Influence of Electronic Record Keeping on Planning and Decision Making of Secondary School Administrators in Lagos State

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Abstract

Administrative functions are becoming increasingly complex and requires powerful administrative tools such as ICT for record keeping. The paper studied the perceived influence of electronic record keeping on planning and decision making of secondary school administrators in Lagos State. Quantitative research design was adopted. The target population consisted of 3,564 administrative team in the 324 public senior secondary schools in Lagos State while purposive sampling technique was used to select 285 participants. Influence of Electronic Record Keeping on Planning and Decision-Making Questionnaire (IERKPDMQ) was the instrument for data collection. Responses were analyzed descriptively using mean and standard deviation for research questions. T-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The finding of the study revealed among others that secondary school administrators in Lagos State have little knowledge of electronic record keeping. Recommendations were made on the basis of this findings that secondary school administrators should consistently be trained and re-train on the benefits of keeping records electronically and how to do it.

Keywords: Secondary School, Administrators, Record Keeping, Planning, Decision Making

Word Count: 166

Introduction

The maintaining of school records, which provide critical and crucial information on the acts and events that occur in schools, is highly valued by regulatory bodies in Nigeria. For efficient planning and decision-making, the Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM), Ministry of Education (MoE), and other organizations primarily rely on records. All currently available and retrievable records, books, files, and other papers holding pertinent information about what occurs in the educational system were referred to as "school records" (Ololube 2013, Odeniyi & Adeyanju, 2020). These documents may also take the shape of reports, letters, memoranda, images, videos, notebooks, diaries, and other types of material primarily for planning and decision-making purposes.

According to Fayol in Kajo (2011), planning is the process of analyzing the future and setting up plans of action. Planning at the secondary school level entails preparing for future expenses and anticipated revenues, evaluating the need for physical facilities and equipment, and choosing in advance the human and material resources required to achieve organizational goals and objectives. In order to make the greatest use of each employee's talents and competences, it also entails time management and the efficient distribution of responsibilities among various teaching and non-teaching staff members. Secondary school administration includes planning, which calls for a lot of skills and knowledge on the part of school administrators. Another crucial component of secondary school administration is decision-making, which involves selecting the best course of action from among available options. Managers and administrators require access to essential information that is timely, accurate, sufficient, and dependable in order to make good decisions. Since information must play a major role in the decision-making process, it could influence the success or failure of a company (Muaadh & Zawiyah, 2014).

Information has always been essential to human existence. However, as a result of societal advancement and rapid scientific and

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technological development in the 21st century, ICT's significance rose immensely. Ogunsola and Aboyede (2015) noted that the term "information explosion" refers to the rapid proliferation of a mass of diverse information. Record keeping and school administration must change as the world and information it contains change quickly.

The administrative duties of the head of school and their subordinates include planning classroom and extracurricular activities for instructors and students, as well as allocating available resources to the achievement of the goals. In order to avoid conflicts between several programs running concurrently, they also organize school activities. Due to the massive increase in student enrollment that the Lagos State Government is experiencing as a result of Universal Basic Education (UBE), managing schools has become more difficult, leading to difficulties with everything from managing students and staff to managing community relations and school finances. According to Ghaemian (2014), administrative tasks in schools are getting more difficult due to enrolment growth, population movement, and social issues.

This complexity necessitates the employment of strong administrative tools, improving operations, people services, and communication. The use of computers for record keeping is one of thesetools. According to Osakwe (2011), school records are official books, documents, and files that are kept and preserved at the school office for use and information retrieval when necessary. They contain important and critical information about actions and events. Davis (2015) in Oluwole and Ivagher highlighted three types of school records that should be kept: historical records, financial records, and academic records. He went on to say that each record is significant in determining how school programs will be organised.

Amos (2017), emphasized the significance of maintaining school records for a variety of reasons, including the provision of useful information on the progress and development made within the school; the provision of information for parents and guardians regarding the

general conduct and academic performance of their children and wards at school; and the use of the records for planning and budgeting.

Nwagwu (2015), claimed that efficient record keeping is essential to the advancement of education in his commentary on the significance of data in the educational system. The author further underlined that planning and running any institution where records are not kept or are kept carelessly and illegally will be impossible. Amos (2017) emphasized the significance of maintaining school records for a variety of reasons, including the provision of useful information on the progress and development made within the school; the provision of information for parents and guardians regarding the general conduct and academic performance of their children and wards at school; and the use of the records for planning and budgeting.

Nwagwu (2015) claimed that efficient record keeping is essential to the advancement of education in his commentary on the significance of data in the educational system. The author further underlined that planning and running any institution where records are not kept or are kept carelessly and illegally will be impossible. According to Ojo and Obimuyiwa (2019), the methods employed by the majority of educational institutions for creating, sending, disseminating, storing, retrieving, and retaining information have been significantly impacted by the usage of electronic technology.

However, it is disappointing that records are primarily maintained manually and improperly managed, despite the significance of recordkeeping in providing the fundamental information for planning and decision-making. This shows that there are a lot of issues with digitizing record keeping in Nigerian secondary schools, including a possible lack of qualified and experienced record management staff and perhaps a low priority given to record management in the overall scheme of things. This shows up as records and files going missing, records deteriorating, and records being destroyed to hide something (Omoha, 2013). Even though numerous studies have been done on the management and effectiveness of record keeping in secondary schools in Nigeria (Omoha, 2013; Josephine, 2014; Allahmagani, 2014; Oluwole

& Ivagher, 2015; Amos, 2017), there is still a dearth of literature on keeping records electronically for effective planning and decision making in Nigeria secondary schools. This study is necessary due to the desire to fill the void.

Objective of the Study

The primary goal of the study is to investigate how secondary school administrators in Lagos State evaluate the impact of electronic record keeping on planning and decision-making. In particular, the study aims to:

1. Evaluate secondary school administrators' familiarity with electronic record-keeping methods.
2. Analyze how electronic record keeping affects planning in secondary schools in Nigeria.
3. Analyze how Nigerian secondary schools' decision-making is affected by computerized record-keeping.

Research Questions

Based on the above stated objectives, the following questions were answered in the study:

i. What are the knowledge of secondary school administrators on electronic ways of keeping records?
ii. To what extent would electronic record-keeping influence planning in Nigerian secondary schools?
iii. To what extent would electronic record-keeping influence decision making in Nigerian secondary schools?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significance level:

H01 There is no significant difference between the knowledge of secondary school administrators on electronic ways of keeping records.

H02 There is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school administrators on influence of electronic record keeping on planning of Nigerian secondary schools.

H03 There is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school administrators on influence of electronic record keeping on decision making of Nigerian secondary schools.

Methodology

A quantitative research design was used for this investigation. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2015) defined quantitative research design as investigations whose conclusions are mostly the result of statistical summary and analysis. The study's design was deemed preferable because it produces an accurate portrayal of the participants, events, or situations (Mertler & Charles in James & Robinson, 2017). 3,564 administrative staff members from 324 public senior secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, made up the study's target group. Principals, vice-principals, and heads of the several subject departments made up this group (Languages, Humanities, Science, Mathematics, Technology and Business studies).

Table1   Population of the Study

No. of secondary schools	No. of principals (1 x 324)	No. of vice principals (4 x 324)	No of Admin. heads (6 x 324)	Total
324	324	1296	1944	3564

Source: Lagos State Ministry of Education (2021)

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 285 participants representing 8% of the entire population, using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table at 0.025 Margin of error and 95.0% confidence level. The choice of purposive sampling technique was to ensure evenly representation among the principals, vice principals and the administrative heads.

Table 2: Selection of Participants

Subject	Population	Sample
Principals	324	26
Vice principals	1296	104
Administrative heads	1944	155
Total	**3564**	**285**

Source: Researcher, 2023

Influence of Electronic Record Keeping on Planning and Decision-Making Questionnaire (IERKPDMQ) was the only instrument for data collection for the purpose of this study. It was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A contains information on demographic characteristics of the respondents while section B consisted of 18 items, in line with the variables of the study using four (4) points likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA4), Agree (A3), Disagree (D2) and Strongly Disagree (SD1). The instrument was validated by two experts from department of measurement and evaluation, University of Ibadan. In order to determine the reliability, it was administered twice to 20 respondents (2 principals, 8 vice principals and 12 administrative heads) from 2 senior secondary schools in Epe Local Government that are not part of the main study. Their responses were analyzed using the Cronbach alpha method, which yielded the coefficient alpha value of 0.91. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher, with the help of two trained research assistants for a period of one week. Out of the budgeted questionnaires, 232 (21 principals, 83 vice principals and 128 administrative heads) responded and usable for the purpose of the study representing 81% of the sample size. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while t-test statistical technique was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The decision rule for answering the research questions was based on any calculated mean scores equal to, or greater than 2.50 was regarded as agreed, while any calculated mean scores less than 2.50 was regarded

as disagreed. Furthermore, the value (p) was use in taking the decisions on the hypotheses. If the p-value is less than or equal to 0.05, the null hypotheses is retained, but if the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypotheses is not retained.

Results

Research Question1: What are the knowledge of secondary school administrators on electronic ways of keeping records?

Table 3: Mean Knowledge of Secondary School Administrators on Electronic ways of Keeping Records

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	RMK
1	I have attended several training on electronic record keeping	2.34	1.28	Disagreed
2	I have sound knowledge of keeping records electronically	2.87	0.52	Agreed
3	I have been keeping my records electronically	2.86	0.35	Agreed
4	I can easily retrieve records from electronic gadgets	2.41	0.83	Disagreed
5	I have my personal computer and flash drive for storing Information	2.14	0.45	Disagreed
6	I have a functional e-mail for backing up my information	3.29	1.18	Agreed
7	Our school have functional e-mail for sending, receiving, storing and retrieving of information	3.14	0.64	Agreed
8	Our school always encourage keeping of records Electronically	2.21	0.68	Disagreed

Source: Researcher, 2023

The table above reveals that the respondents agreed with items 2, 3, 6 and 7 with mean score of 2.8, 2.86, 3.29 and 3.14 respectively. However, the respondent disagreed with items 1, 4, 5 and with mean score of 2.34, 2.41, 2.14 and 2.21 respectively. This implies that secondary school administrators have little knowledge of electronic record keeping in Lagos State.

Research Question 2: To what extent would electronic record keeping influence planning in Nigerian secondary schools?

Table 4: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Extent Electronic Record Keeping Could Influence Planning in Nigerian Secondary Schools

S/N	Items	MEAN	SD	RMK
1	Keeping of records electronically would make planning easier in secondary schools	3.71	0.45	Agreed
2	Keeping records electronically would the stress of preparing budgets in secondary schools	3.14	0.64	Agreed
3	Keeping records electronically would enable secondary school administrators to prepare and submit their annual budget as and when due	3.57	0.49	Agreed
4	Keeping records electronically would promote comprehensive and holistic planning in secondary schools	3.14	0.64	Agreed
5	Keeping records electronically would enable administrators to make reliable forecast about likely future occurrence and event in their schools.	3.71	0.45	Agreed

Source: Researcher, 2023

The table above reveals that the mean score of both the respondents is above the acceptable mean of 2.50. for all the above stated items. This indicates that electronic record keeping would greatly influence planning in Nigerian secondary schools.

Research Question 3: To what extent would electronic record keeping influence decision making in Nigerian secondary schools?

Table 5: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Extent Electronic Record Keeping Could Influence Decision Making in Nigerian Secondary Schools

S/N	Personnel	Mean	SD	RMK
1	Keeping records electronically would enable secondary school administrators to make urgent decisions.	3.67	0.62	Agreed
2	Keeping records electronically would enable secondary school administrators to make best decisions	3.33	0.47	Agreed
3	Keeping records electronically would enable secondary school administrators to provide appropriate information as and when needed by education district, ministry of education and other stakeholders.	3.33	0.47	Agreed
4	Keeping records electronically would reduce the stress of administration in secondary schools.	3.67	0.62	Agreed
5	Decision making is not easy when records are kept manually.	3.84	1.18	Agreed

Source: Researcher, 2023

The table above reveals that the mean score of both the respondents is above the acceptable mean of 2. 50. for all the above stated items. This indicates that electronic record keeping would greatly influence decision making in Nigerian secondary schools.

Hypotheses 1
There is no significant difference between the knowledge of secondary school administrators on electronic ways of keeping records.

Table 6: T-Test Analysis of the Mean Differences between the Knowledge of Secondary School Principal/Vice Principals and Administrative Heads on Electronic Ways of Keeping Records

Variables	Mean	SD	N	F	P. Value	Sig	Decision
Principal / vice principals	3.405	0.700	104	230	- 0.161	0.05	Retain H01
Administrative heads	3.223	0.473	128				

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 6 reveals that the P-value of - 0.161 is lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is thereby accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between the knowledge of secondary school principal/vice principals and administrative heads on electronic ways of keeping records.

Hypotheses 2
There is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school administrators on influence of electronic record keeping on planning of Nigerian secondary schools.

Table 7:   T-Test Analysis of the Mean Differences of Respondents on Influence of Electronic Record Keeping on Planning of Nigerian Secondary Schools

Variables	Mean	SD	N	F	P. Value	Sig	Decision
				230	-0.748	0.05	Retain H01
Principal/vice principals	3.145	0.857	104				
Administrative heads	3.245	0.448	128				

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 7 reveals that the P-value of -0.748 is lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school principal /

vice principals and administrative heads on influence of electronic record keeping on planning of Nigerian secondary schools.

Hypotheses 3
There is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school administrators on influence of electronic record keeping on decision making of Nigerian secondary schools

Table 8: T-Test Analysis of the Mean Difference of Respondents on Influence of Electronic Record Keeping on Decision Making of Nigerian Secondary Schools

Variables	Mean	SD	N	F	P. Value	Sig	Decision
Principal / vice principals	3.402	0. 583	104	230	-0.146	0.05	Retain H01
Administrative heads	3.427	0. 700	128				

Source: Researcher, 2023

Table 8 reveals that the P-value of -0.146 is lower than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is retained. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school principal/vice principals and administrative heads on influence of electronic record keeping on decision making of Nigerian secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings
Based on the above analysis, finding reveals that secondary school administrators in Lagos State have little knowledge of electronic record keeping. As revealed in this study, majority of the respondents have not been attending training on electronic record keeping and as a result, they mostly find it difficult to store and retrieve records from electronic gadgets.

The finding also revealed that electronic record keeping would greatly influence planning in Nigerian secondary schools. This finding supports the argument of Nwagwu (2015) that effective record keeping

is vital to educational development. This finding also align with the position of Amos (2017) that keeping school records electronically would lead to provision of useful information on the progress and development made within the school; provision of information for parents and guardians regarding the general conduct and academic performance of their children and wards at school as well as planning and budgeting purposes.

The study further revealed that electronic record keeping significantly influence decision making in Nigerian secondary schools. This finding agreed with report of Ghaemian (2014) that administrative functions require the use of powerful administrative tools resulting in better communication, efficient operations and better personnel services such as the use of computer for record keeping. This finding also corroborates the assertion of Ojo & Obimuyiwa (2019) that the use of electronic technology has greatly influenced the methods used by most educational institutions in creating, transmitting, disseminating, storing, retrieving and keeping of information.

This study also found no significant difference between the knowledge of secondary school principal/vice principals and administrative heads on electronic ways of keeping records. Similarly, the study found no significant difference between the mean responses of secondary school principal / vice principals and administrative heads on influence of electronic record keeping on planning and decision making of Nigerian secondary school administrators.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, secondary school administrators in Lagos State cannot overstate the value of electronic record keeping for planning and decision-making. It facilitates rapid as well as comprehensive decision making in secondary schools and makes planning, forecasting, and budget preparation easier. However, it is possible to draw the conclusion from the data that secondary school administrators in Lagos State are not very familiar with computerized record keeping. They barely ever send, receive, store, or retrieve

information electronically, despite having understanding of ICT. All interested parties should therefore support and urge secondary school administrators to give electronic record-keeping methods a lot of thought.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

i. Secondary school administrators should always use appropriate and up to date records when planning and making critical decisions.

ii. Both school and administrative heads should be compelled to have a functional e-mail for sending and receiving information.

iii. Regulatory bodies such as TESCOM and Ministry of education should reduce paperwork and encourage sending and receiving information and records through electronic gadgets

iv. Both the principals, vice principals, administrative heads as well as all teachers should consistently be trained and re-train on the benefits of keeping records electronically and how to do it.

v. Government should create website for all secondary schools in Lagos State for easy backup of vital information.

vi. Government should create an enabling environment by providing necessary infrastructure that would promote electronic record keeping in secondary schools.

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