E-Administration and Service Delivery in Nigeria's State Civil Service: A Study of Selected Ministries in Akwa Ibom State

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Abstract
The paper examined the implementation of e-administration in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service and its impact on public service delivery and governance. While there are significant achievements at the federal level of Nigeria, the implementation of digital systems at the state level still faces a lot of challenges, including inadequate ICT infrastructure, low digital literacy, unreliable electricity and resistance to change. These limitations contribute to administrative inefficiency, poor record-keeping, delays in service delivery, and loss of public trust. The study is based on Modernisation Theory, which focuses on the implementation of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRSMS) and Human Resource Management System (HRMS) as tools for technological integration, institutional reform and human capital development. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 330 civil servants of various ministries and analysed with descriptive statistics and Chi-square. The results indicated that there is no significant improvement in records management and human resource operations in both systems, as indicated by the negative correlation, which showed stagnation. This is because of a lack of staff training, technical support, digital resistance and infrastructural challenges such as poor electricity and internet connectivity. The study concluded that although e-administration can help to facilitate the smooth running of administration and enhance governance, the existing e-administration in Akwa Ibom State still has a long way to go. The paper recommended interventions like capacity building, infrastructure development, and policy support to fully harness the potential of e-administration for improved governance outcomes in Akwa Ibom State.

Keywords: E-administration, ICT, civil service, public service delivery, governance, Modernisation Theory, digital transformation

Introduction

The incorporation of information and communication technology (ICT) in public administration has emerged as a vital approach in modernising the work of government, in enhancing the performance of institutions and in enhancing public service delivery. Digital technologies are being used by governments to make administrative processes more efficient, enhance accountability and improve responsiveness to citizens' needs (Ibanga et al., 2024). Heeks (2001, 2006) suggests a differentiation between e-administration (which is about improving internal government processes); e-citizens and e-services (which are about citizen engagement and service provision); and e-society (which is about the relationship between government and society in general). E-administration is especially applicable to civil service

management, as it encompasses the use of electronic systems for handling personnel records, payroll, and official correspondence and administrative processes. These systems, when implemented effectively, can help minimise procedural delays, enhance information management, and foster transparency and accountability within public institutions (Akpan et al., 2025). However, achieving these benefits requires institutional capacity, technological infrastructure, personnel competence and effective integration of digital systems into existing administrative systems.

E-governance in the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service is very important because of the challenges of traditional records management, personnel administration and payroll processing. The literature available shows that physical storage facilities such as wooden shelves, metal cabinets and filing cabinets have been used in the past to store records in state ministries. These can make information retrieval more difficult and limit information sharing and administrative processes. Okon and Edet (2025) further note that administrative delays, ghost workers, and accountability lapses are among the problems that plague the civil service and compromise its performance and credibility. Likewise, Tom et al. (2024) cite electronic payroll and payment systems as potential means of mitigating payroll irregularities and financial corruption, but also highlight the limitations of the lack of ICT infrastructure, limited access to technology, resistance to change and lack of skilled personnel. These challenges highlight the need to explore the deployment of digital administrative systems and the impact these have on the effectiveness of the state civil service.

To alleviate these concerns, the Akwa Ibom State Government has implemented various measures, including the computerisation of official records and human resource records to cut down on delays in leave application processing, salary and retirement benefits (THEWILL, n. d.-a). The Human Resources and Asset Management System was also to be activated to enable the records of public servants to be managed during their working lives (THEWILL, n.d.-b). Additionally, a personnel verification exercise was reportedly conducted for around 55,000 public servants on the state payroll, with less than 53,000 reportedly appearing for verification (Leadership, 2025). This was followed by the launch of a Public Servants' Portal, which allowed for electronic access to payroll details and for self-verification by public servants (Nigeria Startup News, 2026). Other initiatives are the operationalisation of a Treasury Single Account and computer-based, portal-driven recruitment procedures (New Telegraph, 2026; Voice of Nigeria, n.d.). The payroll verification exercise has also been reported to have led to the removal of ghost workers, but the number of ghost workers removed varies from one source to the other, ranging from 2,208 ghost workers (Leadership, 2025) to above 3,000 ghost workers (New Telegraph, 2026). These all represent the state government's attempts to integrate digital technologies into personnel management, financial administration and recruitment.

Despite these efforts, the impact of e-governance on public service delivery in Akwa Ibom State civil service is not yet fully known. The use of digital platforms does not always result in better administration, especially if implementation is hampered by poor infrastructure, staff's lack of competence, resistance from the organisation, or low monitoring rates. Additionally, the fact that the schools have electronic records and payroll systems does not, in and of itself, indicate that administrative delays have decreased, accountability has increased, or services have become more responsive. This will need a systematic evaluation of the functioning of the systems, how much they are used by personnel, and their impact on the efficiency and reliability of civil service operations. The literature available offers some clues to these developments, but raises important questions. Some studies are heavily dependent on documentary evidence and reported policy interventions, and not necessarily measured service delivery outcomes (Tom et al., 2024), and others have dealt with e-governance in other institutional contexts such as the judiciary, rather than the civil service (Akpan et al., 2025). Moreover, official statements and media reports, although useful for documenting government

initiatives, do not necessarily provide sufficient evidence of the effectiveness or sustainability of the reforms. Another illustration of the need to differentiate between reported ghost-worker removal and actual results is the disparity between the figures reported by the provincial government and the ones reported by the Electoral Commission. Hence, a systematic study is needed to understand what e-governance is, how it is being implemented and how it relates to public service delivery in the state civil service.

In this context, the issue to be tackled by this study is the lack of empirical evidence on the level of contribution of e-governance in improving public service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. In particular, the study focuses on the digital administrative systems used in the service, the implementation of these systems and their effects on administrative efficiency, transparency, accountability and responsiveness. The study aims to add to the literature on digital governance and public sector reform in Nigeria and produce evidence that can guide enhancement of civil service administration and service delivery.

Research Objectives

i. To assess the impacts of the electronic document and records management system (EDRSMS) in enhancing and automating the record-keeping process in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.
ii. To assess how online human resource management (HRMS) enhances the handling of HR operations in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

Conceptual Framework

i. E-Administration

Misuraca (2012) and Ndou (2004) define e-administration as the consistent use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) for the administration and management of public sector processes to make them more efficient, transparent and responsive to the needs of governance. It refers to the digitisation of administrative tasks like planning, implementation, monitoring, recording, as well as delivery of services, that would facilitate the efficiency of the workflows, real-time decision-making and reduction in the extent of bureaucratic inefficiencies (Gupta et al., 2008). E-administration consists of aspects such as e-records management, workflow automation, in-house communication systems, human resource management system (HRMS), decision support system (DSS), integrated financial management system (IFMS), enterprise resource planning, e-procurement, and citizen relationship management system (CRMS) (Nkwe, 2012; Chigona & Mbhele, 2014; Ajayi, 2014; and World Bank, 2018). These features collectively increase the efficiency in operations, boost inter-departmental coordination, increase transparency and promote accountability in public institutions (Heeks, 2006; Bwalya & Mutula, 2014).

E-administration has lots of advantages. It increases the efficiency in operation by automating repetitive administrative tasks, reduces the operation cost and improves the allocation of resources (Ayo & Ekong, 2008; Nkwe, 2012). The use of digital platforms can make it easier to improve transparency, as these platforms will have time-stamped and traceable records, real-time data to guide decision-making, and a way of tracking employee output and institutional key performance indicators (KPIs) (Gil-Garcia & Dawes, 2006; Heeks, 2006). Furthermore, e-administration makes public administration services more accessible, boosts citizen participation, helps save paper and protect the environment, and helps ensure citizens' resilience, data protection and security in the event of unforeseen circumstances (OECD, 2003; UNPAN, 2010; Misuraca, 2012). Overall, e-administration is a change-oriented governance approach to make governments efficient and effective in serving the needs of the citizens and providing services in a transparent, accountable and timely manner (Gupta et al., 2008; Ndou, 2004; Heeks, 2006).

ii. Service Delivery

Service delivery is a set of co-ordinated processes in the design, implementation, management and evaluation of services provided to individuals and community members by public and private service providers. Its core is to make services affordable, effective, fair and equitable in all sectors such as health, education, public administration, and social welfare, whose outputs have a great impact on the wellbeing of societies (Ayo & Ekong, 2008; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Fukuda-Parr, 2003; Sen, 1999; Ikhenoba & Atakpa, 2023). Service delivery in the public sector mainly focuses on the delivery of essential public goods which contribute to social justice, accessibility and fairness, and improve governance legitimacy and trust in the public sector. It is increasingly considered from citizens' point of view. It is seen as citizen-responsive, focusing on citizen needs, and increasing the quality of citizens' lives (Alford, 2009; Fung, 2006). The private sector, on the other hand, is market-driven and motivated by the need to meet market demand by focusing on quality, speed and efficiency and often has Digital platforms and Customer Management Systems (Gupta et al., 2008; Kumar & Reinartz, 2016).

Effectiveness has many aspects that are inter-related and are commonly used to assess the extent of services provided. Efficiency is about using resources optimally and eliminating waste, delays and duplication, usually with the help of automation and digital governance systems (Alford, 2009; Mergel, 2021). Effectiveness is related to planning and monitoring based on evidence and whether the services have developmental or administrative goals and whether the goals are achieved (Sen & Nussbaum, 1993; Peters et al., 2008; Kettunen & Kallio, 2019). Quality refers to the degree of meeting or exceeding user expectations and is driven by institutional capacity, staff capacity, and a quality management system and has implications for public trust and participation (Drucker, 1999; Parasuraman et al., 1988; Bouckaert & Van de Walle, 2003; Juran & Godfrey, 2021). Accessibility, which is defined as inclusive service provision, which involves reaching out to everyone, despite any barriers, distance, economic or social, is a growing area with new digital technologies largely extending access to marginalised groups (Alford, 2009; United Nations, 2018). The use of accountability and transparency, in the form of open decision-making and action lines (often digital, with integrated dashboards and open data platforms), can help to reduce the impact of corrupt actions and build institutional trust (Heeks, 2006; Bovens, 2007; Janssen, Charalabidis, & Zuiderwijk, 2021).

Responsiveness is the capacity of institutions to respond to citizens' needs and complaints in time, in the form of feedback, and service designs that are flexible and adaptable (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Mergel, 2021). Citizen satisfaction is another evaluative measure of service performance which measures segments of fairness, quality and efficiency, and has been shown to be closely correlated with trust and civic involvement (Gupta et al., 2008; Anderson et al., 1994). Finally, sustainability is about balancing economic, social and environmental aspects to ensure that service systems remain viable over the years; that is, they are resilient and have long-term institutional continuity (Sen, 1999; UNDP, 2016; Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2015).

E-Administration and Service Delivery in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service

E-administration in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service can be seen in the digitisation and automation of processes in personnel management, payroll administration, recruitment and other administrative processes being implemented by the State government. The State's commitment to providing technology-based administration is highlighted by the creation of the Ministry of Science and Digital Economy and the transition to electronic platforms for government transactions. The Akwa Ibom State Government (2025a) says its recruitment, procurement and all other processes relating to public service are run through digital systems aimed at improving transparency, accountability and administrative efficiency. These developments offer a starting point to consider, at the state level, whether digital technologies have led to better administrative performance in the civil service. One such key benchmark of personnel administration is the state's workforce verification exercise. The Akwa Ibom State chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) revealed in January 2025 that around 51,700 out of 55,120 on-record public workers have been verified; also, over 2,000 suspected ghost workers have been identified during the verification exercise, as reported in The Guardian Nigeria (2025). Later, the State's Head of Service announced the dismissal of 2208 suspected ghost workers after the verification process (Yafugborhi, 2025). The removals amounted to some 4,0% of the originally recorded 55,120 personnel. This calculation offers an approximation of the magnitude of the payroll irregularities that have been found, but it must be recognised that what is reported is actually an administrative outcome of the system and not independent evidence of the effectiveness of digital systems. The exercise introduces the need for an accurate personnel database, employee verification and good payroll controls in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

Another noticeable event in the realm of personnel administration digitalisation is the launch of the Akwa Ibom State Public Servants' Portal. The official website allows active public employees in the unified state payroll system to canvass salary and allowance details, job information, deductions, taxes, loans and electronic payslips. It also offers a self-verification service to verify access through the employee's registered phone number, their National Identification Number and one-time password. The portal's help centre indicates that workers can view their payslips as early as June 2025, and that there are self-service computer kiosks in ministries, departments, and agencies for workers who don't have their own computers or smartphones. (Akwa Ibom State Public Servants' Portal, n.d.). These functions offer a sensible means to access payroll details and decrease the requirement to go to administrative offices physically. However, the portal still has not provided any data about the number or percentage of civil servants that use the portal or the reduction in payroll complaints or payroll processing delays. The state government has also carried forward and followed the system of online recruitment. It stated that it will recruit 3,000 qualified employees in the state via the state employment portal for the mainstream civil service, medical staff, and the teaching service as planned in July 2025 (Akwa Ibom State Government, 2025b; Yafugborhi, 2025). The government announced that hiring through digital platforms for personnel management is in place. The 3,000 appointments proposed, however, should not be taken to be completed, as it is not a means of improving service delivery without the evidence to prove how many, if any, of those appointments are successful and how much time the process takes.

The administrative reform planned by the Government took more shape through the contact with the payroll officers in July 2026. The Akwa Ibom State Government announced that the Commissioner for Science and Digital Economy held a strategy session with payroll officers from the mainstream civil service, the Akwa Ibom State Universal Basic Education Board, and the Local Government Civil Service Commission. During the meeting, participants discussed data integrity, financial accountability, and the need to place payroll processes under the control of trained public servants. The government has also given 46 ministries, departments and agencies the approval to distribute computers, printers and backup generators, especially those agencies facing problems with electricity supply (Akwa Ibom State Government, 2026). This report identifies institutional capacity as a practical consideration in the operation of digital administrative systems, in addition to equipment availability and power supply. It also indicates that e-administration is more than just the introduction of e-platforms; training of personnel and effective coordination between administrative units is also required. However, there is still not enough definitive evidence from published sources to conclude how much progress has been made in e-administration in improving service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service (ACS). The figures for personnel verification give a picture of the scope of the exercise, and the official portal online confirms the availability of Electronic Payroll and Personnel Services. But the administrative products do not automatically create processing time reductions, payroll inaccuracies, reduced operating costs or reduced number of employee grievances (Atairet & Ndaeyo, 2025; Ndaeyo et al., 2025). A systematic evaluation must thus take into account certain aspects, including the proportion of personnel files that are managed electronically, the frequency of disputes in payroll management, the extent of utilisation of the portal, etc., the time taken to complete salary changes and the number of days taken for resolving employee complaints. It should also identify if digital platforms have also led to lesser reliance on manual processes in the ministries, departments and agencies.

Review of Empirical Literature

The attraction of the E-governance/e-administration has drawn attention from scholars in Nigeria due to the hope it holds to improve administrative efficiency, transparency, accountability and public-service delivery. But they remain hamstrung by poor ICT facilities, power failures, low digital literacy, resistance to change and poor institutional accountability. These studies in Akwa Ibom State looked at both civil service and ministries, the judiciary and educational institutions and local government administration, using descriptive research design, cross-sectional survey, documentary analysis and quantitative statistical techniques. These studies offer valuable insights into digital governance, but vary in their methodological approaches and the components on which they focus. For example, Aniefiok and Akpan (2019) studied the benefits and constraints of implementing e-governance in the state. The researchers showed that the major obstacles to effective implementation, from primary and secondary sources, were unreliable electricity, lack of communication infrastructure and lack of information technology professionals. The study linked the e-governance to enhance operational efficiency and enhance possibilities of strengthening democratic governance. It contributes by putting in place the infrastructure and human-capacity conditions that are required for effective digital administration. However, the general information provided on e-governance did not differentiate the contribution of EDRM, e-HRM, e-PM and e-procurement to service delivery.

The study by Aitaret (2022) investigated the association of administrative innovation with sustainable civil service delivery in Nigeria. The study was conducted using secondary sources and Modernisation Theory. The analysis pointed to administrative digitalisation as a potential way of enhancing public sector operations and identified several issues, such as staff resistance, difficulty adapting to the impacts of organisational change and lack of incentives for innovation. The author called for ongoing digitisation as well as better communication with

administrative officials in the process of administrative reforms. While the study offers useful theoretical and institutional relations for comprehending administrative innovation, it depends on secondary evidence and therefore is not statistically established that there is a relationship between particular electronic administrative systems and service delivery results.

While Edemekong et al. (2020) discussed ITC effects and their impact on the Federal Inland Revenue Service, Desmond et al. (2023) focused on e-governance and corruption reduction in public institutions. Likewise, Atairet et al. (2023) explored e-administration and e-communications in the civil service. According to the reviewed literature, these studies used descriptive and/or survey designs in describing the role of using digital technologies for enhancing administrative performance and accountability. The significance of these lies in how they apply to show the relevance of ICTs, e-comms and admin reform to reduce limitations of traditional bureaucratic systems. Nonetheless, their bibliographic details and empirical research need to be verified against the content of the original publications before they can be considered as verified evidence for Akwa Ibom State.

Tom et al. (2024) examined the implications of digital governance on administrative performance, specifically the electronic payment system, payroll administration, ghost worker detection and financial accountability. The study, which was descriptive, used documentary evidence and was rooted in Public Value Theory. It revealed the lack of access to technology, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled ICT professionals and lack of change attitude as major challenges in e-governance. The researchers proposed potential comprehensive biometric systems to enhance the payroll system with greater accuracy and to make it more accountable. The study is significant as it deals directly with Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. However, this study is focused on the electronic payments and payroll administration aspects; there are no references regarding the respective impacts of electronic record management, online human resource management, e-performance management and e-procurement for service delivery.

Based on a descriptive research design, Okon and Edet (2025) studied the problems of the civil service and service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service with the aid of secondary data. They found that the ineffective delivery of services was due to rigid administrative processes, delays in the processing of official documents and pension claims, political interference, nepotism, corruption and poor accountability. Administrative efficiency and public trust were also issues raised by the researchers regarding ghost worker issues. They suggested that administrative workflows should be digitised, institutional structures should be improved, and transparency and accountability should be enhanced by introducing a system for electronic personnel and payroll management. The study offers an institutionalist answer to the question of why administrative ways have to be modernised. It does not prove, however, how far any given electronic administrative systems can go to make public services faster, more precise and easier to access, but sets boundaries for traditional bureaucratic processes.

Akpan et al. (2025) studied e-administration and service delivery in the Judiciary of Akwa Ibom State. The study concentrated on the judiciary staff (2150 persons), and the respondents from the selected samples were 337 persons. Electronic filing, electronic service of court processes and electronic case-record management represented the key explanatory variables, and analysis of variance was conducted to test the hypotheses. The reported findings showed that all three e-administration components were statistically significantly positively associated with service delivery, with 47.4 per cent of the variation in service delivery being attributed to the component on e-case-record management. The researchers also found that electronic filing was not in full swing and that there was still paper filing. They suggested more in-depth paperless documentation and continuing staff training. This study offers empirical support pertinent to the hypothesis that, by utilising electronic records and document-management systems, administrative performance can be improved. However, the courts have unique needs for functioning, and further analysis of the results is needed to extrapolate them to the broader state civil service.

Williams et al. (2026) investigated the issue of electronic payment and service delivery of Akwa Ibom State College of Education. The researchers conducted a cross-sectional survey of 300 staff and students and studied the computer/computer literacy, availability of internet, and ICT facilities in relation to service delivery. These factors showed a significant and positive relationship with reported findings on service delivery. The study suggested that all computer literacy training be made compulsory and that institutions should be tied up with internet service providers for optimum connectivity. Its contribution is to show how important it is to be digitally competent to use technological infrastructure in the operation of electronic administrative systems. Its emphasis on an education establishment and electronic payment, though, makes it distinct from the wide-ranging personnel, records, performance-management and procurement functions of the state civil service.

Edet and Udotim (2026) studied electronic governance and effective service delivery in Nigeria: An assessment of Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Finance. The study applied to internet-based governance and its impact on the effectiveness of the administration of the ministry, with a particular emphasis on time delays in the ministry, paper-based governance and holding financial accounts. The findings reported were related to better goal attainment and stronger acceptance of ICT for service delivery by being on the verge of electronic governance. It is institutionally relevant because it looks at a state government ministry, in which the achievement of administrative efficiency and financial accountability are important measures of the performance of public service. However, the level of reporting for publication is not enough to be certain of how great the described relationship is from a methodological and statistical perspective. In addition, the study does not evaluate the four e-administration systems evaluated in the present research.

Ekpo and Akpan (2604) studied the relationship between e-government and public service delivery in the Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The research method that was used was descriptive and survey, with primary and secondary data. It was reported that the instrument reliability coefficient was 0.76 and that the number of study samples was 420 individuals obtained by simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The data were presented in the form of means and Standard Deviation, and hypothesis testing was done using Pearson product-moment correlation and analysis of covariance. The results revealed that there was a relationship between the use of e-governance and the availability, accessibility, and affordability of public services. The authors have suggested good ICT centres, internet facilities, staff training and citizens' participation in all LGAs in the state. This study widens evidence of digital governance in Akwa Ibom State, but the local government administration is not the same organisation and does not function like state ministries; therefore, generalising this study would be limited.

Udo and Paul (2026) investigated the correlation between digital governance and public service transformation. The study employed convenience sampling to extract data from 400 civil servants and residents who accessed e-government services and used a descriptive survey method, based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The researchers used descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis in SPSS version 25 to analyse the data. Results showed that e-government service delivery, as well as digital transparency and ICT infrastructure, were positively and statistically related to public service transformation. The authors pointed to the need for more investments in ICT technologies, as well as better digital skills and transparency of processes. The study provides state-level evidence in relation to how digital governance is linked to public service outcomes. But its extensive inclusion of digital governance does not separate the discrete impact of e-records management, online human resource management, e-performance management and e-procurement.

Available literature shows that e-governance and administrative digitalisation are of significant concern in the quest to improve the delivery of public services in Akwa Ibom State. The studies draw attention to infrastructure, staff competence, electronic records, digital

payments, payroll management, administrative innovation and transparency, among other issues, collectively. They also signal that having technology and preparing the organisation, employees, and instituting effective accountability mechanisms are also necessary. But the literature is still fragmented across various institutions and administrative functions. Some research is based on secondary data, and some focuses on one technology or even a specific context of service delivery. Therefore, an integrated empirical study of the relationship between electronic document and records management, online human resource management, electronic performance management and e-procurement and public service delivery of Akwa Ibom State Civil Service is still needed. This "lacuna" could be filled by exploring these systems as distinct aspects of "e-administration" and investigating their individual and combined connection with administrative efficiency, timeliness, accessibility, transparency and accountability.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for the analysis of the relationship of e-administration to public service delivery in Akwa Ibom State civil Service is the modernisation theory. The theory provides an explanation of the idea of transformation of societies and institutions from traditional to more differentiated, rationalised, tech-enabled, and efficient structures. The core of its thesis is that the process of development requires transformations in institutional structures, in ways of doing things, and in the communication system, in skills, and in patterns of social organisation. From a public administration point of view, this is significant because adapting to digital technologies is an effort towards enhancing the quality of administrative processes, increasing institutional capabilities and improving the quality of public services provided to citizens. Modernisation theory is linked to the research of Lerner (1958), Parsons (1964) and Rostow (1960). While the scholars employed their arguments within different contexts, all contribute to the themes of links between social change, institutional differences, technological progress and development. Although their original theories are still applicable when it comes to the development of broader institutions, their theories are of less value when addressing digital government, e-governments or technology-enabled public service provision. This is done to add the classical theory's relevance to the current study by combining it with the latest evidence from digital government and public-sector reform literature.

Lerner (1958) identified communication, literacy, urbanisation, and exposure to modern institutions as vital factors in the process of change in traditional societies. His tests indicate that the facilitation of development will be supported by the information, competences and practices which make it possible to enter the modern systems of social and economic life. This can be translated into public administration and implies that electronic administration systems can change the way public organisations generate, treat, store and share information. For example, electronic document and records management systems lessen the reliance on exclusive paper-based documents and aid in the retrieval, preservation and sharing of administrative records. Likewise, digital channels can increase and optimise communication between governments and citizens, if the required technologies and skills are in place as well as organisational backing. This contemporary interpretation is akin to the one suggested by the OECD (2020), which highlights digital-by-design administration, data-driven decision-making and open government and user-driven services as relevant aspects of digital government. Also, digital transformation for better public institutions to support sustainable development is highlighted by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2024) and digital capacity and access are not uniform among countries and regions.

Modernisation theory provides the primary basis for the application of this theory in this study due to the fact that the implementation of the e-administrative system can help facilitate transformations in administrative procedures, organisational coordination and service delivery of the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. The theory can serve as a foundation to analyse the correlation between electronic document and records management, online human resource

management, electronic performance management and electronic procurement and administrative efficiency, timeliness, accessibility and transparency & accountability. However, the desired outcomes would be realised based on the healthy level of infrastructural support, personnel competence and commitment of organisations, as well as good administrative processes. Electronic document and records management systems (EDRMS) are a significant component of administrative modernisation since they affect the way that public institutions develop, store, retrieve, process and preserve official information for the better. Improper and lost files, slow turnover of documents and records, and problems with locating information can hinder administrative operations in a traditional paper-based administrative environment. These difficulties can be minimised by an effective electronic records system, which helps in finding information, enhances security in records and assists in the timely conduct of official business. These functions relate to Lerner's (1958) focus on communication and information access as factors of social change. Moreover, they echo the OECD line of reasoning (2020), which highlights how these forms of processes and administration driven by data are at the heart of modern digital government. Thus, modernisation theory posits the efficient and timely improvement of administrative processes with the interposition of EDRMS, if the electronic records are reliable and accessible to the proper authorities and part of the normal administrative process.

One aspect of administration modernisation is online human resource management systems. Human resource administration includes particulars about people, recruitment, job deployment, leave bookkeeping, promotion, training, payroll, etc. Inconsistencies in the information on personnel, delays in processing the requests of staff, and challenges in monitoring workforce information can become a problem in these activities when they rely primarily on manual methods. Digital HR systems can streamline employee information management, facilitate sharing of data, and help in making informed HR decisions based on accurate and available data. A modernisation theorist might take the view that these changes represent the trend towards greater specialism, increased information and co-ordination in administration. The work of Parsons (1964), with its focus on the organisation and operation of social systems, provides a general theoretical framework for insight into the significance of coordination between administrative units. Modern evidence, such as that of Inakefe et al. (2023), found from an investigation on digital literacy and e-governance adoption within the Cross River State Civil Service, is another example of the high criticality of digital competence and willingness of the workers to embrace new ways of managing administration. The message is that, when civil servants have the capacity to upskill and are open to embracing a digital process in their day-to-day work, it is more likely to improve the delivery of services.

Electronic performance management systems (EPMS) are the process of using digital systems to set performance targets, track employee activities, record accomplishments and facilitate employee performance appraisals. Typical performance appraisal processes can be restricted due to late reporting, lack of documentation, inconsistent standards and insufficient feedback. An EPMS that is well applied to capture performance information can result in a more systematic way to record the data, in the monitoring of responsibilities and in having a basis as the starting point for the identification of administrative weaknesses. The use of this application of modernisation theory is congruent with the idea that the institutionalisation process is accompanied by changes in organisational structure, management and ability to coordinate within the organisation. Indeed, the OECD (2021) also highlights the impact that effective institutional arrangements, coordination and suitable policy instruments play in making sustainable digital transformation a reality. The theory thus serves as a foundation for studying in the context of Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, whether there are patterns of association between electronic performance management and improved administrative efficiency, speedy performance of tasks and high accountability in the discharge of official duties. However, these systems must be accompanied by consensus-driven evaluation systems,

justified and accurate data and management's commitment to performance information to have an impact.

Electronic procurement is an additional form of administrative modernisation and a way for procurement information and transactions to be managed electronically. There are various aspects of public procurement, including determination of the need, preparation of procurement documents, determination of bid processes, bidding and evaluation, awarding of contracts, and record keeping and monitoring of procurement processes. Manual procedures in purchasing activities can cause challenges in disseminating information, documentation, and tracking purchases and verifying adherence to the rules. Electronic procurement systems may help them circulate procurement-related information, make it easier to access records and document their transactions for audit and oversight. These possibilities match with the more general ones of Rostow (1960) focused on technological advance and the shift in institutional and productive potential, but his model does not specifically aim at describing public procurement. Openness and the ability to utilise data to structure government administration and user experience are key factors to consider when defining the concept of digital government, alongside governance and reliable digital infrastructure (OECD 2020; OECD 2024a). In the context of the study, modernisation theory postulates that e-procurement, if adopted and suitably documented, implemented with a proper access control mechanism and with adherence to the pertinent rules and regulations on the part of the procurement officer, may result in transparency, accountability and administrative efficiency. However, poor infrastructure, lack of digital skills and lack of institutional oversight can constrain successful implementation of electronic procurement.

Research Methodology

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, descriptive survey design, in the investigation of e-governance and service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. Adopting this approach is driven by the necessity of bringing together quantitative evidence of civil servants' experience and perception and qualitative evidence drawn from the institutional processes, technological resources and administrative conditions that are involved in the implementation of e-governance systems. The descriptive component offers a systematic foundation to explore and analyse the nature and use of current digital administrative practices, ICT infrastructure, organisational structures and the interrelated problems related to these. The survey module allows for the collection of standardised information from civil servants in terms of what they know, use and think about the impact of e-governance on efficiency, transparency, accountability and responsiveness of administration. The combined approach enables a better understanding of the link between e-governance and service delivery than one methodology standpoint alone can provide.

The population of the study is all the staff of the selected ministries in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance, etc., of which there are 2,600 in the state. The four institutional areas are used as a basis for exploring the use of digital technologies within the field of personnel administration, records management, financial administration and other types of routine government work. A sample of 335 respondents to the questionnaire was drawn from the population identified through both stratified and simple random sampling. Stratified sampling technique was used to ensure representation of the selected ministries, and simple random sampling technique was utilised at the individual level of the selected ministries. A total of 330 questionnaires were returned and were deemed to be appropriate for analysis, for a response rate of 98.5%. This response rate represents a good number of questionnaires collected for the study, but how representative the sample is depends on how adequate the sampling frame is and whether there was an adequate allocation of respondents across the ministries chosen. In the study, both primary and secondary data have been used. Primary data are captured using a

structured questionnaire, which is applied to sampled civil servants and, further, if applicable, a semi-structured questionnaire through interaction with selected key informants, who have relevant knowledge about digital administration in the state civil service. The questionnaire collected data on awareness and adoption of electronic administrative systems; access to ICT facilities; adequacy of staff training; efficiency of records and payroll administration; administrative delays and accountability; and perceived improvements in the provision of services. The interview element delved into organisational structures, practical experiences, readiness of the organisations, technical limitations, and challenges faced in the implementation of digital platforms in existing administration. The secondary data are collected from pertinent publications in the Akwa Ibom State Government, official administrative records, policy documents, reports, and other verifiable documentary sources on digital governance and civil service administration. Multiple sources also allow for the checking and comparison of the respondents' accounts with other evidence, in this case documentary, and ascertain the points of similarity or difference.

The completed questionnaires collected quantitative data and were coded and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Characteristics of the respondents and adoption and utilisation of e-governance systems are summarised by using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. These measures also help to showcase respondents' perceptions of the role of digital platforms in improving administrative efficiency, transparency, accountability and responsiveness. Chi-square (\chi^2) was used to test the study's hypotheses relating to the association between variables of e-governance and indicators of service delivery. The level of significance for statistical tests is set at 0.05, and the appropriate degrees of freedom were calculated depending on the levels and/or structure of the variables analysed. The calculated chi-square was then compared to the critical chi-square value of that curve, and the null hypothesis is rejected if it is statistically significant at the desired level. Assumptions of the test, especially the independence of observations and adequate expected cell frequencies, were evaluated prior to interpretation. Interview and documentary data were collected and analysed qualitatively in thematic mode. This encompassed steps like getting acquainted with the data, determining relevant statements, coding recurring problems, grouping codes consistently into themes and interpreting these themes in the context of the research questions. Specific areas include institutional capacity, ICT infrastructure and competence of staff, organisational attitude, implementation challenges and perceived impacts of digital administrative systems on service delivery. A review of the practice of implementing digital initiatives in schools examined documentary evidence to determine the nature of the digital initiative being implemented, administrative functions supported and reported outcomes of implementation. The qualitative results were recounted in relation to quantitative results to account for the trends in the survey responses, and to add institutional context and spell out some of the conflicts needing interpretation. This integration enriched the analytical level of the study by relating measurable response patterns with organisational experiences they are built on.

The research instruments used were validated in terms of methodological rigour by conducting appropriate validity tests to determine the relevance, clarity and coverage of the objectives of the study. Ambiguous questions were identified and modified to be suitable for full administration through expert review and, if possible, pilot testing. If the items in the questionnaire measured related constructs, the internal consistency of the questionnaire was determined by use of an appropriate measure of internal consistency. The qualitative part was reinforced by meticulous documentation of the data collection and analysis process, careful interpretation of the data from the participants and cross-checking with documentary evidence as needed. These procedures enhanced the credibility, consistency and dependability of the findings. There was awareness of the ethical aspects throughout the research process. The

purpose of the study was explained to the respondents; participation was on a voluntary basis, and the respondents were asked for their consent before data collection.

Data Presentation

The data collected from the administered questionnaires are displayed in carefully constructed frequency distribution tables. To address the study hypotheses and clarify the relationships between the independent and dependent variables, the Chi-square test was employed. A total of 334 questionnaires were distributed, of which 330 were fully completed and returned. The statistical analysis of the results was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20.0.

Table 1: Distributed Questionnaire

Ministry	No. of Questionnaires Assigned	No. of Questionnaires Retrieved	Percentage of Total (%)
Ministry of Science and Technology	50	49	14.85%
Ministry of Education	61	60	18.18%
Ministry of Finance	52	51	15.45
Ministry of Works and Fire Service	60	59	17.89
Ministry of Culture and Tourism	61	61	18.48
Ministry of Agriculture	51	50	15.15%
Total	335	330	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Testing of Research Hypotheses

Thesis of Hypothesis one:

H_{01}: Electronic document and records management system (EDRSMS) has not significantly enhance automating records keeping process in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

H_{11}: Electronic document and records management system (EDRSMS) has significantly enhanced the automation of the record-keeping process in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service

S/N	Item / Test	A	SA	D	SD	Total	% Agree	% Disagree	χ^2	df	Critical value (.05)	p	Decision
1	Speed of records processing	65	50	120	95	330	34.8	65.2	30.30	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
2	Document retrieval	60	60	100	110	330	36.4	63.6	24.55	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
3	Reduced errors	55	75	110	90	330	39.4	60.6	14.85	1	3.841	< .001	Significant

4	Decrease in paperwork	50	60	115	105	330	33.3	66.7	36.67	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
5	User-friendliness	50	70	110	100	330	36.4	63.6	24.55	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
	Total (observed)	280	315	555	500	1,650	36.1	63.9					
	Expected (even spread)	412.5	412.5	412.5	412.5	1,650							
	Overall goodness-of-fit (4 categories)								**133.39**	3	7.815	< .001	Reject H_{01}
	Overall Agree vs Disagree (595 vs 1,055)								128.24	1	3.841	< .001	Reject H_{01}
	Independence across items								13.55	12	21.026	.33	Not significant (items answered alike)

Decision and Discussion of Findings: Calculations of chi-square equals 133.39 which is greater than the critical value of chi2 at 0.05 level of significance and 3 (df) degrees of freedom, thus accepting the null hypothesis. So, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_{11}) is accepted. This shows that there is a statistically consistent trend of the respondents in the assessment of the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) among the staff of the Akwa Ibom State civil service. In terms of substantive findings, however, it is observed that so far the contribution of EDRMS, while it has helped to some extent in automating the record-keeping process, the benefits have been limited, especially regarding paper handling, speedy processing of documents and user-friendliness. The high level of disagreement among respondents suggests that the shift from traditional and paper-based administration towards the effective management of electronic administration records is not complete. This discovery can be viewed from the standpoint of the study of records management that views the success of electronic records systems as depending on their implementation and the organisational processes, as well as the ability of individuals to manipulate and process digital records in all phases of a record's lifecycle. It is often the case that implementation of information-system reforms in public institutions in developing countries faces a dichotomy between the bottom-line transformative vision, imagined by the reformers, and the context and reality of the public institutions concerned (Heeks 2002). In the context of the present study, this viewpoint might imply that EDRMS implementation does not

automatically mean an end to paper-based procedures or a fast-track delivery of administrative processes with respect to those still running similarly without any change, incompleteness of digital records or resorting to manual files by staff. The modest improvements that respondents reported may thus be due to the incomplete integration of the electronic system into ongoing administrative systems, and not because of the lack of capability of EDRMS to foster improved RM itself.

Another academic view has been offered by the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO, 2016) in its standard on records management, which reinforces the need for clear records management policies, responsibilities, monitoring, evaluation, and staff training. Authentic, reliable, integral and usable authoritative records are also emphasised in the standard. This fact is important to the present finding as the usefulness of EDRMS is not necessarily affected by the electronic storage capabilities, but also by the ability to accurately capture an official document, retrieve it in time, prevent unauthorised modification of it and rely on it to make administrative decisions. The inter-rater reliability score of reduced paperwork and processing delays was low, indicating there were still areas for improvement in these operational measures to obtain the full benefits of electronic records management. Yusof and Chell (2000), for instance, state that technology-based records have unique management issues, as they need constant technical attention, migration and conversion to maintain accessibility amid successive changes in hardware and software. As a result of their argument, they are calling for ongoing maintenance of the system and the preservation of records, and not necessarily a one-off administrative process of digitalisation. In this sense, the long-term successful implementation of EDRMS obviously hinges on the ability to maintain the system, preserve electronic records and ensure that documents are accessible and usable in the long term within the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. For this reason, the problems expressed by the respondents might not only be problems during the original use of the system, but issues that have to do with the ongoing institutional needs, which have to do with managing electronic records. More recent evidence from Nigeria reinforces this interpretation. An examination of the readiness to implement electronic records in the Federal Ministry of Finance in Nigeria revealed that computer applications, e-records management, and change management were identified as training needs, as indicated in the widely distributed Training and resources of e-records readiness at the Federal Ministry of Finance in Nigeria (2021), where poor budgets are allocated for records management operations, and records personnel are hardly ever trained.

Testing of Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Online human resource management (HRMS) has not significantly enhanced the handling of HR operations in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

H_{12}: Online human resource management (HRMS) has significantly enhanced the handling of HR operations in Akwa Ibom State Civil Service.

S/N	Item / Test	SA	A	D	SD	Total	% Agree	% Disagree	χ^2	df	Critical value (.05)	p	Decision
6	Employee record management	50	60	120	100	330	33.3	66.7	36.67	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
7	Speed of recruitment	55	60	110	105	330	34.8	65.2	30.30	1	3.841	< .001	Significant

8	Tracking employee performance	45	80	115	90	330	37.9	62.1	19.39	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
9	Payroll management	55	60	120	95	330	34.8	65.2	30.30	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
10	Handling HR complaints	50	75	100	105	330	37.9	62.1	19.39	1	3.841	< .001	Significant
	Total (observed)	255	335	565	495	1,650	35.8	64.2					
	Expected (even spread)	412.5	412.5	412.5	412.5	1,650							
	Overall goodness-of-fit (4 categories)								**147.58**	3	7.815	< .001	Reject H_{02}
	Overall Agree vs Disagree (590 vs 1,060)								133.88	1	3.841	< .001	Reject H_{02}
	Independence across items								11.24	12	21.026	≈ .51	Not significant (items answered alike)

Item-level tests compare Agree (SA + A) with Disagree (D + SD), with an expected count of 165 each. The overall goodness-of-fit test uses an expected count of 412.5 per category.

Decision and Discussion of Findings: The calculated chi-square is 147.58, while the critical chi-square value is 7.815 with 3 degrees of freedom and at a 0.05 level of significance. This means that the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is false and the alternative hypothesis (H_{12}) is true. The statistical decision reflects a significant statistical pattern in the respondents' attitude towards the Online Human Resource Management System (HRMS) in the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service. Yet, the meaning of this finding should be backed up with the descriptive findings and applicable scholarly viewpoints. Only 35.8% of the respondents agreed that HRMS had been able to generate the expected administrative improvements while 64.2% were in disagreement. Employee record management had the lowest agreement (33.3%), while employee performance tracking and the handling of human resource complaints had the highest agreement (37.9% each). These findings suggest that HRMS has helped in the digitisation of

personnel administration, but its impact in terms of operations is still very limited and remains uneven in the functions studied.

This interpretation is in line with Heeks' (2002) argument that information systems in public institutions in developing countries often experience implementation gaps as the technological assumptions on which a system is based do not align with the realities of the organisation, such as staff capacity, infrastructure and work practices. For instance, when it comes to Akwa Ibom State Civil Service, implementing HRMS can not just automatically result in precise personnel recording, efficient performance tracking or quick-time complaints resolution unless it is well anchored into the normal workflow. Similarly, Davis's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model emphasises perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as important determinants of technology acceptance. Lack of training amongst civil servants or difficulties with using the system may dampen its ability to contribute to human resource administration as expected. These points go a long way towards explaining why HRMS could be considered an administrative advancement in performance but may not yield significant gains in overall operational performance. Ojogiwa and Nhari (2024) also found that limited digital literacy, resistance from the workforce, political influence, and infrastructural problems will be obstacles to the introduction of digital HRM in the Nigerian public sector. Given their location, such patchy agreement as was revealed in the instruments from the current study could be due to implementation issues rather than a lack of progress. Also, Dupe et al. (2026) revealed that some of the challenges that confront effective digital personnel administration in the system are lack of adequate personnel training on how to utilise ICTs, delays in ICT processing, system inflexibility and resistance to change. Their results also indicated that certain factors are critical to bridge the gap between technology adoption and administrative effectiveness, such as leadership support, staff training, and perceived usefulness. There is also empirical evidence from Akwa Ibom State to help in the interpretation of the findings. Digitalisation of personnel administration has helped in strengthening payroll integrity and force accountability through personnel verification and ghost workers' removal (Leadership, 2025; New Telegraph, 2026). However, such accomplishments cannot be considered full-fledged improvements of HRMS performance. Technological interventions can help curb payroll fraud, as noted by Tom et al. (2024) in their review of digital payroll and electronic payment systems, but further research and investigation into the limiting effect of the lack of infrastructure, technology and technically literate staff would suggest that this is likely to be an ongoing challenge. This indicates that improvements in personnel verification are possible without any weaknesses in employee record management, monitoring performance, and resolving complaints.

Conclusion

The results of this study entail that the E-Document and Record Management System (EDRMS) has helped to modernise the formulation of administrative processes in the Akwa Ibom State Civil Service alongside the use of the human resource management system (HRMS). On the Chiang Mai Post part, however, the results of the Chi-square showed that there is still a need to maximise its expected benefits and enhance the Chi's effectiveness in records management and human resource administration. While these systems' implementation is a major feat in the effort towards digital administration, their potential for enhancing administrative efficiency, streamlining operations and improving public service delivery is yet to be fully realised. All this only highlights the necessity of ongoing staff training and capacity building, technological infrastructure, technical assistance and proper change management. The study thus recommends that the introduction of EDRMS and HRMS is a positive move towards administrative conversion in the Akwa Ibom State civil service, but more concerted and sustained institutional efforts are required, on the one hand, to maintain gains from the systems, and on the other hand, to make it more flexible to achieve better administrative performance and public service delivery.

Recommendations

i. Better staff training and support: Apparently, not much improvement came from either EDRSMS or HRMS because of a lack of proper training of staff. It is crucial that staff are proficient with these systems and that extensive and ongoing training is undertaken. Furthermore, providing continuous technical support and guidance will help address any issues or challenges faced by staff in adapting to the new digital systems. This will not alone enhance the accessibility of the systems but additionally will stimulate a higher employee engagement and confidence in the systems.

ii. Accessibility of Internet and Power Supply: Study concluded that the internet and power supply is an issue which affected the effective functioning of EDRSMS and HRMS. Therefore, strengthening of the ICT infrastructure such as uninterrupted internet connectivity, uninterrupted power supply, smooth integration of the systems, etc., can not be ruled out and must have all the attention it deserves from the Akwa Ibom State civil service. This will contribute towards a culture that will enable optimal use of digital systems and reap benefits.

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