

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE STRATEGY: ASSESSING THE ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOUNTABILITY REFERENTS IN PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The escalating complexity of public administration in the 21st century has necessitated the adoption of sophisticated information management frameworks to ensure that government institutions remain transparent, efficient, and answerable to the citizenry. This study investigates the relationship between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Accountability in public sector institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. The conceptual framework operationalizes Information Governance Strategy through the lens of process automation, data integration, and information ethics, while Administrative Accountability is measured using transparency and answerability. Grounded in the Agency, Stewardship, and Weberian Bureaucratic theories, the study explores the mechanisms through which structured information systems mitigate bureaucratic inertia and institutional opacity. A descriptive survey research design was utilized, collecting data from a sample of 450 administrative and academic personnel across ministries and tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression analysis. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between Information Governance Strategy and both measures of Administrative Accountability. Specifically, the integration of digital information systems facilitates real-time tracking of administrative actions, thereby enhancing the answerability of public officials. Furthermore, process automation was found to reduce the opportunities for administrative discretion, thereby promoting institutional transparency. The study concludes that the institutionalization of a robust information governance framework is a prerequisite for successful administrative reforms in the Rivers State civil service. Recommendations include the development of a comprehensive state-wide digital information policy and the implementation of continuous capacity-building programs for administrative officers to enhance digital literacy and information ethics.

Keywords: Information Governance, Administrative Accountability, Public Sector, Transparency, Answerability.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary landscape of public administration in Nigeria is increasingly shaped by a decisive departure from rigid, hierarchical bureaucratic arrangements toward flexible, technology-enabled governance frameworks commonly described as Digital Era Governance (Alikornwo, Adiele, & Dornanu, 2025). Within the Nigerian administrative milieu, and more specifically in Rivers State, the

pursuit of public sector effectiveness is rooted in a long-standing reform agenda aimed at constructing a civil service that is adaptive, efficient, and citizen-oriented (Alikornwo & Nwinyokpugi, 2025). Rivers State occupies a strategic position within Nigeria as an industrial, commercial, and educational hub, hosting a dense concentration of public institutions that manage significant volumes of socio-economic data (Alikornwo & Nwinyokpugi, 2025). Successive reform initiatives have sought to reduce procedural bottlenecks, strengthen professional capacity, and enhance service delivery outcomes through the introduction of electronic administration tools designed to improve coordination and workflow management across ministries, departments, and agencies. These initiatives reflect an emerging recognition that administrative reform and digitalization must proceed concurrently to achieve meaningful improvements in organizational performance (Nwinyokpugi & Alikornwo, 2022).

The interrelationship between administrative strategy and digital information management is particularly pronounced in the operational realities of public tertiary institutions and government ministries in Rivers State (Alikornwo, Sam-Kalagbor & Nyeche, 2026). Administrative communication remains the central mechanism through which policies are interpreted, decisions are transmitted, and organizational coherence is maintained (Alikornwo & Nwinyokpugi, 2025). However, the effectiveness of this communication is significantly conditioned by the quality, accessibility, and reliability of underlying information systems (Alikornwo & Nwinyokpugi, 2025). Contemporary digital information systems have therefore evolved from simple repositories of records into strategic resources that shape the consistency, timeliness, and credibility of administrative actions (Adiele & Gbekee-Kalagbor, 2025). By enabling systematic data capture and analysis, these systems support a transition away from intuition-driven and paper-based practices toward decision-making processes grounded in verifiable evidence and institutional memory (Obara & Adiele, 2025).

Public institutions are among the largest producers of information, making the quality and accuracy of information essential for fostering openness, transparency, and accountability (Ogbonna, Egobueze, & Onya, 2025). Digitalization of information through online services reduces errors and strengthens management systems, while open data fosters innovation and maximizes returns on public investment (Chevallerau, 2020; Ogbonna et al., 2025). E-governance refers to the application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the management, administration, communication, and delivery of services within public institutions (Siti, Zuraidah, & Mohd, 2025). The adoption of web-based platforms catalyzes efficiency by streamlining processes and encouraging citizens to engage with government services (Ndou, 2024). In Nigeria, the importance of e-governance led to the formulation of a National Policy on Information and Communication Technology, aimed at enhancing transparency and efficiency in the early 2000s (Abdulkareem & Ishola, 2021). However, the diffusion of these initiatives remained limited, necessitating successive projects such as the E-Nigeria project to connect agencies and institutions (Amagoh, 2020).

Accountability and transparency have emerged as pivotal principles of good governance and effective public administration, particularly in developing democracies such as Nigeria (Ojo, 2019). Effective accountability involves holding public officials answerable for their actions, decisions, and use of public resources (Mulgan, 2000). It requires a system of checks and balances that ensures transparency, reduces corruption, and promotes efficient service outcomes (World Bank, 2020). Despite numerous institutional reforms and anti-corruption frameworks, service delivery remains ineffective due to weak implementation, poor institutional capacity, and systemic corruption (Ogunlana, 2021). Strengthening institutional autonomy, promoting citizen engagement, and digitalizing transparency systems are essential for ensuring efficient and responsive public service delivery in Nigeria's public sector (Nwambuko, Egbuchulam, & Amanze, 2026). Accountability mechanisms reinforce institutional exposure, as failures in high-profile programs often trigger inquiries or leadership changes (PA 2023).

Statement of the Problem

Administrative inefficiency continues to pose a persistent and systemic challenge for public institutions in Rivers State, manifesting in operational delays, coordination failures, and weakened decision-making capacity (Adiele & Bestman, 2025). These inefficiencies are evident in routine administrative processes where approvals are protracted, interdepartmental communication is poorly synchronized, and institutional responses to emerging issues are slow and inconsistent (Adiele & Bestman, 2025). Although successive reform efforts have emphasized modernization and capacity building, the administrative architecture of many ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) remains anchored in labor-intensive and paper-based workflows that are ill-suited to the demands of contemporary governance (Okafor & Nwachukwu, 2025). The fragmented nature of digital implementations means that electronic systems often function alongside manual processes, producing hybrid arrangements that lack the efficiency of fully automated systems (Adiele & Bestman, 2025). These structural limitations are further intensified by a weak culture of information utilization, where data is not consistently transformed into actionable knowledge to inform administrative judgment (Obara & Adiele, 2025).

Furthermore, where access to timely and accurate information is limited, administrative processes are prone to delays and diminished responsiveness (Obara & Adiele, 2025). This gap hinders coordination, accountability, and overall administrative effectiveness, highlighting the urgent need to investigate how strategic information governance can enhance transparency and answerability (Obara & Adiele, 2025). Persistent challenges such as political interference, weak institutional capacity, and limited compliance with guidelines like the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) continue to undermine the accountability outcomes of public institutions (Nwosu, Adekunle, & Eze, 2022). There remains a lack of empirical work that explicitly links information governance strategy dimensions to specific administrative accountability measures within sub-national government institutions in the Niger Delta region (Alikornwo & Obara, 2025). In the absence of such evidence, public sector managers risk committing substantial resources to technologies that remain poorly aligned with operational realities, thereby reinforcing inefficiency rather than resolving it (Alikornwo & Obara, 2025).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information Governance Strategy

The concept of Information Governance (IG) has evolved from traditional records management into a multi-disciplinary field that integrates decision rights, accountability, and technical protocols for managing information assets (Smallwood, 2020). Gartner Research defines information governance as the specification of decision rights and an accountability framework to ensure appropriate behavior in the valuation, creation, storage, use, archiving, and deletion of information. IG serves as a critical discipline that enables organizations to systematically manage their information assets while balancing legal, ethical, and operational imperatives (Saleh, Idris, & Abubakar, 2021). It encompasses the policies, procedures, and technologies designed to optimize data quality and regulatory compliance (Earley, 2016). In the public sector, IG provides a framework for ensuring that institutional information is created and managed securely across its life cycle (Proenca et al., 2016; Wilson, 2016).

Information governance is often conceptualized through three main themes : who is responsible and accountable, how policies and standards are carried out, and what value or compliance goals are being directed (Tallon et al.; Weill & Ross, 2004). The core disciplines of IG include metadata management, security and privacy, data quality, business process integration, and information lifecycle management (Soares, 2012; Ballard et al., 2014). Within the public administration of Rivers State, a robust IG strategy is characterized by a deliberate orientation toward evidence-based governance and transparency in information handling (Mensah, 2023). Achieving an optimal balance

between decision timeliness and accuracy is essential for fostering effective governance and efficient service delivery (Okeke & Ugwu, 2021).

Process Automation: Process automation refers to the application of software and digital platforms to manage repetitive, rule-based administrative functions such as document processing, payroll, and procurement tracking. The goal of automation is to rationalize internal procedures, reduce delays, and minimize human error by moving away from labor-intensive manual workflows (Alikornwo et al., 2026). In Rivers State institutions, automation acts as a strategic tool to overcome bureaucratic inertia by creating predictable and efficient administrative cycles (Nwinyokpugi & Alikornwo, 2022). Automation enables the systematic capture of information, ensuring that administrative actions are grounded in verifiable evidence rather than personal discretion (Obara & Adiele, 2025).

Empirical evidence suggests that automation in the workplace has a significant relationship with employee commitment and organizational productivity (Zeb-Obipi & Ikoromasoma, 2021). By providing tools to organize daily tasks, automation helps optimize the use of institutional resources and facilities (Tella, Adeyinka, Ayeni, & Popoola, 2007). In the context of local government councils in Rivers State, administrators are encouraged to adopt automation to help employees keep pace with technological advances and minimize organizational loss (Zeb-Obipi & Ikoromasoma, 2021). Process automation also facilitates the creation of a digital audit trail, which is essential for documentation integrity and administrative consistency (Obara & Adiele, 2025).

Data Integration: Data integration involves the consolidation and harmonization of information flows across different organizational units to eliminate information silos (Adiele & Sam-Kalagbor, 2026). It establishes shared platforms that connect disparate data sources, reducing duplication and enhancing data consistency (Alikornwo et al., 2026). Within public tertiary institutions and ministries in Rivers State, data integration is crucial for providing a unified view of administrative operations, which supports informed decision-making and policy implementation (Adiele & Bestman, 2025). Effective integration ensures that information preparers, auditors, and users have access to reliable and synchronized data (Cifuentes-Faura, 2023).

Furthermore, the lack of inter-departmental data integration has been identified as a major factor contributing to slow and inconsistent administrative decisions in Rivers State (Okeke & Ugwu, 2021). When departments operate in isolation without structured knowledge flow, the institution as a whole becomes less responsive to internal and external challenges (Chikwe, Dike, & Akpan, 2023). Digital information systems have evolved into strategic resources that shape the credibility of administrative actions by providing a centralized repository for institutional knowledge (Adiele & Gbekee-Kalagbor, 2025). Strengthening data integration is therefore linked to improved administrative responsiveness and overall decision quality (Obara & Adiele, 2025).

Information Ethics: Information ethics represents the normative dimension of information governance, focusing on the responsible management of sensitive and proprietary information (Mensah, 2023). In public administration, a commitment to information ethics entails safeguarding data integrity, confidentiality, and the secure management of operational records (Rabbani, 2024). It involves institutionalizing data ethics among staff to promote transparency in information handling and protect against data breaches (Obara & Adiele, 2025). Ministries that cultivate a strategic information culture prioritize accurate data collection and ethical practices that encourage knowledge sharing across hierarchical levels (Mensah, 2023).

A weak commitment to information ethics often results in restricted access to timely data and a culture of secrecy that undermines public trust (Okeke & Ugwu, 2021). The use of data science tools in the public sector extends beyond technical merits to broader issues of governance and ethical

judgment (Straub et al., 2023). Ethical governance is not peripheral but central to the effectiveness and legitimacy of public sector management (Agostino et al., 2023). Without adherence to ethical codes, even advanced digital systems can be manipulated, leading to biased outcomes and compromised accountability (Lehner et al., 2022).

Administrative Accountability

Administrative accountability in the public sector is the obligation of government officials to explain, justify, and take responsibility for their decisions and actions before citizens and oversight authorities (Onuorah & Appah, 2012). It serves as a key pillar of good governance, promoting compliance with legal and ethical standards (Akinwunmi & Akinola, 2019). In Nigeria, the institutional framework for accountability is supported by the Fiscal Responsibility Act and the Public Procurement Act, which aim to regulate financial management and ensure ethical conduct (UNODC, 2024; World Bank, 2023). Accountability is fundamentally linked to stewardship, where public administrators entrusted with resources must account for their stewardship at all times (Akpan, 1995).

Administrative Transparency

Transparency is a cornerstone of good governance and a critical determinant of public trust in Nigerian government institutions (OECD, 2018). It entails openness, access to information, and the willingness of government institutions to disclose their activities for public scrutiny (Bovens, 2007). Transparency involves making administrative processes visible and understandable to citizens, thereby discouraging corruption and promoting efficiency (Mulgan, 2000; Ogunlana, 2021). In Rivers State, transparency in government expenditures and service delivery is essential for building public confidence and ensuring that resources are used in the public interest (Agostino et al., 2021). Information governance supports transparency by ensuring that institutional information is accessible, credible, and capable of supporting compliance (Maurel & Zwarich, 2021).

Administrative Answerability

Answerability refers to the obligation of public office holders to face sanctions when misconduct occurs and to face oversight from the principal regarding the discharge of their responsibilities (Bovens et al., 2022). It involves a judgment by the principal of the extent to which the steward has properly discharged their responsibility (Yang, 2005). In the public sector, answerability requires a sound system of internal controls, including administrative reviews and system performance appraisals (Dibie, 2014). Answerability mechanisms like audits and financial disclosures are crucial for ensuring that public resources are managed efficiently (Ojo, 2019). In Nigerian public sector entities, rigorous budget review processes and hearings substantially enhance financial discipline and administrative responsibility (Nwosu et al., 2022).

Theoretical Framework

Agency Theory

Agency theory, rooted in organizational economics, describes a contractual arrangement where one party (the principal) appoints another (the agent) to carry out actions on their behalf (Jensen & Meckling, 1976; Bouckova, 2015). In the public sector, the government and citizens act as principals while public administrators serve as agents (Siti et al., 2025). Two potential problems arise in agency relationships: the agency problem, where interests conflict and monitoring is costly, and the problem of risk-sharing (Eisenhardt, 1989). Agency theory has been the primary tool in accountability research to hypothesize the behavior of parties in administrative procedures (Schillemans, 2013).

Information asymmetry is a common challenge in applying agency theory, occurring when the agent has access to a different volume of information than the principal (Nchukwe & Adejuwon, 2013).

Principals may be unable to effectively monitor agents, leading to moral hazard or opportunistic behavior (Eisenhardt, 1989). Agency theory suggests that mechanisms such as performance-based incentives and strict monitoring are necessary to align the interests of the administrator with those of the owners or the public (Donaldson & Davis, 1991). Applying agency theory to local government councils in Rivers State can improve service delivery, employee efficiency, and public trust in elected officials (Iyowuna & Davies, 2021).

Stewardship Theory

Stewardship theory presents an alternative perspective, suggesting that managers inherently act as stewards who prioritize the organization's welfare over their personal gain (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997). Unlike agency theory's assumption of self-interest, stewardship theory posits that executives are motivated by intrinsic values, such as job satisfaction, organizational success, and a sense of duty (Donaldson, 1990). Under stewardship theory, leadership transcends mere authority and embodies the ethos of resource guardianship for long-term success.

Stewardship relies heavily on the development of trust between executives, shareholders, and stakeholders, reducing the need for costly monitoring systems (Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003). The theory encourages a collaborative environment where decisions are made for the collective organizational benefit. In the public sector, stewardship theory suggests that public administrators are pro-organizational and trustworthy, and when granted autonomy, they act in ways that promote institutional goals (Sundaramurthy & Lewis, 2003). Stronger support has often been found for stewardship theory in public sector settings where goal convergence exists between ministers and officials (Boon, 2016).

Weberian Bureaucracy Theory

Max Weber's theory of bureaucracy offers a comprehensive framework for structuring governmental entities, promoting order, efficiency, and predictability in organizational life (Weber, 1947). Bureaucracy is characterized by a hierarchical authority structure, task specialization, and adherence to explicit rules and regulations (Pollitt et al., 2004). It emphasizes that power should derive from one's official position and professional competence rather than personal loyalty (Weber, 1947). Administrators maintain impersonality to ensure rational, unbiased decision-making and are hired based on qualifications (Daykin, 2003).

Weberian theory asserts that bureaucracies contribute to better performance by minimizing arbitrary decisions and maintaining hierarchical functional structures. In the context of Rivers State Government Agencies, bureaucratic structures facilitate accountability through written standards of conduct and merit-based systems (Kelly, Mulgan, & Muers, 2000). This theory provides the foundation for evaluating institutional efficiency and the ability to prevent resource wastage (Sami, Jusoh, Nor Irfan, & Liaquat, 2018). Modern information governance strategy serves as a digital layer that reinforces these bureaucratic principles by ensuring documentation integrity and procedural clarity (Nwinyokpugi & Alikornwo, 2022).

Empirical Review

Obara and Adiele (2025) investigated the relationship between strategic information culture and administrative decision-making efficiency in government ministries in Rivers State. Their findings revealed a significant positive relationship between strategic information culture and administrative decision-making efficiency. The study demonstrated that proactive information sharing, systematic documentation, and integrity of institutional records contribute significantly to faster and more accurate administrative outcomes within public sector organizations.

Similarly, Alikornwo and Nwinyokpugi (2025) examined the mediating role of information management systems in the relationship between administrative communication and decision-

making dynamics in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Their results showed that information management systems significantly enhance both the speed and quality of administrative decisions. The study established that well-structured digital information systems facilitate timely communication flows, improve record accessibility, and strengthen managerial decision processes within tertiary institutions.

Further empirical evidence was provided by Alikornwo et al. (2026), who examined the predictive influence of administrative strategy on public sector effectiveness in Rivers State. Their findings indicated that administrative strategy significantly predicts institutional efficiency and responsiveness, explaining 61.7 percent of the variance in institutional efficiency and 49.1 percent of the variance in responsiveness. The authors further identified digital information management systems as a substantial mediating factor in this relationship, accounting for 56.6 percent of the observed variance in public sector performance outcomes.

In another related investigation, Alikornwo and Obara (2025) explored the influence of dark data management on administrative competence in public sector organizations in Rivers State. Their empirical results showed a significant positive relationship between dark data management and decision-making as well as process execution, with correlation coefficients of 0.674 and 0.702 respectively. The study concluded that structured digitization and systematic management of latent data resources improve institutional capacity for timely resource alignment and operational coordination.

Beyond Rivers State, several studies have examined similar relationships in other parts of the country. Alabi, Daramola, and Fakorede (2021) investigated information management practices within the civil service of Lagos State and found that fragmented and poorly coordinated data systems contributed to slow administrative decision-making and weak service delivery outcomes. The study emphasized the need for integrated information governance frameworks to improve administrative coordination and public service effectiveness.

Similarly, Ogunyemi, Balogun, and Emecheta (2022) examined digital infrastructure development and data utilization in public institutions in Ogun State. Their findings revealed that investments in digital infrastructure alone do not automatically translate into improved administrative outcomes. Rather, effective backend data utilization and structured governance of institutional information resources are necessary to achieve meaningful improvements in organizational performance.

From a broader theoretical and managerial perspective, Smallwood (2020) emphasized that effective information governance systems enable organizations to monitor information safety, ensure regulatory compliance, and maintain operational transparency. The author argued that the absence of structured information governance frameworks often leads to poor service quality, operational inefficiencies, and long-term organizational failure.

Similarly, Siti et al. (2025) highlighted that information governance structures play a crucial role in ensuring record reliability, institutional accountability, and sustainable administrative performance across both public and private sector organizations. Their findings reinforced the view that information governance has become an indispensable institutional mechanism for improving transparency, coordination, and decision-making effectiveness in contemporary organizations.

Based on the empirical review and the thematic discussion, the following null hypotheses are formulated:

H₀₁: Information Governance Strategy has no significant relationship with Administrative Transparency in public sector institutions in Rivers State.

H₀₂: Information Governance Strategy has no significant relationship with Administrative Answerability in public sector institutions in Rivers State.

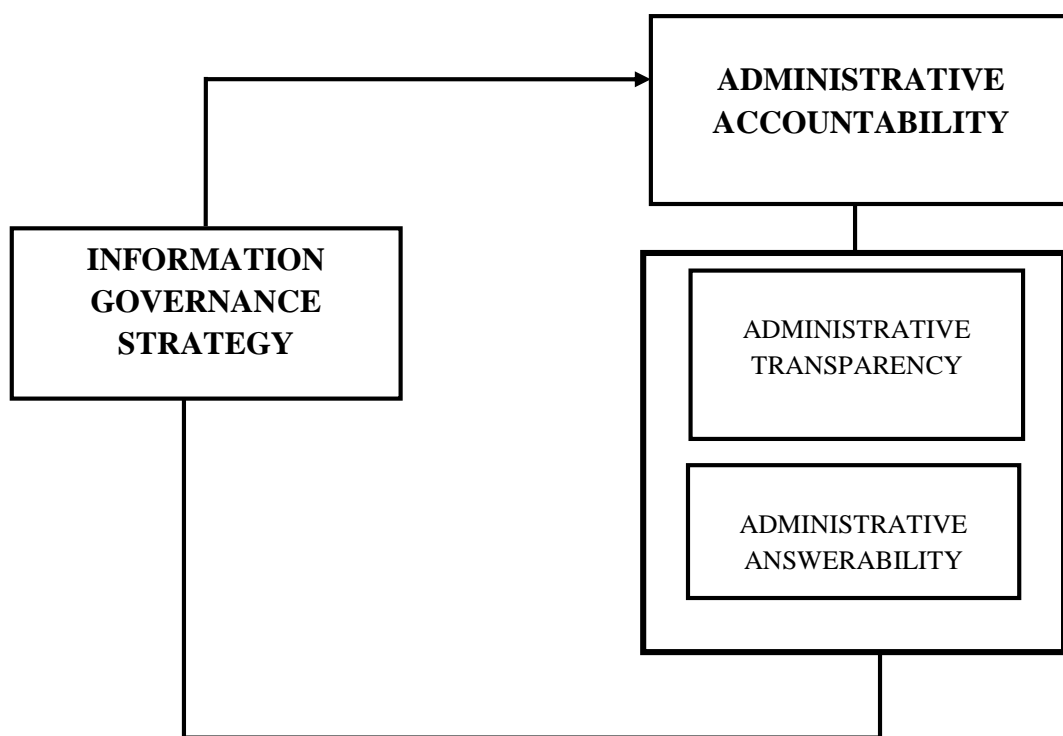


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Accountability in Public Sector Institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design utilizing a cross-sectional approach to investigate the correlational relationship between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Accountability in Rivers State. The target population consisted of administrative and academic staff in 14 selected public sector institutions, including government ministries and state-owned tertiary institutions such as Rivers State University and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select 450 respondents, ensuring a representative distribution of roles including directors of administration, finance, procurement, and project management. Data collection was facilitated through a structured questionnaire titled "Information Governance and Administrative Accountability Index" (IGAAI), designed on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument underwent content validation by experts in the field of Office and Information Management, and reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's Alpha, with all constructs yielding coefficients above 0.70. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the respondents' profile and research variables, while the null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at a 0.05 level of significance to determine the strength and direction of the relationships.

RESULTS

The presentation of results focuses on the test of the two null hypotheses to determine the relationship between the predictor and the measures of the criterion variable.

Hypothesis One Testing

H₀₁: Information Governance Strategy has no significant relationship with Administrative Transparency in public sector institutions in Rivers State.

Table 1: Correlation between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Transparency

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	r-value	p-value	Decision
Information Governance Strategy	3.82	0.74	415	0.617*	0.000	Reject H01
Administrative Transparency	3.65	0.82	415			

*Significant at 0.05 level. **Source:** Research Survey, 2026.

As shown in Table 1, the correlation analysis reveals a coefficient (r) of 0.617 between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Transparency. The calculated p-value (0.000) is less than the chosen significance level of 0.05. This indicates a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the implementation of information governance protocols and the transparency of administrative processes. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H01) is rejected. This implies that as the strategy for information governance improves through automation and ethical handling, institutional transparency in public sector organizations in Rivers State significantly increases.

Hypothesis Two Testing

H02: Information Governance Strategy has no significant relationship with Administrative Answerability in public sector institutions in Rivers State.

Table 2: Correlation between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Answerability

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	N	r-value	p-value	Decision
Information Governance Strategy	3.82	0.74	415	0.592*	0.000	Reject H02
Administrative Answerability	3.58	0.79	415			

*Significant at 0.05 level. **Source:** Research Survey, 2026.

The results in Table 2 indicate a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.592, which signifies a moderate to strong positive relationship between Information Governance Strategy and Administrative Answerability. The p-value (0.000) is below the 0.05 threshold, demonstrating that the relationship is statistically significant. Thus, the second null hypothesis (H02) is also rejected. These findings suggest that the institutionalization of robust information governance frameworks provides the structural and evidentiary support necessary for public officials to justify their actions and remain answerable to oversight bodies.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study demonstrate that Information Governance Strategy is a vital driver of Administrative Accountability within the public sector of Rivers State. The significant positive correlation found between IG strategy and administrative transparency aligns with the assertions of Obara and Adiele (2025) and Alikornwo et al. (2026), who noted that a strategic information culture characterized by proactive sharing and documentation integrity leads to more transparent

administrative outcomes. By moving away from manual, paper-based workflows that are prone to opacity and error, institutions in Rivers State can leverage automation to make their processes more visible and verifiable. This finding resonates with the core tenets of Agency Theory, where digital transparency serves as a monitoring mechanism to reduce information asymmetry between the administrator and the public.

Furthermore, the relationship between IG strategy and administrative answerability highlights the role of structured information systems in creating a "digital audit trail" that compels responsibility. This is consistent with the findings of Alikornwo and Nwinyokpugi (2025), which identified Information Management Systems as a critical mediator that translates administrative communication into actionable and timely decisions. In an environment where bureaucratic inertia has often hindered responsiveness, the integration of data and the institutionalization of information ethics provide the necessary infrastructure for officials to explain and justify their resource use effectively. The results also validate the work of Zeb-Obipi and Ikoromasoma (2021), suggesting that workplace strategies like automation trigger greater employee commitment and accountability in local government councils. Ultimately, the study confirms that institutional success in Rivers State is highly contingent on the alignment of technical infrastructure with a strategic information culture.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has established that Information Governance Strategy is a significant predictor of Administrative Accountability in public sector institutions in Rivers State. Through dimensions such as process automation, data integration, and information ethics, public organizations can foster an environment where administrative actions are transparent and officials are held answerable for their stewardship. The transition from labor-intensive traditional methods to digital governance frameworks is not merely a technical upgrade but a strategic necessity for enhancing public trust and institutional legitimacy. The empirical evidence underscores that the effectiveness of administrative strategy depends heavily on the quality and reliability of underlying information systems, which serve as the procedural backbone of modern governance.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. The Rivers State Government and management of public institutions should institutionalize cohesive digital governance policies that mandate the use of automated platforms for core administrative functions such as procurement, payroll, and record management.
2. Ministries and tertiary institutions should prioritize continuous workforce capacity development, focusing on enhancing digital literacy and institutionalizing data ethics among administrative staff to ensure that information is managed as a strategic resource.
3. Strategic efforts should be directed toward eliminating inter-departmental information silos through unified data integration platforms, which facilitate seamless communication and improve the speed and accuracy of administrative responses to citizen needs.

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