



## PRINCIPALS' RECORD STORAGE AND DISPOSITION PRACTICES AS PREDICTORS OF EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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### Abstract

The study investigated principals' record storage and disposition practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. The study was guided by two research questions, and two null hypotheses were tested at an alpha level of 0.05. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The census sampling technique was used, as the entire 267 principals were studied, given that the sample size is relatively small and manageable. The researcher developed questionnaires, namely "Principals' Record Storage and Disposition Practices Questionnaire (PRSDPQ)" and "Effective Administration of School Scale (EASS)" were used for data collection. The face validation of the instruments was determined by three experts, of which two were from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one from the Measurement and Evaluation Unit in the Department of Educational Foundations, all from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the internal consistencies of the instruments, which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.76 for the two clusters of PRSDPQ, and 0.77 for EASS. The researcher, along with five research assistants, collected data for the study using the direct approach method, and a 97% return rate was recorded. Simple regression was employed to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. The study's findings revealed, among other things, that principals' record storage practices are a strong and significant predictor of the effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. It was also found that principals' records disposition practices are a fair and significant predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that the Ministry of Education should formulate a handbook providing step-by-step guidelines to principals on when and how to destroy obsolete records, thereby improving their records disposition practices for the effective administration of secondary schools.

**Keywords:** Record, Record Storage, Record Disposition, Principals, Effective, School Administration

### 1. Introduction

A principal is a person responsible for overseeing the smooth operation of a secondary school's daily activities. According to Suleiman (2023), the principal, as the administrative head, is responsible for developing strategies, plans, executing policies, and allocating and coordinating activities within the secondary school. It is the duty of the principal to exercise formal authority in leading members of staff and controlling other resources in a secondary school. The principal

is the person who takes on leadership roles, influencing and directing the activities of staff towards the attainment of set goals. The principal is responsible for planning and coordinating the activities carried out in a secondary school. Ossai and Ichazu (2023) noted that the principal is the chief executive of the school, who provides instructional leadership by coordinating curricular and co-curricular programmes and is also responsible for the general administration of the school. The authors added that as instructional leaders, principals are responsible for supervising, monitoring, assessing, evaluating, and disseminating current information on management and academic techniques, leading to an effective teaching and learning process. The principal plays a key role in the success of a secondary school. These key roles include planning staff activities, managing facilities, making judicious use of school funds, maintaining good school-community relationships, overseeing students' affairs, and coordinating curricular activities. The principal occupies the administrative and leadership position of organizing and overseeing the activities of staff to ensure effective administration of the school.

Effective school administration is the process of accomplishing set goals through the coordination of staff efforts and the utilization of other resources. Danladi, Abdullahi and Abdulkadir (2022) posited that effective administration of a school helps to bring about optimum achievement of its purpose and objectives. Effective school administration is concerned with working together with others to achieve optimal results or outcomes. Effective administrators set clear goals, provide clear directions, and make resources available to achieve these goals. According to Akporehe, Osiobe, and Egoh (2024), the effective administration of a school involves the proper organization and direction of human and material resources to achieve the stated school goals and objectives, as well as the implementation of laid-down policies. Effective school administration involves getting things done properly through planning, organizing, and directing the activities of others. Amadi, Barango-Tariah, Thomas and Awala (2023) pointed out that effective school administration involves the optimal utilization of financial resources to ensure that human, material, and time resources are adequately or nearly adequately provided to enhance efficient teaching and learning activities. Operationally, effective school administration is the attainment of optimal results through the effective utilization of available resources.

Effective school administration could be assessed in several ways. Akporehe, Osiobe and Egoh (2024) asserted that the indicators of effective school administration are: the successful implementation of a school's budget, accounting for funds, knowing who and when to delegate, knowing when to hire teachers, ensuring the implementation of curriculum, assistance in the management of some behavioral and classroom activities, knowing when to provide teachers with tools they need to succeed in their classrooms and the provision of disciplinary actions accordingly. Effective school administration can be measured through the smooth coordination of all affairs, a mutually beneficial school-community relationship, a harmonious work environment, delegation of responsibilities, support for the execution of curriculum programs, ensuring that physical facilities are in a functional state, amicable resolution of conflicts, and high academic performance of students. The effective administration of a school can be assessed through judicious financial management, the proper use of physical facilities, equipment, and instructional materials, staff motivation, sound decision-making, leadership styles, and effective record management practices of school principals.

Record management practices are strategies for maintaining documents related to official activities or occurrences within an organization. Onuorah and Ezema (2023) described record management practices as various meaningful activities and roles played by school administrators (principals and staff) to maintain and keep information updated regarding school activities. Record management practices encompass measures and procedures for capturing, storing, retrieving and using information to facilitate work activities. Records management practices are systematic processes for handling information and files, enabling the smooth functioning of institutions. According to Gesmundo, Glorioso, Raviz, and Apat (2022), records management practices encompass the filing of documents, backup and recovery of files, and the recording, tracking, and monitoring of documents. Alegbeleye, Unegbu and Chilaka (2019) defined records management as the application of systematic analysis and control of records from their creation through processing, maintenance and protection to final disposal. They added that the purpose of records management practices is to ensure that full and accurate records of all an organization's activities are created, managed, and retained or disposed of appropriately in accordance with relevant legislation. Record management practices ensure the availability, easy retrieval, and utilization of information for the smooth operation of an organization. The essence of record management practices is also to ensure the availability of accurate and reliable information for planning and decision-making in an establishment. Contextually, record management practices involve administrative tasks such as creating, managing, and ensuring the judicious use of available files or documents to ensure the smooth running of daily activities in a learning institution.

Records management practices are administrative approaches related to the creation, keeping, maintenance, utilization and disposal of records in both hard and digital copies. Adelusi (2020) highlighted record management practices that include: record creation, classification, preservation, accessibility, retention (storage), and disposition. The focus of this study was on four components of record management practices: record storage and record disposition. The choice of two record storage and disposition practices is justified by the shortage of relevant data for planning and decision-making in secondary schools.

Records storage practices are the activities concerned with keeping document in a safe manner. According to Ukaogba and Nwankwo (2020), record storage is a systematic process of securing and maintaining documents, files, or information in an intact state. Furthermore, they emphasized that record storage entails securing records from unauthorized access, tampering, deletion, or loss. Record storage practices involve keeping files in cupboards, cabinets, and drawers, dedicating a special room for record storage, regularly dusting files, and ensuring open access to records by a few staff to avoid mutilation. Additionally, records are computerized or digitized to facilitate access. Records could be stored based on their nature. Records in paper form can be stored on shelves or in cabinets, while electronic ones can be stored using digital devices. This buttressed the views of Ughamadu, Obiagwu, and Nwanne (2024), who stated that school records could be stored manually or using an electronic-based method. Record storage ensures the availability of information to organize activities that might facilitate effective administration of schools. Records must be stored until they are no longer useful and require disposal.

Record disposition is the destruction or transfer of document or files that no longer serve an organization to archive. It is a means of discarding records that have reached the end of their



life cycle. Gunasekara and Marasinghe (2023) posited that record disposal practices encompass key functions, including identifying records, reviewing, listing, and executing disposal actions. Record disposal is an activity concerned with getting rid of irrelevant files and documents in schools. Adelusi (2020) asserted that record disposition practices include incineration, shredding, dumping in the dustbin, and paper pulverization. The disposal of irrelevant records paves the way for managing the required ones, enabling effective school administration.

The unsatisfactory state of affairs in some secondary schools in Anambra State could be attributed to ineffective school administration by the principals. This is substantiated by Nwafor and Egboka (2020), who noted that some secondary schools in Anambra State seem to be bedeviled with cases of indiscipline among staff and students, poor decision making, examination malpractice, improper planning, poor implementation of school programmes and shortage of relevant facilities, which indicates ineffective school administration by the principals. Credence was laid to this assertion by Okaforcha (2022), who observed that there is a high alarming rate of misplacement or loss of vital records and the slow rate at which needed information are retrieved from their storage in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Some principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State tend to retain records that ought to have been disposed of. However, Okeke and Ikediugwu (2021) noted that sometimes principals keep too many records that are not usable or necessary for official purposes, planning, and decision-making in secondary schools in Anambra State. Furthermore, Okeke and Ikediugwu noted that it is worrisome that record-keeping remains manually based and unorganized, which makes it difficult to track activities in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This could probably be due to the fact that some principals lack sufficient skills in using innovative devices to keep records. Similar to this, Ogbo, Ikedimma, Chukwu, and Emere (2021) noted that some principals in secondary schools in Anambra State have very poor knowledge of Information and Communication Technology, thereby making it difficult for records to be retrieved and put to good use. It is against this background that the study was conducted to determine principals' record storage and disposition practices as predictors of effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The vulnerability of important files and document to destruction by rodents and unauthorized personnel could indicate laxities in record storage practices of some principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. It is worrisome that some principals appear to underutilize innovative means of record storage practices, as files tend to be predominantly kept in wooden drawers, lockers and bookshelves in secondary schools in the state.

The predominantly manual means of managing files are obsolete, thereby making the retrieval of information difficult in public secondary schools in Anambra State. One is worried about the record disposition practices of principals, probably due to the existence of numerous irrelevant files and document that are yet to be destroyed in secondary schools in Anambra State. Some principals appear to waste their time and go through the administrative burden of tracking and retrieving vital records, possibly due to lapses in their record storage and disposition practices. Poorly maintained records could contribute to a shortage of vital information for making informed decisions, which could lead to ineffective school administration in Anambra State. These problems prompted the investigation into principals' record storage and disposition practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

### 1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate principals' record storage and disposition practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. Principals' records storage practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principals' records disposition practices as predictors of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

### 1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the predictive value of principals' records storage practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?
2. What is the predictive value of principals' records disposition practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

### 1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. Principal's record storage practices are not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.
2. Principal's record disposition practices are not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

## 2. Methods

A correlational research design was adopted for this study. A correlational design is appropriate for this study because the researcher collected data from one subject (principals) to investigate principals' record storage and disposition as predictors of effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 267 principals in public secondary schools in Anambra State. A census or total sampling technique was used since the entire population is relatively small and manageable. Therefore, the 267 public secondary school principals in Anambra State were utilized for the study.

A researcher-developed instruments titled "Principals' Record Storage and Disposition Practices Questionnaire (PRSDPQ)" and "Effective Administration of School Scale (EASS)" were used for data collection. The instruments were developed by the researcher based on a review of related literature and consultation with experts in educational management. PRSDPQ had 17 items spread across Clusters I and II. Cluster II, which focused on record storage practices, had 10 items and Cluster III had seven items on record disposition practices. EASS contains 20 items, which are designed to measure effective school administration. The two sets of questionnaires were structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from the Department of Educational Foundations, all within the Faculty of Education at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The experts suggested, among other things, that the questionnaire items should be in harmony with the purpose and research questions, and that personalization, addition, and recasting of some items should be considered to convey clear

meanings. Based on the suggestions, some items were added and the existing ones were recast. Thus, their suggestions were used to produce the final version of the instrument. The Cronbach alpha method, which involved administering 30 copies of the instrument to teachers in public secondary schools in Enugu State, was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The data obtained were subjected to a test for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded coefficient values of 0.79 and 0.76 for the two clusters of PRSDPQ, and a coefficient value of 0.77 for EASS.

The researcher, together with five research assistants who are secondary school teachers in the area of study, administered copies of the questionnaires directly to the respondents. A total of 267 copies of the instruments were distributed and 259 copies of the questionnaires were properly filled and successfully retrieved, indicating a 97 percent return rate. Simple regression was employed to address the research questions and test the hypotheses. For decision on the research questions, the coefficient  $r$  and the degree of prediction were interpreted using the correlation coefficient by Alsagr (2021), as follows

Coefficient	Prediction
0	Not prediction
.01- .19	Weak prediction
.20- .39	Fair prediction
.40- .69	Moderate prediction
.70- .89	Strong prediction
.90- .0.99	Very strong prediction
1	Perfect prediction

In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact  $p$ -value is equal to or greater than the significant level of 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected, but if the exact  $p$ -value is less than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected.

### 3. Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the predictive value of principals' records storage practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 1:** The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Records Storage Practices as a Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Model	n	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Record Storage Practices	259	.785	.616	.615	.53033	Strong

The results in Table 1 reveal that the predictive value between principals' record storage practices and the effective administration of secondary schools is 0.785, with a coefficient of determination of 0.616. This shows principals' record storage practices make 61.6% contributions



to effective administration of secondary schools. The regression coefficient  $r$  of 0.785 indicated that principals' records storage practices are a strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis One: Principals' record storage practices are not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Table 2:** The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Record Storage Practices as not a Significant Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Predictor		N	R	$r^2$	$F$	$P$ -value	Remark
Record Storage Practices		259	.785	.616	412.947	.000	*S

\*Significant

Table 2 indicates that the simple regression coefficient ( $r$ ) of principals' record storage practices as a predictor of effective administration in secondary schools is 0.785, while the R-squared value ( $r^2$ ) is 0.616. This suggests that 61.6% of changes in the effective administration of secondary schools can be attributed to the principals' record storage practices. The  $F$  (1/259) = 412.947 and the  $p$ -value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the principals' record storage practices are a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Research Question 2:** What is the predictive value of principals' records disposition practices on effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State?

**Table 3:** The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Records Disposition Practices as a Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Model		N	R	r Square	Adjusted r Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Remarks
Record Disposition Practices		259	.370	.137	.133	.79558	Fair

Table 3 indicates that the predictive value between principals' record disposition practices and effective administration of secondary schools is 0.370 with a coefficient of determination of 0.137. This shows that principals' record disposition practices could explain 13.7% of the variation in the effective administration of secondary schools. The regression coefficient  $r$  of 0.370 indicated that principals' records disposition practices are a fair predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

Hypothesis Two: Principals' record disposition practices are not a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

**Table 4:** The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis on Principals' Record Disposition Practices as not a Significant Predictor of Effective Administration of Secondary Schools

Predictor	N	R	$r^2$	$F$	$P$ -value	Remark
Record Disposition Practices	259	.370	.137	40.693	.000	*S

\*Significant

Table 4 indicates that the simple regression coefficient ( $r$ ) of principals' record disposition practices as a predictor of effective administration in secondary schools is 0.370, while the  $R$ -squared value ( $r^2$ ) is 0.137. This suggests that the principals' record-keeping practices may be responsible for a 13.7% variation in the effective administration of secondary schools. The  $F$  (1/259) = 40.693 and the  $p$ -value of .000 is less than .05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, principals' record disposition practices are a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State.

#### 4. Discussion

The results of the study showed that principals' record storage practices are a strong predictor of the effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. This is in line with the findings of Onweh and Etim (2013), which indicated that there was a strong relationship between record storage (keeping) and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. This also supported the finding of Ereh (2015), which indicated that record storage practices had a strong relationship with principals' administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. The agreement with the finding could be attributed to the fact that the two studies were conducted in secondary schools in the same country, where there is similarity in record storage practices. This refuted the finding of Agu, Njoku, Umaru, Eleke, Nwokoma and Bashiru (2022), which indicated that record storage practices have a very strong relationship with organizational effectiveness. The disagreement in the finding could be connected to differences in time, space and geographical location of the study. One might argue that this finding could be attributed to the fact that principals' records storage practices help maintain confidentiality and safeguard vital information to support managerial activities, which may account for their strong predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. It is required of principals to maintain certain statutory records, which may encourage them to adopt record storage practices that facilitate compliance with educational laws, thereby improving the effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. Further results showed that principals' record storage practices are a significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. This affirmed the finding of Onweh and Etim (2013), which indicated that there was a significant relationship between record storage (keeping) and administrative effectiveness in secondary schools. The agreement with the finding could be attributed to the fact that the two studies used similar participants in secondary schools in the same country.

The study's findings indicated that principals' records disposition practices are a fair predictor of effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding concurred with that of Dada and Ogunwemimo (2024), which showed a fair relationship between record disposal practices and the organizational effectiveness of university registries. This finding disagreed with the finding of Nyamwamu (2018), which showed that record classification practices have a weak relationship with the administration of public institutions. The difference in time span



and organizations in which the studies were conducted might explain the disagreement in the findings. Principals' records disposition practices are geared towards the destruction of obsolete information, ensuring the availability of only relevant information, which may contribute to the fair prediction of effective administration in public secondary schools in Anambra State. A possible reason for this finding is that records disposition practices may prevent principals from spending too much time searching for information required to enhance the effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. It was also indicated that principals' record disposition practices are a significant predictor of effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State. This finding is also in agreement with that of Ughamadu, Obiagwu, and Nwanne (2024), which indicated that principals' record-keeping practices were a significant predictor of effective administration (managerial effectiveness) in public secondary schools. This also supports the finding of Dada and Ogunwemimo (2024), which indicates that record disposition practices have a significant relationship with the organizational effectiveness of university registries. The similarity in time span could contribute to the agreement with the findings. It is through principals' record disposition practices that the office space and money to be spent in preserving document or files that are no longer needed in schools could be utilized in facilitating effective administration of public secondary schools in Anambra State.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that principals' record storage and disposition practices are a positive and significant predictor of effective administration in secondary schools in Anambra State. Accurate, authentic and reliable data can be made available for effective school administration through record storage and disposition practices

## **6. Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Post-Primary Schools Service Commission should conduct regular visits to schools to supervise and guide principals in improving their records storage practices, thereby enhancing the effective administration of secondary schools.
2. The Ministry of Education should formulate a handbook that provides step-by-step guidelines to principals on when and how to dispose of obsolete records, thereby improving their records disposition practices for the effective administration of secondary schools.

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