

**INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AND STUDENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN  
SOUTH-WEST NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY REGISTRIES**

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**Abstract**

*Records are information assets because they reflect an organization's accumulated intellectual resources. Records must be efficient and reliable in order for an organization to make sound decisions. Despite the important role played by records management, researchers agree that many organisations, including educational institutions, pay little attention to the management of records. Hence, this paper examined the influence of institutional factors on student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University registries. Survey research design was employed for this study. Set of structured questionnaire on institutional factors and student records management practices of selected Federal, State and Private Universities in South-West, Nigeria were self-administered for the collection of the primary data. In order to get a valid sample, a group of 380 registry personnel's were analysed. Pilot study was carried out to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument using Cronbach Alpha reliability test. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics. The findings of this study revealed that institutional factors ( $\beta=0.194$ ,  $t(291) = 3.376$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) had a positive and significant influence on student records management practices in in South-West Nigerian University registries. This study concluded that institutional factors had significant effect on student records management practices, and the study recommends that it is imperative for South-West Nigerian University registries to improve on their records disposition practice by giving serious consideration to issues related to disposing of records especially degaussing and shredding methods for destroying electronic records*

**Keywords:** Institutional factors, Records management, University registries, Records creation practices, educational institutions.

### **Introduction**

The handling of records is an essential aspect of office administration. An efficient records management program enables the business to offer improved customer service, increase legal defensibility, and increase income. As a result, records management must be given top priority in order to prevent organizational problems that can occur as a result of inadequate office record management (Luyombya & Ndagire, 2020). The growing concern on improving records management practices in the educational sectors has created a demand for research especially in the area of student records. Records are stored information, regardless of their format, made or received by an organization or institution which stand as evidence of its operations and has value requiring its retention for a specific period of time (Mabera, 2020). These documents and data that have been recorded are of high importance and as such need to be strictly preserved. Registry personnel are legally bound to retain and preserve documents as a record of their student's activities and proceedings. Institutions create records to support the activities they carry out. However, if these records are not managed properly, they will not provide the necessary support, and information might be lost causing problems for the institution (Mabera, 2020). Therefore, the capturing, managing and protection of those records are important and must be well managed in order to retain their value. Records can be said to be the life blood of any organization, therefore they are very essential resources and assets that organizations like universities cannot do without.

The university registry plays a prominent role in the academic life of any university, it engage in core functions such as; granting admission to students into the university, managing the students information, administering courses, coordinating all university examinations, compiling students' semester results, custodian of all university rules and regulations, policies and decisions of the university preparing students transcript, preparing students for graduation, preparing students certification among others (Mohammed, Tetteh & Ahmed Azumah, 2018). All these activities or actions produce important documents that can be referred to, and safely kept and preserved for easy retrieval and use at any time. Therefore, the success of any university system can be said to depend largely on the documented information which is referred to as record, produced by the registry. However, Nwaomah (2013); Ameyaw and Frempong-Kore (2020), asserts that personnel who maintain registry system with filing cabinets containing paper evidence of university records are inadequate and ignorant of their responsibilities and also that records management practice can also be negatively affected by institutional factors in the university system.

Institutional factors in this study are the school based features that affects the quality of the staff performance within the education sector here in Nigeria. Institutional factors include areas that affect the persistence of students that an institution may or may not be able to change (Allison & Otuza, 2017). Institutional factors include support programs or requirements that an institution sets as standards, practices, or criteria for student participation to meet the conditions as established for graduation (Dixon, 2015). Educational institutions in Nigeria are faced with several challenges when it comes to the promotion of educational offers that can improve the country's advancement to a developed status (Parsons, 2008). According to Ameyaw and Frempong-Kore (2020), institutional factors in terms of support are a crucial construct impacting student educational attainment but practice and research in this area is relatively new and limited. Based on the gaps and record management issues identified above, this study examined the influence of institutional factors on student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University registries.

### **Statement of the problem**

The issue of managing student records has become very important in most educational institutions, particularly in the Nigerian university system. The importance of proper student record management cannot be overstated for both the student and the registry staff, who will have access to information as soon as possible (Aminu & Aliero, 2019). The university's image in the eyes of the public is also improved as a result of its ability to obtain requested information. It should also be noted that the information gathered about a

student has the potential to make or break him or her (Momoti & King, 2019). Despite several studies on the management of student records, it has been noted that the problems of how to properly manage student records continue and are becoming even more severe, particularly with the explosion in the number of universities. Lack of policies to underpin institutional records management, inadequate funding, lack of competent staff to maintain records, lack of initiative among staff, and lack of institutional commitment are some of the issues identified by studies such as those of Atuloma (2011), Abdulrahman (2015), and Egwunyenga (2017). To make matters worse, the records themselves are poorly maintained, resulting in the loss of files, mutilation and misplacement of records and common. However, despite the importance of proper records management, these problems have never been investigated empirically. The purpose of this research is to determine the impact of institutional factors on student records management.

### **Literature Review**

This section provides a detailed review of the variables used in this study which are institutional factors and student records management practices, theories and the empirical findings of past studies.

Records management is defined as the capturing and maintaining of accurate, reliable, complete, and useable documentation of activities of an organization in order to meet legal, evidential, social and cultural requirements of the organization (Tagbotor, Adzido & Agbanu 2015). Records management practices is the management practices by the registry personnel that cover all of records life cycle model in order to ensure that the right and accurate information gets to the right person at the right time. According to Ameyaw and Frempong-Kore (2020), records management practices involve the creation, capturing, maintaining, and controlling the records of an organization from the time they are created up to the time they are finally disposed or archived following the life cycle concept. This practices may involve classifying, storing, securing and destruction of the records (Mohammed, Tetteh & Ahmed Azumah, 2018). Records management practices provide guidance and assistance in managing the university records which are been created and used on a day-to-day basis for the smooth running of the organization. With records management practices in place, there will be improvement in the records storage, efficient and effective records revival, reduce cost of operation, protect vital records and support decision making (Luyombya & Ndagire, 2020).

Institutional factors of any institution can be attributed to internal or external environment. Their performance is in two forms such as environmental and organizational. The environmental aspect of the institution may not be totally managed and controlled by the organization. Meanwhile, the institutional factor of an organization level displays the response of an organization towards the business environment as it forms the internal environment of an organization (Fukushima & Peirce, 2011). Institutional factors include areas that affect the persistence of students that an institution may or may not be able to change. Institutional factors include support programs or requirements that an institution sets as standards, practices, or criteria for student participation to meet the conditions as established for graduation (Dixon, 2015). Based on institutional factors, Franco-Santos, Kennerley, Micheli, Martinez, Mason, Marr, Gray, and Neely (2017) found that organizational strategic orientation, technology, socioeconomic political institutions' pressure, competition, competence, economic constraints, and organizational features are better measures to identify an organization's internal and external environment. Institutional factors refer to the school based attributes which affect the quality of the students' performance in the educational sector of the Nigeria economy.

### **Underpinning Theory**

This study is anchored on institutional theory which was developed by Meyer and Rowan (1983); DiMaggio and Powell (1977). The institutional theory is seen as a theoretical approach of management studies. Meanwhile, institutional theory identified internal and external environmental factors as institutional factors (economic constraints, competition; copying best practice from others, accounting standards/financial legislation, socio-economic political institutions' pressures, professionals, top management/ corporate culture, organizational strategic orientation and organizational characteristics), according to which the behaviour of an organization could be disclosed and researched (Hussain & Hoque, 2012).

The Institutional theory is selected to guide this study because its assumptions are keen to how institutional factors both internal and external can indirectly and directly affect student’s records management practices. The justification for this theory was based on its theoretical explanation related to the variables in this research. The primary assumption of the Institutional Theory is that it emphasizes the fact that organizations and their members are often time affected by their work environment and how job is been carried out in their organization which could be beyond their control some times. Some factors perform without institutions and that is the economic and coercive factors, while the normative and mimetic depends solely on the reaction of an organization to function.

However, it has been criticized by several researcher, the major criticisms of institutional theory have been its assumptions of organizational passivity and its failure to address strategic behaviour and the exercise of influence in its conceptions of institutionalization. The researchers like Kennedy and Fiss (2009); Beck and Walgenbach (2005); Beunza and Ferraro (2019); Tolbert and Zucker (1999) criticized the institutional theory. Zilber (2012), also criticized the theory because it was "focused on effects completely ignoring the institutionalization process." Moreover, the new institutionalists focused on institutionalization only on macro-levels despite the fact that it also took place on macro levels.

**Objective**

find out the influence of institutional factors on student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University registries

**Hypotheses**

The following null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** institutional factors will not have any significant influence on student records management practices in in South-West Nigerian University registries.

**Methodology**

This study adopted survey research design and investigated influence of institutional factors on student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University registries. The population of this study comprised of 1,094 registry personals derived from the selected Federal, State and Private Universities in South West, Nigeria. Registry personnel/staff were chosen from those fourteen Federal, State, and Private universities which are Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, University of Lagos, Akoka, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Lagos State University Ojo, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Babcock University, Ilisan Remo, Bowen University, Iwo, Covenant University, Ota, Bell University of Technology, Otta, Crescent University, Abeokuta, Lead City University Ibadan, Afe Babalola University, Ado and Adeleke University, Ede, located in Ekiti State, Lagos State, Ogun State, Osun State, and Oyo State. These universities were chosen as the population of this study because they have been in existence for more than five years (National Universities Commission’s Website, 2017), federal universities with not less than 120 registry personnel, State Universities with not less than 85 registry personnel and private universities, with not less than 30 registry personnel.

However, adopting the Taro Yamane (1970) of sample size formula, a sample size of 380 was determined with N (the population size) = 1094; Z (95% confidence interval) = 1.96; P (5% error term) = 0.5; q =1-p; d (degree of accuracy) = 0.04.

$$n = \frac{1094}{1 + Ne^2} = \frac{1094}{1 + 1094 (0.05)^2} = \frac{1094}{1 + 1094 (0.0025)} = \frac{1094}{3.735} = 292$$

**n = 292 (total sample size of registry staff)**

Where the sample size is not large enough to carry out a research study, the researcher can expand his sample size by 30% as suggested by Amugune (2014). The sample size for this study was therefore expanded by 30%. Hence, the researcher arrived at a sample size of 380.

In order to evaluate the influence of institutional factors (X) on student records management practices (Y) in South-West Nigerian University registries, an econometric model was developed.

$$Y = f(X)^n.$$

Where:

Y = Dependent Variable

X = Independent Variable

Hence the model was structured as such;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 X + \beta_3 X + \epsilon_i \dots \dots \dots \text{eq. i}$$

Where:

SRMP = student records management practices and IF = Institutional Factors

**Results, Interpretation & Discussions**

Out of the 380 respondents targeted, 292 respondents correctly filled out the research instrument satisfactorily, which is an 77.4% success rate. To test for the hypothesis of this study which states that: institutional factors have no significant influence on student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University Registries, the SPSS process analysis was used. The results of the process analysis are shown in table 1.

**Table 1. Simple linear regression analysis of institutional factors and student records management practices.**

Predictors	B	Beta (β)	T	P	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	F	ANOVA (Sig.)
(Constant)	2.652		18.067	.000*	0.038	0.034	11.396	0.001*
Institutional factors	.174	.194	3.376	.001*				
Dependent Variable: Student records management practices Predictor: (Constant), Institutional factors DF (F-Statistic) = 1, 290 DF (T-Statistic) = 291								

**Source: Field Survey Results, 2021**

Table 1 shows the simple linear regression analysis result for testing of hypothesis one According to the result of Table 1.1, institutional factors ( $\beta=0.194$ ,  $t(291) = 3.376$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) had a positive and significant influence on student records management practices in in South-West Nigerian University registries. The result of Table 1.1 revealed that institutional factors accounted for 3.8% ( $R^2 = 0.038$ ) of the changes in student records management practices. The  $F(1, 290) = 11.396$ ,  $p < 0.05$  shows that the regression model 1 developed from Table 1.1 can be used in predicting student records management practices based on institutional factors. The established simple linear regression model one is:

$$SRMP = 2.652 + 0.174 IF + u \dots \dots \dots \text{Model 1}$$

Where:

SRMP = Student Records Management Practices

IF = Institutional factors

$u$  = Disturbance term (All omitted variables that may influence SRMP but not included in the regression model)

The regression model 1 shows that holding institutional factors to a constant zero, student records management practices would be 2.652, signifying that in the absence of institutional factors, student records management practices would still be enhanced because other factors (denoted by  $u$ ) not investigated in the study can still improve records management practices. However, improving institutional factors by one unit on a measurement scale will improve student records management practices in South-West Nigerian University Registries by 0.174. This result showed that institutional factors determine student records management practices in South-West. Therefore, this result suggests that institutional factors are vital to improving student records management practices when adequate attention and planning are offered by management of in South-West Nigerian University Registries.

### **Discussions of Findings**

Hypothesis one revealed that institutional factors had a positive and significant influence on student records management practices in in South-West Nigerian University registries. In contrast to this finding, Ogbogu, (2014) showed that institutional variables such as unfavourable learning conditions, interrupted water supply, poorly equipped library etc did not have any significant impact on students' performance. This result is different from the current study which indicates positive influence of institutional factors on student records management practices. The differences in the findings could be due to the different institutional variables in the present study area. Similarly, Mohammad, Jan-Jan and Aznor (2017) found that inconsistencies regarding the fact that theoretical and empirical aspects of the efficiency of higher education institutions in Nigeria affects the efficiency within the confines of public higher education institutions.

Nonetheless, this finding is similar to the study done by Cletus and Emmanuel (2017) who conducted a study on institutional factors influencing the academic performance of students in principles of accounting. The study revealed that some of the institutional factors affecting students' achievement in principles of accounting in Nigerian universities are class size, entry requirement, access to functional library, semester duration, contact hours and curriculum contents. Also consistent with the present study is the report of Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) in Nigeria which found that a number of institutional factors: student-teacher ratio, lecturers' interest and commitment, school calendar stability and to a lesser extent, teaching method, were significant predictors of students' academic achievement in the colleges of education. Consistently, the study conducted by Klovienè (2016) indicated that according to the institutional factors internal and external environment of organization could affect records management practices. Also, Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) who investigated institutional factors as predictors of students' academic achievement in colleges of education in south western Nigeria found that a number of institutional factors: student-teacher ratio, lecturers' interest and commitment, school calendar stability and to a lesser extent, teaching method, were significant predictors of students' academic achievement in the colleges of education. These findings corroborated the finding of this study.

### **Conclusion**

The study on the basis of the findings as discussed above concludes that there was positive statistically and significant influence of institutional factors on student records management practices in in South-West Nigerian University registries. The study indicated those institutional factors are vital to improving student records management practices when adequate attention and planning are offered by management of in South-West Nigerian University Registries. Basically, this study also produced theoretical evidence that specifically supported the institutional theory, which posited that that organizations and their members are often time affected by their work environment and how job is been carried out in their organization which could be beyond their control some times. Some factors perform without institutions and that is the economic and coercive factors, while the normative and mimetic depends solely on the reaction of an organization to function.

### **Recommendations**

In view of the findings of this study, it is recommended that it is imperative for South-West Nigerian University registries to improve on their records disposition practice by giving serious consideration to issues related to disposing of records especially degaussing and shredding methods for destroying electronic records and records management function should be incorporated into the University-wide strategic planning initiatives. Most importantly, senior management should embrace the records management function to ensure its effectiveness and should be incorporated into their performance management targets. This study serves as a useful basis for future researches. Future researchers can expand the scope of the study to other sectors of the economy so as to come out with in-depth results. Future investigations can adopt a qualitative approach or mixed research design in order to probe deeper into the study problems and determine if the result obtained in this study can be reproduced or different from the one obtained.

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