

Levels of Records Keeping and Records Management among Basic Schools in Zamfara State

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ABSTRACT

This research paper was conducted purposely to determine the levels of record keeping and record management among basic schools in Zamfara State, Nigeria. To achieve this objective, two research questions were established to guide the study. This study used survey design. A descriptive research design of survey type was employed in the study. The study population comprised all teachers in 126 government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area of Zamfara State, Nigeria. 230 teachers were sampled through a random sampling technique using Krejcie and Morgan's Sample Size Determining Table. A structured questionnaire was developed as an instrument for data collection. Data analysis was made using descriptive statistics. The study observed that both levels of school records keeping and that of school records management was at moderate level among basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. Based on findings, it is recommended that government should provide all the relevant/essential materials required for record keeping at the disposal of in-service teachers and other school personnel deployed in the basic schools. Also, head teachers should be exposed to modality of keeping and management the school records which should be done through workshops, effective supervisions and mentoring.

INTRODUCTION

Schools are an important part of our society, with their own unique histories, traditions, and cultural practices. School records play a critical role in the effective management of schools, as they help track student progress, achievement, and events that occur on school grounds. These records are kept by school administrators, teachers, counselors, and other staff members for future reference. School records are essential for a school to function effectively and ensure accountability to its staff, students, and the community. These records include important information about student behavior, performance, and any events that occur at the school. The records are kept as official documents, books, or files for future reference (Abiodun-Oyebanj, 2018). School records are maintained by various school staff members, including the principal, teachers, counselors, and administrative staff. These records include staff records, logbooks, visitor logs, inventories, attendance records, punishment logs, and report sheets. These records are kept for future reference and to track students' progress (Aburime et al, 2021). According to Abiodun-Oyebanji (2018) records management is the practice of tracking and maintaining records for an organization, from creation to disposal. Efficient records management is important for institutional support, decision-making, accountability, and transparency. Unegbu and Oludipe (2013) define records management as the classification, identification, storage, access, security, disposition, and use of records to support an organization's mission. In short, records management is about keeping track of information and using it to support the goals of an organization. According to Aburime et al. (2021), the purpose of record keeping and management is to document accurate, detailed information about students, learning progress, and school activities. This information can be used for future planning and administrative purposes. Schools maintain records of each student, including details about their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This helps teachers and parents to support students in achieving success. School records are an essential tool for tracking student progress and making informed decisions about the future. The academic records of students are critical to effective guidance and counseling. As Aburime et al. (2021) state, school records are essential for school administration and are used to inform planning and decision-making. They also play a role in monitoring and evaluating school activities, which can help to improve overall performance. In the context of this study, we can clearly state that school records provide a wealth of information to students, parents, teachers, school heads, and employers on the background, activities, and progress of staff and students. Keeping records not only provides parents with information about their children's activities and achievements, but it also helps teachers and school administrators to monitor and track student progress which is considered as the fundamental purpose of establishing formal school system. School records are important because they provide valuable information that supports the educational goals and objectives of the school. However, to be considered records, the information must be authentic, comprehensive, accessible, and secure. This ensures that the information is reliable and can be used to make informed decisions about the school and its students. On the other hand, records management is the systematic

and scientific process of controlling, organizing, and protecting all types of records within a school. According to Hanior et al. (2018), effective records management is critical to the success of a school, while poor management of records can negatively impact the school's success. Therefore, it's important for schools to have a robust system for tracking and managing all records.

Essentially, Ibrahim (2014) noted, it is vital for schools to maintain accurate records to assess their progress and make informed decisions. Records must be complete and accessible when needed. Incomplete or poorly kept records can be misleading and hinder the progress of the school. School administrators must ensure that records are accurate and free of misleading or false information. Records management is a critical component of any successful educational institution. The school head is responsible for maintaining and preserving official documents, transcripts, and other records. School records are created and kept as evidence of transactions or events that occur within the school. Because organizations like schools rely on records to measure success and failure, accurate record keeping is essential. In educational management, it's important to gather, organize, analyze, interpret, transmit, and store information about all aspects of the school (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2018; Umar & Halilu, 2023). Abiodun-Oyebanji (2018) also asserted that good record keeping and management of records are critical to the success of any educational institution.

Despite the importance of records management in educational achievement and student performance, there have been issues with school record keeping in Nigeria. Aburime et al. (2021) noted that school records are not being effectively managed by school administrations. It seems like the management of school records and the progress of student learning has not been given the attention it deserves. This could have negative implications for the school's operations and the students' success. The lack of priority given to record keeping has resulted in missing student progress reports and, in some cases, school management falsifying records. Student learning progress, which has been referred to in literature as academic achievement and scholastic functioning, has been negatively impacted by these issues. In Zamfara State, "school records are regarded as indispensable for the smooth running of any school. They provide basic information about the school, teachers, and students. Such records include: log books, admission registers, lesson plan/note, staff attendance registers, school diaries, staff duty books, visitors books, staff movement books, PTA minutes books, SBMC minutes books, health record books and scheme of work. Despite extensive records, previous research has revealed that most schools in Zamfara State do not have an inventory register, account books, reward and punishment books, a national education policy and a national curriculum which are often not regularly updated. Most teachers have lesson plans for various subjects, but these plans are not updated or contain grammatical or spelling errors and have not been reviewed by school management or other relevant staff. Some older teachers and many younger teachers do not write lesson plans at all. These findings led to this investigation to determine the level of records management in basic schools in Zamfara State. Reports from the Zamfara State Government (2014) and research

by Ajayi and Ayodele (2002) suggest that there may be weaknesses in the record keeping practices of public schools in the Zamfara State. Some of the issues include: lack of uniformity in record keeping; teachers' apathy or laziness in providing or recording information; lack of formal training for teachers in record keeping; lack of continuity in records; security issues leading to destruction of records; inaccurate or false information; inadequate record keeping materials; and poor record management by teachers.

Objectives of the Study

This academic paper attempts to examine:

1. The level of school records keeping among government-owned basic schools in Zamfara State.
2. The level of school records management among government-owned basic schools in Zamfara State.

Research Questions

The current study will be guided by the following constructive research questions:

1. What is the level of availability of records keeping among government-owned basic schools in Zamfara State?
2. What is the level of the management of records management in government-owned basic schools in Zamfara State?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive research design of survey type was employed in the study because it was trying to measure the degree of the utilization of school records keeping and management. The study was plotted on survey design because it was in conformity with the characteristics of the survey research as observed by Kerlinger (1986).

Population of the Study

The study population consisted of all in-service teachers in basic schools in Bungudu Local Government. Fifty (50) government-owned basic schools government-owned basic schools were randomly sampled for the study.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

In conducting this study, the researcher randomly selected the sample of schools to simplify and justify the work. The Simple size selection is as follows:

- i. Total number of government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government is 165 and 50 were sampled due to security challenge.
- ii. Total number of government-owned basic schools teachers in Bungudu Local Government is 1,203 and 230 were sampled due to security challenge affecting Zamfara State.

Instrumentation

Questionnaires instrument were adopted to collect data from the respondents of the research. The questionnaires were of two types, i.e Record Keeping and Record Management. The two questionnaires had the total number of 32 items which were

measured using the four rating scale i.e 1.strongly agree 2.Agree 3. Strongly disagree and 4 disagree respectively. In order to ensure the validity of the instruments, the questionnaires were given to the supervisor and other experts for scrutiny after which corrections were made. This will help in ensuring the validity of the instruments for data collection and analysis of the data. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a test- re- test of the instrument was carried out among a small number of respondents in Bungudu Local Government Area of Zamfara State.

Administration of the Instruments

The questionnaire instrument was personally distributed to respondents with the help of a trained research assistant who assisted in the distribution and collection of the questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis

The data to be collected from the respondents would be subjected to the computation analysis using descriptive statistics.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Demographic Data of the Respondents

Demography	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex:	Male	188	82
	Female	42	18
Qualification:	NCE	190	82
	B.Sc/B.Ed	18	8
	Diploma in Education	22	10
Years of Experience:	2-5	21	9
	6-10	58	25
	11 - Above	151	66
Total		230	100

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 showed that 188 (82%) of the respondents were Male; while only 42 (18%) were Female. This denotes that, male teachers are much higher than their counterpart, i.e. female teachers among the government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State.

On the highest qualifications obtained by the respondents, it was observed that 190 (82%) of the respondents were the holders of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE); 22 (10%) were in possession of a Diploma in Education; while online 18 (8%) possessed Bachelor’s Degree. This denotes that majority of the respondents (the in-service instructional teachers were the holders of Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE) which serves as the minimum qualification to practice teaching profession in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the table 1 also showed that 151 (66%) of the respondents had 11 and above years of in-service experience; 58 (25%) had 6 to 10 years of in-service experience; while only 21 (9%) had 2 to 5 years of in-service experience. This

translates that, the majority number of teachers serving in the sampled government-owned basic schools schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State had an in-service experience of 11 years and above. Followed by teachers who had an in-service experience of 6 to 10 years. While, teachers with in-service experience of 2 to 5 years were least.

Descriptive Analysis of Levels of Availability of School Records Keeping and School Records Keeping

In order to determine the levels of the research variables, the mean score interpretation in the below table 2 was adopted. The mean score was classified into low, moderate and high as shown in table 2 below:

Table 2. Mean Score Interpretations

Mean Value	Level
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.66	Moderate
3.67-5.00	High

Source: Adopted from Robert Ho (2006) and Dahiru (2017)

Descriptive Analysis of the Level of Availability of School Records Keeping

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation for Items Related to Availability of School Records Keeping

Statements/Constructs	X	SD	Level
SRK1 Log book is available in my school	3.53	1.88	Moderate
SRK2 In my school admission/withdrawal register are available	3.53	1.88	Moderate
SRK3 Class daily attendance registers are available in my school	3.71	1.93	High
SRK4 Pupils transfer certificate is available in my school	2.97	1.72	Moderate
SRK5 Continuous assessment records are available in my school	3.58	1.89	Moderate
SRK6 Staff movement book is available in my school	3.58	1.89	Moderate
SRK7 Staff attendance register is available in my school	3.61	1.9	Moderate
SRK8 Staff leave roster is available in my school	3.17	1.78	Moderate
SRK9 Punishment book is available in my school	3.53	1.88	Moderate
SRK10 Visitors' book is available in my school	3.66	1.91	Moderate
SRK11 Weekly diaries of work are available in my school	3.60	1.9	Moderate

SRK12 Lesson plan and lesson note are available in my school	3.57	1.89	Moderate
SRK13 Pupils' personal files are available in my school	2.27	1.51	Low
SRK14 Pupils' health records are available in my school	2.04	1.43	Low
SRK15 School club/Association records are available in my school	2.23	1.49	Low
SRK16 Staff query book is available in my school	1.87	1.37	Low
SRK17 National Policy on Education is available for reference	2.17	1.47	Low
Total Mean Score of the Level of School Records Keeping	2.92	1.71	Moderate

Source: SPSS Data Result, 2023. Note: X = Mean Score, SD = Standard Deviation

Results from the table 3 revealed that, classroom teachers among government owned public basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State believed that all the 17 items listed were constructs of school records keeping. Thus the level of availability of the items were as follows: SRK1 "Log book is available in my school" (M=3.53, SD=1.88); SRK2 "In my school admission/withdrawal register are available" (M=3.53, SD=1.88); SRK3 "Class daily attendance registers are available in my school" recorded the highest mean score (M=3.71, SD=1.93) which means that class daily attendance registers were much available than any other document among government owned public basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. SRK4 "Pupils transfer certificate is available in my school" (M=2.97, SD=1.72); SRK5 "Continuous assessment records are available in my school" (M=3.58, SD=1.89); SRK6 "Staff movement book is available in my school" (M=3.58, SD=1.89); SRK7 "Staff attendance register is available in my school" (M=3.61, SD=1.9); SRK8 "Staff leave roster is available in my school" (M=3.17, SD=1.78); SRK9 "Punishment book is available in my school" (M=3.53, SD=1.88); SRK10 "Visitors' book is available in my school" (M=3.66, SD=1.91); SRK11 "Weekly diaries of work are available in my school" (M=3.6, SD=1.9); SRK12 "Lesson plan and lesson note are available in my school" (M=3.57, SD=1.89); SRK13 "Pupils' personal files are available in my school" (M=2.27, SD=1.51); SRK14 "Pupils' health records are available in my school" (M=2.04, SD=1.43); SRK15 "School club/Association records are available in my school" (M=2.23, SD=1.49); SRK16 "Staff query book is available in my school" recorded the lowest mean score (M=1.87, SD=1.37) this denotes that, staff query book was the least and unavailable document of school records than any other document among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. SRK17 "National Policy on Education is available for reference" (M=2.17, SD=1.47). The total mean score of the level of availability of school records keeping (M=2.92, SD=1.71) revealed that, the level of school record keeping among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State was at a Moderate level.

Table 4. Mean and Standard Deviation for Items Related to School Records Management

Statements/Constructs	X	SD	Level
SRM1 Log book is up-to-date in my school	3.45	1.86	Moderate
SRM2 In my school admission/withdrawal register is up-to-date	3.21	1.79	Moderate
SRM3 In my school teachers mark class attendance registers daily	3.6	1.9	Moderate
SRM4 in my school pupils transfer certificate is properly managed	3.26	1.8	Moderate
SRM5 Continuous assessment records are updated and properly used in my school	3.6	1.9	Moderate
SRM6 In my school Staff movement book is functional	3.51	1.87	Moderate
SRM7 In my school teachers endorse on Staff attendance register daily	3.66	1.91	Moderate
SRM8 In my school Staff leave roster is properly managed	3.13	1.77	Moderate
SRM9 In my school Punishment book is functional	3.5	1.87	Moderate
SRM10 Head teacher in my school properly manages Visitors' book	3.63	1.91	Moderate
SRM11 In my school teachers update weekly diaries and endorse by HODs	3.52	1.88	Moderate
SRM12 In my school teachers writes Lesson plan and lesson note	3.52	1.88	Moderate
SRM13 Pupils' personal files are properly managed in my school	2.2	1.48	Low
SRM14 In my school Student health records are confidentially managed	2.03	1.42	Low
SRM15 In my school club/Association records are up-to-date	2.22	1.49	Low
SRM16 Staff query book is put in use in my school	1.87	1.37	Low
SRM17 National Policy on Education is used for reference in my school	2.02	1.42	Low
Total mean of the Level of Proper Management of School Records	2.89	1.64	Moderate

Source: SPSS Data Result, 2023. Note: X = Mean Score, SD = Standard Deviation

Results from table 4 revealed that, item SRM1 "Log book is up-to-date in my school" (M=3.45, SD=1.86); SRM2 "In my school admission/withdrawal register is up-to-date" (M=3.21, SD=1.79); SRM3 "In my school teachers mark class attendance registers daily" (M=3.6, SD=1.9); SRM4 "In my school pupils transfer certificate is properly managed" (M=3.26, SD=1.8); SRM5 "Continuous assessment records are updated and properly used in my school" (M=3.6, SD=1.9); SRM6 "In my school Staff movement book is functional" (M=3.51, SD=1.87); SRM7 "In my school teachers endorse on Staff attendance register daily" recorded the highest mean score (M=3.66, SD=1.91) which explains that, teachers do manage and endorse on staff attendance register daily than any other document of school record keeping among basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. SRM8 "In my school Staff leave roster is properly managed" (M=3.13, SD=1.77); MR9 "In my school Punishment

book is functional" (M=3.5, SD=1.87); SRM10 "Head teacher in my school properly manages Visitors' book" (M=3.63, SD=1.91); SRM11 "In my school teachers update weekly diaries and endorse by HODs" (M=3.52, SD=1.88); SRM12 "In my school teachers writes Lesson plan and lesson note" (M=3.52, SD=1.88); SRM13 "Pupils' personal files are properly managed in my school" (M=2.2, SD=1.48); SRM14 "In my school Student health records are confidentially managed" (M=2.03, SD=1.42); SRM15 "In my school club/ Association records are up-to-date" (M=2.22, SD=1.49); SRM16 "Staff query book is put in use in my school" obtained the lowest mean score (M=1.87, SD=1.37) which reveals that, the staff query book was the least managed document of school records than any other among the basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. SRM17 "National Policy on Education is used for reference in my school" (M=2.02, SD=1.42). Total mean of the Level of Proper Management of School Records (M=2.89, SD=1.64) expressed that the level of proper management of school records among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State was Moderate.

DISCUSSIONS

Level of Availability of School Records Keeping

Based on the findings of the current research work, the level of school record keeping among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State was at a Moderate level with reference to overall mean score of (M=2.92, SD=1.71) as shown in the result of table 3 This finding is in agreement with the findings of Odeniyi (2020) who found in his study that, school records availability was at a moderate level. The finding is however contrary to that of Ezeugbor et al. (2016) who conducted a study on assessing the availability of school records in Anambra State, Nigeria, found in their study that, all statutory school records were found much available among public schools. Similarly, Modebelu and Onyali (2014), carried out a study on qualitative record management skills for effective service delivery in Nigeria education system, thus reported that, school records are available to a high extent in secondary schools in most of the public schools across the country. Asamonye et al. (2019) conducted a study on the school records in Basic Schools, thus observed that, school records are essential in educational sector and due to their significance, the provision of school records is increasing among public schools in Nigeria. In addition, Omoha (2013) found that, there is a high extent of availability school records among public schools in Otukpo Education Zone in Benue State, Nigeria. Kissa (2013) revealed that, there was a high provision and utilisation of school records among public schools in Mbale Municipality, Uganda.

Level of School Records Management

The extent of school records management among public school in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State was found at a moderate level with reference to the overall mean score of (M=2.89, SD=1.64) as expressed in table 4. This finding is in compliance to that of Amanchukwu & Ololube (2015) who found in their study that, despite the significance of the school records management but the

extent of the management seems less than required and may lead to the policy implementation problems in schools. Amanchukwu and Ololube suggested that, there is a need for establishment of teaching staff skills development trainings in order to promote the extent of school records management among public schools in Nigeria. This result is also in compliance to Omoha (2013) who indicated that, records in schools were not properly kept. Furthermore, Samuel (2018) indicated in his research investigation, that, about 50% of teachers in public secondary schools in Nyanza District in Rwanda agreed that, school records management was not effective and also outdated.

On the other hand, this finding contrary to Amaefule and Eshiet (2021) who investigated on school records management and its impact on teaching and learning in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, thus found out that there is a high extent of school records management put in place by principals and teachers in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State. Furthermore, Odeniyi and Adeyanju (2020) asserted that manual school records were still in used in most of the secondary schools in the Federal Capital City. Kissa (2013) stressed that, there was a significantly high level of school records management among public schools in Mbale Municipality, Uganda. Kissa (2013) also added that, the teaching staffs that handle records in schools were well qualified, to handle the task and the records kept in schools are ultimately valuable for the operations of the schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research paper was conducted purposely to determine the levels of record keeping and record management among basic schools in Zamfara State, Nigeria. The study observed that the level of school records keeping was at moderate level among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State. Similarly, the level of school records management was at moderate level among government-owned basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State.

Based on the findings, observations and conclusions of this study, the researcher arrived at the following recommendations;

1. Government should provide all the relevant/essential materials required for record keeping at the disposal of in-service teachers and other school personnel deployed in the basic schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara state.
2. Government should organise some timely trainings, workshops, seminars, and other relevant refresher courses for basic school administrators and classroom teachers on the significant of school records keeping. And give them decorum to learn the effective way of filling such school record documents in a professional way.
3. Head teachers should be exposed to modality of keeping and management the school records. This should be done through workshops, effective supervisions and mentoring.
4. Head teachers should specifically employ good administrative practices to manage school records; delegate the keeping of day-to-day school records to teachers, record events as they occur in the appropriate record booklets.

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