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INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN DIGITALLY ENABLED OFFICES: EVALUATING ADMINISTRATIVE PRODUCTIVITY IN RIVERS STATE GOVERNMENT MDAS

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ABSTRACT: The digital transformation of administrative processes has become an indispensable priority for enhancing efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness in public institutions. This study empirically examined the relationship between digital office administration dimensioned through records automation and digital filing systems, and information management success, measured through information accessibility and data security, in selected government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in Rivers State, Nigeria. Adopting a correlational survey design, data were collected from 112 administrative and ICT personnel using a structured questionnaire. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to test four hypotheses. Results revealed significant and positive relationships between records automation and both information accessibility (r = 0.652) and data security (r = 0.590). Similarly, digital filing systems were significantly correlated with information accessibility (r = 0.670) and data security (r = 0.703). These findings underscore the pivotal role of digital systems in improving the management of institutional information. The study concludes that strategic investment in digital office technologies and personnel training are essential steps toward securing administrative data and enhancing service delivery. Implications for administrative modernization, digital policy enforcement, and institutional capacity building are discussed.

Keywords: Digital Office Administration, Records Automation, Digital Filing Systems, Information Accessibility, Data Security, Public Sector, MDAs, Administrative Efficiency

INTRODUCTION

In today's knowledge-driven landscape, digital office administration has emerged as a strategic enabler of effective information management, especially within public sector institutions. Across the globe, government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) are progressively transitioning from traditional paperwork to structured digital systems in response to mounting demands for accountability, transparency, and efficiency in public service delivery (Alikornwo, Adiele & Dornanu, 2025). In advanced economies such as Canada, Estonia, and Singapore, digitized administrative operations are foundational to seamless communication, records processing, and inter-agency coordination (Scott & DeLone, 2020). However, public institutions in Nigeria, particularly in Rivers State, still predominantly operate with fragmented and outdated manual systems, characterized by paper-based files, duplication, and bureaucratic delays. While modest efforts have been made to incorporate ICT tools; the level of implementation remains insufficient for optimal functionality. This inadequacy becomes more evident as administrative tasks grow in volume and complexity, further straining the capacity of MDAs to deliver accurate, timely, and secure information. Against this

backdrop, records automation and digital filing systems emerge as transformative technologies capable of redefining how government institutions organize, retrieve, share, and safeguard information. Countries like South Korea and the United Kingdom demonstrate the possibilities of such digital innovations: from cloud-based document repositories to streamlined electronic filing protocols that reduce processing times and physical storage needs (Kim, Park & Lee, 2022; Jackson & Thomas, 2021). This study, therefore, interrogates the role of digital office administration in driving effective information management within MDAs in Rivers State.

The success of information management in the public sector hinges on the extent to which data is accessible, accurate, timely, and protected from breaches. In policy-driven environments such as MDAs, the inability to promptly retrieve critical documents can result in delayed decision-making, stalled policy execution, and missed fiscal deadlines. Nations like Finland and New Zealand have adopted real-time dashboards and automated alerts to support responsiveness and reduce administrative lags (Osei-Bryson & Dong, 2021). By contrast, many Nigerian MDAs remain hampered by overcrowded file rooms, inconsistent documentation, and limited search capabilities, all of which undermine public service efficiency. Information accessibility and data security are, thus, positioned as core indicators for evaluating digital office outcomes in this study. Yet, despite the proven relevance of digital tools, their deployment across government institutions is beset by persistent barriers such as inadequate funding, obsolete ICT infrastructure, limited staff capacity, and resistance to innovation. Moreover, the absence of interoperable systems and persistent information silos obstruct data integration and institutional synergy. While countries like Denmark and Australia have built robust digital governance frameworks grounded in legislation, capacity development, and change management (Chigudu & Musa, 2020; Bennett & Oliver, 2022), Nigeria's MDAs continue to lag behind due to infrastructural and institutional constraints. As such, this study is situated within the urgent need to examine the extent to which records automation and digital filing systems have contributed to improving information accessibility and data security in Rivers State MDAs.

Statement of the Problem

Government ministries in Rivers State are confronted with growing volumes of administrative data, yet the tools used for managing this data remain largely obsolete and manual. This mismatch between data volume and system capability leads to frequent delays in file retrieval, duplication of records, errors in documentation, and overall inefficiency in service delivery. The continued use of manual records systems in many MDAs makes sensitive information vulnerable to loss, unauthorized access, and physical degradation. While digital office solutions are being embraced globally for enhancing accuracy, security, and speed of administrative processes, their adoption in Nigerian public institutions remains underwhelming and insufficiently studied at the sub-national level. A critical gap exists in understanding how specific dimensions of digital office administration (records automation and digital filing) contribute to key outcomes like information accessibility and data security. Previous studies have often generalized digital tools without isolating the administrative functions that directly relate to day-to-day information handling. The lack of localized empirical evidence on the effectiveness of digital administrative tools in Rivers State MDAs further complicates efforts at policy reform and implementation. This study is therefore designed to address these gaps by investigating how digital office administration influences information management success in the region's public sector institutions.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between digital office administration and information management success in government ministries, departments, and agencies in Rivers State. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the relationship between records automation and information management success in MDAs in Rivers State.

2. Assess the influence of digital filing systems on information management success in MDAs in Rivers State.

Research Questions

1. How does records automation affect information management success in MDAs in Rivers State?
2. In what ways do digital filing systems influence information management success in MDAs in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between records automation and information accessibility in MDAs in Rivers State.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between records automation and data security in MDAs in Rivers State.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between digital filing systems and information accessibility in MDAs in Rivers State.

H_{04}: There is no significant relationship between digital filing systems and data security in MDAs in Rivers State.

This study conceptualized the following framework as a guide to the study.

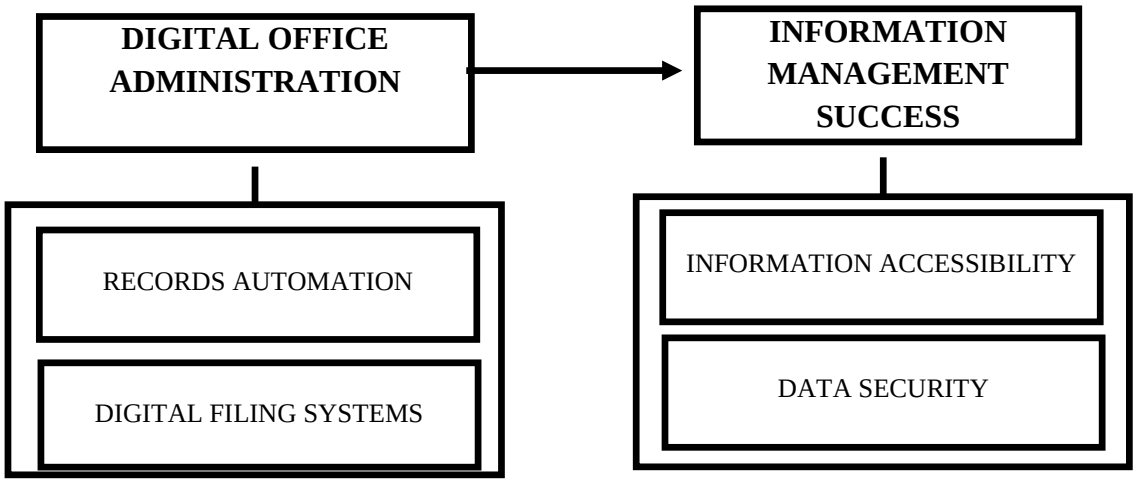

Fig1: Conceptual Framework of Digital Office Administration and Information Management Success of MDAs in Rivers State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical parameters of this study is hinged on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Information Theory

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), developed by Davis in 1989, explains how users accept and use technology based on two key perceptions: Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU). PU denotes the belief that a system improves job performance, while PEOU relates to how effortless the system is to operate. These perceptions shape user attitudes, influencing their intention to adopt technology and, eventually, their actual usage. Within the context of digital office administration in MDAs, TAM is instrumental in explaining varying adoption patterns, particularly in environments like Rivers State where resistance to change is prevalent. The model highlights the necessity for intuitive system design and clear demonstration of utility to drive user acceptance. As Igwe and Ajayi (2021) found, staff who perceive digital tools as complex or non-beneficial are less likely to use them effectively. Akani and Eze (2022) further observed that many public sector

technologies fail due to poor sensitization and insufficient training. Hence, TAM provides a useful lens through which this study examines how behavioral factors such as perceived value and usability affect the adoption of records automation and digital filing systems, ultimately impacting information accessibility and data security in MDAs.

Information Theory

Initially proposed by Claude Shannon in 1948, Information Theory addresses how data is encoded, transmitted, and preserved through communication systems with minimal distortion or "noise." Though rooted in engineering, its principles have significant applications in organizational information flow. In MDAs, where effective data transmission and storage are crucial, Information Theory helps evaluate the reliability of digital tools like records automation and electronic filing systems. Poorly managed systems often lead to information loss, duplication, and decision delays, as noted by Uwaoma and Ogaraku (2021). This theory emphasizes the importance of system structure and reliability for maintaining data clarity and reducing disruptions. Data security; a key measure in this study, aligns with the theory's concerns about signal fidelity and protection from noise. Chukwunweike and Briggs (2022) reported that weak digital safeguards contribute to record loss and undermine institutional trust. Thus, Information Theory supports the argument for investing in structured, secure, and interoperable systems that enhance clarity, promote seamless information flow, and ensure efficient administrative performance in Rivers State MDAs.

Digital Office Administration

Digital office administration involves the use of modern technologies to manage information, communication, and resources in a more efficient, accurate, and accessible way. It replaces traditional paper-based methods with digital tools such as word processors, cloud storage, automated filing systems, and collaborative platforms. Afolabi and Oduwole (2021) identify it as central to bureaucratic efficiency, especially in government institutions that handle vast documentation daily. Advanced countries like Sweden and the Netherlands integrate digital office practices with national e-governance systems for seamless operations (Jackson & Thomas, 2021). In contrast, most Nigerian MDAs still face adoption challenges due to low digital literacy, poor infrastructure, and fragmented ICT strategies. While some agencies have introduced digital tools, implementation remains inconsistent and fails to produce systemic change. Document digitization, automated scheduling, and electronic communications streamline administrative processes, reduce errors, and enhance transparency (Akinyemi & Alade, 2021). Estonia's centralized X-Road platform exemplifies how digital office systems can drive both internal efficiency and public access. In Nigeria, however, siloed operations persist, often causing duplication, delays, and weak accountability. A comprehensive digital office system would not only support data storage and transmission but also offer audit trails to ensure traceability and institutional integrity.

The shift to digital office systems also transforms workplace roles and demands new staff competencies (Alikornwo, Sam-Kalagbor & Nyeche, 2026). As administrative tasks become automated, civil servants must adapt through digital literacy and technical upskilling. Countries like Finland and Singapore have institutionalized digital training to keep public workers aligned with evolving systems (Ibrahim & Dauda, 2022). However, many Rivers State MDAs lack the training, support, and maintenance needed to sustain digital platforms, leading to a reversion to manual processes. Digital administration is also a cost-effective strategy over time, reducing expenses on physical storage, stationery, and courier services. Oladele and Musa (2020) forecasted that MDAs can cut up to 40% of recurrent overhead through digital recordkeeping. Rwanda and Kenya have leveraged such savings through national digital office programs, often implemented in partnership with ICT firms. Nigeria's limited investment and weak continuity planning have stalled similar progress. For digital office administration to yield its full benefits, it must be institutionalized through policy commitment, adequate funding, and strong monitoring frameworks.

Records Automation

Records automation refers to the application of digital technologies to manage records from creation through classification, storage, retrieval, and eventual disposal. It replaces manual processes with systems that capture, index, and organize data automatically, thus enhancing administrative efficiency. Countries like Australia and Germany have adopted enterprise content management systems (ECMS) that track documentation across agencies, ensuring data consistency, accuracy, and auditability (Bennett & Oliver, 2022). Conversely, Nigerian MDAs still rely heavily on manual registries and paper-based storage, resulting in inefficiencies, delays, and risks of data loss. Afolabi and Oduwole (2021) argue that these outdated practices hinder timely document retrieval and contribute to weak institutional memory. Functional records automation integrates scanning tools, document management software, metadata tagging, and search features that facilitate secure, fast access to information in structured formats. Kenya's e-Registry system, for example, allows automatic archiving and real-time monitoring of official communications (Okoth & Mwangi, 2020). In Nigeria, the absence of searchable databases often causes prolonged delays in accessing public records, which undermines service delivery and erodes public trust.

Automating records also protects against physical threats such as fire, theft, or environmental damage, which are common in government offices with poor infrastructure. Digital archiving on secure servers or cloud platforms ensures durability and easy restoration. Ibrahim and Dauda (2022) reported that over 30 percent of government records in Nigerian MDAs have been lost or damaged due to poor handling. Tools like Microsoft SharePoint and OpenText support long-term preservation and access control, while adherence to global standards such as ISO-15489 improves record reliability. Estonia offers a model example, having transitioned to a fully paperless administration using digital signatures and automated record systems (Scott & DeLone, 2020). Nigerian agencies can replicate this through cost-effective, context-appropriate platforms that align with their operational needs. Automation also reduces repetitive clerical work, allowing staff to focus on data integrity and strategic tasks. However, success depends on staff training, digital literacy, and active system use. Akinyemi and Alade (2021) identified user resistance and inadequate support as key obstacles, especially among older personnel. In many MDAs, systems exist but remain underutilized due to insufficient technical orientation. Therefore, beyond infrastructure deployment, agencies must embed automation within institutional routines, supported by user training, operating procedures, and routine maintenance. Records automation should be seen as an evolving process aimed at continuous administrative improvement.

Digital Filing Systems

Digital filing systems involve the structured organization and storage of electronic documents using computer-based platforms that facilitate quick sorting, retrieval, and management of information. These systems replicate the logic of physical filing but offer enhanced searchability, accessibility, and security through features like metadata tags, search filters, and permission-based access. Unlike manual cabinets that require physical handling, digital systems enable users to locate files instantly using criteria such as keywords, dates, or document types. Countries like Finland and Canada have implemented such systems in public institutions to support real-time access and inter-departmental coordination (Osei-Bryson & Dong, 2021). Often cloud-based, these systems ensure secure, multi-user access from various devices. In contrast, many Nigerian MDAs still rely on unstructured digital folders or outdated local drives without backup provisions, exposing sensitive data to risks of loss, unauthorized access, and inconsistent document formatting. Afolabi and Oduwole (2021) observe that the absence of standardized filing protocols results in data duplication, poor traceability, and administrative inefficiencies. Structured digital filing would centralize document storage, enforce naming conventions, and streamline access control, enhancing record integrity and organizational performance.

Moreover, digital filing systems are crucial for ensuring regulatory compliance and preserving institutional memory. Many global regulatory frameworks, such as the Federal Records Act in the

United States and the Public Records Act in New Zealand, mandate secure and traceable digital filing practices in public institutions (Jackson & Thomas, 2021). These frameworks require audit trails, version control, and document authenticity; all of which promote transparency and accountability. While Nigeria's National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) has issued general guidelines on digital records management, enforcement remains weak, leading to the persistence of hybrid (part-manual, part-digital) systems in many MDAs. Such inconsistencies hinder administrative efficiency and compromise data reliability. Implementing scalable digital tools such as M-Files, Document Locator, or customized SharePoint applications; tailored to local administrative needs, can help Rivers State MDAs modernize their operations and safeguard sensitive information. As government agencies manage growing volumes of confidential and mission-critical data, the adoption of secure and standardized digital filing systems is not just beneficial but essential for institutional modernization and responsive public service.

Information Management Success

Information management success refers to the extent to which an organization can systematically collect, store, retrieve, utilize, and secure information to support effective operations and decision-making. In public institutions, especially government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), successful information management underpins administrative efficiency, service quality, and policy implementation. Zauberman, Lynch and Ariely (2009) emphasize that for information systems to be effective, they must provide timely, accurate, accessible, and secure data. Countries like Norway and the United Kingdom enforce strict data quality protocols and retention standards, ensuring coherent decision-making and transparency. Conversely, many Nigerian MDAs struggle with fragmented data systems, inconsistent documentation, and poorly maintained records, leading to administrative delays and compromised service delivery. As Afolabi and Oduwole (2021) assert, the value of information lies in its transformation into actionable knowledge; a process only feasible when data systems are dependable and current. Singapore's Smart Nation Initiative illustrates how interoperable platforms can drive data integration across ministries, enabling evidence-based governance. In contrast, Nigeria's MDAs often operate in silos, hindered by missing files, disparate systems, and weak documentation practices. This undermines strategic alignment and operational coherence. Thus, the success of information management extends beyond mere data availability; it demands structured, well-governed systems that align with institutional objectives (Orisah-Godfrey & Alikornwo, 2026).

Equally essential to information management success is the balance between accessibility and security. Effective systems must allow authorized personnel to retrieve data easily while protecting against unauthorized access, loss, or manipulation. In countries like Denmark, role-based access, encryption, and audit trails ensure that sensitive information is both secure and readily accessible to relevant users (Scott & DeLone, 2020). In contrast, Nigerian MDAs often face accessibility challenges due to outdated software, poor integration, and insufficient user training. Data security remains a concern, with frequent breaches resulting from unsecured storage devices, public email platforms, and weak cybersecurity protocols. These vulnerabilities not only jeopardize institutional credibility but also expose agencies to legal and regulatory risks. Moreover, information management success is shaped by organizational culture. Institutions that foster transparency, documentation, and ethical data stewardship are more likely to achieve consistent outcomes. As Oladele and Musa (2020) argue, even sophisticated systems fail in environments where data is hoarded, undervalued, or misused. Finland's public sector, for instance, embeds ethical training into civil service development, promoting responsibility and fairness in data use. In Nigeria, record-keeping is often relegated to junior staff without strategic oversight, weakening institutional memory and encouraging informal practices. Achieving true information management success, therefore, requires not just technology but a transformative shift in institutional culture, championed by leadership and reinforced through policies and continuous capacity development.

Information Accessibility

Information accessibility refers to the ease and timeliness with which authorized personnel can retrieve and use organizational data to perform their duties. In the public sector, where effective governance relies heavily on records and documentation, accessibility is a cornerstone of institutional efficiency. Disjointed or poorly maintained systems result in time-consuming file searches, delayed decisions, and diminished public service delivery. Akparobore and Anie (2020) emphasized that the effectiveness of digital systems is closely tied to usability and traceability. In Rivers State MDAs, however, access often still depends on physical cabinets, unsecured flash drives, or informal request chains, making information retrieval slow and unreliable. Well-structured digital filing systems enhance accessibility through keyword search, metadata filters, and indexed storage. Countries like South Korea and the Netherlands have adopted integrated repositories that allow instant access to authorized staff across ministries (Osei-Bryson & Dong, 2021). In contrast, many Nigerian MDAs suffer from information silos and fragmented digital repositories, leading to file duplication and operational delays (Ogbonda & Wali, 2019). Accessibility is not merely about digital storage but about the logical arrangement, naming, and visibility of files. A poorly labeled document, even if stored electronically, may be as inaccessible as one that is lost. Afolabi and Oduwole (2021) argue that accessibility remains under-prioritized in Nigeria's digital governance strategy. Simple measures like standardized folder structures, metadata tagging, and naming conventions, when supported by administrative training, can substantially improve information access in Rivers State MDAs.

Data Security

Data security encompasses the protection of digital information from unauthorized access, alteration, or loss. In public institutions that handle sensitive data; ranging from personnel files to confidential policy drafts; security is critical to administrative continuity and public trust (Obara & Alikornwo, 2025). Weaknesses in data protection can lead to systemic breakdowns, financial fraud, or reputational damage. Obaro and Essien (2021) noted that many Nigerian MDAs lack formalized data security frameworks, leaving digital records exposed to risks such as hacking, human error, and device failure. Common vulnerabilities include poor password hygiene, unsecured networks, and the absence of backup or encryption protocols. More advanced systems in countries like Canada and Denmark apply multi-factor authentication, audit trails, and role-based access to ensure security and accountability (Bennett & Oliver, 2022). However, in many Rivers State MDAs, records remain stored on isolated computers without backup or oversight, making them vulnerable to corruption or loss (Olaka & Ejekwu, 2020). The use of personal devices and unofficial email accounts for official business further increases the risk of data breaches. Effective data security must go beyond technology to include organizational policies, staff training, and incident response preparedness. Institutions should implement regular system audits, cybersecurity drills, and data recovery protocols (Scott & DeLone, 2020). In this study, data security is examined alongside records automation, based on the premise that automated systems, if properly deployed offer structured controls that outperform manual systems in safeguarding sensitive information. As such, data security represents a vital measure of information management success in Rivers State MDAs.

Empirical Review

Several empirical studies have examined the role of records automation in enhancing public sector efficiency. Adebayo and Ogunleye (2021), in a study conducted across selected federal ministries in Abuja, reported that automated records management significantly improved the timeliness of information retrieval and reduced physical storage constraints. Their findings revealed that where automation was fully implemented, administrative staff processed internal memos and personnel files twice as fast compared to agencies still using manual systems. Similarly, Adeola and Okonkwo (2022) investigated the effect of records digitization on internal coordination in Lagos State secretariats and found a positive correlation between digital recordkeeping and interdepartmental

communication efficiency. However, the study noted that system breakdowns and lack of continuous ICT support remain persistent challenges. These findings support the assumption in the present study that automation enhances workflow and improves access to institutional memory, particularly in complex public organizations like MDAs in Rivers State.

Empirical evidence also links digital filing systems with information organization and retrieval quality. Ogbonda and Wali (2019), in their work on document management practices in Rivers State civil service, found that most MDAs lacked standardized digital filing protocols, leading to duplication, data inconsistency, and difficulties in locating official files. Their study emphasized the absence of unified file naming conventions and categorized storage frameworks, which often resulted in repeated creation of documents and loss of traceability. In contrast, a study by Kim and Lee (2021) on e-governance platforms in South Korea revealed that digital filing systems equipped with metadata tagging and hierarchical folders significantly enhanced administrative responsiveness and inter-ministerial transparency. The comparison demonstrates that while Nigerian MDAs are familiar with digital filing tools, the lack of structured deployment and training limits their effectiveness. This affirms the relevance of examining digital filing systems as a core predictor of information management outcomes in this research.

Also, empirical studies underscore the pivotal role of information accessibility in organizational effectiveness. Akparobore and Anie (2020), in a study involving Delta and Edo State government offices, found that digital file access systems enabled faster communication, quicker policy implementation, and greater satisfaction among administrative officers. Their study highlighted that access to digital records reduced the dependence on individual knowledge holders, thereby promoting continuity in governance. Conversely, Nwachukwu and Udo (2021) observed that in several MDAs across southeastern Nigeria, files were stored in isolated local drives without backup, rendering access difficult when responsible officers were absent. Their study recommended the institutionalization of cloud-based shared drives and role-based access models to improve accessibility. These findings justify the choice of information accessibility as a measure of information management success in this study, especially within the context of Rivers State MDAs that require structured and responsive administrative systems.

Empirical investigations into data security within public organizations show both opportunities and vulnerabilities. Obaro and Essien (2021) examined cybersecurity readiness in Nigerian MDAs and revealed that while some ministries had begun installing firewalls and antivirus software, many lacked encryption protocols and data recovery plans. Their study reported frequent cases of unauthorized access, missing records, and untraceable file modifications. Similarly, Chukwunweike and Briggs (2022), focusing on Rivers State, discovered that most MDAs did not conduct routine data backups or apply user-level access controls, leaving sensitive information at risk. In comparison, Bennett and Oliver (2022) explored public data protection in Canada and found that periodic audits, digital surveillance logs, and multi-level authentication had become standard practice. These contrasting findings reflect a critical gap in data protection practices in many Nigerian MDAs and underscore the importance of incorporating data security into the analysis of information management systems.

Previous empirical studies provide substantial evidence supporting the relevance of digital office administration to effective information management in public institutions. However, most studies focus either on federal-level agencies or isolated ICT components, with limited holistic analysis within sub-national contexts like Rivers State. This gap reinforces the significance of the present study, which integrates two key dimensions of digital administration: records automation and digital filing systems, and investigates their impact on two vital outcomes: information accessibility and data security. By anchoring this research within empirical trends and real administrative environments, the study provides a well-grounded platform for evaluating digital transformation in Rivers State MDAs.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative, correlational survey design to investigate the relationship between digital office administration and information management success in selected government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population comprised administrative and ICT staff from five purposively selected MDAs, including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Bureau of ICT, and Civil Service Commission. A structured questionnaire with 20 items was used as the research instrument, validated through expert review and subjected to a reliability test yielding a Cronbach alpha of 0.84. Data were collected from 120 respondents using stratified random sampling, ensuring adequate representation from each ministry. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient) were employed to analyze the data using SPSS Version 25. The level of significance was set at 0.05 for hypothesis testing.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Of the 120 questionnaires distributed, 112 were properly filled and returned, representing a response rate of 93.3%. The respondents comprised 61 males (54.5%) and 51 females (45.5%). A majority of them (72.3%) were within the age bracket of 31 to 50 years, and 83.0% reported having more than five years of experience in public administration. This profile suggests that the respondents possess considerable knowledge and experience regarding administrative practices and exposure to digital systems within their respective MDAs.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between records automation and information accessibility in Rivers State MDAs.

Table 1: Relationship between records automation and information accessibility

Variables	N	R	p-value	Decision
Records Automation vs. Information Accessibility	112	0.652	0.000	Reject H_{01}

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.652$, $p < 0.05$) indicates a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between records automation and information accessibility. This implies that the more digitized and structured an MDA's records system is, the easier it becomes for staff to access critical information for administrative action. This supports the earlier conclusion by Adebayo and Ogunleye (2021), who found a significant enhancement in public service delivery when digital records replaced paper-based systems.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between records automation and data security in Rivers State MDAs.

Table 2: Relationship between records automation and data security

Variables	N	R	p-value	Decision
Records Automation vs. Data Security	112	0.590	0.000	Reject H_{02}

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The analysis shows a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.590$, $p < 0.05$) between records automation and data security. This suggests that as MDAs automate their records, the likelihood of data breaches, unauthorized file access, and document tampering reduces. It also affirms findings by Obaro and Essien (2021), who noted that automation provides digital audit trails and version control, which help secure public records from unauthorized manipulation.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between digital filing systems and information accessibility in Rivers State MDAs.

Table 3: Relationship between digital filing systems and information accessibility

Variables	N	r	p-value	Decision
Digital Filing Systems vs. Information Accessibility	112	0.670	0.000	Reject H_{03}

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

The correlation result ($r = 0.670$, $p < 0.05$) confirms a strong positive and significant relationship between digital filing systems and information accessibility. The presence of well-structured, searchable, and logically arranged digital files improves the speed and ease of retrieving needed documents. This aligns with the conclusions of Kim and Lee (2021), whose study showed that structured digital repositories enabled faster administrative decision-making and reduced file duplication in government agencies.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between digital filing systems and data security in Rivers State MDAs.

Table 4: Relationship between digital filing systems and data security

Variables	N	r	p-value	Decision
Digital Filing Systems vs. Data Security	112	0.703	0.000	Reject H_{04}

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

A strong and statistically significant correlation was observed ($r = 0.703$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that effective digital filing systems significantly enhance data security in MDAs. Systems that include controlled access, encryption, and secure digital folders help prevent unauthorized access and reduce the risk of file loss or compromise. This outcome echoes the findings of Chukwunweike and Briggs (2022), who established that ministries with robust digital filing frameworks experienced fewer incidences of data breaches or tampering.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from all four hypotheses reveal that both dimensions of digital office administration: records automation and digital filing systems have statistically significant positive relationships with the core indicators of information management success: information accessibility and data security. Specifically, automation improves not only the speed of information access but also the reliability and traceability of stored data. On the other hand, a well-structured digital filing framework boosts access convenience while simultaneously protecting institutional documents from threats. These outcomes suggest that Rivers State MDAs that embrace comprehensive digital strategies are more likely to experience reduced administrative delays, improved transparency, and stronger information governance structures.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between digital office administration, operationalized through records automation and digital filing systems and information management success, measured by information accessibility and data security, in selected MDAs within Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings from the analysis confirmed that both dimensions of digital office administration have a statistically significant and positive relationship with information management success. These results offer empirical support to the growing body of literature that affirms the transformational potential of digital systems in public sector governance. The study has shown that the strategic implementation of digital tools does not only enhance operational responsiveness but also addresses issues such as document retrieval delays, unauthorized access, and institutional memory lapses that have long plagued MDAs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MDAs in Rivers State should prioritize the full automation of administrative records to ensure timely access to accurate and up-to-date information.

2. MDAs should adopt secure and structured digital filing systems that include user authentication protocols, file access control, encryption, and audit trails.

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