

INFLUENCE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN NIGERIA; A STUDY OF IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT, AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

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Abstract: The delivery of service in immigration department relies on its ability to manage records through a good record management practice. This study examines the influence of record management on service delivery in the immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state. The objectives were to ascertain the effects of records management practices on service delivery Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state and establish record management practice that enhance effective service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka chapter, Anambra state. The study adopted a survey approach and purposive sampling technique for sample selection. Structured questionnaire was employed specifically designed to solicit their view about the study and analyse the scoring response. Frequency counts, percentage and mean scores were used to answer the research questions while inferential statistics such as Pearson Correlation coefficient and Chi-square analyses was adopted to test hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study were that there is a relationship between record management practices and service delivery of Federal Polytechnics in South-East Nigeria and record management practices have significant contributions on the transparency and accountability of Federal Polytechnics in South-East Nigeria.

Keywords: Record, Record Management, Service Delivery, Transparency and Accountability.

1. INTRODUCTION

Every organisation looks forward for new ways to tap the hidden potential of information and derive insight from it for the benefit of its operations. Public and private organisations generate information in conducting their daily activities. Information has proven to become necessity in today's business environment. It is considered as one of the main assets of modern organisations, since it plays a critical role in their competitive advantage and survival.

No doubt, information reinforces any decision within organisation at their daily operational, tactical and strategic decision level. It is the biggest determining factor of a successful organisation. As information becomes the most significant asset for organisational operations, there is a rise in the threats to information security, yet record management policies and best practices have not been able to keep pace with the growth and use of data in so many organisations (Hripsak 2013).

Record management is a key to service delivery of any business activity which enables organizations to make organisational decisions. For any organisation to function effectively, record keeping, and good record management are considered essential. No organisation be it public or private can survive without keeping records of its activities and also no office could operate successfully if it had to rely on memory alone to keep track of every transaction.

Managing and maintaining records comes with various challenges from its creation to the time of disposal. The management of an organization should prioritize effective record management practices that enhance visibility, reliability and security. This is essential for instilling confidence among the organizational, its staff and client that both organization and personal information are well protected. They must also acknowledge the importance of finding a suitable balance between transparency and confidentiality in handling and utilizing records. They should implement effective record management practices to enhance employee productivity, customer services, compliance, risk management, litigation management, data management and more.

The Department of Immigration, as a public sector organization, responsible for administering and enforcing immigration laws and regulations. The department play a crucial role in managing and controlling the entry, residence and exit of both Nigerians and foreign nationals' rights as well as safeguarding national security. In fulfilling this role, the organization plays a key part in upholding essential human including the rights association and movement. As part of its operations, the Department of Immigration processes a significant volume of records and file in its Registry. In the processing of the various documents issued in the Department, numerous public records are created and stored in the various forms for future reference. These records include administrative guidelines, nationality declarations and the attendant allegiances paid to the country.

In the context of the study, the immigration department, Awka division, serve as both security entity of the government and a service provider. Its primary responsibility is to manage the entry and exit of individual seeking to reside temporarily or permanently in Anambra state. To fulfil its roles in security, national development and poverty alleviation, the department handle a significant volume of records, making effective and secure record management essential. These records include visa application and supporting documents, passport copies and travel documents, work permits and employment authorization documents, citizenship and naturalization records, deportation and removal records, correspondence with immigration authorities among more. Proper management of these records is vital to ensure adherence to legal requirements, facilitates smooth processes and protect sensitive information. By adopting effective strategies and best practices, the immigration department can ensure compliance and safeguard sensitive information, without which it will be very difficult to account for any decision taken. Against this backdrop, the study examines the influence of record management on service delivery in the immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Statement of Problem

Record management is a crucial aspect of public service administration, (Lowry and Wamukoya, 2014), especially for the efficiency and effectiveness of the service provided. Public organisation deals with an ever-growing volume of document and records. But without proper management system, this influx of information can quickly spiral into chaos. Evident have shown laxity in the record management practice within public organisations which includes lack of responsive and comprehensive case management system for handling caseload, lack of standardized processes in managing the record, reliance on outdated systems, lack of policies and training, record volume and complexity, insecure record storage, outdate record retention schedule, security risk, record accessibility problem, cost, employee compliance in addition to transitioning digital.

Giving credence to this, Afolobi cited in Chukwudebelu (2024) asserted that record management practice in Nigeria has number of problems which may include insufficient skilled and experienced records management personnel, insecurity, access difficulty, data isolation, limited physical storage space, communication gap and incompleteness of information as well as low priority for record management in the scheme of things. All these problems mentioned above constitutes threats to record management, yet the best record management practices have not been able to keep pace with the growth and use of record in the immigration department. It is against this backdrop that the study the influence of record management on service delivery in the immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of record management on service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. Ascertain the relationship between record management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.
2. Determine the extent to which records management impacts on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration department, Awka, Anambra state.

Research Questions

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following questions was proposed:

1. What is the relationship between record management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state?
2. To what extent does records management impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration department, Awka, Anambra state?

Research Hypotheses

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following hypotheses questions were formulated:

H₀₁: There is no relationship between Records management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

H₀₂: Records management practices has no significant impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Record Management

Records are the evidence of actions and decisions, and therefore trustworthy records are the pillars of accountability and transparency. Transparency has become a widespread principle for governance and accountability. It refers to the availability of information to the public and openness about an organizations management, rules, regulations and decisions. But any disclosure of information is only as good as the quality of the records to which it provides access or on which the reports are based. The study therefore discusses the idea of transparency as a route to building trust and better accountability in management of records, before going on to explore how records and its management can render immigration department reporting more credible, reliable and measurable.

Record management is an activity embarked on for the sole purpose of keeping track of information which can be used as a proof or evidence of an activity or action undertaken and a basis on which future decision are made (Igbokwe-Ibeto cited in Alegbeye and Chilaka 2019). Record management processes encompasses planning, staffing, controlling, organizing and directing all activities involved in the lifecycle of record, from creation to archiving, retrieval, usage and disposal (Prit and Nathan, 2016). According to Shonhe and Grand (2018), a good records management practice improves the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery by reducing litigation risks, promoting accountability and transparency, ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, and promoting informed decision-making.

Service Delivery

Service delivery is a topical issue among government and scholars that public service delivery is critical to ensuring the national wellbeing and stimulation of economic development. In this view, Badmus (2017) discourses that public service delivery is very paramount to the government and citizens of any country; hence the need for effective service delivery to meet the demands of citizens can never be exaggerated. In this context, this study adopts the definition by Ewuim, Igbokwe-Ibeto, and Nkomah (2016), that service delivery is all about the customer service and effectiveness. Effectiveness in customer service typically refers to “doing the right things” and measures constructs like customer satisfaction on dimensions, such as service quality, speed, timing, and human interaction.

Records Management Practices and Service Delivery

Effective public service delivery begins with sound record management practice irrespective of the sector. Record management practices involve the systematic control of record throughout their lifecycle from creation to disposal and are

crucial for effective service delivery. Record management practice significantly impact service delivery in various organizations.

Effective record management ensures regulatory compliance, improves organizational efficiency, secure data and enables continuity. Several studies conducted established that lack of proper records management programs can negatively impact on service delivery According to Akor and Udensi (2015), sound record management practices significantly contributed to the effective administration of the federal university of technology in Nigeria which in turn enhanced efficient and effective service delivery to student lecturers and the community at large. He found out that proper record management ensured that there was an orderly flow of information that enables the official at the university to carry out their task effectively.

A study by Mampe and Kalusopa (2012) established that records management practices in the Corporate Service Division at the Ministry of Health Headquarters, were not well ingrained and this leads to poor service delivery. This was evidenced by lack of security and preservation measures, delays in access and use of records, lack of records management policy and lack of an intricate electronic records management programmed. All these studies conclude by recommending that organizations should implement good records management practices that will improve efficiency and effectiveness.

By implementing strategic practices, organizations can improve efficiency, ensure compliance, protect sensitive information and promote accountability. This strategy should address the legal, policy and regulatory framework. An appropriate organisational structure, awareness raising, capacity building and proper storage and also financial investment is necessary for this strategy to succeed.

According to Keakopa (2013), a records management practices strategy provides direction for records and information management through an organization. Some key strategies for record management and service delivery enhancement: establish a comprehensive records management policy/ document retention policy; implement effective indexing and categorization; transition to digital records; implement an automated retention schedule; Provide regular training for staff; conduct regular audits; ensure secure storage solution; establish disaster recovery plans and enforce strict access controls and more.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

System theory

Systems theory proposed by a biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968). The theory helps understand the relationships among variables in a study. It emphasises that system is open to, and interact with their environments, acquiring new properties through emergence and ongoing evolution. Systems consist of interdependent subsystems, where changes in one part affect the entire system. Each system is goal directed and produce outputs. This theory encompasses three key components: input, process and output.

System theory has been used in previous studies to explore the relationship between record management practices and effective service delivery. For example, Muemi & Rotich (2015) analyzed this relationship in the context of the Ministry of Land, Housing and Urban Development in the Kenya public sector.

Understanding how record management practices affect service delivery is crucial for the Immigration Department in Awka, which processes information from its environment to provide services. The polytechnic institution is viewed as cohesive entity with interconnected parts. As an entity, all the parts and its sub-parts need the cooperation of each part to keep it functioning. The environment comprises of internal and external; the interactions among staff within the environment is the internal, while the external environment is the public they service. The inputs involve the sharing and destruction of records While the processes encompass the guidelines for creating, archiving, retrieving, sharing, and destroying of records in Immigration Department.

The outputs are the services provided by the Immigration Department, Awka chapter, to the public with their effectiveness evaluated based on the accuracy, and efficiency of record during the organization's operation.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed descriptive research design. This study employed qualitative and quantitative methods. Probability sampling techniques i.e., Stratified random sampling design was used in the study. The reason for the adoption was because it is effective when researcher intend to attain a desire representation of various subgroup that are found within the study population. A sample size of ninety-six (96) respondents was drawn for the study, but sixty-five (65) were used for the

analysis after data collection. Questionnaire served as the primary tool for data collection. The validated of the instrument was established through content validity and test re test reliability. The study employed descriptive statistics and inferential analysis; frequency counts, percentage and mean score was adopted to address the research questions. and Chi-Square to test the hypotheses at 5% level of significance. The ethical issue involved in this included informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. This was achieved through effective measured employed by the researcher.

5. DATA COLLECTION, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

This part deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results from the research data. The analysis and interpretation of the data were based on the administered questionnaires.

Table 1: Summary Questionnaires Administered and Response Rate

Questionnaires	Number Of Respondents	Percentage %
Copies retrieved	65	68
Copies not retrieved	31	32
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table1: indicated that 65 out of 96 questionnaires distributed were retrieved, resulting in a response rate of 68%. This response rate was considered adequate for our analysis, while 31 questionnaires, or 32% were not returned.

Demographic distribution of the respondents

The bio-data of the respondents which include the following variables gender, department and length of service

Table 2: Distribution of gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent %
Female	22	34
Male	43	66
Total	65	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2: sought to find out the gender of the respondents. It was paramount for the study to determine the respondent's gender to ascertain gender parity in the Immigration Department. From the findings 34% of the respondents were female while 66% of the respondents were male. This is an indication that both genders were involved in this study and thus the finding of the study did not suffer from gender bias.

Table 3: Years/ Length of Service

Years of Service	Number Of Respondents	Percent %
5years	15	23
6 – 10 years	21	32
11 – 15years	11	17
16 and above	18	28
Total	65	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 3: represents the respondents' length of service, categorized in five-year intervals. Among them, 15 respondents (23%) have five years or less of experience, while 21 respondents (32 %) have 6-10 years of experience. Additionally, 11 respondents (17%) fall within 11 to 15 years range while 18 respondents have over 16 years of experience. The data indicated that most respondents possess significant work experience, enhancing the reliability of their perspectives on the study's issues.

Table 4: Department of the respondents in the immigration department

Directorate/units	Frequency	Percent %
Human resources management	11	16
Finance and accounts	13	20
Passport and other travel documents	9	14
Migration directorate	15	23
Visa and residency directorate	9	14
ICT and cyber security	7	11
Total	65	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4: shows the distribution of respondents across various units: 11 from human resource management (16%), 13 from finance and accounts unit (20%), the respondents are finance and accounts, 9 from the Passport and other travel documents unit (14%), 15 from the Migration directorate (23%), 9 from the Visa and residency directorate (14%) and 7 from ICT and cyber security unit (11%).

Core Research Issue

The second part of the questionnaire was analysed according to the research questions, with result presented in the tables. A four-point Likert scale was used, where a mean score of 3.0 or above indicates general agreement with a statement, while a score below 3.0 signifies disagreement.

Note: Strongly agree (SA), Agree(A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)

Research question 1: What is the relationship between records management practices and service delivery of Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state?

Table 5: The relationship between records management practices and service delivery of Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

N65								
S/N	ITEMS	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	Σ Fx	Mean X	Decision
1	Records are created according to established procedures.	33 (51%)	28 (43%)	4 (6%)	0	224	3.4	Agree
2	Information from records is readily available for day-to-day operations.	15 (23%)	48 (74%)	2 (3%)	0	206	3.2	Agree
3	The records management system facilitates information sharing between different departments	23 (36%)	25 (38%)	10 (15%)	7 (11%)	204	3.1	Agree
4	Good record management enhances transparency in the department's processes	48 (74%)	12 (18%)	5 (8%)	0	238	3.6	Agree
5	Records are stored in secure locations to prevent unauthorized access.	55 (85%)	10 (15%)	0	0	250	3.8	Agree
6	Improved record management leads to higher client satisfaction with services	34 (52%)	28 (43%)	3 (5%)	0	226	3.2	Agree
	Cluster Mean	3.2	2.3	0.4	0.1	225	3.5	Agree

Source: Researcher's field study, 2025.

From Table 5, the items addressed the first research question which is on the relationship between records management practices and service delivery of Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state. From the data analysis all items 1,2,3, 4,5 and 6 obtained a mean rating above the criterion mean of 3.0. Based on the fact that the cluster mean scores were above the

criterion 1 mean of 3.0. The respondents agree that records management practices affect service delivery of Immigration Department, Anambra state

2. To what extent does records management practices impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration department?

Table 6: records management practices impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration department?

N 65

S/N	ITEMS	SA 4	A 3	D 2	SD 1	Σ Fx	Mean X	Decision
1	Proper record management allows the department to prove it has met its obligations	30 (46%)	28 (43%)	5 (8%)	2 (3%)	216	3.3	Agree
2	The transparency of service delivery is high due to the availability of comprehensive records	43 (66%)	20 (31%)	2 (3%)	0	238	3.6	Agree
3	Citizens can more easily access information about immigration due to good record management	36 (55%)	21 (32%)	8 (12%)	0	223	3.4	Agree
4	Lack of proper record management leads to a lack of transparency in decision marking in the department	23 (28%)	27 (42%)	11 (24%)	4 (6%)	199	3.0	Agree
5	It is easy to audit past immigration cases due to clear and complete records	21 (32%)	32 (49%)	6 (9%)	6 (9%)	198	3.0	Agree
6	It easy to track the status of an application or case through department records	38 (58%)	25 (38%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	230	3.5	Agree
	Cluster Mean	2.9	2.4	0.5	0.2	217	3.3	Agree

Source: Researcher's field study, 2025.

From Table 6, the items addressed the first research question which is on the effects of records management practices on service delivery of Immigration Department, Awka chapter, Anambra state. From the data analysis all items 1,2,3, 4,5 and 6 obtained a mean rating above the criterion mean of 3.0. Based on the fact that the cluster mean scores were above the criterion mean of 3.0. The respondents agree that records management practices have impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration department.

Test of hypothesis one

H₀₁: There is no relationship between records management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

H₁₂: There is relationship between records management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state

Table 7: Correlation between records management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Variables	Records management practices	service delivery
Pearson Correlation	1	.645**
Records management practices	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.41
N	65	65
Pearson Correlation	.645**	1
service delivery	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.41
N	65	65

Source: Questionnaire Administered, (2025)

Results from the table above indicate that the correlation coefficient (r) is .645. This implies that there is a relationship record management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state. Hence, since the probability value of .000 is less than the level of significance which is 0.05, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and the alternative that there is significant relationship between record management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Chi-Square Test

Ho₂: Records management practices has no significant impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Hi₂: Records management practices has significant impact on transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

Table 8: Chi-Square Test of records management practices impact on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.649	9	.029
Likelihood Ratio	12.271	9	.019
Linear-by-Linear Association	.629	1	.038
N of Valid Cases	65		

Source: Questionnaire Administered, (2025)

From the table, the value of Pearson chi-square is computed as 10.70 with a degree of freedom. However, comparing them with critical value of chi-square at 9 degree of freedom and 5% level of significance, it is clear that the computed value of 18.65 is greater than the critical value at 9 degrees of freedom with 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. The implication of this is that record management practices have significant effect on transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state.

6. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

Hypothesis one revealed that there is a relationship record management practices and service delivery in Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state with $r = .645$, $n = 65$ and p value of 0.41 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the study accepted the alternate hypothesis and concluded that the findings are congruent with Saman & Abrar Haider, Akor and udensi (2013), Chiwanza & Mutongi(2017) who concurred that effective record management practices were integral in attaining quality service delivery in public organisation. The information contained in immigration department records need to be managed according to a methodical approach in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the immigration department in carrying out their mission.

Hypothesis two revealed that record management practices have significant effect on transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state with a clear that the computed value of 16.83 greater than the critical value at 9 degrees of freedom with 5% level of significance. The implication of this is that record management practices have significant contributions on the transparency and accountability of the Immigration Department in Awka, Anambra state. Chinyemba cited in Mosweu (2020) opined that if records are well managed, it becomes a powerful weapon for facilitating transparency and accountability in an organisation.

7. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that most of the respondents had worked in the department for some good years enough to provide ample information on the research topic to determine the influence of records management on service delivery in the Immigration Department, Awka, Anambra state, Nigeria. The study also concludes that majority of the respondents indicated that records are managed manually and electronically in the Immigration Department and that the state of records management in the department of the Immigration Department need to be improved for effective service delivery.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. The Immigration Department should comprehensively adopt a good practice for record management by enhancing the management system through stipulating procedure and guidelines for record creation, usage, storage or retention and disposal
2. Record management system at the Immigration Department should be integrated with that of other Immigration Departments across the state and Nigeria at large to facilitate ease in term of information sharing which will translate into effective service delivery to the public.

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