Examination of Students' Record Management Practices in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN)

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

This study examines the record management practices in National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). In recent years, the effective management of student records has become increasingly critical in Open and Distance Learning institutions (ODL) due to the complex nature of distance education, involving large numbers of students, multiple learning platforms, and diverse administrative processes. Data was collected through surveys with staff involved in record management at NOUN. The findings revealed while records management practices within the Directorate of Academic Registry are relatively strong, enhancements in storage capacity, environmental controls, and stricter safety regulations could further optimise efficiency. The study recommended the university management to constantly upgrade the recommended records management systems with extensive server capabilities to meet the needs of all students and other users and to enhance policies to ensure the accuracy, accessibility, and security of student records.

Introduction

Universities all over the world generate a lot of records whether paper-based or in electronic format in the course of their daily engagement. Records are created and maintained for legal, fiscal or administrative reasons. In most universities, records need to be captured, managed and safeguarded in an organised and efficient way in order to retain their value for as long as possible. Thus, these records require effective management to meet the demands of the university (Ailakhu, 2020). The primary purpose of records management practices is to provide guidance and assistance in managing the institution's records and information they create and use daily. Management of records allows fast, accurate and reliable access to information, ensuring the timely destruction of redundant information and the identification and protection of vital and historically important records (Popoola,2000). Records administratively are used in designing policies, decision making, explaining organisational structure, procedure and operations. For records to have meaning in any university setting it must be well managed throughout the records cycle. An effective university records management program requires an inventory of records maintained by the university and the identification of existing retention schedules or the establishment of new retention schedules that can be applied to those records (Ailakhu, 2020).

Records are a valuable resource for an open and distance learning university such as the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). According to Touray (2021) who asserts that effective record management acts as a "secret weapon"

and a "winning strategy" that provides organisations with a competitive advantage. Administrative records play a crucial role in preserving the institution's historical memory amid evolving governance and management. To fulfill this role efficiently, it is essential for an organisation to establish how long records should be kept as evidence of activities, transactions, and decisions. Isiwele-ishola and Osebhahiemen, (2024) emphaised that the organisational records management is essential because it ensures that important data created or received is managed, preserved and accessible when the need arises. Simwaka and Malanaga (2023), opined that a variety of organisation which includes public, private, academic and civil society acknowledge the significance of proper records management practices. Kirvan (2024) defined records as information created or received that have enduring values such as administrative, legal, historical, financial details which organisations could use in their operations, decisions, policies, procedures and other actions of any organisation. According to Kirvan, records can be in different format, digital and physical.

Records management refers to the planning, budgeting, organising, directing and control involved in managing the life cycle of records in any organisation. The essence of records management is for organisations including universities to certify that all documents, manuscripts, raw data and information received or created are managed and maintained in a manner that meets all internal and external business needs of the creating organisation. According to Touray, (2021), information and records are the lifeblood of any organisation and the foundation upon which choices are made. He also expressed the opinion that the significance of records management in the modern world cannot be overstated. Barigye *et al*. (2022), asserted that the use of appropriate records management practices would result in improvement in the productivity and effectiveness of administrative staff of an organisation. They further opined those records of many different kinds are created for different reasons at different times and it is expected to be managed and preserved differently. Records management practice is vital as it can protect the organisation and also helps in achieving its goal. Proper record keeping is critical to ensuring the administration's successful and productive record management. A wide range of records management difficulties and problems in dealing with electronic records, requires a qualified records manager in an organisation to implement records management best practices, including how records are kept and maintained (Michael *et al.*2022)

In open and distance learning institutions, safeguarding these records is crucial to maintaining the institutional integrity. Academic records which include of students' records must be protected from environmental damage and unauthorised access, as some individuals may seek to destroy them for malicious purposes. For records to have meaning in any university setting it must be well managed throughout the records cycle. An effective university records management program requires an inventory of records maintained by the university and the identification of existing retention schedules or the establishment of new retention schedules that can be applied to those records (Ailakhu, 2018). Klareld, (2018) noted that it is essential for a university to ensure that records are created accurately, managed diligently, and organised in accordance with established guidelines and policies. These measures must uphold confidentiality, proper maintenance, security, preservation of content and context, and the efficient disposal of inactive records. The academic registry, a directorate within the office of the university registrar, plays a pivotal role in achieving the university's core objectives, including fostering academic success through teaching, learning, and research (Falolo, Capillas, Vergarra, and Cerbito, 2022). This office oversees key academic functions, such as student enrolment, registration, credit transfer, and graduation, issuance of certificates and transcripts, and maintaining records of both current and former students. It serves as the backbone of the institution, acting as a central hub around which the university's operations seamlessly revolve (Mu-Azu and Nabila, 2016).

In open and distance learning universities, the use of information and communication technology is a standard practice. The rise of information and communication technology has greatly enhanced capacity building within universities. Technologies such as the internet and global digital networks are increasingly utilised to provide access to learning and knowledge infrastructure, transforming traditional educational systems. However, managing electronic records in universities remains challenging due to the lack of adequate electronic management systems for capturing, classifying, preserving, and disposing of records (Ailakhu, 2020). Information and communication technology has the potential to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of records managers in university registries by enabling the

strategic application of technology and ICT-driven skill development. Ailakhu, (2020) noted that information and communication technology can support skill training and capacity-building programs tailored to civil servants and decision-makers through tools such as e-learning. E-learning, in particular, accommodates diverse learning styles through various delivery methods suited to different learners. The application of information and communication technology in the training of university records managers can expand access to quality knowledge resources, enhance information sharing, and provide specialised support. It also enables greater transparency in and monitoring of records management decisions, improves departmental efficiency, and facilitates horizontal and vertical exchange and networking among departments. Through strategic technology use and ICT-enabled skill development, universities can strengthen their records management practices while fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing across organisational units. Students' academic records maintained at the academic registry include records of newly enrolled students yet to report, returning students, and alumni. These records must uphold confidentiality and integrity and should be accessed only by authorised such as staff of the academic registry risks (Metto, Mwita and Kinuthia, 2022). The lack of a standardised training framework for record keepers hampers effective record management in both governmental and non-governmental organisations, affecting not only developing nations but also developed ones. Student academic records maintained by the registrar's office include those of admitted students yet to report, continuing students, and alumni. These records must uphold confidentiality and integrity and should be accessed only by authorised individuals, such as students, parents or guardians, senior institutional administrators, as well as external entities like accreditation bodies and government agencies (Danver, 2016).

In Nigeria and Zimbabwe, the records office faces challenges such as a shortage of professional records managers (Makwae and Nyarige, 2017), "weak laws and inactive legislative provisions that fail to promote effective records and archive management" (Afriye, Yangapuori, and Hindu, 2020), and unqualified personnel, particularly administrative officers and clerks, being "recycled" into records management roles (Namukasa, 2017). Ailakhu, (2021) noted the constraints confronting records management effectiveness in registries of federal universities in Nigeria includes inadequate storage space and this was supported by Muhammad, Mannan and Farashi, (2021) that Nigerian universities often lack sufficient space for preserving student records.

In Uganda, public university officials employ inconsistent methods for distinguishing between email records and non-records. This is due to reliance on inadequate institutional policies, fringe legislation for electronic recordkeeping, and a lack of trained professionals for managing email records, compounded by limited information and communication technology training and qualifications (Luyombya, David, and Ndagire, 2020). Similarly, in Ghana, Azameti and Adjei (2020) identified issues such as frequent computer freezing, weak technological support, loss of records, poor remuneration leading to low morale among record keepers, inadequate record-keeping equipment, virus infections, lack of backup storage facilities, unreliable internet services, the absence of an information and communication technology equipment replacement policy, and poor knowledge of electronic records management among staff.

In Kenya, public universities often rely on outdated file management systems, which take up significant space and make accessing information cumbersome and inefficient, increasing the risk of data manipulation (Wangui, 2018). Mohammed *et al*. (2020) attributed the surge in student enrollment to the creation of large volumes of records, which can overwhelm existing systems. Makwae and Nyarige (2017) argue that poor records management practices, especially in African universities, result largely from a lack of trained records managers.

Statement of the Problem
At the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), the Directorate of Academic Registry serves as the custodian of all students' academic records. However, outdated file management systems are still used at various study centres to handle records, limiting the staff's ability to provide accurate and timely information. The rapid increase in student enrolment at NOUN has further exacerbated the challenges in records management within the directorate, making data

access difficult and increasing the risk of misinformation. These issues highlight significant shortcomings that necessitate an evaluation of the records management practices within the Directorate of Academic Registry at NOUN. This study, therefore, examined the records management practices among the staff of the academic registry at NOUN, focusing on the creation, storage, retrieval, circulation, and disposal of records within the Directorate of Academic Registry.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the level of record management practices at the directorate of academic registry NOUN in the management of students' records in terms of: a. creation and classification of records; b. storing records; c. retrieval and communication of records and d. disposal of records.
2. To evaluate the extent the academic registry staff of NOUN has adopted the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in students' academic records management?

Comparative Analysis of Students' Records Management Practice in Public Universities and Open and Distance Learning Universities in Nigeria and Tanzania.

In Nigeria's public universities, a persistent hybrid records system is evident, blending paper-based and digital practices. Odewale, Adeyemi, and Etebom (2024) highlight that while some administrative functions are digitised, paper files and documents remain dominant, hampered by inconsistent infrastructure, limited funding, and staff capacity deficits. Asogwa, Ezeani, and Asogwa (2021) further reveal that although information and communication technology hardware exist in the university's libraries, actual readiness for e-records is low due to unskilled staff, unreliable power, and absence of international best practices. In the open and distance learning universities, setting exemplified by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) records management is complicated by decentralisation. While the institution uses digital portals to upload students' records, uniformity and data security scattered across the various study centres remain weak. Falebita's (2022) case study on secure, web-based student information systems in Nigeria suggests potential improvements yet emphasises critical concerns over consistency and portal security. The contributing factors to these challenges include but not limited to Political/ policy factors examples are weak enforcement of national e-records policies; Economic factor example is inadequate information and communication technology's budgets and Technological factors such as lack of staff capacity building on digital literacy, inconsistent power and internet connectivity. While in Tanzania, public universities lag in adopting e-records due to centralised governance and policy bottlenecks. Newa & Mwantimwa (2020) highlight that despite a government push for e-governance in Tanzania, actual uptake in public services is sluggish due to weak policy implementation, understaffed and underfunded systems, and centralised governance delaying local adoption. The open and distance learning universities in Tanzania like the Open University of Tanzania experience challenges such as scaling digital records across remote regions. This stems from patchy broadband, limited information and communication technology skills, and fragmented support systems mirroring issues seen in Nigerian open and distance learning universities. The contributing factors to these challenges are technological (rural-urban infrastructure gap; Institutional (limited staff training) and Political (centralised policy impending local innovation).

Comparative & Global Insights

Public universities and open and distance learning universities create, receive, maintain and preserve records including student's records, worldwide these universities experience records management issues, the African context is marked by deeper infrastructure deficits, policy gaps, and resource constraints. Similarly, outside African contexts such as India's IGNOU is faced with the challenge of fragmentation in open and distance learning records due to decentralised systems, Brazil's challenge struggles with standardising records across institutions amid political turnover, and Eastern Europe is faced with GDPR compliance pressures exist, but better infrastructure makes challenges less severe Ngoepe & Jacobs (2024).

Theoretical Framework for the Study

Michael Buckland's theory on the Nature of Information and Records Management (1991) was adopted for this study. It provides a conceptual foundation for understanding how information is created, organised, and used. Buckland emphasised that records are not simply data or documents; rather, they become meaningful through use, context, and functionality. According to him, information can be viewed in three ways: Information-as-thing: physical or digital objects (like student files or transcripts); Information-as-process: the act of informing or being informed and Information-as-knowledge: the internalised understanding a person gains. Buckland further argued that records must be systematically managed across their life cycle from creation and classification to use, storage, retrieval, and eventual disposal because only through proper records management can organisations including universities ensure accountability, transparency, and informed decision-making. For this study, Buckland's theory provides a useful lens for evaluating how records (e.g., admission files, course results, graduation lists) are handled in educational institutions. The study analyses how students' records are created, stored, retrieved, and disposed of in line with institutional policies. Applying Buckland's conceptualisation, the study explores whether student records are treated simply as things (stored data) or are actively managed at the Directorate of Academic Registry and utilised as tools by the university for decision-making and service delivery (process and knowledge).

Buckland's theory was adopted in the study because it offers a comprehensive framework for understanding students' records are not just static documents but are dynamic resources that support institutional functions. In the context of student record management, this perspective helps assess whether students' records are organised and retrievable in meaningful ways; the extent to which students' records support academic planning and administrative decisions, and the gaps identified on how records are managed over time, especially regarding digital transformation. Therefore, the theory supports a holistic analysis of the challenges, efficiency, and strategic importance of student recordkeeping in the modern educational environment.

Method

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Population of the study comprised 20 administrative staff in the directorate of academic registry of the university. Data collection was done using a questionnaire. Due to the small size of the population, the total enumeration technique was adopted for sample size. Consequently, all 20 administrative staff were selected to participate in the survey. A self-designed questionnaire distributed through Google Form link which had two sections: that gathered information about the respondents' demographic and the level of record management practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry NOUN in the management of students' records. The measuring scale in the questionnaire was Likert scale scoring measures. 13 responses were retrieved and were all valid for analysis. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics including frequency count, percentage, mean score. The gathered data were analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS IBM 2023).

Analysis

Demographic data of respondents show that 7 (53.8%) respondents were females while 6 (46.2%) were males. Females (53.8%) outnumber males (46.2%) among the respondents. The gender distribution is fairly balanced, with a slightly higher representation of females in the academic registry. In terms of work experience, the highest percentage 4 (30.8%) of the respondents had 11-15 years, 3 (23.1%) had 3years and below, 7-10 years respectively, while 2 (15.4%) had 4-6 years, 1 (7.7%) had 16 years and above. Most staff (30.8%) have 11-15 years of experience, indicating a strong presence of experienced personnel. 23.1% have 3 years or below, and another 23.1% have 7-10 years, showing a mix of junior and mid-career staff. Only 7.7% have 16 years and above, suggesting that long-term staff retention may be low. The category of staff 1 (7.7%) were junior staff and 12 (92.3%) were senior staff. 92.3% are Senior Administrative Staff, while only 7.7% are Junior Administrative Staff. This suggests that the majority of respondents are in higher-ranking roles, likely involved in key decision-making and record management processes.

Table 1: Record Management Practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry NOUN in the management of students records in terms of creation and classification of records

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
1.	Each enrolled student has an academic file in the academic registry	15.4	7.7	30.8	23.1	23.1	3.31
2.	Vital biographic and academic information is captured correctly in the students' file (e.g. date of birth, nationality, citizenship, gender, programme (with area of specialisation where applicable)	15.4	0	7.7	38.5	38.5	3.85
3.	Students' files/records are updated regularly in the academic registry (e.g. grades, communications between the student and the university)	0	7.7	7.7	84.6	0	3.77
4.	There is an approved and existing policy that guides the creation of records in the academic registry in NOUN	0	0	23.1	46.2	30.8	4.08
5.	Each staff working on the creation and classification of records at the academic registry in NOUN has a copy of the approved policy	7.7	7.7	46.2	30.8	7.7	3.23
6.	Records created, received and maintained in the academic registry are classified (e.g. public, internal, or confidential)	0	0	7.7	61.5	30.8	4.23
7.	The policy on the creation and classification of records at the academic registry specifies the staff responsibilities in the management of the records in their custody	7.7	0	15.4	53.8	23.1	3.85
8.	Students' records are organized in a systematic order during filling	7.7	0	7.7	69.2	15.4	3.85
9.	Rules that guide in labeling of folders in the academic registry are maintained and followed.	7.7	0	15.4	69.2	7.7	3.69

The Weighted Average is 3.76

The result from Table 1, this shows the summary record management practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry, NOUN, in terms of creation and classification of student records, are generally above average with a weighted average is 3.76. The majority of respondents agree that student records are correctly captured, updated, and systematically organised. There is a strong indication that records are classified appropriately (Mean=4.23) and that an approved policy exists for record creation (Mean = 4.08). However, some gaps exist in ensuring all staff have copies of the approved policy (Mean=3.23). Generally, the record management system is fairly effective but requires improvement in policy dissemination.

Table 2: Record Management Practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry NOUN in the management of students records in terms of storing records

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
1.	Students' academic records are stored both electronically and in paper format in the academic registry of NOUN STOPPED	23.1	0	7.7	53.8	15.4	3.38
2.	There is a specific burglar-proof storage room within the academic registry for the storage of hard copy students' academic records	0	0	0	76.9	23.1	4.23
3.	Students' files/records are There is a specific fire-proof storage facility within the academic registry for the storage of hard copy of students' academic records	0	0	30.8	61.5	7.7	3.77
4.	There is sufficient space for storing students' hard copy of academic files in a burglar-proof storage room.	30.8	0	23.1	46.2	0	2.85
5.	Storage equipment such as vertical/ lateral file cabinets, shelves are available and sufficient in the storage area within the academic registry	30.8	7.7	0	53.8	7.7	3.00
6.	Storage equipment such as file cabinets and shelves, are labelled according to the classification of files	15.4	0	0	76.9	7.7	3.62
7.	There is a notice at the door showing that the storage area is **restricted** to unauthorized staff	23.1	0	15.4	53.8	7.7	3.23
8.	Inside the storage area, there is a notice that bans eating, and smoking inside or around the area	38.5	7.7	23.1	30.8	0	2.46
9.	There are fire extinguishers and sand buckets within the academic registry in case of a fire outbreak	7.7	0	0	76.9	15.4	3.92
10	In the storage area, students' records are maintained, kept clean and secure from destructive insects, rodents, and environmental hazards	7.7	7.7	0	69.2	15.4	3.77
11	In the storage area, there is/are serviceable fire extinguishers	0	0	23.1	61.5	15.4	3.92
12	Staff movement in and out of the storage area is monitored (e.g. by CCTV, staff movement register)	15.4	0	15.4	46.2	23.1	3.62
13	There is a record of students' files taken in and out of the storage area, indicating time taken/returned, date,	7.7	0	30.8	53.8	7.7	3.54

S/N	Statements/Questions						MEAN
	and the details of the staff handling the file(s).						
14	After the creation and classification of students' academic records, they are moved immediately to the storage area	7.7	0	23.1	69.2	0	3.54

The weighted mean is 3.49.

The result from Table 2 shows the level of record management practices at the directorate of academic registry NOUN in the management of students' records in terms of storing records. The result suggests that record management practices in the Directorate of Academic Registry at NOUN are generally moderate to good. Strong agreement was observed in areas like having a burglar-proof storage room (4.23) and fire safety measures (3.92), indicating good security measures. However, insufficient space for storing hard copy files (2.85) and a lack of strict rules against eating and smoking in the storage area (2.46) suggest areas needing improvement. The presence of CCTV monitoring and file tracking (3.62 - 3.54) reflects a structured approach to security and accountability. Overall, while NOUN's record management practices are fairly robust, enhancements in storage space, environmental control, and stricter safety regulations could further improve efficiency.

Table 3: Record Management Practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry NOUN in the management of students records in terms of retrieval and communication of records.

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
1.	Students' information stored and preserved in the academic registry can be retrieved when required	0	0	7.7	84.6	7.7	4.00
2.	On request, a student's file stored in the academic registry can be retrieved within an acceptable time	7.7	0	15.4	69.2	7.7	3.69
3.	When a staff opts to work on a student's academic record(s) outside the academic registry, approval must be granted by the Director, academic registry.	0	0	7.7	76.9	15.4	4.08
4.	Access to students' academic records is only granted to the relevant persons as per NOUN policy	0	0	7.7	76.9	15.4	4.08
5.	The Registrar's office is prompt in sending information to students or other relevant stakeholders as per NOUN policy	0	0	7.7	61.5	30.8	4.23
6.	Communication tools such as the university academic calendar are issued in time to enable students and parents to plan for their studies.	0	0	0	69.2	30.8	4.31
7.	The Director, academic registry's communication to staff and students is done through email, bulk SMS, posting information on the	0	0	0	76.9	23.1	4.23

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
	university's website and social media handles						
8.	Passwords are used to retrieve electronically stored students' academic records	15.4	0	7.7	69.2	7.7	3.54
9.	To ensure the security of electronic academic records in the academic registry, an audit is done at the start and end of every semester	7.7	7.7	38.5	38.5	7.7	3.31

The weighted mean is 3.94.

From table 3, the results with a weighted mean 3.94 indicate that the record management practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry, NOUN, in terms of retrieval and communication of records are generally effective. It can be observed from the table that (4.00) strongly agreed students' information stored and preserved in the academic registry can be retrieved when required. Additionally, (4.31) agreed that Communication tools such as the university academic calendar are issued in time to enable students and parents to plan for their studies. Furthermore, there is evidence of data security as electronic records are secured with passwords, and audits are conducted with mean (3.54) and (3.31) respectively, though some respondents express slight concerns about this process. Overall, the record retrieval and communication system is functioning well, with minor areas that may require further strengthening, particularly in security measures for electronic records.

Table 4: Record Management Practices at the Directorate of Academic Registry NOUN in the management of students records in terms of disposal of records

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
1.	There is a policy guiding the disposal of students' academic records in custody of the academic registry	0	0	23.1	69.2	7.7	3.85
2.	To create space, records in the academic registry are audited regularly to identify records that have enduring value or should be destroyed	7.7	0	61.5	23.1	7.7	3.23
3.	NOUN has an archive where the Directorate of academic registry has a section to move its inactive students' academic files and other important documents	15.4	0	30.8	46.2	7.7	3.31
4.	Inactive paper records selected for destruction are destroyed as per the policy	0	0	46.2	53.8	0	3.54
5.	Inactive electronic academic records of students are destroyed using available software that guarantees permanent destruction	7.7	0	53.8	38.5	0	3.23

The weighted mean is 3.43.

The results from above table indicate that record management practices regarding disposal of student records at the Directorate of Academic Registry, NOUN, are moderately implemented with a weighted average of 3.43. While there is a guiding policy and some level of disposal through destruction or archiving (3.85), the mixed responses suggest that the implementation is not entirely consistent or could be improved. The second research was to find out the extent to which the academic registry staff of NOUN adopted the use of information and communication technology in students' academic records management.

Table 5: Extent the academic registry staff of NOUN adopted the use of Information and Communication Technology in students' academic records management

S/N	Statements/Questions	SD	D	N	A	SA	MEAN
1.	The academic registry hosts a website to manage, store and retrieve student academic records	0	15.4	30.8	46.2	7.7	3.46
2.	The academic registry has a hybrid records management practice (manages paper and electronic student academic records)	15.4	0	7.7	76.9	0	3.46
3.	Fire walls have been installed to secure electronic information/data from invasion of hackers	0	15.4	46.2	38.5	0	3.23
4.	Students' paper records are scanned and managed alongside those kept in the electronic format	7.7	0	30.8	61.5	0	3.46
5.	When a change is made to a students' electronic academic record, the system automatically sends an alert to the academic registry	0	15.4	38.5	38.5	7.7	3.38
6.	The academic registry's staff are trained on how to use technology in the management of students' academic records	0	7.7	15.4	69.2	7.7	3.77
7.	The academic registry has updated records management software and necessary infrastructure needed in the management of student records	0	7.7	23.1	69.2	0	3.62
8.	The academic registry has computers/laptops and necessary infrastructure needed in the management of student records	7.7	7.7	0	61.5	23.1	3.85
9.	The academic registry has unlimited internet access and necessary infrastructure needed in the management of student records	23.1	7.7	7.7	61.5	0	3.08
10	The academic registry has uninterrupted power supply and other necessary infrastructure	30.8	15.4	23.1	30.8	0	2.54

	needed in the management of student records.						

Source: Field survey, 2025

The staff pointed out that **i**nformation and communication technology **a**doption in the Academic Registry as shown in (Table 5) is moderate. The academic registry has adopted **i**nformation and communication technology tools but not comprehensively, with key infrastructure such as computers, updated software, and training available. The staff receives training on **i**nformation and communication technology usage. The staff agreed there is unreliable power supply and internet access which indicate potential barriers to full **i**nformation and communication technology adoption. Other challenges faced by staff which needs improvement on for the adoption of **i**nformation and communication technology in academic registry firewalls for protecting electronic records which exist but pose to have security vulnerabilities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study and data analysis revealed that while records management practices within the Directorate of Academic Registry of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) are relatively strong, enhancements in storage capacity, environmental controls, and stricter safety regulations could further optimise efficiency. The study also revealed that existing policies related to the development and classification of students' records in higher education institutions require improvement. Additionally, the record retrieval and communication system were found to be functioning effectively, though minor improvements, particularly in the security of electronic records, may be necessary.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were suggested:
1. The university should establish clear policies that offer a foundation for managing university records.
2. Once the records management policy has been created, it will also be required to make sure that records management system audits are used consistently to evaluate compliance.
3. There is need to improve on the internet and power supply, this will give access to full adoption of information and communication technology in students' academic records management.
4. The university management should constantly upgrade the recommended records management systems with extensive server capabilities to meet the needs of all students and other users.

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