



**MANAGEMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION RECORDS AND RECORD KEEPING FOR SUSTAINABLE QUALITY DELIVERY IN CAPTAIN ELECHI AMADI POLYTECHNIC, RUMUOLA, RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study investigated the management of higher education records and record keeping for sustainable quality delivery in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study discussed records and records keeping in educational institutions especially, higher education. The article enumerated the purposes or importance of record management in higher institutions; some related literature were reviewed accordingly, theoretical framework was looked into and the study was achieved on record continuum theory by Funke Upward in 1990. The study highlighted some qualities of a good educational record keeping. The study found that good records management contributes significantly to administrators' work performance and institutional performance in conclusion records keeping in tertiary institutions improves management performance to a very high extent. It was recommended among others that training programmes in the form of workshops, seminars, conferences be provided for administrative staff with regard to good records management in higher education. It is therefore a known fact that when records are well managed, utilized adequately and appropriately in higher institutions execution of management functions are likely to be easy, effective and sustainable.*

**KEYWORDS:** Management, Higher education, Records, Records keeping, Sustainable, Quality delivery.



## INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions are generally established for the purpose of learning, growth, development and civilization of individuals and the society at large. However, for these goals to be achieved, there is a need for proper record keeping in educational institutions. School records serve as a data bank in which information is deposited and kept with the hope of retrieving and utilizing in the future. Proper keeping and management of education records would enhance planning process, serve as historical record, provide knowledge on academic performance and facilitate schools' financial administration. It will equally provide a basis for advisory and counseling service, since effective records management is very vital for the quality existence of the higher education system and national development (Aleru, 2022).

Ordinarily, one can say that a record is a written document kept for future references. Records are critical to our daily activities in higher education. In fact, no organization can survive without adequate record keeping and information for daily activities. For any organization to function effectively, record keeping and good record management are also considered necessary (Ademola, James & Olore, 2012). In the words of Seniwoliba, Mahama and Abilla (2017), in higher education, record keeping and management are essential. The institution's long-term viability is heavily reliant on the availability of useful records; as a result, records play an important role in higher education management, from the institution's founding to the stages of development, implementation monitoring, evaluation and renewal of its programs and these are vital pieces of information for the institution's continued survival.

Records are information in whatever form which are very necessary for existence and smooth running of educational institutions. Records must be written documents where the activities of the institutions are written, and it must fall within the normal routine of an activity. The implication is that all activities, programmes and functions that are connected to teaching and learning as means of attaining education goals must be documented. These records must be kept in books, files, computers, cupboards, drawers, cabinets or flash drives, and are always made available/accessible for future reference. This is exigent because records as documental statements of facts about persons, facilities, proposals and activities in and about the institution are life-wire for school administration. To this effect, administrative staff of tertiary institutions should not only maintain accurate records but must ensure that all staff keep accurate records of their activities.

Shonhe and Grand (2018) revealed that good records management improves the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery by reducing litigation risks, promoting accountability and transparency, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements and promoting informed decision making. Gesmundo, Glorioso, Raviz and Apat (2022) conceptualized that every strategy implemented by institutions such as universities is vital for the order of records. Thus, university policies help ensure that the system of creating, modifying and preserving records runs smoothly.

To Koko and Nwiyi (2019), school records are of utmost importance in the management of educational institutions and require serious attention. The keeping of records in educational institutions as entrenched in the public education edict 1974 and carries penalties for those who fail to keep them. The edict stipulated that: at every public or private institution, records and books shall be kept by the personnel in charge and produced at the request of an inspecting officer or education manager.



The importance of school records and proper management of university records to facilitate their retrieval in school administration cannot be over emphasized. Effective school administration hinges on good record keeping and management. As stated by Modebelu and Onyali (2014), 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 sub-sectors of the 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 third world nations is due to poor record management by education managers, administrative staff and even lecturers in higher education. It is therefore noteworthy that in order to maintain sustainable quality delivery, records have to be kept and managed adequately in higher education. Moreso, various types of records are kept in higher institutions to ensure efficiency of the education managers. 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 and managed by administrative personnel. Records required to be kept by law are known as statutory, mandatory or obligatory while those that are not under law but enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the education system are called non-statutory, non-mandatory or nonobligatory records. Furthermore, Allison (2021) stated that administrative or registry staff must record, keep and manage these records using good record management practices. Their ability to effectively manage these records will determine the sustainable quality of records/information that the university will have and the type of decision they will make, as well as their job performance.

Related literature was reviewed in this study. In the words of Azameti and Adeji (2013), public tertiary institutions lack adequate equipment to effectively manage electronic records. Of course, this is a major indictment of administrators committed to record-keeping. It has also been found by Allison and Otuza in Gesmdo et al. (2022) that many students had suffered as a result of poor records management of credentials, examination scripts and results. These challenges lead to difficulties in administering, developing and supervising educational systems (Amanchukwu & Ololube, 2015). Management or administrative functions in higher institutions ought to be simple, efficient and effective if records are kept and managed for sustainability. The purpose of records is to help managers to perform better (Okoli & Onuigbo, 2014). It is also believed that management functions are more likely to be simple and effective if records are kept, used and managed properly. Education managers and administrators can also be more aware of their responsibilities and work more diligently towards the achievement of educational goals by keeping and managing sustainable quality records. A proper records management is required by the university system for ensuring the continuity of records and values can continuously be beneficial to the education system. The primary benefit of utilizing the student record management system in the university or higher education is for educational institutions to effectively track data. This includes records such as fees, examinations, hostels and transportation, all provided by the institutions, this is necessary because the universities are complex entities.



## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

This article is hinged on the records continuum theory which was developed by an academic theorist in Australia. in 1990. The said theory sees the process in the traditional records management and traditional archival system which has to do with creating or receiving records, classifying, appraising, controlling, maintaining, managing and making such records accessible whenever they are needed for retrieval. The theory also claims that the system is interwoven or overlapping in nature but not in the electronic environment. The records continuum theory considers the institutional record keeping process into four (4) dimensions – create, capture, organize and pluralize.

### **Conceptual Review**

Management is a term used in place of administration. Most of the time in education, these two concepts are used interchangeably. It is the arrangement of human and material resources available for education and carefully and systematically using them to achieve educational objectives. Educational administrators are therefore needed in our education system for effective and efficient utilization of both the human and material resources meant for education in order to achieve the goals of education hence the study of educational management/administration is imperative in all teacher education programmes (Koko & Nwiyi, 2019).

Aleru (2014) posit that the construct ‘Higher Education’ comes by several other descriptions like higher, postsecondary, tertiary or third level education and reconsiders it as the stage of education that occurs in universities, academics, colleges of education seminaries and institutions of technology.

Higher education also includes certain college level institutions, such as vocational schools, trade schools and career colleges that award academic degrees or professional certificates. The foregoing is an international conception of higher education. At the national level, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2004) sees higher education as tertiary education and perceives it as the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics, including those institutions offering correspondence courses.

### **Goals of Higher Education**

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) conceptualized that the goals of higher education shall be to contribute to national development, through high level relevant man-power training, development and inculcation of proper values for the survival of the individual and society, development of the intellectual capacity of individuals to understand and appreciation of their local and external environments, acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills, which will make individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society. The goals of tertiary or higher education also include promoting and encouraging scholarship and community service forging and cementing unity and promoting national and international understanding and interaction.

In order to achieve the above goals, the Federal Government of Nigeria furthers state that, tertiary education shall pursue the goals through research and development, virile staff development programmes generation and dissemination of knowledge a variety of modes of programmes, including full time, part time, block release, day release and sandwich Olubor,



Abdulkareem, and Adeyanju (2017) see record keeping and management as one of the essential parts of information as we as the management of the manpower, hardware and software in an organization. Record management is a method of controlling all records throughout their life circles from creation to retention. Therefore, an effective management of record serves as the survival of any organization especially higher institutions through the following:

- Proper keeping of records from the time of creation to the time they will be needed.
- Keeping of records to ensure that they are genuine and reliable.
- Providing adequate services to meet the needs of the institution.
- Providing accurate, reliable and usable documentation for easy accountability hence, accountability is the responsibility of an effective and sustainable leadership research has shown that not all documents can be referred to as records. Record management procedures are based on classification of records of any higher institution which indicates its data or information that will become records.

### **Records Classification**

Oluwalola in Olubor et al. (2017) asserts that record classification can be referred to as grouping of documents or files according to the filing suitability. Higher institutions can adopt any system that is most suitable depending on the type of record, such as students' result, admission letters, student bio data forms, staff data. Among such filing systems are:

- i. Alphabetical filing system
- ii. Numerical filing system
- iii. Chronological filing system
- iv. Alpha-Numerical filing system
- v. Subject filing system.

### **Quality Record Management in Higher Education for Sustainability**

Modebelu et al. (2014) posit that quality administration is not only judged or assessed by educational administrators' professional competence in leadership style but also on his/her level of record keeping competence. There are many ways to quality record keeping in the educational system. According to the authors, there exist five skills imperative for quality service delivery in Higher Education system; some of the skills include effective filing, usage of computer (e-record keeping), usage of audio and video cassettes, keeping non-falsified data, proper records classification using drawers and shelves, usage of flash drive and CD ROMS, avoidance of mutilation of the records, maintenance of secret record, management of the books in shelves/cabinet, and good record keeping maintenance culture.

It is important to note that technology has played a prominent role in record keeping in institutions of higher learning. It has made the work of the administrative staff easier. Information recorded on papers such as students' profile, payment of school fees, invoice, students scanned and stored through electronic means. For example, information can be stored



for a long time in compact disc or flash drives and retrieved when needed. The importance of technology in keeping records cannot be overstressed. Technology must be used for record keeping in order to facilitate quick retrieval of documents in all higher institutions.

However, Aleru (2022) revealed that for efficient, effective and quality record management to take place in higher institutions in Nigeria and for education administration goals to be realized, the following records are crucial:

1. Students Record Card;
2. Attendance Register;
3. Textbook Card;
4. Result Sheets;
5. Department and Faculty Hand Book;
6. Lecturers Records and Files;
7. Teachers Evaluation Reports;
8. Inventory of Physical Facilities;
9. Inventory of Teaching/Learning Resource Materials;
10. Office Equipment Record;
11. Student's Retention Metrics Record;
12. Students Graduation Metrics Record;
13. Summary of University Budgets;
14. Bursary Receipts;
15. Student Projects, Thesis and Dissertation Record;
16. Files of all sorts;
17. Staff Minutes Book (departmental, faculty and different units);
18. Part Time and Sandwich Record;
19. Continues Assessment Record;
20. University Accreditation Books;
21. University Calendar;
22. Education Law or Edict;
23. The National Policy on Education;
24. Statistics Board;



25. Health Record Book;
26. Visitor's Book;
27. Mail Book;
28. The School Cash Book;
29. The Dossier of the Staff (Staff personal file); and
30. Teacher Development/Upgrade Record.

### **Sustainable Quality Delivery in Record Management**

Quality in records management simply means adequate handling or administering documents containing recorded information, regardless of the medium or characteristic, which demonstrate the effectiveness of the quality management system and that which provide evidence that products meet regulatory requirements and comply with specific product requirements. The role of records management in the attainment of sustainable development goals in records form the backbone of every organization or institution as they are used as evidence of business operations. However, sustainable development depends on the availability of information accessed. Therefore, sustainability is embedded in their corporate culture and supported by a robust quality management system. In essence, a sustainable quality delivery and management system is an approach to quality management that emphasizes continuous improvement and innovation of higher education records for service delivery.

### **Issues in Record Keeping/Management in the Education System**

Koko and Nwiyi identified seven of such issues. They include:

- Lack of modern facilities;
- Natural hazards;
- Inadequate trained personnel;
- Inadequate storage facilities;
- Ignorance;
- Attitudinal behavior;
- Negligence of duty and carelessness;
- Differences among administrative staff; and
- Frequent change of administrative staff.



## CONCLUSION

The management of an institution records determines its reliability and trustworthiness. As such, records must be stored in a safe environment that ensures accessibility and protects records from environmental damage (Kaboyo, 2019). In the words of Nnabuani (2018), a well-kept record can protect the institution where legal defense of their actions is required. An institutions' success or failure is highly determined by its quality.

Sound and quality records management is the foundation any higher educational institution needs to provide/delivery service in order to fulfill its obligation. Record management enhances the performance of educational administrators. A proper utilization of records makes the role of administrator easier. The significance of quality record management in achieving quality education delivery is very vital, hence the study examined management of higher education records and records keeping for sustainable quality delivery in Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic in Rivers State, Nigeria.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made:

1. The management of tertiary institutions should organize training, seminars, workshops, conferences where administrative staff who handle records would learn and practice the same.
2. In order to maintain quality delivery service in tertiary institutions, there is a need to establish adequate record keeping system and maintenance culture in administration.
3. The power that be should train and retrain administrative staff who handle the said records or sustainability.
4. Education for all, is the responsibility of all. By this, all stakeholders in education should assist higher institutions to ensure that faculties, documents and all records be kept and managed accordingly as this will go a long way to better our education system holistically.

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