

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS ACADEMIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT IN POLYTECHNICS IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the institutional support (IS) for students' academic records (SAR) management practices in polytechnics in South-west, Nigeria. A correlational survey design was adopted. The population consisted of 516 registry personnel in the 18 polytechnics located in SWN. Total enumeration was used. The instruments used were SAR management ($r=0.89$), IS ($r=0.81$), ILS ($r=0.81$) and WE ($r=0.78$) scales. Out of the 516 copies of the questionnaire administered, 463 (89.7%) were valid for analysis. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Linear and Multiple regressions at 0.05 level of significance. Records personnel in the executive cadre constituted the majority (19.4%), while respondents' age was 40.70 ± 4.10 years, 30.5% were first-degree holders, and 58.1% were male. The procedure employed for SAR management was proper storage ($\bar{x}=3.40$), designated personnel ($\bar{x}=3.31$) and files and data entry for students records ($\bar{x}=3.27$). The types of IS were human resources ($\bar{x}=2.70$) and institutional policy ($\bar{x}=2.82$), whereas funding ($\bar{x}=2.69$) and motivation ($\bar{x}=2.17$) were not adequately provided. The study concluded that institutional support (human, funding, infrastructure) constitutes a great factor in the management of student academic records in Nigeria Polytechnics, particularly among those located in Southwestern Nigeria. It was recommended that the procedures for managing academic records could be enhanced by digitizing the records, especially the old records; there is a need to improve the institutional support available for records management, especially in the areas of human resources and funding, among others.

Keywords: Academic records management, Institutional support, Polytechnics, Records management practices, Registry personnel,

Introduction

Records are created, received, used, transferred, and maintained as a reference source by individuals or organisations in pursuance of legal obligations and business transactions. In higher institutions of learning, especially in polytechnics, academic record keeping occupies a strategic position for efficient and effective operations. Academic records are central to the planning and implementation of appropriate courses of services in institutions of learning. It is viewed in higher institutions of learning as materials for records in administrative

documentation (Igwoku, 2018). Student's academic records include registration kit, statements of results, testimonials, and transcripts, among others.

As cited by Abdulrazaq (2018), the National Archives Decree of 1992 of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides a most encompassing definition of records as all papers, registers, printed matter, books, plans, maps, photographs, microfilms, cinematographic films, sound recording, or other documentary materials. It is regardless of physical forms or characteristics made or received by public or state offices or by business houses or companies, private bodies and individuals in pursuance of legal obligations or connection with the transaction of proper business.

Students' academic records are closely linked with the learning agreement plan, which is an official document that specifies the courses, research, and training or activities that students are expected to achieve during mobility. Nakpodkia (2011) considered students' academic records as the gathering of data to expedite action and to furnish information about current students or former students in any institution. The institution could be: primary, secondary, or tertiary; large or small; rural or urban by nature; or government-owned/private sponsored. Students' academic records are vital assets of institutions of higher learning, particularly the polytechnics. Fundamentally, records are being maintained to enhance institutional support, better decision-making, accountability, and transparency, as well as to facilitate easy access for students in obtaining certificates, results, and transcripts, among others (Umar, 2017). The context observation revealed that the state of student academic record management at the polytechnic is chaotic. Several factors have been attributed to students' records management practices in institutions of higher learning such as polytechnics. Prominent among these factors are institutional support and a paucity of qualified staff, among others.

The institutional support in this study is defined as the extent to which the parent institution provides the necessary resources such as equipment/tools, facilitation of regular training and retraining through seminars, workshops, conferences, payment of fringe benefits, as well as the creation of a conducive environment for records staff to enhance improved service delivery (Lazarus et al., 2019). Institutional support also refers to the resources, opportunities, privileges, and services that institutions provide for employees to perform optimally. It has been affirmed that institutional factors provide an important background and platform for effective record management and practices among personnel in polytechnics' records departments.

Statement of the Problem

Effective management of students' academic records is crucial for ensuring timely access to essential documents such as transcripts, testimonials, and registration records. However, accessing these records remains a significant challenge in many polytechnics. Preliminary investigations indicate that academic records management in polytechnics faces several issues, including improper arrangement of registration forms, delays or loss of student records, inconsistent record-keeping practices, outdated institutional policies, and an unfavorable work environment. These inefficiencies hinder students' ability to obtain necessary documents promptly, affecting their academic and professional pursuits. Although previous studies have examined these challenges, most have focused on independent factors rather than institutional perspectives. Limited attention has been given to the role of institutional support in shaping effective records management practices. Therefore, this study examined the institutional support (IS) for students' academic records (SAR) management practices in polytechnics in South-west Nigeria.

Research questions

1. What are the procedures available for the management of academic records in polytechnics in South-west Nigeria?
2. What institutional support is available for the management of academic records in polytechnics in South-west Nigeria?

Literature Review

The concept of "records" refers to information generated, received, and maintained by an institution or individual in the course of fulfilling legal obligations or conducting business transactions. Records serve as vital documentation, offering evidence of activities, decisions, and transactions, and are essential tools for ensuring that institutions meet their administrative, educational, and legal requirements (Aliyu, 2019; Otuma, 2015). In higher education institutions such as polytechnics, records include various forms of information, such as student enrolment records, academic assessment booklets, financial documents, personnel files, and institutional policies (Smith, 2003). These records, whether in paper form, digital format, or other mediums, are critical for decision-making, reference, and ensuring operational continuity (Adu-Oppong & Asante, 2017).

Records can be categorized into different types based on their purpose and function within an institution. These include academic records (e.g., student results, transcripts, and admission registers), administrative records (e.g., budgets, staff files, and institutional policies), and reference records that provide historical and legal documentation (Daramola, 1991; Oyebanji, 2018). Mnjama and Wamukoya (2014) emphasised that records are integral to the functioning of institutions, serving as both evidence of past actions and as essential tools for the ongoing operations of an institution. In polytechnics, the accuracy and accessibility of student academic records, for example, are vital for fulfilling obligations related to graduation, promotions, and accreditation (Adu-Oppong & Asante, 2017).

Management, in the context of student academic records, refers to the systematic process of planning, organizing, controlling, and maintaining student-related information to ensure efficiency, accuracy, and accessibility. Effective management of student academic records is essential for institutional performance, decision-making, and compliance with legal and administrative requirements (Sapere-Obi, 2014). Records management in higher institutions, particularly polytechnics, ensures the proper collection, storage, and retrieval of student-related data such as enrollment details, academic performance, disciplinary records, and graduation requirements (Adu-Oppong & Asante, 2017).

Records management refers to the systematic control of the creation, organization, maintenance, and disposal of records within an institution or organization. It is a critical function in ensuring that records, which serve as proof of actions, transactions, and decisions, are properly managed throughout their lifecycle. Effective records management includes the processes of identifying, classifying, storing, and securing records, and it also involves the creation of systems to ensure records can be retrieved when necessary (Pember & Cowan, 2016). In higher education institutions like polytechnics, the management of student and academic records is vital to ensuring smooth administrative functions and meeting legal and regulatory requirements (Mnjama & Wamukoya, 2014).

According to Sapere-Obi (2014), records management is not just about keeping documents but involves ensuring that these records are accessible, protected, and disposed of properly when no longer needed. It encompasses planning for record creation, classification systems, and maintenance strategies to avoid record proliferation. Proper records management also ensures that an institution complies with legal obligations, such as maintaining students' academic records, staff information, and financial records (Smith, 2003). Mnjama and Wamukoya (2014) further emphasized that records serve as vital

evidence of institutional activities and decisions and that they should be kept for reference, administrative, and educational purposes.

In polytechnics, effective records management is crucial for managing a range of academic and administrative records, including students' enrollment data, academic performance, staff information, and financial records. Poor record-keeping practices can lead to inefficiencies, inaccuracies, and difficulties in decision-making (Adu-Oppong & Asante, 2017). For example, accurate and accessible student academic records are essential for graduation, promotions, and accreditation purposes (Oyebanji, 2018). Therefore, a sound records management system ensures that institutions can meet their operational, legal, and educational requirements while maintaining the integrity and security of institutional data (Ifedili & Agbaire, 2017).

Student academic records encompass documents related to student enrollment, progress, performance, and certification. These include admission records, cumulative academic records, transcripts, terminal report cards, and progress reports (Smith, 2003). The effective management of these records is critical for ensuring institutional efficiency, as it provides essential data for administrative decision-making, curriculum planning, and student assessment (Otuma, 2015). Poor record-keeping can result in inefficiencies, loss of critical information, and administrative challenges (Ifedili & Agbaire, 2017).

The role of records management in polytechnics extends to creating, maintaining, securing, and appropriately disposing of student academic records. Institutional support plays a vital role in this process by providing the necessary infrastructure, policies, and technologies for effective records management (National Archives of Australia, 2012). Institutions must ensure that student academic records are properly classified and stored to facilitate quick retrieval and protect sensitive information (Egwuyenga, 2019).

Furthermore, student records management aligns with institutional policies to ensure legal compliance and accountability. It also helps institutions track students' academic progress, verify credentials, and support research on student performance trends (Daramola, 1991). Given the increasing digitization of academic records, modern polytechnics must incorporate technology-driven solutions such as electronic databases and cloud storage for efficient management (Hassan, 2017).

Institutional support is crucial in managing student academic records as it provides the necessary tools, facilities, and training for registry personnel to maintain accurate and reliable records (Mathis & Jackson, 2018). The institutional environment, including policies, financial

support, and technological infrastructure, significantly influences the efficiency of academic records management (Franco-Santos et al., 2017). Without proper institutional backing, records management in higher institutions may face challenges such as poor data security, inaccessibility, and loss of important student records (Ugwunze, 2016).

Institutional support refers to the mechanisms, policies, resources, and practices that an organization or institution provides to foster an environment conducive to achieving its goals. In higher education institutions, such as polytechnics, institutional support plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of both academic and administrative processes. It encompasses a range of components, including policies, resources (financial and non-financial), physical facilities, training, and human resources (Dixon, 2015). Institutional support is essential for the performance and well-being of staff and students. It includes the provision of resources such as financial aid, infrastructure, technology, training opportunities, and policies that guide the institution's operations (Sheng et al., 2013). For students, institutional support might involve providing access to academic resources, career counseling, and guidance to help them succeed in their studies (Shu et al., 2015). For staff, it refers to the training, development opportunities, and other tools provided by the institution to enhance their performance and job satisfaction (Mathis & Jackson, 2018).

Moreover, institutional support in educational settings can extend to activities that encourage student engagement and retention. For instance, guidance on academic matters, extra-curricular activities, and provisions for students with special needs fall under the domain of institutional support (Ameyaw & Frempong-Kore, 2020). Such support helps students navigate the academic environment, thus enhancing their chances of success. Institutional support is not just about the availability of resources but also about creating an organizational culture where staff and students feel valued and supported. For employees, this support influences their performance and commitment to the institution (Erdogan & Enders, 2017). For students, it helps alleviate the barriers that might affect their educational journey, contributing to their overall success and retention in the institution (Sheng et al., 2013).

A polytechnic is a higher education institution that focuses on providing practical, skill-based education, particularly in fields like engineering, technology, applied sciences, and business. Unlike traditional universities, polytechnics emphasize hands-on learning, industry-relevant skills, and vocational training, often offering diploma, certificate, and degree programs (Smith, 2003). Their curriculum is designed to prepare students for careers in technical and professional sectors, providing them with the skills and experience needed

for direct entry into the workforce (Otuma, 2015). Polytechnics play a significant role in bridging the gap between theoretical education and real-world applications, which enhances employability (Adu-Oppong & Asante, 2017).

Polytechnics are vital in fostering human capital development by offering specialized programs tailored to meet industry demands. These institutions provide students with the opportunity to engage in internships, practical training, and project-based coursework, which ensures that graduates are well-prepared for technical roles in industries such as manufacturing, healthcare, and business (Shepherd, 2010). In many countries, polytechnics work closely with industries to align their curriculum with current market needs, thereby strengthening the relationship between education and employment (Smith, 2003). This industry-driven focus enables polytechnics to contribute significantly to economic growth and innovation (Pember & Cowan, 2016).

In countries like Nigeria, polytechnics are considered an alternative path to university education. They cater to students who seek a more hands-on, vocational approach to learning. By offering specialized training, polytechnics contribute to filling the skills gap in various sectors, providing a workforce that is ready to address the technical and industrial needs of the economy (Oyebanji, 2018). These institutions also help to diversify the educational system, making higher education more accessible to a broader range of students while ensuring the development of skilled technical personnel crucial for national development (Uwaifo, 2004).

Several studies highlight the critical implications of poor academic record management in Nigerian institutions. Mabera (2020) found that delays in decision-making for graduating students and lost opportunities were significant consequences of poor record management. Philip (2017) emphasized the importance of human resources development in enhancing the productivity of records personnel, recommending that institutions invest in human resources, provide adequate funding, and conduct periodic reviews of development progress. Additionally, Olasedidun and Badmus (2017) pointed out the role of institutional factors, including ICT infrastructure, in improving education and e-learning practices in Nigerian colleges of education.

Akasi and Ekeata (2021) examined the impact of records management on office efficiency in two polytechnics in Osun State and found that effective record-keeping was crucial for office planning. However, they noted challenges such as insufficient resources, inadequate storage, and lack of training for office managers. They recommended that both

government and school authorities allocate appropriate resources, skills, and training to improve office record-keeping practices. These studies collectively highlight the need for institutional support, proper resources, and ongoing training to enhance records management practices in Nigerian polytechnics and educational institutions.

Methodology

This study adopted a survey design with a population of 516 personnel from 18 polytechnics in south-west Nigeria, including the states of Oyo, Ogun, Lagos, Osun, Ekiti, and Ondo. However, due to the manageable sample size of personnel in the records, the total enumeration technique was employed. The data were collected using a questionnaire that was distributed to records personnel during Senior Staff Association Nigeria Polytechnics (SSANIP) congresses and within their respective departments over 3 days between 12 pm and 2 pm to accommodate busy schedules. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were motivated by the importance of the study. The SSANIP members, who hold executive positions in Nigerian polytechnics, may have degrees or certificates in various fields but are dedicated to their roles. The collected data were analyzed using frequency tables, mean, and standard deviation. Out of the 516 copies administered, 498 copies were returned, but 463 were found usable and valid for analysis, giving a response rate of 89.7%.

Presentation of Results and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job Description		
Administrative Officer	55	11.9
Executive Officer	90	19.4
Examination Officer	68	14.7
Record Officer	49	10.6
Faculty officer	45	9.7
Registry Staff	71	15.3
Student Affairs Officer	21	4.5
Library/Information Officer	33	7.1
Others	31	6.7
Gender		
Male	269	58.1
Female	194	41.9
Age Range		
25 – 29	69	14.9
30 – 35	81	17.5
36 – 40	100	21.6
41 – 45	116	25.1
46 and above	97	21.0
Experience in Years		
1 – 5	90	19.4

6 -10	119	25.7
11 – 15	78	16.8
16 – 20	58	12.5
21 – 25	63	13.6
26 and above	55	11.9
Educational Qualifications		
ND	87	18.8
HND	139	30.0
BSc	141	30.5
PGD	11	2.4
Master Degree	78	16.8
M.Phil.	4	0.5
PhD	3	0.6
Marital Status		
Single	95	20.5
Married	330	71.3
Divorced	7	1.5
Widowed	19	4.1
Widower	12	2.6

The information contained in Table 1 showed that personnel in the executive cadre constituted the majority of the respondents (90, 19.4%). This was followed by registry staff (71, 15.3%) and administrative officers (55, 11.9%), respectively. It was observed from Table 1 that nearly all the respondents were involved in records management in the polytechnics under survey, as expected in the study. The result on gender also revealed that the majority of the respondents were male 269 (58.1%). This result implied that there was a little disparity in the gender distribution of registry personnel in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria as there were slightly more male personnel than their female counterparts.

In addition, it was revealed that the highest number of respondents 116(25.1%) were found in the age bracket of 41-45 years, followed by 100(21.6%) who were 36 – 40 years' age bracket, while the lowest number of respondents 69 (14.9%) were found between 25 – 29 years. This result suggests that most of the personnel in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria were young and in their prime ages. In terms of years of work experience, the result indicated that the highest number of respondents (119, 25.7%) were found to have worked in the management of student records between 6 – 10 years, while 55(11.9%) of the respondents, which was the lowest, claimed to have worked for more than 26 years. This implies that the participants in the study were quite experienced enough in the record management system to be able to respond appropriately to issues raised in the study questionnaire.

The distribution of the respondents by educational qualification indicated that 141(30.5%) of the respondents were BSc holders, 139(30.0%) were HND holders and only 3(0.6%) were doctoral degree holders. This suggests that most of the personnel saddled with the responsibility of managing student records were duly qualified as the minimum qualification possessed was an HND/BSc degree. Finally, on marital status, the majority of the respondents (330, 71.3%) were married while the rest were single (20.5%), divorced (1.5%), widowed (4.1%) or widower (2.6%).

The result of the demographic characteristics of the respondents attests to the fact that the distribution of the registry staff in the polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria is homogeneous in terms of job description, gender, age, experience and educational qualifications as all categories in each case are adequately represented in the study. The study, therefore, regards this population as appropriate as they were able to respond to the questions raised in the study accordingly.

Table 2: Available Academic Records Management Procedure in Polytechnics

Statement	SA		A		D		SD		\bar{x}	δ
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
The institution mandates designated personnel to receive and dispatch students' academic records mails.	254	54.9	131	28.3	47	10.2	31	6.7	3.31	0.91
The institution authorise records personnel to open files and data entry for students records	245	52.9	151	32.6	14	3.0	53	11.4	3.27	0.97
	250	54.0	103	22.2	79	17.1	31	6.7	3.24	0.96
The institution adopted the alphabetical arrangement of students' records										
	256	55.3	165	35.6	11	2.4	31	6.7	3.40	0.83
The files are in good shape, and storage conditions in the registry are conducive to keeping records in my institution.										
	240	51.8	95	20.5	43	9.3	85	18.4	3.06	1.16
My institution places a premium on ensuring the security and confidentiality of records by restricting access to authorised personnel										
Weighted mean									3.26	0.966

Key: Strongly Agree (SA-4) Agree (A-3) Disagree (D-2) Strongly Agree (SA-1). \bar{x} = Mean, δ = Standard Deviation.

The results of the procedure employed for managing academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria are presented in Table 2. The result reveals that the majority of the respondents agreed at varying extents with the statement that "The institution maintains records by ensuring that files are in good shape and storage conditions in the registry are conducive" ($\bar{x}= 3.40$); "the institution mandate designated personnel to receive and dispatch students' academic records mails" ($\bar{x}= 3.31$), and the institution authorise records personnel to open files and data entry for students records ($\bar{x}= 3.27$). This suggests that the procedures employed for managing academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria were ensuring that files are in good shape and storage conditions in the registry are conducive, mandating designated personnel to receive and dispatch students' academic records mails and authorise records personnel to open files and data entry for students' records. Other procedures employed for managing academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria include an alphabetical arrangement of student records and security and confidentiality of records by restricting access to authorised personnel.

Discussion of the Finding

The finding of research question one revealed that the procedures employed for managing academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria were the maintenance of good storage conditions in the registry, mandating designated personnel to receive and dispatch students' academic records mail, and authorise records personnel to open files and data entry for students' records. Other procedures employed for managing academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria include an alphabetical arrangement of student records and security and confidentiality of records by restricting access to authorised personnel. It was apparent from this finding that most of the procedures employed for managing student records in polytechnics in south-west Nigeria are mostly traditional, with little recourse to the use of modern storage and retrieval procedures brought about by the ICT. This finding confirms the assertion of Asogwa (2013) that records management practices are documentable, repeatable, and proven processes that are prerequisites for preserving records in service delivery. It also supports Crockett (2016), who noted that record management practices are pre-determined guidelines that provide a framework within which

records management processes operate for effective services. The finding of this study corroborates Chidobi (2015) that Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) are not adequately applied in the management of both administrative and student' records in the universities in Nigeria.

Table 3: Types of Institutional Support Available for Student Academic Records in Polytechnics

Statement	SA		A		D		SD		\bar{x}	δ
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
My institution makes use of assessment and projections for staff training and development	33	7.1	133	28.7	187	40.4	110	23.8	2.39	0.71
An outstanding performance merit and outstanding reward is given to deserving records personnel	69	14.9	128	27.6	145	31.3	121	26.1	2.43	0.86
Adequate funding is being provided for records room activities and maintenance in my institution	86	18.6	127	27.4	159	34.3	91	19.7	2.34	0.76
My institution funds records personnel for seminars, symposium, conferences, workshops attendance among others	41	8.9	183	39.5	121	26.1	118	25.5	2.22	0.79
My institution has enhanced records management policies	137	29.6	169	36.5	97	21.0	60	13.0	2.57	0.75
The records management policy spells out the creation of records management programme in the institution	108	23.3	125	27.0	109	23.5	121	26.1	2.47	0.79
My institution introduced strategies for proper records management	241	52.1	197	42.5	9	1.9	16	3.5	3.43	0.70
My institution introduces flexible strategies for effective students' academic records management	218	47.1	204	44.1	34	7.3	7	1.5	3.37	0.69
My institution motivates me as a records personnel to improve performance	65	14.0	108	23.3	193	41.7	97	21.0	2.25	0.75
My institution gives incentives to records unit staff to encourage our performance	84	18.1	133	28.7	113	24.4	133	28.7	2.32	0.84

The results on types of institutional support available for managing students' academic records in polytechnics in South-west Nigeria, as presented in Table 3, revealed a range of views on various aspects of institutional support for records management within the polytechnics in South-west Nigeria. The item regarding the use of assessments and projections for staff training and development in the institution ($\bar{x} = 1.97$), indicating

that respondents generally disagree with this statement. Similarly, the statement about the institution offering rewards and recognition for outstanding performance among records personnel received ($\bar{x} = 2.08$), reflecting slight disagreement, indicating considerable variation in responses. The provision of adequate funding for records room activities and maintenance ($\bar{x} = 2.20$) showing general disagreement, indicating differing views among respondents.

Furthermore, the enhancement of records management policies and the clarity of the records management program received more positive feedback ($\bar{x} = 2.54$) showed slight agreement with the institution having enhanced records management policies. Also, regarding the creation of a records management program in the institution ($\bar{x} = 2.22$), suggesting that opinions on the clarity of this policy vary widely.

The most favorable responses came from the statements on the introduction of strategies for proper records management ($\bar{x} = 3.08$) and flexible strategies for students' academic records management (3.02), suggesting that there is little variation in opinions, implying a broad consensus that these strategies are in place. On the other hand, responses to statements about motivation and incentives for records personnel were less favourable ($\bar{x} = 2.02$) and about the institutional motivation for improved performance and giving incentives to staff ($\bar{x} = 2.12$) suggesting that respondents disagreed with these statements but with varying degrees of agreement.

Conclusively, the analysis reveals that while some respondents agree that the institution has introduced effective strategies and policies for records management, there is a general sense of dissatisfaction when it comes to funding, rewards, and recognition for records personnel.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings on types of institutional support available for managing students' academic records in polytechnics in Southwestern Nigeria are in tune with the finding earlier submitted by Sheng et al., (2013), Shu et al. (2015) who submitted that Institutional support is a general reflection of financial and technical support from the institution's management and its agencies, which provides students with critical resources that they may use for learning and that institutional support has several provisions and feelings received by

colleagues, supervisors, and departments that assist in the success of records management tasks and work.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher, therefore, recommends the following:

1. The institutions should invest in continuous professional development programs for records personnel. This could include attending seminars, conferences, and workshops relevant to records management and technology to ensure that staff remain updated on best practices and new developments in the field.
2. Institutions should prioritize the improvement of the physical infrastructure required for efficient records management. This includes ensuring that records rooms are well-maintained, equipped with modern storage systems, and have proper environmental controls such as temperature and humidity regulation to prevent deterioration of physical records.
3. Institutions could collaborate with government agencies, professional bodies, and other educational institutions to share resources, knowledge, and best practices in records management. External support in the form of grants or partnerships could also help to improve the available funding and ensure that records management systems are robust.
4. Students should keep in mind that their academic records may be required for future educational pursuits, job applications, or other personal reasons. It is essential to plan for long-term access by downloading digital records or requesting official transcripts before leaving the institution.
5. It is essential to develop and enforce clear, comprehensive policies and guidelines regarding records management. These policies should be accessible to all records personnel, outlining best practices, responsibilities, and compliance standards to ensure a standardized approach across institutions.
6. Students should maintain personal copies of important documents such as transcripts, course syllabi, and academic certificates. Organizing and storing these documents in both physical and digital formats will ensure they can easily be retrieved when needed, especially for future academic or career opportunities.
7. Institutions should regularly conduct audits and evaluations of their records management practices to identify areas for improvement. These assessments can help

identify gaps in the system, ensure that the current methods of records management are effective, and take corrective measures where necessary.

8. To increase motivation and performance, institutions should consider offering incentives such as performance-based bonuses, recognition awards, and opportunities for career advancement. These incentives could encourage records personnel to perform at their best and contribute positively to the overall management of academic records.
9. Students should regularly meet with academic advisors to discuss their academic performance and ensure their records are up to date. This will help address any discrepancies or issues early on and ensure they are on track to meet graduation requirements.
10. Students should actively participate in feedback mechanisms or surveys related to records management at their institution. Providing feedback can help improve systems for future students and highlight areas where support may be lacking or where improvements are necessary.

Conclusion

In conclusion, effective management of student academic records is essential for the smooth operation of polytechnics, as these records are integral to academic planning, decision-making, and legal compliance. However, the management of these records faces challenges, including inadequate institutional support, lack of qualified staff, and insufficient resources. Addressing these challenges requires strong institutional support, which includes adequate funding, regular staff training, provision of necessary tools and equipment, and a conducive working environment for records personnel. Polytechnics must prioritize these aspects to ensure efficient and effective record-keeping practices.

Moreover, digitizing records and creating secure and easily accessible storage systems would significantly enhance record management processes. By improving institutional support and addressing the current gaps in human resources, funding, and training, polytechnics can foster a more efficient and transparent academic record management system. This approach will contribute to the overall success and development of both the institution and its students, ensuring compliance with best practices and legal requirements in academic record-keeping.

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