

## **Analysis of Male and Female Principals' Utilization of Mandatory School Records in Secondary School Administration in Anambra State**

<sup>1</sup>Ogbo, Rosita Nwaribeaku

<sup>2</sup>Ikedimma, Ifeanyi Francis

<sup>3</sup>Chukwu, Regina Nwamaka

<sup>4</sup>Emere, Ogechukwu Nwakaego

<sup>1, 2, 3</sup> Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

<sup>4</sup> Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, Nwafor Orizu College of Education, Nsugbe, Anambra State, Nigeria.

### **Abstract**

*This study analysed male and female principals' utilization of mandatory school records in secondary school administration in Anambra State. The study was guided by one research question. A hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Population consisted 258 respondents. The entire 258 respondents were used for the study. Data were collected using a questionnaire of 13 items titled "Principals' Utilization of School Records Questionnaire" (PUSRQ) which was validated by three experts. The reliability index of 0.96 was obtained for the questionnaire using test retest method. Data analysis was done using mean for the research questions and t-test for the hypothesis. The findings revealed among others that male and female principals to a high extent utilize mandatory school records in secondary school administration. The study also found that the difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals on their utilization of mandatory school records was not significant. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended among others that principals should make conscious effort to utilize mandatory records in school administration.*

**Key words:** School records, school improvement, principal.

### **Introduction**

All over the world, governments of nations are identifying with the crucial role that secondary school education plays in the development of the economy. Improving the quality of secondary education is particularly important for all states in Nigeria. This is because education at the secondary level plays a key role in equipping the youths with the necessary knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes to serve in various sectors of the economy. Indeed, it is imperative that in this era of globalization, school principals in Nigeria, Anambra State inclusive work to ensure improvement of the schools by enhancing effective planning, resource allocation and decision making.

Informed decision making is very important for institutions to remain relevant and competitive to their ever-changing environment. It is even essential for schools because with data driven decision making, schools are able to know where to channel their limited resources, identify areas of need, improve students' achievement and respond to their most urgent needs.

Decision making without necessary information may at times become very difficult and unrealistic, chaotic, and in some cases may not lead to accurate results. This underscores the essence of school records utilization in enhancing administrative decisions for school improvement.

Records are documented information generated, collected or received in the initiation, conduct or completion of an activity and that comprises sufficient content, context and structure to provide proof or evidence of the activity. Furthermore, Chifwepa (2001) observed that a record is a documented proof of transaction and that information is what a record contains, stores and transmits. Hence, records do not only enable school principals to have a clear picture of what is available and what is required, they also provide justification for certain needs and seem to extend the memory by which persons or organizations can pass on their culture and achievement to the future generation. School records are official documents, books and files which contain information on what goes on in school (social, academic and non-academic events), the school plant as well as other relevant information focusing on the growth and development of the school (Olagboye 2004).

According to Federal Ministry of Education (FME, 2009), school records are categorized into student- related records, teacher related records, other records and mandatory records. The focus of this study is on mandatory records. Mandatory records are those records which all institutions are specified by law to maintain in the school. These categories of records are to be compulsorily kept by schools because of their importance to the management of school activities. Mandatory records tends to give the principal an insight of what goes on in the school, identify the needs of the school and helps in making future plans on how to improve the school to attain set goals. Some of the mandatory records according to FME (2009) include: an admission register, school time-table, examination book, log book, school attendance register for pupils- each school day, class attendance book/register for pupils- each school day, continuous assessment book/register for pupils- each school day, teachers' diary of weekly work- completed each week, file of inspection reports, conduct book, punishment book, transfer certificate booklets and files.

School record is not an end in itself; rather it is a means to an end. This means that school record when properly put into use is a road map to school improvement. Information kept in records is retrieved for taking decisions on specific areas of school administration. Discussing the various uses to which school records can be put; Olagboye (2004) noted that information collected from school records on students' enrolment, staff, finance and school facilities can be used for strategic planning purposes. For instance, school records are relevant for planning for placement of students into higher classes. They are equally valuable for personnel planning, this is because these records can be analyzed in order to determine the number of teachers and other resources that would be needed by the school. Consequently, teaching activities would be improved and there would be greater students' academic achievement and overall attainment of educational goals.

Notwithstanding the various benefits that come from effective utilization of school records, principals in Anambra state appear not to utilize various school records in school administration. This may have contributed to the various challenges faced by secondary schools in the state such as poor funding, poor infrastructure, poor quality teachers, inadequate staffing,

poor academic performance, poor use of available equipment and facilities (Anambra State Government, 2010).

Principals' utilization of school records might be influenced by variables such as gender. A number of works that studied influence of gender on leadership and management have shown conflicting theoretical positions and results (Madzar, 2001; Clissbee 2004; Starcher, 2006). This suggests the relevance of gender as a variable that needs to be further studied in relation to principals' utilization of school records. The quest for a clearer understanding of whether male principals are more effective than their female counterparts has spanned several decades, many researchers have already traced the evolution of this enquiry (Polland & Morgan, 2002). In view of these demands, there is need to know whether the position of male and female principals will differ significantly on the extent to which they utilize school records.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Notwithstanding the importance of school records in the achievement of educational objectives through school improvement, principals of secondary schools in Anambra State appears not to be utilizing generated records in carrying out their administrative functions. According to Davis, (2007) and Fasasi, (2010) school record utilization in secondary schools in Anambra State are poorly done. This could be the reason for poor funding, poor infrastructure, inadequate staffing, poor use of available equipment and facilities in secondary schools across the state. Most principals in secondary school in the state also have a very poor knowledge of Information and Communication Technology thereby making it very difficult for information to be retrieved and put into good use.

Studies (Modebelu & Onyali, 2014; Obiekwe, 2015; Ezugbor, Obiekwe & Onyali, 2016) have examined and indicated that the essential school records required for effective school administration are being kept in secondary schools in Anambra state, but the extent to which these records are being utilized remains unknown. This study therefore answers the question to what extent are mandatory school records utilized by male and female principals in secondary school administration in Anambra State?

### **Research Question**

To what extent do male and female principals utilize mandatory records in secondary school administration in Anambra State?

### **Hypothesis**

Male and female principals do not differ significantly in their utilization of mandatory school records in secondary school administration in Anambra State.

### **Method**

A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study which was carried out in public secondary schools in Anambra State, Nigeria. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance. A population of 258 principals consisting 137 females and 121 males. A researchers' developed instrument titled "Principals' Utilization of School Records Questionnaire" (PUSRQ) which was validated by three experts was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a four point scale of Strongly

Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1. The reliability test carried out on the instrument yielded coefficient of 0.96. The instrument was considered reliable in line with Nworgu (2015), who stated that if the co-efficient obtained for an instrument is up to 0.70 and above, the instrument should be considered good enough to be used for a study. Direct administration and retrieval method was used for data collection. A total of 258 copies of the questionnaire were administered while 251 were retrieved and was used for data analysis. Mean was used to answer the research questions while t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. For the research questions, a mean rating of 2.50 and above was interpreted as agree while mean rating of less than 2.50 was interpreted as disagree. The null hypothesis was rejected where the t-cal was greater than the t-crit whereas the null hypothesis was not rejected where the t-cal was less than the t-crit.

## Results

**Table 1: Mean Ratings of the Extent to Which Male and Female Principals Utilize Mandatory Records in School Administration.**

To what extent do you utilize...	Male Principals (N=121)		Female Principals (N=130)	
	Mean	Remark	Mean	Remark
1. An admission register as a reference for tracing the entry progress of every student admitted into the school.	2.72	HE	2.77	HE
2. A withdrawal register as a reference for tracing the exit of any student from the school.	2.89	HE	2.99	HE
3. School time table to regulate activities and proper allocation of teachers to various classes.	2.99	HE	2.93	HE
4. Lesson note book which serves as an aid to teachers.	3.74	HE	3.74	HE
5. A log book to document important events of the school.	3.30	HE	3.45	HE
6. A visitor's book to have the list of important personalities	3.44	HE	3.54	HE
7. Class attendance register to determine the presence and absence of students on daily basis.	2.96	HE	2.95	HE
8. National Policy on Education which is geared towards instituting uniformity in educational practices.	3.40	HE	3.43	HE
9. Staff movement book to show the where about of a staff.	3.41	HE	3.45	HE
10. Transfer certificate for students on transfer.	2.80	HE	2.90	HE
11. Teachers' diary of weekly work for proper accountability in school work.	3.14	HE	3.14	HE
12. Punishment book to record cases of punishment given to students.	3.58	HE	3.32	HE
13. School Cash Book which shows incomes received and expenditures.	3.14	HE	3.16	HE
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.19</b>	<b>HE</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>HE</b>

As shown in the above table, the grand mean score for male and female principals (3.19) and (3.13) shows that male and female principals utilize mandatory records in school administration to a high extent. The mean grand mean for male principals was greater than that of their female counterpart. The item by item analysis shows that male and female principals rated all the 13 items as being utilized to a high extent. The mean ratings for male principals ranged from 2.72 to 3.74 while that of their female counterpart ranged from 2.77 to 3.74.

**Table 2: t-test comparison of male and female principals' mean ratings on the extent to which they utilize mandatory records in school Administration**

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male Principals	121	3.19	.42	249	-.39	1.96	Not Sig
Female Principals	130	3.13	.42				

The result in table 2 shows that the calculated z-value of -.39 is less than the critical value (1.96) at alpha level of 0.05 and degree of freedom (df) 249. This shows that the difference in the mean ratings of male and female principals and teachers on the extent to which they utilize mandatory records in school administration was not significant. The null hypothesis therefore was not rejected.

## Discussion of Findings

The results revealed that male and female principals to a high extent utilize mandatory records in school administration. Mandatory records are records required to be kept by law. According to Ololube (2013), Modebelu and Onyali (2014), the importance of mandatory school records transcend into short and long term benefits and affects the overall achievement of educational objectives. They identified that mandatory school records can be utilized by principals in provision of necessary information for decision making, for guidance and counseling purposes, to aid administrative decision-making and efficiency at the school level, in provision of standard means of measuring progress of an individual child in various learning skills, in saving the school from unnecessary embarrassment and legal tussle among others.

The finding of this study is consistent with Akubo (2004) who pointed out that utilization of records such as student's attendance register and student class record book enables the school administrator to identify students who attend classes regularly. Record utilization enables a teacher or school administrator to identify a student who is a truant. Onweh, Etim and Eniang (2013) in support emphasized that utilization of school record also provides the basis for advisory and counselling services. The head teacher and the school counsellors would make use of record in order to give advice on student academic activities.

The findings of this study also conforms to Edem (2002), who stated that utilization of records on academic performance of students is imperative for academic decisions. Utilization of records on academic performance of students will help principal to be able to determine the termly and yearly academic performance of students and take necessary precautionary measures

towards improving their academic performance where necessary. Olabgaye (2004), on importance of school record utilization emphasized that data collected from school records on students or pupils' enrolment and school facilities can be used for strategic planning purposes. This can be analyzed in order to determine the number of teachers and other resources that would be needed by the school. Within the school, records would enhance planning for placement of students into higher classes.

The finding of this study is in agreement with Ereh and Okon, (2015) who highlighted that utilization of teacher related records are very important in the life of any school organization; the reason being that teachers are one of the most important human resources in education enterprise, without which there will be no schools. Utilization of teacher related records are therefore very important for a successful administration of schools. This assertion is in line with Ndu, Nkama and Adeyemi (2012) whose study revealed that utilization of teachers' records can lead to improvement in their performance.

The findings of this study is not in line with the findings of Modebelu and Onyali (2014). The study recorded inadequate utilization of available records and expected records by school administrators. They affirmed that administrators are weak in enforcement of record utilization and management. Poor utilization of school records appears to be the cause of poor educational administration in Nigerian secondary schools. If records on school resources are not utilized, there is tendency of giving false information to government and education stake-holders on the status of schools facility and resources. The findings of Igwe (2000) and Adedeji (2006) is also contrary to the findings of this study. They observed poor utilization of records necessary for stimulating quality teaching particularly reports with dismay inability of secondary teachers to utilize records on school facility.

The study also found that male and female principals did not differ significantly in their mean ratings on the extent to which they utilize mandatory records in school administration. Both principals and teachers are within the school system and are part of the day to day running of the school. So they know the extent to which these records are being utilized.

## **Conclusion**

The importance of utilization of school records in achieving quality education through effective school administration cannot be over emphasized. Based on the findings of the study presented, analyzed and discussed, it was concluded that male and female principals' to a high extent utilize school records in school administration in public secondary schools in Anambra state.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendation was made:

1. Principals should continue to make conscious effort to always make use of mandatory records in order to achieve effective school administration.
2. School boards such as the Anambra State Post Primary School Services Commission (ASPPSSC) and the State Ministry of Education should from time to time organize enlightenment programmes in form of workshop and seminars for principals to



update their knowledge on different areas of the school that school records can help to improve.

## References

- Adedeji, S. O. (2006). General book keeping for office optimization. A paper presented at the Workshop Organized by the Association of West African Book Editors, University of Ibadan Conference Centre.
- Anambra State of Nigeria (2010). *Strategic Education Sector Strategic Plan (SESP) 2011-2020*. Awka: Anambra State Government & United Nations International Children Educational Fund (UNICEF).
- Chifwepa, V. (n.d). *Managing records at school level*. Retrieved, October 15, 2015 from <http://www.adeanet.org/adeaportal/adea/downloadcentre/NESIS/e-records 021065.pdf>.
- Clisbee, M. A. (2004). Leadership style: do male and female school superintendents lead differently. *Doctoral dissertation*, University of Massachusetts-Lowell. UMI ProQuest Digital Dissertations, AA T 3122967.
- Edem, D. A. (2002). *Introduction to educational administration in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Ereh, C. E., & Okon, N. N. (2015). Keeping of teachers' records and principals' administrative effectiveness in Akwa ibom state secondary schools, Nigeria: *International Journal of Education, Learning and Development*, 4(1), 40-44.
- Ezeugbor, C. O., Obiekwe, K. K. & Onyali, L. C. (2016). Assessing the Availability of school records required for the implementation of Nigeria education management information system in Anambra State: *Journal of Educational Policy and Entrepreneurial Research*, 3(1), 36-44.
- Igwe, S.O. (2000). *Professional Handbook for Teachers*. Owerri: Milestone Publishers.
- Madzar, S. (2001). Subordinates' information inquiry: Exploring the effect of perceived leadership style and individual differences. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 74(2), 221-233.
- Modebelu, M. N. & Onyali L. C. (2014). Qualitative record management skills for effective service delivery in Nigeria education system. *American Journal of Educational Research*, 2,(12): 1250-1256.
- Ndu, P.O; Nkama J.I & Adeyemi A.Y (2012). *Records keeping in Nigerian schools*. Teacher's College Press.

- Obiekwe, K. K. (2015). Extent of implementation of Nigeria education Management information system policy. *A master's thesis submitted to the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.*
- Olagboye, A. A. (2004). *Introduction to educational administration, Planning and supervision.* Ikeja: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Limited.
- Ololube, N. P. (2009). *Understanding teachers' professional competencies for education effectiveness.* Owerri Springfield Publishers.
- Onweh, V. E., & Etim, E. P. & Eniang (2013). Record keeping and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State: *Academic Discourse: An International Journal*; 2(1), 137-148.
- Starcher, L. S. (2006). The relationship between leadership practices of principals and student achievement. (*Unpublished doctoral Dissertation*). Marshall University, United States of America.