

## Academic records management in supporting functional promotion administration

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### Abstract

Effective academic records management is essential for ensuring accountable and efficient administrative services in higher education institutions. This study aimed to evaluate how academic records management supports employee functional promotion administration. It used an evaluative study with a mixed-methods approach, conducted through document analysis, questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. The findings indicate that academic records management was generally rated positively, with an overall mean score of 4.12 on a five-point scale. Digital record systems and records storage received the highest ratings, whereas policy dissemination, archival audits, and continuous system evaluation were identified as areas requiring improvement. These findings highlight the need to strengthen archival governance, administrative procedures, and staff competencies to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of functional promotion administration in higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** *academic records management; administrative services; functional promotion; evaluation; higher education*

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### INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions are increasingly expected to provide administrative services that are transparent, accountable, and responsive to the evolving demands of governance, quality assurance, and digital transformation. While universities are primarily recognized for their educational, research, and community engagement missions, the effectiveness of their administrative systems has become an equally important determinant of institutional performance and stakeholder trust. Administrative processes rely heavily on the availability of authentic, reliable, and accessible records to support evidence-based decision-making, ensure regulatory compliance, and maintain organizational continuity. Within this context, academic records constitute strategic organizational assets that preserve institutional memory and facilitate administrative accountability across academic and personnel functions. Effective academic records management not only safeguards documentary evidence but also improves service efficiency, reduces administrative risks, and strengthens organizational transparency, particularly in higher education institutions that operate within increasingly complex regulatory environments (Asogwa, 2012; Shepherd & Yeo, 2023; ISO 15489-1:2016; Duranti & Rogers, 2019).

The strategic importance of records management in higher education extends beyond document preservation to institutional governance and accountability. Phiri and Tough (2018), through a comparative case study of six higher education institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, demonstrate that effective records management can contribute to stronger governance structures and organizational accountability. However, their findings also indicate that this relationship is not automatic and depends on institutional arrangements and management practices. This perspective is particularly relevant to functional promotion administration, where decisions must be supported by authentic, reliable, and

accessible documentary evidence. Accordingly, records management should be integrated into institutional governance mechanisms to ensure that personnel decisions are transparent, traceable, and administratively accountable.

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed records management practices in higher education, shifting from conventional paper-based archives to integrated electronic records systems. This transformation is driven not only by technological innovation but also by increasing expectations for faster, more transparent, and user-oriented administrative services. Digital records management enables institutions to improve information accessibility, enhance document traceability, reduce processing time, and support data integrity throughout administrative workflows. Nevertheless, digitalization alone does not guarantee effective records management. Previous studies have emphasized that the success of electronic records systems depends on the alignment of institutional policies, standardized procedures, human resource competencies, and organizational commitment. Weak coordination among administrative units, inconsistent implementation of records management policies, and inadequate monitoring mechanisms remain common barriers that reduce service quality and organizational efficiency. Consequently, higher education institutions are increasingly required to evaluate their records management practices to ensure that digital transformation contributes not only to technological modernization but also to sustainable improvements in administrative performance and institutional accountability (Franks, 2021; Shepherd & Yeo, 2023; Oliver & Foscarini, 2020; ISO 15489-1:2016).

Digital transformation in higher education requires the integration of records management with broader institutional information systems. Maican and Lixandriou (2016) propose an enterprise content management architecture that connects document workflows, records management, and administrative information systems within academic institutions. Their study demonstrates the importance of organizing information flows across institutional departments while minimizing duplication and fragmentation. These considerations are particularly relevant to functional promotion administration because promotion processes involve documents generated by multiple administrative and academic units. An integrated information management environment can support more consistent document classification, information accessibility, and coordination across organizational functions. Consequently, the effectiveness of digital records management should be assessed not only in terms of technological availability but also in relation to system integration and administrative workflow requirements.

Among various administrative functions in higher education, personnel promotion and functional appointment represent processes that demand rigorous documentation, procedural consistency, and verifiable evidence. Decisions regarding promotion are contingent upon the completeness, authenticity, and accessibility of academic records, including educational qualifications, professional achievements, research outputs, teaching performance, and institutional service. Ineffective records management may result in document duplication, retrieval delays, incomplete documentation, and inconsistencies in administrative decision-making, thereby reducing both service efficiency and institutional credibility. Previous studies have shown that deficiencies in records management adversely affect administrative performance, prolong service delivery, and increase the risk of procedural errors in public sector organizations, including universities. Consequently, effective academic records management should be viewed not merely as a technical archival function but as an integral component of administrative service quality that supports transparent, timely, and accountable personnel management. This perspective underscores the need for systematic evaluation of records management practices to ensure that administrative processes remain reliable and responsive to institutional and regulatory requirements (Ngoepe, 2014; Franks, 2018; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003; ISO 15489-1:2016).

Existing studies have consistently demonstrated that effective records management contributes to organizational efficiency, regulatory compliance, and improved public service delivery. In higher education, research has primarily examined the adoption of electronic records systems, digital preservation strategies, and information governance to enhance institutional performance. These studies generally report that digital records management improves information accessibility, facilitates

administrative workflows, and supports evidence-based decision-making. However, they also acknowledge persistent challenges, including fragmented information systems, inconsistent implementation of records management policies, limited staff competencies, and insufficient institutional support, all of which undermine the effectiveness of administrative services. Despite these advances, most previous investigations have concentrated on the technical dimensions of records management or the implementation of digital archiving systems. Comparatively little attention has been given to evaluating how academic records management functions within personnel administration, particularly in supporting functional promotion processes that require comprehensive documentation, procedural consistency, and administrative accountability. Consequently, empirical evidence explaining the relationship between records management practices and the effectiveness of promotion administration in higher education institutions remains limited, leaving an important gap in the literature that warrants further investigation (Oliver & Foscarini, 2020; Franks, 2021; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). Ngoepe (2014) further emphasizes the importance of integrating records management with organizational risk management to strengthen accountability and reduce administrative vulnerabilities. This perspective reinforces the need for systematic records management practices in supporting reliable and accountable personnel administration.

Within the Indonesian higher education context, data governance has become an increasingly important consideration in institutional administration. Ramadhan et al. (2024) investigated the factors influencing data governance implementation in Indonesian public universities and identified the relevance of both internal and external organizational conditions. Their findings suggest that effective data governance cannot be understood solely as a technological undertaking but must also account for institutional environments and implementation requirements. This perspective provides an important contextual foundation for examining academic records management in Indonesian universities, particularly where personnel administration involves multiple stakeholders, institutional policies, and regulatory obligations. Nevertheless, data governance and records management represent related but distinct functions. The present study therefore focuses specifically on evaluating how records management practices support the administrative requirements of functional promotion.

Although previous studies have established the importance of records management in supporting administrative efficiency and institutional accountability, several gaps remain evident in the existing literature. First, most empirical investigations evaluate records management from technological, archival, or information systems perspectives, with limited attention to its role in personnel administration. Second, studies examining promotion administration generally focus on regulatory compliance, performance appraisal, or human resource management, while overlooking the contribution of academic records management as a critical supporting system. Third, relatively few studies adopt an evaluative perspective that simultaneously examines the alignment between institutional policies, implementation practices, and administrative outcomes. As a result, there is insufficient empirical evidence explaining whether current records management practices effectively support promotion administration and what aspects require improvement to achieve efficient, transparent, and accountable administrative services. Addressing these gaps is essential because promotion administration represents a strategic institutional process whose effectiveness depends not only on regulatory compliance but also on the quality and reliability of academic records management.

The implementation of electronic records management in universities also presents organizational and operational challenges. Chaputula (2022) examined electronic records management practices in three public universities in Malawi, providing empirical insights into how higher education institutions manage digital records within developing-country contexts. This study demonstrates the importance of examining actual institutional practices rather than assuming that the adoption of electronic technologies necessarily results in effective records management. Such considerations are relevant to universities seeking to improve personnel administration through digital systems. Academic records management must therefore be evaluated in relation to organizational procedures, administrative responsibilities, and institutional capacities. Building on this perspective, the present study assesses both operational

performance and areas requiring further improvement in records management practices associated with functional promotion administration.

This study offers both conceptual and practical contributions to the literature on higher education administration by positioning academic records management as a strategic determinant of administrative service effectiveness rather than merely an archival function. Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasize digital records systems or technical archival practices, this research adopts an evaluative perspective to examine the extent to which institutional policies, implementation processes, and administrative outcomes are aligned within the context of functional promotion administration. Furthermore, the integration of quantitative and qualitative evidence through a mixed-methods approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of organizational practices, enabling the identification of operational challenges as well as actionable recommendations for improving administrative services. By linking records management evaluation with personnel promotion processes, this study extends the existing discourse from technical records management toward evidence-based administrative improvement in higher education institutions.

Based on the foregoing discussion, this study aims to evaluate the management of academic records in supporting employee functional promotion administration by examining the alignment between institutional policies, implementation practices, and administrative outcomes. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the strengths and limitations of existing records management practices and to formulate evidence-based recommendations for improving administrative services. The findings are expected to enrich the literature on higher education administration by providing empirical evidence on the role of academic records management in enhancing service effectiveness, accountability, and organizational performance. In addition, the proposed recommendations may serve as practical references for higher education institutions seeking to strengthen administrative systems and improve the quality of personnel services through more effective records management.

## METHOD

This study employed an evaluative research design using a mixed-methods approach to assess the management of academic records in supporting employee functional promotion administration. The evaluative design was adopted to examine the extent to which academic records management aligned with institutional policies, implementation practices, and expected administrative outcomes. The mixed-methods approach enabled the integration of quantitative and qualitative evidence, providing a comprehensive understanding of records management practices and administrative service performance.

It was conducted at a public university in Indonesia, involving administrative personnel responsible for academic records management and functional promotion services. Data were collected from 50 respondents using structured questionnaires, while qualitative information was obtained through document analysis, semi-structured interviews, and direct observation of administrative procedures. The questionnaire was developed based on six evaluation dimensions, namely policy and planning, records management, records storage, digital records systems, administrative services, and evaluation and continuous improvement. Prior to data collection, the research instruments underwent expert validation to ensure content validity and their suitability for evaluating academic records management practices.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores for each evaluation dimension, to describe respondents' perceptions of academic records management practices. Qualitative data from interviews, observations, and institutional documents were analyzed through data reduction, categorization, data display, and conclusion drawing. The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated during the interpretation stage to provide a comprehensive evaluation of records management implementation and identify organizational strengths, operational constraints, and opportunities for administrative improvement.

To enhance the credibility of the findings, methodological triangulation was applied by comparing evidence obtained from questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentary analysis. This procedure facilitated cross-validation among multiple data sources, thereby improving the

trustworthiness of the evaluation results and strengthening the formulation of recommendations for improving academic records management and administrative services.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Overall evaluation of academic records management

The descriptive analysis indicates that academic records management was generally perceived positively by respondents, with an overall mean score of 4.12 on a five-point Likert scale. This finding suggests that the existing system adequately supports administrative processes related to employee functional promotion. The positive perceptions reflect the satisfactory implementation of institutional policies, document management procedures, records storage, digital systems, and administrative services. However, several aspects still require continuous improvement to enhance service effectiveness and strengthen administrative accountability.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of academic records management evaluation (N = 50)

| Dimension                             | Mean |
|---------------------------------------|------|
| Policy and Planning                   | 4.07 |
| Records Management                    | 4.15 |
| Records Storage                       | 4.16 |
| Digital Records Systems               | 4.18 |
| Administrative Services               | 4.11 |
| Evaluation and Continuous Improvement | 4.07 |
| Overall Mean                          | 4.12 |

*Note.* Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

The results demonstrate relatively small variations across the six evaluation dimensions, indicating that respondents perceived academic records management as consistently implemented across different administrative functions. The highest mean score was observed for Digital Records Systems ( $M = 4.18$ ), followed by Records Storage ( $M = 4.16$ ) and Records Management ( $M = 4.15$ ). Meanwhile, policy and planning and evaluation and continuous improvement received the lowest ratings, although both were still positive ( $M = 4.07$ ). These findings suggest that operational implementation has progressed more rapidly than policy reinforcement and continuous organizational learning.

Records storage effectiveness should also be considered in relation to information security and controlled accessibility. Khalil et al. (2015) proposed a data access rights framework for managing student records in higher education, emphasizing the need to balance information availability with privacy protection and institutional authorization. Their approach demonstrates that effective records management requires clearly defined access privileges and appropriate procedures for information sharing. In functional promotion administration, comparable principles are relevant because personnel documents may contain sensitive personal and professional information. The positive evaluation of records storage in the present study ( $M = 4.16$ ) indicates favorable respondent perceptions; however, this finding does not independently establish the adequacy of information security controls. Further assessment of access authorization, confidentiality, and document protection would therefore strengthen the evaluation of institutional records management practices.

### **Policy and planning**

Policy and planning received a mean score of 4.07, indicating that respondents generally agreed that institutional policies governing academic records management had been implemented appropriately. This result suggests that existing regulations provide sufficient guidance for administrative personnel in managing records related to functional promotion. However, compared with other dimensions, policy and planning obtained one of the lowest scores, implying that further improvements are still needed, particularly in strengthening policy dissemination and ensuring consistent implementation across administrative units. These findings are consistent with the view that organizational policies become effective only when they are communicated clearly, supported by leadership commitment, and translated into standardized administrative procedures.

The effectiveness of records management policies also depends on their integration into everyday administrative practices. Bowker and Villamizar (2017) explored an approach involving the placement of a records management professional within a university administrative team to address information management needs and influence organizational recordkeeping culture. Their study provides an example of how professional support can connect formal records management principles with practical administrative requirements. This perspective is relevant to the present study because policy and planning received one of the lowest evaluation scores ( $M = 4.07$ ). Although the score remains positive, it suggests an opportunity to strengthen policy communication and implementation. Universities may therefore consider more systematic collaboration between records management personnel and administrative units to improve procedural consistency, staff understanding, and the practical application of institutional recordkeeping policies.

### **Records management**

The records management dimension obtained a mean score of 4.15, reflecting positive perceptions regarding document classification, organization, retrieval, and utilization. Effective document management facilitates evidence-based decision-making and minimizes administrative delays during promotion processes. Well-managed records also enhance institutional accountability by ensuring that administrative evidence remains authentic, complete, and readily accessible whenever required.

### **Records storage**

With a mean score of 4.16, records storage emerged as one of the strongest aspects of academic records management. This finding indicates that respondents perceived institutional procedures for preserving records as reliable and capable of maintaining document integrity over time. Proper storage practices reduce the risks of document loss and facilitate long-term preservation, which is particularly important for personnel records that may be required repeatedly throughout an employee's professional career.

### **Digital records systems**

The highest evaluation was recorded for digital records systems ( $M = 4.18$ ), demonstrating respondents' positive perceptions of digitalization initiatives implemented within the institution. Digital records systems improve accessibility, accelerate document retrieval, and enhance administrative efficiency. These findings indicate that digital transformation has become an important supporting factor in functional promotion services. Nevertheless, digital systems should continue to be supported by comprehensive institutional policies, regular monitoring, and continuous capacity development to ensure sustainable implementation rather than merely technological adoption.

The implementation of digital records systems should accommodate differences in institutional structures and administrative requirements. Bayram et al. (2013), in a comparative investigation of electronic records management software applications in Turkey, demonstrated that organizational differences influence system development and implementation. Their examination included an academic institution whose records management requirements differed from those of other organizations, necessitating adjustments to the design and implementation of electronic records systems. This finding

is relevant to functional promotion administration, which requires the management of diverse documentary evidence across academic and personnel units. Although digital records systems received the highest mean score in the present study ( $M = 4.18$ ), the evaluation should also consider whether existing applications adequately accommodate specialized administrative processes, document relationships, and institutional workflows. Thus, technological effectiveness depends partly on the alignment between system capabilities and organizational requirements

### **Administrative services**

Administrative services received a mean score of 4.11, indicating that respondents generally perceived promotion administration as responsive and adequately supported by existing records management practices. Efficient administrative services depend not only on competent personnel but also on the availability of accurate and accessible documentary evidence. Consequently, improvements in records management are expected to directly contribute to better service quality, shorter processing times, and greater administrative transparency.

Administrative service quality is closely related to the accessibility of organizational records and the implementation of information governance principles. Shepherd et al. (2010) examined records management and freedom of information practices among local government authorities in England, demonstrating the relevance of records management to organizational transparency, accountability, and access to public information. Although their study was conducted outside higher education, the underlying governance considerations are applicable to administrative processes that depend on reliable documentary evidence. Functional promotion administration similarly requires authorized personnel to retrieve, verify, and process records in accordance with institutional requirements. The administrative services dimension in the present study received a favorable mean score ( $M = 4.11$ ), suggesting positive respondent perceptions of service provision. However, objective measures such as processing time, document retrieval accuracy, and procedural compliance would provide additional evidence of administrative effectiveness.

### **Evaluation and continuous improvement**

Although respondents positively evaluated evaluation and continuous improvement ( $M = 4.07$ ), this dimension shared the lowest average score with policy and planning. The findings imply that systematic evaluation has not yet become an integral part of organizational practice. Continuous monitoring, internal audits, periodic policy reviews, and staff development are therefore necessary to ensure that academic records management continues to adapt to changing institutional needs and regulatory requirements.

Continuous evaluation of academic records management should also consider the institutional barriers that may limit data governance implementation. Sulistiyan et al. (2026) examined data governance challenges in an Indonesian private university and identified barriers associated with organizational conditions, resources, top management support, data, regulations, and external technologies. Their findings emphasize the importance of considering nontechnical factors when evaluating institutional information management practices. This perspective is relevant to the present study because evaluation and continuous improvement received one of the lowest mean scores ( $M = 4.07$ ). Although respondents generally perceived existing practices positively, the result suggests the need for more systematic evaluation of institutional procedures and organizational support. Consequently, continuous improvement initiatives should extend beyond technical system maintenance to include policy review, staff development, management commitment, and coordination among administrative units responsible for academic and personnel records.

The overall findings indicate that academic records management was perceived positively, as reflected by the overall mean score of 4.12. This reinforces the argument that records management has evolved beyond its traditional archival function to become a strategic component of organizational administration. According to ISO 15489-1:2016, records management ensures that authentic, reliable,

and accessible records are available to support organizational accountability and evidence-based decision-making. Likewise, Shepherd and Yeo (2003) argue that records constitute organizational evidence that underpins transparency and administrative continuity. The present findings therefore support the theoretical perspective that effective records management contributes directly to institutional performance rather than merely preserving documentary evidence.

Nevertheless, previous studies caution that positive perceptions of records management do not necessarily reflect institutional maturity. Oliver and Foscarini (2020) emphasize that effective records management depends not only on technology but also on organizational culture, leadership commitment, and staff behavior. Similarly, Oladejo & Hadžidedić (2021), in a state-of-the-art review of electronic records management, identifies emerging research directions and gaps in the field, highlighting the need for further investigation into the evolving requirements and applications of electronic records management systems.

Among the evaluated dimensions, digital records systems received the highest mean score ( $M = 4.18$ ), indicating that respondents perceived digitalization as the strongest aspect of academic records management. This finding aligns with studies showing that electronic records systems improve document accessibility, retrieval efficiency, and administrative responsiveness (Franks, 2018; Shepherd & Yeo, 2020). Research on records management in higher education also highlights the contribution of digital systems to information accessibility, institutional transparency, and accountability (Adom-Nyankey & Andoh, 2022; Sebucao-Orias, 2023).

However, digitalization alone does not guarantee effective records management. Härtig et al. (2021) highlight the need to integrate electronic systems with organizational procedures, governance mechanisms, and staff competencies. Similarly, Oliver and Foscarini (2020) stress the importance of an information culture in which employees recognize records as organizational evidence rather than merely digital files. Therefore, the high rating of digital records systems represents a positive operational achievement, but sustaining this performance requires institutional commitment, standardized procedures, and continuous staff development.

The findings also demonstrate relatively high evaluations for records storage ( $M = 4.16$ ) and records management ( $M = 4.15$ ). These results support archival theory suggesting that systematic classification, storage, and retrieval constitute the core functions of records management because they preserve organizational memory and ensure the availability of reliable evidence for administrative decision-making (International Organization for Standardization (ISO), 2016; Shepherd & Yeo, 2020). Previous studies have likewise shown that effective records maintenance significantly improves administrative performance by reducing document retrieval time and minimizing procedural errors (Barigye et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, previous investigations also reveal that effective document storage does not automatically eliminate organizational challenges. Records management practices frequently remain fragmented because different administrative units apply inconsistent filing procedures and retention policies. A hermeneutic review conducted by Simwaka et al. (2023) concluded that higher education institutions generally recognize the importance of records management but continue to encounter difficulties related to policy implementation, resource allocation, and organizational coordination. Consequently, although respondents in the present study expressed positive perceptions regarding storage and document management, these findings should also encourage institutions to strengthen procedural consistency across administrative units.

The administrative services dimension ( $M = 4.11$ ) further demonstrates that respondents perceived academic records management as facilitating promotion administration. This finding supports studies reporting that records management contributes positively to service delivery because administrative personnel can retrieve authentic documentary evidence more efficiently during organizational processes (Adom-Nyankey & Andoh, 2022). Similarly, Barigye et al. (2022) found that records creation, maintenance, and disposal were significant predictors of administrative staff performance in private universities in Uganda. These findings reinforce the importance of systematic records management practices in improving administrative efficiency and organizational effectiveness. These findings

collectively reinforce the proposition that records management functions as a strategic administrative resource rather than solely an archival activity.

Although policy and planning and evaluation and continuous improvement received relatively positive evaluations ( $M = 4.07$ ), they represented the lowest among the six dimensions. This pattern is theoretically meaningful because organizational policy provides the institutional framework through which records management practices become standardized and sustainable. Shepherd and Yeo (2020) emphasize that effective records management requires clear institutional policies accompanied by systematic monitoring and continuous review. Likewise, Oliver and Foscarini (2020) argue that organizational culture and governance are fundamental determinants of successful records management implementation. In this context, the comparatively lower evaluation of these dimensions suggests that the institution has established satisfactory operational practices but still requires stronger policy dissemination, internal evaluation, and organizational learning to ensure long-term effectiveness.

Overall, the findings indicate that academic records management has effectively supported functional promotion administration while simultaneously identifying organizational areas requiring further improvement. Rather than indicating deficiencies, the comparatively lower evaluations for policy reinforcement and continuous evaluation represent opportunities for institutional development. These findings contribute to the existing literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of academic records management depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on the interaction among institutional policies, organizational culture, administrative procedures, and continuous evaluation. This integrated perspective extends previous records management research, which has predominantly emphasized technological implementation, by highlighting the importance of organizational governance and continuous improvement in sustaining administrative effectiveness within higher education institutions.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that effective academic records management serves as a strategic enabler of functional promotion administration in higher education by strengthening administrative efficiency, accountability, and service quality. The findings indicate that while digital records systems, records storage, and records management have been implemented effectively, greater institutional attention should be directed toward policy implementation and continuous evaluation to ensure sustainable administrative improvement. These results contribute to the growing literature by emphasizing that the effectiveness of records management depends not only on digital infrastructure but also on the integration of institutional policies, organizational practices, and ongoing quality improvement. Future research should extend this evaluation across multiple higher education institutions using comparative and more advanced analytical approaches to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

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