

# Assessment of Records Management in Registry Department of Kebbi State University of Science and Technology

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**ABSTRACT:** Records are a vital asset in ensuring that the institution is governed effectively and efficiently, and is accountable to its staff, students and the community that it serves. The major purpose of this study was to assess record management of the registry department of Kebbistate University of science and technology Aliero. To be able to achieve this objective, research questions were formulated and answers obtained, which centered on records creation, record management policy, challenges facing records management. There view of related literature revealed that there is need for records to be properly managed and in doing so there is need for good records management policy that clearly spells out the various programs required for effective records management. Survey research method was used involving questionnaire, and observation. The findings revealed that the registry department of the University still has a long way to go with respect today records management. The study recommended provision for adequate, modern, safe and functional storage facilities, sufficient and regular funding, recruitment of trained personnel, on the job training for existing staff, computerization of all units records, and uninterrupted power supply to all parts of the unit as a means of ensuring proper records management.

**Keywords:** Records, Management, Records Management Policy, Registry

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## 1. Introduction

Record means any document to r other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, ordinary other manner or by any other means. For any organization to function effectively and carry on with

its services there must be one form of record or another (Iwhiwhu, 2005). The (International Standard Organization 2001) then goes on to define records management as ‘the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records’.

It states that records management includes activities such as:

- Setting policies and standards,
- Assigning responsibilities and authorities,
- Establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines,
- Providing arrange of services relating to the management and use of records,
- Designing, implementing and administering specialized systems for managing records.

Furthermore, Records are very vital instrument in every society, organization or institutions especially in reference, decision making or administrative, research among others (Abdulrahman2015). Accordingly, there is the need for increased record management among administrators, planners and policy makers (Nwankwo, 1985). That is to say records are a vital asset in ensuring that the institution is governed effectively and efficiently, and are accountable to its staff, students and the community that it serves.

Records in registry department of higher institution suffer from arbitrary or random destruction, unprotected from disaster, heaps of files without proper arrangement. There is also lack of management principles which cover records from their creation through their use to their final disposition (Abdul rahman, 2015). It is how ever becoming clearer that it is more pronounced in the university system because accurate, reliable and trust worthy records that fulfill evidential requirements are being created but not properly managed. The above is in line with Isah (2007) who identified personnel, lack of basic infrastructure as requirements for an efficiently based Management Information System MIS at the tertiary education level. Higher institutions in Nigeria today needs to pay more attention to the management of records in their custody for efficiency and effectiveness.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

In order to define records management, the concept “record” needs to be fully explored. (Corn well Management Consultants, 2001) define are cord as a document produced or received by a person or organization in the course of business and retained by that person or organization. (Langemo 1995) further defines are cord as the memory of the organization, the raw material for decision-making and the basis for legal defensibility. Based on the above definitions, the concept record it is created or received by employees as evidence in the course of their normal operation in an organization.

Some indicates (Noris 2003) that a good storage program is in place included:

- Proper shelving is used to store records, and Vaults are used for the most valuable records.
- Electronic data backup procedures are in place and are routinely followed.
- Fire prevention systems are in place in storage areas.
- Adequate environmental controls exist in storage areas.

Management of university records is a new development in Nigeria (Ugwunze 1992). There is a need to create awareness of the importance of records management in the universities. Universities in Nigeria generate an immense quantity and quality variety of records in their day-to-day activities. A lot of files are multiplied in numbers without control over their creation. Problems of storage and retrieval of information on records/files continue to increase because they are done manually.

In Nigeria, just as in America, the nature and extent of the record will vary depending upon the purpose, setting and context of the services. However, whatever the record may be, it is important that the staff get familiar with the legal and ethical requirements for record keeping in their specific professional contexts and jurisdiction. Generally, record keeping must be guided by some level of confidentiality, proper maintenance, security, preservation of the content and context, etc (Akorhonor and Iwhiwhu,

2007). Unfortunately, the Nigeria situation in the business of record keeping and management especially in the university system has not been too successful because of lack of management components (Omeyi, 2002 in Egwuyenga 2009).

The management of these problems would mean the development of efficient and effective options within and between universities, this indeed requires urgent attention. It is hoped that if these options are adopted in the university system, perhaps most if not all the problems associated with record keeping would have been addressed.

### 2.1 Objectives of the Study and Methodology

The objectives of the present study were to:

- To identify the types of record created by the registry department of Kebbistate University of science and technology, Aliero.
- To find out if there is any record management policy in the registry department of Kebbistate University of science and technology, Aliero.
- To determine how records are stored in the registry department of Kebbistate University of science and technology, Aliero.
- To find out challenges facing records management in the registry department of Kebbistate University of science and technology, Aliero.

To fulfill the objectives of the study, a questionnaire survey method was used in carrying out this study. This Method was adopted for this study because it will provide the needed information on which to base a sound decision at the end of the study. Thus, I the lps gather information based on which sound decision is made at much less cost but greater efficiency, with a request for cooperation. Total 858 registry staff both seniors and juniors Kebbi State University of science and technology Aliero, Nigeria. Were 130 staff questionnaires distributed and returned.

### 2.2 Scope and Limitation

The study seeks to assess records management system and practices which contributes to the effectiveness and efficiency of its operation in the registry department of kebbi state university of science and technology, Aliero.

### 3. Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussion

The survey questionnaire was distributed to the staff in registry department of all selected in both seniors and juniors staff so that the data representation is diversified; category of staff, and the opinion of the staff both seniors and juniors ones at different levels can be compared.

The first question of the survey was framed just to collect staff category that is; how many seniors/juniors staff participated in the survey. It was found that in the total of 130 respondents 57 (43.8%) were seniors, 66 (50.8%) were juniors, and 07 (05.4%) were others.

Category of Staff	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Senior	57	43.8
Junior	66	50.8
Others	07	05.4
Total	130	100

Table 1. Category of staff

The table above deduces that Fifty-seven (57) respondents representing 43.8% are Senior Staff, Sixty-six (66) respondent representing 50.8% are Junior Staff, Seven (07) of the respondents representing 05.4% are in the category of others.

The second question of the survey was Equipment for Creating Records, they were asked to rate the types of equipment usage

for creating records below the table designed, were types of the equipment used by the staff for creating records.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Pen and Paper	09	06.9
Manual Typewriter	16	12.4
Electric Typewriter	19	14.6
Computer	51	39.2
Printer	35	26.9
Tape Recorder	00	00.0
Total	130	100

Table 2. Equipment for Creating Records

After analyzing the data, it was found that records in the registry department of the University are mostly created Using computers 51 (39.2%) and printers 35(26.9%). Fewer records are created using electric typewriter 19 (14.6%) and manual type writer 16 (12.4%). Pen and paper 09(06.9%) are still fairly used in creating some nonessential records. This shows that there is a shift from the traditional ways of creating records by using pen and paper or manual typewriter, to modern ways using ICT devices. For this reason there would be need for more ICT facilities and trained personnel. The third question enquired about the Records Management Policy.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
Yes	04	03.1
No	126	96.9
Total	130	100

Table 3. Records Management Policy

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
In Files	31	23.8
In Folders	30	23.1
On Wooden Shelves	16	12.3
On Metal Shelves	00	00.0
In Wooden Cupboard	30	23.1
In Metal Cabinet Drawer	23	17.7
In Metal Safe	00	00.0
Total	130	100

Table 4. Records Storage (Manual Records)

From the table 3 one hundred and twenty-six 126 (96.9%) respondents show that there is no written records management policy in the University. This implies that every office, department or unit organize their records the way they deem appropriate.

The fourth question was to find out Records Storage (Manual Records).

Table 4 shows that that paper based records of the university are mostly kept in files 31(23.8%), in Folders 30(23.1%), and those kept in wooden cupboard 30(23.1%), the least used are those kept in metal cabinet drawer 23(17.7%). Least used are metal shelves 116(33.1%) and metal safe 109(31.1)%. This researchers observed that most of the shelves, cupboards and drawers are labeled. This supports the view of Stewart and Melesco (2002) who said that file cabinets and folders hold the records; labels identify the contents with in a cabinet and the contents within a folder. Proper storing and accurate labeling allow records to be easily located, identified and retrieved and easy retrieving is the main purpose of any record filling system.

The question number five was quantifying the usage of Records Storage in (Electronic Records) in registry department of the university.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
On Floppy Disk	00	00.0
Flash Drive	33	25.4
Hard Drive	52	40.0
CD-ROM	45	34.6
Tape	00	00.0
Total	130	100

Table 5. Records Storage (Electronic Records)

From table 5 above is that some of the hardware used to it shows that electronic records are mostly stored on Hard drive which was represented by 52(40.0%), CD-ROM which was represented by 45 (34.6%), and flash drive which was represented by 33(25.4%) while Observation showed that most of the computers are not connected to any network except those within the administrative building of the university. The implication of the store records can be personalized by some staff, and this can compromise the confidentiality of some records. Also, where the computers are not provided with passwords or the passwords are known to so many staff, records cannot be said to be well protected. The institution need to keep tabs on all computers to ensure that they are not abused y those authorized to use them and that unauthorized persons are not allowed to use them.

The sixth question was to know how Organization of Records has been formulated and arranged.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Filling Records Alphabetically	15	11.5
Filling Records Numerically	30	23.1
Filling Records Alphanumerically	16	12.3
Using Subject Index	36	27.7
Using Number Index	33	25.4
Total	130	100

Table 6. Organization of Records

Table 6 Shows that records are mostly arranged using subject index 36(27.7%), number index 33(25.4%) and Filing numerically 30(23.1%). The least used are alphabetic filing 15(11.5%) and alphanumeric 16(12.3%). Arranging records by subject categories such as topic, department, service, product or project is logical and facilitates quick and accurate location of record. Read Smith et al.(2002). Even when you file records alphabetically by name, you find that certain records are kept under subject headings such as applications, salaries, contracts, examinations, fees etc. Personal observation of the records by the researchers indicated that many of them were contained in file jackets that were arranged it her serially or based on their subjects in cabinet drawers while others were in book forms.

The implication of this finding is that there is noun I formity in the method of filing records. This has the Tendency of confusing records managers in the event of transfers from one department to another and cause delay in retrieving information. The university needed to train staff especially records managers on filing procedures for its records.

Then next question was added to find out Problems Encountered in Managing Records of registry department of the university.

ITEM	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
Lack of records retention and disposition schedule/policy	47	36.1	42	32.3	24	18.5	17	13.1
Record management policy not well implemented	21	16.2	25	19.2	44	33.8	40	30.8
Improper security for records	38	29.2	42	32.3	27	20.8	23	17.7
Use of paper for official purposes	45	34.6	40	30.7	21	16.2	24	18.5
Lack of professionally trained record managers	46	35.4	38	29.2	26	20.0	20	15.4
Inadequate computer terminals/Lack of Internet Connectivity.	48	36.9	43	33.1	23	17.7	16	12.3
Lack of Filing Manual/Finding Aids and Involvement of manual operations	22	16.9	27	20.8	42	32.3	39	30.0
In adequate resources	50	38.5	36	27.7	30	23.1	14	10.7
In effective means of retrieving records	44	33.8	37	28.5	30	23.1	19	14.6
Negative attitude in the system e. g. laziness, absenteeism, mediocrity etc.	53	40.7	44	33.8	15	11.5	18	13.8
Lack of backup facilities for ICT based records	51	39.2	48	36.9	13	10.0	18	13.9
Acute space problem	49	37.7	39	30.0	19	14.6	23	17.7
Transfer and retirements of officers	48	36.9	39	30.0	26	20.0	17	13.1
Erratic and irregular Power Supply	56	43.1	49	37.6	14	10.8	11	08.5

Table 7. Problems Encountered in Managing Records

From the table above it shows that the respondents strongly agreed with the following statements on problems encountered in managing records in the registry department of the university: Lack of records retention and disposition schedule / policy 47(36.1%); use of paper for official purposes 45(34.6%); lack of professionally trained record managers 46(35.4%); In adequate computer terminals/Lack of Internet Connectivity 48(36.9%); In adequate resources 50 (38.5%); In effective means of retrieving records 44(33.8%); Negative attitude in the system e.g. laziness, absenteeism, mediocrity etc. 53(40.7%); Lack of backup facilities for ICT based records 51(39.2%); Acute space problem 49(37.7%); Transfer and retirement so f officers 48(36.9%);

Erratic and irregular Power Supply 56 (43.1%), and 42 (32.3%) respondents agreed that there was improper security for records. While 44 (33.8%) respondents disagree with the statement that Record management policy is not well implemented; 42 (32.3%) disagree with the statement on Lack of Filing Manual/Finding Aids and Involvement of manual operations.

This supports the view of Egwunyenga (2009) who pointed out that there are a number of problems associated with record keeping in the universities ranging from negative attitude of staff, badly implemented record management policy, insecurity of records, use of paper convention, lack of training, manual operation, inadequate computer terminal and resources to ineffective retrieving, retention and disposition schedule, as well as lack of policy and filing procedure manual. These agree with the views of Egwunyenga (2009), and Iwhiwhu (2005) who have in their various studies pointed out at different times that records kept by Nigerian tertiary institutions, their acquisition policy, methods of preserving and disseminating them are faulty.

The last question was based on the Solutions to the Problem in Managing Records in registry department of the university.

ITEM	SA	%	A	%	D	%	SD	%
Periodical check to ensure proper management	56	43.1	44	33.8	12	09.2	18	13.9
Need for professional training of staff and maintenance of confidentiality	51	39.2	36	27.7	21	16.2	22	16.9
Adequate storage facilities for paper based records	65	50.0	52	40.0	05	03.8	08	06.2
Need for simple filing manual and finding aids for paper based records	59	45.4	47	36.2	11	08.4	13	10.0
Computerization and internet connectivity for the polytechnic records with backup facilities	56	43.1	49	37.6	09	06.9	16	12.3
Induction/orientation for new staff	53	40.8	44	33.8	18	13.8	15	11.6
Record retention and disposition policy/record manual are Encouraged	54	41.5	50	38.6	10	07.7	21	16.2
Full implementation of internet services	54	41.5	48	36.9	15	11.5	13	10.1
Adequate provision of funds and equipment	45	34.6	40	30.7	21	16.2	24	18.5
Compliance with International Standards	52	40.0	35	26.9	19	14.6	24	18.5
Ensure regular and uninterrupted power supply	95	73.1	35	26.9	00	00	00	00

Table 8. Solutions to the Problem in Managing Records

Table 8 above has shown that most respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the suggest adoptions of possible solutions to the problems encountered in managing the records of the universities. Periodical check to ensure proper management 56 (43.1%); Need for professional training of staff and maintenance of confidentiality 51(39.2%); Adequate storage facilities for paper based records 65(50.0%); Need for simple filing manual and finding aids for paper based records 59(45.5%); Computerization and internet connectivity for the polytechnic records with backup facilities 56(43.1%); Induction/orientation for new staff 53(40.8%); Record retention and disposition policy/record manual are encouraged 54(41.5%); Full implementation of internet services 54(41.5%); Adequate provision of funds and equipment 45(34.6%); Compliance with International Standards 52(40.0); Ensure regular and un interrupted power supply 95(73.1%).

This supports the view of Egwunyenga (2009) who opined that some of the most useful measures to be taken to minimize problems of records management include periodical checking of records, professional training, and full computerization of the

system, policy enlightenment, provision of records manual, introduction of internet services, and adequate provision of funds, security and storage facilities. Furthermore, the findings equally agree with Baje (1998), who shares the idea of adequate security, storage facilities and funds as necessities for good record keeping. This indicates that majority of the respondents are satisfied with the suggested options for solving problems of records management in the university.

#### 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Records management contributes to the performance of an organization to ensure competitive survival. In the light of the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the registry department of the university creates and receives several types of records but there are acute maintenance problems. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- The registry department and the whole university/institution should come up with a written and clearly spelt out records management policy which every staff should be familiar with.
- Storage facilities should be located in places where records are not exposed to dust, moisture, flood theft, or infringement of content privacy. The registry department should also provide fire Extinguishers in offices and be fumigating them once in a while to prevent termites and rodents.
- Computerized records should be protected by use of passwords for all systems in the department.
- The university should provide adequate and modern file cabinet drawers for all its paper based records and functional electronic storage devices for computerized records for the registry department.
- Qualified record managers should be recruited to take care of the records management of the university.

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