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Digital Transformation and Operational Efficiency in Local Government Administration of Oyo State

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Abstract

Digital transformation (DT) in public sector administration has recently sparked debate, as most local government areas in remote areas have yet to fully leverage technology in their management processes, thereby affecting operational efficiency. This study examined the influence of digital transformation on the operational efficiency of Local Government Areas' administration processes in Oyo State. A descriptive survey research design was employed, targeting staff members across different administrative levels within the local government. A sample of 1000 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. Findings revealed a significant relationship ($r = 0.663$, $p < 0.05$) between the level of digital transformation and administrative planning processes. Furthermore, digital transformation significantly enhanced operational effectiveness of planning ($r = 0.525$, $p = 0.008$) and promoted transparency in administrative activities ($r = 0.740$, $p = 0.000$). The study concluded that digital transformation can improve operational efficiency in Local government administration in Oyo State. The study therefore recommended that administrators be continually trained in digital technologies, and that the government enact legislation to enforce the use of DT across all local government areas to improve transparent and efficient processes.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, operational efficiency, Local government administration, administrative planning, organizational culture.

Introduction

The increasing pressure on Local government administration from the government, society, and the general public to enhance transparency, efficiency, and accountability has led to the integration of digital solutions into local government planning frameworks, administration, and service delivery, according to Kuhlmann & Heuberge (2021). The urgency of digital transformation in Local government administration became more pronounced during the COVID-19 pandemic, which restricted contact-based service delivery. As noted by Palos-Sánchez et al. (2023), the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the urgency of adopting digital tools to maintain continuity in public service delivery, further highlighting the nexus between digital transformation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In Nigeria, the local government system has traditionally been characterized by limited financial resources, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and a slow pace of technological adoption. However, recent trends indicate a growing recognition of the need for digital transformation to enhance

service delivery, improve citizen engagement, and optimize administrative planning. For instance, studies on local government digitalization in Nigeria have shown that integrating digital tools can mitigate challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and poor record-keeping, ultimately leading to a more efficient and responsive public sector (Okorie et al., 2024).

Local government comprises the administrative units responsible for implementing government policies and delivering services at the grassroots level to improve people's living standards. It is the closest level of government to the citizens and plays a critical role in ensuring that public services are accessible, equitable, and efficient. Local governments face unique challenges, including budgetary constraints, infrastructure deficits, varying levels of digital literacy among employees, and poor service delivery (Orie, Nwosu, Chinenyenwa, Izekwe, & Sunday, 2024). The integration of digital transformation into local government procedures has the potential to reduce or eliminate these challenges by introducing more efficient, transparent systems for administrative planning.

Digital transformation (DT) has emerged as a critical driver of change in public sector management and administration across the globe, and it is widely defined as the comprehensive integration of digital technologies into all aspects of an organization's operations, fundamentally altering how services are delivered, processes are managed, and decisions are made (Mahula, Lindquist, Norström & Lindman, (2022). In the context of local government, DT involves adopting innovative tools such as cloud computing, big data analytics, and blockchain technology to modernize public administration, enhance transparency, and increase operational efficiency (Vehtasvili, Sumar, Altin, & Fitriyanti, 2024). Digital transformation is not an isolated phenomenon but interacts dynamically with other key variables in the governance ecosystem, particularly administrative planning and local government management. Digital transformation interlinks with administrative planning in local government by reshaping the planning processes. For instance, the incorporation of digital tools enables real-time data analysis and forecasting, which enhances the accuracy of policy formulation, the timely allocation of resources, and service delivery. The advent of DT and the rapid evolution of digital tools have significantly altered the operational efficiency of local governments in planning, delivering, and managing public services. This paradigm shift is particularly relevant for administrative planning, which has traditionally relied on manual processes and paper-based systems.

Operational efficiency in administrative planning in local government refers to an optimal, structured process through which local authorities design, implement, and monitor policies and programs to deliver public services and manage community resources. It encompasses the systematic collection of data, analysis of community needs, formulation of strategic plans, and execution of initiatives that drive socio-economic development (Okorie et al., 2024). In traditional settings, this planning process is often hampered by bureaucratic delays, paper-based procedures, and limited access to timely information. However, when integrated with digital transformation, administrative planning becomes more agile, data-driven, and responsive to citizens' evolving needs.

The influence of digital transformation on administrative planning extends beyond mere process automation. It fundamentally reshapes organizational culture, stakeholder

engagement, and service delivery. For instance, digital transformation initiatives can streamline data collection and analysis, enabling local governments to make evidence-based decisions that respond swiftly to emerging challenges. In this regard, local governments not only improve their operational efficiency but also foster a more participatory and transparent decision-making process.

Recent empirical studies in some developing and developed countries have demonstrated that digital transformation in local governments can improve operational performance and enhance service delivery. In Indonesia, the adoption of digital transformation models has provided local governments with structured frameworks to overcome regulatory and resource constraints, thereby enhancing planning and service delivery outcomes (Vehtasvili *et al.*, 2024).

This study, therefore, seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by examining how modern digital tools can influence planning settings, transforming challenges into opportunities for enhanced public service delivery, otherwise referred to as operational efficiency, in Local Government Areas of Oyo State.

Traditional planning processes in Local governments in Oyo State often involve manual data entry and handling, which are not only time-consuming but also prone to administrative bottlenecks, poor service delivery, and errors. Transferring data from one system to another increases the risk of inaccuracies, resulting in inefficiencies and delays. Moreover, reliance on paper-based systems can result in the loss of information or misplaced documents, all of which increase operational inefficiency. In recent years, digital transformation initiatives in local government administrative planning have been championed as a key strategy to improve service delivery and enhance operational efficiency. Numerous reforms have been introduced to digitalize administrative processes in Nigeria, including the digitization of records, the integration of e-governance platforms, the enhancement of data analytics capabilities, and the establishment of robust inter-departmental communication networks. Unfortunately, these digital reforms are yet to be felt in the administrative management of Oyo State Local Government Areas.

Research from comparable environments in South Africa, China, and Indonesia demonstrates that robust digital transformation leads to improved real-time data management, better resource allocation, and more transparent governance (Palos-Sánchez *et al.*, 2023; Vehtasvili *et al.*, 2024). Oyo State LGAs have yet to experience a noticeable impact of DT in their operational planning, a gap between policy intentions and on-the-ground realities, which underscores the need for the study.

Objective of the Study

The broad of this study is to examine the influence of digital transformation on the operational efficiency of administrative planning in Oyo State Local Government Areas. The specific objectives are:

- to assess the state of digital transformation in administrative planning within Oyo State Local Government Areas.
- to identify the challenges associated with integrating digital technologies into local government planning processes in the study area.

- to determine the impact of digital transformation on the operational efficiency of administration processes in the Local Government Areas.
- to investigate the effect of digital transformation on the transparency of administrative planning in the Local Government Areas.

Research Hypotheses

- **H₀₁:** Digital transformation will not significantly affect the operational efficiency of administrative planning in Oyo State Local Government Areas.
- **H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between digital transformation and transparency in the Local Government Areas.

Literature Review

Digital Transformation

Digital transformation (DT) in public administration refers to the holistic, strategic integration of digital technologies across all aspects of government operations to enhance service delivery, improve operational efficiency, and increase citizen engagement. Unlike basic digitization, which focuses primarily on converting analogue data to digital formats, digital transformation encompasses a broader scope, involving the redesign of business processes, organizational structures, workforce capabilities, and the underlying technologies that support them (Aytekin et al., 2025; Mahula et al., 2022). In the context of public institutions, DT is not merely about adopting technology but about fundamentally changing how government functions to meet the expectations of a digitally aware public and achieve higher standards of governance. According to Palos-Sánchez et al. (2023), DT enables local governments to not only automate routine tasks but also to enhance transparency, data-driven decision-making, and citizen participation in governance. Palos-Sánchez et al. (2023) present a definition in line with local government administration: DT is the adoption and use of new technologies by local government institutions to improve planning, enhance service delivery, reduce costs, and ensure the active participation of citizens in governance. This definition captures the administrative and democratic nature of local government operations. The European Union e-Government Action Plan (2016-2020) also opined that digital transformation is the rethinking and redesign of government processes and structures through the strategic use of ICT to improve public sector performance and the lives of citizens. This definition adequately shows the relevance and scope of DT in public administration, including local government.

Numerous tools and technologies are being utilized in driving digital transformation across public institutions. E-governance platforms are among the most common, enabling digital interactions between governments and citizens for services such as tax payment, licensing, civil registration, and complaint handling. Cloud computing provides scalable data storage and processing capabilities, enabling local governments to host integrated systems without the need for heavy investments in physical infrastructure. Blockchain technology, though still in its nascent stage in many developing countries, provides secure, tamper-proof records that are useful for public registries, procurement, and identity verification (Mahula et al., 2022). Other innovations, such as mobile applications, automated chatbots, IoT devices,

and big data analytics, are also gaining traction as tools to enhance citizen engagement, monitor service delivery, and generate actionable insights for planning and decision-making.

Dimensions of Digital Transformation

There are three dimensions of digital transformation: technological, organizational, and human capacity. The technological dimension represents the most visible aspect of digital transformation. It is the adoption and integration of digital tools, platforms, and infrastructure that enable automated processes, real-time data processing, and enhanced service delivery. In the local government administration context, this dimension involves the use of e-government platforms, cloud computing, big data analytics, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain technologies. However, the successful utilization of these technologies relies heavily on the availability of supporting infrastructure, such as internet connectivity, secure servers, and data storage facilities.

Organizational dimension, on the other hand, is the engine that drives transformation forward. This dimension refers to the institutional structures, governance models, workflows, leadership practices and internal policies that shape how digital technologies are adopted and utilized within public institutions. It also involves aligning digital strategies with broader administrative goals to ensure that technology adoption is not isolated but is integrated into the day-to-day operations of the government (Kuhlmann & Heuberger, 2021).

Human Capacity Dimension of Digital Transformation centers on the skills, knowledge, attitude and adaptability of the people who operate within the government system. This includes elected officials, administrative personnel, IT specialists and support staff who are directly or indirectly involved in the implementation and utilization of digital technologies. Competent human resources are essential for delivering the benefits of digital technologies, which extend beyond technical skills. It involves change management, problem-solving, and innovation competencies.

Administrative Planning in Local Government.

Administrative planning in local government refers to the deliberate, structured and strategic process through which local authorities organize their activities, allocate resources, set objectives and develop programs for the effective delivery of public services. Administrative planning, according to Okafor & Yusuf (2023), can be defined as a continuous process of identifying community needs, setting priorities, developing action plans and deploying resources in a coordinated manner to achieve targeted outcomes in public service delivery. Administrative planning in local government comprises several essential components that work together to ensure effective governance, and one of the important elements of administrative planning is strategic planning, which combines long-term goal setting, a vision, and a mission statement aligned with local government development objectives. Kuhlmann and Heuberger (2021) opined that strategic planning enables local authorities to anticipate future challenges, evaluate current realities, and position themselves to take proactive actions rather than react to crises. In the local government context, strategic planning typically involves stakeholder consultations, community needs assessments, environmental analysis such as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and the formulation of

strategic goals and key performance indicators (KPIs). The planning process fosters inclusiveness, as it often involves inputs from civil society groups, traditional leaders, business stakeholders and citizens. In situations when strategic planning is properly executed, it enhances coordination among departments, ensures alignment with Theoretical Framework. The study is situated within the context of Diffusion Innovation Theory, Institution Theory and Technology Model Theory.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was first proposed by Davis (1989) to explain and predict user acceptance of information technology (IT). TAM focuses on understanding how external factors influence users' technology adoption. The model assumes that the decision to use technology is influenced by two primary factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. This theory is especially relevant to digital transformation in local government because it helps explain why local government employees or citizens may either adopt or resist new digital tools or platforms in administrative processes.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory (Everett Rogers)

Everett Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theory, first introduced in 1962, offers a framework for understanding how new technologies or innovations spread through a population. According to Rogers, innovation adoption follows a predictable curve, with five distinct adopter categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The adoption curve suggests that the pace of digital tool adoption in local government settings will vary across user groups. Innovators are the first to adopt new technology, followed by early adopters, who are often opinion leaders within the community or government.

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory, developed by scholars such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983), examines how organizational structures, cultures, and societal norms shape organizational behaviour. In the context of local government, institutional theory highlights the role of formal structures, policies, and informal norms in shaping how digital transformation occurs. Public sector organizations, such as local governments, are often bound by formal bureaucratic structures, legal frameworks, and long-established practices that can slow down or resist the adoption of new technologies. Institutional theory helps explain how these existing structures, such as hierarchical decision-making, strict regulatory frameworks, and the risk aversion common in public organizations, can create barriers to digital transformation.

Methodology

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A survey design was considered appropriate for this study because it enables the researcher to collect data systematically from a representative sample of the population, analyze it, and draw meaningful inferences about the larger population. The population for this study comprises all staff members of the thirty-seven local government areas of Oyo State. a sample size of 1,110 staff members.

Questionnaires were administered to 1,100 respondents, and 1000 questionnaires were found usable.

The primary instruments for this study are a structured questionnaire divided into three sections: A, B, and C. The questionnaire items are structured on a five-point Likert scale with response options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), allowing quantification of attitudes and perceptions. The responses collected were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha reliability test to determine the internal consistency of the items. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.84, which exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.70 recommended by Nunnally (1978), confirming that the instrument was reliable for the study. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.

Data Presentation and Analysis

This section details the testing of the hypotheses formulated for the study

Testing of Hypotheses

Three (3) hypotheses were formulated and tested using regression analysis in this study. In regression analysis, when the significant (sig) value is less than 0.05 for a 95% confidence level or less than 0.01 for a 99% confidence level, we accept the alternative hypothesis and reject the null hypothesis and vice versa.

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the current level of digital transformation and administrative planning processes in the Local Government Areas in Oyo State.

Table 1a: Model Summary Correlation table between Digital Transformation and Administrative Planning Processes

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.663 ^a	.540	.512	.37617

Source: Author's Computation 2025

a. Predictors: (Constant), current level of digital transformation

b. Dependent Variable: Administrative Planning Processes

Table 1a presents the model summary for Hypothesis One. The result shows a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.663, indicating a moderate-to-strong positive relationship between the current level of digital transformation and administrative planning processes. The R-square value of 0.540 indicates that 54.0% of the variance in administrative planning processes can be explained by the current level of digital transformation. The adjusted R Square of 0.512 further confirms the model's reliability in explaining the variation, with a standard error of 0.37617.

Table 1b: ANOVA Table of the relationship between Digital Transformation and Administrative Planning Processes

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	20.123	1	6.708	47.403	.000 ^b
	Residual	25.612	99	.142		
	Total	45.735	100			

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

a. Dependent Variable: Administrative Planning Processes

b. Predictors: (Constant), current level of digital transformation

The ANOVA results in Table 1b reveal that the regression model is statistically significant, with an F-value of **47.403** and a significance level (p-value) of **0.000**, **which** is less than 0.05. This indicates that the relationship observed in the model is not due to random chance.

Table 1c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.782	.236		3.309		.001
	EW	.230	.054	.266	4.272		.000

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

a. Dependent Variable: Administrative Planning Processes.

b. Predictors: (Constant), current level of digital transformation

Table 1c further supports this, as shown by the coefficients. The unstandardized coefficient (B) for digital transformation is 0.230, and the t-value is 4.272 with a p-value of 0.000, confirming that the relationship between the current level of digital transformation and administrative planning processes in Ibadan North Local Government is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between the current level of digital transformation and administrative planning processes in the Local Government Areas.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: There is no significant impact of digital transformation and effectiveness of administrative planning in the Local Government Areas

Table 2a: Model Summary Correlation table between Digital Transformation and Operational Efficiency of Administrative Planning

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.525a	.422	.412	.45468

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Digital transformation
- b. Dependent variable: effectiveness of administrative planning

The model summary in Table 2a shows a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.525 and an R-square of 0.422, indicating that digital transformation accounts for approximately 42.2% of the variation in administrative planning effectiveness. The adjusted R Square is 0.412, with a standard error of 0.45468, suggesting a moderate model fit.

Table 2b: ANOVA Table of the relationship between Digital Transformation and Effectiveness of Administrative Planning

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2.503	2	.834	4.035	.008 ^b
	Residual	37.418	98	.207		
	Total	39.921	100			

- a. Dependent variable: effectiveness of administrative planning
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Digital transformation

According to the ANOVA results in Table 2b, the F-statistic is 4.035 with a significance level of 0.008. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, the regression model is considered statistically significant, and digital transformation has a measurable effect on planning effectiveness.

Table 2c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.638	.286		12.735	.000
	RWM	.229	.093	.259	2.459	.015

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

- a. Dependent variable: effectiveness of administrative planning
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Digital transformation

From Table 2c, the unstandardized coefficient (B) is 0.229, with a t-value of 2.459 and a p-value of 0.015. This shows that digital transformation significantly impacts the effectiveness of administrative planning. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that digital transformation has a significant impact on the effectiveness of Local Government Area administration.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between digital transformation and transparency in the Local Government Areas.

Table 3a: Model Summary Correlation table between Digital Transformation and Transparency

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.740 ^a	.548	.541	.33794

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

- a. Predictors: (Constant), digital transformation
- b. Dependent variable: Transparency of administrative planning

The model summary in Table 3a indicates a strong positive relationship between digital transformation and transparency, with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.740 and an R-squared of 0.548. This means that 54.8% of the variance in transparency can be explained by digital transformation. The adjusted R Square value of 0.541 further confirms this, and the standard error of estimate is 0.33794, suggesting a good fit.

Table 3b: ANOVA Table of the relationship between Digital Transformation and Transparency

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	25.064	3	8.355	73.155	.000 ^b
	Residual	20.671	97	.114		
	Total	45.735	100			

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

- a. Dependent variable: Transparency of administrative planning
- b. Predictors: (Constant), digital transformation

As shown in the ANOVA table (3b), the model has an F-value of 73.155 and a significance level of 0.000, indicating statistical significance. This confirms that digital transformation contributes meaningfully to transparency variance.

Table 3c: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.806	.203		3.973	.000
	COMP	.146	.047	.161	3.118	.002

Source: Author's Computation (2025)

- a. Dependent variable: Transparency of administrative planning
- b. Predictors: (Constant), digital transformation

In the coefficients table (3c), the unstandardized coefficient (B) is **0.146**, with a t-value of 3.118 and a p-value of 0.002. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between digital transformation and transparency in administrative planning within the Local Government Areas.

Findings

The summary of findings based on data generated from the field includes the following:

There is a significant relationship ($r=0.663$) between the current state of digital transformation and administrative planning processes in the Local Government Areas. At an alpha level of 0.05 and a degree of freedom of 99, the calculated F-value of 47.403 exceeded the critical value, with a p-value of 0.000, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This implies that the implementation of digital transformation significantly influences how administrative planning is carried out.

There is a significant impact ($r = 0.525$) of digital transformation on the effectiveness of administrative planning within the Local Government Areas. The ANOVA result showed an F-value of 4.035, with a p-value of 0.008 at 0.05 significance level and 98 degrees of freedom. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming that digital transformation contributes significantly to improved planning efficiency and execution.

There is a strong, significant relationship ($r = 0.740$) between digital transformation and transparency in administrative planning across Local Government Areas. At a 0.05 significance level and 97 degrees of freedom, the regression model yielded an F-value of 73.155 and a p-value of 0.000, both of which were statistically significant. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that digital transformation plays a critical role in enhancing transparency and openness in local government administration.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study investigated the influence of digital transformation on administrative planning in Oyo State Local Government Areas. Drawing on empirical data and supported by statistical analysis, the findings revealed that digital transformation has a significant and positive impact on the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of local government administrative planning. Each hypothesis tested confirmed that as digital technologies become more integrated into governance structures, there is measurable improvement in planning speed, record accuracy, inter-departmental collaboration, and public accountability.

The study further established that challenges such as inadequate digital infrastructure, limited staff digital literacy, resistance to change, and funding constraints continue to hinder full-scale implementation of digital initiatives. Nevertheless, it was evident that the potential benefits of digital transformation far outweigh the limitations when the right policies, training, and leadership support are in place.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that digital transformation is no longer a futuristic ideal but a present necessity for local governments seeking responsive, transparent governance. The Local Government Areas can achieve more inclusive, data-driven, and participatory governance if digital tools and strategies are properly embedded into planning and administrative operations. Therefore, a structured, sustained, and well-funded digital transformation agenda is imperative to strengthen public-sector delivery at the grassroots level.

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