

**INVESTIGATING THE ENHANCEMENT OF TRAFFIC OFFENCE RECORDS  
MANAGEMENT THROUGH DIGITISATION IN THE NAMIBIAN POLICE IN THE  
OMUSATI REGION**

A research project report submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in Records and Archives Management (Honours) to the University of Namibia,  
Faculty of Education and Human Sciences, Department of Social Sciences

By

Loide Mpingana Jason

(STUDENT NO:201708720)

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Supervisor :

Prof . C. Nengomasha

## **Abstract**

This study, titled “Investigating the enhancement of traffic offence records management through digitisation in the Namibian police in the Omusati region,” investigated how the management of traffic offence records can be enhanced through a case study of Namibia Police Omusati. The study was guided by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The study adopted a multiple case study research design within a qualitative research approach and was informed by the interpretive research paradigm. The population for this study was 65 police officers and the sample was made up of 15 Namibian Police officers, all serving under the Omusati Region, who were purposively selected because of their experience in crime records management in the region and therefore, they were rich sources of data. In addition, the fact that they manage crime records daily, they were aware of any challenges encountered in the management of these records. The data collection instrument used was a semi-structured interview guide. Data was analysed applying the thematic qualitative data analysis sampling technique. The findings indicate that the police officers used manual records. The records were created at the scene and stored in cabinet lockers. The police officers pointed out the manual records save electricity costs. However, spacing requirements, theft and loss of records were risks associated with manual records by the officers. The police officers expressed positivity towards the adoption of digitised crime records. The researcher recommends that the police avail funding and training for digitisation to kick off.

## **Dedication**

To my late mother Loide Mpingana Uushona, who against all odds gave me a good childhood and good education; and most importantly my Son Wilbard Junior Uushona who understood my studies were equally as important as raising him.

## **Acknowledgements**

This study would not have been possible without the support and guidance of several people and institutions.

I thank you all most sincerely. I acknowledge my supervisor Prof . Cathrine Nengomasha for your good guidance and mentoring.

I acknowledge my cousin Henock Kalola who made sure he adds on my tuition fees.

This study would not have been possible without the protection and guidance of the almighty God.

Thank you very much for being with me during this journey until the attainment of my degree.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the former Inspector General of the Namibian police Sebastian Ndeitunga for permitting me to conduct my research at the Regional Police Headquarters.

## Declaration

- I, Loide Mpingana Jason , hereby declare that this is a true reflection of my own research and that this work or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree in any other institution of higher learning.
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- I am the original author of this work without any assistance from someone other than my helpful supervisor Prof Nengomasha.

Signature.....



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TAM- Technology Acceptance Model

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This study sought to investigate the enhancement of the management of traffic offence records through digitisation in the Namibian Police in the Omusati Region. The chapter first outlines the orientation of the study. The second section presents the problem statement. The problem statement justifies why this study was conducted. This is followed by research objectives, which express what the study focused on achieving. The significance, limitations and delimitations of the study are also presented and described. The chapter summarises the research methodology and finally presents the project research layout.

#### **1.2 Orientation of the proposed study**

The enhancement of information technology in managing records has now been a universal practice in both the private and public sectors. However, Caughell (2018) observes that the private sector seems to have taken an upper hand in the adoption of digitized records. Concurring, Strom (2017) reports that while the notable ground has been covered in automated records with law enforcement agencies, some functions and records are still manual. The use of manual records in the Namibian Police is noted by Nakale (2021) who made a call that it is high time that Namibia's public service moves from paper records. Nakale (2021) is not concerned about saving the environment by reducing paper records, but much concerned about the laborious task of paperwork filing, taking time to search for records and losing some important records. The use of manual records is still practised in the Namibian Police. According to Howells (2018), this is not only ineffective policing but a threat to justice delivery. Concurring, Caughell (2018) states that manual

records get lost or are misplaced and sometimes fall, hence compromising the justice system. Losing digitized records is very rare considering the robust information management system currently in use. Digitised records become electronic records and there is no need to have them if you can't manage them properly.

While the use of manual records as in the case of the Namibian Police is a choice, Fatih and Bekir (2015) argue that management is to blame. If management enjoys the status quo or is benefiting from the current system, resistance to the adoption of technology-based management may not see the light of the day due to a lack of skills. Strom (2017) found that it may not be just resistance to maintain the status quo but there may be multiple factors contributing to resistance to enhancing digitized record management when the whole world has embraced technology management systems. Following Strom's observation, research is necessary to determine this gap of resistance to embracing technology management. Supporting the need for research Caughell (2018) further spells out that sometimes it may not be resistance per se but other barriers. With these insights in mind, this study focuses on investigating the perceptions of the Namibian Police Omusati Region towards the utility of digitised traffic offences crime management records.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Management of records determines organisational effectiveness, efficiency and competitiveness. Atulomah (2011) asserts that the records of an organization constitute the corporate memory which supplements human memory and serves as a source for effective planning, decision making and quality service delivery. Service-oriented organisations such as the police depend entirely on information hence records need to be accurate, available, up-to-date and easily retrievable and law enforcement agencies have adopted technology-based record management to enhance quality justice delivery. The Namibian government through the e-Government Strategic Action Plan 2014-

2018 introduced information technology-based management in all government ministries. However, the Namibian Police, in particular the Omusati Regional Police, are still using manual records management systems particularly for managing traffic offences records. The manual traffic crime records management system is causing many challenges which include losing documents, misplacing documents, taking time to find documents and some cases being thrown away because of lost records. In addition, some offices at small sub-branches are now having no space because of manual records. Police officers spend a lot of time searching for records, which affects attending to crime scenes. All these manual records-related challenges are compromising justice delivery hence this study intends to investigate the perceptions of the Namibian Police Omusati in enhancing digitised traffic crime records management.

#### **1.4 Research objectives**

The main objective of the study was to investigate how the management of traffic offence records can be enhanced through a case study of Namibia Police Omusati. The study's research objectives are:

**1.4.1** To establish the problems of managing police records which can be solved by digitisation;

**1.4.2** To determine skills available to digitise and manage digitised records among the traffic officers; and

**1.4.3** To find out interventions that need to be implemented to embrace digitised traffic offence records management by the Namibian Police, Omusati.

#### **1.5 Significance of the study**

The study highlighted the challenges of managing traffic offences retrieve in paper form to provide a solution to that problem. Interventions were suggested and implementation thereof would improve traffic crime management and service delivery. Both the public and police would benefit as the study would contribute to the body of knowledge on the management of traffic offence record management.

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

The sample of 15 police officers was small to generalize the findings to all the Namibian Police stations in the Omusati Region. However, the findings were still useful in informing practice in the management of offence dockets in all police stations. t.

### **1.7 Scope and Delimitations**

The study was carried out at two police stations only that have traffic units out of 7 police stations in the Omusati region. Only fifteen (15) out of sixty-five (65) traffic officers were interviewed at Outapi police station.

### **1.8 Research Methodology**

Sekaran and Bougie (2013, p.95) describe a research design as a blueprint or guideline for collecting and analysing data to answer the research questions. Since this study focused on the lived experiences of the police in managing traffic crime records, the study was informed by the interpretive research paradigm hence adopting the qualitative approach and case study research design. Data was collected using face-to-face interviews. The population was made up of 65 Namibian Police officers in Omusati Region. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 15 police officers who are in leadership positions from the 7 police stations. The semi-structured interview was used to collect data. The four dimensions of data trustworthiness namely

dependability, transferability, credibility and confirmability were addressed. Permission was requested from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety and to conduct the study in the police station. The interviews took 10 to 12 days and responses were audio-recorded and note-taking was also used. Participants took part through informed consent. No names of the participants were written on the research instruments. Strict confidentiality and anonymity were adhered to. Sensitive and personal information was not requested. In addition, the interviews were made in reasonable time frame to avoid keeping the participants for too long.

### **1.9 Definitions of key terms**

**Digital record:** Devi and Murthy (2015, p.1) define digital record as means an official record of an original document that is recorded on electronic storage media and is readily accessible on a computer.

**Traffic automated records:** It is an automated application system that provides details of traffic offences and enables the police to analyse and manage such offences effectively and efficiently (More, Guptha & Athalye, 2016).

**Information technology:** Caughell (2018, p.1) defines information technology (IT) as the use of any computers, storage, networking and other physical devices, infrastructure and processes to create, process, store, secure and exchange all forms of electronic data.

**Information management system (IMS):** Refers to any framework of software that facilitates the collection, storage, organization, and distribution of information. (Weedmark, 2019).

### **1.10 Research project report layout**

**Chapter one:** Introduction: The chapter presents the orientation of the study, problem statement, research objectives, the significance of the study and limitations and delimitations.

**Chapter two:** Literature review: The chapter presents and discusses the theoretical framework that underpins the study and the literature related to the study.

**Chapter three:** Research Methodology: This chapter presents and justifies the research methodology aspects used for the study. The chapter also describes how ethical principles were addressed.

**Chapter four:** The chapter presents data, analyses and discusses it and interprets it to obtain findings for each research *question* or objective. The findings are discussed and linked to related literature.

**Chapter five:** The chapter summarises findings, makes recommendations, draws conclusions and makes suggestions for further research.

### **1.11 Chapter summary**

Chapter one presented the introduction of the study. The study orientation, the problem statement, the research objectives and the significance of the study were presented. The chapter also explains the limitations and delimitations of the study. Finally, the chapter presented the research project layout.



## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

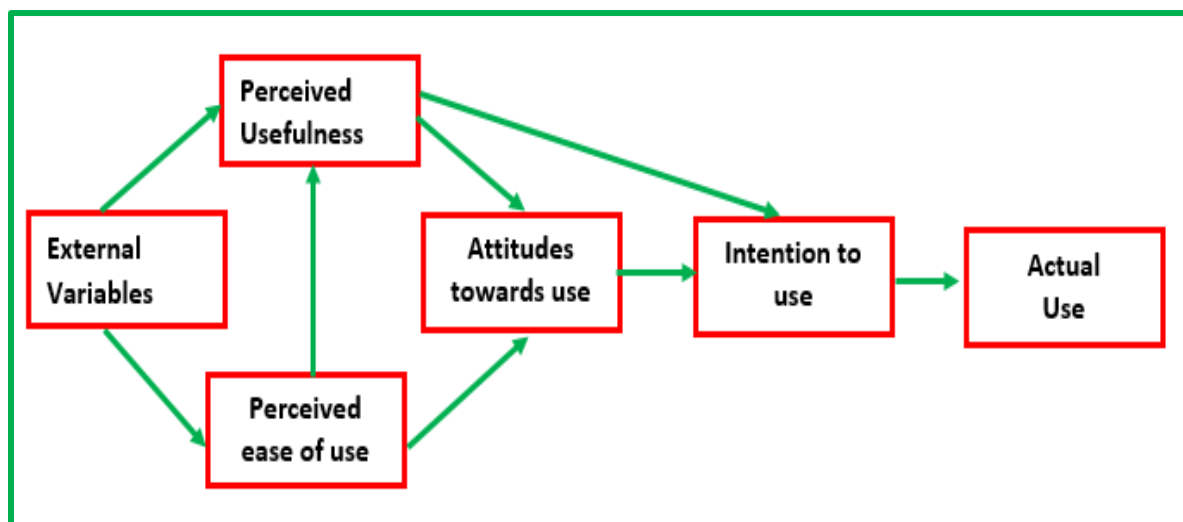
#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses literature related to this study. First, the study presents the theoretical framework. The study considers the technology acceptance group of theories as relevant in informing this study. The study uses the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The second section of the literature review explores the problems of managing records which can be solved by digitisation. The third section of this chapter discusses the value of training so that police officers have the skills to adopt digital records. The final section presents a model which can be used to enhance the adoption of digital records within the police organisation.

#### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is informed by the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Figure 1 illustrates the TAM

**Figure 2.1:** Technology Acceptance Model



**Source:** Adapted from Durodolu (2016)

The TAM originated from Davis (1986). The model is a double-edged sword. According to Durodolu (2016), the model has implications for reluctance to embrace technology and can be used as interventions to motivate people to embrace technology-based programmes.

As shown by the TAM model external variables are outside the people who should embrace change. On a positive note, external variables could be top management support, motivations from colleagues, training or supportive policy. These variables are favourable and promote the adoption of technology-based intervention (Lai, 2017). On the other hand, external variables can be a lack of resources, lack of support or lack of skills. These are barriers to the adoption of technology-based intervention. Being positive or negative about the variable affects a person's adoption of new technology for example lack of skills among the police officers may result in resistance to the adoption of digital records. On the other hand, strong support and availability of resources is a driving force that supports the adoption of new technology, in this digital record.

Johar and Alluwadin (2015) describe perceived usefulness as benefits that are derived from the new intervention. An example is that if the police officer perceives digitized record management as beneficial, they will accept it without any hustle. Alternatively, if they perceive digitized record management as having no benefits, they will resist its adoption of it. Therefore as suggested by Johar and Awalluddin (2014) management needs to sell new technology so that subordinates can embrace the new technology. In the case of digitized record management, management needs to convince and practically illustrate the utility of digitized record management. Management can also organise a visit to a police station where digital records are used so that the police officers practically see the benefits.

Sargolzaei (2017) describes perceived ease of use as a person's perception of how easy the new technology is simple to operate. This factor has got to do with skill possession. If a member has

adequate skills to embrace digitized record management, the member will welcome the intervention. On the other hand lack of skills and knowledge will result in resistance. In contrast, someone will find new technology easy to operate hence the new technology is accepted easily. Brown (2013) considers lack of skills as one of the critical barriers to adoption of new technology. Instead of indicating a lack of skills, the employee resists and indicates that they have been keeping records manually and it has been working.

Attitudes towards the adoption of new technology are also dependent on the already three factors. Chutter (2016) states that the interplay of the three factors creates attitudes towards use. If for example, the external variables are supportive, the perceived ease to use are all positive, and the attitudes to use will also be positive, then someone will find it easy in adopting new technology. The implication is for management to create a conducive environment for the adoption of digital records.

Behaviour intentions concern whether to embrace or not embrace new technology. Kozar and Larson (2013) view behaviour intention as a culmination of all stages before it. If for example, all the previous TAM processes have been negative, the behaviour intention will also be negative and the concerned person will have a negative behaviour intention. The implication is that there is a need to analyse the needs of the police officers so that provision is made to address these needs to enhance adoption of the digital records.

In a nutshell, the TAM model can guide in motivating personnel to accept new technology. Management has the responsibility to use the TAM to create a positive environment, provide support, and train and motivate subordinates to embrace new technology. In the case of this study police officers at the managerial level have the responsibility to ensure creation of a conducive environment that enhances the acceptance of digitised traffic crime records. The police officers

need to be trained so that they have the required skills to find ease to use digitised traffic records. Further, the police officers require continuous support to sustain the use of digitised crime records.

### **2.3 Manual crime records**

The use of manual crime records has dominated management of the crime records over time. With the coming of information technology, Guss, Tuason and Devine (2020) contend that the following limitations of manual crime records have made the system redundant. Manual records require every case to be filed and over time the files increase and requires rooms for keeping paper (Guss et al., 2020). In contrast digital crime records require a single computer for all records. The accumulation of manual records over time, creating huge heaps of files makes it difficult and takes time to locate some records, a challenge noted by Baraka and Murimi (2019) as often leading to lost documents. When crime documents are lost, it means cases are lost and justice in the system is compromised. A study conducted and reported by D'Árcy (2020) found that in manual records, dockets are sometimes corruptly manipulated by inside staff who are paid to destroy the criminal records.

This brings the issue of security which Melo (2019) and Hardie (2020) regard as one of the significant limitations of manual crime records. The level of risk is high. There have been cases where the whole warehouse keeping manual crime records caught fire and as noted by Hardie (2020) most such cases are done by human to destroy evidence of some crimes. The records can also be destroyed by natural disasters such storms and floods. An example has happened in Namibia in the 2008s when police stations in the north were affected by floods (Sasman, 2008). In such situations, crime management becomes difficult as cases are lost because of lost records. The just system is compromised.

The day-to-day management of manual crime records may be challenging. Hardie (2020) notes that manual records are difficult to update new information or make any adjustments. It may require redoing the whole document or writing an attachment. In contrast, digital crime records can be adjusted instantly and saved. Communicating manual crime information may take time while digital information can be instantly communicated.

All these limitations identified on manual crime record system, have effect on effective crime service delivery. Melo (2019) and Hardie (2020) contend that, the most worrisome challenge is losing crime records because without a crime record the case is lost. Searching for the records takes time, a situation which causes delays, sharing crime information across police stations takes time and delays the justice system. All these challenges are reduced with digital crime records.

#### **2.4 Digital crime records**

The era of digital crime records has seen the solution to most challenges of manual records. According to Bryne and Marx (2011), digital crime record system has many advantages over manual record-keeping system. Digitised records are stored and retrieved when needed Bryne & Marx (2011). The retrieval is instant, in contrast with manual records where time is spent perusing through files and paper records. According to Caughell (2018), digitised record management gives police a competitive edge. Competitive edge implies carrying out the work effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of the community. An example is that with digitised crime records, a record is retrieved while in manual record system, a record may take days to locate.

Faith and Bekir (2015) hail digitised record management as smart in the sense that the police do not require a lot of space. It is unlike the manual files which may over ten years fill a room. In addition, dockets and other records getting lost will be the past when digital records are adopted.

Ndonga (2018) cites examples of how the Kenyan Police have benefited from digitised record keeping. According to Ndonga (2018), the police no more carry files when going to court. The crime records are linked with the magistrate's office. Thus sharing of crime information promotes teamwork and more than one person can work on crime despite the geographical location. A single officer having access to the crime records provides security and the records cannot be destroyed.

Jensen (2019) underscores the utility of digitised records by acknowledging the paradigm shift from manual to archival science. Digitised crime records have multi-benefits and Jackson (2017) and Lagenson (2020) share the observation that contemporary policing no more requires the traditional large rooms for storing files. A single laptop or smartphone can store large amounts of crime records. Any time and place, the crime information can be retrieved and shared with personnel from different police stations (Jackson, 2017). Digitised crime records thus address the challenges of locating records, the records are instantly available at the touch of a finger hence offering convenience and saving time. Contrary to the traditional record-keeping digitized records free the police officers, to spend more time on the crime as opposed to spending the whole day shuffling through papers. A study conducted by Borglund (2015) confirmed the appreciation of digitised crime records by police officers. In this study, police officers indicated the benefits they enjoyed from digital records which included instant retrieval of crime information, accuracy, authenticity and enhanced informed decision. The police officers in this study acknowledged the multi-benefits of the paradigm shift from manual to digital crime records.

In addition to being key in availing information needed for decision-making, a notable benefit of digital crime records is the creation of confidence and trust among community members. Kearns and Muir (2017) note that availing accurate crime data and responding instantly assures the community that justice is being delivered. This is contrary to the traditional methods of keeping

crime data where sometimes the records went missing and victims would be requested to come back again. Rather than viewing it as a challenge to manual records, community members whose cases are dropped because of lost documents, view it as corruption. With digital records, such cases are minimised as crime records are saved in multiple systems.

Digital crime record system has a facility called the rapid identification system described by Feafo (2019) as a robust digital information system that enables the retrieval of individual criminal history and cluster or group cases of individuals. Police officers are informed of how many times the person has committed a crime (Eeaf0, 2019). Such information enhances correct decision-making on sentencing the crime perpetrator.

Digital records have altered police officers' ability to obtain trustworthy and authentic information for tactical and legal decisions, improving their ability to make proper decisions in operational work (Borglund, 2015). Many administrative responsibilities are now handled by information technology and information systems, which allow officers to access and search electronic information regardless of their physical location. This opens the door to mobile access to reliable information that can aid police work. The usage of electronic records has changed operational police work in a positive direction, and this transformation can be further developed. Records management solutions provide access regardless of the police department's physical location (Borglund, 2015). This makes sharing crime information easy and can be done without moving one foot from the office. Thus digital crime records save time and costs and brings convenience to the police force.

Jensen (2019) notes that police collect primary information, or raw data, which is subsequently processed inside policing for crime-solving or event closure, resulting in secondary information. It can migrate up the organization as tertiary or managerial information after being processed

twice, gathered, and formatted. These types of data and intelligence (knowledge obtained in advance of an occurrence rather than in response to one that has already occurred) are realized and interact with police operational methods (the allocation of resources to obtain a preventive, prospective, or reactive end). management systems that provide access regardless of a police officer's actual location could open up new opportunities for working cops. The implication is that digital records introduce flexibility that enhances effective and efficient management of crime.

In a nutshell, Paxton (2020) and Fuchs (2021) contend that crime is dependent on information hence digital crime records are key in enhancing effective and efficient service delivery. Quality service delivery makes the public have confidence in the police and the community will cooperate with the police to fight crime. The ability to contain crime and achieve the mandate of policing motivates the police officers hence they lend more support to the digital crime record system. Therefore, digital crime record system enhances improvement in managing traffic crime records, is convenient, accurate and works on instantly available records.

## **2.5 Training and development**

The crime environment is one of the most dynamic hence the police officers need continuous training to keep abreast with digital crime records management to effectively manage crime. Training in digitized records by the police is regarded by Paxton (2020) as critical for effective and efficient policing. Possession of the right skills not only enhances effective operations and handling of crime information but also motivates the police officers. The ability to navigate through the diversified operations of digitised crime data enables police officers to relate crime incidences to other related crime events. As emphasized by Fuchs (2021), police training solves many challenges which may occur, for example, a lack of skills to digitise crime information may lead to resistance. A study conducted by Borglund (2017) found a high level of resistance to

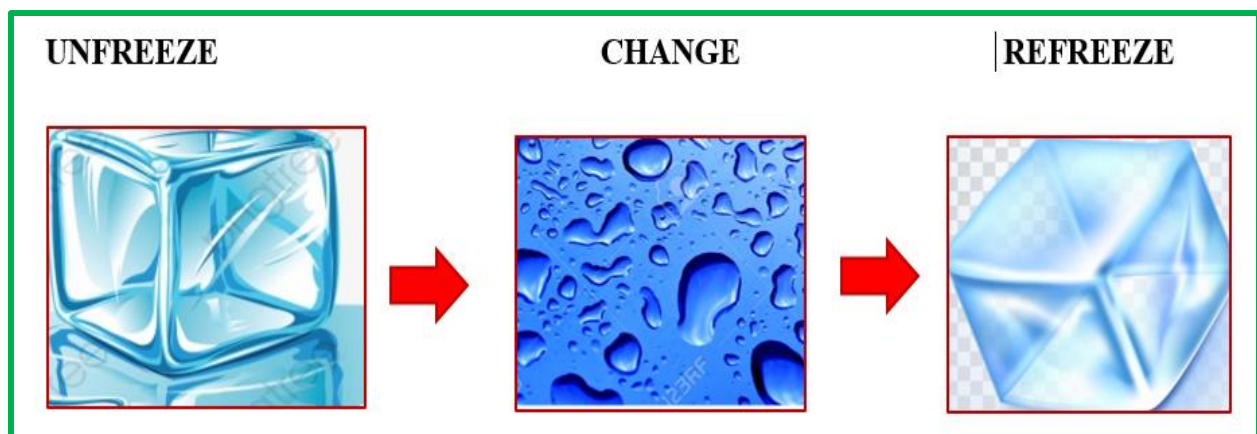


embracing digitised crime records. Lack of knowledge and skills resulted in a lack of confidence and hesitance to venture into unknown areas and resistance to change set in. A different study conducted by Loohuis (2021) among Dutch police found a gap of lack of detail crime knowledge and recommended digital crime records be integrated into police training. Concurring, Morgan (2021) further raises the need for on-the-job training to link theory and practice. When the police have the necessary digital crime management skills, they embrace the technology-based crime management system. Without the necessary skills, they resist (Morgan, 2012). The implication is that digital crime management system can be a success when the police have the necessary skills to run the system, hence the need for continuous training and development.

## 2.6 Interventions

The introduction of digitised record management requires buy-in from staff and groundwork so that it fits into the systems. Figure 2.2 illustrates the model

**Figure 2.2:** Freeze-Change –Refreeze Model



**Source:** Adapted from Brown (2013)

The model allows change to be introduced in stages and the steps of the model are inclusive hence taking everyone on board is the hallmark of intervention success.

- **The unfreeze stage**

Brown (2013) describes the first stage as involving an analysis of the current status. An example is that the police analyse the current manual record-keeping system. The analysis involves the identification of the weaknesses, challenges and barriers to effective record keeping. An example is that handling a lot of paperwork, and some information getting lost are all challenges with the current system. Dockets getting lost or mixed up resulting in some cases being dropped compromises justice delivery. The same stage is described by Cummings and Worley (2015) as preparing all the groundwork for the successful implementation of digital records. One of the areas of concern is the training of staff to ensure that everyone has the skills to navigate through digital records. As indicated by Paxton (2019), a lack of skills can result in resistance hence various training modes can be applied to ensure confidence in the use of digital records among the personnel. The introduction of digital crime records is a paradigm shift hence Jensen (2019) expresses the need to change the mindset of the police officers. During the unfreeze stage, therefore, there is a need for re-visioning to embrace the new trajectory and focus on the preparedness of the organisation in embracing. Human resources, technology and other support resources should be tailored toward the new that is the adoption of digital records (Brown, 2013).

- **The change stage**

Cummings and Worley (2015), note that the execution stage is critical in the adoption of a new programme because the stage defines the success or failure of the programme. During the change stage, the police officers implement the adoption of digital records. The implementation involves

using digital records. Jensen (2019) suggests the need for close monitoring and support so that any challenges are instantly responded to. There should be no room for frustration and failure, support should be given to develop confidence and sustain the gains made. Brown (2013) expresses that resources should always be available to support the execution of the new technology. As indicated and implied by the TAM, the implementers of digital records should find the new technology easy to use. To ensure that the police officers are kept on board, wins should be acknowledged and celebrated (Cummings & Worley, 2015).

- **The refreezing stage**

The third stage (refreezing) is sustaining the change (Brown, 2013). In this case, it is sustaining digitized record keeping. However, the environment is dynamic, sustaining does mean being static but adopting the new technology as part of the organisation or institution. Paxton (2020) notes that after adopting a new programme such as the adoption of digitised records if strong systems are not put in place, the organisation may relapse into the old. Therefore, there is a need to ensure the digital records practices are kept life. One way suggested by Brown (2013) is speaking about the new way of keeping records. Speaking about digital recording keeping is continuously reporting, celebrating wins and using internal communication to share successes and challenges.

## **2.7 Support**

Cummings and Worley (2015), note that new technology may fail if top management relegates it to the lower level and does not take concern. For the success of digital records according to Cummings and Worley (2015, top management should strongly support the project. Since top management evasions the organisation's strategy, it should as well take part in the adoption of crime digital records. In addition, Brown (2013) states that the adoption of new technology should

be supported by adequate resources. Implementers should not complain about a shortage of resources, otherwise, it builds resistance and once the police officers develop negative attitudes, it may be difficult to turn them back. Immediate management should also motivate the officers so that they feel that what they are doing is worthwhile and appreciated (Brown, 2013). As indicated in the preceding sections, wins should be acknowledged and challenges should be approached as a team. Cummings and Worley (2015), remind us that learning from the best offers an opportunity to excel hence benchmarking is a strategy for appreciating the success of others in the same profession. Therefore, benchmarking can be used to learn from others so that one can adapt and even do better. In a nutshell, the success of adopting digital crime records is chiefly determined by the police officers.

## **2.8 Chapter summary**

This chapter explored literature on the adoption of digital crime records. The chapter first presented the TAM, a model that theorises the conditions and variables that influence the adoption of new technology. The TAM shows how negativity and positivity conditions, and exposure can lead to adoption and non-adoption of new technology such as the adoption of digitised crime records. The next section explored and discussed the utility of digital crime records. This section revealed how digital crime records enhance edge in the crime prevention and management service. Then, the chapter discussed the importance of the need for police officers to have the right skills, hence continuous training was indicated as a priority. The final section considered securing buy-in from police officers to enhance the adoption of digital crime records and Lewin's unfreeze change refreeze model was used. The next chapter presents and justifies the research methodology for this study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter addresses the research methodology adopted for this study. First the chapter presents the research design, justifies why the study adopted the qualitative research approach. The chapter also presents the target population and a description of how the sample was selected. Research instruments are described and the process of data collection is outlined. The chapter outlines how thematic data analysis was employed to analyse the data collected from the field. The last section of the chapter explains how data trustworthiness and ethical principles were addressed.

#### **3.2 Research Paradigms**

The study which adopted a multiple case study research design within a qualitative research approach was informed by the interpretivist research paradigm. Saunders et al. (2019), describes the interpretivist research paradigm as understanding the meanings attached to organisational life through narratives of the people in the organisation. Meaning is derived from interpretations of the lived experiences of the social actors. In this study, the police narrated their experiences with management of traffic crime records.

Creswell and Creswell (2018, p.42), identify three research approaches namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed research. The study focused on the everyday experiences of the police in managing crime records, the study was informed by the interpretive research paradigm hence adopted the qualitative research approach. According to Cohen et al. (2018, p.21), qualitative research allows the research participants an opportunity to speak for themselves narrating their daily lived experiences. In this case the police officers spoke out about their experiences in

managing records. The police officers were engaged to explain the challenges they are encountering in managing records using the current manual system. In addition, qualitative research is interactive hence it provided the researcher an opportunity to probe and get information one never thought of.

Sekaran and Bougie (2013, p.95) describe a research design as a blueprint or guideline for collecting and analysing data to answer the research questions. The study adopted the multi case study research design, as focus was on 15 police stations in Omusati region. Fouche et al. (2021, p.303), describes it as a research design that focuses on a single unit of analysis in a real life situation. A case study thus allows to capture in-depth data through engaging the participants. In this study, the cases were the 15 police stations in Omusati region from which the study managed to capture diversified data on the management of traffic crime records.

### **3.3 Data collection methods**

Data was collected using face to face interviews. Bless et al. (2013) consider an interview as a powerful flexible data gathering method which allows the researcher to create positive rapport with the interviewee. The relationship creates the trust and enhances collection of rich data. For the purpose of keeping focused on crime records management within the police, a semi-structured interview was used. The semi-structured interview guide was created being guided by themes generated from the research questions. The research method spoke to the research objectives. This was done to ensure that the data collected addressed the research objectives.

### **3.4 Population**

Maree (2013) describes the population as the total number of people the researcher is targeting and from which the sample is selected. The population for this study was made up of 65 Namibian

Police officers, all serving under Omusati Region. The 65 police officers were all relevant to this study because they experience crime records management in the region and therefore, they were rich sources of data. In addition, the fact that they manage crime records daily, they were aware of any challenges encountered in the management of these records.

### **3.5 Sample**

Saunders et al. (2019, p.292) define a sample as a subgroup of the target population. Since the aim of the study was to explore the challenges of the current manual crime records management and consider the prospects of using digitized crime records, the most knowledgeable personnel were station commanders. Therefore, purposive sampling technique was used to select 15 police officers who were in leadership positions at the various police stations of the Omusati Region. The 15 police officers in charge of the police stations in Omusati Region were considered unique because they are overall in charge of all crime records. They were in the position to explain the manual crime record management and the perceptions towards migration into digitized crime records management.

### **3.6 Research instruments**

Data collection instruments are tools used for collecting data. In this study a semi-structured interview guide (Appendix -) was used to collect data. Saunders et al. (2019) describes a semi-structured guide as a guideline with research questions that guide the collection of data. In this study, the semi-structured interview guide had the following sections: Section A had questions on demographic data; Section B had questions on the utility of digitized crime records; Section C had questions on skills required to manage digitized records and Section D had questions on

interventions that can be put in place to enhance the adoption and implementation of digitized crime records.

### **3.7 Trustworthiness**

Bless et al. (2013) supported by Creswell and Creswell (2018) indicate that data trustworthiness in qualitative research is the equivalent of reliability and validity in quantitative research. In this study, the following four dimensions of data trustworthiness were addressed. Credibility is equivalent to internal validity and according to Fouche et al. (2021) it concerns the accuracy and truthfulness of the results. Credibility in this study was addressed by strictly following all the steps of the research process. Saunders et al. (2019) describe dependability as equivalent to reliability. It concerns the stability of the results over time. A dependability audit trail was conducted to ensure that all processes were followed and quality control was effected at every stage of the research process. Fouche et al. (2021, p.393) describes transferability as the equivalent of external validity. In addition, detailed descriptions of analysis and findings were made to ensure that all important details were not left out. Confirmability involves different researchers conducting the same study and getting similar results (Leavy, 2017). The responses from participants were presented verbatim to confirm that the data was from the participants.

### **3.8 Research procedure**

Permission to conduct the study was requested from the Ministry of Safety and Security to conduct the study in the police stations. Then the participants were selected and their permission in person was sought. The participants were debriefed about the purpose of the study, the role in the study and ethical principles were explained. They were requested to complete consent forms and voluntary participation was clarified. Appointments were made. Interviews were conducted at the



police stations to enhance convenience and to ensure that data is collected within the work environment where crime records are managed. The responses from the interviews were audio recorded.

### **3.9 Data analysis**

Sekaran and Bougie (2016, p.337) define data analysis in qualitative research as the process of reducing the large amounts of data in words and extract themes to give the data meaning. Qualitative data can be analysed using document analysis, discourse analysis, grounded theory analysis and thematic data analysis. This study used thematic qualitative data analysis technique. Saunders et al. (2019) describe thematic data analysis as a systematic process of identifying themes or patterns in the data so these patterns can be used to categorise data for analysis and interpretations. The data was read through to familiarize with the type and quality of data. Then the data was coded, themes identified and data categorized under the themes. The data was then analysed and findings were linked to research questions. Verbatim quotes were used to show the direct words of the participants. As the findings were discussed, they were linked to related literature. The data was presented and recorded as narratives.

### **3.10. Research Ethics**

Bless et al. (2013, p.28) underscore the importance of adhering to ethics in research by emphasising the need to respect and own the rights of research participants. Research ethics prevent researchers from abusing participants and being dishonest. The following ethical principles were addressed from the beginning up to the end of the research. Participants took part in the study through informed consent. The participants were debriefed about the purpose of the study, their role and expected behaviour during the study. The participants signed a consent form (Appendix -

B). All ethical principles were explained and the participants were requested to sign a consent form to show voluntary participation and that they observed all the ethical principles indicated.

No names or form of identification of the participants were written on research instruments. Strict confidentiality and anonymity were adhered to. When reporting the findings, pseudo names were used. The reporting did not indicate the source of the findings. Findings were reported as being from the study and not individuals. Saunders et al. (2019) indicate that participants should not be forced to continue with the study if they feel to withdraw. In this study, participants were told that they had the right to withdraw at any stage of the study without being asked why they had decided to withdraw from the study.

Bless et al. (2013) advise that participants should be in any way harmed by taking part in the study. Participants may be harmed physically or psychologically. In this study, sensitive and personal information were avoided to protect the participants. In addition, the interviews were made of reasonable time frame to avoid keeping the participant for too long. The participants were openly told that the study was for academic purposes and no reward was to be provided. The findings were reported honestly and no attempt was made to inflate or misrepresent the findings. Data is stored in servers and made available through internet.

### **3.11 Summary**

This chapter explored the various aspects of methodology adopted for this study. The study adopted the qualitative research design which influenced all other components of the research methodology. Research participants were indicated to have been selected purposively, data collected through interviews and analysed the qualitatively using thematic technique. Finally, the

chapter explained how ethical principles were addressed. The next chapter presents analyses and presents the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

Saunders et al. (2019), describe data analysis and presentation as the process of selecting and presenting and synthesising data collected from the field for the purpose of answering the research questions. This chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation. The data is presented in themes generated from the interview data. The themes are linked to the following research objectives:

- The problems of managing police records which can be solved by digitisation;
- Skills available to digitise and manage digitised records among the traffic officers; and
- Interventions that need to be implemented to embrace digitised traffic offence records management by the Namibian Police, Omusati.

#### 4.2 Response rate

Response rate is the ratio, expressed as a percentage, of the participants that respond to the research instruments (Chung, 2022). The response rate depends on the research, hence there is no fixed rate. The researcher had intended to interview 15 police officers but ended up interviewing 8 which is 53.3%. Chung (2022) indicates that anything above 50% return rate is considered reasonable to generate results which are representative of the study population, hence this study's findings could be generalised to the traffic records in the region.

#### 4.3 Demographics

Table 4.2: Sample demographics

Police Officer	Gender	Position	Experience (years)	Code
A	Male	warrant officer 2	14	Participant 1
B	Male	warrant officer 2	14	Participant 2
C	Male	warrant officer	14	Participant 3
D	Female	warrant officer	7	Participant 4
E	Male	warrant officer 2	14	Participant 5
F	Male	sergeants	10	Participant 6
G	Male	sergeants	10	Participant 7
H	Male	sergeants	10	Participant 8

As shown by Table 4.2, eight police officers were interviewed. Of these, three males were warrant officers, class 2 and one male was warrant officer. These four had been working at the current police stations for 14 years. Three male police officers were sergeants with 10 years working experience at their current stations. One female was a warrant officer who had seven years' work experience at her current work station. All the eight police officers had more than 7 years working at their current stations and seven years is long enough for the officers to have experienced how manual records are kept and managed.

#### **4.4 Main theme: Manual traffic records**

##### **4.4.1 Sub theme: Traffic records storage**

Under this theme the participants explained how they recorded and stored manual records. They indicated that the crime record was first recorded in the station crime register. After recording and assignment of a code that reflects the record number and the date, the record was taken for filing. Explaining where the records were filed, participant 3 said, "We have cabinet lockers which we

use for filing and when full, we use tables." Participant 7, from a different police station indicated that they kept the crime records in boxes, being loose papers because they had no more files. When asked how the records were filed the participants gave two ways. The first group indicated that the police station used names of offenders and dates as reflected in the main traffic crime register. The second group said that they used the type of traffic offence and in the categories created and filed using dates when the crime was recorded as reflected in the main crime register.

#### **4.4.2 Sub theme: Traffic records retrieval**

The process of record retrieval was said to begin from the crime register where the officer identifies the details of the file and then use these to retrieve. Explaining how they retrieve offender follow up cases, participant 5 said,

*If the offender wants to make a follow up of his or her ticket, a control officer is to retrieve the specific and get the court feedback, most of the time is very difficult to spent time searching for that specific file as they are piling up every year.*

As explained by the participants, the filing and storage of traffic crime records follow an official routine approach. However, participant 2 and 6, added what they do at their stations, thus,

*We have a guideline on keeping manual records but because of time the piling up of records, cause misplacements. We came up with an arrangement of filing records according to their state, for example according to month of traffic crime and according to case active or inactive. We introduced colours on the shelves to categories records for easy retrieval and identification. Otherwise without that it takes time to identify the manual records,*

The strategies of filing traffic manual crime records explained by participant 2 and 6 reveal plans of easy identification and retrieval of the records. The participants where they keep records in boxes indicated random retrieval of records and the process was said to take a lot of time.

On how the police keep manual traffic crime records, the results show an official common routine process. However, some participants indicated the introduction of colours to enhance easy identification and retrieval of the manual records.

#### **4.4.3 Sub theme: Benefits of manual records**

On the benefits of manual records, the participants unanimously agreed that manual traffic records were ideal at the present moment. Justifying the benefits of manual records at present, Participant 8 explained, thus, “At the present the situation at most of our police stations require manual records, we do not have reliable electricity, no computers hence digital records, may not be executed successfully.”

In addition, participants raised the issue of human capital skills. Without thorough training of police officers in crime technology, manual records remain beneficial. The participants were of the view that introduction of digital records before skills are developed among the police offers, it may result in resistance to change. The participants expressed that migration from manual to digital needed to be supported by training so that police officers have the right skills.

The participants raised the issue of ethics with regard to privacy of manual records. Explaining how manual records promotes privacy, participant 2 said, “Once the records are filed, there is no access to the filing room except the officer in charge. It is unlike digitized records where many people may have access to computers.”

The views expressed by participant 2 reveal belief in the privacy of manual records. According to this belief, manual records once filed are not open to other police officers. It is the officer in control of the file room who has access and can delegate someone to search for records under strict observation of confidentiality and privacy.

The participants considered the possibility of power failure with digitized records while manual records require no electricity. Related to the same, the participants regarded manual records as less expensive. There is no hardware needed and no internet is required. Shining light on this benefit, participant 7 insinuated thus, “Manual records do not require electrical devices such as computers, scanner and internet. The manual system can need one or two people who can create performers for approval and distributed to the entire unit,”

The views expressed by participant 7 supported the notion that manual records require a small budget compared to digital records that require electrical driven gadgets. The implication of participant 7 views is that manual records are less expensive than digitized records.

The participant also regarded manual records unlike digitized records which regarded as possibility of being affected by collapse. The participants gave a list of various situations that may cause loss of all records. One of the participants (Participant 1) had the following to say:

*Today cybercrime is rampant and digitized records can be hacked by criminals.*

*The criminals that use the hacked data to change data on criminal cases, which is unlikely with manual records. For this matter manual records are less risk.*

The views expressed by participant 7 were shared by half of the participants, while the other half was silent on the risk factor of digitized records.



#### 4.4.4 Sub theme: Challenges of manual records

On challenges with manual records, all the participants agreed that manual records required space. Sharing their experiences on space requirements of manual records, participant 4 and 7 shared that overtime manual records accumulated to the extent that there was a need to have more rooms. In some instances, the old records were packed in cardboard boxes and stored outside. When rains came the records were destroyed. They further indicated that manual records may take more space than the officers. While some may be destroyed, there was hesitance to destroy manual records considering that some may be needed especially when some cases are revived.

As indicated earlier the challenge of storage was raised by all participants. As indicated by participant 4, some old records ended up being stored outside in verandas and the back of buildings.

The participants expressed the risk of manual records as easy to steal or destroyed. Clarifying this challenge, participant 5 explained, thus

*Manual records can be destroyed or stolen for the purpose of destroying the evidence of a case. Some corrupt police officers may work in cahoots criminals to destroy records. This has criminals destroy records. This has been common, when the case is to be taken to court, records are found missing.*

All participants agreed to this claim of records disappearing and in most cases, records were said to disappear before they reached the filing stage. Manual records were also described as taking a lot of time to retrieve. “In case, a simple error concerning order of filing may result in days looking for the records”, claimed Participant 8. The participants expressed that the delay would affect processing cases.

Participant 4 raised the challenge of manual records losing quality over time. The participant said,

*Most manual records are duplicates and with time because of weather the duplicate inks fades. After sometime the record is blurred because of fading. Such records may lose all the important information and cannot be used. This compromises the delivery of justice,*

The experiences of Participant 4 were echoed by the majority of the participants who acknowledged the fading of ink records. Further explaining the challenge, Participant 6 stated that sometimes, due to time, the ink become blurred to the extent of making the document difficult to read. This mostly happened to documents which are stored in open place.

A single participant raised the issue of lack of editing with manual record. The participant explained that errors happened on documents and correcting on the same document may not be feasible hence, “If some errors have been made on a document, it has to be rewritten. This wastes time and increases the cost of documentation. This unlike digitized documents that can be corrected”, said Participant 2.

#### **4.5 Main theme: Digitised traffic records**

##### **4.5.1 Sub theme: Digitised records perceptions**

On perceptions of digitized crime records, the majority of the participant expressed positive views towards the adoption of digitized crime records. Expressing this desire, Participant 8 said, “As contemporary policing is embracing technology tools, we cannot remain no exemption to the changes. The new digitized traffic crime records are welcome.”

As indicated by Participant 8 policing is responding to changes in the technological environment, hence the police cannot remain behind to this global trend. Therefore, the implication is that the majority of the participants showed support for digitized records.

However, some few participants from rural area police post made some reservation on the introduction of digitized crime records. The first concern they raised was increase in budget. The participants expressed concern over the budget the government would spend to provide infrastructure, electricity and software and hardware components.

These participants further raised the difficulty on the availability of electricity. According to Participant 6, “Even if we accept digitized records, it may take many years before have electricity. Therefore, we can accept but it may, not be immediate to implement digitized records.”

The views expressed by Participant 6 are quite positive. The participant accepted the adoption of digital crime records. However, the participant also identified what needed to be put in place to make digitized crime records successful.

While accepting the issue of barriers that may constraint immediate adoption of digitized records, a participant raised the need of a hybrid approach to crime traffic records. Clarifying this suggestion, Participant 2 said, “Our records begin at the crime scene where we record manually. Then when we come to the offices, the records are digitized. Therefore because of these records collected in the field we can consider both manual and digitized records.”

On the benefits of digitized crime records, the participants indicated that digitized crime records have significant cost savings. Explaining the savings of digitized crime records, participant 7, explained, thus, “Digitized crime records do not use paper hence there are notable savings. Also accessing a document does not require much time and time savings makes the officer provide service within time,”

These savings were described as of benefit to the police station and the government and society. An example is that use of digitized records was described as reducing the use of paper, hence save

trees. Timeous processing of digitized records was described as enhancing quick response and attention of crime.

Digitised records were described as safe with regard to loss of data. The presence of back up facilities make digitized records safe and less risk. Explaining these benefits, participant 3 said, "Unlike manual records that can be lost through fire, digitized records can be backed up, hence the model is safe."

The comparison made by Participant 3 spells out the advantage of digitized records having back up facilities. According to Participant 3, this makes digitized records safe and secure. That digitized crime records can be shared among different police stations without physical movement was described as an advantage. Unlike manual records which would need a person to carry them from police station to another, the participants, hailed digitized records for being electronically shared. According to Participant 6, "Digital crime records can be instantly shared hence decision make is facilitated,"

According to Participant 6, digital records were unlike manual records which take time to be shared among different police stations. Therefore, instant communication was considered one of the distinct benefits of digital records. The participants further extended the benefit to national traffic crime management when digitized records can be communicated to the national police headquarters.

Finally on this section, the participants indicated that digitized crime records can be statistically analysed and provide summary results of traffic crime records. According to the participants, this is contrary to manual records that would take months to analyse. The instant analysis of digital records is accurate and provide comparison statistics of all kinds.

#### **4.5.2 Sub theme: Digitised records challenges**

On the challenges on the use of digital crime records, the participants identified two major challenges. The first challenge was indicated as the process of migration from manual to digital records. Elaborating on this challenge, participants 4 and 8 shared that most of the staff did not have the required skills. They expressed a need to be trained and as their prior knowledge on technology was not the same. The participants also said that there was a need to conduct a thorough training needs analysis, which takes time. Both participants 4 and 8 expressed the challenges which go with change. However, the participants mentioned the need to train officers so that they understand what change is and they have the required skills to implement change.

The second challenge which the participants expressed as a significant barrier to digital records implementation was inadequate funding. According to Participant 1, "The Namibian police is already being under-funded and the same problem of constrained budget may affect the digital crime records project. Therefore, see the project not fully financed." The other participants shared the views expressed by Participant 1. While the participants agreed that digital crime records can be initiated, they expressed doubt on the ability of the government to fully fund the programme.

#### **4.6 Main theme: Skill availability**

##### **4.6.1 Sub theme: Police officer current digital skills**

The participants indicated that it was difficult to be specific on the current technology skills availability among officers. Participant 5 suggested thus, "The best approach is to conduct a skill needs analysis to establish skill availability among the police officers." The views expressed by Participant 5 were unanimously supported by the participants. They justified the need for carrying skill needs analysis by stating that it enables finding out exactly the skill level of the police officers.

The participants further suggested adoption of on-the-job training of computer skills, criminology related data handling, analysis and interpretation. The participants supported on the job training and indicated that it should be continuous..

#### **4.7 Main theme: Interventions to embrace digitisation of records**

##### **4.7.1 Sub theme: Piloting the project**

A pilot trial was supported by all the participants. Justifying the need for a pilot study, Participant 7 said, "To enable the Namibian police determine challenges and hitches that may affect the digital crime records, first there is need for a pilot study. The challenges met during the pilot study can be used to perfect the system." The views expressed by Participant 7 were supported by the other participants. The pilot study according to the participants saves the government from loss, if the pilot establishes the need to put in place specific measures before out rolling the project. In addition, the participants indicated that piloting the digitisation of crime records helps to establish material, infrastructure and skill requirements.

##### **4.7.2 Sub theme: Resourcing the project**

The second intervention suggested was to put in place a separate budget for this project. According to Participant 4, "Creating a separate budget for the digital crime records project ensures the project is financed fully. The implementers are ensured the project will not flop on the way." The issue of budget constraints have already been raised in this study. The participants were informed by the current Namibia Police budget that is so tight that it is affecting service delivery. The participants expressed doubt on the ability of government to finance this project.

### **4.7.3 Sub theme: Benchmarking**

Participants 5 and 8 suggested that the Namibian police could learn from the SADC police force partners on how they have implemented digitisation of police traffic records. Supporting this view, Participant 2 raised the need to approach a country of countries that have similar socio-economic status such as Namibia. Further highlighting the process of benchmarking, Participant 6, indicated that benchmarking was not copying but learning from others and the adapting to the local environment.

Also contributing on benchmarking, Participant 7 indicated that there was nothing wrong to benchmark against developed countries that have introduced technology in policing a long time ago. The important thing according to participant was taking what works in our environment considering the local socio-economic environment and the crime context. The participants further added that benchmarking programmes should embrace not only high-ranking officers but also lower level structures because these are the implementers.

### **4.7 Summary**

This chapter presented data collected from the field using interviews. The data was presented in sections under the guidance of research objectives. First the chapter presented demographics of the participants. The work experience of the participants was considered long enough for them to know how manual records are kept. Thereafter the chapter presented the data and emphasising the findings through verbatim quotes. The next chapter interprets the data and reports findings.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses and interprets the findings of the study. The discussion of the findings will explain many of the issues included in the research problem. The findings have been discussed under the main themes of Manual traffic records, Digitised traffic records, Skill availability and Interventions to embrace the digitisation of records. The sub-themes will also be discussed and incorporated into the literature. The themes that are linked to the research objectives This chapter will further summarise the findings and make recommendations.

#### **5.2 Discussion of findings**

##### **5.2.1 Manual traffic records**

The discussion in this section looks at traffic record storage and retrieval within the police.

##### **5.2.1.1 Sub-theme: Traffic records storage and retrieval**

The study investigated how the police are managing police records which can be solved by digitisation. The response of the participants indicates how records are being created and stored at the station. One of the questions to be answered by the study was “ Can you please share how your station keeps manual crime records,” Manual records were created when a ticket was issued to the traffic offender and assigned with a code that reflects the record number and the date the record is



registered. The study further observed that the records were being kept in cabinet lockers for filing purposes. Guss et al. (2020) enlightened manual records require every case to be filled and over time the files increase and require room for keeping paper. In the case of the Omusati police, it was observed that the accumulation of manual records created huge heaps of files in the boxes making it difficult. The Participants mentioned that the manual record filing took up their time to relocate some records a challenge noted by Baraka and Murimi (2019) as often leading to lost documents. Different police officers at other police stations indicated that they kept the records in boxes, being loose papers because they had no more files which lead to records being lost or misplaced. To that, Melo(2019) and Hardie (2020) contend that the most worrisome challenge is losing crime records because without a criminal record the case is lost. The study highlighted that the process of record retrieval began with a control officer identifying file details. The study noted that the process is described to be cumbersome and time-consuming. Melo (2019) in an agreement concurred that searching for the records takes time, which causes delays and delays in the justice system. Marx (2011) also argued for the retrieval of manual records much time is spent perusing files and paper records.

#### **5.2.1.2 Benefits of manual records**

On the benefits of manual records participants unanimously agreed that traffic records were ideal at the present moment. In answering the question “What are the benefits or strengths of manual records.” The study recognised the police station requires manual records as they do not have reliable electricity and no computer that will enable digital records executed successfully. The researcher came across the issue of human capital skills. Brown (2013) considers a lack of skills as one of the critical barriers to the adoption of new technology. Instead of indicating a lack of skills, the employee resists and indicates that they have been keeping records manually and it has

been working. The finding of the study. While there are officers who are interested in digital records in contrast to manual record, the benefits of manual records was outlined to be cheaper as does not require electrical devices such as computer, scanner and the internet.

### **5.2.1.3 Challenges of manual records**

The study established spacing and loss of documents as a critical challenges of paper records. These challenges were confirmed by Baraka and Murimi (2019) as often leading to lost documents. The investigations proved that there is a high accumulation of records at the stations that made the office a tiny cubicle as there is no space. The study further established that more records were packed outside the office, a situation that compromises its security.

This brings the issue of security which Melo (2019) and Hardie (2020) regard as one of the significant limitations of manual crime records. The level of risk is high at the police stations.

## **5.2.2 Digitised traffic records**

This section discusses the findings on the issues aligned with digital records perceptions and digital records challenges.

### **5.2.2.1 Digitised records perceptions**

The perception of digitised crime records, researcher established a positive perception towards the adoption of digitised crime records. The majority of the police officers perceives digitized record management as beneficial, and they will accept it without any hustle. According to Bryne and Marx (2011), a digital crime record system has many advantages over a manual record-keeping system. The study further established the embracement of technology and positive changes towards the newly digitised traffic crime records. Johar and Alluwadin (2015) describe perceived

usefulness as benefits that are derived from the new intervention. The challenges of manual records convince police officers about the benefits, hence they couldn't resist its adoption of it.

Another advantage the study established is that police officers embrace the technology saying digitised records are stored and retrieved when needed. A study conducted by Borglund (2015) confirmed the appreciation of digitised crime records by police officers. It was established through this study that digital crime records save time and costs and bring convenience to the police force.

Bryne & Marx (2011) reiterated that retrieval is instant, in contrast with manual records where time is spent perusing through files and paper records. According to Caughell (2018), digitised record management gives police a competitive edge.

The majority of police officers supported the digitised records but raised issues about the budget government will spend on the infrastructure. Faith and Bekir (2015) hail digitised record management as smart in the sense that the police do not require a lot of space. The researcher agreed with the witters as it was established that the manual files which may be over ten years fill a room. In addition, dockets and other records getting lost will be the past when digital records are adopted.

Digitised crime records have multi-benefits and Jackson (2017) and Lagenson (2020) share the observation that contemporary policing no more requires the traditional large rooms for storing files. Few officers were concerned about resources to make the digitised record a success. The collection of data established that the police begin to create records at the scene of crime manually before they are recorded.

Jensen (2019) notes that police collect primary information, or raw data, which is subsequently processed inside policing for crime-solving or event closure, resulting in secondary information.

Therefore, a digital crime record system enhances improvement in managing traffic crime records, is convenient, accurate and works on instantly available records. Participant 6 argued that, unlike manual records which take time to be shared among different police stations. Hence, the instant sharing of digital crimes facilitates decision making and instant communication was considered one of the distinct benefits of digital records. A digital crime record system has a facility called the rapid identification system described by Feafo (2019) as a robust digital information system that enables the retrieval of individual criminal history and cluster or group cases of individuals. Police officers are informed of how many times the person has committed a crime (Eeafo, 2019). Such information enhances correct decision-making on sentencing the crime perpetrator. Finally, in this section, the participants indicated that digitized crime records can be statistically analysed and provide summary results of traffic crime records. According to participants, this is contrary to manual records that would take months to analyse. The instant analysis of digital records is accurate and provides comparison statistics of all kinds.

#### **5.2.2.2 Digitised records challenges**

Research findings indicated that digitised records had challenges not only to police officers but to all electronic records users. The two main challenges outlined found by the study were the migration of records from manual to digital and inadequate funding.

The finding observed that most of the staff did not have the required skills. The findings revealed that most of the staff required to be trained to migrate records without any data loss. A thorough training needs analysis is required as the findings have it that most of the officers need to be trained as their prior knowledge is not the same. Brown (2013) supported this by saying analysis involves the identification of the weaknesses, challenges and barriers to effective record-keeping. The participant enriches the finding with an idea of the change resistance. There is a need for re-

visioning to embrace the new trajectory and focus on the preparedness of the organisation in embracing Additionally that officers need to be trained in the skills to implement the change. One way suggested by Brown (2013) is speaking about the new way of keeping records. This is in agreement with Paxton (2019), a lack of skills can result in resistance hence various training modes can be applied to ensure confidence in the use of digital records among the personnel. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that digital records practices are kept live.

The findings established that a significant barrier to digital records implementation was inadequate funding due to budget constraints of the police. The police are one of the ministries that received a reduction in budget allocation during the 2022/23 financial year. The findings contemplate the effect of the digital crime records project. Although the researchers observed full support for the digital records, there were sceptics that the lack of funds will compromise the success of the programme. The findings established that projects such as the digitisation of crime records if not adequately funded may fail and frustrate the officers. Brown (2013) states that the adoption of new technology should be supported by adequate resources. Implementers should not complain about a shortage of resources, otherwise, it builds resistance and once the police officers develop negative attitudes, it may be difficult to turn them back. Immediate management should also motivate the officers so that they feel that what they are doing is worthwhile and appreciated.

The absence of qualifications hindered the proper establishment of the current technology skill availability among officers. The findings established that there was a need to conduct a skill needs analysis to establish skill availability among police officers. The views were unanimously supported by the participants. The skills analysis will establish the level of skills possessed by the officers as supported by Jensen (2019) expresses the effectiveness and success of the projects depend on the skilful officers.

### **5.2.2.3 Interventions to embrace digitisation of records**

The discussion centers on three issues around piloting the project, resourcing the project and benchmarking.

There is a need to conduct the pilot study that was indeed welcomed by all the participants in the research. The pilot study will enable the police to determine challenges and hitches that will affect digital crime records as suggested by Cummings and Worley (2015) that a pilot study puts measures in place before rolling out. In addition to that, the findings established that piloting the digitisation of crime records helps establish material, infrastructure and skill requirements.

The study established that there was a need to have a separate budget for digital record projects. Creating the separate will ensure the project is fully financed and implementers are ensured the project will not flop on the way. However, this point was taken with mixed feelings as the issue of the budget was already discussed in this study. Having a separate budget would enhance adequate funding for the project. The shortage of budget was reignited by Brown (2013) who said implementers should not complain about a shortage of resources, otherwise, it builds resistance and failure of the project.

Benchmarking was one of the interventions the study established. The findings prevailed that the police through Interpol can partner with SADC countries' police that has implemented digitisation of police traffic records. The literature revealed that Uganda has a successful traffic digital record system in place. Supporting this view, Cummings and Worley (2015), remind us that learning from the best offers an opportunity to excel hence benchmarking is a strategy for appreciating the success of others in the same profession. Therefore, benchmarking can be used to learn from others so that one can adapt and even do better.

In a nutshell, the success of adopting digital crime records is chiefly determined by police officers.

### **5.3 Discussion of Findings**

The main thematic areas within which the summary is presented include manual traffic records, traffic records storage and retrieval, the benefits of manual records, and the challenges of manual records, digitised traffic records perceptions and challenges, skills availability on police officers' current digital skills and intervention to embrace digitisation of records. During the intervention, three main issues were discussed such as the piloting project, resourcing the project and benchmarking as the findings of the study. This section revealed how manual records are being managed by the police in the Omusati region. The study 's main assumption is that the police have embarked on digital crime records which will see the enhancement of the edge in crime prevention and management service was proved not correct. However, then, the chapter discussed the importance of the need for police officers to have the right skills, hence continuous training was indicated as a priority. The final section considered securing buy-in from police officers to enhance the adoption of digital crime records. The intervention of the pilot study and benchmarking were suggested for a successful implementation of the project. The findings reveal that there is no digital record system in place and the officers have no adequate skills required to manage digital records.

### **5.4 Conclusions**

All the three objectives of the study that are stated below were met.

#### **5.4.1 To establish the problems of managing police records which can be solved by digitisation**

The challenges that were outlined in this study was the loss of records, space, time consuming and disappearance of records.

#### **5.4.2 To determine skills available to digitise and manage digitised records among the traffic officers .**

Lack of skills among most of the police officers was a challenge that emerged from this study. Another challenge was inadequate funding.

#### **5.4.3 To find out interventions that need to be implemented to embrace digitised traffic offence records management by the Namibian police, Omusati region.**

The study established that the interventions required to embrace digitised traffic offence records were: piloting the digitisation, resources and benchmarking to ensure that the digitisation will not be a flop.

### **5.5 Recommendations**

The researcher recommends that the police should prioritise continuous training and development for a digital crime management system to be a success. The study further recommends that the police introduce a digital crime record to avoid the loss of records that will compromise the justice system. With the introduction of digital records in place, there will be enhancement in managing traffic records, resulting in accurate records and enhanced retrieval.. The study further recommends that benchmarking be done before implementing a digitisation project.. The police should avail a dedicated budget for the project, for its success.

### **5.5 Areas for further research**

Noting the challenges of managing police traffic offence records, the researcher proposes that another research be conducted at the national level where a thorough investigation will be done at all 14 Police Headquarters in the country . This will be significant to establish how the national



police manage the various crime related records which include rape, domestic violence, arm robbery , assaults and murder.

## **5.6 Final Conclusion**

The study was carried out at two police stations that only had traffic units and revealed how digital crime records enhance edge in the crime prevention and management service. It also established the importance of the need for police officers to have the right skills.

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## **APPENDIX A: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR POLICE OFFICERS**

### **SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS**

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Experience: at this station \_\_\_\_\_

### **SECTION B: Traffic crime records**

1. Can you please share how your station keep manual crime records?
2. What are the benefits or strengths of manual crime records?
3. What challenges do you encounter with keeping manual crime records?
4. What are your and staff under you perceptions of digitized crime records?
5. What do you think are the benefits of digitized crime records?
6. What challenges do you foresee in adopting digitized crime records?

### **SECTION C: Skill requirement**

7. What skills do you think the officers require to digitise and manage digitized crime records?

### **SECTION D: Interventions**

8. What do you think needs to be done to adopt digitization of crime records in the Namibian Police?
9. Do you have anything you may want to suggest on the adoption of digitized crime records in the Namibian Police?

**APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

My name is Loide Mpingana Jason. I am doing a degree of Bachelor of Arts in Records and Archives Management (Honours) to the University of Namibia. As part of the course, I am conducting a research on the topic, "**Investigating the enhancement of traffic offence records management through Digitisation in the Namibian Police in the Omusati Region.**" You are kindly requested to complete the consent form.

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided to me	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project and my privacy will be respected.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names) to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	I understand the interview will last for approximately 30 to 40 minutes to complete	
9.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Participant:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Researcher:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX C : RESEARCH LETTER

University of Namibia, Private Bag 13301, Windhoek, Namibia  
340 Mandume Ndemufayo Avenue, Pioneerspark  
☎ +264 61 206 3111; URL.: <http://www.unam.edu.na>



Department of Information and  
Communication Studies

29 June 2022

To Whom It May Concern

**Re: Request for Permission to Conduct Research**

We wish to introduce to you Ms Loide Jason, a fourth year student conducting research in partial fulfilment of the B.A. in Records and Archives Management (Hons). Her research project is titled “Investigating the enhancement of traffic offence records through digitization in the Namibian Police in the Omusati Region”. Please find attached the research proposal.

We are requesting your assistance by granting the student permission to conduct the study on your institution. We rely on the support of our stakeholders for the success of our programmes.

Her contact details are [loidejason@gmail.com](mailto:loidejason@gmail.com) tel. 0814307508.

Thank you in advance for your support.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'C. Nengomasha'.

Prof C.T. Nengomasha

Supervisor, Department of Information and Communication Studies

Cell: 0812787617; Office: 2063641; email: [cnengomasha@unam.na](mailto:cnengomasha@unam.na)

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

POL 716



Namibian Police Force

**MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS, IMMIGRATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Tel. No: (+264 61) 209 3111  
Fax: No: (+264 61) 220 621

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Enquiries: Comm. Mafwila/ Insp Ngesheya

Our Ref.: 8/3/1  
Your Ref.:

OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL  
Namibian Police Force  
Private Bag 12024  
Ausspannplatz  
WINDHOEK  
Namibia

04 August 2022

Ms. L. Jason  
P.O. Box 61182  
KATUTURA

Dear Madam

**RE: PERMISSION FOR RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION**

1. The above mentioned subject matter has reference.
2. Your request to conduct academic research study in the Namibian Police Force titled: *"Investigating the enhancement of traffic offence records through digitization in the Namibian Police in the Omusati Region"* is hereby **approved**.
3. You are urged to ensure that information that will be provided to you will be treated with higher level of confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose except for only this academic research.
4. Your interest and willingness to carry out a research study within the Namibian Police Force is highly appreciated. Hence, this office would appreciate sharing the research findings with the Namibian Police Force.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

  
S.H. NDEITUNGA, OMS  
INSPECTOR-GENERAL: NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE

  
LT-GEN



