

## **Assessing the Role of E-Governance in Improving Efficiency within the Kogi State Public Service**

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### **Abstract**

*Despite the numerous opportunities associated with the global adoption of e-governance, many government institutions remain hesitant to embrace this approach fully. This paper examined the impact of e-governance, defined as Information and Communication Technology (ICT)-driven governance, on service delivery within the Kogi State Public Service. The study relied on secondary data and confirmed that ICT played a significant role in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in government operations and in improving governmental responsiveness to citizens' needs. Findings further revealed that e-governance initiatives promoted transparency and accountability in public administration by strengthening interaction between government and citizens through internet-based platforms. Consequently, the paper recommended the widespread adoption of e-governance across all public institutions and agencies, given its potential to reduce governance costs while ensuring efficient, effective, and timely service delivery.*

**Keywords:** E-governance, efficiency, effectiveness, public service, service delivery.

## **Introduction**

Over time, improving efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in the timely delivery of quality public services has remained a critical challenge for governments across the world. The growing scope and intricacy of the responsibilities of government have encouraged the acceptance of e-governance as a planned machinery for enhancing governance competence in contemporary states. Aran (2008) observes that governments in emergent or developing countries face mounting demands to reassess as well as modernise their administrative processes. At the international level, donor agencies and governments in developed countries encourage developing nations to promote transparency, strengthen decentralisation, curb corruption, and engage in global digital information systems. Domestically, private sector stakeholders, chiefly within public-private partnership (PPP) arrangements, demand better openness and accountability, while the populace increasingly expects quicker, higher-quality public services and improved access to government information, especially in rural areas. These combined pressures have forced governments in less developed countries to pursue broader reforms than ever before (United Nations, 2003).

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2006) describes governance as the act or way of leading, involving the exercise of authority, control, and regulation over civic affairs. In this situation, governance refers to how societies are governed and how state affairs are managed and regulated. In the same way, the African Development Bank report (1999) defines governance as the way political authority is used in managing a nation's monetary and social resources. Customarily, interactions between the populace and agencies of the government occur principally within government offices. However, growing public demand for improved service delivery has led governments worldwide to adopt electronic governance systems, commonly referred to as e-governance.

E-governance, an abbreviation for electronic governance, involves the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to government operations to achieve governance that is simple, accountable, efficient, responsive, and transparent (Sharma, 2012). E-governance can also be defined as the use of ICTs to deliver public services, exchange information, facilitate communication and transactions, and integrate standalone systems across government-to-citizen (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), and government-to-government (G2G) interactions, including internal administrative processes. E-governance seeks to simplify citizens' access to services, enhance communication with public authorities at various levels, advance competence and efficacy in public administration, and increase governmental responsiveness to public needs.

According to Sharma (2012), e-governance notably influences key areas of public administration, including service delivery, decision-making, information management, communication, human resource management, monetary administration, and regulatory processes. In their study of Usenet groups and online chatrooms, Hull & Hughes (1998), cited in Jean-Yves (2010), establish that opinion-sharing constitutes a central feature of online interactions, mostly in states extensively regarded as politically oppressive. Recognising the dominant role of ICTs in shaping civic discourse, several governments have sought to watch or control internet usage by making user identities visible. Countries such as China, Burma, Egypt, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Vietnam are often cited among the restrictive states regarding internet use worldwide.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the extensively acknowledged reward of e-governance in promoting efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in the running of state affairs, most government agencies in Nigeria

have not embraced or utilised this arrangement. Instead, governance continues to function principally within the structure of traditional public administration, characterised by strict technical procedures and the postulation that interactions between the populace and institutions of government must occur physically within government offices.

Obasanjo (2003) noted that institutions of the government have long been signs of inefficiency and corruption and have stalled the effective completion of government policies. He emphasised that Nigerians deserve greater public services and expressed the commitment of the government to deliver improved outcomes.

The constant reliance on traditional administrative practices has continued to hinder Nigeria's increasing aspirations, particularly in an increasingly dynamic and technology-driven universal environment. Noor & Ambali (2014) emphasise the transformative potential of information and communication technology (ICT), stressing its capacity to decrease poverty, motivate social and economic development, and enhance the quality of living, especially in remote areas. However, specifically, available text on Kogi State's public administration system indicates that limited scholarly attention has been paid to assessing the impact of ICT on well-organised public service delivery, despite its vital role in the management of advanced economies.

The sustained reliance of public authorities on conventional administrative systems has fostered information hoarding, restrictive administrative practices, impassive attitudes toward citizens' needs, and weak transparency and accountability mechanisms. These situations have reinforced corruption within the public civil service, ensuing poor and unsatisfactory service delivery. This situation perpetuates inefficiency and drastically undermines Nigeria's overall development agenda. Therefore, this raises the problem of uncovering the state of e-governance implementation in Kogi State's public service and how it has affected service delivery in the state, regardless of its implementation nationwide.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent does e-governance enhance the prompt and efficient delivery of public goods and services in Kogi State?
2. In what ways do e-governance initiatives enhance efficiency in public service delivery in Kogi State?
3. To what extent have e-governance initiatives enhanced transparency and improved accountability in government operations in Kogi State?
4. How has electronic-governance improved interface and engagement between the government and citizens in Kogi State?

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to scrutinise the essential role of e-governance in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. And the specific objectives of the article are to:

- i) Highlight the impact of e-governance initiatives in Kogi State's public service delivery.
- ii) Examine how the acceptance of e-governance has promoted transparency and responsibility of public resources management in Kogi State.
- iii) Propose strategies through which e-governance initiatives can further support the timely delivery of public services in Kogi State.

## **Literature Review**

### **E-Governance**

Moon (2002) describes e-governance as the application of information technologies such as the internet, World Wide Web, and mobile computing by government institutions to reshape their interactions with citizens, businesses, various governmental units, and other governments. Similarly, Basu (2004), cited in Fatile (2012), explains that e-governance involves the use of information technologies by public agencies with the capacity to transform relationships between government, citizens, the private sector, and other arms of government. He notes that e-governance encompasses the deployment of emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs) to support government processes, public administration, and efficient service delivery.

Chatfield (2009) defines e-governance as the use of ICTs, particularly the internet, to provide government information and services. This view is reinforced by Norris (2010), who emphasises that e-governance enables the electronic provision of government information and services on a continuous basis, twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. Notably, the concept of e-governance has evolved beyond mere computerisation of administrative tasks to include broader citizen access to information and services.

Suleiman et al. (2010) also highlight notable achievement stories of e-government implementation in several countries, as reported by the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). Examples include Singapore's e-Citizen portal, which offers citizens access to over 1,600 government services online; China's Golden Customs Programme, which links foreign trade companies, banks, customs, and tax authorities to accelerate customs clearance and tax collection; Mississippi in the United States, which provides online access to payroll information records; and the Philippines' Bureau of Internal Revenue, which facilitates electronic payment of taxes, bills, and related services.

Heeks (2001), cited in Aran (2008), identifies three key domains of e-governance based on taxonomies propounded by Ntiro: e-administration, which focuses on civilising internal government processes; e-services, which underline direct service delivery and communication between populace and government; and e-society, which aims at strengthening meetings within civil society. E-governance practices, chiefly in e-administration, include systems such as electronic salary payments through integrated payroll systems, online registration processes for admissions, land applications within the Federal Capital Territory, procurement contracts, and job applications across government agencies. Additional services include online company registration through the Corporate Affairs Commission, as well as the use of communication tools such as email, social media platforms (Facebook and Twitter), Skype, mobile phones, and fax machines to improve government communication and service delivery.

### **Public Service and E-Governance in Nigeria**

Nwokocha & Uremadu (2012) describe public service as employment or services rendered within formally recognised public institutions that are funded by the government and qualify for pension benefits. Public service employees are expected to function within established rules and regulations to enable the structure to achieve its organisational goals and ensure efficient and effective service delivery. Lucienne & Lutske (2008), while recognising the contribution of e-governance to public service efficiency, argue that its success depends on an enabling institutional environment. Such an environment includes comprehensive public sector reforms aimed at improving service delivery, strengthening good governance, and effectively applying information and communication technology (ICT) for development purposes. Public or government sector reform has long been a central theme in public administration discourse, ranging from the

“reinventing government” movement in the United States to evolving civil service frameworks in countries such as Malaysia.

To move the Nigerian public service to improved performance, the Federal Government of Nigeria aligned with global governance trends by adopting e-governance as a reform initiative. The idea of e-governance emerged from studies examining the widespread transformations occurring in public services worldwide during the initial stages of globalisation, driven by technological advancement. ICT tools, including telecommunications, computing, and broadcasting, have been identified as critical contributors to sustainable human development. In the twenty-first century, ICT has remained a vital instrument for scaling up development initiatives and linking development outcomes across sectors.

The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) has played a leading role in Nigeria’s e-governance drive through public–private partnership initiatives. According to Muhammed (2010), several components of e-government have already been implemented in Nigeria. Notable examples include the Nigerian Customs ASYCUDA Programme, the digitisation of occupant permit processes by the Nigerian Immigration Service, and the computerisation of land management and issuance of Certificates of Occupancy within the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA). Additionally, payroll systems in some organisations have been computerised via electronic payment platforms. Online access to assessment results from bodies such as the National Examinations Council (NECO), West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO), Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), and postings by the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) further reveal the provision of real-time, cost-effective e-government services. Despite these advancements, there remains a need to expand and intensify these initiatives across other public services and extend them to rural neighbourhoods.

National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) asserts that e-government enhances workflow and process management, sustaining long-term governmental strategies aimed at unbroken development in domestic operations and the proper delivery of services to the populace. It also facilitates partnership and harmonisation among government agencies at various levels, thereby enabling quicker, more exact, and effective decision-making. In addition, NITDA upholds that e-government lessens waste, saves time, and promotes straightforwardness, accountability, responsiveness, and transparency in public service delivery. By strengthening governance systems, e-governance positions Nigeria more competitively within the global economy (Suleiman et al., 2010).

Abdullah (2008) further illustrates the benefits of e-governance via realistic examples. One key function is informing the populace by making government information widely reachable, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability. For example, Mexico’s Government Procurement System, which allows the populace to monitor public expenditure and the companies providing government services. Another benefit is improved service delivery, achieved by offering the populace greater choice, faster access, and more efficient services, as demonstrated by the e-Seva centres in Andhra Pradesh, India, which streamline access to multiple government services. E-governance also promotes increased popular participation by improving access to representatives of the people and fostering collaborative decision-making. This is exemplified by the Democracy Project in North Jutland, Denmark, which initiated an electronic platform for dialogue between people and elected politicians, particularly during the County Council elections of November 20, 2001.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theory adopted to analyse this topic is the New Public Management (NPM) theory. New Public Management (NPM) refers to an approach to public sector administration that emphasises the application of private sector management principles within government institutions at both national and sub-national levels. The idea emerged in the early 1980s and was pronounced by scholars in the United Kingdom and Australia, especially Christopher Hood, in response to rising concerns about inefficiency, rigidity, and rising costs within traditional bureaucratic systems. NPM gained influence as governments sought to modernise the public service by making it more results-oriented, flexible, and responsive, relying heavily on business practices to enhance working efficiency and service delivery (Abdullahi, 2024).

Central to NPM is the repositioning of citizens as service users or customers, with a strong focus on service quality, cost reduction, and value for money. The approach promotes decentralisation of administrative functions, granting greater managerial autonomy to agencies and senior executives in decision-making and resource management. Key tenets of the NPM theory include the use of performance targets, continuous monitoring, audits, and benchmarking to assess effectiveness and accountability. NPM also encourages competition through quasi-market arrangements and, in some cases, the outsourcing or privatisation of public services. With the improvement of information and communication technologies, NPM reforms progressively more incorporate e-government systems to reorganise processes, centralise services where cost savings can be achieved, and improve overall efficiency in public service delivery.

The theory provides a framework for assessing the extent to which digital governance reforms reflect NPM principles such as efficiency, performance measurement, decentralised management, and value for money. Through this viewpoint, e-governance implementations, such as digital payroll and financial platforms, online service portals, and electronic record management systems, are evaluated in terms of their capacity to simplify administrative procedures, reduce bureaucratic delays, minimise costs, and enhance service delivery outcomes. NPM also enhances the study to cross-examine how managerial sovereignty, performance monitoring, and the use of technology-driven accountability mechanisms influence productivity and responsiveness across ministries, departments, and agencies in Kogi State. The study, using NPM as a systematic perspective, systematically links the acceptance of e-governance to measurable efficiency gains in public sector operations, while also highlighting institutional and managerial factors that shape the effectiveness of these reforms.

## **Methodology**

This study utilises secondary data, content analysis approach to investigate how e-governance drives efficiency within the Kogi State public service. By systematically reviewing literature, policy documents, and reports, the analysis examines the impact of digital tools on administrative performance, transparency, and accountability. The research focuses on reputable, current sources to provide evidence-based insights into improving public service delivery.

## **E-Governance in Kogi State**

Although no specific date can be identified as the starting point for Kogi State's public service e-governance reforms, the history is best understood as a sequence of functional expansions; that is, from administration to taxation to local governments/councils, embedded in national Nigerian ICT-in-government reforms, rather than a fully documented chronological narrative. 2019, however, is the year most recognised for when e-governance initiatives, tools, and applications gained prominence in Kogi State's public service.

E-governance in Kogi State is primarily anchored on the application of ICT for tax administration, civil service management, healthcare delivery, and education services. Existing studies consistently indicate that the adoption of digital technologies has produced measurable gains in administrative efficiency and service quality, particularly in areas where processes have shifted from manual to automated systems. Within public administration, e-administration initiatives across ministries, departments, and agencies have improved digital record management, strengthened inter-agency coordination, and enhanced overall service delivery. However, while citizen feedback mechanisms have been introduced in some instances, their utilisation remains uneven. In the area of tax administration, the e-tax system has been strongly associated with improved revenue generation, which indirectly supports better public service provision, though evidence suggests that gains in resource allocation efficiency and broader process optimisation remain constrained by implementation gaps and limited institutional capacity (Adegoroye et al., 2025; Ukomadu, 2024; Abdullahi et al., 2022).

According to the Kogi State Government (2020, 2026), revenue performance data strongly reinforce the positive impact of the e-governance reforms. In 2020, KGIRS generated approximately ₦12.53 billion, achieving 122.9 per cent of its budget despite prevailing economic challenges. Between 2021 and 2022, monthly internally generated revenue rose from about ₦750 million in late 2021 to a significantly higher baseline, with annual collections surpassing ₦18 billion by the end of 2022. The upward trajectory persisted in 2023, when revenue exceeded the ₦23 billion fiscal target. By late 2024 and early 2025, monthly IGR had climbed to an average of ₦3 billion—equivalent to roughly ₦36 billion annually—while preliminary figures for 2024 placed total IGR at approximately ₦32.01 billion, underscoring sustained and substantial growth over the reform period.

Aside from Kogi State's e-governance injection into revenue collection, arguably more prominent is the State's efforts to draw citizens closer to government and improve service accessibility through e-government portals. Through the official state website managed by the Kogi State Government, ministries, departments, and agencies now publish policies, budget summaries, project updates, and service information online, enabling residents to obtain official documents and updates without physical visits. The deployment of Management Information Systems (MIS) across key MDAs has strengthened internal record-keeping, personnel management, and workflow coordination, while online application systems, particularly for recruitment, education-related services, and business registration, have streamlined submission and processing procedures. In addition, digital platforms supporting procurement disclosures, examination registrations, and public notifications reflect a gradual institutional shift towards integrated information systems that enhance transparency, reduce manual bottlenecks, and promote more responsive public service delivery within the state.

At the sub-national level, concerns persist regarding the depth and uniformity of digital transformation. Assessments of local government readiness, including evaluations conducted in Lokoja Local Government Area, highlight continuing challenges in infrastructure adequacy, technical expertise, and institutional preparedness. Across sectors such as health and education, ICT deployment has improved data management and operational coordination, yet structural limitations, including inadequate digital infrastructure, skill deficits, and low levels of citizen uptake, continue to restrict the full realisation of e-governance objectives in the state.

## **Findings**

The findings indicated that e-governance reforms within the Kogi State Public Service, particularly the adoption of electronic tax registration, automated assessment procedures, and online payment systems, significantly improved the efficiency of service delivery across relevant ministries and agencies. These initiatives reduced administrative delays, enhanced transparency in revenue administration, minimised leakages, and strengthened compliance among taxpayers within the state. Performance indicators during the reform period reflected noticeable reductions in processing time and steady growth in internally generated revenue (Abimaje & Bagaji, 2026; Isah et al., 2024).

The introduction and use of ICT tools by some government institutions in Kogi State's public service have significantly enhanced service delivery within the state civil service. The finding shows that, across diverse national contexts, the approval of digital tools such as e-government portals, artificial intelligence, management information systems (MIS), online application systems, and biometric technologies is constantly associated with improvements in administrative efficiency and service delivery. Research shows that digitalisation shortens processing times, reduces paperwork, and enables quicker and more coordinated decision-making within public institutions (Jehan & Alahakoon, 2020; Latupeirissa et al., 2024). These gains are particularly obvious in routine, high-volume services where computerisation replaces manual procedures, minimising delays caused by human bottlenecks and technical redundancies. As a result, public organisations are better able to manage workloads, allocate resources more effectively, and deliver services promptly.

Beyond efficiency improvements, existing studies emphasise how digital technologies promote greater transparency, accountability, and higher service standards. By enabling better tracking of transactions and official decisions, digital platforms' decisions reduce opportunities for bribery and corrupt practices (Latupeirissa et al., 2024). When these systems are consistently implemented and thoughtfully designed around users' needs, they also improve public perceptions of service quality and delivery, as citizens encounter clearer processes, more predictable outcomes, and less reliance on informal intermediaries (Ibrahim et al., 2024). In a specific sector, such as healthcare, the adoption of digital records and specialised information systems has been linked to fewer errors and improved outcomes, including documented reductions in mortality rates within Nigerian specialist hospitals. Overall, the findings suggest that digitalisation does more than enhance administrative efficiency; it transforms the interaction or relationship between people and government institutions by nurturing trust, reinforcing accountability, and delivering measurable improvements in public service outcomes.

Further findings indicate that e-governance initiatives, particularly when combined with social media-based engagement, are increasingly associated with enhanced transparency and accountability in public administration, especially in contexts where citizens actively demand explanations and interact with government online. Digital government platforms expand access to information such as budgets, policies, and administrative decisions, which users widely perceive as increasing transparency and enabling closer monitoring of government actions. In addition, Setyarto et al. (2025) also state that the use of digital systems such as e-budgeting and e-procurement creates traceable audit trails that allow public spending and decision-making processes to be monitored in real time, thereby strengthening financial accountability. Emerging tools connected to open data initiatives and anti-corruption efforts, such as real-time public portals and blockchain-based procurement systems, are helping to reduce opportunities for corrupt practices while strengthening public confidence in government institutions. Findings from surveys and comparative studies conducted across different countries consistently show that when e-

government systems are properly implemented, they improve transparency and accountability in public administration.

Alongside these institutional reforms, social media platforms have become an important extension of e-governance by creating direct, two-way communication between governments and citizens. Government agencies now use official online platforms to share policy updates, emerging information, and administrative decisions, helping the public better understand government actions and increasing the sense of openness in governance. At the same time, citizens actively respond through comments, questions, and criticism, creating continuous public engagement that encourages officials to explain their decisions more clearly and respond to misinformation when it arises. (Chen et al., 2020). Citizens, in turn, engage via reactions, questions, and criticism, creating unrelenting demand for explanations that pressures governments to justify decisions and address misinformation (Islm et al., 2021). Research suggests that such online civic behaviour is driven by information-seeking, political interest, and perceived responsiveness, reinforcing continuous engagement and scrutiny. However, the findings also highlight important limitations: one-way information flows and weak dialogue can undermine perceptions of genuine accountability despite increased data availability, while digital divides, low digital literacy, and concerns about data security may exclude certain groups and erode trust in e-governance systems (Setyarto et al., 2025).

Since the introduction of e-governance, the relationship or interaction between government and the people has improved, leading to greater public involvement in governance. Evidence shows that digital governance systems have encouraged more open, regular, or frequent, interactive communication between public institutions and citizens, which in turn strengthens participatory governance (Adnan et al., 2022). The shift towards e-governance has made it easier for citizens to engage directly with government processes and decision-making.

In the post-adoption stage of e-governance, citizens tend to benefit from improved access to timely and detailed information about government activities. Lee-Geiller & Lee (2019), Tejed-Romero & Araujo (2020), and Setyarto et al. (2025) opine that through government portals, open-data platforms, and the online publication of policies, budgets, regulations, and service standards, official decisions become more evident and far easier to access than under paper-based systems. These digital platforms enable citizens to follow how decisions are formulated and how public resources are allocated, often on an ongoing or near-real-time basis. As such, channels become embedded in citizens' everyday information practices, and individuals are better able to locate information that directly affects their rights, entitlements, and local services, thereby strengthening transparency and supporting more informed and meaningful engagement with public decision-making.

However, the impact of these reforms within the Kogi State public service remained constrained by persistent challenges, including unstable internet connectivity across parts of the state, inadequate ICT infrastructure in rural local government areas, limited digital literacy among segments of the population, and insufficient technical support to sustain system performance.

## **Conclusion**

In the modern era, the adoption and application of ICT across all sectors, such as governance, healthcare, science, and business, have become unavoidable, and neglecting this technology would be costly for both nations and individuals. Many countries have already recognised the inherent advantages of ICT. Dion (2014), in his early assessment of e-governance, anticipated profound transformations in government and bureaucratic processes, potentially leading to advanced outcomes such as e-democracy. However, in practice, these changes have been more incremental.

Nevertheless, responses from various reviews indicate a clear transition away from traditional administrative systems, reflecting the adaptive nature of contemporary bureaucracy.

Evidence from the survey conducted in this study shows that most bureaucrats have embraced modern technologies in the conduct of public affairs. The study further establishes a positive relationship between the adoption of ICT in routine administrative activities and improved communication between citizens and government. This enhanced interaction has, in turn, fostered inclusive and participatory governance, which remains a core principle of democratic systems.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the demonstrated benefits of adopting ICT tools in the administration of government authorities, this article makes the following recommendations:

- i) Public institutions in Kogi State should publish detailed information about their activities online and ensure their websites are regularly updated to enable citizens to easily access relevant information in line with global best practices.
- ii) Information desks in Kogi State's public service institutions should be established within ministries, departments, and agencies to ensure the timely dissemination of information and prompt responses to citizens' inquiries.
- iii) The State Government should urgently equip staff of agencies and parastatals with modern ICT facilities to enhance the rapid flow and exchange of information.
- iv) The federal government, through the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), should support the expansion of internet connectivity to rural areas to guarantee nationwide access to information, including remote communities.

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