

UTILIZATION OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (EMIS) FOR SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK AND ADMINISTRATION: EMERGING ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

The increasing complexity of school administration necessitates the adoption of modernized systems to enhance policy implementation and achieve educational objectives. The Education Management Information System (EMIS) is a vital tool designed to collect, store, manage, and analyze educational data, providing a structured framework for decision-making, strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation. Despite its potential to improve data management, decision-making, and service delivery in school social work and administration, EMIS implementation faces significant challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, limited technical expertise, financial constraints, and resistance to change. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts from governments, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to invest in ICT infrastructure, promote continuous capacity-building initiatives, and formulate supportive policies for seamless integration. This study contributes to knowledge by identifying emerging issues affecting EMIS utilization and proposing strategic solutions to optimize its role in enhancing administrative efficiency and service delivery. By leveraging innovative approaches, EMIS can serve as a transformative tool for strengthening school management, fostering accountability, and improving overall educational efficiency.

Keywords: Education Management Information System, School Social Work, Administration, Issues, Prospects

Introduction

The acronym EMIS stands for "Educational Management Information System." In the digital era, the Utilization of Education Management Information System (EMIS) for School Social Work and Administration has become a critical

tool for enhancing efficiency, data-driven decision-making, and student welfare management. EMIS provides a centralized platform for collecting, processing, and analyzing educational data, enabling school administrators and social workers to monitor student progress, track behavioral patterns, and implement timely interventions. An Educational Management Information System (EMIS) serves as a vital tool for promoting student social welfare by creating a secure, inclusive, and supportive learning environment (Okafor *et al.*, 2024). It facilitates data-driven decision-making, enabling school administrators to implement targeted interventions that enhance student well-being and overall academic success.

By leveraging EMIS, schools can foster a more inclusive learning environment, ensure equitable resource distribution, and strengthen accountability in policy implementation. As educational institutions face increasing demands for transparency and effectiveness, integrating EMIS into school social work and administration is essential for improving service delivery and promoting holistic student development. Asio *et al.* (2022) emphasize that in response to the rapid transformations within the education sector, effective information management has become an integral aspect of an institution's operations and responsibilities.

Concept Of Educational Management Information System (EMIS)

Effective administration plays a pivotal role in any organization by coordinating resources, implementing policies, ensuring service quality, maintaining discipline, and fostering a conducive environment for growth (Ngene & Obona, 2024). In the education sector, strong administrative systems enable teachers to deliver high-quality instruction, ultimately enhancing student outcomes. Given the increasing complexity of school administration, Ngene and Obona (2024) emphasize the need for modernized systems to streamline policy implementation and achieve educational objectives. One such system is the Education Management Information System (EMIS) a comprehensive tool designed to collect, store, manage, and analyze educational data.

An EMIS serves as an organized structure for information and documentation services, facilitating data-driven decision-making, planning, monitoring, and evaluation at all levels of the education system (Asio *et al.*, 2022). It is a system designed to provide essential information to an organization's management at all levels, aiding in operational, tactical, and strategic decision-making (Shah, 2014). Borkar (2021) describes EMIS as a system that tracks the performance of educational programs while managing, distributing, and allocating institutional resources efficiently. By optimizing workload distribution and resource allocation, EMIS plays a critical role in enhancing school administration. The growing adoption of Information Technology (IT) in educational management further underscores its efficiency and practicality (Shah, 2014). Shah also highlights the positive impact of Education Management Information Systems (MIS) on school administration, noting improvements in information accessibility, resource utilization, workload management, time efficiency, and the quality of reports generated.

The concept of the Educational Management Information System (EMIS), as described by Stephen and Cummings (2009), involves the collection of statistical data from schools while integrating various elements such as personnel, models, methods, procedures, processes, rules, and regulations. Additionally, it leverages computer technology to ensure these components function cohesively, providing comprehensive, integrated, relevant, reliable, clear, and timely data to education leaders, policymakers, planners, and administrators. This enables them to effectively carry out their responsibilities and achieve established goals (Haiyan & Herstein, 2003). Consequently, EMIS serves as a crucial tool for assessing and monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of an educational system at all levels (Haiyan & Herstein, 2003). Moreover, modern EMIS integrates computerized technologies to streamline the input, processing, storage, and retrieval of organizational data, facilitating more effective administration (Ako, 2022). This technological integration enhances administrative effectiveness in secondary schools by

supporting data-driven decision-making, efficient record-keeping, and improved communication among stakeholders.

The primary objectives of EMIS include supporting decision-making, policy formulation, educational planning, and system monitoring (Thompson *et al.*, 2019). School administrators leverage MIS for key operations such as financial management and student-related services, transforming leadership, human resource management, accountability, and overall school planning. According to Madiha (2013), MIS supports diverse administrative functions, including attendance tracking, assessment record-keeping, financial oversight, and staff allocation. Helal *et al.* (2021) highlight the growing dependence on information, emphasizing that Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) have become an essential part of daily life. Within the educational sector, EMIS plays a crucial role in supporting school development by enhancing data-driven decision-making and administrative efficiency. Kuswara (2021) further advocates for the full integration of EMIS to optimize learning and school management processes.

Importance Of Educational Management Information System (EMIS)

The primary goal of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) is to develop and establish procedures, processes, and routines that generate detailed reports with accuracy, consistency, and timeliness (Shah, 2014). One of the main objectives of secondary education in developing countries like Nigeria is to equip students with essential skills, tacit knowledge, cultural values, positive attitudes, and innovative problem-solving abilities to navigate daily life challenges (Osha *et al.*, 2021). Difoni *et al.* (2024) stated that organizations, whether profit-driven or service-oriented, are created with the primary aim of achieving specific objectives. The effectiveness of any organization, including the school system, is largely dependent on the availability and proper management of both human and material resources (Obona *et al.*, 2023).

In Nigeria, secondary education was established to provide students with a strong academic foundation, develop essential skills, enhance critical thinking and

problem-solving abilities, and prepare them for higher education or the workforce, ultimately contributing to the nation's socio-economic development (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRN], 2013, as cited in Obona *et al.*, 2024). In this regard, the implementation of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) is crucial, as it facilitates effective decision-making, policy development, and resource allocation within the education sector. By providing accurate, timely, and comprehensive data, EMIS enhances administrative efficiency and contributes to improved learning outcomes. Despite its significance, EMIS presents both advantages and challenges. Martins *et al.* (2019b) identified one key advantage of EMIS as its ability to determine the net benefits of information and service quality. Similarly, Stamenkov and Zhaku-Hani (2021) highlighted the perceived benefits of EMIS in educational administration. Osha *et al.* (2024) asserted that effective school administration is essential for establishing a structured and supportive environment that promotes student learning and facilitates the attainment of educational objectives.

Additionally, Ugwude and Ugwude (2020) noted that EMIS plays a crucial role in managing student attendance records and examinations. Kuswara *et al.* (2021) further emphasized its contribution to enhancing the quality of learning services in schools. However, several challenges hinder the effective implementation of EMIS. According to Nwakesiri (2022), a major impediment to educational progress is the lack of reliable and timely data necessary for informed policymaking and planning. Furthermore, inadequate mechanisms for performance monitoring, feedback collection, and quality advocacy have also been identified as significant barriers to its success. Idoko (2017) reported during the Minister of State for Education's maiden conference in 2017 that Nigeria's education sector had faced numerous challenges over the past two decades, including a high number of out-of-school children and weak governance. However, he emphasized that reliable data collection is a crucial step in addressing these challenges. He further noted that the lack of dependable data has hindered the effective delivery of quality education in

Nigeria. To bridge this gap, the establishment of a strong and efficient Education Management Information System (EMIS) is essential, as it can generate credible data to support policymakers and planners in implementing national education policies.

The Role of EMIS in the Education Sector

An Educational Management Information System (EMIS) plays a crucial role in digitally connecting all aspects of an educational institution, ensuring seamless operations and efficient management. As a foundational pillar of modern institutions, EMIS is essential for modern educational institutions:

- i. **Centralized Data Management:** EMIS serves as a comprehensive repository for data collection, analysis, and reporting, enabling institutions to monitor their growth and track students' academic progress efficiently.
- ii. **Adaptability Across Educational Levels:** Whether in schools, colleges, or universities, EMIS can be tailored to meet the unique needs and strengths of students, improving personalized learning experiences.
- iii. **Scalability and Storage Capacity:** With the ability to store unlimited student data, EMIS ensures high scalability, making it suitable for institutions of all sizes.
- iv. **Integration with Other Systems:** EMIS can seamlessly integrate with various software applications to enhance workflow automation, improving administrative and academic operations.
- v. **Multi-Branch Management:** For organizations with multiple campuses or branches in different locations, EMIS enables centralized management, ensuring uniformity in administration and resource allocation.

The Role of the Educational Management Information System in School Social Work

An Educational Management Information System (EMIS) serves as an integrated platform for gathering, processing, and analyzing data within educational institutions, ultimately improving the efficiency and effectiveness of education

management. It integrates various components people, technology, processes, and regulations to provide relevant, reliable, and timely information to educational leaders and managers. Within school social work, EMIS is crucial in providing data-driven insights that guide interventions and support services for students (Younobs, n.d; UNESCO, 2008)).

Strengthening Data-Driven Decision-Making

EMIS enhances decision-making by providing accurate, real-time data that enables administrators and educators to make well-informed choices, ultimately improving educational outcomes. In school social work, this functionality is essential for identifying and addressing student needs effectively. For example, analyzing attendance records helps social workers detect absenteeism trends and implement appropriate interventions. In Houston schools, recent initiatives have shown that improved attendance tracking systems, a key component of EMIS, have played a significant role in addressing chronic absenteeism, which increased in Texas from 11% in 2019 to 26% (Mellon, 2025).

Enabling Early Detection and Intervention

By consolidating data from multiple sources including academic performance, attendance, and behavioral records, EMIS supports the early identification of students in need of additional assistance. This comprehensive approach allows school social workers to implement timely and targeted interventions. For instance, after a school shooting at Apalachee High School in Georgia, state lawmakers explored ways to enhance information sharing between education, child welfare, and juvenile justice systems to identify potential risks more effectively (Amy, 2025).

Enhancing Special Education Services

EMIS plays a crucial role in managing special education by maintaining detailed records of students' needs, progress, and the services provided. This ensures that students with special educational needs receive the necessary support. The ongoing crisis in special education services in the UK underscores the importance

of efficient data management systems in addressing the challenges faced by vulnerable students (Various Contributors, 2024: The Guardian).

Strengthening Communication and Collaboration

As a centralized platform, EMIS fosters seamless communication and collaboration among educators, administrators, and social workers. This integration ensures that all stakeholders have access to up-to-date information, promoting a coordinated approach to student support. For example, EMIS streamlines the sharing of student records, enabling a more unified and effective intervention process (Flavor, 2022).

The Growing Impact of EMIS In School Administration

EMIS has simplified the responsibilities of administrators, teachers, and staff by providing a multifunctional platform (Syifa, 2019). Additionally, the author highlights that school system management facilitates interactions between the school, students, and parents, thereby enhancing communication among the three parties. To ensure efficient school administration, the implementation of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) is essential (Ugwude & Ugwude, 2020). The integration of information technology in school administration has expanded significantly due to its ability to enhance efficiency and effectiveness (Shah, 2014). Traditionally, school administrators invested substantial time in addressing complex challenges such as staff allocation, resource distribution, and timetable planning. However, advancements in technology, particularly Education Management Information Systems (EMIS), have streamlined these processes, enabling better decision-making and operational effectiveness. EMIS provides a standardized framework for managing both academic and administrative tasks, ultimately improving institutional efficiency.

Key Administrative Functions Supported By EMIS

- i. **Financial Management:** EMIS plays a critical role in financial administration by offering tools for budgeting, expenditure monitoring, and financial reporting. The integration of financial management systems within

EMIS enhances transparency and accountability in managing school funds. Adaku and Obona (2024) emphasized that schools utilizing EMIS for financial transactions experienced greater accuracy and accountability, thereby improving overall administrative effectiveness.

- ii. **Effective Communication and Collaboration:** Strong collaboration between educators, students, and parents is essential for a well-functioning school environment. EMIS fosters seamless communication by serving as a centralized platform where parents, teachers, and students can interact efficiently. Through EMIS, parents can access real-time updates on their child's academic progress, provide feedback, and communicate with faculty members, ensuring better coordination of academic and non-academic activities.
- iii. **Library Management:** A well-managed library is essential for academic success, yet traditional methods of cataloging and tracking books can be challenging, especially in large institutions. EMIS offers a digital library management system that allows students to browse and access resources online without physically visiting the library. This digital transformation provides students with flexible access to academic materials anytime and anywhere, ensuring continuous learning beyond school hours.
- iv. **Report Card and Student Performance Management:** Managing student performance records over time can be cumbersome, but EMIS simplifies this process by providing a structured platform for storing and retrieving student results. Teachers can easily input grades, generate report cards, and print academic records when needed. Additionally, students and parents can access academic progress reports, facilitating a more transparent and efficient grading system.
- v. **General School Information and Admissions:** EMIS serves as an information hub for both current and prospective students. Schools seeking to attract and retain students can utilize EMIS to showcase admission

requirements, academic programs, and institutional policies. By providing detailed insights into school operations, EMIS aids in student enrollment and institutional branding.

- vi. **Fee Collection and Financial Transactions:** School fee management is a critical administrative function, yet manual processing can be time-consuming and prone to errors. EMIS streamlines fee collection by providing a digital payment gateway where parents can access detailed fee structures, payment deadlines, and transaction histories. This automated system eliminates manual inefficiencies, ensuring a smooth and organized financial process.
- vii. **Student Information and Lifecycle Management:** Tracking a student's academic journey from admission to graduation requires a robust data management system. EMIS simplifies this process by maintaining comprehensive student records, including attendance, assignments, schedules, and grades. Adaku and Obona (2024) highlighted that EMIS enhances student information management, leading to improved institutional efficiency and student success.
- viii. **Admission, Attendance, and Examination Management:** EMIS significantly contributes to school administration by automating admission, attendance, and examination management. Attendance tracking features help schools monitor student presence efficiently, while examination management tools support tasks such as scheduling, grading, and result processing. These automated functions reduce administrative workload and minimize errors, enhancing overall academic management. Additionally, EMIS facilitates online learning by enabling virtual classes, sharing learning materials, and updating students and educators on essential academic activities. Uwaleke *et al.* (2024) confirmed that EMIS has revolutionized school administration by optimizing admission procedures, tracking attendance, managing

examinations, and overseeing financial operations, thereby fostering a more efficient and organized educational environment.

Emergency Issues in Utilization of Education Management Information System (EMIS).

The introduction of EMIS in recent years has transformed school administration. Previously, many administrative tasks were carried out manually, leading to inefficiencies and errors. However, schools are now increasingly adopting EMIS to manage both administrative and academic activities, resulting in positive improvements (Ugwude & Ugwude, 2020). Despite its numerous benefits, EMIS continues to encounter several challenges.

- i. **Adapting to Change:** EMIS plays a vital role in school planning, decision-making, and monitoring. However, in remote rural areas and underprivileged urban slums, EMIS remains a relatively new concept due to limited technological penetration. Many school staff, teachers, and administrators lack full awareness of EMIS's potential. Some perceive it as an advanced and resource-intensive system requiring sophisticated skills, leading to resistance and failure to recognize its role in enhancing school administration and social work.
- ii. **Rapid Technological Advancements:** A key challenge in EMIS implementation is that technological innovations often outpace institutional adaptations. Without proactive planning, institutions risk lagging behind advancements. For example, teachers accustomed to outdated data storage methods like diskettes may struggle with modern technology if not adequately trained. Similarly, schools that purchase hardware but delay software installation may find the software obsolete before its actual use.
- iii. **High Cost of ICT Infrastructure:** The initial cost of acquiring and maintaining ICT hardware and software presents a significant barrier for many educational institutions. Unstable exchange rates further complicate the affordability of imported equipment, as most computer components are not

produced locally. According to Nagar *et al.* (2018), schools often struggle with EMIS implementation due to a lack of computers, computer laboratories, and the inability to afford school management software.

- iv. **Internet Accessibility and Adoption:** Limited internet connectivity remains a major obstacle in EMIS adoption. Many schools lack the necessary infrastructure, such as telephone lines and broadband access, to support internet-based communication. Nagar *et al.* (2018) highlight inadequate internet connectivity and insufficient technical support as key challenges affecting the effective use of EMIS in schools.
- v. **Unreliable Power Supply:** Inconsistent electricity supply is a critical technical hurdle in EMIS utilization. Since computers and related accessories depend on electricity, power shortages hinder their functionality. While some institutions rely on diesel or gasoline generators as backup, the high operational costs make them unsustainable in the long run. Ensuring stable energy sources is crucial for the successful deployment of EMIS.
- vi. **Limited Administrative Support:** Effective EMIS implementation requires strong administrative backing. Administrators are responsible for resource allocation, policy formulation, and project oversight. However, some top school officials lack ICT proficiency and exhibit technophobia, making it difficult to drive EMIS adoption. Special training programs for administrators, school heads, and department leaders are essential. Carnoy, as cited in Shah (2014), identifies a lack of data analysis skills, inadequate training in ICT-based management tools, and the absence of user-friendly software as key challenges in EMIS adoption.
- vii. **Financial Constraints:** Budgetary limitations often result in governments prioritizing other educational needs, such as teacher training and infrastructure development, over EMIS implementation. Establishing a fully functional EMIS requires significant financial resources to hire skilled

professionals and procure advanced digital tools. In many cases, these competing demands hinder the availability of funds for EMIS deployment.

- viii. **Shortage of Qualified Personnel:** Recruiting highly skilled professionals to manage EMIS is often constrained by government employment policies. Competitive salaries alone do not guarantee the hiring of competent personnel, as promotions in many ministries are based on seniority rather than expertise. Nagar *et al.* (2018) identify key barriers to EMIS adoption, including a lack of training, insufficient ICT experts, and limited staff availability.
- ix. **Data privacy issue:** While EMIS offers numerous benefits, challenges such as data privacy concerns, the need for proper training, and resource constraints must be addressed to ensure its effective implementation. Privacy advocates caution against profiling students based on records, suggesting that it could lead to false flags and discrimination (Amy, 2025).
- x. **High Staff Turnover:** Frequent staff turnover in schools poses a major threat to EMIS sustainability. When experienced EMIS personnel leave, they take valuable knowledge and skills with them, leading to a loss of institutional memory. New recruits require extensive training, necessitating trainers with expertise in EMIS, further straining resources and time.
- xi. **Lack of Motivation:** Low motivation among staff handling EMIS is another significant challenge. User-related barriers, such as reluctance to adopt new systems and lack of enthusiasm, impact effective utilization. Engaging all stakeholders and fostering motivation are crucial for successful EMIS implementation. Motivation strategies, including competitive salaries, benefits, structured work plans, and timely feedback, can help retain skilled personnel and enhance system effectiveness.

Solutions to the Issues of Education Management Information System (EMIS)

1. Comprehensive Training and Capacity Building

One of the major challenges in EMIS utilization is the lack of technical skills among school administrators and teachers. To address this, schools and governments should implement regular training workshops, seminars, and hands-on ICT training for educators and administrators. Training should focus on data entry, analysis, and the use of EMIS software for decision-making. Additionally, integrating ICT literacy into teacher training programs will ensure that future educators are well-equipped with digital skills.

2. Improving Internet Accessibility and ICT Infrastructure

Limited internet connectivity and inadequate ICT infrastructure hinder the effective use of EMIS, especially in rural areas. To resolve this, governments and educational institutions should expand broadband internet access to schools, particularly in underserved areas. Schools can also adopt low-cost internet solutions, such as satellite-based connections or offline-compatible EMIS platforms that allow data entry and synchronization when connectivity becomes available. Moreover, investing in ICT hardware like computers, servers, and network facilities will enhance EMIS adoption.

3. Providing Stable Power Supply

Unreliable electricity supply disrupts the effective use of EMIS in schools, particularly in developing regions. To mitigate this issue, schools should invest in alternative power sources such as solar energy, backup generators, and uninterruptible power supply (UPS) systems to ensure continuous system functionality. Governments should also prioritize electrification programs for rural schools to enhance the sustainability of ICT-based educational management.

4. Strengthening Administrative and Policy Support

The successful implementation of EMIS requires strong administrative commitment and policy backing. School administrators should receive special training in ICT leadership to understand the importance of EMIS in educational management. Governments should develop clear EMIS implementation policies,

allocate specific budgets for ICT projects, and encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) to support funding and technical expertise. Ensuring that school leaders are actively engaged in EMIS integration will enhance system adoption and sustainability.

5. Motivating and Retaining Skilled Personnel

The shortage of qualified personnel and high staff turnover negatively affect EMIS sustainability. To address this, schools and education authorities should offer competitive salaries, professional growth opportunities, and performance-based incentives to retain skilled ICT staff. Additionally, structured knowledge transfer programs should be established so that when staff members leave, their expertise is not lost. Regular employee recognition programs can also boost motivation and commitment to EMIS utilization.

Conclusion

Given the increasing complexity of school administration, the adoption of modernized systems is essential to streamline policy implementation and achieve educational objectives. One such system is the Education Management Information System (EMIS), a comprehensive tool designed to collect, store, manage, and analyze educational data. EMIS provides a structured framework for information management and documentation, facilitating data-driven decision-making, strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation at all levels of the education system. While the utilization of EMIS in school social work and administration offers significant advantages, including enhanced data management, improved decision-making, and more efficient service delivery, its implementation is often hindered by challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited technical expertise, financial constraints, and resistance to change.

Addressing these obstacles requires a collaborative effort from Government, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to invest in ICT infrastructure, provide continuous capacity-building programs, and formulate supportive policies to ensure seamless integration. By leveraging innovative solutions, EMIS can serve as a

transformative tool for strengthening school administration and social work, thus, enhancing efficiency, accountability, and overall educational outcomes.

Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge by highlighting the critical role of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in enhancing school social work and administration. It provides a comprehensive analysis of emerging issues affecting EMIS implementation, including infrastructure deficits, technical skill gaps, financial constraints, and resistance to change. By identifying these challenges and proposing strategic solutions, the study offers valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders on how to optimize EMIS for data-driven decision-making, efficient resource management, and improved service delivery in schools. Furthermore, it expands the existing literature by emphasizing the need for continuous investment in ICT infrastructure, professional development, and policy reforms to ensure the effective utilization of EMIS in fostering administrative efficiency.

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