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## School Records Keeping Culture among Public and Private Schools in Nigeria

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### Abstract

This study examines the difference that exists between government and private owned secondary schools in terms of the availability of school records with reference to Zamfara State, Nigeria. In order to achieve this objective, one research question was formulated. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study population consisted of 550 teachers in government-owned and private secondary schools. 215 teachers were sampled using stratified sampling technique. For the purpose of data collection, a structured questionnaire was constructed on a 4-point Likert's scale. In order to obtain reliable and accurate results, the data were analyzed using both descriptive (Mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t test). The study found that government-owned secondary schools reported significantly higher levels of school records keeping ( $M = 5.67$ ,  $SD = 16.0$ ) than private secondary schools ( $M = 5.24$ ,  $SD = 15.3$ ). Based on findings, it is recommended that Private secondary schools should put more effort to increase the level of provision and utilization of school records keeping facilities which would add value to their investment in education sector through efficient education service delivery.

**Keywords:** School Records, Public Schools, Private Schools

### Introduction

The school is virtually the most recognized formal social institution where children and adolescent spend most of their time learning to improve their psychological, physical, moral, intellectual and emotional development. Though the fundamental aim of establishing schools is for academic development, yet it is social in nature because of the predominant peer-group activities and other inter-personal relationships. The academic and social structure of the school could be maintained, preserved and improved only through keeping of school records (Asamonye, et al., 2019). The management and operations of private schools in Nigeria have gone a long way to assist nations globally on the problem associated with complexities of learners' continuous population explosion; and simultaneously with access to school enrollment, attendance and retention by all school going-age children, which resulted to low academic achievement, dropout rate and or out of school children. Of great importance is the urge to provide functional education to all in line with world declaration. Record keeping is very pertinent for management effectiveness in any organization or institution. It is not

enough to just keep records, but it should be noted that how records are kept and used should be seen as essential for management effectiveness (Oluwole & Vagher, 2015). Record keeping is an essential attribute in any organization. It assists the organization to satisfy its client need and help the organization to deal positively with legal and other risks. We must recognize the fact that for any organization to succeed and achieve its goals, a good organization is highly necessary most especially the school. One of the most important aspects of school administration is the keeping of records by teachers as well as principals. There have been significant changes in school management over the past two decades that have been affected by record keeping. The school as an educational institution is a community with life of its own which has its traditional, cultural, historical and academic records. The school administrator has the responsibility of seeing to the smooth running of a school. The extent to which he succeeds in carrying out this responsibility depends on a number of factors and one of them has to do with the records that he is expected to keep. These records give a lot of information about the school that will enable him to take decisions and also assess the progress of the school. National policy on education requires that some of the records should be kept appropriately. FRN (2004) different people such as the headmaster, the class teacher, and the local government education authority keep different records about the school (Dorcas, 2013). Furthermore, school records tend to capture those various meaningful activities and roles rendered by school administrators (Principals and Staff) of the school to maintain and keep an up-date of date regarding the school. School record management is of paramount value, this is because it is the basis through which effective and efficient school administration can be achieved. Generally speaking, record management deals with the documentation of data to its at most update towards achieving of any organizational goals. In other hand, the efforts of school principals and staff to preserve and retrieve the information of an individual staff and students and making use of them when need be is herein refers to school record management (Adegbesan et al., 2020). Durosaro (2008) stated that records are important tools for effective planning and administration of a school. Records are important because they serve as major information tools that sustain the school and aid achievement of educational goals and objectives. Records restore teaching competence and maintain the trend in the history of teaching and learning processes. According to Almustapha et al (2023) school records include Students' Enrollment Register, Students' Withdrawal Register, Transfer and/or Leaving Certificates, Lesson Plans, Scheme of Work, Disciplinary Records, Health Records, Curriculum, Syllabus, and Class Timetable.

A critical analysis of the existing literature reviewed in this study revealed that there is a theoretical gap in literature in regards to the nature of school records keeping culture between public and private schools. Most of the prior research investigations focused on the significance of school records facilities in effective school administration and management. This study, therefore, attempts to fill this literature gap by examining the school records keeping culture among public and private schools in Nigeria.

This study will therefore be significant to relevant educational authorities of the government, private schools practitioners and policy makers in education to determine the differences that exist in the extent of school records keeping culture between government-owned and private-owned secondary schools as well as determining the need for providing school records facilities at the disposal of the teachers and school administrators. Furthermore, the study will be of utmost importance to researchers willing to conduct research investigations on school records keeping culture in the future time.

### **Problem Statement**

In Nigeria, it is an obligation upon public and private schools to provide sufficient record keeping facilities for the efficient conduct of school activities (Lagos State Government, 2016). In spite of the significance record keeping, prior research investigations revealed that, many school administrators and teachers could not retrieve important records whether statutory or non-statutory for basic decision making in the school or at the board level. Analytically, shortage of school records keeping negatively affects the effectiveness of school administration at all levels due to the finding that all school activities are expected to be recorded in details and a well-defined manner for both internal and external supervisions. Furthermore, some determinants of school effectiveness such as teachers' professional performance, students' academic achievements, and attainment of established school goals and mission cannot be measured or evaluated without sufficient and efficient school records keeping.

In Zamfara state as the geographical area of this study, it was observed that, most schools do not have adequate school records keeping facilities at the disposal of teachers and school administrators, such as, inventory register, account books, reward and punishment books, National Policy on Education and National curriculum. Even where available, such records are not updated as regularly as they should be. Also, most teachers in urban areas have lesson plans in various subjects but such plans are either not updated or are replete with official language issues such as spelling or grammatical errors and have not been vetted by the school administrators or other relevant personnel.

In light of this phenomenon, this study therefore attempts to examine the extent of school records keeping culture among public and private secondary schools of Zamfara state in particular and in Nigeria as a whole.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of this study was to examine the difference that exists between government-owned secondary schools and private-owned secondary schools in terms of the availability of school records

### **Research Question**

Is there any difference between government-owned secondary schools and private-owned secondary schools in terms of the availability of school records?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Concept of School Records**

School inventories are the official documentaries of daily activities of formal school proceedings extensively to be retrieved or made available for future official utilization the school inventories are significantly more relevant and requisite for school administrative duties, like educational planning, discipline, evaluation of curriculum implementation, evaluation of teachers' professional course delivery, evaluation learners' academic performance(s), and most significantly to assess the extent to which school goals and objectives have been achieved and realized. There is no specific method(s) of putting school inventories into place. They could be in a handwritten document or electronically captured through advanced technology devices at the disposal of the responsible school personnel (Almustapha et al., 2023).

All school legitimate records should be accurate, original, truthful, comprehensive, and clearly stated, written or preserved electronically in a durable form. These school records should be accessible for educational planning and administrative purposes. School records are important and of great value to school heads, teachers, students, parents, government, Ministry of Education, philanthropists, industries, non-governmental agencies and in fact all stake-holders of education. Such records determine whether a school is effectively run or not (Ibrahim, 2022).

### **Nature of School Records**

All school legitimate records should be accurate, original, truthful, comprehensive, and clearly stated, written or preserved electronically in a durable form. These school records should be accessible for educational planning and administrative purposes. School records are important and of great value to school heads, teachers, students, parents, government, Ministry of Education, philanthropists, industries, non-governmental agencies and in fact all stake-holders of education. Such records determine whether a school is effectively run or not (Ololube, 2013).

### **Significance of School Records Keeping**

According to Bello (2012) the significance of school record keeping entails the following:

- It ensures that the Head teacher keeps strictly to the education regulations as directed by the state government
- It provided necessary information for the educational development in school
- It provides means of assessing progress in education
- It provides useful information about the students and staff
- It can be used as history if properly documented

### **Challenges Affecting School Records Keeping**

Records management would continue to be relevant in any organization, however, it faces some challenges. UBE Records training manual (2019); Alabi (2017) listed some of these challenges:

1. Under-utilization and lack of knowledge of some school administrators on how to use generated data at school level
2. Poor quality of records due to lack of efforts in completing records as required by school administrators
3. Uncooperative attitude of some school administrators when records are demanded from them
4. Inadequate or badly maintained storage facilities leading to the destruction of school records by flood, termites etc.
5. Lack of accurate information on pupil attrition, especially in rural areas
6. Inadequate supply of school record keeping materials by LGEA/State
7. Weak supervision by LGEA staff

### **Concept of Public School**

A Public school is a school directly administered and controlled by the Ministry and includes a school, educational institution or class established and maintained by the Minister. The public school system is divided into Kindergarten, Primary education, Secondary education

and Tertiary education (AfroEden, 2021). Public schools in this context are schools owned by the government of Nigeria. Public schools are directly administered and controlled by the Ministry of Education and maintained by its minister (Deni, n.d.). Public schools are creatures of law. Their creation, control and management, and the countless day-to-day decisions are directly or indirectly products of the law. Matters of school finance, teacher-board relations or teaching service commission-employment relations, curriculum, policy making and the effect on teachers, pupils and parents, and a variety of relationships among schools, the community and other bodies all derive from the constitution or enabling legislation. Most school problems arise from human interactions that are generated and resolved within the framework of law. The overlapping involvement of the three layers of federal, state and local governments in education creates problems of coordination, uniformity, management and control in Nigeria (Fayokun & Adedeji, 2012).

### **Concept of Private School**

A private school is a school that does not depend on the Government's Education administration and funding. It is not financially helped by either the local, state or federal government, rather they are funded in whole or in part by tuition she asks her students. The government do not intervene in the affairs of private schools, they do that only to check that it does not infringe public order and does not contravene good morals. A Private school is often owned and run by an individual or a group of persons. Private schools are also referred to as "non-contract" schools since no contract binds them to the government (AfroEden, 2021). Private schools on the other hand are owned by either individuals or private bodies or groups.

In broad terms, private schools do not depend on the Government's Education administration and funding. Most private schools are also referred to as 'non-contract' schools since no contract binds them to the government (Deni, n.d). Private schools and owners invest a lot of worthwhile input in the provision of functional educational service delivery thus paving way for further access, equity and fair play to every intending learner as complement to the effort of government, the public school providers in Nigeria. This development actually met the world declaration of the expectation from all nations of the world to provide mass, quality and free education to all citizens. By and large, education service delivery as a social service requires huge sum of money in its operations across all levels of educational institutions – basic, post basic and tertiary (Egbebi & Wakili, 2020).

### **Nexus between Public and Private Schools in Nigeria**

In Nigeria, education has been regarded as a mechanism for achieving the established national goals and objectives of the country. Therefore, the control of educational sector has been solely the responsibility of Federal, State and Local Governments authorities. This was confirmed by Ogbiji (2018) who established that, the aforementioned levels of government in the country are the key stakeholders in educational proceedings including philosophy of education, establishment and implementation policies on education, financing of education, schools supervision, implementation of post-supervision recommendations in order to ensure proper achievement of the Nigeria's national goals and objectives.

According to prior literatures consulted in the current study, it was discovered that, the educational responsibilities are huge and the three levels of governments cannot cover those responsibilities comprehensively. This notion paved a way for non-governmental entities like religion-based authorities, charity organisations, civil society organisations, profit making

companies and respective individuals to dwell into the business of education services delivery with their human and financial resources as well as under their own terms and conditions. However, such educational centres operate under the established guide materials of the government authorities.

Those schools that are set up by voluntary agencies, communities and individuals that are not directly administered by government are termed “private schools”. This category of schools now exist at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels and are strong contenders today with government or “public schools” both in terms of population and administrative effectiveness (Adegun, 2005). Although the public and private schools are guided by the same National Policy on Education, and pursue the same objective of providing standard and qualitative education, yet parents and guardians appear to be more inclined to believe that principals of private schools are administrative more effective than those of public schools (Ogbiji, 2018).

### Methodology

This study used descriptive survey research design. The study was plotted on survey design because it was in conformity with the characteristics of the survey research. The study population consisted of 550 teachers in government-owned public secondary schools and private secondary schools in Zamfara State respectively. 215 teachers were sampled using stratified sampling technique while Krejcie and Morgan’s sample size determining table. For the purpose of data collection, a structured questionnaire titled: “Teachers’ Perceptions on the Level of Availability of School Records in Secondary Schools Questionnaires” utilised. The instrument was constructed on a 4-point likert’s scale, i.e. Very Much Available (VMA), Much Available (MA), Rarely Available (RA) and Not Available (NA). The data collection exercise was conducted through field survey technique where the researchers alongside a trained graduate research assistant administered the questionnaires to the respondents. at their respective government-owned and private-owned secondary schools. In order to obtain reliable and accurate results, the data analyses was computed on SPSS version ’22 using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-test).

### Results

Table 1

*Demographic Data of the Respondents*

Demography	Category	Frequency (n=215)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	135	62.8
	Female	79	36.7
Type of School Ownership	Government-Owned	127	59.1
	Private-Owned	83	38.6
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Researchers’ Field Survey, 2023

From table 1 presented above, it was revealed that 135 (62.8%) of the respondents were male; while 79 (36.7%) were female. This explains that most of the respondents were male and females were few in number.

On the type of school ownership, the results in a table 1 shows that 127 (59.1%) of the respondents were public school's teachers; while 83 (38.6%) of them were from private schools. This indicates that, most of the respondents were from government-owned secondary schools, while rest were from private-owned secondary schools.

Table 2

*T-test Analysis Showing the Difference between Public and Private Secondary Schools in terms of the Availability of School Records*

Variable	Mean	Std Dev	T-Value	P-Value
Public Secondary Schools	56.7	16.0	1.94	<.005
Private Secondary Schools	52.4	15.3	1.96	<.005

Source: Researchers' Field Survey, 2023. Note: Std Dev=Standard Deviation

The t-test analysis presented in table 2 above revealed that public secondary schools (M=56.7, SD = 16.0) reported significantly higher levels of school records keeping than private secondary schools (M=52.4, SD=15.3). This translates that there is a slight difference that exists between government-owned secondary schools and private-owned secondary schools in terms of the availability of school records in Zamfara state, Nigeria.

### Discussions

With reference to the results obtained in table 2, the study found that school records keeping culture among government-owned secondary schools is much higher than that of private-owned secondary schools in Zamfara state, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with that of Modebelu and Onyali (2014) who carried out a study on qualitative record management skills for effective service delivery in Nigeria education system, thus reported that, school records are available to a high extent in secondary schools in most of the public schools than private schools across the country. Asamonye et al (2019) conducted a study on the school records in Basic Schools, thus observed that, school records are essential in educational sector and due to their significance, the provision of school records was increasing among public schools in Nigeria. In addition, Omoha (2013) found that, there was a high extent of availability school records among public schools in Otukpo Education Zone in Benue State, Nigeria. Similarly, Ezeugbor et al (2016) conducted a study on the assessment of the availability of school records in Anambra State, Nigeria, found in their study that, all statutory school records were found much available among public schools and higher than the private schools. Kissa (2013) revealed that, there was a high provision and utilization of school records among public schools in Mbale Municipality of Uganda.

On the other hand, findings of this study are contrary to that of Emmanuel (2022) who dedicated that availability of school records facilities in private schools in Nigeria had an average of 66 percent compared to 45 percent in public schools, which was the only case where private schools and public schools were relatively marginally satisfactory in absolute terms. The author further asserted that, the standard and quality of education in private schools beats that of public schools in all ramifications, this is due to the fact that the government in a way has neglected the educational needs of public schools. The findings of this study is also not in harmony with Zamfara state government (2014) who conducted a state-wide assessment exercise and reported that most government-owned secondary schools lack school records keeping facilities as much as required. Similarly, Ibrahim (2022)



expressed that, the level of school record keeping among government owned public schools in Bungudu Local Government Area, Zamfara State was at a Moderate level. Furthermore, Odeniyi & Adeyanju (2020) found in their study that, school records availability was at a moderate level. The finding is however contrary to that of Deni (n.d); AfroEden (2021) found in their studies that record keeping facilities are adequately provided private schools higher than the public schools. The authors also asserted that at sometimes, such facilities are obsolete in most public schools. He also concluded that private schools are better than public schools in Nigeria currently.

### Conclusion

This study examined the difference that exists between government-owned and private-secondary schools in terms of the availability of school records. The data analysis revealed that public secondary schools reported significantly higher levels of school records keeping than private secondary schools in Zamfara state, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on findings, it is recommended that

1. Federal, state and local governments should endeavor to maintain proper provision of the school record facilities; while government-owned schools' teachers should continue to keep school records that are much as required.
2. Private secondary schools should put more effort to increase the level of provision utilization of school records keeping facilities which would add value to their investment in education sector through efficient education service delivery.

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