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UTILIZATION OF ICT IN STUDENT RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA

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Abstract

This study examined the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the management of student records in the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University. The study aimed to identify the ICT facilities available, determine the purposes for which the facilities were used, and examine the ICT facilities frequently utilized in managing student records. A quantitative research approach using descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised twenty-nine administrative staff involved in record management, and census sampling was used due to the small population size. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings revealed that computers and printers were the most available and frequently used ICT facilities, while scanners, storage devices, and e-mail facilities were less available. ICT facilities were mainly utilized for administrative tasks, record retrieval and access, communication, and e-payment activities. The study concluded that ICT significantly enhanced efficiency in student record management. The study recommended adequate provision of ICT facilities, staff training, and continuous monitoring of ICT systems for improved service delivery.

Keywords: *administrative tasks, ICT facilities, record management,* multimedia, software devices, *organizational performance*

Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is broad and includes the tools and technologies used for gathering, storing, processing, and disseminating information. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have improved the delivery of services by improving how organizations store, manage, and disseminate information in many developed countries. ICTs comprise essential devices such as audio, video, multimedia, networking tools, and other hardware and software devices that are used to create, process, store, retrieve, disseminate, and organize information efficiently and effectively (Akpan, 2018). Organizations today have adopted the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in order to cope with the ever-increasing amount of information generated within the organization (Lyman, 2014). Organizations are moving from the analog age to the digital age as a result of the widespread use and rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Johnson, 2011). ICT comprises computer hardware and software, networks, and several other devices such as video, audio, photocopying, camera flash drives, CDs, and DVDs that convert information, images, sounds, and motion, among others, into digital format.

Records are written information that is created, acquired, and preserved by a person, group, or institution as part of their daily operations. Hulme (2012) and Toyo (2017) argue that records, which take different forms of transaction: working papers, drafts, files, electronic messages, information, data, text messages, documentaries, photographs, databases, and audiovisual, among others, become useful for different purposes.

Record management is a systematic control and organization of records throughout their lifecycle is a crucial aspect of records management. It includes the production, upkeep, use, and disposal of records in a way that protects their reliability, accuracy, usability, and accessibility. AlShathry and Jamaludin (2022) stated that the role of records management in enhancing organizational performance, are link between effective records management and improved operational efficiency, risk mitigation, and decision-making within organizations. The need of using records management procedures as a tactical instrument for accomplishing corporate objectives. The impact of digital transformation on records management, have given opportunities in increasing volume of digital records and the need for organizations to adapt their records management practices accordingly, it should Assure technologies such as cloud storage, artificial intelligence, and automation to streamline records management processes and ensure compliance with data protection regulations The Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) (2021). Records management usefulness in the digital age, technology adoption, institutional goals alignment, and the understanding that records are valuable assets all help to build effective, legal, and secure records management procedures.

Objective of the Study

To determine the types of ICT facilities available in the School of Postgraduate Studies Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

1. To find out the purposes that ICT facilities are being used for managing student records in the School of Postgraduate Studies Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.
2. To determine the type of ICT facilities that are used for managing student records in the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Literature Review

Information and communication technology (ICT) covers a wide range of devices and methods for producing, processing, storing, sending, and managing data. Every element of society has been gradually impacted by ICT, which has altered how organizations and institutions run. According to Nwaomah (2012), ICT is a broad term that refers to the technology used for gathering, storing, altering, and transmitting (communicating) information in various forms. Kozma (2018) stated that ICT enhances learning opportunities, promotes active engagement, and facilitates knowledge construction. Information and communication technology (ICT) has completely changed the educational environment by creating brand-new, exciting prospects for improving educational experiences, encouraging active engagement, and facilitating knowledge production.

It is impossible to overstate the importance of ICT in record management. ICT has completely changed record-keeping procedures, improving

their efficacy and efficiency. Records management has changed from the old method of storing and managing records to an electronic and digital approach with the help of ICT, eliminating the difficulties of manual records administration. ICT has enabled the deployment of effective record management systems that are automated, secure, and reliable. According to Idowu et al. (2020), ICT has made it possible to create, capture, store, retrieve, and preserve records in an efficient and transparent manner. The utilization of Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS), Management Information Systems (MIS), and other ICT-enabled record management systems has become increasingly popular in modern-day record management practices.

The way institution and individuals keep, handle, manage, and access records has changed as a result of information and communication technology (ICT). Here are a few effects of ICT on record management.

Digital Recordkeeping: ICT has enabled organizations to move from paper-based record management to digital record management, enabling easy storage, retrieval, and sharing of records. According to Ahmad and Rana (2019), digital record management has eliminated storage space issues, reduced record handling, and enhanced record preservation. The utilization of ICT in record management enables the digital preservation of records, minimizing the need for paper-based documents.

Cloud Computing: Records can be kept on servers far away and accessed from any location with an internet connection thanks to cloud computing. According to Okello-Obura and Kabanda (2020), cloud computing solutions have become increasingly popular among organizations due to their cost-effectiveness and reliability.

Data Analytics: Data-driven decision-making is now possible thanks to the development of analytical tools for business companies that examine data and records. Business organizations can analyze vast amounts of data included in their records using data analytics tools to get insights, spot patterns, and take appropriate action.

The goal of institutional records is to support efficient management of institutions. Keeping records is mandated by law, but it is also beneficial for enhancing management techniques. As a formal organization, the school requires accurate, timely, sufficient, and relevant information. These records, which contain information about the school's past, present, and predicted future activities, are kept. By digitizing student records, ICTs allow educational institutions to replace outdated paper-based systems. This facilitates efficient data collection and storage, as information can be entered, updated, and accessed electronically, saving time and reducing the risk of errors associated with manual record-keeping. (Hu G, 2019). The traditional method of gathering, processing, preserving, and presenting or disseminating large volumes of information in print media has failed to facilitate work in the institutional system because of its attendant problems, ranging from limited capacity to total loss of important information.

The impact of ICTs, as reported in the Information and Knowledge Management field, envisages that diverse research organizations, such as academic libraries and research institutes, among others, have transformed due to the impact records have had on their operations. This consists of where mandates for teaching, learning, research, and other community engagement were carried out (Enakrire, 2019).

Transition through availability and accessibility to information and knowledge support in ICTs enforces knowledge and skills acquisition, which are paramount in the reconfiguration of organizations today; it serves as coping strategies for better service delivery in libraries (Enakrire & Ocholla, 2017). The changes in users' perception and behavior in adopting ICTs for libraries and their information resources are similar to the impact that ICTs have on records management practices. Adeyemi & Olaleye (2010) referred to the provision of ICT equipment as having transformed the management operations of institutions, such as the work operations of typing, processing, and printing examination papers, among other duties.

Records of students were manually protected by the records management as most do not use electronic devices in the management of their records; records were adequately utilized for the administration of the institution. The utilization of ICTs, as envisaged in Luyombya's (2011) study, was to advance service delivery in the economy, administration, and health services, among many others. ICTs automate routine administrative tasks such as student registration, enrollment,

scheduling, and grading. This automation helps streamline processes, reduce paperwork, and enhance the overall efficiency of managing student records by providing validation and verification mechanisms to ensure data accuracy and integrity. These technologies can flag inconsistencies, errors, or missing information, reducing the chances of inaccuracies in student records (Juma, 2011).

Osakwe (2012) stated that ICTs have the ability to facilitate administrative tasks like record management while also maintaining the effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching-learning process. Education authorities should be sensible enough to employ ICT to enhance record management. Nwaomah (2015) opines that utilizing ICT to handle records will significantly improve their use and accessibility. Juma, Raihan, and Clement (2016) found that ICT improves efficiency in managing student records because it facilitates information organization, quick and accurate data analysis, increased coordination, and quick and effective decision-making. ICT can help secondary schools manage student records more effectively in several ways, including proper resource allocation and utilization, providing stakeholders with access to student records, improving performance monitoring, and enhancing effective communication and planning (Juma et al., 2016). ICT has streamlined the process of overseeing and maintaining records about students attending educational institutions. This includes any data about their admissions, enrollment, academic progress, assessments, attendance, and personal information.

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach to examine the utilization of information and communication technology in the management of student records. Descriptive survey design and questionnaires were used to collect data from the administrative staff of the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University. The population for this research consisted of all staff involved in record management in the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, which comprised twenty-nine (29) staff members. Due to the small population size, the study adopted a census sampling procedure in which all members of the population were included. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire. This approach was adopted to obtain reliable and accurate information from the respondents. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the respondents and later collected the completed copies. For ease of analysis, the data collected were summarized in tabular form and analyzed using percentages. A total of twenty-nine (29) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, and all were successfully completed and returned.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Response Rate
Bar Chart
Response Rate

Senior Staff | 18 (62%)
Junior Staff | 11 (38%)

Table 1: Response Rate

Respondents	Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire returned	Percentage (%)
Senior staff	18	18	62%
Junior staff	11	11	38%
Total	29	29	100%

The data in Table 1 show that a total of 29 questionnaires were distributed and all 29 were successfully returned, resulting in a 100% response rate. Out of the respondents, senior staff constituted the majority with 18 respondents (62%), while junior staff accounted for 11 respondents (38%). The complete return of questionnaires indicates a high level of participation and cooperation among the respondents, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the study findings.

Table 2: Gender Distribution

Bar Chart

Gender Distribution

Table 2: Gender

Sex	Frequency	Percentage rate (%)
Male	22	76%
Female	7	24%
Total	29	100%

Table 2 reveals the gender distribution of the respondents. Male respondents constituted the majority with 22 respondents representing 76% of the total population, while female respondents were 7, representing 24%. This indicates that the study population was predominantly male. The disparity suggests that male staff were more represented in the organization or among the sampled respondents than female staff.

- Total respondents: **29 (100%)**
- Senior Staff: **18 (62%)**
- Junior Staff: **11 (38%)**
- Male: **22 (76%)**
- Female: **7 (24%)**

The results indicate a full response rate from all distributed questionnaires and show that the respondents were predominantly senior staff and male.

Table 3: Type of ICT Facilities Available

Bar Chart

ICT Facilities Available (%)

Table 3: Type of ICT Facilities Available

ICT Facilities	Available		Not available		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Computer	29	100	0	0	29	100
Photocopy	17	58	12	42	29	100
Scanners	13	45	16	55	29	100
Printer	27	93	2	7	29	100
Storage Devices	16	55	13	45	29	100
E-mail	14	48	15	52	29	100

Table 3 shows the availability of ICT facilities used for managing records. The results indicate that computers were available to all respondents (100%), making them the most available ICT facility. Printers were also highly available, with 27 respondents (93%) confirming their availability. Photocopy machines and storage devices were available to 58% and 55% of respondents respectively. However, scanners (45%) and e-mail facilities (48%) were reported as less available than other ICT facilities. The findings suggest that while basic ICT infrastructure such as computers and printers are adequately available, there is a need to improve access to scanners, e-mail facilities, and storage devices to enhance effective record management.

Table 4: Purpose of Using ICT Facilities

Bar Chart

Purpose of Using ICT Facilities

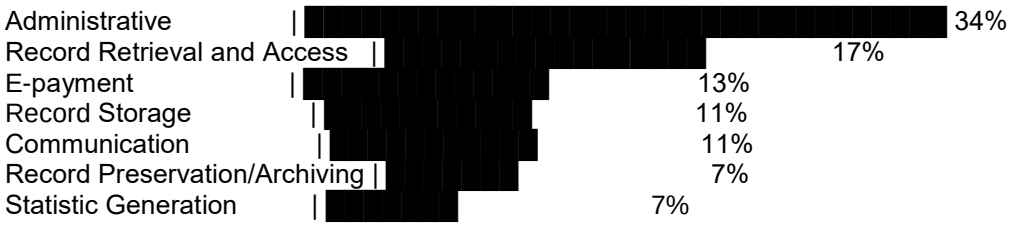

Table 4: Purpose of Using ICT facilities

Items	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Record storage	3	11
Record retrieval and access	5	17
Record preservation and archiving	2	7
Administrative	10	34
E-payment	4	13
Statistic generation	2	7
Communication	3	11
Total	29	100

Table 4 presents the various purposes for which ICT facilities are utilized. The findings reveal that administrative activities constitute the major purpose of ICT use, accounting for 10 respondents (34%). Record retrieval and access ranked second with 5 respondents (17%), followed by e-payment services with 4 respondents (13%). Record storage and communication each accounted for 3 respondents (11%). Record preservation and archiving as well as statistical generation recorded the least usage, each with 2 respondents (7%). This suggests that ICT facilities are primarily employed for administrative functions rather than for advanced records management activities such as preservation, archiving, and statistical analysis.

Summary of Findings

- **Most available ICT facility:** Computer (100%)
- **Least available ICT facility:** Scanner (45%)
- **Major purpose of ICT use:** Administrative activities (34%)
- **Least purpose of ICT use:** Record preservation/archiving and statistical generation (7% each)

The results indicate that ICT facilities are available to varying degrees, with computers and printers being the most common. Their utilization is concentrated mainly on administrative tasks, while records preservation and analytical functions receive comparatively less attention.

Table 5: ICT Facilities Used in Managing Student Records

Bar Chart (Percentage Distribution)

ICT Facilities Used in Managing Student Records

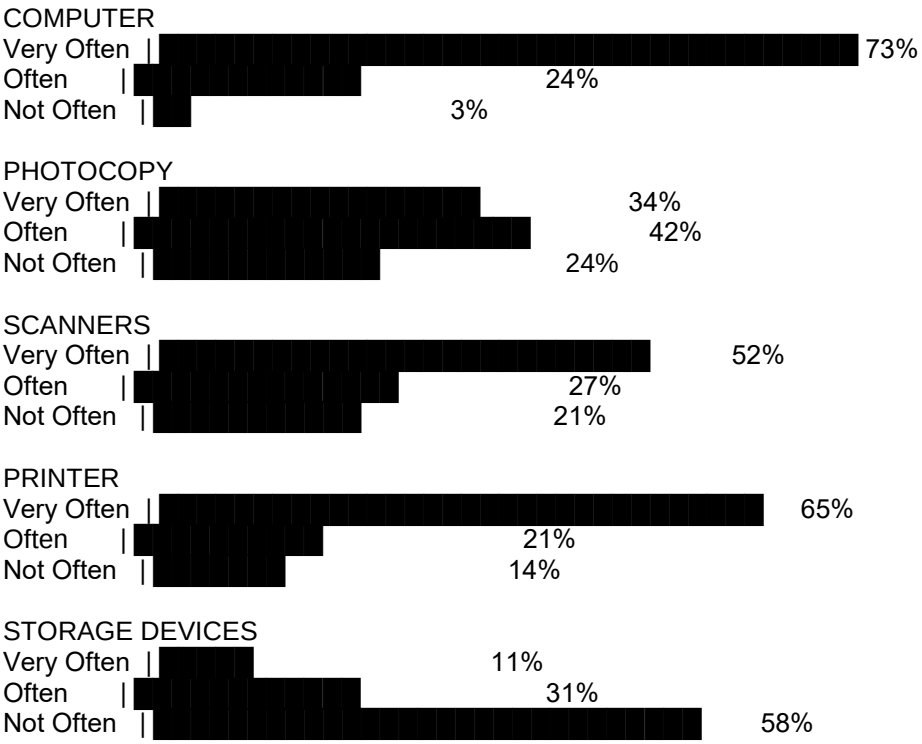

Table 5: ICT facilities are used in managing student records

ICT Facilities	Very Often		Often		Not Often		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Computer	21	73	7	24	1	3	29	100
Photocopy	10	34	12	42	7	24	29	100
Scanners	15	52	8	27	6	21	29	100
Printer	19	65	6	21	4	14	29	100
Storage Devices	3	11	9	31	17	58	29	100

Table 5 presents the extent to which various ICT facilities are utilized in managing student records. The findings indicate that **computers** are the most frequently used ICT facility, with 21 respondents (73%) reporting that they use them very often, 7 respondents (24%) often, and only 1 respondent (3%) not often. This demonstrates that computers play a central role in student record management. Similarly, **printers** are extensively utilized, as 19 respondents (65%) indicated that they use them very often, while 6 respondents (21%) use them often and only 4 respondents (14%) use them not often. This suggests that printing remains an essential component of record management activities. The use of **scanners** is also relatively high, with 15 respondents (52%) reporting very frequent use, 8 respondents (27%) indicating frequent use, and 6 respondents (21%) reporting infrequent use. This reflects the growing importance of digitizing records.

For **photocopy machines**, the majority of respondents reported using them often (42%),

while 34% use them very often and 24% use them not often. This indicates moderate reliance on photocopying facilities for record management tasks. In contrast, **storage devices** appear to be the least utilized ICT facility. Only 3 respondents (11%) reported using them very often, 9 respondents (31%) often, while a majority of 17 respondents (58%) indicated that they do not use them often. This may suggest inadequate availability of storage devices or a preference for alternative storage methods.

Findings

The results reveal that computers and printers are the most frequently used ICT facilities in the management of student records, highlighting their importance in record creation, processing, and retrieval. Scanners are also widely utilized, supporting the digitization of records. However, the relatively low use of storage devices suggests a need for improved digital storage infrastructure and data management practices to enhance the effectiveness of student records management. The findings generally indicate a substantial level of ICT integration in student record management activities.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings showed that computers were fully available to all respondents, while printers were also widely available for managing student records at the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University. This indicated that the institution relied heavily on these ICT facilities for administrative and record management activities. However, scanners, storage devices, photocopy machines, and e-mail facilities were not adequately available to all respondents. The inadequate availability of these facilities suggested that some aspects of electronic record management were still limited within the institution.

The findings further indicated that ICT facilities were mainly used for administrative tasks, record retrieval and access, communication, and e-payment activities. Administrative functions recorded the highest usage, showing that ICT played a major role in supporting the daily operations of the postgraduate school. Record retrieval and access were also important functions, as ICT facilities made it easier to locate and process students' information when required. In contrast, record preservation, archiving, and statistical generation received less attention, suggesting that the institution focused more on immediate administrative activities than on long-term electronic preservation of records.

The findings also showed that computers, printers, scanners, and photocopy machines were frequently used in managing student records. Computers recorded the highest level of usage, followed by printers and scanners, indicating their importance in processing and managing students' information effectively. Photocopy machines were moderately used, while storage devices were less frequently utilized by respondents. The low usage of storage devices suggested inadequate emphasis on electronic backup and data storage systems.

Conclusion

The utilization of ICT significantly improved the management of student records through efficient administrative operations, record retrieval, communication, and e-payment activities. The study established that computers, scanners, and printers were the major ICT facilities frequently used in the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University. Therefore, adequate provision and effective utilization of ICT facilities are essential for efficient student record management.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested:
The management of the School of Postgraduate Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, should provide adequate ICT facilities such as scanners, storage devices, and reliable internet services to enhance efficiency and accessibility in student record management.
The institution should organize regular training programmes for administrative staff to improve their knowledge and skills in the effective utilization of ICT facilities for record management and other administrative activities.
The institution should ensure continuous monitoring, evaluation, and maintenance of ICT facilities and systems to identify weaknesses, improve performance, and promote effective service delivery in student record management.

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