

Chapter 1

Records Management in the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Challenges and the Way Forward

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ABSTRACT

The chapter looked at records management in the fourth industrial revolution (4IR) with the challenges and the way forward. The chapter discussed the industrial revolutions, records management, and the fourth industrial revolution (4IR), and described the advancement in records management in the 4IR based on the 4IR tools and technologies including artificial intelligence, blockchain, internet of things (IoT), robotics, and big data. The chapter also identified and discussed the benefits of technological advancement in the management of records; challenges of records management at the wake of 4IR and charted the way forward. In the context of document and records management, and taking into account all characteristics of the 4IR technologies and tools as well as its underlying technologies and concepts, the chapter concluded that the 4IR tools can be used to save time to create and process records, secure records from being damaged or destroyed, confirm the integrity of records, among others.

INTRODUCTION

Ever before and even now, part of the determinants of organizations' success is the effective and efficient management of records. Records management is the supervision and administration of records regard-

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less of format. It is all about using efficient and economical methods to create, use, maintain, retain, preserve, and dispose official records. ARMA International, a leading professional association for those who manage records and information, defines it as the “systematic control of records all through their life span (ARMA, 2013; Giordano, 2019). It is on organization responsibility dedicated or committed to the management of information in organization all through its life span, from time of creation or development to its consequential disposition. The (International Standard Organization, ISO 15489-1: 2001,p.7): conceived Records Management (RM) as the discipline of management that sees to the effective and methodical control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, such as the process of capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about operational activities and transactions in the form of records. Irrespective of the definitions and meanings, there is always the reflection of management of information for the achievement of organisations’ success.

Records management activities include but not limited to the creation, receipts, maintenance, use and disposal of records (ISO 15489-1, 2001, p. 7). It also has to do with identifying, classifying, storing, securing, retrieving and tracking, and destroying or permanently preserving records. In view of this, records are content that records a business transaction in organisation. The process of classifying and annotating texts, photographs, may exist in contracts, memos, paper files, electronic files, reports, emails, videos, and instant message logs or databases’ records. Records in form of paper may be stored in physical boxes on-premises or at a storage facility. Digital records may be stored on in-house media or in the cloud.

An organization’s records preserve aspects of the memory of the institution. When determining the extent to which records can be kept in organisation, their capacity for re-use is supreme and cardinal. In organizations, several records are kept as evidence of activities, transactions, and decisions. Evidently, the motive behind records management is to assist an organisation to keep the essential document and make them accessible both for business operation and compliance audit.

Management of records in organization is not new because it has been around us for many years. It has become an integral part of the functioning of individual organisations and to society as a whole (Lappin, 2020). However, the advancement in technologies has resulted into the radical and primordial change in the society thereby leading to rudimentary and critical change in records management practices. The world has witnessed different revolutions beginning from the first through second and third industrial revolutions. The world is now at the verge of fourth industrial revolution. All these revolutions in one way or the other have impacted the way and manner in which records are managed in the organizations. Therefore, what obtained in the management of records in the first, second, third and the current fourth industrial revolution differs considerably.

The fourth industrial revolution in which we are or which some thinkers will say we are about to enter is a revolution that is affecting or will affect all aspects of humans’ lives including management of records. We currently now witness advances in the management of records in organization using numerous emerging advanced technologies. While scholars have looked at various perspectives in the management of records, they have not considered examining the issue that surround record management in the fourth industrial revolution. An era where management of everything will be different including records. Since, several disruptive technologies are now available majority of which will impact management of records. It is therefore considered important to prepare the mind of records management experts and also create awareness regarding transformation in records management introduction by the new era. Hence, this chapter considers this development and examine the management of records in fourth industrial revolution, and attempts to discuss the various emerging technologies being used to manage

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