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PRINCIPALS' RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AS PREDICTORS OF EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated principals' record management practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Census sampling technique was used since the entire 267 principals were studied because it is relatively small and manageable. The researcher developed questionnaires namely ''Principals' Record Management Practices Questionnaire (PRMPQ)" and "Effective Administration of School Scale (EASS)'' were used for data collection. The face validation of the instruments were determined by three experts of which two were from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Educational Foundations, all from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach alpha method was used to determine the internal consistencies of the instruments which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.77 and 0.81 for two clusters of OPRMPQ and 0.77 was obtained for EASS. The researcher together with five research assistants collected data for the study using the direct approach method and 97% return was recorded. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions and test hypotheses 1 and 2, while multiple regression was used to answer research question and test hypothesis 3. The findings of the study revealed among others that record creation and storage practices are strong and significant predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Also, record classification practices are moderate and significant predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that Ministry of Education should organize annual training programmes for principals to enable them update their skills and knowledge of record classification practices for effective administration of secondary schools.

Keywords: Record Management, Record Creation, Record Classification, Principals, Effective Administration

Introduction

School is an avenue through which skills are developed, knowledge is imparted and values are inculcated in individuals to enable them make meaningful contribution towards the development of the society. As a result

of schooling, individuals can develop their full potentials, modify their belief system and build positive characters that make them responsible members of the society. School can only be successful in helping individuals acquire competencies necessary for personal and national development through effective administration.

Effective school administration is optimal result achieved by getting things done through utilization of available resources. Ukaogba and Nwankwo (2020) described effective school administration as the successful attainment of predetermined educational objectives through utilization of the available resources. Effective school administration is an act of accomplishing set goals through the coordination of efforts of staff and utilization of other resources. According to Udo, Jackson and Ntuen (2023), effective school administration is the successful management and leadership of educational institutions in a manner that ensure their smooth operation and the achievement of educational goals. Effective school administration is the act of ensuring that the best practices in all daily activities of learning institution. Operationally, effective school administration is the attainment of desired result at a specific time through optimal use of the available resources. There are many visible indicators of effective administration of secondary schools.

The indicators of effective administration of secondary schools have been highlighted by many scholars. Okorji and Nwodo (2024) noted that the indicators of effective administration of schools are smooth running of the day-to-day activities, timely communication, ensuring operation of available facilities to full capacity, amicable management of conflict, safe learning environment, commitment of teachers and high academic performance of students. In the same vein, Egboka and Onyeagba (2024) averred that effective administration of school is assessed through utilization of personnel, judicious use of material resources, timely dissemination of information, prudent use of funds, cordial interpersonal relationship, desirable work attitude and improvement of learning outcomes. In this study, effective school administration could be assessed through judicious use of funds, regular environmental sanitation, enforcement of rules and regulation, harmonious work environment, infrastructure maintenance, making of informed decisions, implementation of educational programmes, safe learning environment, well-disciplined members of staff and proper management of records for smooth overall operations of the school. The responsibility of ensuring effective administration of secondary school rests on the shoulders of the principal.

Principal is the manager entrusted with the task of fostering goal attainment through coordination of efforts of others. Ikediugwu and Ibezim (2023) noted that principal is chief executive officer saddled with the responsibility of ensuring smooth running of the daily programmes of secondary school. It is one of the duties of the principal to formulate and enforce rules and regulations to facilitate smooth functioning of a secondary school. In the context of this study, principal is the chief executive officer in charge of planning, overseeing and ensuring smooth operations of daily activities of a secondary school for

attainment of predetermined objectives. Effective administration of schools could be enhanced by principals through planning, effective communication, good teamwork, decision making based on available information in school records.

School records are piece of evidence about past events, academic programmes and learning activities in an educational institution. Yusuf and Ibrahim (2023) described school records as official books, documents, and files kept and preserved in the school offices for use and retrieval as needed. School records give account of what goes on in an educational institution. According to Usman (2023), records are pieces of information written down on papers, computers, stores in slide, memories, and films for the progress of an organization. In the context of this study, school records are documentary pieces of evidence of activities or events in educational organization. Records could be created, classified, organized, assessed, safeguarded and made accessible through record management practices.

Record management practices are measures and procedures for capturing, storage, speedily retrieval and use of information to facilitate work activities. This tallies with the view of records management practices by Usman (2023), as activities involving the storage, updating, preserving, maintenance, retrieval and use of information. The essence of record management practices is also to ensure available of accurate and reliable information for planning and decision-making in an establishment. Onunwor (2022) defined record management practices as the adoption of methods or tools in creating, storing, retrieving, and sharing of official data and information. Operationally, record management practices are the approaches and techniques for controlling, keeping, retrieving and utilization of files or document containing proceedings of events, programmes and action in an organization.

Record management practices commence with the creation of the record and ends with its disposal. Consequently, several scholars have highlighted different record management practices. Otobo (2022) outlined record management practices to include: record creation, record maintenance and record disposition. Similarly, scholars such as Adelusi (2020) and Alegbeleye, Unegbu and Chilaka (2019) highlighted record management practices to include: record creation, record classification, preservation, accessibility, retention (storage) and disposition. The focus of this study was on four components of record management practices which are record creation and record classification because available of information for running the affairs of schools could be depended on the ways records are created and classified for easy retrieval. Another justification is that any laxities in any practices of record creation and record classification might adversely affect the availability of information to ensure smooth operation of secondary schools.

Record creation is the establishment of proceedings, accounts of events and actual happenings in schools. Ughamadu, Obiagwu and Nwanne (2024) described record creation as the documentation of events, facts, activities and transactions of an organization in a given period. Continuing, Ughamadu et al. asserted that

records are created from the routine activities, agreements, minutes of meeting and directives from higher authority. Records are created through the documentation of all curricular, non-curricular and administrative activities in secondary school. Alegbeleye, Unegbu and Chilaka (2019) noted that a record is either received or created, when a letter is produced, an e-mail is written, a form is completed or a pamphlet is printed in an establishment. Record creation practices help to make available information to plan and make rational decisions that could improve effective administration of schools. Records created which provide information which is the life blood of any organization require proper classification for easy retrieval when needed for making decision.

Record classification practices are procedures and tasks of categorizing files and document containing account of activities in an organization. Kaddu, Ssekitto and Kyarimpa (2022) described record classification practices as the process of identifying and arranging records in categories according to logically structured conventions, methods and procedural rules. Record classification involves assigning unique code to files and document for easy identification and retrieval of information to improve effective administration of schools. Adelusi (2020) noted that record could be classified by alphabetical arrangement, subject matter, chronological arrangement, serialization and randomly. Records could be classified based on names, subject matters, usability and purposes. Classified record could be logically kept for easy retrieval through proper storage.

The unsatisfactory state of affairs in some secondary schools in Anambra State could be attributed to ineffective school administration by the principals. This is substantiated by Nwafor and Egboka (2020) who noted that some secondary schools in Anambra State seem to be bedeviled with incidences of indiscipline among staff and students, poor decision making, examination malpractice, improper planning, poor implementation of school programmes and shortage of relevant facilities which indicated ineffective school administration by the principals. Also, Obiekwe, Ikedimma, Thompson and Ogbo (2020) who observed that there is poor state of infrastructural development and undue delay in implementation of school improvement plan experienced in most of the public secondary schools in Anambra State. The improper planning, delay and poor implementation of school programmes could be connected to shortage of relevant data. Credence was laid to this assertion by Okaforcha (2022) who observed that there is high alarming rate of misplacement or loss of vital records and the slow rate at which needed information are retrieved from their storage in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Similar to this, Ogbo, Ikedimma, Chukwu and Emere (2021) noted that some principals in secondary school in Anambra State have a very poor knowledge of Information and Communication Technology thereby making it very difficult for records to be retrieved and put into good use. It is against this background that this study was undertaken to determine if principals' record management practices were predictors of effective administration

of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

The cases of nonchalant attitude to work among teachers, dilapidated school infrastructure, financial mismanagement and shortage of data for decision making could be associated with ineffective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. The record creation practices are in serious doubt as there is shortage of relevant data for planning programmes of public secondary schools in Anambra State. The voluminous records generated in schools tend to be manually kept and unorganized by principals in this innovative era, which make the management of secondary schools in Anambra State challenging. Some principals appear to waste their time and go through administrative burden of tracking and retrieving vital records possibly due to lapses in their record classification practices. Poorly kept records could contribute to shortage of vital information for making decisions that could lead to effective school administration in Anambra State. These problems prompted the investigation into principals' record management practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate principals' record management practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. Principals' records creation practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principals' records classification practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Principals' records management practices as joint predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of principals' records creation practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of principals' records classification practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?
3. What is the joint predictive value of principals' records management practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principal' record creation practice is not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principal' record classification practice is not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.
3. Principal' record management practices are not joint significant predictors of

effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The study was conducted in Anambra State which is one of the five states in the South East Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria. The choice of Anambra State as the area of the study is justified by the cases of shortage of relevant data in secondary schools probably to the improper management of records. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in the 257 public secondary schools in Anambra State. Census or total sampling technique was used since the entire population is relatively small and manageable. Therefore, the 267 public secondary school principals in Anambra State were utilized for the study.

A researcher-developed instruments titled ‘‘Principals’ Record Management Practices Questionnaire (PRMPQ)” and “Effective Administration of School Scale (EASS)’’ were used for data collection. The instruments were developed by the researcher based on review of related literature and consultation of experts in educational management.

PRMPQ has Cluster I and II which were based on the two components of record management practices. Cluster I which focuses on record creation practices had 10 items and Cluster II contains nine items on record classification practices. PRMPQ contains 19 items structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. EASS contains 20 items which is designed to measure effective school administration. EASS is structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The experts suggested among others that the questionnaires items should be in harmony with the purpose and research questions, personalization, addition and recasting of some items to depict clear meanings. Based on the suggestions, some items were added and the existing ones were recast. Thus, their suggestions were used to produce the final version of the instrument. Cronbach alpha method which involved single administration of 30 copies of the instruments to teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The data obtained were subjected to test for internal consistency using Cronbach alpha which yielded co-efficient values of 0.77 and 0.81 for the two clusters of OPRMPQ, while coefficient value of 0.77 was obtained for EASS. Thus, the researcher considered the instrument to be reliable for the study. This is in line with Doval, Viladrich and Angulo-Brunet (2023) who recommended that a co-efficient correlation (r) of 0.70 or greater is widely considered that items of an instrument are reliable.

The researcher together with five research assistants who are secondary school teachers in the area of study administered copies of the questionnaires directly to the respondents. A total of 267 copies of the instruments were distributed and 259 copies

of questionnaires were properly filled and successfully retrieved, indicating 97 percent return rate. At the end of the exercise, duly completed and retrieved copies of the instruments were used for data analysis. Simple regression was used to answer the research questions 1-2 and test hypotheses 1-2, while multiple regression was used to answer research question 3 and test hypothesis 2. For decision on the research questions, the coefficient r and the degree of prediction was interpreted using the correlation coefficient by Alsagr (2021), as follows

Coefficient	Prediction
0	Not prediction
.01- .19	Weak prediction
.20- .39	Fair prediction
.40- .69	Moderate prediction
.70- .89	Strong prediction
.90- .0.99	Very strong prediction
1	Perfect prediction

In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact p-value is equal to or greater than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected but if exact p-value is less than significant value of 0.05, the null hypotheses was rejected.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive value of principals' records creation practice on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 1: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Records Creation Practices as a Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Model	n	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Record Creation Practices	259	.808	.653	.652	.50443	Strong

As shown on Table 1, the predictive value between principals' record creation practice and effective administration of secondary schools is 0.808 with a coefficient of determination of 0.653. This shows principals' record creation practice make 65.3% contributions to effective administration of secondary schools. The regression coefficient r of 0.808 indicated that principals' records creation practice is a strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: Principal' record creation practice is not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 2: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principal' Record Creation Practice as not a Significant Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Predictor		N	R	r^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Record Practices	Creation	259	.808	.653	483.505	.000	*S

*Significant

Table 2 indicated that the simple regression coefficient (r) of principal' record creation practice as not a significant predictor of effective administration of secondary schools is 0.808, while the r^2 is 0.653. This shows that principal' record creation practices could explain 65.3% changes in effective administration of secondary schools. The *F* (1/259) =483.505 and the *p*-value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, principal' record creation practice is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive value of principals' records classification practice on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 3: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Records Classification Practice as a Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Model		n	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Record Practices	Classification	259	.534	.285	.283	.72386	Moderate

Table 3 indicates that the predictive value between principals' record classification practice and effective administration of secondary schools is 0.534 with a coefficient of determination of 0.285. This shows that 28.5% changes in effective administration of secondary schools could be attributed to principals' record classification practice. The regression coefficient r of 0.534 indicated that principals' records classification practice is a moderate predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: Principal' record classification practice is not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 4: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principal' Record Classification Practice as not a Significant Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Predictor	N	R	r^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Record Classification Practices	259	.583	.285	102.609	.000	*S

*Significant

It is revealed in Table 4 that the simple regression coefficient (r) of principal' record classification practice as not a significant predictor of effective administration of secondary schools is 0.583, while the r^2 is 0.285. This shows that principal' record classification practice could account for 28.5% changes in effective administration of secondary schools. The *F* (1/259) =102.609 and the *p*-value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, principal' record classification practice is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Research Question 3: What is the predictive value of principals' records management practice on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

Table 5: The Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on Principals' Records Management Practices as a Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Model	n	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Record Management Practices	259	.886	.776	.774	.30332	Strong

Table 5 indicates that the predictive value between principals' record management practices and effective administration of secondary schools is 0.886 with a coefficient of determination of 0.776. This shows principals' record management practices could make 77.6% contributions to effective administration of secondary schools. The regression coefficient r of 0.886 indicated that principals' records management practices is a strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Three: Principal' record management practices is not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Table 6: The Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis on Principal' Record Management Practices as not a Significant Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Predictor	N	R	r^2	*F*	*P-value*	Remark
Record Management Practices	259	.886	.776	448.494	.000	*S

*Significant

Table 6 indicated that the simple regression coefficient (r) of principal' record management practices as not a significant predictor of effective administration of secondary schools is 0.886, while the R^2 is 0.776. This shows that principal' record management practices could account for 77.6% changes in effective administration of secondary schools. The *F* (1/259) =448.494 and the *p*-value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, principal' record management practices is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the study showed that principals' records creation practice is a strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is in agreement with the earlier report of Ughamadu, Obiagwu and Nwanne (2024) which indicated that principals' record creation practice was strong predictor of effective administration (managerial effectiveness) in public secondary schools. The finding also aligned with that of Dada and Ogunwemimo (2024) which indicated records creation practice had a strong relationship with organizational effectiveness of universities registries. The agreement in the findings could be attributed to the fact that the studies were conducted in educational institutions within the same time span. This finding is not surprising possibly due to the fact that every single record created by the principals could form the basis for planning and decision-making which strongly contribute to effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. One suspect that record creation practice make available past documented evidences that might be reviewed by principals in handling similar situations to organize work activities which could account for strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Principals' records creation practice provides information which serve as proof of actions to guide actions and enhance effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

It was also found that principal' record creation practice is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. This supported the finding of Dada and Ogunwemimo (2024) which indicated records creation practice had a significant relationship with organizational effectiveness of universities registries. This upheld the finding of Ughamadu, Obiagwu and Nwanne (2024) which indicated that

principals' record creation practice was a significant predictor of effective administration (managerial effectiveness) in public secondary schools. The similarity in the participants of the studies could explain the agreement with the finding. This finding is possibly due to the fact that principals' record creation practice makes available information for directing work activities which could be responsible for significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

It was revealed that principals' records classification practice is a moderate predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is contrary to the finding of Nyamwamu (2018) which showed that records classification practice has weak relationship with administration of public institution. This also disagreed with the finding of Agu, Njoku, Umaru, Eleke, Nwokoma and Bashiru (2022) which indicated that records classification practice has very strong relationship with organizational effectiveness. The disagreement with the findings could be attributed to different organizations and participants of the studies. This finding is not surprising due to the fact that records classification practice of principals allow easy identification and retrieval of information in a timely manner to support administrative activities which moderately predict effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. The finding could be attributed to the fact that principals' records classification practice makes information to be well-organized and easily located to plan managerial activities which might be connected to moderate predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. One feels that record classification practice has time and energy to be spent on searching for information to improve daily operations of schools. The time and energy saved in managing information through principals' records classification practices could be channeled to productive tasks which might be responsible for the moderate predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

It was also discovered that principal' record classification practice is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. This is contrary to the finding of Nyamwamu (2018) which showed that records classification practices had no significant relationship with administration of public institution. The disagreed with the finding could be attributed to time span difference of six years that could affect research findings. The possible explanation for this finding is that principals' records classification practices allow for easy, safe and timely access to essential information required for organizing daily activities to bring about effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

The findings of the study showed that principals' records management practices is a strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is in agreement with the finding of Otobo (2022) which showed that records management practices had strong relationship with administrative effectiveness. This also agreed with the finding of Olalere (2021) which showed that record management practices had strong

relationship with effective administration of secondary schools in Nigeria. The possible reason for this finding is that principals' records management practices ensure proper creation, classification, storage and disposal of information to ensure decisions are based on current and accurate data to strongly improve effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Principals' records management practices allow staff to have access to accurate and timely information required to carry out managerial activities in ways that strongly improve effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

It was also found that principal' record management practice is a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. This concurred with the finding of Olalere (2021) which showed that record management practices had significant relationship with effective administration of secondary schools in Nigeria. The agreement in the findings could be connected to the fact that the studies were conducted in secondary level of education in the same country where similar policy guide record management practices. One feel that is as a result that it is through the information collected and kept through record management practices those principals can plan and make budget for effective administration of secondary schools.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that principal' record management practices is a positive and significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. Principals' record management practices such as record creation and record classification ensure availability of well-organized and accurate data for planning activities to enhance effective administration of secondary schools in Anambra State. Principals' record management practices ensure quick and easy access to documented evidence and relevant information needed to make decisions for effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Post Primary Schools Service Commission should embark on periodic enlightenment programmes to sensitize and encourage principals to continue to imbibe and improve the culture and practices of regular record creation to improve effective administration of secondary schools.
2. Ministry of Education should organize annual training programmes for principals to enable them update their skills and knowledge of record classification practice for effective administration of secondary schools.
3. Principals should enroll in professional courses to enable them improve their competencies in record management practices for effective administration of secondary schools.

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