

Qualitative Record Management Skills for Effective Service Delivery in Nigerian Education System

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Abstract Record keeping is a strong instrument for keeping an organization alive and healthy. It is the only veritable tool for keeping the government and the nation informed as to the need or otherwise of further investment in education and other subsectors of economy, the direction as well as the dimension of such investment. One of the major reasons education has not been utilized adequately to achieve national transformation and reconstruction of the third world nations is due to poor record management by educational managers, administrators and teachers. The study examined qualitative record management skills for effective service delivery in Nigerian education system. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The sample size was 1260 respondents (260 Educational Administrators and 1000 classroom teachers), from 260 public secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria. A 52-item structured questionnaire built on 4-point scale was used for data collection. Senior lecturers and the deputy registrars in the 36 tertiary institutions in the south east zone of Nigeria consisted of the population of the study. A 33 – item structured questionnaire built on a 4 – point scale was used for data collection. Three research questions and a null hypothesis guided the study. The instrument was validated by two experts in Educational Management and Policy. Mean and t-test statistic tool at 0.05 level of significance were used for the analysis of the research questions and hypothesis respectively. Findings revealed low extent application e-recording, inadequate lecturers in terms quality/ quantity and administrative officer's skills.

Keywords: education system, service delivery, records, record management, skills what is record

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1. Introduction

Records and its effective management are very vital for quality existence of man, education system, good performance and national development. Good records management on the capacity of the nations' Ministry of Education, various education commission/boards, agencies etc in successful planning and administration of education and effective resource management, it has become a problem area in the management of education in Nigeria. The study arose due to apathy, capacity, gap or lack of proper understanding of records life cycle on the part of those saddled with responsibility of records management. The knowledge and skills among others include knowing what records are, administrative purposes of keeping records, skills of keeping records, retrieving records e-record keeping skills and record management skills for service delivery.

Records are those documents kept by management or administration of organization for future reference. UNESCO (United Nations for Educational Science and Cultural organization) (1991) described record as a proof

of a transaction while [1] stated that records are set of information put down on books, files and other documents on every event that goes on in an organization. Records therefore, are information in whatever form which are very necessary for existence and smooth running of educational institutions. For formal organization and formal business transactions, records must be written document where the activities of school organization for instance are written. It must fall within the normal routine of an activity. The implication is that all activities, actors, programmed and functions that are connected to teaching and learning as means of attaining school goals must be documented. These records according [3] could be kept in books, files, computers or flash drives and are always made available/accessible for future reference. This is exigent because records as documental statement of facts about persons, facilities, proposals and activities in and about the school are the life wire for school administration. To this effect school administrator should not only maintain accurate records but must ensure that all staff keeps accurate records of their activities.

Types of Records

Various types of records are kept to ensure efficiency of school managers/administrators. There are records that are required by education law and there are also those that are not required by law but are still very essential that they are kept by the school administrators. Records required to be kept by law are known as statutory or mandatory or obligatory while those that are not under law but enhance efficiency and effectiveness are called non-statutory or non-mandatory or non-obligatory records. Examples are shown on the table below.

S/N	STATUTORY	NON-STATUTORY
1.	Admission register	Record of physical development.
2.	Student class attendance register	Inventory
3.	Diary of work	Stock book
4.	Time – table	Minute book
5.	Lesson Notes/Plan	Fee register
6.	Staff class attendance register	Duty roster register
7.	Continuous assessment	Staff record
8.	Log book	Health records
9.	Visitor’s book	Movement books
10.	Corporal punishment	Account books etc.
11.	School budget	Receipt booklet
12.	Testimony certificates	
13.	Transfer certificate	
14.	National Policy on Education	
15.	Teachers Service Manual etc.	

[3,4,7,8,9].

For quality service delivery in education system, these two categories of records can again be classified as:

- a. Pupils records: admission, progress and withdrawal
- b. Teachers records: teaching staff statistics, reports on teachers
- c. General staff records
- d. Financial records: fees, incomes and expenditure
- e. Material records: inventory, assets etc [1,8]

Purposes of Record Keeping

Records are kept for the following purposes:

1. To keep the government and the society informed as to the need or otherwise of the further investment to education, the direction as well as the dimension of such investment.
2. To enhance effective guidance and counselling services to be provided for students’ social/academic activities.
3. To provide useful information for higher institutions of learning and employers of labour for placement.
4. To provide effective monitoring for parents and guardians about their children’s education.
5. To provide useful and reliable statistics for educational planning and provide solutions to various educational problems.
6. They enable inspectors/supervisors to assess teachers’ performance

Achievement of these enumerated purposes avails the organization and its members beautiful and qualitative opportunities of benefiting from the documents as well as keeping up with trends.

Benefits of Good Record Keeping

The benefits of good record keeping are described as its importance. These are innumerable. They include:

- * Provision of necessary information for decision-making at school systems and co-employers of labour.
 - Guidance and counseling purposes.
 - The teacher is enabled to access necessary information in guiding the learners.
 - Aiding administrative decision-making and efficiency at the school level.

- Saving the school from unnecessary embarrassment and legal tussle.
- Providing direction to the overall development of the school.
- Providing standard means of measuring progress of an individual child in various learning skills
- Providing strong source of assistance to the child.
- A means of assessing the influence of family history on the general behaviour and performance of the child.
- Facilitating monitoring of the movement of children from one school to another [3]. In addition [1] asserted that record keeping aids teaching and learning, new teacher familiarization with the previous activities in the school, performance appraisal research and for supervisors’ assessment.

Attributes/Qualities of a Good Record

One thing is to keep record and another is to ensure that such records kept are of good quality. Quality records are indispensable in quality decision-making which is the key function of an administration. Administrators should know that poor and inaccurate information outcome are poor planning, poor decision-making hence doom to such an organization. This is why every administrator must be versatile with the basic attributes of a quality record. A good record must therefore possess the following qualities viz:

- Easy storage and retrieval
- Easy to understand and interprets
- Easy to locate and readily available for reference at any time.
- Ability to give detailed/complete information about events.
- Ability to generate further information.
- Ability to be utilized to take appropriate actions on what it is collected for ie. good records must be valid and reliable [2].
- Must be found as hard and soft copy for free access without physical barriers

Good Record Maintenance Culture

An administrator that takes pain to prepare and keep quality record should endeavour to have a good maintenance culture. The researcher has observed with regrets, that one of the glaring problems facing today’s effective management of education in Nigeria is total lack of maintenance culture. This is more appalling when government has made every effort to make funds available for the provision of school facilities for teaching and learning resources. The importance of school records in effective and efficient management of the Nigerian education system as earlier pointed out has called for necessity in adequate record keeping maintenance culture. There are issues that can lead to poor maintenance culture in Nigeria education system.

Issues Associated with Quality Record Keeping Maintenance Culture in Nigeria

Some of the issues are:

1. Incomplete and unreliable sources of data.
2. Improper entries, inaccurate, incomplete and incorrect documentation.
3. Improper, poor and inadequate storage facilities.
4. Duplication of records.
5. Organized falsification of data.

6. Failure of government/school management to make available the necessary official registers for correct documentation.
7. Lack of training in school record keeping.
8. Some of the school heads do not see the urgent need of keeping quality records.
9. The documents for keeping the records were seldom standardized.
10. Increasing retention of useful but outdated records.
11. Inadequate safe space for storage of such volumes.
12. Record keeping approach is still more of analogue
13. Lack of safe guard on the confidentiality and accuracy of the records [1].

Skills Imperative for Quality Record Management in Secondary Educational System

It should be noted that quality administration is not only judged or assessed by school administrators' professional competence in leadership style but also on his level of record keeping professional competence. There abound many ways to quality record keeping in school system. According to [5] skills imperative for quality service delivery in secondary school system abound. Some of the skills are Skills of effective filling in cabinets, using computer (e-record keeping), using audio and video cassettes, keeping non-falsified data, proper records classification, using drawers and shelves, use of flash drive and CD ROMs, avoiding mutilation of the records, maintenance of secret record, proper management of the books in shelves/cabinet, good record keeping maintenance culture. Others include:

1. Use of drawers and shelves
2. Use of computer (e-record keeping)
3. Use of audio and video cassettes
4. Avoiding mutilations of the records
5. Ensuring top secret record maintenance
6. Proper management of the books in the shelves/cabinets.

2. Legal Implications of School Records Keeping

Majority of school administrators and classroom teachers appear not to know the legal implications of keeping the expected school records. Education Edict of 1974 of the East Central State of Nigeria indicates that:

1. Any person responsible for keeping the records prescribed by regulation 3 or 4 who fails to produce the books and records so prescribed shall be guilty of an offence.
2. Any person responsible for submitting statement of accounts, voucher or other documents required to be submitted under the provision of regulation 5 who fails to do so shall be quality of an offence.
3. Any member of Management Board of an Institution in which the person is responsible for keeping the records as prescribed by regulation 3 or 4 and who fails to keep or produce the books and records so prescribed shall be guilty of an offence.
4. A person convicted of an offence under these regulations shall be liable to a fine of one hundred naira.
5. Every school administrator should be knowledgeable over this. Administrators and educational experts should imbibe the basic skills in keeping these records.

Part of the skills required are ability to keep the record well, ability to recognize the importance of an issues, a duty and an expected role. Lack of these abilities (skills) apparently will lead to failure or snail speed progress in such school system.

The situation in Nigerian education system seems to be that of inadequate skills of record keeping by the school administrators and their staff. This poor record keeping culture appears to be responsible for the low advance tone as well as students poor academic performance. This in turn seems to hamper level of attainment of quality teaching and learning in the school system. Against the above background and reviewed literature that the paper examined qualitative management skills for effective service delivery in Nigeria Education System with special reference to south east geo-political zone. Specifically attention was on:

- a. availability of records needed for effective service delivery in secondary education system
- b. Staff attitudes toward quality record management.
- c. Extent of the utilization of the available record kept.
- d. Level of records keeping skills of both the administrators and teachers.
- e. Identification of the impeding factors to quality record keeping in Nigerian schools.
- f. Way forward to quality record keeping in the school system.

2.1. Research Questions

1. To what extent are expected vital school records available for effective service delivery in secondary schools in Nigeria?
2. What is the attitude of staff towards record management as a veritable instrument for enhancing teaching and learning?
3. To what extent are statutory records being utilized for effective service delivery in Nigerian secondary education system?
4. To what extent do staff possess the skills of quality record management for effective service delivery in secondary schools?
5. To what extent do the identified impediments in the literature reviewed still impede the quality record management in secondary schools in the study area?
6. To what extent could the solutions proffered serve as items for enhancing staff record management skills?

3. Method

Descriptive survey design was deemed adequate for describing the existing situations and assessment of qualitative record management skills for effective service delivery in the secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria. All the 260 Administrators and 5,800 classroom teachers in public secondary schools in the six educational zones in Anambra State of Nigeria constituted the population of the study.

All the 260 principals (School administrators) were used for the study because of its small size while 1000 classroom teachers were sampled through proportionate sampling technique from the 6 education zones (Anaocha – 601, Awka – 2006, Nnewi – 892, Ogidi – 510, Onitsha – 1,508 and Otuocho – 283). This gave total respondents of

1,260 (260 principals and 1000 teachers). A 52-item researcher’s self- made structured questionnaire built on a 4-point-scale and titled Quality Record Management Skills Questionnaire (QRMSQ) was used to generate data for answering the research questions. The content and face validity were established by two experts from Department of Educational Foundations, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike Abia State of Nigeria. The instrument was subjected to test-retest and Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistical tool was used to obtain a reliability index values of 0.73, 0.80, 0.85, 0.83, 0.85 and 0.82 for the six clusters respectively.

With the help of four trained research assistants, the researchers administered 1,260 copies of the QRMSQ instrument to 1,260 respondents. Out of the 1,260 copies 1,256 were returned and used for the data analysis. That indicated 99.7% return rate. Mean and grand mean were used to answer and analyzed the research questions. Decision rule is that items scoring less than 2.50 weighted mean were regarded as negative response or disagree or low extent while scores above 2.50 were seen as positive response to the items (i.e. agree or high extent). The interval scale ratings for the data presentation in the six tables shown below are as follow:

Interval rating scale used in the tables below

0.00 - 1.49	Strongly Disagree (SD)	OR	Very Low extent (VLE)	} Disagreed/Low extent
1.50 - 2.49	Disagree (D)	OR	High Extent (HE)	

2.50 - 3.49	Agree (A)	OR	Moderate Extent (ME)	} Agreed/High extent
3.50 - 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	OR	Very High Extent (VHE)	

The mean score responses to the items were compiled and interpreted from the data and presented in tables below, according to research questions as shown below.

4. Results

Table 1. Availability of vital records needed for effective service delivery in Nigerian secondary education system

S/N	Vital record extent of Availability for quality educational service delivery	Administrator X	Teachers X	Decision
1.	Register of admission / progress and withdrawal	4.00	3.80	High extent
2.	The log book	3.59	3.06	High extent
3.	Visitor book	3.60	3.00	High extent
4.	School time-table	4.00	4.00	High extent
5.	Students personal files	3.92	3.64	High extent
6.	Teachers lesson notes	2.25	3.44	Varied opinion
7.	Students’ attendance Register	4.00	4.00	High extent
8.	Diary (scheme and record of	4.00	4.00	High extent
9.	Continuous assessment Record	3.65	3.38	High extent
10.	Corporal Punishment book	3.63	2.15	Varied opinion
	Grand Mean	3.67	3.45	

Table 2. Attitudes of school Staff towards quality record management

S/N	Item	Principals X	Teachers X	Decision
11.	School personnel is very careful in keeping documents of staff activities	1.87	2.40	Disagreed
12.	Records of work done are duly being observed by teachers	2.22	2.30	Disagreed
13.	Students roll call are observed accordingly	1.58	1.44	Disagreed
14.	Administrators enforce adequate management culture in schools	2.42	1.90	Disagreed
15.	Teachers utilized e-records	2.46	1.95	Agreed
16.	Teachers are willing to use computer for record keeping.	2.33	1.99	Disagreed
17.	Teachers have good attitude to writing lesson note	1.00	2.06	Disagreed
	Grand Mean	1.98	2.01	

Result in Table 1 reveals 3.67 and 3.45 grand means responses of principals and teachers in secondary schools in Anambra State respectively. The grand means scored above 2.50 weighted mean indicating the general agreement of both respondents that all the ten items are always available to high extent for educational service delivery and that they serve as vital records that must be

kept for smooth and effective educational service delivery. Item by item analysis revealed that only 8 out the 10 items were available to high extent and are also the vital records that must be kept for quality management. Items 6 and 10 indicated varied opinions from both the respondents. While principals agreed that corporal punishment books are vital records and are always available, classroom

teachers disagreed that they are available to a low extent. Teachers agreed to high extent that lesson notes are available to high extent while the administrators (principals) agreed that they are available to a low extent. In conclusion, the two items are available to low extent for quality educational service delivery.

Result in Table 2 reveals grand means 1.98 and 2.01 for both administrators and teachers respectively scored below 2.50 indicating their general disagreement with all the 7 items as staff attitudes towards record management. This implies low extent positive attitude to record management.

Table 3. Extent of utilization of records kept in schools for effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in secondary education system

S/N	Item	Principals X	Teachers X	Decision
18.	Log book	2.60	2.00	Varied opinion
19.	Flash drives/USB	1.40	1.40	Low extent
20.	Lesson note	1.82	1.35	Low extent
21.	Students personal file	2.35	2.10	Low extent
22.	Class time table	3.35	3.47	High extent
23.	Diary (Scheme & Records World)	2.66	3.01	High extent
24.	Staff movement book	2.22	3.14	varied opinion
25.	Corporal Punishment book	1.88	1.15	Low extent
26.	Continuous Assessment records	4.00	4.00	High extent
27.	Register of admission	3.89	3.06	High extent
	Grand mean	2.62	2.47	

Data in Table 3 shows grand means of 2.62 and 2.47 for the administrators and classroom teachers respectively. The grand means are below the dichotomy mean indicating administrators and classroom teachers' general disagreement with the items. This observation also reveals that the items (records available and needed for effective service delivery) are utilized to a low extent. The result also show that only 4 items out of the 10 items represent

records that are utilized at a high extent for quality education service delivery (time-table, Diary, continuous assessment and register of admission). Continuous assessment scored highest indicating the wide agreement that it is a record that majority of the teachers utilized. In effect, the afore-mentioned records are school records utilized for effective educational service delivery in secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria.

Table 4. Extent of possession of skills for quality record management by staff

S/N	Item	Principals X	Teachers X	Decision
28.	Log book	2.45	2.30	Low extent
29.	Flash drives/USB	1.17	2.35	Low extent
30.	Lesson note	2.36	2.40	high extent
31.	Students personal file	2.32	2.46	Low extent
32.	Class time table	2.30	2.22	Low extent
33.	Diary (Scheme & Records World)	1.58	2.44	Low extent
34.	Staff movement book	1.00	1.00	Low extent
35.	Corporal Punishment book	2.79	2.96	High extent
36.	Continuous Assessment records	2.33	2.15	Low extent
37.	Register of admission			
	Grand mean	1.83	2.03	

Result in Table 4 has grand means of 1.83 and 2.03 for administrators and teachers respectively indicating general disagreement of the both respondents on that the staff of secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria possess the necessary skills for managing the itemized records to a high extent. The implication is that both the administrators

(principals) and classroom teachers possess the required skills to a low extent for effective education service delivery. It was observed that only the skills for managing continuous assessment records alone was possess to a high extent.

Table 5. Extent of Impediments to staff possession of adequate skills for records management

S/N	Item	Principals X	Teachers X	Decision
38.	Inadequate training on the skills needed.	3.76	3.88	High extent
39.	Inadequate opportunities for skills acquisition	3.00	3.15	High extent
40.	Ignorance of importance of record management.	4.00	4.00	High extent
41.	Inadequate sponsorship for attendance to workshops, conferences/ seminars on	3.87	3.45	High extent
42.	Inadequate facilities for practice of record management.	3.20	2.95	High extent
43.	Inadequate record management maintenance culture	3.98	3.88	High extent
44.	Inadequate ICT literacy	3.17	3.41	High extent
	Grand Mean	3.43	3.54	

Results in Table 5 show grand means of 3.43 and 3.45 of principals and classroom teachers respectively. The grand means and individual item mean scored above 2.50

indicating that all the 7 items listed are to high extent impediments to the staff effective record management and skills acquisition.

Table 6. Suggested Solutions to Impediments to the staff inadequate record management skills

S/N	Item	Principals X	Teachers X	Decision
45.	Repositioning of teacher preparation institutions for teachers quality record keeping skills	3.92	3.67	High extent
46.	Provision of adequate opportunities for in-service training.	3.26	3.86	High extent
47.	Organizing/seminar/conference/ workshops for educating serving staff on the importance of record management	3.52	3.77	High extent
48.	Sponsorship of the attendance to the conferences/workshops.	4.00	4.00	High extent
49.	Provision of adequate facilities necessary for record management in schools.	4.00	4.00	High extent
50.	Encouraging staff to become ICT literates.	3.55	3.00	High extent
51.	Close supervision/monitoring of staff record management.	3.69	3.24	High extent
52.	Enforcing the education law for statutory records.	2.84	2.92	High extent
Grand Mean		3.60	3.06	

Result in [Table 6](#) reveals grand means of 3.60 and 3.06 for principal and classroom teachers respectively. Since the grand means rated above the weighted mean of 2.50, the implication is that all the 8 enumerated items will serve a solution to the impediments to staff record management to a high extent.

5. Discussion

Results of the study identify expected records that must be available in schools for effective educational service delivery, effective day-to-day running, quality, quantity and maintenance of standards in secondary education. Findings in [Table 1](#) also reveal that these records are available to a high extent in secondary schools. The findings are in line with [\[4,9\]](#) and [\[8\]](#) who identify various categories of records that must be made available by the staff and school for quality educational administration and academic excellence. The records recommended agree with the ten identified by the finding of this study. They include: Admission register, log book, visitor's book, time-table, class attendance register, continuous assessment book etc. The availability of these records in schools as recorded by the study could be because these records are mandatory to keep. Ref. [\[7\]](#) and [\[8\]](#) also observe that in Nigeria educational institutions, staff appears to obey the education law hence they endeavour to keep mandatory records. Expected records and every other record of activities should be available for enhancing teaching and learning activities which are the primary essence of school systems.

Findings of the study reveal poor staff attitude towards record management in secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria:

Administrators and teachers are not very careful in keeping vital documents; records of work done as expected by statutory records are not kept. Students attendance register are not duly kept. Administrators are weak in enforcement of record management culture etc. These findings negate the purposes of record in educational institutions in Nigeria. Ref. [\[7\]](#) emphasizes the purposes and benefits of record keeping in enhancing quality teaching and learning. [\[2\]](#) also noted that good attitude to record; keeping promotes good administration of education.

Inadequate utilization of available records and expected records to be kept are recorded by the study. Poor utilization of statutory and non-statutory appears to be the

cause of educational administration in Nigerian secondary schools. If class attendance register and register of admission are not utilized, the tendency is false information to government and education stake-holders of the statusquo of schools and students. [\[4\]](#) and [\[1\]](#) observe poor utilization of records necessary for stimulating quality teaching [\[5\]](#) particularly reports with dismay inability of secondary teachers to utilization continuous assessment records to improve poor performance of learners. Ref.[\[7\]](#) was of the opinion that school heads should be able to compile useful information about students and staff for purposes of appraisal, school fee receipts indicates number of students who have paid and are qualified to sit for examination.

Inability of secondary school system to maintain quality record management was identified. Findings show that teachers inadequate possession of skills for quality record kept has greatly contributed to the predicament skills they lacked identified included: skills to maintain log book, flash/USB drives lesson notes, student's personal files etc.

These are in confirmation [\[1\]](#) and [\[3\]](#) who reported of the importance and benefits of school records management and the need that all involved in running and management teaching and learning must possess such skills. They also identified impediments to quality record keeping due to staff inadequate skills. [\[3\]](#) recommended that record maintenance culture skills acquisition and implementation should be encouraged.

6. Conclusion

The importance of record management in achieving quality education through educational administration cannot be over emphasized. That is why the paper examined quality record management skills for effective education service delivery in secondary schools in Anambra State of Nigeria. The study identified records that must be kept and made available for smooth running of education. The extent of availability of these records also were identified. Poor attitude to record management by members of school community was reported. Constraints to quality record management were identified and way forward examined and suggested.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations based on the finding include:

There is need for awareness/sensitization of staff on the importance of record management in attainment of goals of education in Nigeria.

There is need to establish record keeping system and maintenance culture. Administrations

Both the principals (administrators) and classroom teachers should be motivated to attend workshops on record keep and management skills.

Higher institutions especially University Lecturers should be enabled to carry out these training exercises.

Government with the assistance of school communities, voluntary organization and non-governmental organization should assist schools in ensuring that facilities need to be kept, maintain and managed are put in place.

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