

IMPACT OF RECORDS KEEPING ON OFFICE MANAGERS' EFFICIENCY IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT: *The study examined the impact of records keeping on office managers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. A descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The study was carried out in Ebonyi and Enugu States of Nigeria. The entire population comprising of 100 office managers was studied. A four point response item questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Two experts in the department of business education and one expert in educational measurement and evaluation were given the drafted copies of the questionnaire for face and content validity. Cronbach Alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics. The findings of the study showed that records' keeping is very important for effective planning of the office. Despite the importance of records keeping on office management, it has been constrained by lack of funds, insufficient skills, poor storage, and lack of infrastructure etc. Furthermore, the null hypotheses were accepted. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended that government and school authorities should provide adequate funds and sufficient skills for the effective management of office records, there should be adequate training and retraining of office managers, also there should be adequate infrastructure in the school.*

KEYWORDS: Records, Office, Efficiency, Universities

INTRODUCTION

Due to continuous technological changes in all facets of human endeavour, there has been drastic changes in the methods of records-keeping in Nigerian Universities. Records keeping is essential in all organized offices. This is because all organizations, including the Universities depend on information for their decision making and service delivery. The records of an organization such as the university system constitutes her corporate memory which supplement human memory as well as guide the effective planning, and decision making (Fasasi, 2004). Accurate and good records keeping are the bedrock of planning in the University setting (Popoola, 2000). According to him, if there is no information, the office management will be crippled in its ability to plan and make decision.

Furthermore, Durosaro (2002) noted that records keeping helps in the effective planning and administration of a university. This is because records keeping plays an important role in effective and efficient management of universities. It helps in the planning and implementation of appropriate course of actions, allowing proper monitoring of activities or tasks. Akube (1991)

in his contribution noted that records keeping is meant to enhance the performance of tertiary institutions' administration. Adequate records management coordinates and protects institutions records, sharpens the effectiveness of the records and helps to simplify intra organizational and communication problems.

Asogwa (2004) opined that records of data generated in the course of execution of legitimate function of an institution should be kept and managed properly. Despite the importance record keeping in office management, it has been observed that these records as noted by Ugwunze (1992) to be poorly kept and managed by office managers, hence, he opined that school records should be properly kept and managed for proper utilization and retrieval when needed. A well organized records keeping saves a lot of money for the management. It helps to control the quality and quantity of information that is created. This is important because information can be maintained in way that effectively serves the need of the organization and any information that are no longer necessary can be disposed of efficiently.

Furthermore, Egwunyenga (2005) noted that proper record keeping by office managers are constrained due to insufficient skills by office managers, lack of infrastructure, problem of storage, poor supervision and poor records management programme in Nigerian Universities. Thus, management of school records becomes an issue of great concern to stakeholders in education. Thus, in the face of the aforementioned challenges it is pertinent to determine the impact of records keeping of office managers' efficiency in Nigerian Universities.

Purpose of the study

1. The study sought to determine:
The role of records keeping on effective planning of the office by office managers in Nigerian Universities.
2. The impact of record keeping on efficient control of information in the office in Nigerian Universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the role of record keeping on effective planning of the office by office managers?
2. What is the impact of records keeping on efficient control of information in the office in Nigerian Universities?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance guided the study.

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the response of experience and inexperienced office managers in the role of records keeping on effective planning of the office.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the response of experience and inexperienced office managers in the role of records keeping on efficient control of information in the office.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Ebonyi and Enugu States. The population of the study comprised of 200 office managers from Ebonyi State University and Enugu State University of Technology. The entire population was used, hence, there was no sampling. The study made use of survey design. A 25 item questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two sections, section A sought for demographic information while section B contained 19 items arranged in four clusters. The instrument was subjected to reliability test and it yielded a reliability index of 0.88 using Cornbach Alpha Coefficient.

The research questions were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using T_ test at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results are presented in tables, in line with the research questions and hypotheses as follows:

Research Questions 1

What is the role of record keeping on effective planning of the office? Items 1-10 in section B of the questionnaire were used to solicit the opinions of the respondents to research question one and their responses were presented in table 1

Table 1: Mean Response of Respondents on the Role of Record Keeping on Effective Planning of the Office.

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Record keeping provides proper and sufficient information It facilitates decision making	100	3.77	0.49	
2	It enables the office to plan the activities.	100	3.51	0.58	Agree
3	It helps in implementation	100	3.27	0.53	Agree
4	It facilitates the functioning of other departments	100	3.31	0.53	Agree
5	Record keeping helps in retrieval of information.	100	3.33	0.57	Agree
6	It enables the office to maintain a high level of confidentiality	100	3.76	0.49	Agree
7	It provides security. It enhances policy compliance.	100	3.26	0.76	Agree
8	Record keeping stimulates honestly, care and prudent management	100	2.97	0.72	Agree
9	of office fund	100	3.12	0.61	Agree
10		100	3.37	0.34	Agree

Data analyzed in table 1 indicated that the respondents agreed in all the items 1-10, since they have means of not less than 2.5. The result shows item 1 (3.77), 2(3.51), 3(3.27), 4 (3.31), 5 (3.33), 6 (3.76), 7 (3.26), 8 (2.97), 9 (3.12) and 10 (3.37). These means could be considered high, which signify the extent to which records keeping are very important and helps for effective planning of the office.

Research Question 2

What is the impact of record keeping on efficient control of information in the office?

Table 2: Mean Response of Respondents on the Impact of Record Keeping on Efficient Control of Information in the Office in

S/N	ITEMS	N	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Record keeping enables departments to manage their ongoing operation.	100	3.67	0.49	Agree
12	Deliver program and services.	100	3.57	0.59	Agree
13	Record keeping create room for proper accountability				
	It helps to ensure orderly and smooth administration	100	3.29	0.64	Agree
14	It helps to retain the records needed as essential evidence.	100	3.55	0.54	Agree
15	It ensures proper classification in the office.				
	Record keeping helps to prevent dishonestly; embezzlement and misuses of	100	3.48	0.5	Agree
16	office funds.	100	3.22	0.54	Agree
17	Record keeping helps to set-up coordination between various departments of the organization.	100	3.31	0.69	Agree
18	Record keeping ensures compatibility of forms used throughout the offices/units to facilitate systems integration.	100	3.11	0.49	Agree
19					Agree
		100	3.44	0.2	

Analysis of data in table 2 showed that questionnaire items 11 – 19 scored above the 2.5 mean cut off point, however, the result showed that items 11 (3.67), 12 (3.57), 13 (3.29), 14 (3.55), 15 (3.22), 17 (3.31), 18 (3.11) and 19 (3.44), were agreed by the respondents that records keeping are highly needed for efficient control of information in the office .

Ho₁: There is no significant difference between the response of experience and inexperienced office managers on the role of records keeping for effective planning of the office.

In order to test these hypotheses, t-test method was applied.

Table 3 T-test Analysis on the Difference between the Response of Experienced and Inexperienced Office Managers on the Role of Records Keeping on Effective Planning of the Office

Variables	N	X	SB	t	Df	t-tab	Decision
Role of record keeping on effective Planning of office							
Experiences	84	3.34	0.35				
0-10 years				-1.84	98	1.96	NS
11 years and above	16	3.51	0.12				

Data analyzed in table 3 indicated that the critical test value from statistical table was 1.96 and the calculated t-test value was – 1.84 lesser than the critical value with degree of freedom (df) 98 at an alpha level of 0.5. The researcher accepted the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean response of experienced and inexperienced office managers in the role of records keeping on effective planning of the office

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the response of experienced and inexperienced office managers on the impact of record keeping on efficient control of information in office.

Table 4T-test Analysis on the Difference between the Response of Experienced and Inexperienced Office Managers on the Impact of Record Keeping on Efficient Control of Information in the Office.

Variables	N	X	SD	t	Df	t-tab	Decision
Impact of record keeping on efficient control of information in office							
Experiences							
0-10 years	84	3.4	0.2				
				-0.26	98	1.96	NS
11 years and above	16	3.42	0.22				

In table 4, the mean value of inexperienced office managers with regards to management of records for efficient control of information in the office was 3.40 with SD of 0.20. And experienced which were 3.42 mean values with SD of 0.22. The calculated t-test was -0.26 with degree of freedom (df) 98 at 0.05 level of significance. The obtained t-test was lesser than the critical test value of 1.96, therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. This showed that there is no significant difference between the response of experienced and inexperienced office managers on the control of information in the office.

DISCUSSION

On research question 1 which sought to find out the role of record keeping for effective planning of the office. It could be seen that the findings of this research revealed that records keeping is very important for effective planning of the office. The results of this study are similar to research findings by Durosaro (2002) who stated that records are important tools for effective planning and administration of a school. In support of this, Eneasator (1998), stated that availability of relevant data and information help to ensure sound planning. Eneasator expressing his views said that, a school administrator who does not keep records is always confused and approaches school functions on a trial basis. This implies that, if there are no records, office management will be crippled in its planning and decision making.

The result of the data analyzed in table 2, focused on the impact of record keeping on efficient control of information in the office. The first two items with the highest mean score is that record keeping enables departments to manage their ongoing operation and to deliver programs and services. In support of this, Nduka (1998) stressed that record keeping facilitates the functioning of other departments, it ensures orderly and smooth administration, it retains the records needed as essential evidence and it ensures proper classification in the office. The opinion was in accordance with Eneasator (1997) who said that record keeping sets up coordination between various departments of the organization, it ensures proper classification in the office and it retains the records needed as essential evidence.

Table 3 contained data used to test the null hypothesis 1 (H_{01}). The finding showed that experienced and inexperienced office managers and administrators do not differ with regards to management of records for effective planning of the office. In support of this, Eze (2004) stated that irrespective of the experiences in the office,, the basic role of record keeping is necessary for effective panning of the office the calculated T is less than the critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 4 contained data to test the null hypothesis 2 (H_{02}). The result showed that there is no significant difference between the response of experienced and inexperienced office managers on the control of information in the office. It was observed that records keeping aids management in control of information and in decision making. In support of this Ugwunze (1992) stated that records keeping help to control the quality and quantity of information that is created, that experience does not really come to play. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted.

IMPLICATIONS

Even though it is generally accepted that records are important tools for the smooth running of institutions, the study revealed that any record not well kept for future use can hinder the effective running of the office. Furthermore, when records are efficiently kept, they can help in the effective planning of the office by office managers and this will eventually control the flow of information in offices.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the above findings on the impact of records keeping on office manager in tertiary institutions, it clear that records' are meant to enhance the performance of management. When records are kept and utilized appropriately, execution of management functions is likely to be easy and effective. Records keeping also enables office managers and administrators to be alive to their responsibilities and work conscientiously towards the achievement of educational objectives.

Furthermore, the researcher concludes that there exist no significant differences in the effective management of records by office managers with regards to experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Office managers should develop a positive attitude towards records keeping.
- There should be adequate fund by the management and government to maintain records in tertiary institutions.
- School authorities should employ office managers who possess adequate skills for records keeping.

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