Net Journal of Business Management
Vol. 5(2), pp. 19-29, October 2017
ISSN: 2437-1335
Full Length Research Paper

Evaluation of information management practices in Ghanaian organisations

Mustapha Osman Opoku[1]* and Francis Enu-Kwesi[2]

[1]Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Catholic University College of Ghana, Fiapre, Ghana.
[2]Institute for Development Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

Accepted 23 August, 2017

ABSTRACT

The relevance of information as a resource for achieving organisational objectives has attracted the attention of both practitioners and researchers, including this study which examined the state of information management practices in Ghanaian organisations. A descriptive survey design was employed, using scaled-items questionnaires administered to 939 randomly selected employees from purposively chosen organisations in Ghana. Descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test and factor analysis were used to analyze the views of the sampled units. The results established that more organisations in Ghana have information management strategy and policies which guide their operations, as evident in the presence of departments and staff responsible for information management, and databases. However, in general, heads of information management departments were not part of strategic management teams, while more of the organisations use a manual approach in handling their information issues. Despite these deficiencies, the respondents were satisfied with the current state of information management practices in their organisations, and that there were no differences between the public and private sectors with respect to information management practices. We therefore recommended that the organisations should focus on using technology to manage their databases, and include their information management heads in the strategic management teams.

Keywords: Access, information, management, policy, strategy.

*Corresponding author. E-mail: yawosman2004@yahoo.co.uk.

INTRODUCTION

Information has been described by Laudon and Laudon (2010) as data that have been processed into meaningful and useful form. Earlier on, Pijpers (2009) described information as intangible and abstract, existing only through human perception and assessments, Pijpers added that information is the only resource of organisations which is self-multiplicative and does not lose its value upon exchange. Pijpers views suggest that in effect, information is expandable, while its free flow maximizes its use. The implication is that when data, raw facts and figures are transformed they assume features that are unique and useful in the life of organisations. Accordingly, Dorr et al. (2013) argued that information is one of the world's most important resources since it is needed to solve problems and make decisions affecting both the present and the future.

The usefulness of information as a resource is seen in the various roles that it plays in achieving organisational objectives. Researchers, including Adams (2006) and Al-Mobaideen et al. (2013) have also indicated that information provides the relevant intelligence, and serves as a valuable business resource, by providing knowledge that helps to reduce uncertainty in decision making, and consequently, aids planning and evaluation, while serving as means of communication, motivation and learning (Saloojee et al., 2007; Laudon and Laudon, 2010). These writers maintain that information corrects or confirms previous information and has surprise value in that it tells something the receiver did not know or could not predict, and it has value in the decision-making process in that it changes the probabilities attached to expected outcomes in a decision-making.

However, Ebbighausen (2011) opined that in order for the information to be useful and provide the needed knowledge, it must be relevant for its purpose, accurate, understandable and delivered on time, and these can only be achieved through effective information management. Similarly, Dorr et al. (2013) argued that the degree of success enjoyed by an organisation and its members depends largely on how well information is managed. Information is thus a valuable resource, and arguing from the point of view of the resource based theory, Akio (2005) indicated that the resources possessed by an organisation are the primary determinants of its performance, which consequently may contribute to its sustainable competitive advantage. These resources according to Barney (1991), include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, and other intangibles controlled by the organisation. But according to Feather (2004), in order for information to support organisational competitive advantage it should have some special qualities that increase the value offered to customers by increasing differentiation or/and decreasing the costs of the production (Tokuda, 2005).

Theoretically, there is abundant literature on information management practices and its impact on organisational performance in the developed countries, however little attention has been given to information management practices in developing countries, including Ghana (Adams, 2006). While studies show that, globally and in Ghana, information is seen as a vital resource in achieving organisational objectives and therefore its management is important (Mensah and Adams, 2014), other researchers, including Akortsu and Abor (2011) have concluded that Ghanaian organisations do not give information management the attention it desires and as a result it has affected their performance (Akortsu and Abor, 2011). Tale and Alefaio (2011) also concluded that information management is not prioritized by Ghanaian organisations and they usually delegate those functions to inexperienced and low rank staff, an indication that it is not strategic to the organizations. The consequence of this is the difficulty that most organisations have in meeting their performance targets (Mensah and Adams, 2014).

Furthermore, the available literature on information management has identified technical and managerial aspects (Robertson, 2005). A lot of contributions have been made with respect to the technical aspect, but the managerial involvement remains little. Providing in-depth knowledge and understating in this regard will help improve information management practices, and hence organizational performance in Ghana. It is against this background that this study was conducted to examine the state of information management practices in Ghana. The specific issues of interest were availability of information management strategies and policies; operational structure and processes with respect to information management practices; level of access to information; and a comparison of information management practices in public and private sectors. In the ensuing sections of the paper we focused on theoretical and conceptual discussions on information management, followed by the methodology used. Thereafter we presented the results and discussion, and ended the paper with the conclusions and policy implications.

Theoretical and conceptual discussions on information management

Information has been theoretically perceived and defined differently (Bosman, 1985), and many writers, including Rene (1975) and Hintikka (1984) have indicated that the concept of information is misleading, describing it as “semantic chameleon”. The differences occur because the concept of information has invaded various disciplines including natural science, economics, psychology and humanities (Burgin, 2009). Brookes (1980), Buckland (1991) and Kogut and Zander (1992) define information in terms of knowledge and concluded that information can be used in place of knowledge. However, others like Meadow and Yuan (1997), Henczel (2000) and Choo (2002) agree that data is transformed into information which is also transformed into knowledge which is used in the operations of organisations. In this respect, Curtis (1989) defines information as data processed for a purpose, while Senn (1990) discusses information as data presented in a form that is meaningful to the recipient.

Expanding the above definitions, Robek et al. (1995) opine that information is any intelligence, which can be communicated in either graphic form or alphanumeric character, which include records, documents, data and files created and maintained by organisations. The view of McGee (1993), Walker (1993), O' Brien and Marakas (2008) and Laudon and Laudon (2010) is that, information is data that have been transformed into a form that is meaningful and useful to the recipient and has a real or perceived value and can cause a change in decision making.

The various definitions of information by different writers indicate that information has some importance which needs to be explored (Adams, 2006). According to Dorr et al. (2013), information is one of the world’s most important resources that are needed to solve societal or organisational problems and make decisions affecting the present and the future. Bedward and Stredwick (2004) have indicated that information enhances organisations’ knowledge, improves understanding of complex situations and reduces uncertainty. By reducing uncertainty and enhancing understanding of problems, situations are simplified and become more manageable (Pijpers, 2009). According to Bedward and Stredwick (2004) and Pijpers (2009), in order for information to

perform its roles effectively, it should be relevant to the needs of the organisation. It must be accurate, reliable, consistent and must be provided at the right time. These features of information can only be achieved through effective information management (Robertson, 2005).

In essence, managing information is therefore a key issue in organisations, as explained by the resource based view (RBV) theory that in order for a resource to help in the achievement of organisational goals and sustain competitive advantage, it needs to be managed well (Rothaermel, 2012). Thus the application of management principles and functions like planning, organising, leading and controlling, and theories of information is crucial for ensuring efficient and effective gathering, storing, processing and distributions of information to enhance organisational performance (Basharat et al., 2012; Robertson, 2005).

Information management has been defined differently in information management literature. Akotia (2003), Kargbo (2005), and Robertson (2005) have defined information management to include all processes for gathering, managing, disseminating, leveraging and disposing of all types of information assets within an organization. Ebbighausen (2011) added that it is the systematic, imaginative and responsible collection, storing, processing and distribution of information in order to create and use information that will contribute strategically to the achievement of organisation's goals. In contributing to the literature, Akortsu and Abor (2011) stated that information management ensures that groups and individuals have efficient access to and make effective use of information. This connotes that information management is a framework by which resources are collected, coordinated, processed, controlled and managed through successive stages in order to provide information to various users for one or more purposes in an organisation.

Attempts have been made to differentiate between information management (IM) and records management (RM). Robek et al. (1995) consider IM as the administration of information, its uses and transmission and the application of theories and techniques of information science to create, modify or improve on information handling system. Adams (2006), on the other hand, describes records management as the application of systematic and scientific controls to recorded information required in the operation of organisations. It is a professional management discipline which is primarily concerned with the management of document-based information, most of which are in paper media format (Adams, 2006). In this sense, records management does not look at the creation and the manipution of data, but rather concentrates on the organisation, storage, retrieval and destroying of data/information, which by inference indicates that records management is embeded in information management.

Information management seeks to provide accurate, timely and complete information for effective decision making in the management and operation of an organisation (Adams, 2006). In addition, it enables the provision of information and records at the lowest possible cost (Mensah and Adams, 2014), while rendering maximum service to the user of the records, and facilitating disposal of records that are no longer needed in the organisation (Read-Smith et al., 2002). It also has the objective of processing recorded information and distributing them to all users as efficiently as possible (Robertson, 2005).

IM has evolved from traditional methods of records keeping to the application of sophisticated technology (Trauth, 1989). The traditional or manual era, according to O' Brien and Marakas (2008), was the period when human capabilities and other equipment such as file, boxes or filing cabinets, were used to generate information for management decision making. These methods of information management have some pitfalls, which include inaccurate data/ information handling, limited capacity, and slow pace of information processing and distribution which pose a lot of challenges to organisations (Laudon and Laudon, 2010). The technological era was the period in which technological devices like computers were introduced in information management (Earl, 1989), with two sub-eras namely data processing era and information system era. The data processing era was when the technology was in the infancy stage, when simple equipment or devices were used to assist information management.

The Information System era refers to the period that saw an expansion of the data processing concept, where the raw data, previously copied manually from paper to punched cards, and later into data-entry terminals, was fed into a computer system from a variety of sources, including automatic teller machines (ATMs), electronic fund transfer (EFT), and direct customer entry through the Internet. Studies conducted by Earl (1989), Bedward and Stredwick (2004), Stair and Reynolds (2006), Laudon and Laudon (2010), Ravi (2011) and many others agree that the proper way of managing information in organisations is through information systems. They are of the view that information systems provide all the necessary information needed from inquiry level to strategic level.

Many researchers, including Kargbo (2005) and Al-Mobaideen et al. (2013) have established the correlation between information management and organisational performance. For instance, Akotia (2003) and Adams (2006) asserted that the collapse, decline and at times nonexistence of proper record keeping have let most African countries non-accountable. According to Mnjama (2008), the inefficiencies coupled with lack of continuity in the policies and practices of African governments is not only caused by frequent change in governments but also bad management of information/records.

The available literature on information management

has identified two important aspects for any good information management namely, technical and the managerial aspects (Robertson, 2005). A lot of contributions have been made with respect to the technical aspect, but the managerial involvement remains little. Researchers like O' Brien and Marakas (2008) and Ogbomo and Ogbomo (2008) have stressed the importance of technology in managing information. They indicated that technology is used in information management because of the capabilities it has, perceived ease of use and usefulness as indicated in the technology acceptance model (Averweg, 2008).

On the other hand, Barata and Cain (2001), Akotia (2003), and Adams (2006) emphasised that if the manual system of information management is not functioning well, using technology to handle the information cannot change the situation. In their view, it is incorrect to assume that automation is the only way to get information for a quick decision making. Using Turkey's experience in information management, Kulcu (2009) indicated that while the relatively cost reduction, speed and efficiency in records management introduced by virtual environment may convince managers as an easy solution, meeting the legal and other requirements poses a challenge. Kahraman et al. (2011) argued that effective information management requires the integration of cross-functional strategies, and investment in information management, guided by intelligence techniques, policies, strategy and needs. The policies are the rules and processes that support and guide information management programme, and must be universally applied and communicated to the workforce to ensure consistent application (Mensah and Adams, 2014).

Information strategy provides the general direction and framework, indicating how organisations' information resources should be managed effectively. According to Bowman (2009), information strategy among other things include the developing of information management goals and objectives that are well aligned with the organisation's mission and vision. It entails the development of principles that articulate desirable outcomes and form the basis for developing information policies and identifying one or more areas of strategic focus, which may include some critical information content and common information to be shared. In Turner's (2011) opinion, such a framework may lead to the development of information policies, standards and best practices regarding, data management, business intelligence framework and change management.

METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive in nature and adopted a quantitative approach which allowed us to gather data from a relatively large number of participants, from the staff of selected organisations across the country Ghana. The descriptive approach was used to explain the reality regarding information management practices in order to provide a better understanding of the current state of information management practices in Ghana. The quantitative approach or method is derived from the doctrine of philosophy of science known as positivism (Saunders et al., 2007). Positivism was employed because it allows the measurement of issues quantitatively as indicated by Rajasekar et al. (2013).

The sample was drawn from the employees of selected organisations of the major sectors of the Ghanaian economy, including education, health, agriculture, banking, insurance, manufacturing, security services, communication and media, public services and local government. These sectors were selected because of their contributions to the development of the country with respect to their contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), poverty alleviation and employment (Ghana's Budget, 2014). The selected organisations were those organisations that have nation-wide representation and have similar characteristics in terms of structure, policy and management.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select staff and management in selected organisations in Ghana. The technique was employed in order to get a fair representative from the population of study by given every research subject equal chance of being selected (Saunders et al., 2012).

The sample size for this study was 939 employees, consisting of 729 staff and 210 management staff. Self-administered questionnaires, based on items structured on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 showing least agreement and five showing strong agreement, and a theoretical mean of 2.5, was employed for the data collection. The questionnaires received from the survey were checked for consistency of responses. The data were processed and analyzed with descriptive statistics, factor analysis and hypotheses testing tools in Statistical Product and Service Solutions (version 21). Descriptive statistics was employed to find the state of information management practices in Ghana and the factor analysis was used as data reduction method (Pallant, 2011). Where applicable reliability analysis were conducted and all the Cronbach alpha results exceed 0.7, indicating the feasibility of factorability, and we used principal component analysis with Varimax rotation and Kaiser normalization.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were presented in four main parts, with each part focusing on one of the specific issues notably, availability of information management strategies, operational structure, level of access to information and a comparison of public and private sector information management practices. We began with a brief report on

the respondents characteristics, comprising their sex, employee status and educational levels.

Demographic characteristics

The variables examined under the demographic characteristics include sex, status, and level of education. Out of the 939 respondents, 73.5% were males. There were 210 managers, with 78.1% of them being males, while the other 729 respondents of general staff category comprised 72.2% males and 27.8% females. With respect to their educational level, Table 1 portrays that 55.2 % and 71.6% of the managers and staff respectively have either HND or a first degree. A total of 90.5% of the managers and 90.6 % of the respondents have gone through higher education (Higher National Diploma, first degree and second degree).

The results suggest that respondents may have the required basic capacity needed to manage information in their respective organisations.

Availability of information management policies and strategies in Ghanaian organisations

This section of the study looks at the availability and awareness of information management policy, and the content of the policy. With respect to availability and awareness of IM policy, the study first examined whether the organisations have information management policy guiding their operations and the results are shown in Table 2.

The results show that 67.6% of the managers did indicate that they have information management policy in their organisations and 77.2% of the staff also did confirm that they are aware of the existence of information management policy in their respective organisations. The result is in line with the general model of a good information management programme, as indicated by Maceviciute and Wilson (2002) and Robertson (2005) that for best practices regarding information management, there is the need for policies and strategies that are in line with the organisational goals and strategies. In support of this result, Bowman (2009) and Turner (2011) indicate that information management practices should include the development and implemention of policy and strategy which provides a framework and guidelines with respect to data creation, data storage, processing data into information, information delivery and usage.

In order to examine the content of information management policy in the various organisations, 16 items of information management policy were subjected to factor analysis and the result shows the presence of three components with eigenvalues exceeding 1.0. These three components explain a total of 54.0 percent of the variance. The scree plot supported the retention of three components. The component matrix was used to show how the variables were loading on each of the three components. The results are shown in Table 3. This further suggests that all the three components of the factor solutions that are likely to be more suitable.

Each of the three components represented variables that had clear conceptual commonality and each was named appropriately as shown in Table 4, with their Cronbach alpha test results for the summary scores. The results in the table show that we have grouped the content of information management policy into three components; namely operational structure, operational procedure and operational security.

The results in Table 4 indicate that the three latent variables meet the required criterion of a Cronbach alpha measure greater than 0.7. This means that there is internal consistency with respect to the items that measure the variables. In view of this we retained the three factors. The examinations of the result identified three important headings in the information management policy, which include operations structure, operational procedure and operational security. These findings are consistent with the views of Mensah and Adams (2014) that information management policy provides guidelines regarding information management and the guidelines must be universally applied and communicated to the organisational members in order to ensure consistent application.

With respect to information management strategy which is a very essential ingredient in the management of organisations information, the study determined availability of information management strategy and also examined the content of the strategy of the various organisations under the study and how the strategy is contributing in information management programmes. The results show that 68% of the respondents did indicate that they have information management strategy in place. This is an indication that the organizations value information, and confirms the position of Bowman (2009) that information strategy gives the general direction and framework indicating how organisations' information resources will be managed effectively. However, 32% of the managers indicated that they do not have information management strategy in their organisations.

Another aspect examined was the content of the information management strategy. We used factor analysis based on 21 items that were presented to the respondents and the total variance explained table showed three components with eigenvalues above 1.0 (13.964, 1.545 and 1.040). These three components contributed a total of 75.23% of the variance. In order to determine how the items were loaded on each of the three components, the component matrix table was used and the results are shown in Table 5.

The results in Table 5 indicate that the three components represented are variables that had clear

Table 1. Respondents level of education and status.

Level of education	Managers		Staff		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Basic level	3	1.4	25	3.4	28	3.0
Secondary	17	8.1	43	5.9	60	6.4
First degree/ HND	116	55.2	522	71.6	638	67.9
Second degree	57	27.1	76	10.4	133	14.2
Others	17	8.1	63	8.6	80	8.5
Total	210	100.0	729.0	100.0	939	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 2. Availability and awareness of information management policy.

Managers	Frequency	Percentage
Available	142	67.6
Not Available	68	32.4
Total	210	100
Staff Aware	563	77.2
Unaware	166	22.8
Total	729	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 3. Rotated component matrix of information management policy.

Variables	Component		
	1	2	3
F1: Operational structure			
The head of information dept. is part of the top level management	.791		
There is a database system as part of information management	.754		
There is a substantive staff in charge of IM	.742		
The current information management system is good for the operations	.653		
There is IM Department in my Organisation	.651		
F2: Operational procedure			
Policy facilitates quality of Access		.807	
Policy optimizes information sharing and re-use		.750	
There is IM Policy in your org		.581	
Policy reduces duplication in accordance of law		.537	
IM ensures creation and accountability		.516	
To protects essential records for timely purpose		.511	
F3: Operational security			
To support employees to meet their responsibilities			.727
To dispose of information			.699
To ensure effective and efficiency management of information			.678
Electronic system is the preferred means for creating & managing info			.455
IM ensures information integrity			.388

Source: Field data, 2016.

conceptual commonality and each was named appropriately as shown in Table 6, with the accompanying Cronbach alpha or reliability results. The results show three components for the content of

Table 4. Factor components and reliability test results.

Factor component	Latent construct or variable	Cronbach alpha
F1	Operational structure	.827
F2	Operational procedure	.815
F3	Operational security	.710

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 5. Rotated component matrix of information management strategy.

Variables	Component		
	1	2	3
F1: Strategy formulation			
Plan enhance and implement IM awareness and skills strategy	.776		
The plan ensures legislation compliance	.732		
To reduce operating costs	.731		
To control the creation and growth of information	.685		
Strategic plan helps develop information management legislation	.671		
The plan helps to identify and use trusted information source	.632		
To assimilate new information management technology	.535		
Plan helps to improve risk management	.532		
The organisation has information management strategic plan	.530		
F2: Strategy implementation and compliance			
To ensure regulatory compliance		.771	
To minimize litigation risks		.744	
Strategic plan provides clarity regarding roles, responsibility and accountability		.714	
IM strategy foster professionalism in running the organisation		.675	
The plan provides appropriate collection of and access to info		.657	
The strategic plan ensures transparency and customer engagement		.654	
Enhance and implement enterprise information management program		.628	
F3: Strategy evaluation			
IM strategy safeguard vital information			.862
IM strategy supports management decision making			.841
To improve efficiency and productivity			.782
The strategic plan support collaboration			.641
IM strategy help to preserve corporate memory			.596
The plan helps to build enterprise governance and accountability			.593

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 6. Factor components and reliability test.

Factor component	Latent construct or variable	Cronbach's alpha
F1	Strategy formulation	.937
F2	Strategy implementation and compliance	.941
F3	Strategy evaluation	.934

Source: Field data, 2016.

information management strategy, namely strategy formulation, strategy implementation and compliance and strategy evaluation.

The results in the table indicate that three components

were extracted and most of the items loaded high on them with Cronbach alphas of .937, .941 and .934 respectively. The three factors were thus retained. These findings support the general model of strategy formulation, implementation and control as indicated by Raduan et al. (2009).

The respondents, both managers and staff, were asked to response to issues concerning access to information. Their responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics tools and Table 7 contains the results.

The results in Table 7 indicate that all the issues had means exceeding the theoretical mean of 2.5 (5/2 = 2.5), with highest mean being 3.86 (st dev = 0.77), representing the fact that respondents understand the information they receive for their jobs. The lowest mean of 3.08 (st dev = 1.102) is also an indication of the respondents' admission that some information are sometimes destroyed prematurely. These results imply that the respondents strongly agreed with respect to the issues. The findings reflect that the organizations conform to best practices which indicates that information/records management is incomplete unless the users get the needed information/records at the right time (Adams, 2006; Akotia, 2003; Akortsu and Abor, 2011). Practically the findings imply that employees get information at the right time for operations in the organisation.

Operational structure and processes with respect to information management practices in organisations

In examining the operational structure and processes of information management practices, we focused on availability of information management department, human resource, sources and forms of information received, level of training and overall assessment of information management practices. With regard to the existence of information management departments, the result shows that 77.27% of the respondents did indicate that they have departments in charge of information management in their organisations. The result also shows that 84.5% of the organisations have personnel in charge of information. As a follow up, respondents had to indicate the position of the information managers in the hierarchy of their organisations and 60.9% of the respondents indicated that information managers do not occupy strategic positions while only 39.1% of them responded that their information managers occupy strategic positions.

The finding that the majority of information managers do not occupy strategic positions contradicts the best practices of information management as indicated by Kargbo (2005), Akortsu and Abor (2011), Al-Mobaideen et al. (2013) that information is a strategic resource and shoud be managed by strategic managers. The finding on the other hand confirms Tale and Alefaio's (2011) assertion that the task of information management is considered by most developing countries, including Ghana as a lower level administrative activity that can be handled by any staff irrespective of the position.

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 showing least agreement and 5 showing strong agreement, both management and staff provided some responses regarding the availability of databases in the organisations. The analyzed responses yielded means between 3.49 and 3.76, which exceeded the theoretical mean of 2.5 for the scale. This shows that the majority of the respondents strongly agreed that their organisations have databases as part of information management practices.

In relations to the source and form of data received by the various organisations for processing, the responses are shown in Table 8.

The results in Table 8 depict that 78.1% of the respondents did indicate that they get their data from both internal and external sources, and 76.0% stated that they receive both physical (paper) and electric form of data. Respondents were also asked to indicate the estimated percentage of each of the forms and the result portrays that 62.11% of the data or information are processed in manual form and the remaining 37.89% are handled electronically.

Findings of the study with respect to the sources of data/information support the views of O' Brien and Marakas (2008) and Laudon and Laudon (2010) who opined that the major sources of data/information for contemporary firms are from both internal and external sources as well as from the internet. Practically, the findings imply that organisations in Ghana are following the international trend, since diversity and the turbulence nature of the environment are causing organisations to seek data/information in all directions and sources in order to survive competition.

However, the high paper content means that most of the data/information handled by the organisations in Ghana are in paper form. This is inconsistent with current trends mentioned in the literature and what pertains in organisations in the developed countries as indicated by Al-Qahtani (2012) and Smith (2016) that it is more beneficial to be a paperless organisation. The practical implication is that organisations in Ghana are operating below the global business trend, meaning that business processes will be delayed, and more physical storage is required leading to high cost of information processing and loss of data/information.

Training of human resource with respect to information management is very important (Robertson, 2005). In view of this the study ascertained how staff were trained with respect to information management and responses are shown Table 9.

As evident in Table 9, 73.5% of respondents have received some training before and it took the form of both on-the-job and off-the-job training. The respondents were also asked to indicate how regular training programmes

Table 7. Descriptive statistics showing level of access to information.

Variables	Sum statistic	Mean statistic	Std. deviation
I always get the relevant information to perform my job	3362.00	3.5804	.95120
I do get accurate information for my job	3276.00	3.4888	.95453
I do get complete information to do my job	3131.00	3.3344	.95361
I do obtain information from confidence sources	3455.00	3.6794	.80146
Information is communicated to the right person	3124.00	3.3269	.96342
Information contain the right amount of details	3385.00	3.6049	.85669
Appropriate channels of communication are used to communicate information	3516.00	3.7444	.84051
I understand information I receive for my job	3626.00	3.8616	.76574
I can verify information to check for correctness of the information	3546.00	3.7764	.82151
Information is secured from unauthorized users	3296.00	3.5101	1.66766
Information is stored for too long a time	3302.00	3.5165	1.03484
Certain vital information is destroyed prematurely	2893.00	3.0809	1.10042
I am satisfied with the level of Access of information in my organisation	3139.00	3.3429	.98365
I am satisfied with the level of quality of information in my organisation	3131.00	3.3344	1.04228
The current information management system is good for the operations	3258.00	3.4696	.94626

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 8. Sources and form of data received by organisations.

Source	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Internal source	169	18.0
External source	37	3.9
Internal and external sources	733	78.1
Total	939	100.0
Form		
Physical	136	14.5
Electronic	89	9.5
Physical and electronic	714	76.0
Total	939	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016.

Table 9. Forms of training in information management.

Source	Frequency	Percentages (%)
On-the-job training	404	43.0
Off-the-job training	89	9.5
Both on-the-job and off-the-job	358	38.1
Not applicable	88	9.4
Total	939	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016.

were and the results show that 39.9% have received it once, 29.1% have had it twice, while 17.5% have had it three times, with a few (3.8%) receiving training four times. The findings on training are in accord with the claim made by Robert (2005) that training staff of organisations in information management will help the organisational members to better understand and implement the concept of information management. Organisational members with the right knowledge, skill and competency in information management means that

practically the organisation is poised for action with respect to information management programmes. Those who said that they have not gone through any training indicated that they have no policy on information management training in their respective organisations.

Lastly, respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction regarding the current level of information management practices in their various organisations and the result shows a mean of 3.4696 with standard deviation of 0.94626. This means that the majority of the respondents are satisfied with the current state of information management practices.

Comparing information management practices in the public and the private organisations

Organisations in Ghana comprise those in the public and private sectors, and since these organisations have different ownerships and purposes, the way they manage their resources sometimes differ (Nutt, 2005). In view of this the study tried to determine if there was any significant difference in information management practices between the public and the private organisations. Out of the 939 respondents, 669 were from the public sector and their responses yielded a mean of 240.892 with a standard deviation of 42.55 and a standard error of 1.65. There were 270 respondents from the private sector, and their responses yielded a mean of 246.342 with a standard deviation of 43.19 and a standard error of 2.58.

An independent samples T-test for the mean difference of 5.44, based on the assumption of equal variances (Levene's Test: F-statistic = 0.017, p-value = 0.895) yielded a T-statistic of 1.785, with a p-value of 0.075 and a confidence interval of -11.44, 0.54. This means that at the alpha level of 5%, the mean difference was not statistically different from zero. This means that there was no significant difference in information management practices for the public and the private organisations.

Conclusions and policy implications

The study has established that the selected organisations in Ghana have information management policy and strategies which guide their operations with respect to information management practices. This is based on the evidence that there are departments and staff responsible for information management even though most of the heads of information management departments are not part of the top level management. It was found out that majority of the organisations have databases as part of their information management practices. However, large proportions of organisations use the manual approach in handling their information. With respect to training of staff on information management practices, on-the-job training is mostly used, which means that relatively low expenses are incurred. There is access to information for operational purposes. Overall it can be concluded that both public and private sector organizations use similar processes with respect to their information management.

The theoretical implications of this finding is that it provides a framework in the literature for the development and implentation of a good information managenet policy as indicated by Mensah and Adams (2014) that information management strategies and policies are the rules and processes that support and guide information management programme. Practically, the result implies that organisations have information management policy so that organisations and prospective organisations are guided in their efforts in designing and implementing information management strategy and policy and these guidelines must be universally applied and communicated to the workforce to ensure consistent application.

With the level of access, the finding implies that organisational members get information at the right time for effective decision making as required for the achievement of organisational objectives echoed by Achampong (2012) and Azameti and Agyei (2013) that getting information at the right time enhances the perfomance of organisations.

The general implications of the findings are that while Ghanaian organizations value information, their approach to its management leaves a lot to be desired. It will be beneficial to them if they consider the prospects of addressing information as a strategic asset and thus include the heads of such departments in their strategic management group. The usage of paper or the manual approach to information management comes along with data losses and higher costs so it is advisable for the organizations to seriously consider transforming their systems from the manual approach to electronic or technology based systems which are more efficient in guarding against data losses and are less expensive to maintain in the long run. As this contradicts the modern trends mentioned in the literature and what pertains in organisations in the developed countries as indicated by Smith (2016) that it is more beneficial to be a paperless organisation. A consequence of the transformation will be the need to use off-the-job training facilities so that employees can become aware of newer systems at a faster pace and thus be prepared such that their organizations are not placed at a competitive disadvantage.

REFERENCES

Achampong, E. K. (**2012**). Electronic health record system: A survey in Ghanaian hospitals. Open Access Scientific Reports, 2(1): 1-4.

Adams, M. (**2006**). Freedom of information and records management in Ghana. African Journal of Library Archives and Information Science, 16(1): 29-38.

Akortsu, M. A., and **Abor**, P. A. (**2011**). Financing public healthcare institutions in Ghana. Journal of Health Organisation and

Management, 25(2): 128-141.
Akotia, P. (**2003**). Public sector records systems in Ghana: Some lessons in development management. African Journal of Library Archives and Information Science, 13(2): 107-118
Al-Mobaideen, H., Allahawiah, S., and Basioni, E. (**2013**). Factors influencing the successful adoption of human resource information system: The content of Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority. Intelligent Information Management, 5: 1-9.
Al-Qahtani, S. H. (**2012**). The Paperless Organization, Improved processes and reduction in paper usage through wider use of electronic documents and tablet computer. Hamilton, New Zealand: University of Waikato.
Averweg, R. U. (**2008**). Information technology acceptance in South African; An investigation of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and actual system use construct. African Journal of Information Systems, 1(1): 44-66.
Azameti, M. S., and **Agyei**, E. (**2013**). Challenges in academic records managementin tertiary institutions in Ghana. International Journal of Scientific Research in Education, 6(3): 287-296.
Barata, K., and **Cain**, P. (**2001**). Information, not technology, is essential to accountability: electronic records and public-sector financial management. The Information Society, 17: 247-258.
Barney, J. (**1991**). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. Journal of Management, 17(1): 99-120.
Basharat, M., Mahmood, Z., and Bashir, Z. (**2012**). Review of classical management theories. International Journal of Social Sciences and Education , 2(1): 512-522.
Bedward, D., and **Stredwick**, J. (**2004**). Managing Information: Core Management. London: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinnemann.
Burgin, M. (**2009**). Theory of Information - Fundamentality, Diversity and Unification. University of California, Los Angeles, USA: World Scientific Series in Information Studies: Volume 1.
Choo, C. W. (**2002**). Information Management for the Intelligent Organization: The Art of Scanning the Environment (3rd ed.). Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc.
Dorr, S., Walther, S., and Eymann, T. (**2013**). Information Systems Success - A Quantitative Literature Review and Comparison . 11th International Conference on Wirtschaftinformatik,. Leipzig, Germany. pp. 1813-1827.
Earl, M. J. (**1989**). Management Strategies for Information Technology. Prentice Hall International (UK) Ltd Campus 400 Mayland Avenue.
Ebbighausen, H. (**2011**). How records and information management practices continue to evolve. North America: Iron Mountain.
Ghana's Budget (**2014**) The Budget Statement and Economic Policy of the Government of Ghana for the 2014 Financial Year Presented to Parliament (www.mofep.gov.gh).
Henczel, S. (**2000**). The Information Audit as a First Step towards Effective Knowledge Management: An Opportunity for the Special Librarian. Worldwide Conference on Special Librarianship. Brighton: Special Libraries Association (SLA). pp. 210-226.
Kahraman, C., Kaya, I., and Cevikcan, E. (**2011**). Intelligence decision systems in enterprise information management. Journal of Enterprese Information Management (Emerald Insight), 24(4): 350-379.
Kulcu, O. (**2009**). Evolution of e-records management in practices in e-government. Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 999-1009.
Laudon, K. C., and **Laudon**, J. P. (**2010**). Management Information Systems, Managing the Digital Firm: 11th Edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River.
Maceviciute, E., and **Wilson**, T. D. (**2002**). The development of the information management research area. Information Research, 7, 3.
Mensah, M., and **Adams**, M. (**2014**). The nexus between corporate governance and records management in private and public hospitals in Ghana. Records Management Jounal, 24(1): 32-55.
Nutt, P. C. (**2005**). Comparing public and private sector decision-making practices. Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 16: 289–318.
O' Brien, J. A., and **Marakas**, G. M. (**2008**). Introduction to Information Systems, 14th Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin Companies, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas.
Ogbomo, M. O., and **Ogbomo**, E. F. (**2008**). Importance of Information and communication technology in making a healty information society. Ethiope East Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria: Philosophy and practice.
Pallant, J. (**2011**). SPSS Survival Manual A Step by Step Guide to Data Analysis using SPSS, 4th Edition. Australia: Allen & Unwin.
Pijpers, G. (**2009**). Information on Information. Tilburg: The Institute for Innovation & Information Productivity.
Raduan, C. R., Jegak, U., Haslinda, A., and Alimin, I. I. (**2009**). Management, strategic management theories and the linkage with organizational competitive advantage from the resource-based view . European Journal of Social Sciences, 11(3): 402-417.
Rajasekar, S., Philominathan, P., and Chinnathambi, V. (**2013**). Research Methology. Tamilnadu, India, 620-024.
Ravi, T. M. (**2011**). The Path to Information Management Nirvana. Information Management Daily.
Read-Smith, J., Ginn, M. L., and Kallaus, N. F. (**2002**). Records Management (7th Edition ed.). New York: Thompson Learning Inc: South-Western.
Robek, M. F., Brown, G. F., and Stephens, D. O. (**1995**). Information and Records Management: Document-Based Information Systems (4th Edition ed.). New York, Columbus: Mc Graw-Hill.
Robertson, J. (**2005**). 10 Principles of Effective Information Management. Step Two Design pty Limited.
Rothaermel, F. T. (**2012**). Strategic Management: Concepts and Cases. Strategic Management; MacGraw-Hill/Irwin, 5.
Saloojee, R., Groenewald, D., and du Toit, A. S. (**2007**). Investigating the business value of information management. South African Journal of Information Management.
Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (**2007**). Research Methods for Business Students, Fourth Edition. New York: Pearson Education, Prentice Hall.
Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (**2012**). Research Methods for Business Students, 6th Edition. New York: Pearson Education, Prentice Hall.
Smith, T. (**2016**). Going paperless Why and how Organisation should do it. Smart Working.
Stair, R. M., and **Reynolds**, G. W. (**2006**). Principles of Information Systems, A Managerial Approach, 7th Edition. Boston, Massachusetts: Thomason Learning Inc.
Tale, S., and **Alefaio**, O. (**2011**). Records management in developing countries: challenges and threats-towards a realistic plan. Association of Commonwealth Archivist and records Managers Newsletter No. *37*.
Tokuda, A. (**2005**). The Critical Assessment of the Resource Based View of Strategic Management: The Source of Heterogeneity of the Firm. Institute of International Relations and Area Studies, Ritsumeikan University.
Trauth, E. M. (**1989**). The evolution of information resource management . Information and Management, 16: 257-268.

Citation: Opoku, M. O., and Enu-Kwesi, F. (2017). Evaluation of information management practices in Ghanaian organisations. Net Journal of Business Management, 5(2): 19-29.