

# Harmonising the Undergraduate Records Management Curriculum and the Labour Market in Kenya

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## Abstract

There is a link between the broader subject of records management (RM) in Kenyan universities and the records management labour market in Kenya. It is always assumed that employers' input and review of an institution's curriculum typically produce better skilled, more knowledgeable employees who have a greater potential to succeed once they leave universities. This research aimed to identify the relevance of the undergraduate RM curriculum to the labour market in Kenya and to make recommendations on the areas that can be improved on in the curriculum. Undergraduate studies are the education level that shapes most professionals' career paths. The challenge of the high unemployment rate among Kenyans in general despite thousands of graduates coming out of universities each year also motivated this research. The contextual set-up of the study was Moi University, Kenyatta University, and five online job listing sites in Kenya. The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods research design. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously using online questionnaires and key informant interviews. The research sample of 56 comprised two key informants from records management departments of Moi University and Kenyatta University and 54 alumni graduates of records management from the two universities who were selected using snowball sampling, as well as 20 records management job advertisements. The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and Atlas.ti software and are presented in tables, diagrams, and graphs. The research revealed that there

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is a need for more collaboration between the various stakeholders and that there is a strong link between university education and the performance of students in the job market; it also found a mismatch between the records management curriculum offered and the market demands. The mismatch was attributed to the theoretical nature of studies and the impact of information and communications technology on records management. The research further revealed that there is minimal consultation during curriculum review and that records management is not popular in the Kenyan labour market.

**Keywords:** curriculum; records management; undergraduate; Kenya; labour market

## Introduction

Linking curricula to industry needs is vital for universities for several reasons. Employers' input and review of an institution's curriculum eventually produce better skilled, more knowledgeable graduates who have a greater potential to succeed once they leave universities. Updating and innovating the curriculum, therefore, is a vital task for all educational institutions (Corominas, Saurina, and Villar 2010, 23).

Amimo (2012, 3) defined curriculum as what, how, why and when learners should learn. The curriculum is not an end in itself; rather, it seeks both to realise a range of government policies and societal demands as well as the achievement of worthwhile and useful learning outcomes for students. Through the curriculum, key political, economic, cultural and social questions about the purpose, aim, process and content of education are resolved. While it may not be an end in itself, its vital role in a student's life cannot be ignored. A well-structured curriculum is a means of achieving greater success beyond the classroom.

Records play a vital role in an organisation. Most notably, records act as evidence of transactions that take place within the organisation (Buchanan et al. 2017). There are many activities going on in an organisation at any one time. Records prove the existence of the activities and act as a vital input in times of decision-making within an organisation. Additionally, records ensure the continuity of an organisation, reduce operational costs and enhance the integrity of an organisation. These key functions of records make it necessary for stakeholders and policymakers to invest in sound records management practices (Mosweu and Rakemane 2020). At the core of all these are the records managers themselves.

## Records Management Curriculum

A records management curriculum aims to enable students to obtain and develop skills, knowledge, values, and the accompanying competencies and capabilities to be productive with their lives (Stabback 2016, 20). Quality in the curriculum is determined and measured by different indicators. The main indicators of curriculum success include the quality of the learning achieved by students as well as how effectively students use

that learning for their personal, cognitive, physical, social, psychological, moral and emotional development. A quality curriculum exploits the potential for the effective enhancement of learning. The quality of student learning depends heavily on the quality of the teaching and the two eventually inform the quality of education that a learner receives. The relevance, quality and effectiveness of the curriculum greatly enhance good teaching and learning (Stabback 2016, 21). About 16 universities in Kenya offer undergraduate courses in information science, which encompasses records management.

Knowledge and education are among the major factors contributing to sustainable development, the reduction of poverty as well as economic growth. There has been a paradigm shift where the curriculum is viewed as a vital foundation to reforms in education that aim to achieve high-quality learning outcomes. The curriculum represents a systematic and conscious selection of skills, knowledge and values: a selection that addresses the questions of why, what and how students ought to learn and thereby shapes the way teaching, assessment processes and learning are organised (Amimo 2012, 12). Further, the curriculum is understood as a social and political agreement that reflects a society's common vision while at the same time considering the various needs at local, national and global levels. It is the curriculum that reveals a society's educational purposes and aims in general (QQI 2014, 22). The complexity of curriculum development processes and the range of issues informing the key questions of teaching, learning and assessment constantly present major challenges for curriculum developers and policymakers (Cook 1982; Stabback 2016; Walters 1995).

## Background of Records Management Training in Kenya

UNESCO developed the concept of harmonisation as a basis for the training of information professionals. The concept was based on the premise that there are areas of knowledge and skills common to all the information sciences and this creates a common base for education and training and allows graduates flexibility in their future choice of careers (UNESCO 1974). The Rosenberg report (Rosenberg 1974, 31) constituted the first comprehensive study on training needs carried out and implemented in Kenya. The aim was to enable the Faculty of Information Sciences (FIS) at Moi University to identify the type, nature, and range of information-handling skills needed in Kenya to enable the faculty to match curricula content with the required professional competencies. The report correlated two groups of training areas shared and specific to certain categories of information professionals within the whole profession. The four broad categories of professions identified were archivists and records managers, librarians/documentalists, information scientists/officers and publishers, booksellers and printers (McCowan 2014, 13; Ocholla and Shongwe 2013, 9). Shared training needs were defined as those that all types of employers required, irrespective of job title. These covered activities such as acquiring, organising, updating, repackaging and disseminating information and included the ability to design, publish and print, analyse and produce information in print and audio-visual media.

## Statement of the Problem

Kenya has thousands of graduates who remain unemployed despite successfully completing their studies. Records management graduates are no exception as some of them struggle to be absorbed directly into the workplace (Mwangi 2016). So where is the problem? Records management is a dynamic field that is constantly changing. There have been numerous developments at the national and international level as far as the broad subject of education is concerned. These include the inauguration of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, the Kenya Vision 2030, the East African Protocol, Sustainable Development Goals and most recently the Agenda 2063 (GOK 2007, 5; Kamau and Owano 2016, 3; Kolesnikova, Kamasheva, and Fakhrutdinova 2015, 4). These developments have had an impact on records management as a course and as an organisational function.

The basis of the Kenya Vision 2030 is human resource development (GOK 2007, 13). Kenya seeks to create a globally competitive and adaptive human resource base that meets the requirements of a rapidly industrialising economy. Kenya intends to achieve its promise by raising labour productivity to international levels. The social strategy starts with providing globally competitive education, training and research to her citizens for development and enhanced individual well-being. Records management departments and curricula need to ensure that they are part of this initiative to raise the profession to international standards as outlined by Kenya's vision. Kenya's strategy for achieving this is through the revision of the curricula of universities and technical institutes (GOK 2007, 13; Ntemngweh 2016, 62). The records management curriculum is one of the progressive curricula and hence is of interest in the process. However, there is a wide gap between the university records management curricula and the labour market demands, leading to increased cases of unemployment among graduates and leaving them with nothing to do in line with their training (British Council, Samuel Hall, and UKaid 2017, 59; McCowan 2014, 14; McCowan et al. 2016, 8). The situation persists, yet the growth of the global economy demands competitive graduates with relevant work and life skills to equally match the growing economies. Reforms in tertiary education must be targeted towards providing broader curriculum areas based on skill-centred approaches and appropriate knowledge from non-academic sources (World Bank 2014).

There is a lot of investment by various records management players such as the universities, the lecturers and even the students themselves. All these efforts are aimed at producing skilled and knowledgeable individuals prepared to be absorbed in the job market at the end of their training. However, many graduates end up jobless after all the toil in school, which leads to a lot of wastage of skills and knowledge. The Commission for University Education requires that there be a close working relationship between the players in the education sector to enhance productivity. However, there exists a situation where the RM departments and the RM curriculum are on one side, while employers and the job market are on the opposite side. This is an unfortunate anomaly in a system

that was meant to work together in harmony for the benefit of all the players. The future of achievements in records management education and training is anchored on curricula that are progressively changing to guarantee growing opportunities for the graduates (Caroleo, Ciociano, and Destefanis 2017; World Bank 2014). The curriculum plays an important role in how learners are taught. There is sufficient evidence that putting a high-quality curriculum in the hands of higher education lecturers can have a significant positive impact on their students' achievement (Matina and Ngulube 2019; Muricho and Chang'ach 2013; Sang, Muthaa, and Mbugua 2012).

In regard to records management, advancement in technology has greatly affected human behaviour. This can be observed in the inclination towards the use of technology as opposed to human labour in several sectors of employment. However, the problem of a mismatch between what employers need and what records management departments offer is threatening these professionals and calls for a critical re-evaluation of how things are done and how they ought to be done for them to remain relevant (Makwae 2021). Records managers are at risk of becoming irrelevant if they do not keep up with the changing needs in the market.

## Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to establish the relevance of the undergraduate records management curricula offered at Moi University and Kenyatta University to the labour market in Kenya in order to harmonise the records management curriculum and the labour market needs. The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Identify the link between the undergraduate records management curriculum and the labour market in Kenya;
2. Make recommendations regarding the records management curriculum in Kenya.

## Research Questions

In addressing the topic, the study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the link between the undergraduate records management curriculum and the labour market in Kenya?
2. How can the relevance of the undergraduate records management curriculum in Kenya be enhanced?

## Justification of the Study

At the heart of the education process is the curriculum. The records management curriculum sets out what is to be learned, and the methods of delivery. It reinforces all other parts of the system besides guiding the everyday experiences of the classroom. The records management curriculum forms the basis for RM lecturers' training

programmes, the content of the learning and teaching materials, determining how learning is assessed through various systems laid down by the universities, how standards are developed and how performance is monitored (Mocanu, Zamfir, and Pirciog 2014). The curriculum is a major determinant of what is brought to the world by records management graduates. An education system's capacity to effectively contribute to national social and economic development is therefore shaped by the curriculum (Hope 2012). The education sector, and particularly the records management sector, just like any other sector in Kenya, is facing much streamlining. At the time of writing, there are barely 10 years to achieve both the Kenya Vision 2030 and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, of which Kenya is a signatory. Since the two focus on harmonising the university curriculum and labour market needs, this study was timely as the findings will help in aligning the Kenyan records management curriculum appropriately.

## Literature Review

One of the most important indicators of the performance of higher education institutions is the degree of fit between the qualifications obtained by graduates and the characteristics of their jobs (Algan, Cahuc, and Zylberberg 2002, 20; McCowan 2014, 17; McCowan et al. 2016, 10). Employers require that job seekers have both strong academic backgrounds and practical labour skills that enable them to quickly adapt to the workplace environment (ILO 2012). The focus of the educational system in developing countries is on theory rather than practical knowledge (Kim and Choi 2009, 8). Chandrasiri (2008, 24) and Naong (2011, 11) observed that university learning has been criticised for concentrating too much on an increase in "declarative knowledge" or knowing about things, and insufficiently on professionally relevant understanding or functioning knowledge. Similarly, Paadi (2014, 8) stated that university graduates mostly have textbook theoretical knowledge that is not supported by sufficient practical work experience. In countries where the economy is not growing at a speed that allows for massive skilled job creation projects, graduates find themselves faced with extended periods of unemployment and mismatched jobs. As a result, they fail to keep pace with the changing market demands of the present-day economy. A lack of practical skills and workplace experience results in employers' reluctance to employ such graduates. This is true for Kenya where the unemployment rate among young people is over 60% (World Bank 2019). The adoption of more advanced technological production processes has caused employers to prefer more skilled and experienced graduates to those with theoretical and general knowledge (Kim and Choi 2009, 6). According to the British Council (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2014), career fairs, industrial talks and internship programmes are rarely implemented in most universities. Most students graduating from Kenyan institutions of higher learning rarely get internship opportunities. This is mainly because few organisations are willing to offer them, while the few that do are obviously overwhelmed by the high number of graduates. For example, although there were only 10,300 internship positions for graduate teachers advertised by the Teachers Service Commission on 8th October 2019, the Commission

received an overwhelming 102,918 applications, 10 times higher than the available positions (Wanzala 2019).

According to Kolesnikova, Kamasheva, and Fakhrutdinova (2015), education has a direct impact on the economic situation as it changes people's values and attitudes. Previous research suggests that economic growth is associated with improved public education and literacy. Job training together with in-service instruction is also effective in fostering job efficiency and economic development. Clarke (2018) suggested that the type of educational system and its aims, plans, and facilities are quite influential in the economic growth rate. However, the researchers are of a different opinion and believe that this is not necessarily true. The economic growth rate has more to do with matching the curriculum to the market needs, rather than the schools focusing on instilling skills. They need to be sure that the skills they are instilling are relevant to the labour market. Ghaffarzadegan, Xue, and Larson (2017), Pigden and Moore (2019) and Record Point (2018) agree that matching the curriculum to the market needs is the first step in streamlining the records management field.

In a study targeting graduates of records management, Noko and Ngulube (2015) noted that records management graduates were not very marketable, with less than 50% of the respondents indicating that records management was marketable. In the study, they identified only 20 records management job advertisements in a period of four years. Given the high number of graduates in a similar period, there are questions to be asked regarding the employability of the graduates. They also noted that most of the undergraduate units were not records management specific but focused on the broader library and information science (LIS) spectrum. In establishing the relevance of the records management curriculum to the labour market in South Africa, Khayundi (2011) established a glaring mismatch between what the South African universities offered and what the market required. According to the study, there was no strong correlation between what the universities offered and what the market needed. There are many technological developments in the field of records management and LIS as a whole. This instability could probably be a contributing factor in the rather difficult efforts to match the records management curriculum to the market needs. Various research conducted at different periods presented new terminologies and developments in records management (Katuu 2015; Onyancha and Minishi-Majanja 2017).

Curriculum design is an important factor in improving the quality of higher education and keeping a balance between attitudes, knowledge and skills in relation to the latest scientific achievements of graduates and labour market needs (OECD 2017). Ghaffarzadegan, Xue and Larson (2017) link curriculum design to the culture of each country and highlight actions that must be considered when reviewing the academic curriculum. Such actions include social, economic, communication, technology, ethical and aesthetic systems. The constant shift in the market makes it difficult for universities to adjust even though they are always revising their records management curriculum (Campbell et al. 2019, 9).

## Theoretical Framework

### **Human Capital Theory**

The human capital theory was popularised by Gary Becker, an economist and Nobel Laureate from the University of Chicago, Jacob Mincer, and Theodore Schultz (Fix 2018; Kiker 1966). They proposed a simple explanation of an individual's income. In this study, the theory applies to a person who gains skills (human capital) that make him/her more productive. This enhancement in productivity then leads to greater income (Kiker 1966). The theory arose in an attempt to explain the relationship between the level of schooling received by an individual and the individual's success in the labour market (Allen and De Weert 2007, 11). It is based on a set of factors including knowledge, qualifications, abilities and individual qualities, which influence and facilitate the economic, social and personal welfare of people (Temple 2001, 54). The relevance of the theory to this study is that it measures the impact of education on an employee's productivity. Education is a result of the investment that ultimately determines how productive an employee turns out to be at the workplace (Sweetland 1996; Zamora 2007). In concurrence, Netcoh (2016) affirmed that proper investment in education translates to high productivity at the workplace, in addition to other factors.

### **Research Methodology**

The research used mixed methods consisting of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Mixed-methods research focuses on the collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or even a series of studies. The research was descriptive in nature and sought to describe in detail the subject under research. The researchers employed a convergent mixed-methods design since the study collates various data from different sources. The targeted population comprised 196 students who graduated from Moi University and Kenyatta University with a degree in records management between 2011 and 2015, the heads of records management departments and the top five job listing sites in Kenya that listed job openings for records management professionals.

This research employed total population sampling for key respondents from the two universities. Simple random sampling was used for job advertisement sites, purposive sampling for universities, job sites and years of graduation, and snowball sampling to follow alumni graduates. The respondents were two key informants (heads of records management departments) and 66 records management alumni graduates. The response rate was 100% for the key informants and 82% for the alumni graduates. Data were collected through semi-structured online questionnaires, structured interviews and a content review of records management job advertisements. Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences and Atlas.ti software for quantitative and qualitative data respectively.

## Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that most of the alumni respondents were graduates of Moi University (57%). This is consistent with facts gathered from the two key informants who stated that Moi University had a relatively higher population of records management students than its counterpart. Most of the respondents were employed in the corporate/private sector. This was represented by 43% of the total respondents and could be attributed to the fact that there are many more corporate organisations as compared to government departments in Kenya. This could also be a pointer that the corporate sector is eventually recognising the value of records management in an organisation, although there is no legal requirement for private organisations to manage their records. A further 39% of the respondents were employed in the public sector and government parastatals. Records management has become an important part of government transactions and more and more departments are recruiting records managers. The government is increasingly investing in professional records managers for their records management roles. All government ministries have a records management department, which is a positive development for the profession (Ministry of Lands 2018). The job advertisements, on the other side, were mainly from government institutions, with only a few from the corporate and non-governmental organisation (NGO) sectors. Of the respondents, 11% were employed in the NGO sector and 7% were self-employed. This is in agreement with the United Kingdom Agency for International Development's (UKAID) research which found that very few students are ready for self-employment upon graduation from universities (British Council, Samuel Hall, and UKaid 2017, 34). The findings concur with the finding that records management is increasingly being considered an important department by government institutions (College Factual 2020).

Regarding positions of records management graduates, the study established a total of 18 positions from the respondents, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Designation of respondents

Current title	Frequency			Per cent
	KU	MU	Total	
Archivist	0	1	1	1.9
Director	0	1	1	1.9
ICT Librarian	1	0	1	1.9
Information Management Officer	1	0	1	1.9
Information Officer	1	0	1	1.9
Knowledge Management Officer	1	1	2	3.7
Knowledge Manager	0	1	1	1.9
Knowledge Management Assistant	1	0	1	1.9
Librarian	1	0	1	1.9
Managing Director	0	2	2	3.7

Managing Partner	1	0	1	1.9
Principal Records Management Officer	1	0	1	1.9
Records Assistant	0	2	2	3.7
Records Management Officer	5	8	13	24.1
Records Management Supervisor	2	1	3	5.6
Records Manager	5	3	8	14.8
Records Officer	0	1	1	1.9
Senior Records Management Officer	3	10	13	24.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 indicates that a total of 18 different positions were identified from the respondents. The data shows that almost half of the respondents were occupying the positions of records management officers and senior records management officers; these positions accounted for 48% of the responses. This finding is consistent with data from job advertisements sites where 75% of advertisements analysed were for the position of records management officer. This was particularly significant as the term “manager” depicts a certain level of recognition and responsibility, thus implying that records management professionals may be an important asset in these companies.

The specialisation of the respondents is records management, yet the results show that some are working as knowledge managers, librarians as well as archives managers. The researchers observed that there was diversity in terms of areas of employment for records management graduates. This covers almost the whole spectrum of information science except for media studies. The research also revealed that the position of human resource (HR) and administration assistant was advertised with the requirements of records management. This shows there is a link, to some extent, between the field of records management and HR. This is attributed to the fact that the HR department is the custodian of records in some organisations. However, this situation equally makes it easy for other professions to get into the records management space as per the case of HR.

It was established that there is a close relationship between the curriculum offered and the nature of work at the workplace, based on the skills and qualifications that employers sought from potential employees. The information in the advertisements indicated that records management skills were critical in the performance of the records management duties. The constant reference to undergraduate studies in the job advertisements showed that one’s undergraduate studies play a key role in landing employment as a records management professional. The researchers concluded that there is a close link between the records management curriculum and the workplace performance of the graduates as most of the job advertisements for records managers required them to have an undergraduate degree in records management. It can be assumed that this degree is vital in performing records management functions at the workplace. Table 2 shows the findings from the study. This agrees with the observation by Ntemngweh (2016, 22) that

there is a close link between the curriculum offered in the universities and the performance of graduates in the workplace.

**Table 2:** Academic requirements for records managers

Academic requirement	Frequency	Per cent
Records Management/ Information Science Degree	53	98
No degree was required	1	2
Other degree required	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study found that 65% of the respondents did not think their undergraduate degree course was relevant to their current jobs, although none of the respondents believed that the degree was extremely irrelevant to their current roles. This was because of the mismatch between what they had studied and what was required of them, which in turn forced them to acquire additional training or attend additional courses. The advertisements equally required the candidates to have some further training in addition to their undergraduate degree. Table 3 presents the additional training acquired by these graduates while Table 4 presents additional training required by employers, which implies that there is more that is expected from the graduates besides the degree course.

**Table 3:** Additional training obtained by records managers

Level	KU		MU		Total	
	N	Row N %	N	Row N %	N	Row N %
PhD	1	100.0%	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Master’s degree	15	47%	17	53%	32	100.0%
Diploma / Higher diploma	6	32%	13	68%	19	100.0%
Short courses (e.g., Comp. Applications)	4	24%	13	76%	17	100.0%

**Table 4:** Additional training required by employers

Site		Certificate	Diploma	Management course	TOTAL
Brighter Monday	Advert 1	0	0	1	1
	Advert 2	0	1	0	1
	Advert 3	0	1	0	1
	Advert 4	0	0	0	0
Corporate Staffing	Advert 5	0	0	0	0
	Advert 6	0	1	0	1
	Advert 7	0	0	0	0
	Advert 8	0	0	0	0
	Advert 9	0	0	0	0

Career Point	Advert 10	1	1	0	2
	Advert 11	1	0	1	2
	Advert 12	0	0	0	0
Fuzu	Advert 13	0	1	0	1
	Advert 14	0	0	0	0
	Advert 15	0	1	0	1
	Advert 16	1	0	0	1
PwC	Advert 17	1	0	0	1
	Advert 18	1	1	0	2
	Advert 19	1	1	0	2
	Advert 20	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Documents</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>

The study established a discrepancy between the undergraduate records management curriculum and the requirements of the labour market as inadequate preparation led to unsatisfactory performance in the workplace. It was also established that most graduates had to undergo additional training to effectively discharge their roles as records managers. While the undergraduate records management course was important in landing one a job in the records management field, sustaining the job required more than just the undergraduate degree in records management. Cumulatively, the graduates had acquired 22 additional skills for them to effectively discharge their duties as records managers, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Additional skills and competencies acquired by records managers

Additional Skill	Frequency			Per cent
	KU	MU	Total	
Communication skills	2	2	4	10.8
Teamwork	1	3	4	10.8
Bar-code system	1	1	2	5.4
Electronic records capture	0	2	2	5.4
ICT technologies	1	1	2	5.4
Innovation skills	0	2	2	5.4
Organisational skills	2	0	2	5.4
Problem-solving skills	1	1	2	5.4
Project management	0	2	2	5.4
Records digitisation	0	2	2	5.4
Customer care	2	0	1	5.4
Data backup	0	1	1	2.7

Designing records management system	0	1	1	2.7
Email management	0	1	1	2.7
Leadership skills	1	0	1	2.7
Performance management	1	0	1	2.7
Quality assurance system	1	0	1	2.7
Record centre setup and management	0	1	1	2.7
Records management marketing	0	1	1	2.7
Records outsourcing and management	0	1	1	2.7
Records policy formulation	0	1	1	2.7
Records staff recruitment and management	0	1	1	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Although all the respondents studied the same course, the study established that they were holding different positions at the time of the research. This gives the impression that the benefits of the undergraduate records management curriculum go beyond just the records management field. On the other hand, it depicts a lack of clarity in the curriculum that causes the graduates to find themselves on unfamiliar grounds. The research found that there is a strong link between curriculum adequacy at the undergraduate degree level and performance at the workplace. This finding is consistent with the human capital theory which states that education is an investment that enhances the student's productivity, hence increasing their benefits in the long run (Benjamin et al. 2012). Therefore, it can be argued that investment in education translates to better returns in the workplace, as depicted by the human capital theory.

The study further established that there was nearly an even distribution in terms of satisfaction with the records management curriculum. Those who indicated that they were satisfied totalled 43%, while those who disagreed accounted for 46% of the respondents. The study did not establish the satisfaction level with the records management curriculum. There was an almost equal number of respondents giving opposite views in this regard, which is consistent with the finding by Record Point (2019) that the curriculum for records management is a work in progress due to the constant changes in the field of records management. These changes are principally occasioned by the integration of technology in records management. The key informants from the two institutions believed that the records management units were adequate, with an average confidence level of 80%. As one of them noted,

I would give it a score of 85% because I believe it covers the most important elements of records management. The other 15% is left out because I believe there is still more that can be done and especially with the developments taking place in the field of records management.

The research established that the key informants had more confidence in the records management curriculum than the respondents. This finding concurs with that of Amimo (2012, 14) that institutions tend to believe in their curriculum more than the learners, even when graduates of such institutions express their dissatisfaction with the curriculum.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This study concluded that records management duties can only be entrusted to employees who have studied records management/information science. The fact that over 98% of the advertisements for records managers required a records management course is sufficient evidence that records management graduates perform best in records management roles. The researchers concluded that there is a link between the records management curriculum and workplace performance such that an adequate curriculum translates to adequate performance and vice versa. Inadequate preparation in school leads to a corresponding struggle at the workplace for records managers and the need to add onto the already acquired skills. In addition, the field of records management is rapidly changing, with the main driver for this change being information and communications technology. The current curriculum for records management did not adequately prepare learners for the job market due to environmental changes and dynamics of the labour market, based on the additional training, knowledge, expertise and skills that graduates need to acquire besides their undergraduate degree. There exists a gap between the market and the curriculum and therefore there is a need for more collaboration between the various stakeholders to ensure that this gap is minimised. Further, this research concludes that universities need to be proactive and forward-minded in drafting and reviewing their curriculum so that the teaching of records management benefits both in the present and in the future. The following recommendations were proposed by the researchers from the findings and conclusions of the study:

1. The researchers recommend more collaboration between the various stakeholders in the field of records management. The most important collaboration should be that between the records management departments and the employers.
2. There is a need to create awareness and marketing of records management as some parties are yet to fully embrace professional records management at the workplace. More marketing and awareness creation could be vital in achieving this.
3. There is also a need for periodic market research by universities. Curriculum reviews should be preceded by thorough market research to establish the emerging trends in the field.
4. There should be investment in practical units for students. Since the workplace is more about the practical bit of the acquired skills, universities need to invest

in these practical courses by way of internships or well-equipped laboratories for students to undertake practical work.

5. Early specialisation should be available to students. While students specialise later in their fourth year of study, the study recommends that students should be allowed to specialise early enough to allow them time to fully explore the given speciality they have opted for.
6. There needs to be collaboration in curriculum revision. Since schools exist to prepare students for the workplace, there is a need for collaboration during the review of the curriculum to match market needs with the curriculum offered.
7. The following units were identified by the respondents as being key units in the undergraduate records management curriculum.

**Table 6:** Predominant units in records management

Predominant Unit	Frequency			Per cent
	KU	MU	Total	
Electronic records management	6	4	10	17.2
ICT in records management	5	5	10	17.2
Project management	1	3	4	6.9
Records automation	3	1	4	6.9
Cloud computing	1	1	2	3.4
Digital preservation	0	2	2	3.4
Emerging issues in records management	1	1	2	3.4
Records management policies	2	0	2	3.4
Records management system	2	0	2	3.4
Archives management system	0	1	1	1.7
Archiving electronic records	0	1	1	1.7
Classification schemes in archiving	0	1	1	1.7
Comprehensive archives management	0	1	1	1.7
Development of records standards and procedures	0	1	1	1.7
Ethics in records management	0	1	1	1.7
Health records management	0	1	1	1.7
Information and knowledge management	1	0	1	1.7
Knowledge management	0	1	1	1.7
Legal records	0	1	1	1.7
Marketing of records management	0	1	1	1.7
Marketing records professionals	0	1	1	1.7

Planning and implementing RM projects	1	0	1	1.7
Practical sessions	0	1	1	1.7
Procurement records	0	1	1	1.7
Project records	1	0	1	1.7
Records customer care	0	1	1	1.7
Records digitisation and preservation	1	0	1	1.7
Records management and preservation	1	0	1	1.7
Records staff recruitment and management	1	0	1	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### Limitations of the Study

This study examined the curriculum as a sole contributor to a graduate's readiness for the labour market and as a relevant factor influencing performance at the workplace. The study covered the years between 2011 and 2015 and captured data from respondents who graduated between those particular years. As for the content analysis, the researchers are aware that there are many organisations that have hired records managers during that period worldwide. Therefore, the study was limited to a maximum of 20 advertisements for records management positions over the same period. The study also focused on Moi University and Kenyatta University for the key informants and alumni. Thus, there is a need to explore this further and look at other universities and other factors contributing to performance at the workplace.

### Implications of the Study

With COVID-19 disrupting the status quo at the workplace, this study will be critical in reviewing the action points as we get to the new normal. The findings can be implemented by universities in tailoring their curriculum to suit the immediate and future market needs. Particularly, they can use this study to identify the paramount units that need greater attention. The Commission of University Education can also use these findings in making recommendations to universities to align their curriculum to the needs of the market. Employers can use these findings to seek more collaboration with institutions of higher learning.

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