

## Records Creation and Knowledge Sharing Practices in Faith-Based Organizations: A Case of the Anglican Church of Kenya, Nairobi Diocese

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### Abstract

Record creation is a core tenet of records management that enables knowledge sharing within organizations. In decentralized organizations such as churches that rely heavily on informal communication, record-keeping ensures continuity, accountability, and institutional memory. This study examined how records creation practices optimize knowledge sharing in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Nairobi Diocese. The target population included clergy, administrators, and parish councils within the selected parishes. The study was guided by the SECI model of knowledge creation and Record Continuum theory and used a mixed-methods approach. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews, and pretesting was done to ensure validity and reliability. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentages, mean, and standard deviation, while qualitative data were thematically analyzed. Descriptive statistics showed that records creation had a mean score of  $M = 3.654$ ,  $SD = 0.540$ , indicating moderate-to-strong documentation within the Diocese. Pearson correlation showed a significant relationship between records creation and optimizing knowledge sharing ( $r = .442$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Qualitative findings noted that the diocese regularly created records for formal and compliance-related activities, such as sacramental registers, financial records, governance minutes, and official correspondence. However, documentation for activity reports, handover notes, and lessons learned was less consistent, and participants identified limited staff guidance as the main obstacles. The results clearly showed that systematic recording of events in churches through minutes, reports, registers, and correspondence improves information accessibility, cooperation, organizational memory, and evidence-based decision-making. The study recommends a diocesan records creation policy that specifies documentation standards through clear procedures, staff training, and proper records management systems to enhance information sharing.

**Keywords:** *Knowledge sharing, records management, knowledge management, storage systems, Anglican Church of Kenya*

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## 1. Introduction

Knowledge is a strategic asset that facilitates decision-making, innovation, and organizational learning. In faith-based organizations, most knowledge is conveyed verbally and can be lost during leadership changes. Record creation is the formal process by which an institution documents its activities to create usable knowledge. This paper examines how record creation affects knowledge-sharing optimization in ACK Nairobi Diocese.

Globally, organizations are increasingly incorporating digital records and knowledge management systems to improve information retrieval and continuity. As such, these systems succeed or fail based on standard classification, effective access control, version management, record preservation, and staff skills. In the absence of supportive policies, appropriate infrastructure, and skills, the move towards electronic and hybrid record keeping is likely to exacerbate the fragmentation already evident within organizations (Franks, 2025; Oweru & Mnjama, 2016)

In Africa, record-keeping has proven to be essential, although still underdeveloped, in organizational governance. Various studies conducted in religious organizations have found that information is normally communicated through discussions, sermons, briefs, and networks, but record-keeping has been inconsistent. Reliance on such informal communication systems makes it vulnerable to losing information when there is a change of leadership within organizations (C (Chitima et al., 2023; Cyster & Salubi, 2022)

A study carried out in Kenya also showed that poor record-keeping systems have resulted in delays in information retrieval, lack of accountability, and loss of institutional memory. The shift from paper-based to hybrid and electronic environments has challenged standardization, security, preservation, and continuity. The importance of an efficient records system has been established by Ambira and Kemoni (2011) (Ambira et al. (2019), whereas Matasio (2017) revealed problems within church records systems.

The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) Nairobi Diocese generates various records from its administrative, financial, pastoral, sacramental, and governance activities across the diocese and its parishes. When developed systematically, kept securely, and retained based on their administrative, legal, or pastoral value, these records support accountability, planning, succession planning, and documentation. The study found that records facilitate ministry coordination, institutional memory, and strategic planning at both the diocesan and parish level. The identified knowledge gap was that, although records management is widely studied worldwide, limited empirical evidence exists on its effects in Kenyan religious organizations.

### 1.1 Problem statement

Knowledge sharing requires effective practices for capturing, securing, accessing, and using accurate information so decisions, experience, and lessons are retained even after individuals leave their positions. Properly managed records can make this possible since they allow access, collaboration, institutional memory, and decision-making based on evidence (Alshwayat et al., 2021; Fayyaz et al., 2021)

However, evidence from African religious institutions suggests ongoing reliance on oral communication, scattered record-keeping, inadequate documentation, and poor retention practices (Cyster & Salubi, 2022; Chitima et al., 2023). These problems delay access to records, cause repetition, lead to loss of historical data, and disrupt leadership transitions. In Kenya, research on the effects of records management on knowledge-sharing processes remains limited (Ambira & Kemoni, 2011; Matasio, 2017).

The ACK Nairobi Diocese produces records crucial to governance, administration, financial transparency, membership management, and program coordination. The organization's Strategic Plan (2026-2030) cites poor records and data management systems as an institutional challenge and recommends establishing a records and information management hub. However, little empirical evidence exists on how records creation processes hinder or facilitate optimal knowledge sharing in the diocese. This lack of evidence means any intervention may focus on technological or isolated records management approaches without understanding which records creation processes correlate most with knowledge sharing.

## 1.2 Research Objective

This study sought to establish how record creation, storage, use, and retention affect information access, collaboration, institutional memory, and decision-making in the ACK Nairobi Diocese.

## 2. Literature Review

Record creation involves the intentional recording of the activities, transactions, and decisions made by an organization through a means that will make the records complete, authentic, and accessible (Dwivedi, 2022). This process involves using forms and formats for classification, metadata, and naming to ensure records are created and available for retrieval and reuse. According to researchers, record creation is the first step in the record life cycle, and problems here will affect storage and use (Franks, 2025; Shepherd & Yeo, 2003). Records must be developed in accordance with established records management guidelines to ensure longevity and quality. Yusof and Chell (2000) agrees that the life cycle of records begins when records are created or received in an institution. Research shows that recordkeeping supports efficient operations and preserves organizational knowledge. Ambira and Kemoni (2011) found that standardized recordkeeping processes in Kenyan public organizations led to more efficient and effective administration. Likewise, Becerra-Fernandez et al. (2023) state that recordkeeping turns tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge, enabling collective decision-making. Matlala and Maphoto, (2023) Notes that organizations' creation or collection of records is influenced by a number of factors, including the environment, the type of administration, and the caliber of their workforce. In the religious sphere, Matasio, (2017) has revealed that poor recordkeeping in Friends Church of Kenya caused problems with accessibility and knowledge preservation.

Globally, research has examined how technological innovations affect record creation. According to Fred (2023), technological innovations such as the use of templates, metadata, and classification have the capacity to increase efficiency and make it easier to locate information. However, without policy enforcement and staff expertise, technology can create the same fragmentation in a new form.

Religious institutions pose a special problem in this respect. Much information is passed orally through sermons, meetings, and interpersonal communication channels; therefore, its sustainability becomes questionable (Cyster & Salubi, 2022). According to Chitima et al. (2023), the lack of consistent documentation among Pentecostal churches in Zimbabwe led to information disappearing due to leadership changes. This situation mirrors conditions in the Kenyan church.

From a theoretical standpoint, the SECI model of knowledge creation by Nonaka and Takeuchi stresses the significance of externalization through transforming tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. This act supports the process because it involves documenting experience and

lessons. According to the theory of the records continuum (Upward, 1996), creation is not an isolated act but only the starting point of an ongoing cycle.

In conclusion, the literature shows that records creation is significant for optimizing knowledge sharing. An organization needs a thorough records and information management policy in order to effectively manage the creation, upkeep, use, and disposal of records (Chigariro & Khumalo, 2018). Documenting, classifying, and capturing an organization's activities make information more accessible and improve collaboration, institutional memory, and decision-making. Despite this, empirical research on records creation in faith-based organizations in Kenya remains limited, especially since oral tradition dominates records creation in such institutions. This research attempts to fill this gap by investigating the impact of records creation on knowledge sharing optimization within the Anglican Church of Kenya, Nairobi Diocese.

### 3. Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive survey design within a mixed-methods framework. This was suitable because it allowed quantification of record-creation behaviors while also providing an opportunity to gather qualitative information about contextual problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Ikamari et al., 2015). The study used a mixed-methods research design to achieve triangulation. The study was conducted in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) in Nairobi Diocese, with a target population of 278 respondents. The minimum quantitative sample size was calculated from the target population of 278 using Yamane's formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. Substitution gave  $n = 278 / [1 + 278(0.05^2)] = 278 / 1.695 = 164$ . The minimum quantitative sample was therefore 164 respondents. Proportionate allocation preserved the relative size of the three respondent categories; simple random sampling was then used within each category, resulting in 44 clergy, 64 administrative staff, and 170 parish council members. The instruments were pretested in ACK Thika Diocese. The study ascertained the research instruments' content, construct, and face reliability. Reliability was achieved by computing Cronbach's alpha coefficients in SPSS. Quantitative data analysis used descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and frequency), Pearson correlation, and multiple regression to test relationships between record creation and optimal knowledge sharing. Qualitative data analysis used thematic analysis focused on the documentation process, classification, and version control.

### 4. Results and Discussion

Data were collected using questionnaires that were administered to the selected clergy, admins, and parish council. Out of 181 questionnaires distributed, 164 (90.6%) were considered for analysis. For the interviews, all 10 planned key informants completed the interviews (100%).

#### 4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents.

The study analyzed respondents' background characteristics by gender, position, and length of service. Results indicated that male respondents constituted 54.3% ( $n = 89$ ), female respondents 43.3% ( $n = 71$ ), and 2.4% ( $n = 4$ ) preferred not to state their gender. Parish council leaders were the largest respondent category at 61.0% ( $n = 100$ ), followed by administrative staff at 23.2% ( $n = 38$ ) and clergy at 15.9% ( $n = 26$ ). A total of 72.0% ( $n = 118$ ) had served for at least five years.

The distribution ensured that the quantitative evidence incorporated both organizational oversight and day-to-day administrative experience. The 72.0% ( $n = 118$ ) who had served for at least five years were well placed to explain changes in filing, retrieval, handover and continuity, while newer office holders contributed current experiences of access and transition.

This participant profile is consistent with Nwaomah and Nwaomah (2021), whose examination of church records drew on leaders and personnel with direct operational knowledge of recordkeeping conditions. Including clergy, administrative staff, and parish council leaders therefore strengthened the institutional relevance of the findings without treating length of service as evidence of statistical representativeness, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Characteristics of Questionnaire Respondents**

| Characteristic    | Category              | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| Gender            | Male                  | 89        | 54.3    |
|                   | Female                | 71        | 43.3    |
|                   | Prefer not to say     | 4         | 2.4     |
| Position          | Parish council leader | 100       | 61.0    |
|                   | Administrative staff  | 38        | 23.2    |
|                   | Clergy                | 26        | 15.9    |
| Length of service | Less than 5 years     | 46        | 28.0    |
|                   | 5-10 years            | 51        | 31.1    |
|                   | 11-15 years           | 34        | 20.7    |
|                   | Above 15 years        | 33        | 20.1    |

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#### **4.2 Records creation practices and knowledge optimization**

The study examined how records creation practices influence knowledge-sharing optimization. Respondents were asked to describe how records creation practices optimize knowledge sharing. This section presents findings on systematic organization of records, records documentation procedures, completeness and accuracy of records, documentation of important meetings, Staff guidance on records creation, and records creation practices in relation to preserving organizational knowledge, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Records creation practices in optimizing knowledge sharing at Anglican Church of Kenya-Nairobi Diocese**

| Statement (n= 164)                                                           | SD<br>f (%) | D<br>f (%)   | N<br>f (%)    | A<br>f (%)    | SA<br>f (%)   | Mean  | SD    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Records are systematically created for major organizational activities.      | 0<br>(0.0%) | 7<br>(4.3%)  | 59<br>(36.2%) | 66<br>(40.5%) | 31<br>(19.0%) | 3.742 | 0.813 |
| Documentation procedures are standardized across the Diocese.                | 1<br>(0.6%) | 15<br>(9.3%) | 68<br>(42.0%) | 66<br>(40.7%) | 12<br>(7.4%)  | 3.451 | 0.789 |
| Records created are complete and accurate.                                   | 0<br>(0.0%) | 11<br>(6.8%) | 57<br>(35.2%) | 72<br>(44.4%) | 22<br>(13.6%) | 3.648 | 0.800 |
| Important meetings and decisions are adequately documented.                  | 0<br>(0.0%) | 7<br>(4.3%)  | 42<br>(25.9%) | 80<br>(49.4%) | 33<br>(20.4%) | 3.858 | 0.787 |
| Staff are guided on how to create and document records.                      | 3<br>(1.8%) | 16<br>(9.8%) | 64<br>(39.3%) | 67<br>(41.1%) | 13<br>(8.0%)  | 3.436 | 0.846 |
| Records creation practices support preservation of organizational knowledge. | 0<br>(0.0%) | 8<br>(4.9%)  | 48<br>(29.3%) | 78<br>(47.6%) | 30<br>(18.3%) | 3.793 | 0.795 |

*Note. SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neutral; A = agree; SA = strongly agree. Percentages are based on the valid n for each item and may differ slightly from 100.0% because of rounding.*

Table 2 shows an overall mean score of 3.654 (SD = .540), indicating that record-creation practices were moderately established. Documentation of important meetings and decisions received the strongest support (M = 3.858, SD = .787), with 69.8% (n = 113 of 162) agreeing or strongly agreeing. Respondents also rated preservation of organizational knowledge positively (M = 3.793, SD = .795), with 65.9% (n = 108 of 164) agreeing. The lowest-rated statements concerned staff guidance on records creation (M = 3.436, SD = .846; 49.1%, n = 80 of 163) and standardization of documentation procedures across the Diocese (M = 3.451, SD = .789; 48.1%, n = 78 of 162).

Records creation was positively correlated with knowledge-sharing optimization ( $r = .442$ ,  $p < .001$ ) but was not independently significant in the multivariable model (Beta = .114,  $p = .168$ ). This does not diminish the importance of creation; rather, it indicates that records generate organizational value when they are subsequently controlled, stored, used, and retained within a coherent lifecycle.

The relatively lower ratings for staff guidance and standardization suggest the weakness lay less in whether records were created and more in whether they were created in a consistent, complete, and reusable form. This finding aligns with Cyster and Salubi (2022), who found that valuable tacit knowledge in a religious organization was often shared without systematic documentation, and with Chitima et al. (2023), who linked inadequate policy and trained personnel to records loss in church settings. It also corroborates Matasio (2017), who identified the need for clearer guidance and integrated records procedures in a Kenyan church. Ajiboye et al. (2016) whose Anglican Church study showed that records creation forms part of a wider set of records practices supporting administration. The comparison suggests that ACK Nairobi Diocese reflects a recurrent church-records challenge: documentation occurs, but inconsistent

capture standards reduce the ability of later storage, retrieval, and retention processes to preserve the record's full organizational meaning.

In qualitative findings, the Diocese regularly created records for formal and compliance-related activities, such as sacramental registers, financial records, governance minutes, and official correspondence. However, documentation for activity reports, handover notes, and lessons learned was less consistent. Participants noted workload and delayed documentation, unclear responsibilities, poor handover, inconsistent formats, and limited staff guidance as the main obstacles. They also noted that some records documented activities and results for accountability but did not sufficiently document the justification, experiences, and lessons needed for future organizational learning. These results align with Matasio (2017), who found gaps in records-management procedures, and Cyster and Salubi (2022), who found that tacit knowledge in a religious organization was regularly shared informally but not systematically transformed into explicit knowledge.

Analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative results shows that record creation strongly affects the effectiveness of the knowledge-sharing process. Even though the documentation process is consistent, its classification, versioning, and templating are not.

### Knowledge Optimization

The study assessed the current level of knowledge-sharing optimization in terms of information accessibility, collaboration, availability of organizational knowledge, institutional memory, and decision support, and whether the records management practices have improved knowledge-sharing optimization, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Respondents' Assessment of Knowledge-Sharing Optimization**

| Statement (n= 164)                                                               | SD<br>f (%) | D<br>f (%)   | N<br>f (%)    | A<br>f (%)    | SA<br>f (%)   | Mean  | SD    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------|-------|
| Organizational information is easily accessible when needed.                     | 1<br>(0.6%) | 13<br>(7.9%) | 66<br>(40.2%) | 63<br>(38.4%) | 21<br>(12.8%) | 3.549 | 0.839 |
| Staff collaborate effectively through sharing organizational knowledge.          | 0<br>(0.0%) | 10<br>(6.2%) | 60<br>(37.0%) | 76<br>(46.9%) | 16<br>(9.9%)  | 3.605 | 0.751 |
| Institutional memory is preserved within the Diocese.                            | 1<br>(0.6%) | 11<br>(6.7%) | 68<br>(41.5%) | 64<br>(39.0%) | 20<br>(12.2%) | 3.555 | 0.816 |
| Documented information supports informed decision-making.                        | 1<br>(0.6%) | 6<br>(3.7%)  | 40<br>(24.5%) | 80<br>(49.1%) | 36<br>(22.1%) | 3.883 | 0.812 |
| Organizational knowledge remains available despite leadership transitions.       | 1<br>(0.6%) | 15<br>(9.2%) | 72<br>(44.2%) | 60<br>(36.8%) | 15<br>(9.2%)  | 3.448 | 0.810 |
| Records management practices have improved knowledge sharing within the Diocese. | 0<br>(0.0%) | 8<br>(4.9%)  | 56<br>(34.6%) | 73<br>(45.1%) | 25<br>(15.4%) | 3.710 | 0.786 |

*Note. SD = strongly disagree; D = disagree; N = neutral; A = agree; SA = strongly agree. Percentages are based on the valid n for each item and may differ slightly from 100.0% because of rounding.*

Table 3 shows an overall mean score of 3.625 (SD = .530), indicating a generally positive, although not uniformly strong, assessment of knowledge-sharing optimization. Respondents also agreed that records-management practices had improved knowledge sharing (M = 3.710, SD = .786; 60.5%, n = 98 of 162) and that staff collaborated effectively through organizational knowledge sharing (M = 3.605, SD = .751; 56.8%, n = 92 of 162).

The pattern is consistent with Cyster and Salubi (2022), who found that knowledge in a religious organization was frequently exchanged through interpersonal and meeting-based mechanisms but was not consistently captured for future reuse. This also aligns with Chitima et al. (2023), who linked weak records policies, limited infrastructure, and inadequately trained personnel to records and information loss in church settings, and with Matasio (2017), who emphasized that weak paper and electronic records systems threaten accessibility and continuity in Kenyan churches.

### Knowledge-Sharing Mechanisms

The study assessed existing knowledge-sharing mechanisms; respondents described how the diocese currently shares organizational knowledge and identified improvements that would strengthen knowledge sharing. The responses were coded into current mechanisms and improvement priorities as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Knowledge sharing mechanisms**

| Category                | Theme                                                  | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Current mechanism       | Meetings, synods and staff briefings                   | 53        | 38.1    |
| Current mechanism       | Instant messaging, telephone and informal consultation | 37        | 26.6    |
| Current mechanism       | Formal circulars, email, minutes and reports           | 29        | 20.9    |
| Current mechanism       | Handover notes and shared working documents            | 22        | 15.8    |
| Current mechanism       | Newsletters and public announcements                   | 21        | 15.1    |
| Recommended improvement | Official repository and communication channels         | 19        | 23.5    |
| Recommended improvement | Improved documentation and periodic briefs             | 18        | 22.2    |
| Recommended improvement | Integrated policy and governance                       | 14        | 17.3    |
| Recommended improvement | Regular learning and cross-parish exchange             | 14        | 17.3    |
| Recommended improvement | Digital collaboration skills                           | 12        | 14.8    |
| Recommended improvement | Institutional learning files                           | 12        | 14.8    |

*Note. 139 respondents reported current mechanisms, and 81 respondents reported improvement priorities. Multiple responses were permitted; percentages therefore do not sum to 100%.*

Meetings, synods and staff briefings were the most common current mechanism (38.1%, n = 53), followed by instant messaging, telephone and informal consultation (26.6%, n = 37). The leading improvement priorities were an official repository and communication channels (23.5%, n = 19) and improved documentation with periodic briefs (22.2%, n = 18).

These findings corroborate Cyster and Salubi (2022), who found that knowledge in a religious organization was frequently exchanged through dialogue and meetings but was not consistently captured for future reuse. They also align with Chitima et al. (2023), who linked gaps in records policy, personnel, and infrastructure to information loss in church organizations, and with Matasio (2017), who identified the need for guidance, trained personnel, and integrated paper and electronic systems in a Kenyan church setting.

The descriptive and qualitative findings converged to show that knowledge-sharing optimization within the Diocese was generally positive but not fully effective. The overall mean score exceeded the neutral midpoint ( $M = 3.625$ ,  $SD = .530$ ), and respondents particularly recognized the contribution of documented information to decision-making. However, relatively high neutral responses regarding information accessibility, institutional memory, and knowledge retention during leadership transitions reflected interview concerns about fragmented communication channels, uneven access across parishes, and weak handover practices.

## 5. Conclusion

The study found that knowledge sharing at the Nairobi Diocese of the Anglican Church of Kenya is positively correlated with efficient record creation procedures. Maintaining appropriate records, such as minutes, reports, registers, and correspondence, preserves crucial institutional knowledge and facilitates information access, sharing, and use for decision-making. The quantitative results showed a significant positive relationship between record creation and optimized knowledge sharing ( $r = .442$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The results also demonstrated that documenting experiences, choices, and lessons facilitates the transformation of individual knowledge into collective organizational knowledge. However, inconsistent naming, classification, documentation, and version control hamper efficient knowledge exchange.

## 6. Recommendations

Diocesan leadership should invest in an electronic records management system to improve the security, classification, retrieval, and sharing of records, and create and implement a clear records creation policy covering documentation, classification, naming, metadata, and version control. Additionally, staff and vicars should receive regular training on proper records creation and management. The admins in charge of records should develop and consistently use standardized templates for church records. At the parish level, vicars should oversee parish employees responsible for records and ensure records are created accurately, kept up to date, and submitted to the Diocese when necessary.

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