Full Length Research

Student’s records: Challenges in the management of student personnel in Nigerian tertiary institutions

E. D. Nakpodia

Associate Professor, Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria. E-mail: edwardnakpodia@yahoo.com, Tel: +2348033862036

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This study is on challenges on students’ records in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This is because the life wire of the existence of any organization hinges on adequate information disseminated amongst all members of such organization. The study used samples from Federal, State and Private Universities in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study specially found out if there are significant differences in the challenges in the Federal, State and Private Universities. The design of study is the descriptive survey having all the 7,167 senior administrative staff in Federal, State and Private Universities in the South-South geopolitical zone as the target population. The study used the stratified random sampling techniques to obtain 740 sample size. The instrument used was the questionnaire designed on an adopted four point like scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The test re-test method was used and the Pearson product moment co-efficient statistics was used to obtain a reliability co-efficient r of 0.88 at 5% level for the instrument. Two research questions were raised as guide and one null hypothesis was formulated and tested. The percentage score was used to present and analyse research question one while the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to answer research question two and to test the only hypothesis. The findings revealed that the challenges encountered in the management of records is common to Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigerian.

Keywords: Student’s Record, Challenges, Management, Tertiary Institutions, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Record keeping in an organizational set-up like the school can not be over emphasized, especially to ensure that accurate and proper record of students achievement and growth are kept in schools. The smooth running of any higher institution depends on effective and efficient records management as one of the Student Personnel Services. These records serve the purpose of referring to the past and a signpost to the future. However, on a closer look at Nigeria Universities, one finds that records are not properly kept. Nwagwu (1995) observes that Nigeria does not have a developed record keeping culture in the educational system. But records should be adequately stored and preserved for easy reference and retrieval. Alegbeleye (1993) sees records and information management as an all embracing activity which include form control, correspondence control reports management and control activities, file management records inventory and appraisal records retention and disposition, archives management and control and reprography. According to Anderson and Van Dyke (1992), any institution – primary, secondary or tertiary; large or small; rural or urban; government owned or privately sponsored; gather data to expedite action and to furnish information about students or former students.

Daramola (1995) writes that records are classified as follows:
- **Reference Records:** Policy records which must be possessed by a school which contains Government policies, decisions of governing council, and procedures on funding and moral codes.
- **Administrative Records:** Includes records of great visits, events, annual enrolment of students and records of personnel that have served and still serving in an organization.
- **Academic Records:** Include records of curriculum issues, facilities and equipment for teaching and learning guidelines for the introduction of new academic programmes and students academic records. Others include Official Correspondence and Financial Management Records.

Anho (2006:45-61) classified students’ records services
in the purposes they serve viz:

- **Register of Admission/Matriculation Register:** This shows the list of students enrolled each year for each Course, Department, and Faculty. It contains Admission/Matriculation number, Surname, and other relevant Personal information on the student. It also contains the oath of allegiance and obedience to the University authority and the promise to refrain from any act of violence or any action aimed at disrupting the Universities.

- **Cumulative Records:** These contain the progress report of each student - the scholastic performances and conduct for each course for each session or semester. Transcript and Result are forms of the cumulative records.

- **Permanent Records:** These include student course registration form/card which contains personal data and courses student entered for in each semester/session.

Convocation Brochure which is issued at every convocation ceremony, contains list of all graduated students; indicating their grades/class of degrees, faculties and departments for the session(s) the convocation is serving.

- **Convocation Album:** The photograph of all graduating students, showing names, faculties/departments and years of graduation are entered. References are usually made to it by employers, and institution or persons.

- **Student Disciplinary Entry Book (Log):** It is an historic/legal document kept by each University to record various offences committed by students, the nature of punishment recommended and approved by the University authority, Senate or Council, the date the offence was committed, the date of commencement of punishment, date of expiration of punishment if any, name of person who tried the offender, among others are kept.

However, Olaitan (1995) is of the view that University records are classified into phases:

- Primary-records kept in the office of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Dean, Directors/Controller of different programmes, Librarian, Registrar and the Bursar.
- Secondary includes those in the academic and administrative department office.
- Tertiary phase involves those of supervisors and other officers.

**Review of Related Literature**

**Purpose and Importance of Records**

Student personnel support services are concern with those administrative and supervisory activities other than the classroom/buildings. The aims and objectives of student personnel support services include among others, (a) assisting the government and school administrators to obtain inventory of pupils/students in the schools for proper planning of the University programmes, staffing and provision of facilities. (b) keeping proper school records of admission, placement and progress of students in the school and retrieving same when required.

Records are important in decision making, planning and in general administration of University. Mazikana (1996) puts it that records are indispensable tools for determining the quantity and mix of human and material resources in any organization. From the work of Olagboye (2004) the purpose and importance of records are summarized below:

1. Facilitation of continuity in the administration of a school.
2. Provision of information needed by ex-students for higher and other related institution and employers of labour, for admission or job placement.
3. The provision of data for planning and decision making by school heads, ministries of education and other related education authorities.
4. To provide information needed by lecturers, staff, counselors in working with students. No reason then Maxikana (1996) writes that records are indispensable tools for determining the quantity and mix of human and material resources in any organization.

This record keeping enable the school administrators to know the academic and general progress of students and also report to their parents or guardians when necessary and to inform employers who may require certain information for their employment when out of school.

In his work Anho (2005) noted that the historical beginning o record keeping in school in Nigeria dates back to the records of the just Missionary Schools in the middle of the cost century made up of personal diaries, reports of school inspectors and managers, letters, circulars, reports and other documents from government officials and administrators both in Nigeria and at the colonial office in London.

**Creation and storage of information (Records)**

According to Popoola (1999), creation of records involves
collecting basic data about records and their volume; physical form location, physical condition, storage facilities, rule of accumulation and use, and similar information for the purpose of planning, retention, disposition, microfilming operations and related archival activities.

When the creation of records is not properly managed, attainment of goals and objectives become a problem. These may mainesfcest in difficulty in locating papers/information, bulky files, wrong filing, wrong title of files and having offices clustered with papers and files (Popoola, 2003).

That is why Popoola (2003) noted that there are problems on records creation in Nigeria Universities. Saying that the main problem is the effective creation and control of records as records are the greatest consumers of fund, space and equipment among other service activities in the University system.

Storage of information/records involving the keeping of records in safe custody for easy retrieval. The various types of storage facilities which are in noticeable use in Nigeria Universities includes: Files, shelves, steel cabinets, cupboards, tables, drawers and notice boards. Microfilm which includes; microfilm jackets, roll film, and microficks Electronic which includes computer, word processor, diskettes, flash drives, and magnetic tapes.

However, Iwhiwhu (2005) is of the view that information storage equipment are inadequate in Nigerian Universities which could lead to lose of vital information.

Retrieval and maintenance of record services
Effective retrieval of records encourages information flow. Records retrieval could be efficient and effective by the proper use of computer and its accessories, colour codes, catalogues, indexing, durries and microfilms. Asogwu (2004) writes that records could be maintained for easy retrieval by:
1). Ensuring that files are constantly retrieved.
2). Ensuring proper sorting, modification or outright destruction or achieving some before filling (storage).

Determining the cost of maintenance before storage.
- Signing through strengthening
- Deacidification with the use of alkaline solution to neutralize the acids present and to buffer it against future acidity.
- Lamination through the use of a backing sheet, impregnated with adhesive in a hot press.
- Reformation through substitution, photocopy or microfilming.
- Cleaning and restructuring the record building (storage building)
- Encapsulation; supporting fragile documents, sand miteting the original document between two sheets of clear polyster and fastening them at the edges with

Ayodele (2004) opined that in records maintenance, red tapism hinder proper maintenance with emphasis on rules and regulation which eventually delay repair and maintenance.

Statement of problem
Record management involves the creation, storage, retrieval maintenance, disposition and the use of compact and other manual or electronic means. However, these depend on the disposition of the personnel available, equipment, tools and funds. Presently, findings show that records are poorly managed in Nigeria Universities thereby posing a lot of challenges. Popoola (2003) therefore noted that records management services in Nigeria Universities is facing major crises. Consequently reducing the internal efficiency rate of the Universities, the writer among others also note that the method of retrieval of information from records is time consuming and inefficient. This according to Peretomode (1999) posed a lot of challenges to human resources.

Therefore this study examines the Challenges of Records Management as a function of Student Personnel Services in Nigerian Universities with a view to suggesting effective and efficient ways of meeting these challenges.

Scope of the study
The study used universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria as at the time of the research.

Federal universities
University of Benin, Benin-City
University of Calabar, Calabar
Federal University of Petroleum Engineering, Effurun-Warri
University of Port-Harcourt, Port-Harcourt

State universities
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma
Delta State University, Abraka
Cross River State University of Technology, Calabar
Niger-Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa
River-State University of Science and Technology, Port-Harcourt

Private universities
Benson Idahoa University, Benin-City
Igbinedion University, Okada
Novena University, Ogue-Kwale.

The purpose of the study
The purpose of the study is to identify the Challenges encountered in the Management of Records as function
Table 1: Challenges Encountered in the Management of Records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>ITEMS (Challenges)</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th></th>
<th>State</th>
<th></th>
<th>Private</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Yes %</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Storage space</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Skilled manpower</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Access to information</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Delay in Retrieval</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Power supply</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Security</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Record disposal</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Low morale of staff</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Training &amp; re-training</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Use of ICT</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Creation of records</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Government policy</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Work, 2008

of Student Personnel Services in Nigeria Universities. The study specifically found if there were differences in the challenges faced between the Federal, State and Private Universities in the South-South geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

Research questions
Two research questions were raised as a guide to the study:

- What are the challenges encountered in the management of Records as function of Student Personnel Services in Universities in South-South geopolitical zone in Nigeria?
- Are there differences in the challenges encountered in the management of Records among Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria?

Hypothesis
One null hypothesis was formulated and tested.

Ho: There is no significant difference in the challenges encountered in the management of Records as function of Student Personnel Services among Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria

METHOD
The design of study is the descriptive survey having all the senior administrative staff in Federal, State and Private Universities in the South-South geopolitical zone as the target population. This is estimated to be 7,167 during the 2006/2007 academic year. Due to the large number there was need to sample, the study therefore used the stratified random sampling technique to sample 320 staff from the Federal Universities, 260 staff from the State Universities and 160 staff from the Private Universities bringing the sample size to 740.

The instrument used was the questionnaire designed on four adopted type scale Strongly Agree, Agree to Strongly Disagree. The face and content validity were done by some experts in the department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies and that of Counselling Psychology of the researchers University. The reliability was obtained by the use of test-re-test method using the pearson product moment co-efficient r. to obtain a reliability co-efficient of 0.88 P < 0.05.

The data obtained were presented, the percentages were used to present and analyse research question one while the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to answer research question two and to test the only hypothesis.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS
Research question I
Research question I, what are the Challenges encountered in the management of Records in Nigeria South-South geopolitical zone.

Table 1 shows the percentage of respondents on the challenges encountered in the management of Records in the Universities, from the Federal Universities very high percentages of respondents agreeing with the fifteen listed items as challenges with the least being 83% in Government Policy and as high as 97% for Skilled Manpower. However, the highest negative response was in Record disposal 55%, others are Maintenance, Delay in Retrieval 45% each and Security 40%. This is the same with the State University with negative responses very low under 28%. This is to show that the challenges were noticeable in the State Universities. However, the result is slightly different in the Private Universities. In answer to the research question "What
Table 2: Perception of Staff on the Challenges on Records Management in Federal, State and Private Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F-Cal.</th>
<th>F-Crit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2876</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at 0.05

Table 3: Scheffe Test for Federal and State Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>F-Cal.</th>
<th>F-Crit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at 0.05

Table 4: Scheffe Test for Federal and Private Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>MSW</th>
<th>F-Cal.</th>
<th>F-Crit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at 0.05

Table 5: Scheffe Test for State and Private Universities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>MSW</th>
<th>F-Cal.</th>
<th>F-Crit.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant at 0.05

are the challenges encountered in the Management of Records in Nigeria Universities? They are; Funding, Storage Space, Maintenance, Skilled Manpower, Access to Information, Delay in Retrieval, Power Supply, Equipment, Security, Record disposal, Low Morale of Staff, Training and Re-Training, Use of ICT, Creation of Records, and Government Policies.

This finding therefore revealed that these challenges encountered in the management of Records is common to Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria. This is in line with an earlier writings of Olaitan (1995), Popoola (2003) and Ayodele (2004) which emphasize that these various challenges above are noticeable in Nigeria Universities.

Research question 2

Are there differences in the challenges encountered in the management of Records among Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria.

To answer this research question, the only hypothesis was tested and the result is stated below:

Ho: There is no significant difference in the challenges encountered in the management of records among Federal, State and Private Universities in Nigeria.

Table 2 indicate that the calculated f-value of 23.4 is greater than the critical f-value of 19.50, it therefore holds that the null hypothesis is rejected.

Therefore, there is a significant difference among staff of Federal, State and Private Universities in their perception of challenges encountered in the management of Records in Universities.

To identify the level of the significant difference, the scheffe test was employed.

Table 3 shows that the calculated f-value (24.2) is greater than the critical f-value (19.50) therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. It therefore means there is a significant difference between the perception of staff in Federal Universities as compared to the staff in State Universities with higher mean of 4.4 against 3.3.

Table 4 above revealed that the calculated f-value of 5.14 is far less than the f-critical value of 19.6 which shows that the null hypothesis was accepted. That means there is no significant difference in the challenges encountered in the management of Records in Federal and Private Universities in Nigeria.

Table 5 shows that the calculated f-value of 24.2 is greater than the critical f-value of 19.50, so the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore there is a significant difference in the challenges encountered in the management of Records in State and Private Universities.

The study revealed that there was a significant difference between Federal and State Universities with a mean of 4.4 against 3.3 in the challenges observed in the management of Records. While there was no significant difference between the challenges encountered in Federal Universities and Private Universities with a mean of 4.4 and 3.8 respectively.

Popoola (1999), Iwhiwhu (2005) noted that the appreciable increase in population create more data and lack of practical automated tools to manage records, posses problem in State Universities.

To account for the low difference between Records management in Federal and Private Universities and
significant differences between State and Private Universities, Idris (2001) noted that public property is seen as nobody’s property which can be vandalized, destroyed, stolen or used with reckless abandon, such practices are noticeable in Nigeria Public (Federal and State) Universities.

**Recommendations**

There should be government policy on records management to lower the use of paper and electronic records in our Universities, so as to improve retrieval, storage and management areas especially funding.

Outdated and Non-functioning equipment should be removed or improved. Training and re-training programmes should be embarked upon especially in the area of information and computer technology. There should be curricular review at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of our education to include records management.

Excessive bureaucracy and staff bottleneck should be removed from our Universities especially in connection to records retrieval.

The Vice-Chancellors, should establish Quality Assurance Departments for maintaining all the operations in the system and get feedback for subsequent follow-up actions on records storage and retrieval.

Probity, accountability and transparency, in spending of funds for records such as the library, ICT centres should be enshrined in the management of the University system. This is to curb embezzlement, stealing, abuse or misappropriation of such funds and materials.

**REFERENCES**


