

FACTORS MILITATING AGAINST EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL RECORDS BY PRINCIPALS IN MAKURDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examines factors militating against effective management of school records by principals in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. The study was guided by three research questions. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The population of the study consisted of 7,472 students in 22 secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area. The sample of the study was 380 respondents. The instrument used for data collection was a researcher self-developed structured questionnaire. The instrument was titled “Factors Militating Against Effective Management of Schools Records Questionnaire” (FMAEMSRQ)” Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The Chi-Square Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed there are significant challenges militating against availability, utilization and maintenance of school records in secondary schools. The study therefore, recommended that the school heads should work in conjunction proprietors and organize seminars for staff in order to enlighten them on the basic that is required to make available school records without hitches for it its effective management. Staff should sensitize on the procedure for accurate record keeping through workshop and conferences in order to make proper use of the available school records among others.

Keywords: *Effective management, School records, Availability of school records, Utilization of school records, Maintenance of school records and Secondary school.*

Introduction

Information is every organization's most basic and essential asset and in common with any other business assets recorded information requires effective management. The importance of records in the existence of every formal organization such as the school call for proper record management for the attainment of goals to which schools were established (Kachallah, 2014). School records are official documents, books and files containing essential and crucial information of actions and events, that take place in schools. School records refer to all the necessary documents kept in order to aid the smooth running of academic programmes in the school (Nwoma, 2015). School record implies keeping a regular account of the progress of various aspects in the school such as teachers, students, non- teaching staff, admission, examination, library, academic and co-curricular activities. School records showcase what the history of the school is, how the school progresses and how the direction and condition of the school development looks like for a period of time (Uduak, 2017). The post primary schools are expected to keep basic records that will enhance effective teaching and learning process. Such records are grouped into two categories; which are: statutory and non - statutory records. Alabi, (2017), posits that: "Statutory records are records required by law to be kept as a matter of routine to help in the management of the school. The non - statutory records are those records that a school manager may consider vital for the day to day management of the school, but are not required by law to be kept by the school". Statutory record according to Adebayo (2014) include: admission/withdrawal register, attendance register, scheme of work, time table, log

book, visitors book, movement book, school diary, lesson plan, among others. The non – statutory records include the following: cash book, stock book, punishment book, calendar, inventory book and staff meeting minute book, among others...

According to Uzodimma (2016), school records are important tools for effective planning and administration of the school. School records occupy strategic position which aid effective and efficient organization and administration of the school. In line with the foregoing, Nwugoh (2013) maintained that because of the various activities that take place in the schools as well as the differences in age and social-economic background of students, academic attainment, religious affinity, among others' it becomes necessary that accurate account of what happens to individuals and groups within the school be documented. This involves preservation of information on people, events or things within the schools, be it primary, secondary or tertiary.

Record management is the area of administrative management that is concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records of an organization throughout its life cycle. Record management is one of the most important administrative elements of any school organization in which the school administrator or principal must adhere to. Hence, the purpose of record keeping and management is to ensure that accurate and proper records of students' achievements and growth, information on school activities and matters that will promote efficiency and effectiveness of the school activities are kept. Record management can also be defined as the application of systematic and scientific control of recorded information that is required

for the operation of the school. Such control is exercised over the distribution, utilization, retention, storage retrieval, protection, preservation and final deposition of all types of records within the school. The term Record management according to Ukachukwu (2018) encompasses record availability, utilization and maintenance. School record management deals with the availability, utilization and maintenance of records. It involves meaningful activities and roles undertaken by school administrators (Principals and staff) of the school to maintain and keep up to date information regarding the school. According to Durosara (2002), records are important tools for effective planning and administration of school, so it is impossible to effectively plan and administer any formal organization which records are either not kept or mismanaged. The education system as a social organization has numerous sub-systems or levels that are managed to ensure some coherence and continuity. To successfully achieve this, records must be safely kept and managed.

School record management is of paramount value because it is the basis through which effective and efficient school administration can be achieved. The aim of record management is to achieve the best retrieval and exploitation of school record in the school system and also to improve the efficiency of record making and keeping process. Record management helps to control the quality and quantity of information that is created in a manner that effectively serves the need of the school (Akube, 1991 and Fasasi 2004). School record management according to Fasasi (2004) is meant to enhance the performance of secondary school administrators. Adequate record management co-ordinators and protects an institutions records, sharpens the effectiveness of records as a management

memory which controls the times equipment and space allocated to records and helps to simplify intra-organizational and communication problems. Management of records in secondary school like any other organization is cyclical in nature which involves the principals, teachers, students, messengers, cleaners, and other administrative staff. Bulk of these records are handled by principals and are often kept manually, hence the process of making available, retrieval, utilization and maintenance of records are difficult. It is pertinent to note that data and information generated from an effective and efficient record managements helps the school to make future projection, useful decision, presents facts and figures for future references; thereby enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization and administration of school. In view of the importance of records in the administration of secondary schools, education law in virtually all states of the federation requires that every school must keep certain specified records. For instance, section 22(1) of education (General) Regulation of Education Law, 1964 of Nigeria as stated in Oleka (2013) stipulates that every institution other than a corresponding college or training college shall keep records and books. Those that are statutory specified by law are referred to as statutory records, while those necessary are known as non-statutory records. Large records of varying degree of significant and magnitude are produced in the course of daily administration and transactions in every school.

One of the emerging problems confronting the school administrators and staff is how to effectively and efficiently provide, handle, control, utilize and maintain the ever-increasing records data base that are necessary for the administration of secondary schools.

Various challenges that envelop the process of school records keeping in an organized school environment may be traceable to, unavailability of record keeping facilities, inadequate utilization of submitted records, inadequate security and inadequate co-operation among school personnel. Over the years, public secondary schools in Nigeria in general and Benue State in particular have been experiencing administrative challenges centered majorly on faulty record management system linked to unavailability of record facilities, inadequacy in utilization and maintenance of records. It is obvious that many students have lost in the past series of vital academic report which made them repeat classes due to the fact that record of result of examination they wrote and passed may have got missing. Many principals and teachers appear to be lacking proper knowledge of essence of properly kept records in the administration of secondary schools.

For the realization of educational goals, the availability of record keeping facilities is imperative. Record availability according to Adeyemi (2016), are those documents obtainable in whatever, medium received or created by an organization in the course of business because of the information contained. Record availability in educational management and administration are vital to the continual existence of the school as an organization. School records; if made available and put to use at the appropriate time will enable both principals, teaching and non-teaching personnel to have knowledge of their students, and through this they will be in a better position to assist the students academically, morally and socially. In addition, they would be able to present the information to whoever may need it (Uzoho, 2006). Generally speaking, record availability

in school implies the existence of the required records (statutory and non-statutory) for the purpose of effective school operation. School records must have the quality of being at hand when needed. Record availability deals also with the documentation of data to its utmost update towards achieving any organizational goals. The effort of school principals and staff to preserve and retrieve the information of an individual staff and students and making use of them when needed is referred to as school record management. According to Kulbril (2011), it is the administrative responsibility of both principals and teachers to embrace ideal administrative practices that ensures effective and efficient record keeping in school system. To successfully achieve this, records must be available and stored in such way that they are accessible and safe guarded against environmental damage. The principals and teachers must be very careful in keeping records, checking and cross-checking statutory records kept by the class teachers with emphasis placed on honesty and faithfulness in keeping them.

United National Educational Scientific and Culture organization UNESCO- (2016) described record as a proof of a transaction and further stated that record are set of information put down on books, files computer and other document on every event that goes on in an organization and are always made available or accessible for future references. Omoha (2013) opined that effective management (level of availability, utilization and maintenance) of school records by principals depends on certain procedure and functions such as effective supervision, creation of records, effective leadership, monitoring and training of adequate personnel, record storage and retrieval, discipline and

effective communication, delegation of duty, developing record skills and motivation. It is safe when one says that school records are important because they serve as major information tool that sustain the school and aid in achieving educational goals and objectives. Records engender teaching competence and maintain the trend in the history of teaching and learning processes. School records provide much help for effective planning and implementation of appropriate course of actions that support the continuous survival of the school.

The word utilization as a concept is applicable to virtually every human engagement and it determines the frequency or usage of facilities, funds, objects or materials. However, Uduak (2017) defined utilization as the act of using something or the manner in which something is used. It simple refers to as the state of being used to the fullest extent, potential or ability. In reality, utilization is a practical activity that can be conducted to maximize output of a process that yields positive result. It is mostly applicable to capacity, store, finance and records utilization. Maintenance of school record refers to the process of safe-guarding record and its' facilities against internal or external destruction. Ugwumba (2012) affirmed that record maintenance in school is any activity carried out with the aim of keeping the surface of school records as neat as possible and to ensure that records are in good condition and placed in orderly manner. The maintenance of school records is imperative in ensuring consistency and continuity of educational practices. Anyanwu (2019) was of the view that the maintenance of records is obviously important because proper record maintenance make school records available for utilization and serve as major

information tools that sustain the school and aid in achieving educational goals and objectives. The maintenance and management of the school records requires specific management procedures and functions to be followed in order to achieve good results. According to Obadara (2020), these include effective leadership and supervision, monitoring, adequate provision and training of personnel, record storage and retrieval, discipline, effective communication, delegation of duty and motivation. According to Ujah (2016) a good record contains all relevant details which are recorded or written accurately and honestly. This according to the author can be achieved when events and activities are documented without delay or postponement. It is pertinent for the school head or whoever that is responsible for writing reports to do so giving details of the relevant points. When reports are partially written or points haphazardly jotted down, it does not amount to good record keeping or giving proper information. School records are not to be kept or written in a hurry. There should be adequate time allocated to the writing of reports and keeping of records to avoid errors and inaccuracy where profomas are used. According to Hanior (2016) the person responsible for filling them should ensure that all the columns are accurately completed.

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Statement of the Problem

Record management is one of the basic functions of school administrators and cannot be over emphasized in any way. The continuity of any school organization depend on available and accessible useful records of past activities. In view of the importance of records in the administration of secondary schools, the education law in virtually all states of the federation requires that every school must keep certain specified records. Despite the importance of school records management in the achievement of educational objectives, these records do not seem to be adequately management in terms of provision, utilization and maintenance by Government and school administrators. From observation, it becomes obvious that accurate, reliable, and trustworthy records that fulfill evidential requirement are been created but not properly managed. Observation of the researcher showed that most school administrators (principals) in Benue State secondary schools are experiencing many difficulties in carrying out their administrative functions. These challenges may be connected to unavailability, inadequate utilization and poor maintenance of school records that seem to have characterized secondary school administration in Benue State. it is

against this background that, this study seeks to examine factors militating against effective management of school records by principals in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine factors militating against effective management of school records by principals in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. Examine challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State.
2. Examine challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools.
3. Examine challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State?
2. What are the challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools?
3. What are the challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and tested for the study:

1. There are no significant challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State.
2. There are no significant challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools.
3. There are no significant challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design explores and describes the opinions, feelings, views, preferences and attitudes of the selected sample of the population of the study.

The population of this study consisted of 7,472 students in 22 secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area (Benue State Teaching Service Board, 2021). The reason for the use of public secondary schools is to aid the researcher have access to exact population of the study for easy determination of sample size and application of the study findings.

The sample of the study was 380 respondents (students) out of the population of 7,472 students in 22 public secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area. This is based on Taro Yamene (1964) in Emaikwu (2019) who states that for a study of known

population “N” and error level, the minimum sample size requirement should be given by the

formula, Formula:
$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

The researchers adopted a multi-stage sampling procedure; in the first stage, the researchers adopted simple random sampling to sample one school from each of the 11 council wards in the local government. This technique gave each school equal opportunity to participate in the study. In the second stage, proportionate sampling technique was adopted to sample respondents from each of the sampled schools. This technique enabled the researcher to have a fair representation of the study population proportionately. In the third stage, simple random sampling technique was employed to access individual sampling; this technique gave the respondents equal opportunity to participate in the study.

The instrument used for data collection was a researcher self-developed structured questionnaire. A self-developed questionnaire will be based on the research variables in line with the research questions. The instrument was titled “Factors Militating Against Effective Management of Schools Records Questionnaire” (FMAEMSRQ)”. Each of the variables had four items which were designed to elicit information from the respondents to aid the researchers in their investigation to answer the research questions. The researchers employed a four-point type modified rating scale with the response mode of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1 respectively.

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The Chi-Square Statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

This section dwells with the analysis of research questions that guided the study using mean and standard deviation scores and since the four-point rating scale was adopted for the research 2.50 have been used as the mean cut-off mark.

Research Question One: What are the challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Challenges Militating Against Availability of School Records In Secondary Schools

N	Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	X	Std.	Decision
1	Poor storage facilities affect availability of school records	380	67	136	100	77	2.51	1.01	Accepted
2	Falsification of record/data affects availability in school	380	65	198	26		2.79	.80	Accepted
3	Inaccurate entries in schools affects availability of records	380	146	104	65	65	2.87	1.11	Accepted
4	Lack of training in school records keeping affects availability of records in school	380	95	152	81	52	2.76	.98	Accepted
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		380					73	98	

Table 1 shows that items 1-4 have mean and standard deviation as follows: 2.51, 2.79, 2.87 and 2.76 with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.01, .80, 1.11 and .98 respondents with a cluster mean of 2.73 and a standard deviation of .98 above the cut-off mean point of 2.50. This explains that respondents have accepted that poor storage facilities affects

availability of school records, falsification of record/data affects availability in school, inaccurate entries in schools affects availability of records and that lack of training in school records keeping affects availability of records in school. The result implies that availability of school records is a factor militating against school records in secondary schools.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Challenges Militating Against Utilization of School Records in Secondary Schools?

N	Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	x	Std.	Decision
5	Incorrect record keeping affects it utilization in schools	380	91	202	74	13	2.98	.76	Accepted
6	Poor knowledge of school records affects its effective usage	380	205	121	54	-	2.94	1.20	Accepted
7	Lack of personnel affect effective use of records in school	380	261	63	28	28	3.47	.92	Accepted
8	Non-submission of data affects its utilization	380	119	144	52	65	2.83	1.05	Accepted
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		380					01	.98	Accepted

Table 2 shows that items 5-8 have mean and standard deviation as follows: 2.98, 2.94, 3.47 and 2.83 with a corresponding standard deviation of .76, 1.20, .92 and 1.05 respectively with a cluster mean of 3.01 and a standard deviation of .98 above the cut-off mean point of 2.50. This explains that respondents have accepted that Incorrect record keeping affects it utilization in Schools poor knowledge of school

records affects its effective usage, Lack of personnel affect effective use of records in school and non-submission of data affects its utilization. The result means that utilization of school records is a potential challenge militating against school records.

Research Question three: What are the challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Challenges Militating Against Maintenance of School Records in Secondary Schools

N	Description	N	SA	A	D	SD	Std. Dev.	Decision
9	Lack of proper supervision affects records maintenance in school	380	49	199	78	54	2.64	.88 Accepted
10	Staff laziness militate against effective maintenance of school records	380	154	135	39	52	3.03	1.03 Accepted
11	Poor arrangement of record affects its maintenance	380	118	158	39	65	2.87	1.04 Accepted
12	Poor storage facilities affects records keeping	380	154	108	53	65	2.92	1.11 Accepted
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		380				37	05	Accepted

Table 3 shows that items 9-12 have mean and standard deviation as follows: 2.64, 3.03, 2.87 and 2.92 with a corresponding standard deviation of .88, 1.03, 1.04 and 1.1 respectively with a cluster mean of 2.87 and a standard deviation of 1.05 above the cut-off mean point of 2.50. This explains that lack of proper supervision affects records maintenance in school, staff laziness militates against effective maintenance of school records, poor arrangement of record affects its maintenance, poor storage facilities affect records keeping respondents have accepted that use of school records. The result depicts that maintenance of school records enormously affect school records in secondary schools.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There are no significant challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State.

Table 4: Chi-square scores on the Challenges Militating Against Availability of School Records in Secondary Schools.

Responses	fo	Fe	Df	χ^2 cal.	p	Remark
	83					
	137		3	30.211	.000	H ₀ is rejected
	96					
	64					

Table 5 shows that Chi-square calculated is 30.211, *P* values is $0.000 < 0.05$ at df of 3. Since the *p* value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State is rejected. This implies that there are significant challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State.

Hypothesis 2: There are no significant challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools.

Table 5: Chi-square scores on the Challenges Militating Against Utilization of School Records in Secondary Schools.

Responses	fo	Fe	Df	χ^2 cal.	p	Remark
	117					
	138		3	17.979	.000	H ₀ is rejected
	55					
	70					

Table 6 shows that Chi-square calculated is 47.979, P values is $0.000 < 0.05$ at df of 3. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools. This implies that there are significant challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 3: There are no significant challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools.

Table 6: Chi-square scores on the Challenges Militating Against Maintenance of School Records in Secondary Schools.

Responses	fo	Fe	Df	$\chi^2_{cal.}$	P	Remark
	122	95.0				
	159	95.0	3	97.158	.000	H_0 is rejected
	38	95.0				
	61	95.0				

Table 6 shows that Chi-square calculated is 97.158, P values is $0.000 < 0.05$ at df of 3. Since the p value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there are no significant challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools. This implies that there are significant challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analyzed data the following findings are thus discuss:

The first finding revealed that availability of school records is a factor militating against school records in secondary schools. This finding implies that poor storage

facilities, falsification of record/data, inaccurate entries in schools, lack of training in school records keeping affects availability of records in school. This finding is confirmed with test of hypothesis 1 which revealed that there are significant challenges militating against availability of school records in secondary schools Makurdi Local Government area of Benue State. This finding is in line with Nnenna and Sarah (2019) who found that most of the statutory and non- statutory records were available and utilized in a great extent, only few records were unavailable and utilized in a very low extent. In the same vein, Ikgbusi& Iheanacho (2016) revealed among others that many schools are understaffed and are still facing inadequate subject teachers, in other words, most principals are forced to teach some classes in addition to their official work of administration.

The second finding revealed that utilization of school records is a potential challenge militating against school records. This finding implies that incorrect record keeping; poor knowledge of school records, lack of personnel and non-submission of data affects utilization of school records in schools. This finding is confirmed with test of hypothesis 2 which revealed that there are significant challenges militating against utilization of school records in secondary schools. This finding is in line with Usman (2017) whose results indicated that attendance register and visitors' book were not adequately utilized and maintained despite being provided in public secondary schools in Kaduna metropolis.

The third finding revealed that maintenance of school records enormously affects school records in secondary schools. This finding means that, staff laziness, poor storage facilities and poor arrangement of record militates against effective maintenance of school

records. This finding was also confirmed with the test of hypothesis 3 which revealed that there are significant challenges militating against maintenance of school records in secondary schools. This finding is in contrast with Seniwoliba (2017) who revealed that records management is decentralized and are managed manually through filing of hard copies in folders and kept in metal cabinets based on individual ability and knowledge at the various departments/sections/units and the faculties and schools. It was further affirmed that only the Academic Affairs Section and the Finance Department that have well developed soft ware's to store and retrieve information. Similarly, Nnenna (2020) study revealed that most of the statutory and non- statutory records were maintained and utilized to a great extent, only few records were maintained and utilized in a very low extent.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it has been established that there are several factors militating against effective management of school records by principals in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State; these factors range from availability, utilization and maintenance of school records in secondary schools. The study established that poor storage facilities, falsification of record/data, inaccurate entries in schools, lack of training in school records keeping affects availability of records in school. Also, incorrect record keeping, poor knowledge of school records, lack of personnel and non-submission of data affects utilization of school records in schools.

Recommendations

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

- i. The school heads should work in conjunction proprietors and organize seminars for staff in order to enlighten them on the basic that is required to make available school records without hitches for it its effective management.
- ii. Staff should sensitize on the procedure for accurate record keeping through workshop and conferences in order to make proper use of the available school records.
- iii. The school should endeavour to make available the basic facilities that are required for effective and efficient maintenance of school records.

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