managements of the institution should consider the findings of the study and address these challenges for proper record management and the benefits associated with such benefits.

Keywords: Record management, demographics, training in record management, satisfaction with record management

Jel Codes: M51

INTRODUCTION

The issue of record management in organisations have attracted attention in the literature for a long time, and this same issue in educational institutions in recent times continue to attract a large literature in the area of problems in record management, since proper record management has enormous benefits in educational institutions (Durosaro, 2002; Asogwa, 2004; Egwunyenga, 2005; Okoli & Onuigbo, 2014).

Proper records management according to theoretical and empirical research provides institutions with many benefits (Akube, 1991; Durosaro, 2002; Edem, 2002; Akubo 2004; Asogwa, 2004; Oniyade, 2004; Egwunyenga, 2005; Weggant, 2005; Mbiti, 2006; Davis, 2007; Okoli & Onuigbo, 2014). Among the benefits are: effective design; planning; supervision and monitoring of programmes; effective financial resource management; effective resources allocation to all unit of the institution; proper assessment of students performance and needs; better improvement in instructional facilities for teaching and learning. Problems of improper record management leads to many problems such as lost records, misappropriation of material and financial resources (Akubo, 2004; Mbiti, 2006; Davis, 2007; Fasasi, 2010).

According to researchers (Smith, 2003), the records that are kept by academic institutions include: students' academic assessment booklet; budgetary information; number of

students and schools; training and development of the institutions; income and expenditure records of the institutions; resource allocation to the units of the institutions; number of teaching and non-teaching staff employed and their personal files; students' personal files; log book; the school diary; note of lesson; transfer certificate; terminal report cards for students; teachers' time book; movement book; the supervisory notebook; visitors' book; and staff minutes book.

Researchers (Uwaifo 2004; Akporhonor & Iwhiwhu 2007) explained that these records to be kept in record management should meet certain criteria such as confidentiality, proper maintenance, security, preservation of the content, and context.

Records in organisations are kept in two main forms which are manual (use of office file, pen, paper, pencil to process records and electronic (computers; other information management tools/devices), according to researchers (Edem, 2002; Akubo, 2004; Igwoku, 2008).

Empirical studies have identified many problems in record management in institutions from the perspective of the main stakeholders (governments, university management, the staff and the students) of the institutions (Awe, 2000; Egunleti 2001; Utulu, 2001; Oketunji, 2002; Egwunyenga, 2005).

The findings on the challenges of record management in institutions are found in the works of various researchers such as Baje (1998); Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000); Egunleti (2001); Ogundele (2001); Oketunji (2002); Fadokun (2004); Miller (2004); Egwunyenga (2005); Iwhiwhu (2005); Lawal (2007); Ojedokun (2008); Egwunyenga (2009); Ezeani (2010); Asogwa (2012); Seniwoliba, Mahama, and Abilla, (2017).

The identified problems are lack of record manual; lack of filing guidelines; inadequate computer terminals; difficulty in record retrieval; lack of appreciation by management and staff of the need for well-controlled records; inadequate manual classification; lack of security; lack of storage facilities; inadequate funds; weak legislative; weak organizational infrastructures; lack of basic skills and competences; corruption; absence of an archival institution; the problem of oral traditions; high staff turn-over; absence of an archival law; poor transport and communication network.

The empirical literature cited above reached the conclusion that records management in institutions face various challenges. However, the identified challenge depends on the institution under investigation and the level of the development of the institutions country. This has necessitated the current study to identify the key challenges in Sunyani Technical University, which is in a developing economy, and is newly established by the conversion of an existing Polytechnic. Not enough work have been on the Polytechnics and the current study fills in this gap. The purpose of the study is to examine the challenges in records management and identify whether demographic differences exist in respondents responses on the challenges in the institution, to add to the empirical literature on record science.

The paper is based on the research question such as: (a) what are the problems in record keeping in the institution? (b) what are the most ranked challenges in record management? (c) How does demography of respondents influence the responses? The hypothesis tested is: (i) demographic differences exist in the responses on the main challenges in record management.

The rest of the study is organised into four sections. The methodology is given in section 2. The empirical results are in section 3. Section 4 concludes the study.

2.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 The Research Design

The current paper is based on quantitative research design of the challenges in record management in the institution in a cross-sectional survey. The main challenges are quantified and explained from the self-reported responses of the respondents.

2.2. Target Population and Study Sample

The population for the current paper is the workers of Sunyani Technical University in the administrative and teaching ranks. The sample size for the study is 100, and the convenient sampling method was used.

2.3. Data

Data on the main challenges in record management was collected from the respondents using self-designed questionnaire with 25 items using Likert scale and Yes/No responses. The questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents at the work places of the respondents. Table 1 report the challenges.

Table 1 Challenges in Record Management

| Challenges |
|--|
| 1. There is improper records management and that pose a challenge in retrieving office documents (IRMR) |
| 2. There is inadequate proper security for records which affects the records management practices in the University (IPRS) |
| 3. There are inadequate professionally trained records managers which contribute to problems of records management (IPTRM) |
| 4. There are inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution (IR) |
| 5. There is insufficient space for records management at the University (IS) |
| 6. There is misplacement of vital records in the institution (MVR) |
| 7. There is loss of vital records in the institution (LVR) |
| 8. There are inadequate computer terminals (ICT) |
| 9. There is lack of record keeping policy (LRKP) |
| 10. There is lack of record retention (LRR) |
| 11. There is lack of disposition schedule in the institution (LDS) |
| 12. There are ineffective means of retrieving record (IRR) |
| 13. There is improper records management in the institution (IRMI) |

2.4. Conceptual Framework and Empirical Model

The present paper examines the main challenges of record management in the institution and further ranks the challenges. The effect of demographic variables on the responses on the main challenges is also examined with demographic variables as the independent variables and the responses on the main challenges (RMC) as the dependent variables in a simple regression model as specified in equation (1).

$$RMC_{ij} = \alpha_{ij0} + \beta_{ij} DG_{it} + \varepsilon_{ijt} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where RMC temporary symbolises the dependent variable and DG equally symbolises the independent variables. In equation (1), j=1 for IRMR; 2 for IPRS; 3 for IPTRM; 4 for IR; 5 for IS; 6 for MVR; 7 for LVR; 8 for ICT; 9 for LRKP; 10 for LRR; 11 for LDS; 12 for IRR; 13 for IRMI for the dependent variables (RMC). For the independent variables, i=1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 to represent gender (G), education (E), religion (RG), age (A), rank (R), working experience (YW), marital status (MA), and number of children (NC) respectively.

2.5. Estimation Methods

The standard Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression method and the One-Way Analysis of variance was used to model the influence of demographic variables on the responses on the challenges of record management whereas central tendency was used to examine the ranks of the challenges.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Demographics features of respondents

The results on the demographic variables are reported in Figure 1 to Figure 8. The results show that majority of the respondents are males 55(55.6%); most of them have degree 32(32.3%) followed by those with higher Master's Degree 25(25.3%); majority of the respondents are Christians 52(52.5%); most of the respondents are in the age groups of 28-32 21(21.2%); the rank of most of the respondents are senior administrative assistant 18(18.2%) followed by assistant registrars 16(16.2%); majority of the respondents have worked 5-10years in the institution 34(34.3%); majority of the respondents are married (65%); most respondents have one child 24(24.2%) followed by those with no child 23(23.2%); and most of the respondents are married 48(48.5%).

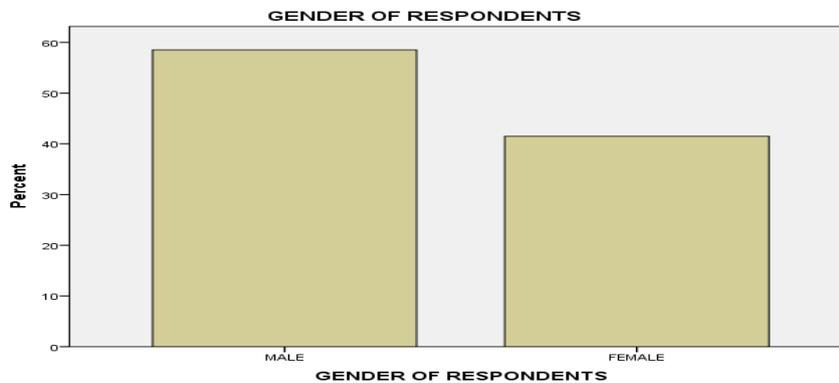


Figure 1 Gender of respondents

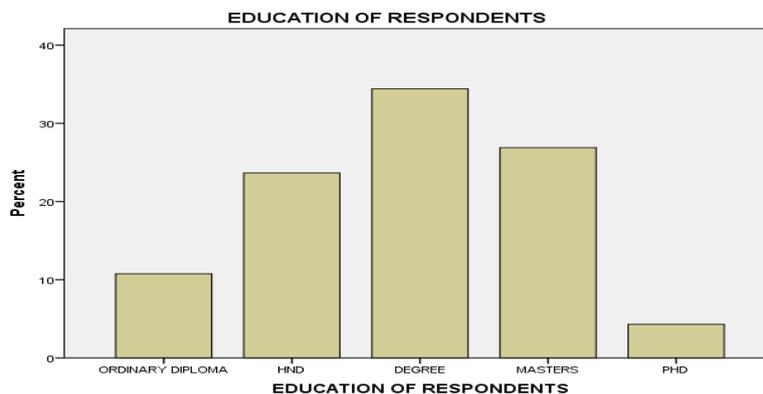


Figure 2 Educational level of respondents

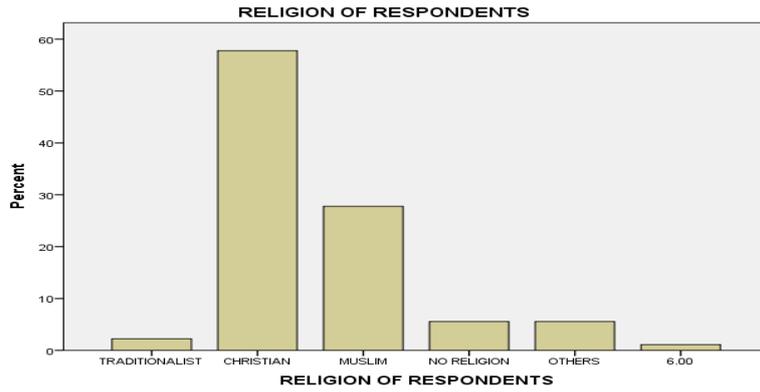


Figure 3 Religion of respondents

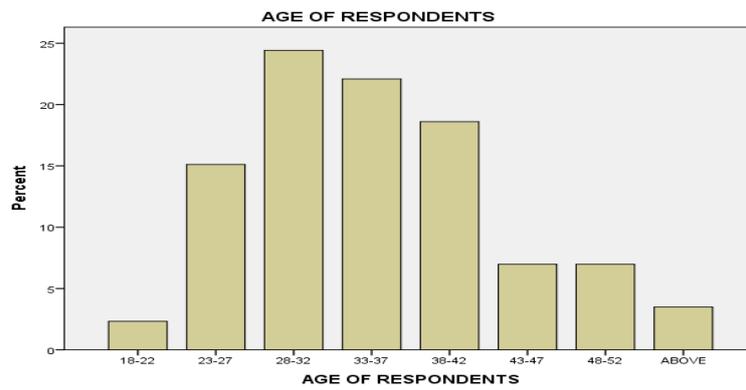


Figure 4 Age of respondents

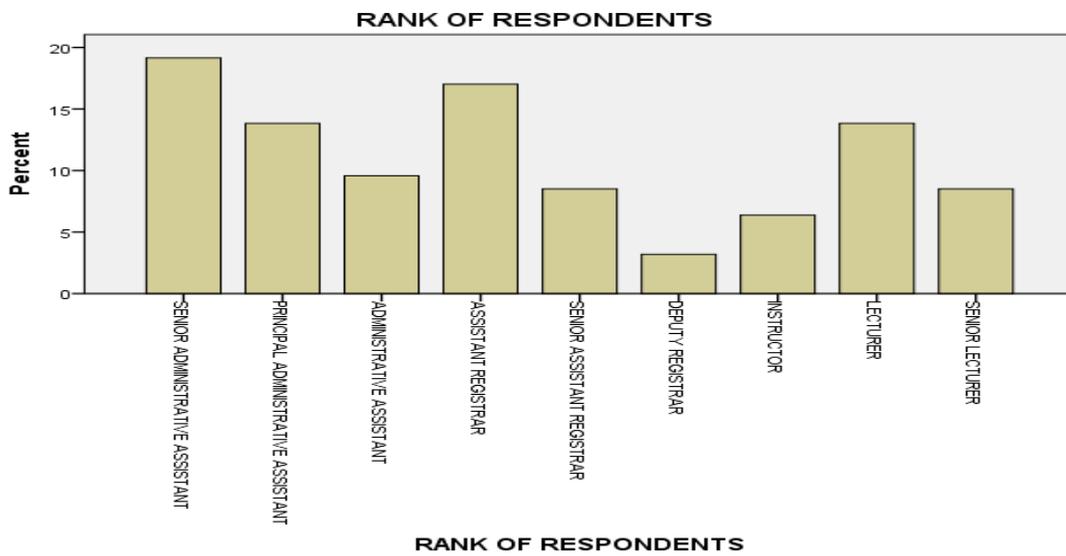


Figure 5 Ranks of respondents

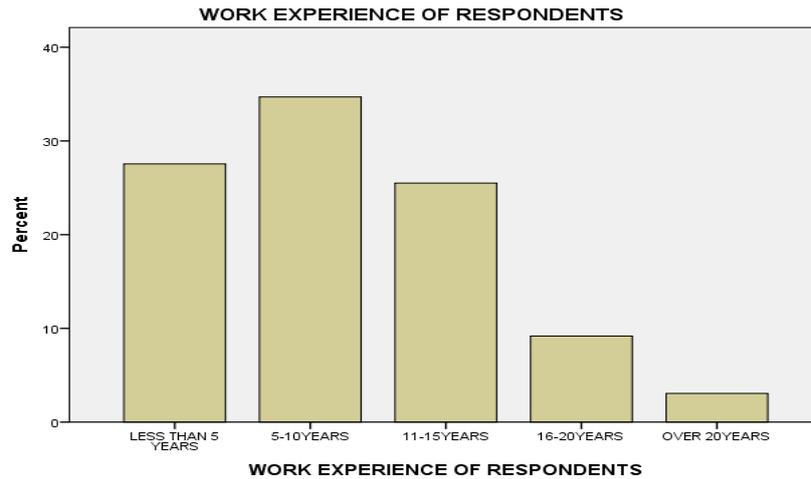


Figure 6 Work experience

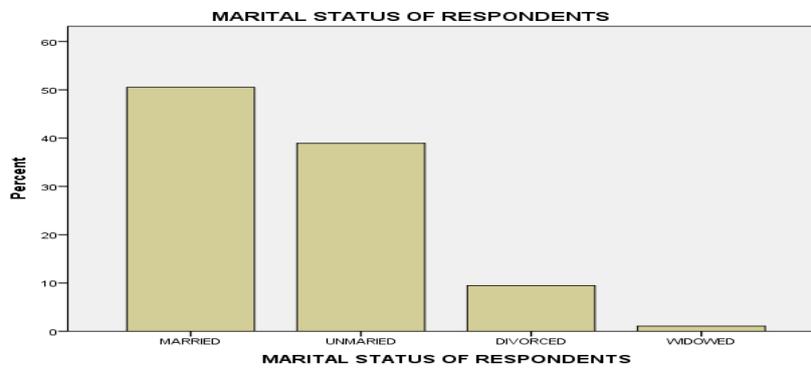


Figure 7 Marital status of respondents

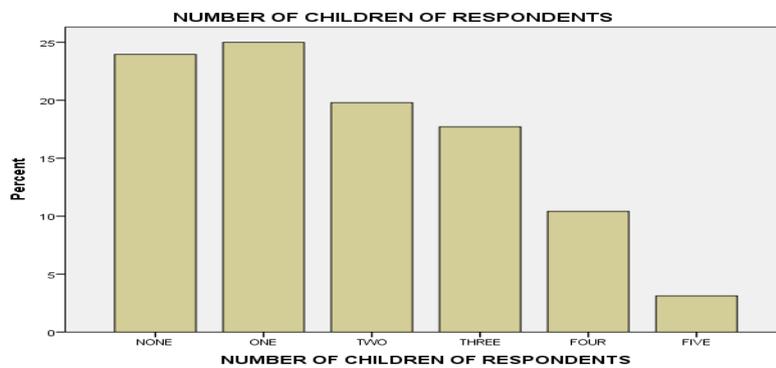


Figure 8 Number of children of respondents

3.2 Results on the ranks of elements of job satisfaction

The study identified thirteen challenges in record management. The challenges identified reported in Table 2. The results in the Table indicate that the three main challenges according to the respondents are ICT, LRR, and IR. The least three challenges are IS, IRMI, and IRMR.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of the challenges of record management in their ranks

| Challenges | Mean | Standard Deviation | Sample (N) | Rank of Challenges |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| There is improper records management and that pose a challenge in retrieving office documents (IRMR) | 2.296 | 1.186 | 98 | 13 |
| There is inadequate proper security for records which affects the records management practices in the University (IPRS) | 2.434 | 1.126 | 99 | 12 |
| There are inadequate professionally trained records managers which contribute to problems of records management (IPTRM) | 2.535 | 1.100 | 99 | 9 |
| There are inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution (IR) | 2.697 | 2.274 | 99 | 3 |
| There is insufficient space for records management at the University (IS) | 2.515 | 1.082 | 99 | 10 |
| There is misplacement of vital records in the institution (MVR) | 2.592 | 1.044 | 98 | 6 |
| There is loss of vital records in the institution (LVR) | 2.696 | 1.136 | 92 | 4 |
| There are inadequate computer terminals (ICT) | 2.722 | 1.256 | 97 | 1 |
| There is lack of record keeping policy (LRKP) | 2.701 | 1.192 | 97 | 2 |
| There is lack of record retention (LRR) | 2.687 | 0.986 | 99 | 5 |
| There is lack of disposition schedule in the institution (LDS) | 2.541 | 1.027 | 98 | 8 |
| There are ineffective means of retrieving record (IRR) | 2.571 | 0.99483 | 98 | 7 |
| There is improper records management in the institution (IRMI) | 2.515 | 1.034 | 99 | 10 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

3.3 Results on the effect of demographics on challenges of record management

The effect of demographic variables on the identified challenges was examined in the study to determine whether demographic differences exist in the challenges identified. Table 3 to Table 13 report the results. The results indicate that demographic differences do not exist in LRKP, LRR, LDS, IRMI, IPRS, IPTRM, and MVR.

The results indicate demographic effect exist in challenges such as IRMR, IRR, ICT, IS, IR, and IRMR. In Table 3 only religion of respondents influences IRMR at 10% level of significance. In Table 4 only ranks of respondents influences IR at 10% level of significance. In Table only region and age influences IS at 10% level and 5% level of significance respectively. In Table 6 only work experience influences LVR at 10% level of significance. Only work experience have effect on ICT in Table 7 at 5% level of significance. Only gender have significant effect on IRR at 10% level of significance.

Table 3 The effect of demographics on challenge of improper records management that pose a challenge in retrieving office documents

| Dependent Variable=There is improper records management and that pose a challenge in retrieving office documents (IRMR) | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 2.244 | 0.897 | 2.500 | 0.015** |
| G | 0.113 | 0.309 | 0.365 | 0.717 |
| E | -0.023 | 0.180 | -0.129 | 0.898 |
| RG | 0.281 | 0.163 | 1.720 | 0.091* |
| A | -0.190 | 0.147 | -1.289 | 0.203 |
| R | 0.039 | 0.069 | 0.564 | 0.575 |
| YW | 0.179 | 0.217 | 0.824 | 0.413 |
| MA | 0.041 | 0.230 | 0.177 | 0.860 |
| NC | -0.200 | 0.157 | -1.278 | 0.206 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 4 The effect of demographics on the challenge of inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution (IR)

| Dependent Variable= There are inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution (IR) | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 3.890 | 1.931 | 2.014 | 0.049** |
| G | -0.342 | 0.667 | -0.512 | 0.611 |
| E | -0.070 | 0.384 | -0.183 | 0.855 |
| RG | 0.226 | 0.354 | 0.637 | 0.526 |
| A | -0.420 | 0.320 | -1.315 | 0.194 |
| R | 0.264 | 0.151 | 1.752 | 0.085* |
| YW | -0.661 | 0.469 | -1.409 | 0.164 |
| MA | -0.184 | 0.498 | -.371 | 0.712 |
| NC | 0.526 | 0.340 | 1.546 | 0.127 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 5 The effect of demographics on the challenge of insufficient space for records management at the University (IS)

| Dependent Variable= There is insufficient space for records management at the University (IS) | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 2.012 | 0.740 | 2.720 | 0.009*** |
| G | -0.074 | 0.256 | -0.289 | 0.773 |
| E | 0.110 | 0.147 | 0.748 | 0.457 |
| RG | 0.267 | 0.136 | 1.964 | 0.054* |
| A | -0.290 | 0.122 | -2.370 | 0.021** |
| R | 0.027 | 0.058 | 0.460 | 0.647 |
| YW | 0.186 | 0.180 | 1.034 | 0.305 |
| MA | -0.027 | 0.191 | -0.144 | 0.886 |
| NC | 0.080 | 0.740 | 0.611 | 0.009 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 6 The effect of demographics on the challenge of loss of vital records in the institution (LVR)

| Dependent Variable= There is loss of vital records in the institution (LVR) | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 2.156 | 0.865 | 2.493 | 0.016 |
| G | 0.307 | 0.289 | 1.062 | 0.293 |
| E | -0.207 | 0.167 | -1.242 | 0.219 |
| RG | 0.096 | 0.162 | 0.594 | 0.555 |
| A | -0.165 | 0.141 | -1.169 | 0.247 |
| R | 0.028 | 0.066 | 0.424 | 0.673 |
| YW | 0.354 | 0.207 | 1.707 | 0.093* |
| MA | 0.211 | 0.216 | 0.981 | 0.331 |
| NC | -0.026 | 0.158 | -0.165 | 0.870 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 7 The effect of demographics on the challenge of inadequate computer terminals (ICT)

| Dependent Variable= There are inadequate computer terminals (ICT) | | | | |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 2.719 | 0.948 | 2.868 | 0.006 |
| G | 0.183 | 0.332 | 0.550 | 0.584 |
| E | -0.078 | 0.186 | -0.418 | 0.678 |
| RG | -0.153 | 0.179 | -0.857 | 0.395 |
| A | -0.188 | 0.155 | -1.213 | 0.230 |
| R | 0.004 | 0.073 | 0.052 | 0.958 |
| YW | 0.487 | 0.229 | 2.126 | 0.038** |
| MA | 0.148 | 0.241 | 0.614 | 0.542 |
| NC | -0.051 | 0.165 | -0.307 | 0.760 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 8 The effect of demographics on the challenge of ineffective means of retrieving record (IRR)

| Dependent Variable= There are ineffective means of retrieving record (IRR) | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 4.128 | 0.742 | 5.562 | 0.000*** |
| G | -0.434 | 0.253 | -1.715 | 0.092* |
| E | -0.078 | 0.151 | -0.518 | 0.606 |
| RG | -0.081 | 0.134 | -0.609 | 0.545 |
| A | -0.155 | 0.121 | -1.276 | 0.207 |
| R | -0.043 | 0.058 | -0.743 | 0.460 |
| YW | 0.078 | 0.177 | 0.439 | 0.662 |
| MA | -0.021 | 0.189 | -0.109 | 0.913 |
| NC | 0.064 | 0.129 | 0.493 | 0.624 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

3.4 Satisfaction with record management in Sunyani Technical University

The satisfaction level of the respondents in relation to record management was examined. Figure 8 reports the results. The results indicate that majority 54(54.5%) respondents are not satisfied with record management in the institution. The effect of demographics on the satisfaction with record management was also investigated. Table 9 and 10 report the results. The results in the Table 9 show that only gender of respondents influences respondent's satisfaction with record management at 5% level using the OLS test. The One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test results in Table 10 also indicate that gender significantly influences respondent's satisfaction with record management at 1% level of significance.

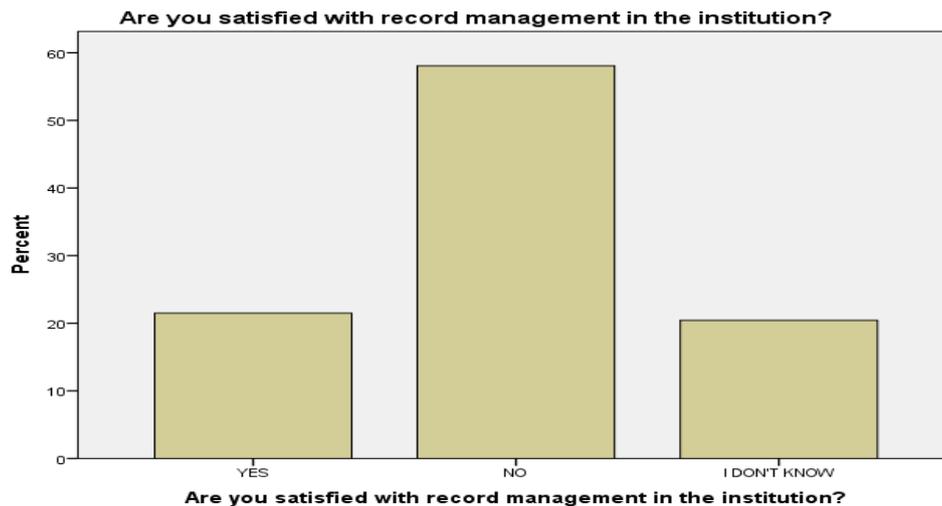


Figure 9 Respondents satisfaction with record management

Table 9 The effect of demographics on the satisfaction with record management in the institution

| Dependent Variable= satisfaction with record management in the institution | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Variables | Coefficients | Standard Deviation | T-values | P-values |
| Constant | 1.878 | 0.529 | 3.551 | 0.001*** |
| G | 0.389 | 0.179 | 2.167 | 0.035** |
| E | -0.045 | 0.108 | -0.418 | 0.678 |
| RG | -0.031 | 0.102 | -0.307 | 0.760 |
| A | -0.004 | 0.093 | -0.038 | 0.970 |
| R | -0.012 | 0.040 | -0.298 | 0.767 |
| YW | 0.066 | 0.122 | 0.542 | 0.590 |
| MA | -0.129 | 0.131 | -0.986 | 0.328 |
| NC | -0.061 | 0.090 | -0.675 | 0.503 |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

Table 10 ANOVA results on the effect of gender on satisfaction with Record management

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | P-value |
|---------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|----------|
| Between Group | 4.190 | 1 | 4.190 | | |
| Within Group | 30.799 | 86 | 0.358 | 11.699 | 0.001*** |
| Total | 34.989 | 87 | | | |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

3.5 Knowledge level of respondents in record management

The knowledge level of respondents in record management was examined by asking respondents whether they have training in record management before joining the institution or have undergone training since they joined the institution. Figure 9 and 10 and Table 11 and 12 report the results. The results in Figure 9 indicate that majority 56(56.6%) of the respondents do not have training in record management before joining the institution. Figure 10 results also indicate that majority 64(64.6%) of the respondents have not undergone training in record management since they joined the institution.

The effect of demographics on the training in record management was investigated. Table 11 report the results. The results in the Table 11 show that demographics do not influence respondent's training in record management before joining the institution using the OLS and the ANOVA tests. However, ANOVA test results (Table 12) on whether respondents have undergone training in record management since they joined the institution indicate that only gender significantly influences the results at 1% level of significance.



Figure 10 Whether respondents have training in record management



Figure 11 Whether respondents have undergone training in Record management

Table 11 ANOVA results on the effect of gender on satisfaction with Record management

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | P-value |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| Between Group | 2.068 | 1 | 2.068 | | |
| Within Group | 22.921 | 86 | 0.267 | 7.759 | 0.007*** |
| Total | 24.989 | 87 | | | |

Source: Author's field survey, December 2017

4. DISCUSSIONS

The findings of the paper seem to suggest that record management is a problem in the institution under discussion. The findings support that of previous researchers such as Egwunyenga (2005); Iwhiwhu (2005) for Nigeria; Lawal (2007); Ojedokun (2008); Egwunyenga (2009) for Nigeria; Ezeani (2010); Asogwa (2012) for Saharan Africa; Seniwoliba et al. (2017) for Ghana; who similar challenges such as poor transport and communication network, absence of an archival law, lack of security; lack of storage facilities; inadequate funds; weak legislative; lack of filing guidelines; inadequate computer terminals; difficulty in record retrieval.

According to researchers such as Akubo (2004); Mbiti (2006); Davis (2007); and Fasasi (2010), problems of improper record management include lost records, misappropriation of material and financial resources, which the current paper has, confirm.

These challenges might prevent the institution from enjoying the benefits of proper record managements such as effective design; planning; supervision and monitoring of programmes; effective financial resource management; effective resources allocation to all unit of the institution; proper assessment of student's performance and needs; better improvement in instructional facilities for teaching and learning, identified by researchers (Egwunyenga, 2005; Weggant, 2005; Mbiti, 2006; Davis, 2007; Okoli & Onuigbo, 2014) in previous studies.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of the research have been achieved in the survey. Record management in Sunyani Technical University is challenged according to the respondents in the study. There are challenges such as improper records management; inadequate proper security for records; inadequate professionally trained records managers; there are inadequate resources to facilitate proper records management practices in the institution; insufficient space for records management; misplacement of vital records in the institution; loss of vital records in the institution; inadequate computer terminals; lack of record keeping policy; lack of record retention; lack of disposition schedule in the institution; ineffective means of retrieving record; improper records management in the institution.

The management of the institution should take all the necessary steps to address the challenges identified. Measures should be put in place to provide training (on the job training) in record management for workers when they are employed to take charge of records of the institution if they do not have knowledge in record management as it was evident in the study that most of the respondents have no training in record management but are handling the records of the institution.

Future studies should examine the measures to address these challenges and other areas in record management such as record management practices among university workers, and the benefits of proper record management in tertiary institutions. The current topic is also worth examining in comparative study of private universities and public universities.

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