Student Registration and Records Management Services towards Digitization

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Abstract

This study examined the extent of implementation of the Student Registration and Records Management Services as fundamental elements of the planned academic record digitization. Utilizing a descriptive-evaluative design, the simple random sampled respondents evaluated the services of the Student Registration and Records Management Office (SRRMO) with a researcher-made and face validated questionnaire. Analyzed through frequency and percentage distribution, weighted mean, Kruskall Wallis test for significant difference, Fisher's Exact Test and Kendall tau_b for significant relationship, results revealed that the majority of the respondents moderately felt the problems encountered with the SRRMO services specifically on lack of admission requirements and non-observance of enrolment schedule. Therefore, the researcher recommends that a more accessible and convenient enrolment scheme be implemented in school. Hence, digitization of students' registration and records shall be instituted.

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1. Introduction

Records management is one of the crucial facets of institutional progress (Yunus et al., 2016). No institution can survive without proper management of records of its activities (Seniwoliba et al., 2017). In the academic setting, records management mainly focus on school records. According to Nwadei (2018), school records include official documents, books and files that contains pertinent information of students, staff, teaching and learning records and school activities. It also includes school policies, educational laws, minutes of school– meetings, including information from the government, educational bodies, and other stakeholders pertaining to the growth and development of the school (Ololube, 2013). These records enable administrators to plan (Allahmagani, 2014) to make informed management decisions (Bibi, 2016). Any academic institution shall put forth efforts in attaining a centralized record management system that would respond to the various needs of the school's clientele, from enrolment to release of academic documents that provide salient information about the learners enrolled.

Academic institutions typically generate data in non-delimited files for use by various departments/units within the institution, with the same data appearing on multiple files. In this case, a simple address change would need to be processed twice, and possibly three or four times, depending on the number of other files that contain the data (Eludire, 2011). Incorrect course registration, late release of student results, inaccuracy due to manual and tedious calculation, and retrieval difficulties/inefficiency are all issues with student academic record management (Okumbor & Todo, 2020).

According to Ukaogba and Nwankwo (2020), an effective record management in academic institutions provides well-organized, properly stored and easily retrieved information. If the academic records are in place, the administrative tasks are easier and the records release services are faster and accurate. In addition, Nwaomah (2017) asserts that effective record management keeps administrative tasks easy. The benefit of school record is derived when information are properly managed through record management practices (Ukaogba & Nwankwo, 2020). Empirical evidence showed that records management had a significant impact on school administration (Charles, 2005) and promotes good governance (Matina & Ngulube, 2019).

Background of the Study

The Records Management Office is responsible for establishing and maintaining a framework of uniform recordkeeping application and practices, effective retention and disposal processes, and efficient storage and retrieval of records. It helps with school records, legal agreements, consulting, training, and archiving. The Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College Student Registration and Record Management Office (DCLC-SRRMO) records are the school's memory. These are vital assets for ongoing operations, providing valuable evidence of organization activities and transactions. As a private organization, DCLC-SRRMO is regularly evaluated. It records actions, transactions, and provides reliable evidence of authority decisions. In this context, accountability and transparency are essential. The scope of services of the Student Registration and Records Management Office covers a variety of activities from before students are admitted to the institution (e.g., design of class schedules) up until the students graduate (e.g., release of transcripts of records and other credentials). The services of the SRRMO apply to current and former undergraduate and graduate students of the Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College. The SRRMO currently employs manual process of records management and accepts only manual transactions.

The college had a significant number of students from the Basic Education Department to the School of Graduate Studies. From 4,205 in School Year (S.Y.) 2016-2017 to 3,346 in S.Y. 2017-2018 and 3,544 in S.Y. 2018-2019 in college. There is also increasing number of Senior High School students from 1,076 in S.Y. 2017-2018 to 1,965 in S.Y. 2018-2019, and 2,549 in S.Y. 2019-2020 and corresponding increase in graduates for three consecutive years, from 367 in S.Y. 2016-2017 to 377 in S.Y. 2017-2018 and 377 in S.Y. 2018-2019 in the college level. With the number of students who would opt to seek advice for possible enrolment and requests of the release of essential documents for whatever legal purposes these would serve them, it is high time to conduct a study that would respond to these calls. Consequently, evaluating the extent of implementation of the SRRMO services was an essential investigation that captured the authentic and genuine sources of information from which the school's clienteles' perceptions on how effective and efficient its student record management system.

As such, this study determined the extent of implementation of Student Registration and Record Management at Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College for the S.Y. 2018-2019. It also identified the problems encountered by the clients on the services provided. It tested the following hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant difference in the respondents' perceptions on the SRMO services when grouped according to their profile.

Ho2: There is no significant difference in the problems encountered by the respondents on the SRMO services when grouped according to their profile.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between the respondents' perception on the SRMO services and the problems encountered.

2. Literature Review

According to Dada (2020), record is a brain box of information packaged in different formats that lives after the death of the creator from generation to generation. In most of the academic institutions, records come in various format from digital to hard copies and could be stored in physical or cloud-based spaces. The Queensland State Archives (2010) enumerates the record formats as to paper (reports, letters, memos, books, journals and diaries), roll (microfilm, microforms), photographs (prints, negatives, transparencies and x-ray films), sound recordings (disk or tape), moving images (film or video), electronic records and multimedia. School records are broadly classified into statutory and non- statutory records (Babalola et al., 2021). The statutory records are obligatory records produced on request while non-statutory records are additional documents which are not required by law (Amos, 2017). In record management, records must meet certain criteria such as confidentiality, proper maintenance, security, content preservation, and context (Akporhonor & Iwhiwhu, 2007; Uwaifo, 2004). These records, in whatever format, type and storage, are vital assets that must be properly managed. Effective record keeping is tantamount to effective management.

Records management leads to the achievement of organizational goals. Theoretical and empirical research show that good records management benefits institutions (AbuZawayda et al., 2013; Demirtel & Bayram, 2014; Mohammed et al., 2018; Mukred & Yusof, 2020). Such benefits include effective design (Yusof & Chell, 1999), planning (Atulomah, 2011), supervision

and monitoring of programmes (Mabera, 2020), efficient financial management, a fair distribution of resources among all units, performance and educational needs of students, and better teaching and learning facilities. Moreover, proper management may help concussed students recover faster and avoid academic damage (Carzoo et al., 2015). However, empirical research also identified many problems in institutional record management from the perspective of the main stakeholders (Awe, 2000; Egunleti, 2000; Oketunji, 2002; Utulu, 2001; Awe, 2000; Egunleti 2001; Utulu, 2001; Oketunji, 2002; Egwunyenga, 2005).

Recording activities are categorized into three major phases according to the records life cycle model: records creation & receipt, records use and maintenance and records disposition (Babalola, 2021). In this age and time, many colleges and universities still use the manual system of keeping records on paper. This records preservation methods were obsolete and records retrieval were slow and sometimes impossible (Ereh and Okon, 2015; Osakwe, 2011 and Umar, 2010). Due to the reliance on paper, student records may be lost or delayed. Paper records may also take up space and time to retrieve when needed. As a consequence, the absence of requisite records and records management apparatus have been shown to undermine accountability, task accomplishment and evaluation by school managers (Ibara, 2010).

As the use of computers and other information and communication technology infrastructure grows, so does the need for electronic records to improve productivity (Eze Asogwa, 2013). Organizations are now in a paperless era where all papers will fade (Gupta, 2015; Pfister & Schwabe, 2016). Converting existing or new paper records to electronic format is becoming an increasingly important issue for records management professionals (Leonard, 2011; Magsamen-Conrad & Checton, 2014).

Globally, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) has been welcomed for its enormous impact and contribution to numerous fields and sectors of the economy (Amutha, 2020; Babu & MA, 2018; Das, 2019). ICT has made significant contributions to education (Dotong et al., 2016; Saha et al., 2014) and student record management (Latif et al., 2008), as these sectors' efficiency and effectiveness have relied heavily on ICT, especially in the last three decades. These days, the use of ICT in student record management is seen as a boost to accuracy, timeliness, and professionalism (Minishi-Majanja, 2007). According to Toyo (2017), using ICT to manage students' records made report generation easier, faster, and more organized. Data

sorting, amendment, security, and duplication were also addressed when ICT was introduced. These are not the only advantages of ICT, the use of ICT has benefited almost every aspect of human life (Rusmansyah et al., 2018; Vestergaard, 2021) which made working much more enjoyable (Adisa et al., 2017; Satpathy et al., 2021).

According to Robek et al. (1995), "*an organization cannot control the growth of its records without a records management program*" which Keakopa (2013) and Shepherd et al. (2011) call for clearly defined policies and procedures to guide the implementation of record management programs but however, appear that most organizations have not developed the required frameworks.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive-evaluative research method. This study was descriptive-evaluative since the result of the study evaluated the respondents' perceptions regarding the extent of implementation of the SRRMO. Evaluation research aims to provide information for decision-makers (policy-makers) related to a program's power or strength, seen from its effectiveness, cost, and device, among other factors (Ary et al., 2010).

3.2. Sample and Sampling Technique

This study involved the randomly-selected students of Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College across colleges and departments. Through simple random sampling via the snow ball technique, the researcher identified the number of students who were involved in this study from every college and department. Since all students have engaged with SRRMO services from enrolment to record release, a simple random sampling technique was necessarily undertaken as every student shares the same engagement unit with the services of the office.

After a series of data analyses and treatment, the researchers involved eighty-six (86) of the total number of respondents in this investigation. The respondents' profile showed that twenty (20) number students whose ages are below 18, fifty-three (53) of the age from 19 to 25 years of age, ten (10) are 26 to 30 years old, two (2) are 31 to 35 years old and only one (1) ages from 36 to 40 years old. The majority of the respondents' age ranges from 19 to 25, which means that they are in the right school age for college degrees enrolled. Additionally, fifty (50) of the

respondents are male, and thirty-six (36) of them are female. In terms of course, majority of the respondents are equally distributed from the different courses and programs offered such as Bachelor of Elementary Education, Bachelor in Secondary Education (major in Mathematics, English, and Filipino), Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Bachelor of Science in Maritime Engineering, Bachelor of Science in Maritime Transportation, Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science, Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Technology, and Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

3.3. Data Gathering Process

This study employed online survey due to the restrictions imposed by the government during the pandemic. Using Google Form, the survey questionnaire was prepared and the link was sent to the participants. The survey was conducted for two weeks at the start of the S.Y.2020-2021 enrolment period. The link to the online survey form was sent to the participants' email. The participants were oriented on the general objective of the survey. It was clearly mentioned that the survey is consensual and that they have the freedom to refrain from answering at any part of the survey process. Meanwhile, the college has given permission to conduct the study and the data gathering and allowed the full disclosure of the college identity.

3.4. Data Analysis

The data gathered were treated using different statistical tools. For the profile of the respondents, simple frequency and percentage distribution was used. A weighted mean was used for the extent of implementation of the SRMO. Meanwhile, the Kruskal Wallis tested significant difference in the respondents' perceptions on the implementation of the services when grouped according to profile as well as the significant difference in the respondents' problems according to their profile. Fisher's Exact Test for Independence was used for the significant relationship on the respondents' perceptions regarding the extent of implementation of the services when grouped according to profile. Finally, the significant relationship between the perceptions of the respondents as regards the extent of implementation of the services and their problems encountered, Kendall Tau-B test for correlation was used.

4. Findings and Discussion

Based from Table 1, it can be noted that all the Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the SRRMO services were perceived to be 'Implemented'. This means that all the services within the

expected outcomes of the office are perceived to have served the students' needs in terms of student recruitment (M=4.22), student admission (M=4.19), student record (M=4.16), student liaison/external assistance (M=4.10), and student academic record release (M=4.10).

Table 1

Perceptions of the Respondents on the Extent of Implementation of SRRMO Services

Key Results Areas of SRRMO	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
A. Student Record	**4.16**	**Implemented**
1. Organizes records properly and diligently	4.15	Implemented
2. Maintains accurate and complete data base of student record.	4.17	Implemented
3. Issues and collates student forms	4.06	Implemented
4. Updates student's database from submitted and returned enrollment documentation	4.08	Implemented
5. Inputs all student documents in the data base	4.07	Implemented
B. Student Admission	**4.19**	**Implemented**
1. Issues admission forms to students.	4.26	Highly implemented
2. Assists students in filing out of admission forms	4.22	Highly implemented
3. Manages the entire admission processes including data management and development from enrolment to graduation.	4.2	Implemented
4. Consults with the Dean/Head of the department where the student would opt to enroll ensuring the student meets the criteria set by the college for successful applicants.	4.33	Highly implemented
5. Undertake an annual review of the student admission process.	4.09	Implemented
C. Student Liaison/External Assistance	**4.1**	**Implemented**
1. Assists students' needs on external requirements that are to be submitted.	4.1	Implemented
2. Coordinates student room assignment and class schedules.	4.08	Implemented
3. Coordinates with Deans/Heads as to class scheduling and posting.	4.15	Implemented
4. Coordinate with Deans/Heads on lacking documents of the students both local and foreign	4.12	Implemented
5. Assists parents and other stakeholders visiting the SRRMO.	4	Implemented
D. Student Recruitment	**4.22**	**Highly implemented**
1. Conducts marketing schemes to invite students to enroll in school.	4.16	Implemented
2. Manages inquiries from prospect students	4.14	Implemented
3. Coordinates with Deans/Heads to conduct school visits, Open House Day and communication expos.	4.01	Implemented
4. Assists/Coordinates with the Deans/Heads on the screening of student documents.	4.14	Implemented
5. Orients students with the plicies and regulations of school/institution.	4.35	Highly implemented
E. Student Academic Record Release	**4.1**	**Implemented**
1. Provides conducive holding area for students requesting their records to be released	4.17	Implemented
2. Attends to students/stakeholders needs and queries	4.06	Implemented
3. Provides viable access to students' records when asked	4.23	Highly implemented
4. Organizes record releasing process in an orderly manner.	4.31	Highly implemented
5. Releases students' records on its scheduled release given by the records in-charge	4.16	Implemented
General Weighted mean	**4.156**	**Implemented**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 (Highly implemented-HI), 3.41-4.20 (Implemented-I), 2.61-3.40 (Moderately Implemented-MI), 1.81-2.60 (Slightly Implemented-SI), 1.00-1.80 (Not Implemented-NI)

The 'Student Recruitment' (M=4.22) has high implementation and the most substantial of the KRA's of SRRMO. This can be attributed to the organized orientation with the policies and regulations of the programs and institutions that the school implements before regular classes (M=4.35). The 'Student academic records release' (M=4.10) and 'student liaison/external assistance' (M=4.10) are the least KRA's of SRRMO. This is an indication that coordination in regards to room assignment, class schedules, documents request and release, and stakeholders' queries. These findings suggest that lack of appropriate policies and programs for recording and releasing of data electronically, indicating of the lack of IT infrastructure for the SRRMO. These are consistent with the studies of Pangcatan and Prado (2019), Yue (2011) and Wang (2010), which emphasized the critical nature of information storage and retrieval and identified technology as network storage. A critical piece of information or document in any organization is its records organization, and employees.

Table 3

Test of Significant Difference on the Responses According to Profile

Kruskall Wallis Test	Age	Gender	Program
Chi-square	1.176	3.893	1.962
df	3	3	3
Assym. Sig	0.759	0.273	0.58

On the significant difference of respondents' perceptions with SRRMO services, table 3 presents the Kruskall Wallis test grouped according to the profile. It can be gleaned that asymptotic significance value (p-value) of age with 0.759, gender with 0.273, and program enrolled with 0.580, these p-values are greater than the 0.05 accepted margin of error of level of significance; therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference with the perceptions of the respondents as regards the implementation of the SRRMO services. This further means that regardless of the respondents' age, gender, and programs enrolled, they still perceive the same way as how SRRMO implements their services and in this case, implemented and even highly implemented.

Table 4

Problems Encountered by the Respondents on SRRMO services

Problems Encountered	WM	Interpretation
1. The students lacks admission	3.01	Moderately felt
2. Wrong input of subjects/code units by students	2.79	Moderately felt
3. Subjects are not available or open for enrollment	2.87	Moderately felt
4. Some students do not observe the scheduled date of enrollment/late enrollees	3.08	Moderately felt
5. Some signatories are not around during enrolment.	2.78	Moderately felt
6. Some released TOR do not have soft-copy; re-encoding is needed	2.77	Moderately felt
7. Late application of SO due to lack of requirements of completion of grades.	2.74	Moderately felt
8. Retrieval of old documents	2.73	Moderately felt
9. Late compliance od incomplete grades	2.8	Moderately felt
10. Later submission of subject description for subject credited or lack of units credited subjects	2.81	Moderately felt
General Weighted Mean	**2.84**	**Moderately felt**

Legend:4.21-5.00 (Highly felt-HF); 3.41-4.20 (Felt-F); 2.61-3.40 (Moderately Felt-MF); 1.81-2.60 (Slightly Felt-SF); 1.00-1.80 (Not Felt at all-NF)

On the problems encountered by the respondents, Table 4 presents the respondents' problems regarding the extent of implementation of SRRMO services. it can be noted that all the respondents uniformly perceived the same amount of 'Moderately Felt' problems they encountered with the SRRMO services. This means that students encounter several problems in the services rendered by the SRRMO, but these moderately affect them. These are largely the lack of admission requirements and non-observance of the schedule of enrolment. The influx of students during the enrollment process can also be attributor to this finding.

Table 5

Test of Significant Difference on Problems Encountered with SRRMO Services according to Profile

Kruskall Wallis Test	Age	Gender	Program
Chi-square	7.507	3.913	5.294
df	4	4	4
Assym. Sig	0.111	0.418	0.258

On the significant difference on the problems encountered by the respondents with SRRMO services, table 5 presents the Kruskall Wallis Test. Findings reveal that the asymptotic significance value (p-value) for age is 0.759, gender is 0.273, and program enrollment is 0.580; these p-values are greater than the 0.05 accepted margin error for the level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant difference in respondents' perceptions of the problems with the SRRMO services. This further means that regardless of the respondents' age, gender, and programs enrolled, they still have the same perception on the problems encountered with SRRMO services.

Table 6

Test of Significant Relationship on SRRMO Services according to Profile

Variables	Extent of Implementation	
	Fisher's Exact Test	**2 sided Exact test**
Age	30.657	.257
Gender	7.493	.394
Program	41.543	.006*

*Significant at p-value<.05

On the significant relationship between the respondents' perceptions with SRRMO services according to profile, table 6 presents the Fisher's Exact test. Findings reveal that the two-sided Exact Test significance value (p-value) for age is 0.257, which is greater than the 0.05 accepted margin of error, indicating that the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant relationship between respondents' perceptions of age. This also implies that age has no bearing on how respondents perceive the SRRMO's services.

In addition, it can be gleaned that with the 2-sided Exact Test significance value (p-value) of gender with 0.394, which is greater than the 0.05 accepted margin of error, the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no significant relationship with the perceptions of the respondents as regards gender. This further means that gender is not associated with how the SRRMO implements its services as perceived by the respondents.

Additionally, the 2-sided Exact Test significance value (p-value) of programs enrolled is 0.006, which is less than the 0.05 accepted margin of error, indicating that the null hypothesis is rejected and that there is a highly significant relationship between respondents' perceptions of programs enrolled. This means that programs enrolled by the respondents affect how the SRRMO implements its services. The implementation of the SRRMO services largely depends on the programs offered. This can be attributed to the fact that every college/department has its separate unique process of enrolment other than the institutional enrolment scheme implemented in school.

Table 7

Significant Relationship between Respondents' Perception on SRRMO services and Problems Encountered

Variables	Extent of Implementation	
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Problems encountered	.003	.978

*Significant at p-value<.05

Table 7 shows the significant relationship between the perceptions of the respondents with SRRMO service and their problems encountered. Using Kendall's tau-b test for significant relationships, it is possible to determine that the respondents' perceptions of the extent of implementation of SRRMO services in relation to the problems encountered (p-value, 0.978) is less than the 0.05 accepted margin of error. The null hypothesis is accepted, and there is no significant relationship with the respondents' perceptions of problems encountered. This means that the respondents' perceptions are not in any way affected by their problems encountered. This is because they perceived that the SRRMO services were implemented and only felt moderate problems regarding lack of admission requirements and non-observance of enrolment schedule.

5. Conclusion

This study determined the extent of implementation of Student Registration and Record Management at Dr. Carlos S. Lanting College for the S.Y. 2018-2019 utilizing descriptive-evaluative research design. It also identified the problems encountered by the clients on the services provided.

The results of the study showed that all the KRAs of the SRRMO services were perceived to be implemented. Regardless of the respondents' age, gender, and programs enrolled, they still perceive the same way as how SRRMO implements their services. Similarly, respondents uniformly perceived the same amount of 'Moderately Felt' problems they encountered with the SRRMO services. The results further showed that age and gender are not associated with how the SRRMO implements their services as perceived by the respondents. However, there is a highly significant relationship with the respondents' perceptions and the programs enrolled. The implementation of the SRRMO services largely depends on the programs offered. This can be attributed to the fact that every college/department has its separate unique process of enrolment other than the institutional enrolment scheme implemented in school.

Since the majority of the respondents moderately felt the problems encountered with the SRRMO services, specifically on lack of admission requirements and non-observance of enrolment schedule, the study recommends a more accessible and convenient enrolment scheme be implemented in school. The digitization of students' registration and records would respond to this call. Institutionalization of the best practices of colleges/departments of the enrolment mechanism may be applied in school as enrolment scheme varies from college to college. Benchmarking is suggestively essential.

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