

**INFORMATION MANAGERS' INTEGRITY AND INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN DELTA STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study examined Information Managers' Integrity and Institutional Success of Tertiary Institutions in Delta State. The study sought to examine the relationship between transparency and institutional credibility, determine the relationship consistency and institutional growth/innovation and ascertain the relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency of tertiary institutions in Delta State. The research hypotheses are stated in line with specific objectives of the study. This study was anchored on Stewardship Theory and Resource Based Theory. The Cross Sectional Survey research design was adopted. The population of this study consists of 399 employees (VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries) of the tertiary institutions in Delta State. While the sample size of 297 was determined using Taro Yamen sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire, the instrument was validated and the reliability test was carried out. The data were presented and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Coefficient. The study concluded that the three independent dimensions; transparency, consistency and impartiality and dependent measures; Institutional credibility, institutional growth/innovation and operational efficiency has a significant relationship with Institutional success of tertiary institutions in Delta State. The study recommended that the management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure accountability to stakeholders and minimizing information asymmetry and trustworthy, reliable, and reputable by its stakeholders, including students, staff, regulatory bodies, and the public of institutional success, Management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure that stakeholders including students, staff, alumni, and regulatory agencies are more likely to trust institutions where information is consistently managed and involves the adoption and application of novel strategies, technologies, pedagogies, and administrative practices to improve institutional performance and competitiveness of institutional success and Management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure that impartiality ethical practices are embedded in the institution's culture, fostering long-term trust and sustainability and Efficient institutions can redirect saved resources towards research, technological innovation, and capacity building, which fuels institutional growth and competitiveness of institutional success.

***Keywords: Information, Managers' Integrity, Institution and Success***

**INTRODUCTION**

**Background to the Study**

In today's data-driven academic environment, information management plays a crucial role in the smooth functioning and sustainability of tertiary institutions. Information managers those responsible for creating, maintaining, and securing institutional records are expected to demonstrate high levels of integrity to ensure that institutional data is accurate, secure, and ethically handled. Their integrity is vital in protecting the credibility of academic records, financial documentation, personnel files, and institutional decision-making processes. In Delta State, Nigeria, tertiary institutions such as Delta State University (DELSU), Federal University of Petroleum Resources (FUPRE), Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, and College of Education, Agbor, increasingly rely on electronic information systems to manage admissions, staff records, research outputs, examinations, and accreditation data. As such, the integrity of information

managers in these institutions directly influences their institutional success, which encompasses academic excellence, administrative efficiency, stakeholder trust, and regulatory compliance.

Ezeani and Ugwu (2022), information managers' ethical behavior particularly in maintaining confidentiality, ensuring data accuracy, and adhering to institutional policies is essential in building trust among stakeholders and promoting effective governance. Adebayo et al. (2023) further assert that universities that maintain high standards of ethical information management tend to perform better in accreditation processes, student satisfaction, and global competitiveness. However, challenges such as result manipulation, unauthorized data access, admission irregularities, and unethical record handling continue to affect the performance and public perception of some tertiary institutions in Delta State. These challenges underscore the need for strong ethical standards among information managers to support institutional growth and protect institutional integrity.

In the current knowledge-driven era, the integrity of information managers has become central to the effective functioning of tertiary institutions. As custodians of institutional data, records, and communication systems, information managers are vital to maintaining data accuracy, confidentiality, and ethical standards. Their conduct directly influences institutional operations, decision-making, and long-term credibility. In Delta State, Nigeria home to several prominent tertiary institutions institutional success hinges significantly on the ethical behavior and professional standards upheld by these key personnel. These institutions depend heavily on data systems for managing student records, admissions, staff files, academic research, and regulatory compliance. Information managers in these settings must exercise high levels of integrity to ensure accurate recordkeeping, data security, and the credibility of internal processes.

However, challenges such as data manipulation, result falsification, admission irregularities, and poor record governance continue to affect many tertiary institutions, undermining trust and institutional performance. Institutional success refers to an institution's ability to achieve its academic, administrative, research, and community development objectives. When information managers act with integrity by upholding truthfulness, professionalism, and accountability they strengthen the institution's operational effectiveness, ensure accurate reporting, and build public trust. Ezeani and Ugwu (2022), ethical behavior among information professionals promotes data credibility, which is essential for institutional audits, accreditation, research visibility, and transparent decision-making. Similarly, Adebayo et al. (2023) note that institutions with robust ethical frameworks for data governance are more likely to achieve strategic goals such as student retention, program accreditation, staff motivation, and global competitiveness. There is a growing need to assess and understand how the integrity of information managers contributes to or undermines institutional success in Delta State tertiary institutions. With increasing reliance on digital systems and growing demands for transparency from regulatory bodies like the National Universities Commission (NUC), the ethical capacity of information professionals is becoming a key determinant of institutional outcomes.

Tertiary institutions serve as critical pillars for national and regional development by producing skilled graduates, fostering innovation, and conducting impactful research. In Delta State, Nigeria home to institutions such as Delta State University (DELSU), Federal University of Petroleum Resources (FUPRE), and Delta State University of Science and Technology (DSUST) the quest for institutional success has become increasingly urgent amid both local and systemic challenges. One of the foremost obstacles to institutional success in Nigerian higher education is insufficient funding and crumbling infrastructure. Many institutions suffer from aged or inadequate facilities, which partially stem from poor prioritization and systemic corruption. These broader issues weaken the foundation necessary for effective teaching, learning, and research. ([THISDAYLIVE](#), 2023).

Successful institutions offer high-quality teaching, curricula, and learning environments that produce competent, employable graduates who meet labor market demands. According to Adebayo et al. (2023), institutional success leads to improved teaching standards and enhances students' academic performance and readiness for the workforce. Institutional success supports research development, grants acquisition, and innovation in science, technology, and humanities.

Ogundele et al. (2023) affirm that successful tertiary institutions in Nigeria are more likely to attract funding and collaborate on national and international research projects.

As highlighted by Ogundele, Adegbite, and Adesina (2023), institutional success is not solely a product of academic outputs but also depends on the ethical and transparent management of information and processes. Therefore, assessing the role of information managers' integrity in enhancing institutional success is timely and essential, especially as Nigerian institutions are increasingly expected to meet global standards of accountability and transparency.

### Statement of the Problems

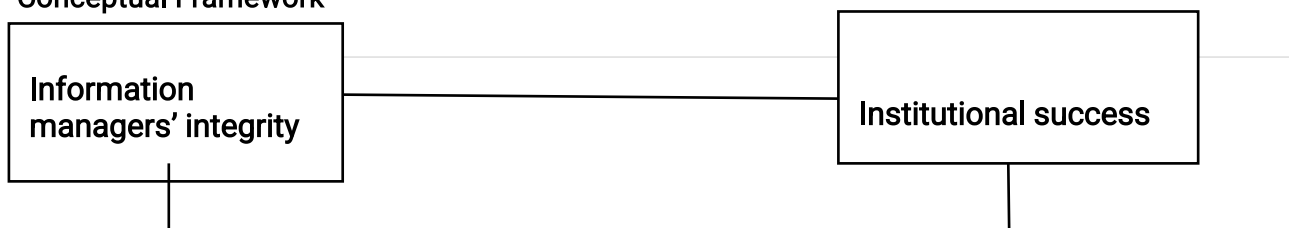
In the contemporary academic environment, information managers' integrity is critical to the performance and sustainability of tertiary institutions. The role of information managers has evolved from mere custodians of records to strategic enablers of institutional performance, especially in data-driven areas such as admissions, staff records, academic performance monitoring, research documentation, and compliance reporting. However, issues of compromised integrity including manipulation of student results, biased data handling, inconsistent recordkeeping, and lack of transparency continue to pose serious threats to institutional progress in many Nigerian tertiary institutions, including those in Delta State.

Despite the increasing reliance on digital information systems in institutions such as Delta State University (DELSU), Federal University of Petroleum Resources (FUPRE), Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku, and College of Education, Agbor, there remain gaps in ethical data management practices. Specifically, the dimensions of information managers' integrity transparency, consistency, and impartiality are often undermined, leading to challenges in institutional decision-making, regulatory compliance, and stakeholder trust. When transparency is lacking, vital information may be hidden or distorted, affecting accountability. A lack of consistency in record management can result in conflicting data, leading to administrative inefficiencies and errors in planning. The absence of impartiality in handling institutional information such as biased admissions or promotions can foster favoritism, corruption, and reputational damage. These challenges weaken the very foundation of institutional integrity and directly affect measures of institutional success.

The measures of institutional success namely institutional credibility, institutional growth and innovation, and operational efficiency are critically dependent on the integrity of the information being used for planning, assessment, and reporting. A breach in any of the integrity dimensions undermines the credibility of the institution in the eyes of students, parents, employers, regulatory bodies, and funding agencies. Moreover, innovation and institutional development efforts are hindered by unreliable data and untrustworthy systems, while administrative inefficiencies multiply in environments where ethical standards are not upheld.

Although several studies have addressed information ethics in Nigerian higher education, there is a paucity of empirical studies specifically linking the dimensions of information managers' integrity to institutional success in Delta State's tertiary institutions. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the extent to which transparency, consistency, and impartiality among information managers contribute to institutional credibility, institutional growth/innovation, and operational efficiency in tertiary institutions in Delta State.

### Conceptual Framework



**Fig 1:** Conceptual Framework showing the independent and dependent variable of information managers' integrity and institutional success with their Dimensions and Measures.

**Source:** Njoku (2023) & Atumu, (2023).

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine information managers' integrity and institutional success of Tertiary Institutions in Delta State. The specific objectives of the study show as follows:

1. to examine the relationship between transparency and institutional credibility of tertiary institutions in Delta State.
2. to determine the relationship consistency and institutional growth/innovation of tertiary institutions in Delta State.
3. to ascertain the relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency of tertiary institutions in Delta State.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide this study.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between transparency and institutional credibility of tertiary institutions in Delta State.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship consistency and institutional growth/innovation of tertiary institutions in Delta State.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency of tertiary institutions in Delta

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of this study concentrates on geographical, content and unit scopes.

**Content scope:** The content scope concentrated on the independent variable (information managers' integrity) and its dimensions (transparency, consistency and impartiality), and the dependent variable (institutional success) and its measures (institutional credibility, institutional growth/innovation and operational efficiency).

**Geographical Scope:** The study is confined to three tertiary institutions in Delta State, which includes; (1) Delta State University (DELSU), Abraka, Delta State, (2) University of Delta (UNIDEL), Agbor, Delta State and (3) University of Science and Technology, Ozoro (DSUST), Ozoro, Delta State

**Unit of Analysis:** The study covered the Registrars and ICT Directors of the tertiary institutions in Delta State. This is because they are the category of employees that provided the necessary information on information managers' integrity and institutional success.

### **Concept of Information Managers' Integrity**

Information managers' integrity refers to the adherence to strong moral and ethical principles by professionals responsible for handling, organizing, storing, and disseminating information within an organization or institution. It encompasses honesty, consistency, accountability, transparency, impartiality, and respect for confidentiality in managing information resources. According to Adebayo and Olatunji (2022), integrity in information management involves "upholding truthfulness, fairness, and ethical responsibility while ensuring accurate and secure information handling across all levels of an institution."

Information managers (librarians, records officers, MIS staff, data stewards) are gatekeepers of data, records, and information flows that underpin teaching, research, administration and public trust (Alexis, et al (2023). When they act with integrity honesty, accuracy, reliability, confidentiality and accountability institutions get better decisions, higher-quality research, improved services, and stronger reputation. Conversely, weak integrity produces poor data, bad decisions, research problems (plagiarism/fabrication), compliance risks and reputational damage. Alexis, et al (2023) posits that information managers who follow integrity principles ensure records are accurate, complete and retrievable. High-quality data supports budgeting, enrolment planning, accreditation evidence, and policy decisions. Studies in the South-South/Nigerian context show that data-storage, security and retrieval practices significantly affect research quality and institutional outputs. Poor data management fuels errors and misallocation of resources.

Condon, et al (2022) asserted that research data integrity (deliberate management of data quality, documentation and security) reduces risks of falsification or irreproducibility and raises research credibility important for promotion, grants and collaboration. A growing literature stresses that institutional support for research-data integrity is central to trustworthy scholarship. Accurate student records, reliable transcript systems and robust administrative databases depend on honest, consistent information handling. Condon, et al (2022) affirms that integrity lowers errors in result processing, admissions, fee records and timetables directly affecting student satisfaction and throughput. Evidence from Nigerian tertiary institutions links better data management with improved administrative outcomes. Institutions that demonstrate trustworthy information practices attract students, staff, funders and collaborators. Studies of librarians' integrity in South-South Nigeria find integrity traits (honesty, dependability, sound judgement) correlate with organisational reliability and reputation outcomes that matter for external funding and partnerships.

Odigwe, and Owan (2020) stated that information managers enforce privacy, retention and access rules. With rising regulation and expectations (data protection, research ethics, accreditation standards), integrity protects institutions from legal risk and sanctions. Scoping reviews of information governance show enterprise-wide governance frameworks are necessary to guarantee appropriate behaviours when handling information. Good information governance and integrity practices are part of an enabling administrative environment. Anho, (2022) observed that research on Delta State tertiary institutions shows that administrative motivation, participative decision-making and good staff management correlate with lecturers' productivity practices that are supported when information is reliable and managers are trustworthy. Recruit and promote information professionals with demonstrated integrity and train them in ethics, data governance and research data management. Ghaffari et al (2024) stressed that implement an institutional information-governance framework (roles, policies, audit trails, access controls, retention schedules). Invest in technical and process controls that support integrity: secure storage,

backups, metadata standards, data-management plans for research. Monitor and audit information practices regularly and link them to performance/appraisal systems.

## **Dimensions of Information Managers' Integrity**

### **1. Transparency**

Transparency in the context of information managers' integrity refers to the open, honest, and accountable disclosure of information, policies, and decisions to stakeholders in a manner that is accurate, timely, and accessible. In tertiary institutions in Delta State, transparency plays a central role in strengthening institutional integrity, building trust, and ensuring accountability in academic and administrative processes. Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) note that transparent information management builds mutual trust and reduces suspicion in higher education administration. Transparency assures stakeholders, students, staff, parents, alumni, and regulatory agencies that institutional decisions are fair and grounded in facts rather than favoritism or manipulation. For example, publishing admission criteria, grading policies and financial statements fosters confidence in institutional governance. Ejikeme and Ugwuanyi (2023) assert that transparency is a preventive measure against unethical behaviors in university records management. By ensuring that information managers disclose decisions and processes openly, transparency holds institutional actors accountable for their actions. This reduces corruption, data manipulation, and unethical practices in areas like exam results, staff promotions, and financial management.

Okpara and Eze (2022) found that transparent communication enhances cooperation between management and academic communities. When processes such as student registration, transcript issuance, or budget allocations are transparent, stakeholders are more willing to participate and support institutional initiatives. This inclusiveness boosts institutional morale and cooperation. Igbinoba and Anasi (2021) highlight that transparent ICT-based data systems improve data reliability and audit readiness. Transparency requires that data be accurate, accessible, and verifiable. In Delta State's tertiary institutions, this leads to improved compliance with reporting standards for accreditation bodies like the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Okoro and Nwachukwu (2023) emphasize that transparency in institutional reporting improves the credibility of higher education institutions. Educational oversight bodies require institutions to report consistently and truthfully. Transparent information handling ensures these reports meet the required standards, thereby safeguarding accreditation and funding. Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) argue that transparency is an essential conflict-prevention mechanism in university management. Lack of transparency often leads to speculation, rumors, and mistrust. Open information flow reduces grievances by ensuring that all parties have access to the same facts.

### **Consistency**

Consistency plays a significant role in enhancing the integrity of information managers within tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. Integrity, in this context, involves the ethical, accurate, and responsible handling of institutional information, and consistency serves as a foundational element that ensures reliability, trustworthiness, and continuity in information practices. Without consistency, integrity cannot be sustained, as erratic and unpredictable information practices erode institutional credibility and stakeholder trust. Consistent information practices reduce errors and discrepancies in institutional records. When data is managed using uniform procedures and tools, it becomes easier to track changes, verify information, and maintain accuracy over time. The sustained adherence to standardized processes and ethical standards in the handling and dissemination of institutional information, regardless of changes in personnel, circumstances, or external pressures (Okpara & Eze, 2022). This means that decisions, communications, and data practices remain aligned over time, reinforcing the institution's reliability and the credibility of its information systems.

Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) emphasize that consistent data handling enhances the credibility of academic records, particularly in areas like student transcripts, admissions, and staff records. Stakeholders including students, staff, alumni, and regulatory agencies are more likely to trust

institutions where information is consistently managed. According to Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022), integrity in information dissemination is best sustained when consistent ethical standards guide institutional operations. Consistency shows that information managers are reliable and ethical, which strengthens the institution's reputation. As Okpara and Eze (2022) note, integrity cannot be maintained without consistency, as it reflects adherence to ethical standards regardless of pressure or context. Okpara and Eze (2022) emphasize that consistency leads to uniformity in documentation, which is essential for auditing, compliance, and accreditation processes in universities.

In a context like Delta State where institutional leadership and staffing can change frequently, consistency ensures continuity. Established protocols, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and documentation enable new or acting staff to carry out tasks without disruption. Igbinoba and Anasi (2021) highlight that consistent use of information systems and processes supports institutional memory and administrative stability. National and regional regulatory bodies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC) require institutions to submit accurate and standardized data. Igbinoba and Anasi (2021) argue that consistent practices especially through ICT systems promote efficiency and reduce operational risks in tertiary institutions.

Consistency ensures that such data submissions meet regulatory expectations, supporting accreditation and funding access. Ejikeme and Ugwuanyi (2023) affirm that consistent information practices reduce risks of non-compliance, sanctions, or reputational damage. Reliable data is essential for decision-making in areas like curriculum development, staff promotion, student support, and financial planning. Consistency in how data is collected, stored, and retrieved ensures its usability for strategic decisions.

According to Okoro and Nwachukwu (2023), information managers who maintain consistency enable institutional leaders to make timely, informed, and evidence-based decisions. Inconsistent information management often leads to manipulation, favoritism, and corruption. By applying rules and procedures uniformly, information managers safeguard institutional integrity and accountability. Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) argue that integrity is most evident when data managers resist external pressures to alter records or bypass protocols. Students, staff, and external partners prefer dealing with institutions that are predictable and dependable. Consistent responses, services, and data handling enhance satisfaction and reduce administrative disputes or grievances. Ejikeme and Ugwuanyi (2023) note that consistent application of information policies helps institutions maintain integrity over time, regardless of internal or external changes.

Consistency is not just a technical requirement it is a moral and professional obligation for information managers. In Delta State tertiary institutions, where public trust and educational standards are continually tested, consistent information practices serve as a backbone for institutional integrity, credibility, and long-term success.

### **Impartiality**

Impartiality understood as the objective, unbiased, and fair handling of information is widely recognized as a core attribute of professional integrity for information managers (records officers, registrars, librarians, ICT managers) in higher education. Impartial information handling means decisions about access, retention, disclosure, grading records, admissions lists, and staff files are made according to established rules and evidence, not personal, political, or sectional interests. This conceptual link (impartiality → integrity) is emphasised in the literature on records administration and public sector information governance. [Emerald](#)

Empirical and sector studies from Nigeria show that institutional politics, weak governance frameworks, and external pressures frequently compromise impartiality in records and information management. Studies examining political influences on students' records management across Nigerian universities report that political interference, patronage, and ad hoc local practices undermine standardised, impartial handling of academic records—producing inconsistencies, grievances, and risks to institutional credibility. These findings imply that where governance is weak, information managers struggle to remain impartial even when they are professionally committed to doing so [AcademiaResearchGate](#). Closely related literature on information

governance and e-records management highlights structural enablers and impediments to impartial practice. Research into information governance implementation in Nigerian universities identifies the absence of clear policies, fragmented IT systems, and lack of staff training as critical barriers to consistent and impartial recordkeeping. Where electronic records systems and information-governance frameworks are weak or absent, opportunities for manipulation or preferential access increase; conversely, standardised e-records and governance frameworks support impartial treatment by enforcing rules and audit trails. [ResearchGatecredence-publishing.com](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368123456)

Integrity-focused studies of academic processes (for example, examinations, admissions, and certification) reinforce the importance of impartiality among information managers. Research on integrity and transparency in examination management in Nigerian public universities shows that impartial recordkeeping and open procedures (e.g., transparent publishing of results, auditable exam workflows) reduce malpractice, build stakeholder trust, and protect institutional reputation. These studies link impartial administrative conduct (by registries and records offices) directly to broader institutional integrity outcomes [EA JournalsEmerald](https://www.emerald.com/insight). A recurring theme in the literature is the interplay between institutional culture, governance, and individual ethics. Several reviews and field studies argue that while professional codes and training are necessary, they are not sufficient: impartiality is sustained when supported by (a) formal policies and SOPs, (b) robust ICT/e-records infrastructure that leaves audit trails, (c) independent oversight or internal audit, and (d) leadership that models and enforces non-partisan practices. In the Nigerian tertiary context, improvements in these structural areas—rather than depending solely on individual virtue—are presented as the pragmatic route to strengthening impartiality and, thereby, information managers' integrity. [ResearchGatecredence-publishing.com](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/368123456)

Finally, although there is limited Delta-State-specific empirical literature explicitly labelled "impartiality of information managers," the national and regional studies cited above are directly applicable: Delta State universities and polytechnics face many of the same governance, ICT, and political-pressure challenges highlighted in the national literature. Therefore, recommendations emerging from the broader Nigerian literature—introducing clear IG (information governance) policies, investing in e-records, strengthening internal audit, and protecting registry offices from undue interference—are relevant and evidence-based pathways for improving impartiality and integrity in Delta State tertiary institutions. [Academiacredence-publishing.com](https://www.academiacredence.com)

Impartiality in the context of information managers' integrity refers to fairness, neutrality, and objectivity in managing institutional information without bias, favoritism, or prejudice. In tertiary institutions in Delta State, impartiality is essential for maintaining trust, credibility, and ethical governance in the handling of academic and administrative information. Impartiality ensures that decisions such as student admissions, grading, staff promotions, and resource allocation are made based on merit and established policies, not personal interests. This reinforces stakeholders' trust in the institution.

Okoro and Nwachukwu (2023) note that impartiality in records and information handling prevents the perception of corruption and reinforces ethical conduct. When stakeholders perceive information managers as impartial, they are more likely to view the institution as credible and professional. This boosts public confidence and enhances the reputation of the institution locally and internationally. Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) highlight that impartiality in information dissemination fosters positive institutional image and stakeholder loyalty. Bias in handling academic results, disciplinary records, or recruitment data often leads to disputes. Impartiality minimizes grievances by ensuring decisions are justified and consistent with documented policies. Ejikeme and Ugwuanyi (2023) emphasize that impartiality acts as a conflict-mitigation tool in higher education governance.

Tertiary institutions are expected to comply with rules from oversight bodies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC). Impartiality ensures that reporting and data management are factual and unbiased, aligning with regulatory requirements. Igbino and Anasi (2021) state that impartial handling of institutional records is essential for meeting national and international accreditation standards. An impartial information management culture creates a level playing field

where all stakeholders regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, or background have equal access to opportunities and information. Okpara and Eze (2022) observe that impartiality supports diversity and inclusion in institutional decision-making processes. Without impartiality, institutional policies lose their legitimacy. Upholding impartiality ensures that ethical practices are embedded in the institution's culture, fostering long-term trust and sustainability. Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) conclude that impartiality is not only a virtue but a strategic tool for sustaining institutional integrity.

### **Concept of Institutional Success**

Institutional success in higher education is commonly understood as the extent to which a tertiary institution attains its core goals: academic excellence, student learning outcomes, research productivity, regulatory compliance (e.g., accreditation), stakeholder satisfaction, and sustainable growth (funding, infrastructure, partnerships). Success is therefore multi-dimensional and measured by a mix of input (funding, staff qualifications), process (quality assurance, governance), and output (graduate employability, research outputs, rankings). Institutional success in tertiary institutions refers to the ability of an institution to effectively achieve its core objectives of academic excellence, research productivity, community engagement, operational efficiency, and sustainable development. In Delta State, institutional success has far-reaching implications, not only for the universities themselves but also for the socio-economic growth of the state and the nation.

Institutional success ensures the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning, which is critical for producing competent graduates who can meet labor market demands. According to Omoregie and Onokpita (2022), the success of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is closely tied to their ability to uphold academic standards, adopt modern teaching methods, and maintain relevant curricula that align with national development needs. Successful tertiary institutions contribute to knowledge generation through impactful research and innovation. In Delta State, universities such as Delta State University, University of Delta, and Delta State University of Science and Technology have made contributions in agriculture, technology, and social sciences. Eze and Okolie (2021) stress that research productivity not only enhances institutional reputation but also attracts funding and collaborative opportunities. Institutional success strengthens credibility, attracting more students, faculty, and partners. Okoh and Ugochukwu (2023) note that a strong reputation leads to increased enrollment, improved alumni engagement, and better community trust, which are vital for institutional sustainability in Delta State.

Adegoke et al. (2022) highlight that institutional success in Nigerian states correlates with reduced unemployment and increased entrepreneurial ventures among graduates. Tertiary institutions play a significant role in local and regional development. Successful institutions create jobs, drive innovation, and stimulate economic activities. Institutional success promotes efficient resource management, ensuring accountability and transparency in operations. Adequate governance structures help institutions in Delta State manage finances, facilities, and human resources effectively, thereby fostering trust among stakeholders (Ogunyemi & Ojeifo, 2021). Tertiary institutions in Delta State that achieve consistent success improve their positions in national and global rankings, thereby enhancing their visibility and attractiveness to international students and researchers (Okoh & Ugochukwu, 2023). Institutional success in Delta State tertiary institutions is multi-faceted and driven by leadership, funding, QA systems, staff capacity, ICT adoption, and external partnerships. Recent national policy supports (e.g., TETFund) and local case studies point to practical levers for improvement, but Delta-specific empirical research especially comparative and longitudinal studies remains limited. Strengthening institutional planning, QA cultures, and resource management, while leveraging national funding schemes, appears the most evidence-based path toward improved institutional success in Delta State.

### **Measures of Institutional Success**

#### **1. Institutional Credibility**

Institutional credibility refers to the degree to which a university or polytechnic is perceived as

honest, competent, and dependable is a cornerstone of institutional success. In Delta State tertiary institutions (e.g., Delta State University, University of Delta, Delta State Polytechnic), credibility affects outcomes ranging from student enrolment to research partnerships, funding, accreditation, and socio-economic impact. Below are the main ways credibility drives success, with recent evidence. Institutional credibility refers to the extent to which a higher education institution is perceived as trustworthy, competent, transparent, and consistent in fulfilling its mission and obligations to stakeholders (Hemsley-Brown et al., 2021). It encompasses the confidence that students, staff, regulators, and the public have in the institution's governance, academic quality, information management, and ethical standards. In tertiary institutions within Delta State—such as Delta State University, the University of Delta, and Delta State Polytechnic—credibility is not merely about perception but also about demonstrable adherence to ethical principles, transparent operations, and dependable performance over time.

Okebukola, (2022) stated that institutional credibility is a critical determinant of institutional success, which includes achieving sustained enrolment growth, maintaining high graduate employability, securing funding, attaining accreditation, excelling in research output, and fostering socio-economic impact. When credibility is high, stakeholders are more willing to invest trust, resources, and collaboration into the institution. Conversely, credibility deficits can undermine student recruitment, funding opportunities, and regulatory standing (Suleiman, 2024). Research shows that in the Nigerian higher education context, credibility strengthens institutional competitiveness and reputation, thereby enhancing the institution's ability to attract quality students, skilled staff, and strategic partners (Hemsley-Brown et al., 2021; Oyewole et al., 2023). In Delta State specifically, the competitive environment between state, federal, and private tertiary institutions makes credibility a key differentiator for long-term success.

Adebayo and Kareem, (2023) opined that credibility also interacts with information managers' integrity, as reliable information systems and transparent records are central to building and sustaining trust. Well-managed, accurate, and accessible institutional information supports accreditation processes, fosters donor confidence, and assures stakeholders of the institution's operational competence. In sum, institutional credibility serves as both a foundation and amplifier for institutional success in Delta State tertiary institutions. It underpins effective governance, strengthens academic reputation, and ensures that achievements are sustainable and recognised by stakeholders locally and globally.

### **Institutional Growth/Innovation**

Institutional growth refers to the progressive expansion and improvement of a tertiary institution's academic programmes, infrastructure, enrolment capacity, research output, and stakeholder engagement over time (Okebukola, 2022). Institutional innovation, on the other hand, involves the adoption and application of novel strategies, technologies, pedagogies, and administrative practices to improve institutional performance and competitiveness (Aina&Olatunji, 2023). Both growth and innovation are interrelated, as sustained growth often requires continuous innovation to adapt to changing educational demands, technological advancements, and policy landscapes.

In Delta State, tertiary institutions such as Delta State University, University of Delta, and Delta State Polytechnic operate in a competitive higher education market that demands strategic growth and innovation to achieve institutional success. This success is measured by indicators such as accreditation status, graduate employability, research impact, community engagement, and financial sustainability (Ogu & Okeke, 2023). Institutions that actively embrace innovation such as introducing e-learning platforms, modernizing curricula, and implementing data-driven governance tend to achieve faster and more sustainable growth (Aina & Olatunji, 2023).

Globally, literature shows that innovation fosters differentiation, enabling institutions to stand out in academic offerings and service delivery (Hemsley-Brown et al., 2021). In the Nigerian context, this is particularly significant given the increasing competition from private universities and international institutions offering online degrees. For Delta State tertiary institutions, integrating innovation into teaching methods, research practices, and administrative operations can strengthen their credibility, attract quality students and faculty, and enhance their regional and

international reputation. Moreover, institutional growth and innovation contribute to resilience, enabling institutions to adapt to disruptions such as funding cuts, policy shifts, or crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (Suleiman, 2024). By cultivating a culture of continuous improvement, institutions not only expand their capacity but also maintain relevance in an evolving educational landscape.

Institutional growth and innovation are essential drivers of sustained competitiveness, relevance, and excellence in tertiary institutions. In the context of Delta State, where public universities, polytechnics, and colleges compete for students, funding, and recognition, these two elements play a pivotal role in determining institutional success. Growth in academic programmes, faculty qualifications, and research output improves institutional ranking and credibility (Okebukola, 2022). Innovation in curriculum design and teaching methods such as blended learning and competency-based education helps institutions stay aligned with global standards, thus improving graduate employability (Aina & Olatunji, 2023). With increasing competition from private universities and international institutions, innovation allows Delta State tertiary institutions to differentiate themselves. Unique academic offerings, technology-driven teaching, and student-centred learning environments attract more students and partnerships (Hemsley-Brown et al., 2021).

Technological and administrative innovations streamline processes such as admissions, records management, and resource allocation. This reduces bureaucratic delays and enhances service delivery, making institutions more responsive to stakeholder needs (Ogu & Okeke, 2023). Growth in research capacity and innovation in research methodologies contribute to solving local and global problems, securing grants, and enhancing institutional prestige (Suleiman, 2024). This in turn reinforces institutional credibility and attracts top talent. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that institutions capable of rapid innovation such as implementing online learning were better able to sustain academic operations (Aina & Olatunji, 2023). For Delta State tertiary institutions, innovation ensures preparedness for future disruptions. Growth in institutional outreach programmes and innovation in knowledge transfer help bridge the gap between academia and industry. This promotes societal impact, which is a critical measure of institutional success in the region (Ogu & Okeke, 2023). Institutional growth and innovation are not just desirable but necessary for ensuring academic excellence, operational sustainability, and societal relevance in Delta State's tertiary education sector.

### **Operational Efficiency**

Operational efficiency refers to the optimal use of human, financial, and technological resources to deliver quality education, research, and community services with minimal waste and maximum productivity. In tertiary institutions, it is a critical driver of institutional success because it determines how effectively available resources are converted into desired educational outcomes (Akinyemi & Adebayo, 2023). In the context of Delta State's tertiary institutions—such as Delta State University, the University of Delta, and Delta State Polytechnic—operational efficiency involves ensuring that academic, administrative, and support functions run smoothly, cost-effectively, and in alignment with strategic goals. This includes:

1. **Streamlined Administrative Processes:** Efficient admission, registration, and records management systems reduce bottlenecks and improve service delivery for students and staff (Okoro&Chinedu, 2022).
2. **Optimal Resource Utilization:** Effective allocation and monitoring of financial and material resources ensure value for money, reducing operational wastage and promoting sustainability (Ogu & Okeke, 2023).
3. **Technology-Driven Efficiency:** Adoption of ICT for teaching, learning, and administration enhances speed, accuracy, and accessibility of institutional operations (Eze, 2023).
4. **Workforce Productivity:** Well-trained academic and non-academic staff contribute to higher institutional output in terms of research, publications, and graduate quality (Babalola & Olayemi, 2021). Operational efficiency is linked to institutional success because it enables institutions to: Deliver high-quality academic programmes, Achieve financial sustainability, Respond quickly to environmental changes and Maintain strong stakeholder trust through

consistent performance.

Operational efficiency is a cornerstone of sustainable institutional performance in tertiary education because it ensures that resources are strategically utilized to maximize productivity, quality, and service delivery. In the competitive and resource-constrained environment of Delta State's tertiary institutions such as Delta State University, University of Delta, and Delta State Polytechnic operational efficiency directly determines the ability of an institution to achieve its goals. Akinyemi and Adebayo, (2023) asserted that operational efficiency ensures that scarce resources (human, financial, material, and technological) are deployed optimally to avoid waste and duplication of efforts. In a state where many institutions operate with limited funding, efficient resource management is essential to sustain academic and administrative functions (Akinyemi & Adebayo, 2023). Streamlined administrative processes, faster response times, and well-coordinated academic schedules improve students' and staff experiences. This enhances institutional reputation and supports student retention (Okoro & Chinedu, 2022).

Ogu and Okeke, (2023) affirmed that efficient operations ensure compliance with the National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory bodies' standards, improving institutional credibility and enabling successful accreditation of programmes. Through cost control, budget discipline, and strategic investments, operational efficiency helps institutions remain financially stable while expanding services and infrastructure (Eze, 2023). Efficient institutions can redirect saved resources towards research, technological innovation, and capacity building, which fuels institutional growth and competitiveness (Babalola&Olayemi, 2021). Consistent operational excellence fosters trust among students, parents, staff, alumni, and government, strengthening the institution's public image and influence (Nwosu&Nnamdi, 2022). Operational efficiency is not just a matter of cost-saving it is a strategic enabler of institutional success. In Delta State's tertiary institutions, it improves quality, sustainability, credibility, and competitiveness, ensuring that institutions remain relevant in the rapidly changing higher education landscape.

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Stewardship Theory – Founders: Donaldson & Davis (1991)**

Stewardship Theory was articulated by Lex Donaldson and James H. Davis in their seminal 1991 work as a response to the limitations of Agency Theory. While Agency Theory assumes that managers are primarily self-interested actors who must be controlled through monitoring and incentives, Stewardship Theory posits that managers (or stewards) are motivated to act in the best interests of the organization due to intrinsic motivations such as commitment, trust, and the satisfaction of achieving organizational goals (Donaldson & Davis, 1991). According to Donaldson and Davis, stewards see their roles as custodians of the organization's assets and reputation, prioritizing the institution's long-term success over personal gains. This approach assumes that organizational performance is optimized when decision-making authority is given to those who are intrinsically committed to the institution's mission, reducing the need for extensive control mechanisms.

Stewardship Theory is highly relevant, information managers who embody stewardship principles uphold integrity, transparency, and accountability in handling institutional records and data. By acting as trustworthy stewards, they enhance institutional credibility, support informed decision-making, and foster sustainable growth and innovation key pillars of institutional success. Donaldson and Davis's Stewardship Theory shifts the perspective of governance from control and monitoring toward trust, commitment, and shared purpose, offering a valuable framework for understanding how integrity-driven information managers can contribute to institutional success.

#### **Resource Based View (RBV)**

Resource Based View (RBV) of Barney (1991) suggests that sustainable competitive advantage is attainable when firms have a human resource pool which cannot be imitated or substituted by rivals. According to the Resource-Based view, firms should constantly evaluate their workforce to ensure that they have the right people with the right skills in the right places to ensure sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 2001) and when this is not the case, firms should make-up for the

shortfall by employing appropriate recruitment and selection criteria. The theory maintained that the major part of any firm's strength or weakness stem from the calibre of the people employed and the quality of their working relationships. To this end, Boxall (1998) revealed that firms which recruit and retain exceptional individuals have the capability of generating human capital advantage. According to Sparrow et al., (2002), technology and capital can be acquired by most firms any time, for a price, but it is not easy to acquire a ready pool of highly qualified and motivated employees. Thus, in order to be differentiated, the companies need to be very careful with the recruitment and selection process.

### **Empirical Review**

Umar, Punaji. Waras and Sulton (2021). Explored Administrators' Moral Integrity and Teachers' Productivity at Madrasah Boarding Schools Indonesia. This article uncovers learning methods and teaches moral integrity and leadership in training a six-year cadre. Umar, Punaji. Waras and Sulton's study on the relationship between administrators' moral integrity and teachers' productivity has captured the critical constructs of measuring integrity and this is moral integrity. Considering the constructs in this topic, their choice for a qualitative research design only was grossly inadequate. This study ought to have adopted a correlational survey research design or at best mixed mode. This has negatively affected the participants' size, 25 for this critical study. Their statement of the problem has failed to tell us the ideal situation and the reality on ground and what the consequences would be if unattended to. The sample size the researchers chose was not the representative sample of the population. It is less than ten percent of the population of teachers in the study area. This would negatively affect generalizability. The researchers though conducted interviews but it is evidently clear, they lack a deeper understanding on thematic representation and analysis and interpretation of phenomenological findings. They would have used an open ended structured questionnaire, because it obvious they lack the technical competence with thematic representation emanating from interviews.

Oluyemisi and Haastrup (2021) investigated integrity and openness as correlates of university effectiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. This study examined the relationship between some leadership traits and university effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 3,418 academic and 8,937 non-academic staff in all the 7 federal universities and 11 states universities in Southwest Nigeria. Their study was fundamental in the region. It was the first study of its kind and came at a very critical time when integrity is needed the most in our institutions of higher learning especially the universities. The statement of the problem was well articulated bearing in mind the ideal situation of university effectiveness when being run with high level of integrity by the top management cadre and went further to tell us the reality of university effectiveness in the region which according to them is on the decline. Principal officers' integrity was partly questioned and felt something needs to be urgently done. However, some weaknesses were spotted in their study. The topic was faulty. The sub construct of the independent variable "openness" should have been buried in the integrity which is the major independent construct. It shouldn't be glaring in the topic. Their choice of the descriptive survey design to merely describe situation is an anomaly. They ought to have adopted a more robust design like the correlational survey or at best mixed mode. Mixed mode will give deeper exploration on the quantitative findings.

José (2020) carried out a qualitative research on Professional Integrity for Educational Quality in Management Sciences at University of Guadalajara, Mexico. The objective of this study is to analyze the importance of professional integrity as the improvement concept and ethics in the development of professionals in administration and management sciences. The research method employed is the ethnographic, documental, and life histories, complemented with field work supported by in-depth interviews and analyzed using a comparative method. The outcomes of the research on the application in management education demonstrate that the drama of economic efficiency is centered on dysfunctional professional integrity. This researcher demonstrated unparalleled competence in handling qualitative research. José used an array of qualitative research methods to dig into the professional integrity for educational quality in management

sciences at Guadalajara, Mexico. However, our ears were left itching as we wanted to envisage the quantitative quantum of relationship as to how professional integrity influences educational quality. This yearning was left swinging in the air like a pendulum because the design adopted by José (2020) lacked the numerical power to envisage such a relationship. Hence, the need to employ aspect of quantitative design approach to give it a balanced flavour.

Majda and Khaled (2021) investigated the relationship between academic integrity of online university students and its effects on academic performance and learning quality. The first hypothesis aimed to see if there is statistically significant relationship between academic honesty of students taking online classes and their apparent academic performance. The second hypothesis aimed to see if there is a statistically significant difference in academic integrity among male and female students. The third hypothesis aimed to see if there was a statistically significant relationship between academic honesty of students and their quality of learning. The study was carried out in Amman, Jordan. The researchers demonstrated high level of competence in handling digital tools in the conduct of their research. The design the used was accurate and the digital instrument they deployed to elicit responses from the participants yielded high level of data sanctity and the analysis was also electronically configured and executed. However, the findings of this study though accurate yet can be crucified on the altar of generalizability because of the sample size. They collected their data from a sample of 150 subjects. This could not give them the latitude to generalize. With this level of digital competence they demonstrated, they would have opted for a global target. To make this study standard, the sample size should be reconsidered in the future.

### **Gap Knowledge**

From the literature review, it was observed that a good number of studies have been conducted on information managers' integrity and institutional success of tertiary institutions in Delta State. However, most of studies conducted does not relate to the dimensions information managers' integrity as transparency, consistency and impartiality, while same to the measures of institutional success (institutional credibility, institutional growth/innovation and operational efficiency) to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. These uncovered areas have created huge gaps in literature which this study seeks to fill and contribute.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The cross-sectional survey research design was adopted in the study. The population of the study consists of all the three tertiary institutions – (VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries) in the tertiary institutions in Delta State. The total population for the study is 399. The study adopted Simple random sampling techniques and a sample size of two hundred (297) was used for the study which was drawn from employees (VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries) of the tertiary institutions in Delta State. The method through which study data were collected was from the primary source, the primary source of data gathering was adopted which was questionnaire. The instrument was validated by research supervisor and two other experts in Office and Information Management, their comments, observations and responses were used to effect corrections on the final copies of the questionnaire that were administered to the respondents. The researcher carried out the reliability test for the research instrument using the Cronbach's Alpha Correlation Coefficient. The result of the reliability test was carried out using statistical analysis software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, showing Cronbach's Alpha Correlation Coefficient of 0.85 for all the items in the questionnaire used for the study. This indicates that the research instrument was highly reliable and appropriate which was administered for the purpose of eliciting answers to the research questions stated in the study. The bivariate analysis was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient at 0.05 level of significance. All the coefficient (r) values that indicate levels of significance as calculated using SPSS were accepted and thus our alternate hypotheses were accepted and when no significance was indicated in the coefficient(r) value, we reject the null hypotheses. We set out confidence interval at 0.05 level of significance to test the statistical significance of this study.

Both the significance values and coefficient values were used.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 4.1 Mode of Questionnaire Distribution and Retrieval

Names Of Institutions	Tertiary	Category Respondents	Of	No. Questionnaire Distributed	Of Retrieved Copies	% Retrieved
Delta State University (DELSU)	University	VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries		95	30	10.1%
University of Delta (UNIDEL)		VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries		122	50	16.8%
University of Science and Technology, Ozoro (DSUST)		VCs, Registrars, ICT directors, Deans, HODs and Secretaries		80	30	10.1%
<b>Total</b>				<b>297</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Data Survey 2023.

Table 4.1 above shows that a total number of two hundred and ninety-seven (297) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to three tertiary institutions in Delta State. However, the researcher was able to retrieve one thousand-ten (110) copies representing 37% of the total copies of the questionnaire distributed. Thus, one hundred and eighty-seven (187) copies representing 63% were not retrieved.

Testing of Hypotheses

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between transparency and institutional credibility of tertiary institutions in Delta State.

Table 4.2: Correlation analysis showing relationship between transparency and institutional credibility

			Correlations	
			Transparency	Institutional
Pearson (r)	Transparency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.738*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.037
		N	110	110
	Institutional Credibility	Correlation Coefficient	.738*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.
		N	110	110

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

SPSS output, 2023.

The output analyzed the extent to which transparency relate with institutional credibility. Pearson correlation co-efficient indicates a strong association between the two variables (pr =0.738).The test of significance indicates that with P 0.037< 0.05 we reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between transparency and institutional credibility of tertiary institutions in Delta State. Thus, we can say that higher levels of transparency were associated with higher levels of institutional credibility.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship consistency and institutional growth/innovation of tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Table 4.3:** Correlation analysis showing relationship between transparency and institutional credibility

		Correlations		
			Consistency	Institutional Growth/Innovation
Pearson (r)	Consistency	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.908*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.033
		N	110	110
	Institutional growth/innovation	Correlation Coefficient	.908*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.033	.
		N	110	110

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*SPSS output, 2023.*

The output analyzed the extent to which consistency relate with institutional growth/innovation. Pearson correlation co-efficient indicates a strong association between the two variables (Rs=0.908).The test of significance indicates that with  $P\ 0.33 < 0.05$  we can reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between consistency and institutional growth/innovation. Thus, we can say that higher levels of consistency were associated with higher levels of institutional growth/innovation.

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency of tertiary institutions in Delta State.

**Table 4. 4:** Correlation analysis showing relationship between transparency and institutional credibility

		Correlations		
			Impartiality	Operational Efficiency
Pearson (r)	Impartiality	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.857**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.007
		N	110	110
	Operational Efficiency	Correlation Coefficient	.857**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.
		N	110	110

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

*SPSS output, 2023.*

The output analyzed the extent to which impartiality relate with operational efficiency. Pearson correlation co-efficient indicates a strong association between the two variables (Rs=0.857).The test of significance indicates that with  $P.007 < 0.05$  we can reject the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency. Thus, we can say that higher levels of impartiality were associated with higher levels of operational efficiency.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of the study are discussed under the following headings:

### **Transparency and Institutional Credibility**

The test of hypotheses one, revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between transparency and institutional credibility of tertiary institutions in Delta State. The findings from the correlation analysis reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between transparency and institutional credibility. The correlation coefficient of 0.738 ( $p = 0.037 < 0.05$ ) suggests a strong positive association, indicating that transparent communication enhances cooperation between management and academic communities. This result is similar with the findings Okoro and Nwachukwu (2023) emphasize that transparency in institutional reporting improves the credibility of higher education institutions. While Okebukola, (2022) stated that institutional credibility is a critical determinant of institutional success, which includes achieving sustained enrolment growth, maintaining high graduate employability, securing funding, attaining accreditation, excelling in research output, and fostering socio-economic impact.

### **Consistency and Institutional Growth/Innovation**

The test of hypotheses two, revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between consistency and institutional growth/innovation of tertiary institutions in Delta State. The findings from the correlation analysis reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between consistency and institutional growth/innovation. The correlation coefficient of 0.908 ( $p=0.033 < 0.05$ ) suggests a strong positive association, indicating that consistency serves as a foundational element that ensures reliability, trustworthiness, and continuity in information practices. This result is similar with the findings Ofoegbu and Okonkwo (2022) emphasize that consistent data handling enhances the credibility of academic records, particularly in areas like student transcripts, admissions, and staff records. While Suleiman, (2024) emphasizes that institutional growth and innovation contribute to resilience, enabling institutions to adapt to disruptions such as funding cuts, policy shifts, or crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Impartiality and Operational Efficiency**

The test of hypotheses three, revealed that there is a strong positive relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency of tertiary institutions in Delta State. The findings from the correlation analysis reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between impartiality and operational efficiency. The correlation coefficient of 0.857 ( $p=0.007 < 0.05$ ) suggests a strong positive association, indicating that impartiality ensures that decisions such as student admissions, grading, staff promotions, and resource allocation are made based on merit and established policies, not personal interests. This result is similar with the findings Ejikeme and Ugwuanyi (2023) emphasize that impartiality acts as a conflict-mitigation tool in higher education governance. While Ogu and Okeke, (2023) affirmed that efficient operations ensure compliance with the National Universities Commission (NUC) and other regulatory bodies' standards, improving institutional credibility and enabling successful accreditation of programmes.

## **Conclusion**

The study concluded that all the three dimensions of independent variable; are transparency, consistency and impartiality positively affects the institutional success of Tertiary Institutions in Delta State.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure accountability to stakeholders and minimizing information asymmetry and trustworthy, reliable, and reputable by its stakeholders, including students, staff, regulatory bodies, and the public of

- institutional success.
2. Management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure that stakeholders including students, staff, alumni, and regulatory agencies are more likely to trust institutions where information is consistently managed and involves the adoption and application of novel strategies, technologies, pedagogies, and administrative practices to improve institutional performance and competitiveness of institutional success.
  3. Management of tertiary institutions in Delta State should ensure that impartiality ethical practices are embedded in the institution's culture, fostering long-term trust and sustainability and Efficient institutions can redirect saved resources towards research, technological innovation, and capacity building, which fuels institutional growth and competitiveness of institutional success.

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