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PRINCIPALS' RECORD MAINTENANCE PRACTICES FOR EFFECTIVE SECONDARY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of the study was to determine principals' record maintenance practices for effective secondary school administration in Anambra State. one research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. All the public secondary schools in all the 6 education zones in the state were studied. The population of the study comprised 257 principals in the six education zones. The sample for the study comprised 76 principals sampled from public secondary schools in Anambra State. A researcher-developed instrument titled ''Principals' Record Maintenance Practices for Effective Administration Questionnaire (PRMPEAQ)'' was used for data collection. The face validation of the instrument (PRMPEAQ) was determined. The instrument was validated by three experts who are lecturers. The data used for establishing the internal consistency of the instrument were single administration of copies of PRMPEAQ administered to 30 respondents made up of 18 more-experienced and 12 less-experienced principals in Edo State. Using data obtained, PRMPEAQ was subjected to test for internal consistency using Cronbach alpha which yielded coefficient value of 0.83. The researcher and six research assistants collected data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question and t-test to test the hypothesis. Findings indicated that the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State include: regular inspection of several files in school, up-dating of the various information contained in a file as at when due, ensuring that where documents are kept is always tidy and tracking of the movement of records. Based on the findings of the study, it was among others recommended that principals should attend regular conferences and workshops on record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools.

Keywords: Principals; Record Maintenance; Effectiveness; Secondary School; Administration.

Introduction

For any school to achieve its predetermined goals, it must be effectively administered. Effective school administration is the achievement of a specific goal or aim of an educational institution through utilization of the available resources. According to Usman (2016), effective school administration is the implementation of programme geared towards the achievement of educational objectives through the utilization of the available resources. The researcher here views effective school administration as the successful attainment of predetermined educational objectives through utilization of the available resources. One indicator of effective school administration is record management.

Several scholars and authors have defined record management in different manners. Seniwoliba, Mahama and Abilla (2017) defined record management as the efficient and systematic control of records (both paper and electronic) throughout their life-cycle from their creation or receipt until the time of their disposal. In this study, record management is the systematic control and effective use of records throughout their life cycle. An aspect of record management which is of interest in this study is record maintenance.

Record maintenance involves activities or strategies for ensuring that the available records are in good condition. The maintenance of records includes all activities that ensure that records are in good condition, and kept in an orderly state (Ibara, 2010).Record maintenance entails adding new information to record or modifying the existing ones to keep it up-dated. It is important to check the files periodically to ensure that they are in good condition, since they are prone to wear and tear (Amanchukwu and Ololube, 2015). Some records in files may be loose and could fall out easily, when not regularly checked and maintained. Record maintenance also entails regular revising, refiling, and occasionally reorganizing the available records. Good record maintenance practices reduce the likelihood of worn out or torn of the available records in secondary schools. It costs money and administrators' effort to maintain records indefinitely. Some records that have reached their life span and also take up valuable office spaces require properly disposal. For efficient record maintenance, some practices need to adopted.

Regodon (2017) and Sharma (2011) have outlined record management practices as: record creation, record storage, record maintenance and record disposal. The record management practices as outlined by the above scholars are adopted in the study in order to have a holistic empirical evidence of record management practices in Anambra State.

In Anambra State secondary schools, there appears to be alarming rate of misplacement or loss of vital records and the slow speed at which needed information are retrieved from their storage. Osakwe (2011) pointed out that despite the importance of school records in the achievement of educational objectives, these records do not seem to be adequately managed by the principals in the State. Osakwe further added that it is obvious that the accuracy, reliability and truthful records that fulfill educational requirements are being created but not properly managed by secondary school principals. In the light of the above, this study focused on identifying the record maintenance practices of principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question: What are the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more-experienced and less-experienced principals on their record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Method

This study was conducted in secondary schools in Anambra State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted. All the public secondary schools in all the 6 education zones in the state which include Aguata, Awka, Nnewi, Ogidi, Onitsha and Otuocha were studied. There are 257 public secondary schools in the six education zones. The population of the study comprised 257 principals in the six education zones. The sample for the study comprised 76 principals sampled from public secondary schools in Anambra State. The sample consisted 30% of the entire population. A researcher-developed instrument titled ‘‘Principals’ Record Maintenance Practices for Effective Administration Questionnaire (PRMPEAQ)’’ was used for data collection. The instrument was structured on four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD) and weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The face validation of the instrument (PRMPEAQ) was determined. The instrument was validated by three experts who are lecturers: two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Department of Educational Foundations (Measurement and Evaluation Unit) all from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The data used for establishing the internal consistency of the instrument were single administration of copies of PRMPEAQ administered to 30 respondents made up of 18 more-experienced and 12 less-experienced principals in Edo State. Using data obtained, PRMPEAQ was subjected to test for internal consistency using Cronbach alpha. Coefficient value of 0.83 was obtained. The researcher and six research assistants who are secondary school teachers in the State collected data for the study. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research question and t-test to test the hypothesis. In taking decisions on the research question, mean item rating that falls below 2.50 was taken as disagreement and any mean rating of 2.50 or above was taken to indicate agreement. In taking decisions on the null hypothesis, if p-value is equal to or greater than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and the difference was taken to be statistically significant, but if otherwise, the null hypothesis was not rejected and the difference was taken to be statistically not significant.

Presentation of Results

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Research Question: What are the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores of More-Experienced and Less-Experienced Principals' on their Record Maintenance Practices in Anambra State

S/N	ITEMS	More-experienced Principals (N = 148)			Less-experienced Principals (N =109)		
		Mean	Sd	Decision	Mean	Sd	Decision
1	Regular inspection of several files in school	2.89	1.06	Agree	2.86	0.96	Agree
2	Up-dating of the various information contained in a file as at when due	2.67	1.14	Agree	2.72	1.12	Agree
3	Regular repair of damaged records storage facilities	2.33	1.09	Disagree	2.36	1.05	Disagree
4	Ensuring that where documents are kept is always tidy	2.89	1.06	Agree	3.04	0.98	Agree
5	Exposing staff to training on record maintenance	2.03	1.02	Disagree	2.18	0.93	Disagree
6	Constituting record maintenance committee	2.43	1.07	Disagree	2.36	1.07	Disagree
7	Tracking of the movement of records	2.70	1.03	Agree	2.86	1.06	Agree
	Total	**2.56**	**1.07**	**Agree**	**2.63**	**1.02**	**Agree**

The results of data analysis present on Table 1 shows that more-experienced and less-experienced principals mean scores for items 1, 2, 4 and 7 are higher than the criterion mean value of 2.50 and this indicates agreement with these items as their record maintenance practices. Thus, the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective school administration included; regular inspection of several files in school, up-dating of the various information contained in a file as at when due, ensuring that where documents are kept is always tidy and tracking of the movement of records. The more-experienced and less-experienced principals mean ratings for items 3, 5 and 6 are below the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicating their disagreement with these items as their record maintenance practices. The overall standard deviation scores of more-experienced and less-experienced principals are 1.07 and 1.02 and this indicates that there is homogeneity amongst their responses indicating a similar consensus of opinion. The cluster means which are above 2.50 indicated agreement

on the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective school administration.

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more-experienced and less-experienced principals on their record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: The t-test of Significant Difference between the Mean Ratings of More-Experienced And Less-Experienced Principals on their Record Maintenance Practices for Effective School Administration in Anambra State

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	t-cal.	t-crit.	Df	∞	Remarks
More-Exp. Principals	148	2.56	1.07	0.68	1.96	255	0.05	Not Significant
Less-Exp. Principals	109	2.631.02						

Result on Table 2 indicated that the t-calculated value of 0.68 is less than t-critical value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 255 degree of freedom. Thus, the null hypothesis is not significant. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more-experienced and less-experienced principals on their record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study revealed that the record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective school administration included; regular inspection of several files in school, up-dating of the various information contained in a file as at when due, ensuring that where documents are kept is always tidy and tracking of the movement of records. Gama (2010) reported that record maintenance practices included fumigation, frequent dusting of records, repair of relevant storage facilities, dedication of a special room for records, monitoring movement of records and digitalization of the records among others. This is an indication that secondary school principals in Anambra State regularly up-date and preserved document showing official accounts of occurrence in schools.

The record maintenance practices adopted by principals enable them to maintain specific record requirements that are pre-determined by the State Ministry of Education. This makes easy not only for controlling the growth of records volume but location and retrieval of record when require for administrative tasks in secondary schools in Anambra State.

It was also reported that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more-experienced and less-experienced principals on their record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding contradicted that of Osakwe (2013) which revealed that there was a significant difference between more-experienced and less-experienced principals in the effective management of school records. The contradiction between the two findings may

be attributed as a result of time span. The finding of this study which indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of more-experienced and less-experienced principals in Anambra State may be because they are exposed to similar kind of training and they are also in the same administrative cadre.

Conclusion

The record maintenance practices adopted by principals for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State include: regular inspection of several files in school, up-dating of the various information contained in a file as at when due, ensuring that where documents are kept is always tidy and tracking of the movement of records. It is also concluded that more-experienced and less-experienced principals did not differ significantly in the mean ratings of their record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Principals should attend regular conferences and workshops on record maintenance practices for effective administration of secondary schools.
2. The Ministry of Education should provide modern office filling cabinets to the secondary schools for effective record maintenance.
3. The digital record management system should be adopted in Anambra State for effective record maintenance practices in the secondary schools.

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