

## **ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS IN JUDICIARY N: IMPLICATION FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN LAGOS STATE JUDICIARY NIGERIA**

**OTOBO ELVIS EFE**  
Caleb University,  
Imota, Lagos, Nigeria  
Elvisotobo1978@gmail.com

### **ABSTRACT**

*Administrative effectiveness is the systematic use of resources for the purpose of achieving the objectives of an organization. In Nigeria, the administrative effectiveness of the Judiciary appears to be poor as demonstrated by gross delay in response time to applicants and litigants, poor teamwork and communication. Records management practices has been considered useful in the organization. This study examined records management practices and administrative effectiveness of Lagos State Judiciary, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 328 administrative staff of Lagos State Judiciary, Nigeria. Total enumeration was used. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Findings showed that the administrative effectiveness in the Lagos State Judiciary was at a high level (overall mean score = 3.89), on a scale of 5. The study concluded that records management practices contribute to administrative effectiveness. It has recommended that judges should motivate staff to come early to work, encourage team work, sustain good records management practices to enhance administrative effectiveness.*

**Keywords:** Administrative effectiveness, Lagos State Judiciary, Records management practices, Records management

### **INTRODUCTION**

The judiciary is an institution comprised of courts that interpret law and provide forum to resolve disputes. It comprises various ranks of staff such as registrars, judges, lawyers and clerks who perform different functions. It is one of the key arms of government upon which democracy grows and evolve. It is the only establishment that deals with the administration and dispensation of justice in any democratic setting. The judiciary exercises the power of judicial review, discharges the laws that are made from the legislative houses and executive powers. They serve as the guardian angel over the other arms of government and ensures that their separate or joint operations are in strict adherence to the rule of law as well as maintain the stability of democratic order in the society. The role of the judiciary, as defined in the 1999 constitution and other governing acts and laws, is central to the survival of democracy and the attainment of its purpose in Nigeria. They are empowered to resolve disputes through the dispensation of justice and determines any question regarding civil rights and obligations of the citizens, ensuring that the processes within the judiciary are made more transparent (Okenyodo, 2018).

The powers of the judiciary are vast in which the National Assembly cannot abrogate any court order under the judiciary. The constitution outlines the powers of the judiciary such as the power to oversee all courts. The judiciary has the highest prerogative in the determination and administration of justice. It has the administrative expertise to ascertain claims and counter claims, legal rights of individuals and corporate organizations. Besides, the judiciary is saddled with the responsibility of providing legal services to the society in Nigeria and as such assumes the responsibility of accomplishing goals and objectives set before it

through the combined efforts of human and material resources within the system. Despite being a powerful arm of government, which has the responsibility to protect the common man, it is a human institution accused of many errors. This is simply because it is a product of human thinking with the tendency to be partial in the application of human laws and in resolving disputes. Okenyodo (2018) explains the need to ensure that the processes within the judiciary are made more transparent. In essence, no single court under the judiciary has the special ability of knowing precisely and accurately all the facts involved in any dispute or how best to resolve the dispute to ensure that each party gets its due. Hence, administrative effectiveness is critical to sustainable judicial system in Nigeria.

Administrative effectiveness involves effectiveness of individuals, groups or teams and effectiveness of the organisation as whole. Individual effectiveness is directed towards the personality of the administrators and towards accomplishing stated goals and responsibilities in the organization. The dimension of group or team effectiveness deals with a common understanding of goals and objectives together with the ability of the groups to accomplishing them as a unit. The goals of an organization can only be accomplished when components of the organization are working in a coordinated fashion. The ability to manage resources, organize people, information, knowledge, how persons can be managed, remembering that *persons* manage persons. In a dialogical sense, they can help each other and work together, even if they are adversaries. In that sense, persons management must strive to be sustainable at the human, organizational, and environmental levels (Michel Fortier, Marie-Noelle Albert, 2015).

A judiciary staff must display quality administrative capabilities such as showing the way, managing change, exhibiting a clear picture of personality trait to lead and the capability to foresee problems beforehand. Adeniyi (2014) reasoned that indicators of administrative effectiveness should involve openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. Administrative effectiveness also involves adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and sustaining organizational values (Karsli & Sahin, 2015). According to Tanvee and Khan (2014) administrative effectiveness take cognizance of the leadership traits of administrators. Therefore, a judicial staff as an administrator will need to possess the right skills and ability to drive effective administration within the judicial system of any nation. To be effective, administrators in the court must exhibit sufficient administrative skills such as coordination if effective administration must be triggered. He or she has the responsibility to manage all case files in the court and to assist in the court process geared towards administering justice. These activities may not be well carried out without some level of coordination and effective communication. Good communication has to do with getting the right message to the right person in the right medium at the right time. Effective communication allows for administrative staff to perform the job well. With the aid of effective communication, an organization is able to have good coordination among the members or unit in that organization. Therefore, the absence of effective communication has the tendency of creating problems in the smooth operation of the judiciary.

Osawe (2017) advances certain measures, which if adopted by the public servants will promote the virtue of time management that can lead to employee effectiveness and efficiency in the public service. These indicators are in congruence with the administrative duties expected of a judicial staff since not all indicators can be applied to the judiciary with regard to the nature of their calling. Hence, judicial effectiveness is x-rayed in the light of timeliness, teamwork and coordination. Timeliness as an administrative effectiveness indicator emphasizes the time frame within which an administrator responds to clients of the organization. Quick response to organizational efforts as assigned to each administrative staff is crucial to the success of the organization.

According to Firdous, (2017) Competent and effective administrators are of vital importance to the success of every dynamic organization. This is due to the fact that the organization itself is complex with administrators performing different roles and responsibilities. Timeliness is also critical in any institution irrespective of size and location of the organization. Therefore, when responsibilities are carried out with reduced time frame, the organization will accomplish more within a short possible period of time. In the

context of the Judiciary, timeliness will mean that case files are provided on time, each documented court case is attended to within limited time space. Inquiries from clients and other legal documentations are provided on time for the benefit of prompt litigation and administration of justice. No court will function effectively with recurrent cases of delay in the provision of administrative resources for the proceeding of any case to take effect. Meaning that poor time factor has the tendency of affecting administrative effectiveness in the judiciary. Besides, when clients of an organization are not attended promptly, the consequences may range from withdrawal of trust leading to negative perception of such an organization. In the case of the judiciary, a delay in response time to client will further destroy the negative perception of the judiciary whose integrity is in the balance especially in the Nigerian case.

It is then crucial to note that, an administrative staff in the Judiciary must show quality administrative capability such as managing time in order to drive the organization forward. As a dimension of administrative effectiveness, teamwork lays emphasis on the need to collaborate in the discharge of administrative duties in the judiciary. Clients who patronise the courts have highlighted the need for teamwork for effective administrative in the judiciary. Lawyers, judges, Clerks and other working in any court system under the judiciary can collaborate with others throughout the firm who have complementary skill set or specialise in some certain areas in order to serve clients. Without a sound and clear picture of teamwork in the judiciary, administrative effectiveness may not be achieved. Thus, teamwork echoes the fact that lawyers and other administrative staff must frequently collaborate across to ensure that work efforts in the system is accomplished. Teamwork in the judiciary can occur when administrators channel their strength and integrate their expertise in order to deliver quality results on complex issues in the system. It is a common knowledge that no organization can function effectively without some level of teamwork among its employees, hence it is paramount that for the judicial administrator to function effectively teamwork is evitable and this goes along with coordination.

Additionally, there is need for coordination in the judicial sector. Administration of justice in the judiciary sector is highly dependent on coordination. Coordination helps to create efficiency in the administration of justice, aids harmony among the sector and resolve problems that may arise in the judiciary sector. Several problems may arise when there is lack of coordination in the justice sector. These include major delay in trials, congestion of court dockets with cases not appropriate for trial in those courts, lack of prosecution of many crime suspects for crimes committed and the main issue is that many crime suspects spend a brutally protracted period of time awaiting trials in cell, sometimes over ten years. The vital goal of coordination in the administration of justice is captured in the administration of Justice Commission Act of 2004. The key function of the Commission as stated in the Administration of Justice Commission Act are as follows: The Commission shall be charged with the general supervision of the administration of justice in Nigeria; The courts system in Nigeria is generally maintained and adequately financed; criminal matters are speedily dealt with, among others (Administration of Justice Commission Act, 2004).

Despite the importance role played by the judiciary, administrative effectiveness is lacking. A preliminary observation by this researcher revealed that administrative efforts in the judiciary in Lagos state is not good enough in which there is delay in response time to applicants and litigants, cases are adjourned for lack of prompt administrative effort. There are accumulation of legal processes, poor teamwork as administrative staff rarely collaborate in the act of providing speedy justice as well as poor coordination and communication. This observation is corroborated by the work of Oden (2018) who highlighted that the judiciary in Nigeria is faced with many negative lights as there is poor administration.

Globally, Administrative effectiveness has been given attention by researchers and administrative personnel, especially in the judiciary. According to Mabala (2018) the UK government under its parliament makes the laws and the judges do interpret the laws. These laws guide the judiciary and are made out of grievances in the society brought by individuals, representatives in the legislature. According to Hofstede's score, UK is among the highly individualized countries and hence individuals such as civil servant do not depend on their

decisions much to politicians, confidence is what leads them to stand on their decisions. There is latent harmony between the powerful and the powerless and also cooperation among the powerless can be based on solidarity. Remarkable progress has been seen in Latin-American statutes and case law in terms of procedural principles guaranteeing a fair trial, the efforts to staunch the proliferation of repetitive claims, now called artificial claims, have failed for several reasons (Ricardo, 2016). These reasons range from the lack of specialized courts and procedural laws sensitive to the public-law nature of administrative disputes to the fact that administrative authorities lack the necessary independence and technical expertise to perform their institutional role.

Still, on the issues of administrative effectiveness, China's judges have been a large, amorphous category with very low, if any, professional qualifications (Qianfan, 2018). In the early 1990s, China had twice as many judges as lawyers, though only a small proportion of them heard any cases. Over time, a large number with low remuneration and low professional quality formed a 'stable equilibrium' in the Chinese judiciary. The first step toward a more effective judicial system has been to break this 'equilibrium', or vicious cycle, by adopting a rigorous definition of 'judges', reducing the existing pool of judges and improving the social and economic status of this more selective group. A key to the success of this judicial reform is to make the judiciary a more appealing vocation for China's young talent. Second, Chinese courts are institutionally and financially dependent on local governments. Until now, all levels of local courts have depended on local governments at the corresponding level in terms of both appointments and funds (Sun, 2015). Judges' salaries and funds for court operations have come mostly from the local government budget, with leaders of the courts selected by the Local People's Congress (LPC) at the corresponding level.

African countries are not left out with issues and challenges on administrative effectiveness. In Kenya, it is noted that the country has made significant strides toward realizing meaningful democracy since the inception of reform initiatives in the early 1990s (Migai, 2018). As a result of these democratization initiatives, the powers of the executive have been curtailed, and the legislature and the judiciary now enjoy considerable autonomy. Despite these significant gains, abuse of power, government corruption and ineffectiveness in the judiciary continues to thrive. This has been a huge bane of administrative effectiveness especially of the judicial system in that country.

Another country ravaged by inconsistencies in its judiciary is Tanzania. According to the 2019 Global Corruption Barometer, 21 per cent of respondents in Tanzania believe that "most or all" judges and magistrates are corrupt, down from 36 per cent in 2015 (Transparency International 2019). The improvement in perceived judicial corruption may be attributed to several government and developmental initiatives. For example, there are projects such as the World Bank-supported Citizen-Centric Judicial Modernization and Justice Service Delivery Project, which aims at reforms such as upgrading infrastructure, training officers of the court, building facilities in underserved areas, and introducing technology (World Bank, 2017). Even Magufuli's special court to fight graft has instilled hope in the citizenry (Xinhua, 2017). Nevertheless, the Tanzanian judiciary is still known to suffer from underfunding, corruption, nepotism, a lack of information and inefficiency, especially in the lower courts (Bertelsmann Stiftung 2018; US Department of State, 2018; Freedom House, 2019). Since judges are political appointees and the judiciary does not have an independent budget, it is left highly vulnerable to political pressure (Freedom House, 2019). Lengthy legal proceedings, the inadequacy of financial resources and qualified personnel, and mistrust from the citizenry hamper the legal system's potential to fulfil its role (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018). Court clerks often ask for bribes to get cases started or to slow them down. Magistrates take bribes to give soft sentences, reduce penalties, withdraw charges or release arrested persons on bail (Kilimwiko, 2019). Judicial independence in Ghana is constitutionally and legally enshrined; nevertheless, corruption and bribery continue to pose challenges (Freedom House 2018). Ghana's judiciary was thrown into crisis in 2015 following the release of a documentary that implicated 180 judicial officials, 34 judges, and scores of prosecutors and state attorneys in accepting bribes in exchange for favourable judgments from 2013 to 2014 (Freedom House 2016; US Department of State, 2017). Following the exposé by investigative journalist Anas Aremyaw Anas (also

responsible for uncovering corruption in the GFA), 22 circuit and magistrate judges were suspended, and 12 high court judges were being investigated (GAN Integrity 2018). However, no criminal prosecutions were pursued against any of the corrupt judicial officials (US Department of State 2017). While there has been no obvious proof of government meddling in judicial systems, corruption and limited administrative capacity continue to pose the greatest difficulties, illustrated in unduly long legal procedures and sometimes incomprehensible verdicts (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018). Moreover, scarce resources and underpaid judges have gone on to hamper the integrity of the body, by indulging in high levels of bribery and extortion within the courts (GAN Integrity, 2018). Large corruption cases are prosecuted in court; however, proceedings are lengthy and convictions are slow in coming (US Department of State 2017; GAN Integrity, 2018). Going to court is often too expensive for the average citizen, and only those with means can afford legal proceedings. Informal procedures of arbitration (e.g. through traditional rulers or elders) are more easily accessible and still play an important role (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2018).

In Nigeria, the complexity in the administrative process in many organizations requires a modernized system approach to ease the process. Performance of systems such as that of the judiciary cannot be realized without effective administration. Administrative effectiveness is about the steady accomplishment of administrative duties and timely realization of set objectives. Administrative effectiveness can be measured through administrative extent of accountability, administrative performance improvement, effective resources management, monitoring, appropriate delegation of tasks, timely discharge of duties and constant meeting of targets (Akinfolarin, 2017). Areas in administrative administration include; staff personnel administration, financial management students' personnel administration, record management, maintenance of facilities among others. According to Ikediugwu (2016), good administrative managers must carefully and effectively handle resources particularly money, material and machines including computers are lacking in Nigeria which thus calls for a huge evaluation as it relates to records management practices.

The availability of information for use by administrators to adjudicate judicial cases depends on the way records have been physically managed. Some of the information contained in judicial records includes case files, court registers, record book and case books. Generally speaking, the success of the judiciary in performing its administrative obligations largely depends on the use of documented information. Some of these records are historical while some are rhetorical or phenological in nature. Historical and legal records were the earliest forms of records to be created and used for making judicial decisions by the courts. Judicial records constitute an important class of public records especially in Nigeria. These records are created by the judiciary and other institutions such as the police, army, ministries, government agencies, corporate bodies and other private organizations or individuals. Records are vital to every aspect of governance process; they are valuable assets that need to be managed by any organization or institution. They fulfil an important function in the society by providing evidence and information about the transactions of individuals and organizations.

Dzifa Peggy Tagbator et al. (2015) argued that records management is the concern information, it must flow throughout the organization in such a way that it can be tapped where it is needed. This can be possible in the presence of a good records management system

Records serve as a basis for review, study and evaluation of all happenings in the court. They serve as a communication link between an organization and its clients. In this context, Mohammed (2009) posited that the written record if accurate and complete is useful both to the institution and its clients in any transactions. Records could be in any physical format or media and must be kept in the context and structure in which they were created to maintain their usability, authenticity, reliability as well as integrity. It is a common knowledge that a basic concept in records management is the records life cycle. The life of a record goes through phases starting from when it is created or received by institutions such as the judiciary, leading to records creation and capture, records maintenance, records access, records retention, records retrieval, records storage, records management policy before it can finally be destroyed or archived permanently according to the records retention or disposal policy of the organization.

The first stage or phase of the Records Life Cycle is creation and capture. Records are created or received through the daily transactions of an organization. For the judiciary the records that may be created or received can include printed reports, emails, phone messages, documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of the organization which serves as an evidence of transaction. The next stage of the records life cycle is the maintenance of records. These stages involve the filing, retrieving, duplication, printing, dissemination and use of the content or the information in the records. At the disposition or retention phase, records are evaluated to ascertain their relative value and level of inactivity in the organization. When records are evaluated for their value it signifies if they will be sent to the archives for continued management and use as a historical document of value or permanent disposal through destruction. Ile e tal. (2015) empirically noted that records management has attracted increasing attention in recent years as a result of growing sophistication of administrative practice in the increasing complexity of organizations, coupled with the enormous expansion of the quality of information. This means that in order to manage the life cycle of records in offices, secretaries should have the needed knowledge and competencies.

Records management practices is an area of necessity for every organization because it helps to deal with the transaction that covered the life cycle of records, which is from the creation of transaction, use, maintenance and disposition of the documents and records. According to Lawal (2018) records management practices influence the job performance of employees in an organization. In the context of judiciary, records management has the tendency of predicting the outcome of administrative effectiveness. Effective records management practices, according to Chinyemba and Ngulube (2012) involve establishing systematic control at every stage of the record's life cycle, in accordance with established principles and accepted models of records management. They further stressed that to effectively manage records, it must go through a life-cycle which consists of the creation and capture, classification in a logical system, maintenance and use, and disposition through destruction or transfer to an archives for long term storage.

According to Ayorinde (2014) standard records management practices are vital for effective administration in the Nigerian legal system, this involve planning for information needs, identifying records for processing, capturing information, creating, approving and enforcing policies and practices regarding records, developing a records storage plan which includes the short and long term, housing of physical records and digital information, coordinating access to records internally and outside of the organization, and disposition or retention of the records according to the policies guiding the management of judicial records. In all, it can be said that the whole essence of a good records management practices is to protect the interest of the institution and individuals that are linked with it. Besides, good records management practices serves as corporate memory, meant to support and serve as a guide for effective planning and decision making within the judicial system (Ndenje-sichalwe, 2011).

### **Statement of the Problem**

In most countries around the world, the judiciary is granted the right to provide legal services to the citizenry of a society. They are expected to provide unbiased administration and uphold the rule of law in a democratic system. However, the judiciary has not been effective in the timely discharge of its responsibility as highlighted by Ndaguba et al (2018) argued that administrative effectiveness is versely affected by cronyism, cabalism, nepotism and sycophancy, including inadequate interaction of systems, institutions and structures are decried as the bane of Nigeria's underdevelopment, which have had adverse negative effects on the educational and judicial sectors thereby undermining the well-being of the poor. A preliminary observation by the researcher also showed that the level of administrative efforts in the Judiciary in Lagos State is not good enough as demonstrated by gross delay in response time to applicants and litigants, coupled with poor team work, poor communication, inadequate staff commitment, accumulation of legal cases and low productivity.

Records management practices play an important role in the efficient, transparent, and accountable management of court processes and the capacity to influence administrative functions. Proper records

management practices will ensure that there is prompt response to applicants and litigants as well as sufficient documentary evidence as it relates to the operations of the judiciary. Good records management practice may therefore ensure effective administrative process in the Judiciary when it comes to quick dispensation of justice but the challenges of administrative ineffectiveness in Lagos State Judiciary could be as a result of low records management practices. It is from these assertions that this study investigated the influence of records management practices and administrative effectiveness in Lagos State Judiciary, Nigeria.

### Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of the records management practices on administrative effectiveness in Lagos State Judiciary. The specific objective is to:

1. establish the extent of records management practices in the Lagos State Judiciary.

### Research Questions

This study was guided by the one research questions:

1. To what extent is records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary?

### METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a survey research design. The available records of the total population of administrative staff of the Lagos State judiciary showed that there are currently 328 staff working in the seven judicial commissions in Lagos state. The study population consisted of all the administrative staff working in the Lagos State judiciary. The study adopted a total enumeration or census approach due to the manageable size of the population. The instrument for data collection was a self-designed structured questionnaire. The analysis of the demographic and research question was done using frequency counts and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation, with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 21

### RESULTS

#### Research Question One: To what extent is records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary?

Table 1: Extent of records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary

Kindly indicate the extent to which records management is practiced in terms of the following:	Very Low Extent (1)	Low Extent (2)	Moderate Extent (3)	High Extent (4)	Very High Extent (5)	Mean	Std.
<b>Record Retrieval</b>						<b>4.33</b>	<b>0.62</b>
All records in the court are given certain ID codes for easy retrieval to a		0.5	10.7	42.0	46.8	4.35	0.69
Court records are well numbered and coded for easy retrieval to a	0.5	1.6	8.1	45.2	44.6	4.32	0.74
<b>Records Maintenance</b>						<b>4.31</b>	<b>0.72</b>
the Judiciary has a legal policy to maintain records to a	0.5	2.2	8.2	41.8	47.3	4.33	0.76
There are established standards and procedures for classifying, indexing, filing, and retrieving records to a		2.6	12.3	37.0	48.1	4.31	0.79
Judicial records are constantly updated to a	1.6	2.7	10.8	35.7	49.2	4.28	0.88
Legal records are well maintained to a	1.6	1.1	8.7	46.2	42.4	4.27	.80

<b>Records Creation and Capture</b>						<b>4.30</b>	<b>0.78</b>
The judiciary captures all forms of legal records to a		2.7	7.4	36.2	53.7	4.41	0.74
Every decision in the court is automatically created in a file for future use to a		1.6	8.9	38.0	51.5	4.40	0.72
Records are created every day in the court based on the presented cases to a	0.5		10.8	43.9)	44.8	4.33	0.71
The use of file classification plan for electronic records are in existence to a	2.1	1.6	8.4	45.0	42.9	4.25	0.84
<b>Records Access</b>						<b>4.29</b>	<b>0.69</b>
There are systems in place to prevent unauthorised access to all records to a	1.6	1.1	8.4	44.2	44.7	4.30	0.80
There is no unauthorized access to records after staff leaves the judiciary to a	1.1	0.5	8.5	48.4	41.5	4.29	0.73
There is centralised filing system that allows staff to retrieve documents and record to a	2.1	1.6	16.8	37.9	41.6	4.15	0.90
<b>Records Authorization Programme and Organization</b>						<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.74</b>
All staff are informed of the role of the staff member in charge of records to a	0.6	1.8	14.6	40.4	42.6	4.20	0.87
The judiciary incorporates its records management activities into its records management programme to a		4.1	18.5	33.5	43.9	4.17	0.87
The judiciary designates a staff member with sole responsibility for records management activities to a		4.7	10.1	55.	29.6	4.10	0.76
<b>Records Management Policy</b>						<b>4.11</b>	<b>0.76</b>
There are plans to draft records management policy to a		1.2	18.7	44.1	36.0	4.15	0.76
Records management policies are made available to staff to a		2.4	13.9	50.6	33.1	4.15	0.74
There are policies for records management in the judiciary to a	1.8	4.2	13.9	44.0	36.1	4.08	0.91
<b>Record Disposition</b>						<b>4.05</b>	<b>0.94</b>
Inactive judicial records are sent to the records centre to a	0.6	5.0	13.2	40.3	40.9	4.16	0.88
Inactive judicial records are sent to the archive to a	5.1	2.3	14.7	34.7	43.2	4.08	1.06
Records of the court are disposed off when it has passed its enduring values to a	5.3	1.2	16.5	42.3	34.7	4.00	1.02



There are shredding machines in the judiciary to a	0.6	9.1	14.6	41.5	34.2	3.99	0.96
<b>Record Storage</b>						<b>4.04</b>	<b>1.0</b>
Judicial records stored online are pass-worded to a	3.8	2.7	10.4	33.6	49.5	4.22	1.00
Judicial records are store in both hard and soft copies to a		3.3	16.9	38.0	41.8	4.19	0.83
Judicial records are well protected in fire proof cabinet to a	11.0	11.5	3.7	24.1	49.7	3.90	1.41
<b>Record Retention</b>						<b>3.98</b>	<b>0.85</b>
Retention of all vital records is taken seriously to a	0.6	1.9	23.4	33.6	40.5	4.11	0.87
Judiciary has a retention policy to a	1.3	2.5	20.3	42.4	33.5	4.04	0.87
The judiciary has a policy to retain inactive records to a	3.1	3.1	17.4	43.5	32.9	4.00	0.96
Records retention in the court follows the retention policy of the court to a	1.8	4.2	18.7	42.8	32.5	4.00	0.92
<b>Records management practices (Overall Mean = 4.17; Std. = 0.75)</b>							

**\*\*\*Decision Rule: If mean falls between 1-1.80 = Very low extent; 1.81-2.60 = Low extent; 2.61-3.40 = Moderate extent; 3.41-4.20 = High extent; 4.21-5.0 = Very high extent.**

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistic result for research question two. The result revealed that the extent of records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary was high (overall mean=4.17), on a scale of 5. Records management practices was measured using nine indicators (record retrieval, records maintenance, records creation and capture, records access, records programme authorization and organization, records management policy, records disposition, records storage, records retention). Of the nine indicators, extent of records retrieval (average mean = 4.33) was highest while records retention was the least practiced (average mean = 3.98). The result indicates that Lagos State Judiciary have performed well in the aspects of providing ID codes for easy retrieval of all records in the court, records capture for all forms of legal records, automatic creation of court decisions in a file. This result suggests the need for Lagos State Judiciary to sustain the aforementioned performance indicators through flexible standard records management policies.

### Discussion of Findings

Research question one sought to find out the extent of records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary. The result revealed that the extent of records management practices employed in Lagos State Judiciary was high. The finding agrees with studies carried out by Blake (2014), Mountain (2005), Adikwu (2007), Mohammed (2009) and Infokits (2007). For instance, Blake (2014), emphasized that records administration practices include creation, classify, prioritize, store, secure, archive, preserve, retrieve, track and wreck unneeded files while Mountain (2005) stressed the importance of having the right files administration practices in place for all cases under different jurisdiction across all units in the judiciary. Infokits (2007) empirically noted that the principal reason for applying the lifecycle concept to records management is to ensure that the records being created and held by the institution are managed and maintained in such a way that they enable the content of the record to be accessed, used and re-used in a controlled and efficient manner. The implication of the finding of this study is that the judiciary sector in Lagos state experienced high level of records management practices. However, the finding disagrees with Mnjama (2012) who concluded that the supply of previously recorded information to officials and lawyers

about individual cases is inadequate, and there seems to be lack of direction on the side of judicial staff leading to inconsistency in court procedures.

## CONCLUSION

The study has succeeded in investigating records management practices and administrative effectiveness of Lagos State Judiciary. The study specifically concludes that records management practices is elements that can influence the administrative effectiveness of staff in the Lagos State Judiciary. Specifically, based on the findings, this study concludes that the high level of administrative effectiveness of Lagos State Judiciary may be as a result of high level of teamwork, coordination and timeliness in the discharge of administrative duties. The Judiciary have a strong administration as observed in the level of collaborations in the organization.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations is made:

1. Administrative effectiveness needs to be sustained by ensuring continuous improvement of records management practices, conducive work environment at all time at the Lagos State Judiciary.

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