ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AS FACTORS FOSTERING SECRETARIES' EFFECTIVE RECORD KEEPING

Owoeye, Ifeoluwa Joseph
owoeyeij@gmail.com
Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State
&
Ikuenomore, Olubusayo Mosunmola
ikuenomoreom@gmail.com
Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ogun State
&
Adesina, Shakirar Olaoti
yshakirat74@gmail.com
Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso

Abstract
The study examined Artificial Intelligence (AI) as factors fostering secretaries' effective record-keeping. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive research design of a survey type was used. The population of the study comprised sixty-three (63) secretaries in Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED, Ijagun, Ogun State. The whole population was used as the sample size using the enumeration method. Researchers developed a questionnaire tagged 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Secretaries' Effective Records Keeping Questionnaire (AISERKQ) was used for data collection with a reliability coefficient (r = .93). Research questions 1 and 3 were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, while research question 2 was answered using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC). The researchers, with the help of three (3) trained research assistants, participated in the process of distributing the questionnaires to the respondents and explaining to them the reasons for the study. The findings of the study showed streamlining and improving record-keeping for secretaries by automating tasks, enhancing data management, providing valuable insights, automate tasks like document classification, data extraction, and record retrieval, freeing up secretaries for more strategic work, improve data security, manage records retention policies and analyze data to offer actionable insights were among the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' records keeping. There was a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective records keeping ($r = .553$, $p < .05$). Lack of formal record management policies, inadequate training in electronic record keeping, difficulty of managing large volumes of information, data security, and accessibility, and compliance with regulations were among the issues facing secretaries' effective records keeping. It was recommended that the organization should endeavour to equip secretaries' offices with modern and latest digital tools like AI, with the view to aid the organization's record-keeping, and a capacity-building programme should be organized for secretarial staff (secretaries) on how to use AI in record-keeping effectively.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Secretaries, Records Keeping

Introduction

In today's organization, the role of secretaries has gone beyond typing and entertaining visitors; they now act as assistant managers. The Secretary is responsible for ensuring meetings are effectively organised and minuted, maintaining effective records and administration. Upholding the legal requirements of governing documents, charity law, company law, and many more. Hence, a secretary is an administrative professional who plays an integral role in business and other organizational environments. Secretaries are typically the individuals who maintain and organize office tasks, implement procedures, and carry out additional administrative duties, depending on the nature of their employment. According to Wilson, Erina, and More blessings (2024), typical responsibilities of the secretary job include answering calls, taking messages and handling correspondence, maintaining diaries and arranging appointments, typing, preparing and collating reports, and filing. In the words of Omigie, Krubu, and Anthony (2023), secretaries develop the annual work plan and programs, ensuring their conformity with the priorities of every organization and the approved annual budget, ensuring appropriate auditing procedures are implemented and overseeing their implementation in compliance with the approved annual budget.

In an office setting, a secretary provides crucial administrative and clerical support, ensuring smooth daily operations and efficient communication. Key functions include managing correspondence, scheduling meetings, maintaining records, and acting as a point of contact for internal and external stakeholders (Osagie & Oladokun, 2024). They also often handle phone calls, greet visitors, and assist with various tasks to support executives and other staff. Secretaries often manage the main phone lines, directing calls to the appropriate person or department. They draft, prepare, and distribute emails, letters, and other forms of communication, managing mail and packages, which includes receiving, sorting, and distributing incoming and outgoing mail and packages, ensuring all correspondence is properly documented and filed (Ojo, 2024). Kirshan, and Atia (2023) reiterated that secretaries in organization schedule meetings, appointments, and other events for individuals or teams, organizing and preparing for meetings which includes booking venues, preparing agendas, and distributing materials, organize and manage both physical and digital files, ensuring easy access to information, monitoring inventory and ordering necessary supplies to maintain a well-stocked office; while Kuteyi and Fasoranti (2020) stated that in some cases secretaries may oversee the work of other administrative staff or new hires, they may serve as a link between management and staff or between different departments, ensuring adherence to company policies and procedures, maintaining discretion and professionalism when dealing with sensitive information and in some cases, secretaries may be involved in communicating with external parties.

Mobila (2022) opined that secretaries' functions include meeting minutes, resolutions, and official correspondence, ensuring that these documents are readily accessible for legal or regulatory review. However, record keeping in a secretary's office involves systematically organizing and storing documents and information related to the organization's activities. This includes creating, maintaining, and retrieving records, both physical and electronic, to ensure easy access to information when needed. According to Abah (2023), organizing documents into folders, cabinets, or electronic systems according to a logical system (e.g., alphabetical, numerical, chronological, or subject-based) as well as recording official minutes of meetings, including decisions, discussions, and action items, ensuring accuracy and clarity, keeping track of office supplies, making sure the office has what it needs, and placing orders when supplies are low in some offices managed by secretaries.

Chukwuka (2022) stated that secretaries records keeping ability involved around maintaining accurate contact information for relevant individuals and organizations, handling incoming and outgoing correspondence, ensuring proper filing and retrieval of documents, storing inactive records in a secure and accessible location for future reference, often following a retention schedule. However, Wilson et al. (2024) were of the views that secretaries' records keeping also entailed ability to ensure the security and confidentiality of sensitive information, complying with data protection regulations. They further postulated that employing office software and systems for efficient record keeping, including word processing, databases, and email, could aid better aid keeping. Omigie et al. (2023) concurred that a well-maintained record-keeping system helps maintain order and efficiency in the office, serves as evidence of actions, decisions, and transactions, promoting transparency and accountability.

Secretaries' proper record keeping can be crucial for meeting legal and regulatory requirements, accurate and readily available records support informed decision-making, and that can be invaluable for documenting the organization's history and activities. However, Kirshan, and Atia (2023) lamented that the problems in office record keeping for secretaries include difficulty managing both physical and electronic records, a lack of clear policies, insufficient training, and the challenges of information overload. These issues can lead to inefficiencies, loss of important information, and difficulty in retrieving data when needed. Osagie and Oladokun, (2024) propelled that in some developed nations like the United States of America (USA) and the United Kingdom (UK), the growing rate of digital technology tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) has now been utilized by secretaries in maintaining office records for proper keeping for office sustainability.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the workplace is fundamentally transforming operations through automation, advanced data analysis, and optimization of physical and digital environments. Its primary benefits include significant cost savings, increased efficiency, and an enhanced employee experience with a better work-life balance. Mobila (2022) said AI is fundamentally changing office work by automating tasks, improving efficiency, and enabling smarter decision-making. AI-powered tools handle routine tasks like data entry, scheduling, and email management, freeing up secretaries for more strategic and creative work. This includes automating workflows, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing productivity through tools like Robotic Process Automation (RPA). According to Adesanya et al. (2020), AI ability to automatically classify and tag records revolutionizes, and how data is stored and retrieved. If secretaries can used natural language processing, AI can easily anticipate the intent of queries, ensuring users find what they need quickly and accurately that may be of help towards effective record keeping.

Statement of the Problems

The inability of organizations to keep records which sometimes manifested from the lapses on the model or methods of keeping records by the secretaries is of major concerns to the stakeholders in secretarial profession. When files are in disarray and challenging to find, it can negatively impact organization in many ways. Poor record keeping can result in time inefficiencies, higher labour costs and crabby secretaries. The model of keeping records traditional seems to be fading away, as this method does not guarantee sustainability of the organization records which are sensitive towards performance and sustainability. However, despite series of attempt by the organizations in ensuring records are kept for the benefits in the

long run, there still issues with data leakages and loss. This study sought to examine Artificial Intelligence (AI) as factors fostering secretaries' effective records keeping.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine Artificial Intelligence (AI) as factors fostering secretaries' effective record-keeping. To achieve the main objective, the following specific objectives were raised:

1. Identify the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping.
2. Relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping.
3. Itemize challenges facing secretaries' effective record-keeping.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study.

1. What are the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping?
2. Is there any relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping?
3. What are the challenges facing secretaries' effective record-keeping?

Methodology

A descriptive research design of survey type was used in this study. The technique helped the study to collect opinions of the respondents (secretaries) on the issues raised towards answering research questions. The population of the study comprised sixty-three (63) secretaries in Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED, Ijagun, Ogun State. Enumeration method was used in selecting sample size, and since, population of the study was not large and manageable, the whole was studied. The researchers developed a questionnaire tagged 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Secretaries' Effective Records Keeping Questionnaire (AISERKQ) was used for data collection. This questionnaire was divided into three sections. These sections comprised demographic characteristics of the respondents, roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping, and issues facing secretaries' effective record-keeping. The validation of the questionnaire was done by three experts, two were from the Department of Business Education, TASUED, and one from the Department of Test and Measurement in the same university. All the corrections and suggestions raised were made accordingly.

The reliability exercise was carried out among five (5) Business Education Lecturers in Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye. The data collected were subjected to Alpha Cronbach based on each research question, with reliability coefficients (r = .81; .84, and .89) for research questions 1, 2, and 3, respectively. Three research assistants were employed and trained by the researchers. The researchers with the help of three (3) trained research assistants, participated in the process of distributing the questionnaires to the respondents and explaining to them the reasons for the study. However, after administration of the questionnaire to the respondents who happened to be secretaries, only 61 out of 63 copies of the questionnaires distributed for administration were retrieved. Retrieval rate was reported as 96.9% and used for analysed. Research questions 1 and 3 were answered using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, while research question 2 was answered using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC). Any mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as agree, while any score below 2.5

was regarded as disagree. For PPMC, when the p-value is less than the significance level ($p < .05$), the research question is positive or otherwise.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping

Items	Mean	SD
1. Streamlining and improving record-keeping for secretaries by automating tasks	2.84	1.004
2. Enhancing data management	2.97	.999
3. Providing valuable insights	2.73	1.032
4. Automate tasks like document classification	2.90	.946
5. Data extraction and record retrieval	3.11	.885
6. Freeing up secretaries for more strategic work	3.16	.893
7. Improve data security	2.91	.955
8. Manage records retention policies	3.24	.777
9. Analyze data to offer actionable insights.	3.34	.799
Cluster Mean	3.02	.9211

Fig 1: Pie-chart showing the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' record-keeping

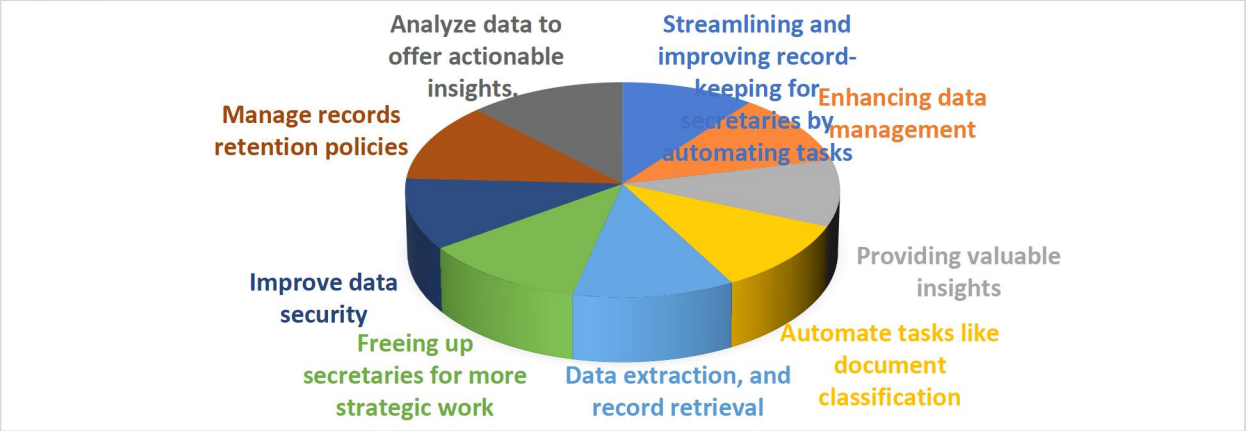

Table 1 showed that (mean 3.02 SD .9211) was greater than the benchmark mean value 2.50. This implied that streamlining and improving record-keeping for secretaries by automating tasks, enhancing data management, providing valuable insights, automate tasks like document classification, data extraction, and record retrieval, freeing up secretaries for more strategic work, improve data security, manage records retention policies and analyze data to offer actionable insights were among the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' records keeping.

Research Question 2: Is there any relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping?

Table 2: Relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping

Variables	Mean	SD	df	r-value	p-value
Secretaries' effective record-keeping	29.821	10.926			
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	21.053	8.842	59	.553	.002

Table 2 depicted that there was a relationship between the explanatory variable and the dependent variable in the order of ($r = .553$, $p < .05$). On this premise, the researcher concluded that there was a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping.

Research Question 3: What are the issues facing secretaries' effective record-keeping?

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on the issues facing secretaries' effective record-keeping

Items	Mean	SD
1. Lack of formal record management policies.	3.11	.904
2. Inadequate training in electronic record keeping	3.19	.871
3. Difficulty of managing large volumes of information	3.12	.902
4. Data security	3.25	.831
5. Accessibility, and compliance with regulations	3.30	.864
Cluster Mean	3.19	.874

Fig 2: Pie-chart showing the issues facing secretaries' effective records keeping

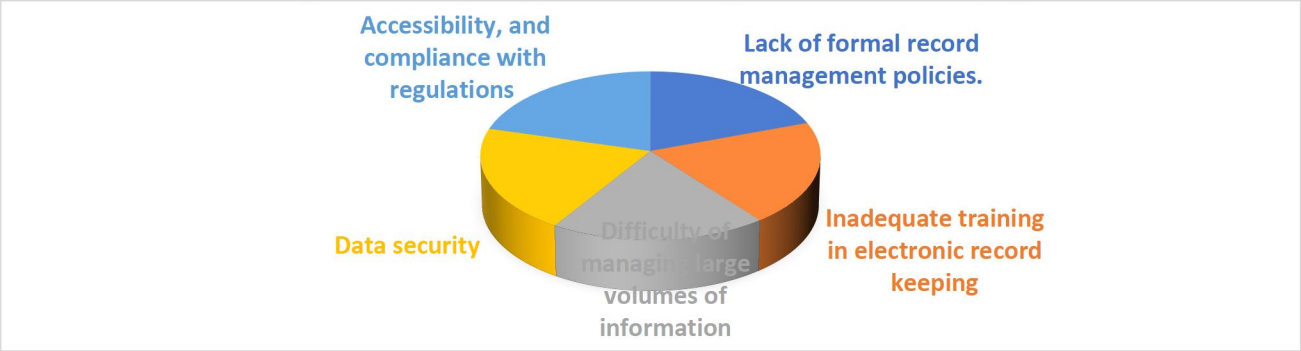

Table 3 revealed that (mean 3.19 SD .874) was greater than the benchmark mean value of 2.50. The implication of this was that lack of formal record management policies, inadequate training in electronic record keeping, difficulty of managing large volumes of information, data security, accessibility, and compliance with regulations were among the issues facing secretaries' effective record-keeping.

Discussion of Findings

Research question 1 revealed that streamlining and improving record-keeping for secretaries by automating tasks, enhancing data management, providing valuable insights, automate tasks like document classification, data extraction, and record retrieval, freeing up secretaries for more strategic work, improve data security, manage records retention policies and analyze data to offer actionable insights were among the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' records keeping. These findings were in agreement with Abah (2023) whose findings indicated AI is a viable digital tool that aids secretaries' functions in terms of effective

record-keeping ability, as well as Kirshan and Atia (2023) agreed that AI is a valuable digital tool that enhances secretaries' or office manager office records for organizational sustainability.

Research question 2 revealed that there was a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective record-keeping. These findings were in tandem with Mobila (2022), who concluded his findings that digital tools such as AI are acting as valuable means through which secretaries' performance can in increased through effective record-keeping. While Kuteyi, and Fasoranti (2020) stated that AI and other digital tools aid secretaries' job performance via effective records management and effectiveness.

Research question 3 showed that lack of formal record management policies, inadequate training in electronic record keeping, difficulty of managing large volumes of information, data security, accessibility, and compliance with regulations were among the issues facing secretaries' effective record keeping. These findings are corroborated with Chukwuka (2022) who found that there are problems confronting secretaries' job effectiveness in today organization which include poor training sessions, inadequate skills to manage a large volume of data and Omigie et al. (2023) concluded that the issues of cyber data insecurity and poor record management policies of organization are germane challenges facing secretaries' office management records.

Conclusion

Having examined Artificial Intelligence (AI) as factors fostering secretaries' effective records keeping, the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study that: streamlining and improving record-keeping for secretaries by automating tasks, enhancing data management, providing valuable insights, automate tasks like document classification, data extraction, and record retrieval, freeing up secretaries for more strategic work, improve data security, manage records retention policies and analyze data to offer actionable insights were among the roles of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aiding secretaries' records keeping; there was a positive relationship between Artificial Intelligence (AI) and secretaries' effective records keeping; and lack of formal record management policies, inadequate training in electronic record keeping, difficulty of managing large volumes of information, data security, and accessibility, and compliance with regulations were among the issues facing secretaries' effective records keeping.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are raised:

1. The organization should endeavour to equip secretaries' offices with modern and latest digital tools like AI, with the view to aid the organization's records keeping, and the capacity building programme should be organized for secretarial staff (secretaries) on how to effectively use AI in records keeping.
2. The organization should mandate secretaries to utilize AI in office responsibilities as a way to keep records saved for future usage.
3. The organization itself to adhere to the use of the latest office records management, ensure data security and accessibility, likewise formulate flexible polices and guidelines to guide office records from leakages.

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