MANAGEMENT AND ETHICAL STANDERDS IN SCHOOL RECORDS FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
Proper Records Management requires the Application of the Ethical Standards in records keeping by ensure ring the integrity, Accuracy, and Accessibility of the records, where the school managers ensure trust by their client. The Paper therefore discussed those Ethical standards that school managers need to work with such as effective utilization of Statutory and Non- Statutory School Records to achieve Sustainable National Development, at the same time some challenges affecting proper records keeping procedures were identified such as in adequate Data Stock, in adequate Monitoring, and Lack of Political will by some records managers and those in Power. It was recommended that all the stake holders in the management of School records should have political will to put hands on desk to manage those School Records in accordance with the said Standards.

Keywords: Management, Ethical Standard, School Records, Sustainable development

Introduction

School records are official documents and files containing essential information about school teachers, pupils, quality of teaching and learning activities taking place during the daily operation of the school. The knowledge of these records and its Ethical standard help teachers and school managers to possess the skills of managing the school records effectively. An effective utilization of school records leads to Sustainable National Development. Understand the ethical standard of school records as a concept, its types and utilizing them for the purpose of management and maintenance of all statutory and non- statutory records will lead to Sustainable National Development. School manager's deficiency in the effective management of school records in some observed Primary and Secondary schools in Kano State. Janguza (2015) called for urgent need to sensitize those in charge with the records keeping to have the knowledge of the Ethical standards for records keeping in Schools

Concept of School Records

Records are information, data or document on particular subjects collected and preserve for future use. School record can simply be understood as official document books and files containing essential routinely updated information about pupils, school, staff, and qualities of teaching and learning activities taking place during the daily operations of the school (Kayode, 2016). School records serve as the bank in which information is deposited in order that the information can be drawn on if and when the need arises.

School records are documents that must be kept in school as stated by law under the care of school teacher or head teachers for feature references. Record keeping is the process of keeping those records for the purpose of reference when need arises.

Types of School Records

There are two basic types of records in school. Statutory and non- statutory records, Which are kept by either the Teachers or the Head teachers.

Statutory Records: Statutory records are those records prescribed by education Edicts and laws of a state which must be maintained by school administrators. They are kept by a school

to details important aspect of its operations and structure. The Education law stipulates that every school in the country should keep statutory records to ensure effective and smooth running of the school (Jumare, 2018). They are the compulsory records to be kept in school. School administrator or manager can be punished for not keeping statutory records in his/her schools.

Non-Statutory Records: Non statutory records are those records kept in school but are no prescribed by law, though they are not prescribed by law they are equally important for the smooth functioning of a school. They are the records that are not compulsory for every school administrator to keep. If absent in the school the school manager will not be punished, but when kept, they contribute a lot in providing some of the important information of the school and its progress or otherwise:

Table 1

Showing Categories and types of School Records:

Examples of Statutory Records	**Examples of Non_Statutory Records**

1. Log book
2. Admission register
3. Class daily attendance register
4. Continuous assessment records
5. Time book
6. Scheme of work
7. Syllabus
8. Punishment book
9. Staff movement book
10. Visitors book
11. School leaving certificate file
12. Transfer record file
13. Health record book
14. Cash book
15. National Policy on Education Booklets

1. School time table
2. PTA file
3. Staff minute book
4. SBMC minute book
5. Duty report book
6. Record of school plant (building & physical development)
7. Examination question files
8. Staff annual performance evaluation record (APER) form
9. Store ledger book
10. Inspection/supervision report file
11. Pupils cumulative record

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22. Pupils cumulative record

Rationale for School Records

There are many reasons for keeping school records among them are as follows:

1. To ensure the availability of accurate and appropriate information on pupils' achievement and progress through out schooling cycles.
2. To provide data needed for planning and decision making by education authorities.
3. To ensure head teachers and teachers adhere strictly to the educational law and national policy framework.
4. To facilitate the supply of information to parent or guardians so that they can follow the performance and progress of their children in school.
5. To provide basis for the objective assessment of the state of teaching and learning in the school including staff and pupils' performance by supervisors and evaluators.
6. To provide information for the school community, the general public, researchers to advance knowledge and to provide efficiency and effectiveness of the school system.

7. To make available to potential employers such information as testimonial, transcripts, certificates and references letters for pupils who want to enter the world of work.

Management of School Records

School records, management involves the systematic creation, retention, storage, retrieval, protection and utilization of information. Each of these has a direct influence on the availability of information for proper management of school records we shall note the following strategies for keeping records as opined by Janguza (2015)

1. **Filing school records:** school record must be filed in a logical order to ensure that they can be retrieved easily when needed. These involve grouping together records on the same topic within a single file, arranged, for example according to class, teachers, materials etc.
2. **Storing school records: -**after a classification system has been decided on and files have been created and labeled the files must be stored in a safe place, one or more filing cabinets that can be securely locked should be used for this purposes there are two basic methods for storage of school record viz.
    a. *Manual storage system***:** this entails keeping school records as written or graphically presented information in hardcopy in form of book and report ledger which are stored in filling carbonate, in shelves or in cupboards.
    b. *Electric storage:* this entails storage of school information on electronic devices such as handsets, personal computers, desktop, laptops note book and palmtop. External storage media and microfilm. Records stored electronically are usually easier for retrieval by copying the files or linking it.
3. **Indexing school records:** this involves ordering the records as they arrive and subsequently where they are kept. The index provides a listening of names or codes to which people may refer when looking for the records.
4. **Retrieving school records:** records stored manually or electronically remain the property of the school and should be easily retrieved for use. Particularly during the annual school census exercise, during school inspection, or on request from education authorities.

Roles and Responsibilities of Head Teacher/Principal and Quality Assurance Evaluators on School Records

The responsibility for the retrieval storage and use of school record can vary within school system. Some school may even specifically employ record keeping officer, since every information affect all actors in the school system, ultimately therefore all staff should be concerned with the way in which the records are managed, nevertheless head teachers/principals and quality assurance evaluators have a particularly important role to play in school record keeping.

In order to ensure effective record keeping head teachers/principal need to perform the following supervisory and coordinating roles in their respective school.

1. Verify the completion and accuracy of admission register and ensure that admission numbers are issued correctly.
2. Checks the completion of class attendance register and continuous assessment record kept by each teacher.
3. Ensure all necessary calculation in the class attendance registers were done accurately.
4. Verify and reconcile transfer-in and transfer-out records particularly for use during the annual school census.
5. Organize in-house training and monitoring for other teachers on records keeping.
6. Take measures to address teacher's non-compliance to the regulation and stipulated procedure for record keeping.
7. Appoint a designated record keeping officer for the school or set-up a record keeping team to help oversee on his/her behalf.
8. Coordinate the filling and archiving of past record. Such record must be kept in cabinet in the head teacher's office or any other designated place.
9. Ensure the school record can be easily access in the school, even if the head teacher is not around or transferred.

Ethical Standards in Management of School Records

To manage school records effectively, there are ethical standards that School manager needs to work with which includes priorities, accuracy, privacy, confidentialities and responsible use of information, ensuring fairness and legal compliance. Below are the breakdowns of key Ethical considerations,

1. Accuracy and Truthfulness; School record, should be accurate, original and truthful ensuring they reflect students actual progress and circumstance.
2. Confidentiality; Information in school record should be treated with utmost confidentiality, access only by Authorized personnel and shared only when necessary or legally required.
3. Fairness and non-Discrimination; School Record should be used fairly without discrimination by ensuring equitable treatment of all students.
4. Transparency and Accessibility; Students and their parents or Guardians should have access to their records and the process for accessing and retrieving them should be transparent and accessible.
5. Data security; School records weather paper or electronics should be stored securely to prevent an authorized access, loss or damage.
6. Purpose and use; School records should be used only for legitimate educational purpose and not for any other purpose without proper authorization.
7. Legal compliance; School records keeping practice should comply with all applicable laws and regulation and data including those related to privacy and data protection.
8. Continues ethical reflection; Staff should continuously reflect on the ethical implication of their records keeping practice and seek guidance when ethical dilemma arises.
9. Respect for Privacy; Student has a right to privacy and school records should be handled with respect for that right.

10. Accountability; Individual responsible for monitoring school records should be hold accountable for ensuring their accuracy, confidentiality and responsible use.

In summary, to maintain ethical standard in school records keeping it involved maintaining accurate, confidential and fair records while ensuring transparency, security and compliance with legal and ethical standard.

Challenges of School Record Keeping

School Record keeping is faced with many challenges that affect the storage and retrieval of information in the school. Below are some of them.

1. Under-utilization and lack of knowledge of head teachers/Principal on how to use or generated data at school.
2. Uncooperative attitude of some head teacher/principals when records are demanded from them.
3. Poor quality of record due to lack of effort in completing records as required by head Teachers/principals.
4. In adequate or badly maintained storage facilities, leading to the destruction of school records by flood and termites etc.
5. Lack of accurate information on pupil's data especially in the rural areas.
6. In adequate school monitoring and supervision by the authorities.
7. In adequate supply of school records keeping materials by the relevant authorities.

Strategies to Strengthen School Records Keeping

School record needs to be effectively kept for the purpose of referencing and understanding of school development or otherwise. Below are some strategies if adopted, the needed information from the school would be effectively kept, and will lead to Sustainable National Development.

1. The attitude of head teachers/principals towards records keeping should be improved through sensitization and training.
2. The quality assurance evaluators (QAEs) should strengthen their roles with regards to the inspection of school records.
3. Assign a specific staff with responsibility for records keeping especially in terms of storage, retrieval and management of school records.
4. Involves PTAs and SBMCs in school records keeping to be achieved by sensitizing parents/guardians to provide accurate information on their children.
5. Existing school record keeping templates should be improved in order to establish linkages with annual school Census. (ASC)
6. Appropriate and adequate school records keeping materials and facilities such as registers, cabinet and files should be provided.
7. Computers and other digital devices should be introduced at school level to facilitate school records keeping and management system where possible.

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