Assessing the Availability of School Records Required for the Implementation of Nigeria Education Management Information System Policy in Anambra State

Ezeugbor, Carol O. (Ph.D.)\(^1\) Obiekwe, Kingsley K.\(^2\) and Onyali, Loyce C. (Ph.D.)\(^3\)

\(^1,2&3\) Department of Educational Management and Policy, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.

co.ezeugbor@unizik.edu.ng, Carolezeugbor@gmail.com, kayceeeobiekwe@gmail.com, Loyceonyali@yahoo.com, Lc.onyali@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

This paper assessed the availability of school records required for the implementation of Nigeria Education Management Information System (NEMIS) policy in Anambra state. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. A 27-item questionnaire was used for data collection. A stratified random sample of 75 principals of secondary schools, 315 head-teachers of primary schools and all the 50 NEMIS staff in the state took part in the study. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage. The hypothesis was tested using chi-square. Findings indicated that all the school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy were available in schools in Anambra state. There was a significant difference in the views of principals, Head-teachers and NEMIS staff on the availability of the records. Among the recommendations made were that the state government should continue to improve the capacities of principals, head teachers and teachers in record keeping and data management by organizing periodic capacity development workshops and training programmes for them. The state government also should set up an effective monitoring mechanism to monitor the availability of these records from time to time for increased efficiency.

Keywords: School Records, Implementation, Nigeria Education Management Information System, Policy.

Introduction

The roles and contributions of education in the development of an individual and the society remain invaluable. Nigeria today regards education as an instrument for the promotion of national development as well as effecting desirable social change (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2009). Over the past two to three decades, different Nigerian governments have indicated interest in transforming the education sector and have come up with different educational policies to ensure that the goals of the educational sector are being achieved. Such efforts inspired the introduction of the universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1976 and the 6-3-3-4 system of education in 1985 (Six years in primary school, three years in Junior, three years in senior secondary school respectively and four years in the university), yet the
desired educational goals appeared not to be achieved as many government policies and programmes seem to be poorly implemented.

One of the recent initiatives by the federal government of Nigeria towards achieving the nation’s educational goals is the approval of the Nigeria Education Management Information System (NEMIS) policy in 2007 through the National council on education (NCE). The NEMIS policy is meant to support the effective management of the education system at the federal, state and local government levels to improve the performance of the education system as a whole and of students in particular (FME 2007). The policy which decentralized the NEMIS process is meant to enhance efficiency in the collection, management and dissemination of education information. The approval of the NEMIS Policy was followed by the approval of NEMIS policy implementation guidelines in 2009 which are intended to provide direction to the management of education information at different levels of the education system by specifying the roles of different stakeholders and requirement for NEMIS right from schools to the federal level. In decentralizing NEMIS which the policy promotes, all the states are required to set up, staff and equip education management information system for their respective states in line with the guidelines. One of the provisions of the guidelines towards enhancing effective planning, resource allocation and decision making as it concerns the educational sector is that schools should make available records of their day to day activities as they happen within the school system.

School records are all the books and files containing information about what goes on in the school. Specifically, Hrach (2006) defined school record as a unified, comprehensive collection of documentation concerning all services provided to a student which may include intake information, evaluation(s), assessment(s), release of information forms, individual learning plan, all written notes regarding the student, all collateral information regarding the student among others. The availability of these records constitutes an important aspect of school management. The expectation is that the objective of the NEMIS policy which is making available timely and reliable data for effective planning and decision making can be achieved if school events are recorded in appropriate records and are made available as required for the implementation of NEMIS policy.

School events as they occur are the building blocks of NEMIS. According to FME (2009), it is best if these events are captured appropriately at the point of occurrence by eye witnesses for their nuance to be preserved before they get distorted through transmission to other persons in other places at other times. There must therefore be a medium for instant recording of these events by competent observers as they unfold in and around the school system. The genre of record-books for recording these events as stated by the FME (2009) includes those that are:

**Pupil-Related Records that deal with:**
- Bio-data
- Human and social development records
- The academic performance of the learner
- Non-academic characteristics

**Teacher-Related Records that deal with:**
- Bio-data
- Academic and professional preparations
- Opportunities for professional development
• Discharge of duties at school on daily basis
• Duties including the teaching load

Other Records:
• Building and other infrastructural facilities
• External contacts and activities
• Supplies and storage
• Audit-related activities
• Graduate output
• New entrants

Mandatory Records to be kept in schools:
All educational institutions are required to keep the following records:
• An admission register – as events occur
• School time-table
• Examination book
• A log book—as events occur
• School attendance register for pupils—each school day
• Class attendance book/register for pupils—each school day
• Continuous assessment book/register for pupils—each school day
• Teachers’ diary of weekly work—completed each week
• A file of inspection reports— as events occur
• Conduct book— as events occur
• Punishment book— as events occur
• Transfer certificate booklets and files— as events occur
• Any other record as may be deemed necessary by the national committee on NEMIS from time to time.

In line with the above, Modebelu and Onyali (2014) submitted that records are kept for the following purposes:
1. To keep the government and the society informed as to the need or otherwise of the further investment to education, the direction as well as the dimension of such investment.
2. To enhance effective guidance and counseling services to be provided for students’ social/academic activities.
3. To provide useful information for higher institutions of learning and employers of labor for placement.
4. To provide effective monitoring for parents and guardians about their children’s education.
5. To provide useful and reliable statistics for educational planning and provide solutions to various educational problems.
6. They enable inspectors/supervisors to assess teachers’ performance.

Achievement of these enumerated purposes in the school system avails the school of qualitative opportunities to benefit from the documents as well as keeping up with trends. The benefits of good record keeping according to Adedeji as cited in Modebelu & Onyali (2014), entails provision of necessary information for decision-making at school; guidance and counseling purposes; enables the teacher to access necessary information in guiding the learners; aids administrative decision-making and efficiency at the school level; saves the
school from unnecessary embarrassment and legal tussle; provides direction to the overall development of the school; provides standard means of measuring progress of an individual child in various learning skills; provides strong source of assistance to the child; a means of assessing the influence of family history on the general behaviour and performance of the child; facilitates monitoring of the movement of children from one school to another. Good record keeping enhances efficiency and aid teaching and learning, and enhances staff familiarization with activities in the school system.

Statement of the Problem
Effective educational management requires accurate and timely data for quality planning and decision making using education management information system. For many years the education management information system in Nigeria especially in Anambra state appeared not to be performing optimally; data were either not available or unreliable and could therefore not inform the basis for educational planning and decision making (FME, 2007). The data management situation appeared disorganized such that different sets of data existed for students’ enrolment, number of teachers among others. The NEMIS policy was formulated eight years ago and its implementation process decentralized to solve these problems. However, in Anambra state, after several years of the approval of NEMIS policy, problems such as incomplete and inadequate data, poor record keeping in schools and untimely release of information seems to have persisted. The government had promised to improve NEMIS and enhance the data management situation in the state (Anambra State Government, 2010). Yet, several years after giving this report, it appears no significant success has been achieved. It therefore becomes worrisome whether unavailability of accurate records in schools could be responsible for this. This therefore necessitated the study of assessing the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study
The study assessed the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy in Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Question
Are school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy available in schools in Anambra state?

Hypothesis
There is no significant difference in the views of principals, Head-teacher and NEMIS staff on the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy.

Research Design
The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey design is one which aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner the characteristics, features or facts about a given population. This design was deemed appropriate for this study which collected data from principals, head teachers and NEMIS staff in order to determine the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy.
Population and Sample for the Study
The target population comprised 254 principals of public secondary schools, 1040 head teachers of public primary schools and 50 NEMIS staff in Anambra State. The sample for the study was 440; it comprised 75 principals, 315 head teachers and all the 50 NEMIS staff in the state. The researchers adopted proportionate stratified random sampling technique in choosing the samples of principals and head-teachers for the study. The primary and secondary schools were stratified according to the 21 local government areas in the state and 30% of the schools in each local government were randomly sampled making a total of 75 secondary schools out of 254 and 315 primary schools out of the 1040 in the state. The entire principals and head-teachers of the sampled schools were used for the study.

Instrument for Data Collection
The instrument for data collection was a 27-item questionnaire titled “Nigeria Education Management Information System Assessment Questionnaire” (NEMISAQ), eliciting information on the availability of school records required for NEMIS. The items were structured with response category of “Available” or “Not-available”.

Validation of the Instrument
The validity of the instrument was determined by presenting the draft instrument, the topic of study, the purpose of study, research question and hypothesis to three experts. One of the experts came from the Department of Educational Management and Policy, one from Measurement and Evaluation, both in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, while the third person was a top NEMIS officer at the Anambra State Ministry of Education, Awka. Their comments and suggestions were integrated in the final instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument
Test-retest method was adopted. Twenty five copies of the questionnaire were administered to 10 principals, 10 head teachers and 5 NEMIS staff in Enugu state. Another set of twenty five copies were re-administered to the same group after a period of two weeks. To determine the reliability coefficient of the two sets of responses, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation was used. A reliability coefficient of 0.99 was considered satisfactory for the study.

Method of Data Collection
Copies of the questionnaire were administered directly to the respondents by the researchers and 4 research assistants (1 principal and 3 head-teachers) who received orientation from the researchers on the procedures for the administration of the questionnaire. Most of the administration took place at ANCOPSS meeting of principals and meeting of head teachers in the state. Out of the 440 copies of questionnaire distributed 430 were properly completed and collected and were used by the researchers for the analysis, making a total of 98% return rate.

Method of Data Analysis
Frequency and percentage were used to answer the research question while chi-square was used in testing the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Any item with a percentage response of 50 percent and above was regarded as “Available” while items with less than 50 percent response was regarded as “Not-available”.

Ezeugbor, Obiekwe and Onyali
RESULTS

Table 1.

Frequencies and percentages on the availability of school records required for NEMIS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Records Required for NEMIS</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Available Freq.</th>
<th>Available %</th>
<th>Not Available Freq.</th>
<th>Not Available %</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student related records</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Bio data</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Human and social development records</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Academic performance records of the learners</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Non-academic characteristics records of the students</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher related records</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Bio data</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Academic and professional preparations records</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Records on discharge of duties at school on daily basis</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Opportunities for professional development records</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Records of duties including the teaching loads</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other records</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Records on Building and other infrastructural facilities</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Records on external contacts and activities</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Records on supplies and storage</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Records on audit related activities</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Records on graduate output</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Records on new entrants</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory records to be kept in schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. An admission register as events occur</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. School time table</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Examination book</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. A log book- as events occur</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result presented in table 1 shows that all the school records required for the implementation of NEMIS were available in public schools in Anambra state. The percentage response for all the 27 items ranges from 67% to 98%. This shows that more than 50% of the respondents affirmed that each of the 27 listed school records required for NEMIS was available in the schools.

Table 2.
Chi-square analysis on availability of school records by respondents’ position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Available (N=377)</th>
<th>Not available (N=53)</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>X²</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>62(82)</td>
<td>13(18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head - Teachers</td>
<td>272(89)</td>
<td>33(11)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.24</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEMIS staff</td>
<td>43(86)</td>
<td>07(14)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis in table 2 shows that there was a significant difference in the views of Principals, head-teachers and NEMIS staff on the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS as the p-value (.02) was less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was therefore rejected.

Lists of Major Findings
1. The findings of the study shows that all the school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy were available in primary and secondary schools in Anambra state.
2. The findings of the hypothesis indicated that there was a significant difference between the views of principals, head teachers and NEMIS staff on the availability of school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy

Discussion
The findings of this study indicated that all the school records required for NEMIS are available in schools in Anambra state as shown in table 1. This finding is in contrast with the findings of Nwankwo (1982), Fagbulu and Duze (1988), Iguodala, (1998); Ogurinde, (2003), and Adeyemi, (2008) who found that school records have not been effectively kept. On the other hand, the findings of this study in this regard is consistent with the findings of Modebelu and Onyali (2014), who reported that school records are available to a high extent in secondary schools in Anambra state. This finding further supports that of Ozigi (1997), Ndu (2001) , and Igwe (2004), who identified various categories of records that must be made available by school for quality educational administration and academic excellence. The records recommended by these studies are part of the mandatory school records identified by the current study. They include: Admission register, log book, visitor’s book, time-table, class attendance register, continuous assessment book among others.

The availability of these records in schools as recorded by these studies could be because these records are mandatory to keep and are essential for the overall management of the school system. Omenyi (2002) and Ndu (2001) observed that in Nigeria educational institutions, staff appears to have started obeying the education law hence they endeavour to keep mandatory records. Expected records and every other record of activities should be available for enhancing teaching and learning activities which are the primary essence of school system.

In terms of significant difference in the views of principals, head-teachers and NEMIS staff, the study found that there was a significant difference in the groups’ responses. This difference points to the fact that principals, head-teachers and the NEMIS staff are different categories of staff handling different classes of individuals as well as different administrative responsibilities and that may have contributed to their divergent views.

Conclusion
All the school records required for the implementation of NEMIS policy are available in schools in Anambra state. There is therefore need to continue to improve the capacities and skills of principals, head-teachers and teachers in record keeping and data management in the state in order to continue making these records available. This is a good step towards the achievement of the objectives of the NEMIS policy in the state.

Recommendations
1. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that the state government should continue to improve the capacities of principals, head teachers and teachers in record keeping and data management by organizing periodic capacity development workshops and training programmes for them.
2. The state government also should set up an effective monitoring mechanism to monitor the availability of these records from time to time for continued efficiency.
References


Ogurinde, E.O., (2003). The importance of record-keeping for the enhancement of meaningful and effective supervision; Ibadan: Gabesther Educational Publishers
