Influence of Records Management Practices on Organizational Effectiveness of University Registries in South-West, Nigeria

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Abstract

Records are information assets and hold value for the organization. Organizations have a duty to all stakeholders to manage them effectively in order to maximize profit, control cost, and ensure the vitality of their organization. Effective records management practices ensure that the information needed is retrievable, authentic and accurate. There seems to be problem of achieving effective records management practices in universities in south west Nigeria. The study therefore investigated the influence of records management practices on organizational effectiveness of University registries in South -West Nigeria. Survey research design was adopted for this study and questionnaire was the instrument used to collect data. Using Yamane formula, a sample size of 340 registry staff was selected out of a total population of two thousand two hundred and eighty-two (2,282) registry staff in Universities in South –West Nigeria. Three hundred and forty (340) copies of the questionnaire were distributed out of which three hundred and four (304) copies were completed and returned for analysis. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts and simple percentages while simple regression analysis technique was employed to test the hypotheses. Results of the hypotheses tested showed that records management practices have a p- value of 0.000 and R^2 of 0.763. The hypothesis is significant at 5% significant level, thus the null hypothesis was rejected. The study recommends that university administration should continue to formulate policies and guidelines that will ensure proper management and use of records and as well make necessary infrastructural facilities available and also provide conducive working environment for staff to achieve effective performance and proper records management for the organization.

Keywords: *Records management, Practices, Records life cycle and Organizational effectiveness, University, Registry.*

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Background to the Study

Organizational effectiveness is the measure of how successful an organization is in achieving its mission and advancing its vision through its core strategies. It is the ability of an organization to meet its goals. Building a solid organization takes hard work and a keen awareness of the culture and environment that exists in a business. In the turbulent business environment, with changes in customer demand the main aim of every organization is to improve its productivity but this can never be possible without effective performance. Organizations can only achieve their objectives if they are able to survive and the primary condition for survival is adequate profitability to enable them maintain their wealth creating capabilities. An organization that is not profitable cannot even survive, not to think of the level of its effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness comprises measuring the actual performance outcomes or results of an organization against its intended goals. Organizational effectiveness is a business strategy designed to improve the efficiency of the company without reducing the quality of the products or services. How an organization produces its set quota of products, how much waste it produces, or how efficient its processes to actualize its goal fall under organizational effectiveness.

An effective organization will make sure that there is a spirit of cooperation and sense of commitment and satisfaction within the sphere of its influence (Abbah, 2014). There are no fixed parameters to compute the effectiveness of an organization since it varies from organization to organization and from case to case. Organizational effectiveness is a business strategy designed to improve the efficiency of the organization without reducing the quality of the products or services. By working with professionals in different fields or at different educational levels, a leader obtains new ideas to help reduce costs, improve the product and provide quality customer service. However, it can be used to measure anything within an organization, from leadership, communication, accountability, metric, human performance, to the delivery systems (Anderson & Adams 2015).

The role of records management in any organization including higher educational institution cannot be over-emphasized. This is because the continuity of the institution depends largely on the availability of useful records of past activities and programmes. In a complex organization like that of the university, it is not possible to keep every information in the brain because the volume of information is so much and therefore, in the course of human interactions and service provisions that occur in organizations records are created. Records are evidence of the transactions that occur daily in any human society. Records can either be generated internally or externally by an organization. Absence of records can cripple the planning and decision making processes of management in an organization. Despite the importance of records management as indicated above, there is consensus among researchers that many organizations pay little attention to records management not realizing that records constitute a major organizational resource.(Egwunyenga, 2009).Popoola and Oluwole (2007) opined that Nigerian administrators are often concerned about the alarming rate of misplacement or loss of vital records and the slow speed at which needed records are retrieved from their storage by records management personnel. In most cases, misplaced or lost records delay necessary actions on urgent matters, or lead to irrational decisions, which may translate to an embarrassment to the organization (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004).

The university depends to a large extent on the availability of, and access to university records by the university community and other stakeholders. Records therefore, constitute an essential instrument of administration without which operational processes and functions can be executed. Alegbeleye (2009) posited that in most African countries, the high producers of records are commercial companies, associations, governments and their agencies, industries, hospitals, the armed forces and educational institutions. Every educational institution deals with all levels of records keeping beginning from creation up to disposition levels. Students' records are one of the most crucial aspects of university activities because it has to do with creation, use, maintenance and disposition of student records. Students' records can be organized into three broad categories: the first category refers to records documenting the contractual relationship between students and the institution. These include records documenting admission and enrolment, payment of tuition fees, academic and non-academic disciplinary proceedings. The next category consists of records documenting the student as a learner such as records documenting programmes undertaken, academic progress and performance, awards, also records documenting the student as an individual and consumer of services provided by the institution. The last category includes records of employees and stakeholders. In this category are records documenting the use of accommodation services, counselling services, library and Information Technology (IT) support services, career and employment services. Adeyemi (2007) acknowledged that records are important because they serve as major information tools that protect students' and employee rights, such as the right to ownership of a degree with the right class, documented through academic cumulative records (scholastic performance), right of developments and entitlements of employee.

Registry in educational institutions plays the roles of creating, receiving and maintaining records of both students and employees. Registry serves as the secretariat of any university and it is the nerve-center and the rallying point of all administrative activities in the university. The registry is headed by the Registrar who is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the day-to-day administration of the University. Registry, as its responsibility, takes care of university records. lwhiwhu (2005) asserted that university records support the administrative and educational research of the institution as well as the visions and goals of the university to support teaching, research and community service functions in the university for effective performance. The growth of university education around the world has been so remarkable in the last decade. This growth has also witnessed an expansion in the Registry department of universities. The registry staff supports the mission of the university by serving the needs of university colleges, schools, faculties, current and former students, staff, and the general public in accordance with university's academic policies and procedures. Recognizing the registry as the nerve center of administrative activities, it should be the dream of the university to develop the potentials of these registry staff who handle all her records. Registry staff in South-West Nigeria is not different from other registry staff all over the world. Treating registry staff well by making adequate provision for the day today managements of records should be the priority of any administration whose goals is to succeed.

Statement of Problem

The primary objective of any organization is to ensure that their customers are satisfied with services of the organization and that the organization is making good profit from the service provided. This satisfaction is achieved through the provision of needed services and the ease with which customer receive what he or she wants. Records management practices therefore, play a vital role that cannot be over emphasis. Atulomah (2011) has shown the laudable effect on University system of good records management practices. There is lacuna in our knowledge of the records management practices on registry staff effectiveness. There have been several complaints by the university regarding lack of proper standard and procedures for creating records, maintaining them and getting the right information to the right administrator at the right time. Incidences of records loss are rampart and unauthorized destruction of records is rife. The question then is: records management practices influence the effectiveness of university registries? This study, therefore, sets out to find out the veracity of the above assumption.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the influence of records management practices on organizational effectiveness in South-West Nigerian Universities. Specific objectives are to:

(i) Determine the influence of records management practices on organizational effectiveness of university registries in South-West Nigeria.

Research Question

This study was undertaken to provide answers to the following question:

(i) What is the influence of records management practices on organizational effectiveness of university registries in South West Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

i. Records management practices have no significant influence on organizational effectiveness of university registries in South-West, Nigeria

Scope of the Study

This study examined records management practices on organizational effectiveness of University registries in South-West Nigeria. The geographical location of this study was limited to Universities within the South-West of Nigeria which is made up of six states; Lagos, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti respectively. The study area comprises of forty one (41) Universities in South-West Nigeria. The study concentrated on registry from the selected Universities from the stratum. There was a purposive selection of Federal, State and Private Universities representing the different categories of Universities in Nigeria. The study was limited to University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, Ekiti State University, Lagos State University, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Afe Babalola University, Babcock University, Bell University, Bowen University and Covenant University. Indicators of organizational effectiveness considered are productivity, growth, stability, efficiency, and goal consensus. While records management practices focused on creation/ capture, maintenance/ use, storage/ security, preservation/ disposition, and destruction/ disposal.

Conceptual Review
Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is a concept that has been defined in many different ways. According to Zheng (2010) effectiveness determines the policy objectives of the organization or the degree to which an organization realizes its goals. High effective and high efficient organizations are well known as high performance entities. They demonstrate excellence in their operational performance as well as strategic planning. Effectiveness refers to doing the right things or occupying oneself with the right things (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2003). The concept of effectiveness is linked to the assumption that organizations are goal-oriented. They also argued that effectiveness is essential for improving results; and in order to perform effectively, clarity is needed. Dwight (2012) viewed effectiveness as a qualitative characteristic that indicates the extent to which targeted problems are addressed and the degree to which preset goals and objectives are achieved by employees. Nwadukwe and Court(2012) contended that if workers do not know what results are expected of them, there is a risk that they will work but will not perform effectively, which means that they are not doing the right things and so their contribution will be that of the opposite.

Organizational effectiveness is a clear sign of a good business performance (Dwight, 2012). Employees are aware of the tasks they have been delegated to perform, they are also well informed of the indicators, which are used to assess their outcomes. Their performance and their attitudes lie along the organizations long term goals and vision. Shiva and Suar (2010) agreed that superior performance is possible by transforming staff attitude towards organization from lower to a high plane of maturity therefore human capital management should be closely banded with the concepts of organizational effectiveness. Organizations that learn to focus on what is working and help employees to strive toward the positive will become more successful with more satisfied employees (Anchor, 2009 and Leonsis, 2010).Smart business leaders know that happy workers are productive workers and ultimately benefit their companies (Waggoner, 2013). Organizational support through participatory leadership is able to increase the organizational commitment of employees in the organization because they feel an attachment to the leaders where they work (Sule and Priansa, 2018). An important thing to note is that the climate within an organization can affect the behavior and attitudes of existing members within the organization (Lin & Lee, 2017). Each organization has its own environment and atmosphere.

More specifically, organizational effectiveness has been defined as the amount of physical output produced for each of the units of productive input (Miller, 2004). Organizational effectiveness has also been defined as successful achievement of financial performances such as increased sales, profitability and market share (Agu and Anichebe, 2015). Profitability is a measure of the effectiveness of business as it indicates what profit the business has made from its sales or money invested in the firm (Harvey, 2007). Profit maximization, return on investment and shareholders wealth are regarded as the primary objectives of businesses, while secondary objectives include productivity, business growth, sales maximization, safety and security and socioeconomic goals (Bosch, Tait& Venter, 2006).The achievement of these objectives is therefore a measure of organizational effectiveness.

Records Management Practices

Records come in a wide variety of forms. Most are still created on paper, in the form of correspondence, minutes, reports and memoranda, and they are normally filed systematically. In addition, information may be recorded on paper in ledgers, registers, notebooks, appointment diaries and other volumes, or they may be in the form of maps and plans (cartographic records), architectural and engineering drawings, pictures (iconographic records) or computer printouts. Such records may be handwritten (manuscript), hand-drawn, typed (typescript) or printed. According to Queensland State Archives (2010), records may be created on media other than paper: in roll microfilm, microfiche or computer output microfiche (COM) formats (microforms); as photographs, including prints, negatives, transparencies and x-ray films; as sound recordings on disk or tape; as moving images on film or video (audiovisual records); as electronic text or images copied on magnetic tape or magnetic or optical disk or held in online databases (electronic records; formerly known as machine-readable records); as three-dimensional models, scientific specimens or other objects; or as combinations of any of the above formats in an electronic form (multimedia). All of these items are records if they were created by individuals or agencies in the course of their business or activities.

According to Northwest Territories (2012), records are documents created or received by institutions or individuals in the course of administrative and executive transactions. While all records convey information, not all sources of information are necessarily records. For example, a published book or an externally provided database (on- or offline) will not be a record, although information selected from it and reused in a new context may itself become a record. World Bank (2009) said records are vital, corporate asset and are required, to provide evidence of actions and decisions to support accountability and transparency, to comply with legal and regulatory obligations, including employment, contract and financial law, to support decision making, to protect the interests of staff, students and other stakeholders. Records management involves controlling records throughout their lifecycle. All information created, sent and received in the course of a job is potentially a record. Records provide evidence of a unit's business activities and function (International Records Management Trust IRMT 2009). Whether it is a University record depends on the information it contains and the context of its creation. Records can be in paper, digital or other formats. Such as emails, reports, databases, samples and objects, letters, minutes, photographs, social media sites, faxes, spreadsheets, maps and plans, information in business systems, text messages, policy and briefing papers and research data. Records are dynamic never static. As stated by Shepherd (2006), the times of a record's arrival or creation and its disposition (if only to persistent storage) are the limits of its life cycle. The concept of creation-to-destruction is analogous to biological birth-to-death. Life cycle is a helpful way to look at records' progressive stages.

Popoola (2000) posited that records constitute an essential instrument of administration without which operational processes and functions cannot be executed in organizations. To him, records are barometers for measuring the performance of an organization. In addition, records are the by-products of managerial and administrative activities, and they mirror the

overall quality of the organization's business performance. If records are barometers for measuring the performance of any organization, according to Popoola and Oluwole (2007), it then means that without records, no organization can function. According to Sanderson & Ward (2013), the importance of records management is increasingly being recognized in organizations. It is therefore the responsibility of records managers to ensure that they gain the attention of decision-makers in their organizations. Gaining recognition is all about convincing management of the role of records management as enabling unit in an organization. The university registry staff needs to be proactive for them win the attention of the administration for the provisions of all necessary infrastructural facilities both human and materials for them to be effective.

Methodology

The study adopted survey design with target population comprising non- academic staff working in the registry beginning from registrar to the most junior staff. In all, there are two thousand two hundred and eighty-two (2,282) respondents comprising all registry staff in the forty-one (41) universities in South-West, Nigerian.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The multistage sampling technique was used to select participants from the target population as shown below.

The first stage of the sampling technique adopted a proportionate stratified random sampling technique to select the three categories of universities from federal, state and private universities.

Secondly, purposive sampling technique was used to select two federal, three state and five private universities based on the age(year of establishment) of the universities and their population. One of its major advantages of purposive sampling technique is that it increases the likelihood that researchers get at least some relevant information from the respondents at sites considered to possess certain characteristics crucial to the study. Yamane's (1967) sample size computation formula was used to calculate the sample size in the ten selected universities. This formula is usually used to determine sample size when the population is known. According to Yamane (1967) 39% of a total population could be used to derive the actual population as given in the formula below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where;

      N (population size) = 2,282
      e(sampling error) = 5% or 0.05.

Therefore;

$$n = \frac{2,282}{1 + 2,282(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{2282}{1 + 2282(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{2{,}282}{1 + 2{,}282(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{2282}{1 + 2282(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{2282}{1 + 5.705} =$$

$$n = \frac{2282}{6.705}$$

$$n = 340$$

Determined sample size for this study is therefore 340

Demographic Chart of the Respondents

The demographic variables of the respondents were coded, analysed showing their frequency distribution and percentages and presented in a tabular form. Out of 304 respondents 131(43.1%) of the respondents are male while 173(56.9%) are females. Hence, most of the respondents are female.

Table 1: Level of records management practices

Records Management Practices	Level 4 (%)	Level 3 (%)	Level 2 (%)	Level 1 (%)	Mean	St.D
Records Capture/Creation	58(19.1)	105(34.5)	91(29.9)	50(16.4)	2.5625	.97968
Records Maintenance and Use	90(29.6)	99(32.6)	75(24.7)	40(13.2)	2.7862	1.01328
Records Preservation and Disposition	50(16.4)	133(43.8)	92(303)	29(9.5)	2.6711	.86193
Records Management Policy	39(12.8)	116(38.2)	105(34.5)	44(14.5)	2.4934	.89366
Records Disposal/Destruction	73(24)	80(26.3)	98(32.2)	53(17.4)	2.5789	1.05634

Level 1 – Inadequate/Sub-standard **Average Mean Score: 2.62**
Level 2 – Acceptable but Requires Development
Level 3 – Effective
Level 4 – Optimal

The Table reveals the respondents view on the level of organization records management practice. It could be deduced from the result that the respondents are of the view that the record management practice in their offices is effective with an average mean value of (2.62). the record management practice components were also individually checked and it was revealed that the respondents are of the view that record capture/ creation practice is effective (mean=2.56), record maintenance and use is effective (mean= 2.79), record preservation and disposition is effective (mean= 2.67) record management policy is not effective but is acceptable and requires development (mean=2.49), while records disposal/destruction is effective (mean=2.58).

Test of Hypothesis

In order to provide answers to the research hypothesis stated the data were collected and the findings is presented below

Records management practices have no significant influence on organizational effectiveness of University registries in South-West, Nigeria.

Table 2: Influence of records management practices on organizational effectiveness of University registries in South-West, Nigeria.

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t- Statistics	Prob.
(Constant)	63.369	1.976	32.062	.000
Records Capture/Creation	2.329	.468	4.975	.002
Records Maintenance and Use	-1.626	.235	-6.920	.001
Records Preservation and Disposition	-2.711	.542	-5.002	..001
Records Management Policy	1.127	.544	2.072	.039
Records Disposal/Destruction	-.299	.454	-.658	.511

R-Square	0.653
Adjusted R-Square	0.651
F-statistics	7.840
Prob. (F-statistics)	0.013

Dependent Variable: Organizational Effectiveness
The hypothesis also shows a multiple regression result of the influence of record management practice on organizational effectiveness. This result shows that there is a significant positive relationship between Records Capture/Creation and organizational effectiveness (coefficient= .2329, t=4.975, prob. =0.002), a negative significant relationship between Records Maintenance and Use and organizational effectiveness (coefficient= -.1.626, t=-6.920, prob. =0.001), negative significant relationship between Records Preservation and Disposition and organizational effectiveness (coefficient= -2711, t=-5.002, prob. =0.001) and significant positive relationship between Records Management Policy and organizational effectiveness (coefficient= 1.127, t=2.072, prob. =0.039) The Adjusted R-Square of 0.651 reveals the explanatory power of the components of records management practices on organizational effectiveness. The result shows that 65.1% change on organizational effectiveness is explained by record management practices in the organization. The F-statistic reveals that the parameter of the general model is significant at 0.013 which is less than 0.05 level of significant. This means that the parameters estimates in a whole are statistically significant in explaining organizational effectiveness. Hence, the null hypothesis has been rejected.

Conclusion
Records management practices level is yet to attain enough maturity level expected of an organization like that of university compared to its counterpart in the developed country. The findings show that at records management practices are effective but not at a very high rate but they were all practiced at least above average.

Recommendations

Based on the findings that were revealed in this study the following recommendations are made:

1. The average mean score of (2.62) was recorded in the level of records management practices, this shows that there is need for the Universities registry to improve on the level of its records management practices through the adequate provision of policies and rules of law guiding good records management practices so as to yield the benefits of good records management practices.

2. To ensure effectiveness management must be up to the task of recognizing good job performance, new innovation and rewarding them accordingly.

3. The University administration needs to make available necessary infrastructural facilities, qualified staff (trained records managers/ workers), conducive environment and staff who have good customer relation and can relate with both customer and stakeholders to improve the image of the university.

4. The level of organizational effectiveness should be maintained and can still be improved upon at every stage of the construct if the universities management's will cooperate with the workers, they can go to any length to achieve a determined goal in the area of stability, productivity, growth, and goal consensus.

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