Electronic Administration and Service Delivery in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, Nigeria.

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Abstract
In recent years, globalization has led to the development and transfer of technology for advancement and ease in the way tasks are executed. This has spread to all facets of society and the Civil Service, which is the executive machinery of the government, is not left out. This paper, therefore, examines the relationship between e-administration and service delivery in Nigeria with a focus on the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The purpose was to determine the extent to which e-administrative infrastructures enhance speed and quality in service delivery in the Ministry. The study adopts the survey design with 159 staff in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice and the judiciary randomly selected and administered questionnaires. Using the Simple Linear Regression Analysis, it was discovered that the use of e-administrative infrastructures for service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is low. As a result, e-administrative infrastructure does not enhance the speed and quality of service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The study recommends that policy measures that are commensurate with modern technologies should be adopted by the State for effective service delivery in the Ministry and the Civil Service in general.

Keywords: E-administration, public service, service delivery, litigation process, case management systems, e-administrative infrastructure.

Introduction
The need for globalization in the world necessitated the Third Industrial Revolution which resulted in a shift from the use of mechanical and analogue electronic technologies to the use of digital technologies including modern computers, and the internet which was invented in 1983 (Titus, 2023). The major aim of the digital revolution which has continued to date has been to ensure connectivity, access to information, efficiency and convenience of work, economic growth spurred by innovation, the transformation of industries, and informed decision-making guided by data (Titus, 2023). Owing to the advantages of digital technologies over the traditional methods in terms of automation, communication speed, better social interaction, security of data, and quick access to information, almost all organizations and institutions that perform public functions have adopted these technologies to ensure effective and efficient service delivery (Nyadzi, 2023).
The processes and activities involved in the adoption and use of digital technologies for administrative functions are what electronic administration entails. This process aims at converting paper processes in a traditional office into electronic processes to achieve a paperless or low-paper office. In extension, for electronic administration to achieve its goal of reducing bureaucracy and ensuring a client/customer-based service administration, all or crucial officials are provided Information Technology (IT) tools that would support the issuance of administrative decisions in an organized form (eMUNICIPALITY, 2016). For instance, an example of the application of e-administration in an organization is the use of an electronic signature and trust profile. This system provides a quick and easy way to sign electronic documents without the need to print paper or affix wet ink signatures. Essentially, it is a process where computers are used to certify the integrity of a document (signer), thereby reducing costs and time, while also dismantling red-tapism which has been a major barricade to efficiency in service delivery (Awati, 2023).

Specifically, in the judicial system which incorporates both public judicial institutions and private judicial firms, electronic administration has also been adopted to ease the work process and ensure speed, safety, and quality in not only the intrinsic process of administering justice in courts, but also the administrative processes involved in the storage and movement of files, or generally, information flow. Such includes the use of case management systems, electronic filing and document exchanges, online dispute resolution systems, online law report systems, scheduling systems, file backup and storage tools, etc. (Reiling & Contini, 2022). For instance, e-curia, Civil Trial Online (TOL), and Quality and Innovation are system software that is used in filing and accessing case documents, performing identity checks, document verification, and document production in the administrative ministries and courts. In extension, these e-platforms provide clerks, judges, lawyers, and administrative staff in the ministries with various functionalities for handling proceedings and other activities including identification, e-filing, electronic handling of procedures, electronic signature, e-summoning, etc. (Reiling & Contini, 2022).

The Ministry of Justice in Akwa Ibom State consists of both administrative and legal staff. Owing to the expansiveness of the judicial system, it is common knowledge that execution of responsibilities would be demanding on the staff of the ministry, as well as the entire judicial system. To ensure stability in the work environment, effectiveness in performance, efficiency in service delivery, and job satisfaction, electronic means of carrying out these functions should be ensured, especially as obtainable in the current dispensation. Hence, the main thesis of the paper is to assess the state of e-administration and how it affects service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

**Statement of the Problem**

Government agencies around the world have increasingly embraced electronic administration, aiming to improve efficiency, accessibility, and transparency in their operations. However, several challenges and problems persist in the implementation and management of electronic administration systems. These problems include the digital divide, inadequate technological infrastructure, data security, and privacy, interoperability and integration, user experience and usability, legal and regulatory compliance, and resistance to change. Specifically, in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, the administrative staff still makes use of analogue systems which are predominantly based on the use of paper, and transfer of such from one department to another or another or judicial institutions like the Courts. Case files are still printed, presented, and stored in paper forms despite the existence of online storage software such as Document Management Software and Case Management Systems which could make access, storage, and transfer easier. Extensively, case files, registers, and cause books are stored in cabinets and shelves according to their subject matter.
(civil & criminal) and arranged in chronological order, a practice which makes sorting and transfer of files relatively tasking owing to the bulk of files printed and submitted daily by staff and clients, respectively (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, 2023). For the legal staff, e-administration is narrowly pervasive. This is a result of the E-judiciary Enterprise Resource Planner (ERP); an electronic application that handles court processes launched in the State in 2014.

However, the ERP as used in the Ministry is only important in specific and subjective terms, that is, as preferred by the legal practitioner, and only in the preparatory stages. Thus, the general litigation process, proceedings, evidence, etc. are provided in paper formats. The process involving the transfer of these files and documents to relevant authorities poses a humongous challenge for speedy service delivery in the Ministry. Additionally, since documents still need to be presented in paper formats, providing signatories to these papers proves difficult especially in times of emergencies for remote clients, despite the existence of e-signature systems like an electronic signature maker. Hence, the speedy administration of justice becomes truncated in an analogue system as such. Therefore, the study is aimed at examining the extent to which e-administration affects service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

From the forgone problem statement, the pertinent questions are: What is the extent to which e-administrative infrastructures are used in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice? Does the state of e-administrative Infrastructure enhance speed and quality in service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice? Therefore, the main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between e-administration and service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The specific objectives include:

determine the extent to which e-administrative infrastructures are used in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice and to ascertain whether the state of e-administrative infrastructure enhances speed and quality in service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

Statement of Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H0: The extent to which e-administrative infrastructures are used in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is low.

H1: The state of e-administrative infrastructure does not enhance speed and quality in service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

Review of Related Literature

The study revolves around some basic concepts, namely, e-administration, service delivery, and public service. It is, therefore, pertinent to operationalize these concepts to establish the nexus between them and the extent they have enhanced service systems in public service. Before delving into the concept of e-administration, it is apt to explore the meaning of the term "administration". Gladden (2008) defined administration as taking care of or managing affairs involving people. The word "administration" is derived from the Latin word “ad” and “ministeriare” which means to serve. In simple terms, it means the management of affairs or looking after people (Bhagwan & Bhushan, 2008). The term covers almost every area of human endeavour and could be seen to mean anything ranging from the directing of the affairs of an enterprise to the simple paying of monthly pensions (Obikeze & Anthony, 2004). Sharma et al (2012) view it as the total of the activities undertaken to implement public policy or policies or to provide some service or goods. According to Presthus (1962), administration is an activity or process concerned with the means for carrying out prescribed.
In agreeable terms, Obikeze & Anthony (2004) define it as a planned system of cooperative effort in which individuals have assigned functions.

E-administration as defined by the European Commission (2005) is the application of information technologies in public administration. It has to do with organizational adjustments and new public service abilities that are meant to raise the standard of services offered by the administration. E-administration is a continuous process that transforms internal and external contacts using the Internet and contemporary communication tools to provide administrative services and improve governance quality. The office-economic entity, office-service provider, and office-citizen relations are examples of external relations. Office-office and office-employee interactions are examples of internal relations. E-administration is intended to make it easier to handle official business and to make information available. The proposed form enables the centralization of issues falling under the purview of several public administration departments and the online publication of their processes.

E-administration refers to the application of information and communication technology along with organizational adjustments to enhance and streamline the performance of public organizations. First and foremost, this entails moving the majority of governmental agencies' tasks online, where the maximum number of citizens can access them. Electronic administration also involves changing the way governance, strategic planning, debate, and communication with businesses and society are done, as well as automating and computerizing current processes that are based mostly on paper documents.

In a related development, service delivery refers to the actual delivery of a service and products to the customer or clients (Lovelock & Wright, 2002). It is therefore concerned with where, when, and how a service product is delivered to the customer and whether this is fair or unfair. The service concept defines the “how” and the “what” of service design and helps mediate between customer needs and an organization’s strategic intent (Goldstein, Johnston, Duffy & Rao, 2002). According to Chen, Tsou, and Huang (2009), innovation in service delivery orientation refers to an organization’s openness to new ideas and propensity to change through adopting new technologies, resources, skills, and administrative systems. Service delivery innovation is also described as an overall process of developing new service offerings in the organization (Johnston and Clark, 2001). Innovation drivers are similar in product and service contexts, at most differing in relative importance between the two environments.

In the public sector, service components are frequently not actual objects but rather a concoction of procedures, human resources, and resources that must be properly combined to provide the "planned" or "designed" service. According to Goldstein (2002), the term "service innovation" has been used to refer to a variety of concepts, ranging from the "idea generation" phase of a new service delivery process to the entire service creation process. Therefore, it is essential to define the service concept in detail both before and throughout the creation of new services. A more comprehensive framework for innovation in service delivery, according to Baker & Sinkula (2007), entails examining many innovation-related causes and effects at once in the context of the service concept. As a result, the service idea guides a variety of choices made while developing new service delivery methods and designing customer experiences.

The delivery of public services to the general public is a function of the distribution of duties and responsibilities to various bureaucratic organizations. The ability and capacity of bureaucracy to effectively carry out the assigned task depend on the relationship and motivation put in place. Several models can be applied to ensure the proper performance of bureaucracy for effective service delivery. This entry adopts the model in the World Bank Report on Public Service (2018). The five key characteristics of efficient service delivery highlighted by this approach are funding, delegation, performance, performance information,
and enforcement. As a result, four separate actors are identified, each with a unique function in the direction of service delivery. These people include citizens or clients, legislators or policy-makers, service providers for organizations, and front-line workers. Citizens/clients stand in for those who receive services, including patients, students, businesspeople, retirees, and numerous more.

These categories of political executives, which span many levels of government and include ministers, commissioners, and elected public officials, are relevant to politicians and policy-makers. While organizational providers are top-level civil servants who can command frontline service providers, such as police officers, doctors, and teachers, the frontline professionals are the group of people who carry out the task of providing services to the general public. All these aforementioned actors perform their roles based on the laid down process and procedure of relationships.

E-Administration and Service Delivery: The Nexus

The relationship between e-administration and service delivery is a positive one. This entails that as e-administration in its safest form increases, service delivery in the aspects where e-administration is applied tends to be more efficient, effective, and customer/client-based if factors that may affect it (e-administration) remain constant (Osakede et al., 2017). E-administration generally aids organizations in improving efficiency by ensuring quicker service delivery. With this, employee-employee and organization-client/customer information flow becomes easy, faster, and safer, hence, breaking and dismantling the bureaucratic barriers caused by excessive paperwork in an organization (Ssweanyana & Busler, 2007). Extensively, service delivery becomes more qualitative, and costs incurred by both clients and employees become lessened. Also, stress from office-office mobility to submit paper files is reduced, thereby easing the work process which is also a factor in job satisfaction and employee efficiency (Ajibade, et al., 2017).

Similarly, service delivery enhances e-administration as well as innovation. The dependence of staff on electronic systems stimulates the ICT industry to identify new opportunities for further innovation which would ease the work process and ensure transparency, accountability, and information flow in an organization (Osakede et al., 2017), for instance, the need for the improvement of process automation and decision support in public sector administration also necessitated the innovation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) which is used in aspects like traffic management, education and science, hospital and public health management, urban planning, transportation, etc. (Reis, 2021). These are supported by parts of AI such as machine learning, data science, decision support systems, cyber-security, robotics and automation, Cloud and Big Data, Intelligent Planning, etc. (Reis, 2021). Hence, there exists a symbiotic relationship between e-administration and service delivery.

Theoretical Framework

The paper adopts the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology developed by the quadruple of Viswanath Venkatesh, Michael Morris, Gordon Davis, and Fred Davis in 2003 (Venkatesh et al, 2003). The theory explains user intentions to use an information system and subsequent change of behaviour (Venkatesh et al, 2003). Extensively, the theory posits that the perceived likelihood of adopting a particular technology is dependent on the direct effect of four (4) key constructs including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Additionally, the theory posits that the moderation effects of age, gender, experience, and voluntariness of use are factors that define the strength of these predictors (Venkatesh et al, 2003).

The performance expectancy is defined as the degree to which the user of a particular technology believes that using the system would aid him/her in enhancing job performance. It
is observed to be the strongest predictor of user intention which is also significant in both voluntary and mandatory settings (Thong & Xu, 2016). Effort expectancy refers to the degree of ease associated with the use of a particular technology whose effect becomes non-significant after extended use (Chauhan & Jaiswal, 2016). Social influence is the extent to which the user perceives how necessary the system or technology is and how other believes he/she should use the system (Venkatesh et al, 2003). This explains the use of new technologies in a mandatory context. That is, using such as a form of compliance with requirements in an organization. The facilitating conditions generally refer to the extent to which the user of a technology or system believes that an organizational and technical infrastructure exists to support the use of the system (Chauhan & Jaiswal, 2016). Facilitating conditions connote the availability of ICT tools and other enabling factors such as network, connection to the internet, sufficient and appropriate open data, and appropriate open data infrastructures. It is opined that when these infrastructures are in place, the intention to use and accept technologies among individuals would be higher (Parycek & Sachs, 2010).

Accordingly, these constructs are affected by moderating effects identified as age, gender, experience, and voluntariness of use (Venkatesh et al, 2003). The age moderates the effect of all four (4) predictors. Gender affects the relationship between effort expectancy, performance expectancy, and social influence. Experience moderates the strength of relationships between effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Voluntariness of use moderates effects on the relationship between social influence and behavioural intention (Venkatesh et al, 2003).

The theory is criticized for its inability to explain behavioural intention in different settings which has resulted in further studies which have extended the constructs of the theory by adding additional determinants such as trust, self-efficacy, computer self-efficacy, innovativeness, perceived threats, perceived risks, etc. (Martins, et al, 2014; Slade et al, 2015). The theory is relevant for the study owing to the perceived and practical place of ICT in work processes in an organization, which further betters service delivery. The four (4) constructs represent and explain the conditions that link e-administration and service delivery. The performance expectancy of the study explains that an organization adopts e-administration systems because such would aid in saving time, costs, errors, and stress involved in paperwork. This would boost efficiency on the part of the employees and ensure quality and timely delivery of service to clients/customers. The effort expectancy explains the ease and safety involved in using e-administration systems in offices as opposed to the intricacies (for example, loss of paper files/documents, mistakes in filling paper forms/documents, rough-handling paper documents, etc.) involved in using the traditional method.

The social influence explains the policy aspect of e-administration in an organization and public agencies as enhanced by the formulation and implementation of policies that would enable the use and acceptance of e-administration systems by the employees of such organization. In this parlance, the use of such systems becomes mandatory in respective roles. The facilitating conditions such as availability of ICT tools, systems, and software, availability of the network, connection to data, etc., required for e-administration are indispensable if service delivery is expected to be efficient and effective. The availability of these conditions is the responsibility of the organization. Hence, for e-administration to achieve the goal of efficient and effective service delivery, the organization must make these infrastructures readily available. The moderating factors such as age, gender, experience, and voluntariness of use are the factors that moderate the extent to which employees use e-administration systems, hence, determining the quality of service delivery in an organization.
E-administration in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice

The Staff in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice are divided into two; the administrative staff and the legal staff. The administrative staff consists of those who carry out both primary and core administrative duties. These include office clerks, administrative assistants, financial clerks, administration and supplies directors, finance and account directors, storekeepers, and some clerical staff in the legal administration division. The legal staff consists of legal practitioners in different departments such as the Public Prosecution Department, Civil Litigation and Advisory Services (I & II), Legal drafting and Counseling Department, and Ministerial Counseling Directorate (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, 2022). In the Ministry, the administrative staff still make use of analogue systems which are predominantly based on the use of paper, and transfer of such from one department to another or another or judicial institutions like the Courts. Case files are still printed, presented, and stored in paper forms despite the existence of online storage software such as Document Management Software and Case Management Systems which could make access, storage, and transfer easier. Extensively, case files, registers, and cause books are stored in cabinets and shelves according to their subject matter (civil & criminal) and arranged in chronological order, a practice which makes sorting and transfer of files relatively tasking owing to the bulk of files printed and submitted daily by staff and clients, respectively (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, 2023).

For the legal staff, e-administration is narrowly pervasive. This is a result of the E-judiciary Enterprise Resource Planner (ERP); an electronic application that handles court processes launched in the State in 2014. The application is used by the legal staff in paying court fees, fines, and judgment debts. It is also used to file cases online and conduct virtual studies of cases (Ifeanyi, 2014). However, the reality in the judicial system in Nigeria and the State alike remains that the courts prefer data contained in the litigation processes in paper formats. Therefore, the legal staff in the Ministry still present records of proceedings, record book, register, client files, etc. in paper formats, just like academic projects and presentations are still submitted using paper forms in most academic institutions in Nigeria. The ERP as used in the Ministry is only important in specific and subjective terms, that is, as preferred by the legal practitioner, and only in the preparatory stages. However, the general litigation process, proceedings, evidence, etc. are provided in paper formats (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, 2023). The process involving the transfer of these files and documents to relevant authorities poses a humongous challenge for speedy service delivery in the Ministry.

Empirical literature Review

Several studies have been carried out on the subject matter of this paper. For instance, Kairu (2013) carried out a study to examine the influence of proficiency in ICT on the service delivery of the Kenya Revenue Authority. The research used a descriptive survey methodology. It was determined that the Kenya Revenue Authority's staff members are generally aware of how to use management information systems. The study found that the Kenya Revenue Authority offered creative customer services as a result of staff members' competency with ICT. Additionally, it was noted that the Kenya Revenue Authority occasionally provided in-service training to staff members on the usage of ICT-based applications to increase their efficiency and performance in terms of service delivery. The study found a correlation between strategic technology application skill level and service delivery quality that was favourable.

The study by Kairu (2013) used only descriptive statistics and therefore showed to statistically link proficiency of application of strategic technology and service delivery. Inferential statistics were utilized in the current study to demonstrate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, revealing a methodological research gap. In a
variety of scenarios, the task expertise of service providers has been connected to service innovation. According to various academics, expertise in a field can produce a long-lasting competitive advantage. In the context of the service industry, Storey and Kahn (2014) sought to find out whether knowledge of the use of ICT innovations in 385 UK-based service businesses influences the quality of service delivery. According to the study, service delivery and skill in the application of ICT advances are positively and significantly correlated. In light of this, the study found that staff members who were informed about ICT developments were better equipped to meet customer expectations, deliver services on time, and offer additional services relevant to those that customers requested. The ability to use ICT advances proficiently was also linked to productivity and speed in service delivery, serving a larger number of clients and ultimately improving service delivery.

Ali., Younas, and Saeed, (2016) writing on the Impact of Moderating Role of e-Administration on Training, Performance Appraisal, and Organizational Performance assessed the effect of the moderating role of E-Administration on training, performance appraisal, and organizational performance. Employees from twenty-five (25) businesses that used e-administration made up the study population. 245 employees were sampled using probability/simple random design, and 220 of them completed a structured questionnaire, yielding an 81% response rate. The study demonstrated the value of electronic administration as a tactical component for enhancing organizational performance. Because it is essential to transparently evaluate employees’ job performance and lower the likelihood of bias and other faults like leniency or strictness, electronic administration moderates the relationship between performance evaluation and organizational performance.

**Method and Materials**
The research utilizes both qualitative and quantitative methodology. The qualitative methodology is used in describing the variables of the study while the quantitative methodology is used in the analysis of data. The survey research design is used in the collection of primary data through the questionnaire and analyzed using the quantitative approach and the study area is the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is one of the Ministries in the Akwa Ibom State executive government. It is concerned with the administration of justice and under the coordination of the Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice. It currently has 159 staff (both administrative and legal) and is located in the Secretariat Complex, Block 7, Uyo (Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice, 2023). Meanwhile, the primary data was obtained directly from the respondents through the questionnaires. These questionnaires were supported by interviews granted by selected respondents. The respondents consisted of 159 employees randomly selected from the Ministry.

However, the Ministry has a total of 173 staff from all its sections, including the core judiciary. The Simple linear regression analysis is used in measuring the hypotheses of the study. Simple linear regression is used to estimate the relationship between two quantitative variables. It is used to know how strong the relationship is between two variables (in this case, the relationship between e-administration and service delivery). It is also used to ascertain the value of the dependent variable (service delivery) at a certain value of the independent variable (e-administration).
Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Percentage Analysis of Responses on e-administrative Infrastructures Used in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Extent of Agreement</th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analogue gadgets like Printers, cannons, and paper files are used in service delivery in the Ministry</td>
<td>SA: 53 (33%)</td>
<td>A: 65 (41%)</td>
<td>D: 33 (21%)</td>
<td>SD: 8 (7%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use Website, email, Facebook page, WhatsApp group to enhance communication with the public/clients</td>
<td>SA: 86 (54%)</td>
<td>A: 36 (23 %)</td>
<td>D: 22 (14%)</td>
<td>SD: 15 (9%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use e-administrative systems like e-signature, e-summoning, etc., to ease services with clients</td>
<td>SA: 15 (9%)</td>
<td>A: 22 (14%)</td>
<td>D: 36 (23 %)</td>
<td>SD: 86 (54%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We use storage systems like case management systems and e-filing systems to reduce paperwork</td>
<td>SA: 20 (13%)</td>
<td>A: 11 (6%)</td>
<td>D: 74 (47%)</td>
<td>SD: 54 (34%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>SA: 174 (44%)</td>
<td>A: 134 (33%)</td>
<td>D: 165 (15%)</td>
<td>SD: 63 (8%)</td>
<td>Total: 636 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2023.

Table 2 shows the frequency of responses and their percentages on the e-administrative infrastructures used in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. Most importantly, the majority of the respondents generally note that e-administrative systems like e-signature, e-summoning, case management systems, and e-filing are not in use in the Ministry, hence, indicating an insignificant application of e-administration in the Ministry.

Table 2: Percentage Analysis of Responses on whether the state of e-administrative infrastructure enhances speed and quality in service delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Extent of Agreement</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is a low level of reliable information delivery because of the absence of e-administrative systems in the Ministry</td>
<td>SA: 30 (18.86%)</td>
<td>A: 29 (18.23 %)</td>
<td>D: 50 (31.44%)</td>
<td>SD: 50 (31.44%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a low level of speed, quality, and confidentiality in the ministry through the use of e-administrative systems</td>
<td>SA: 74 (34%)</td>
<td>A: 54 (47%)</td>
<td>D: 20 (13%)</td>
<td>SD: 11 (6%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is difficulty in accessing information by clients due to the absence of e-administration in the Ministry.</td>
<td>SA: 61 (38%)</td>
<td>A: 65 (41%)</td>
<td>D: 25 (15%)</td>
<td>SD: 8 (6.0%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We face much stress in recording, storing, and transferring files due to the absence of e-administrative systems in the Ministry.</td>
<td>SA: 53 (33%)</td>
<td>A: 65 (41%)</td>
<td>D: 33 (21%)</td>
<td>SD: 8 (7%)</td>
<td>Total: 159 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>SA: 340 (32.7%)</td>
<td>A: 276 (37.4%)</td>
<td>D: 122 (16.3%)</td>
<td>SD: 57 (7.9%)</td>
<td>Total: 795 (100%)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey 2023
Table 2 shows the frequency of responses and their percentages on whether the state of e-administrative infrastructure enhanced the speed and quality of service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. Specifically, the majority of the respondents agree that there is a low level of speed, quality, and confidentiality in the ministry due to the absence of e-administrative systems. Additionally, respondents note that they face much stress in recording, storing, and transferring files due to the absence of e-administrative systems in the Ministry.

Testing of Hypotheses

1. **H0:** The extent to which e-administrative infrastructures are used in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is low

**Table 3: Regression Summary of Hypothesis 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.257a</td>
<td>.426</td>
<td>.523</td>
<td>.34567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Ministry of Justice

**ANOVA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>23.593</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23.593</td>
<td>197.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>21.269</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.862</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Ministry of Justice
b. Predictors: (Constant), e-administrative systems/Infrastructures

**Coefficients**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technological Infrastructure</td>
<td>1.015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Ministry of Justice

The model summary in Table 3 shows an R-value of 0.257. This suggests a low presence of e-administrative systems/infrastructure in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The R square-the value of 0.426 shows that 34.1% variation in e-administrative infrastructure was accounted for by variations in the Ministry of Justice. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model did not significantly predict the dependent variable given the F-value of 197.456 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that there is no significant effect of e-administrative Infrastructure in the Ministry of Justice.

**Decision:** From the analysis above, there is low evidence of e-administrative infrastructure in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. Therefore, we accept the Null Hypothesis which
states that the extent to which e-administrative infrastructures are used in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is low.

Testing Hypothesis Two

$H_0$: The state of e-administrative infrastructure has not enhanced speed and quality in service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

Table 4 Regression Analysis on Data Security and Privacy and Transparency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.420$^a$</td>
<td>.472</td>
<td>.470</td>
<td>.28743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), e-administrative infrastructure

ANOVA$^a$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Regressi</td>
<td>30.156</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30.156</td>
<td>365.02</td>
<td>.000$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>14.705</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44.862</td>
<td>179</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Speed/quality in service delivery
b. Predictors: (Constant), Data Security and Privacy

Coefficients$^a$

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Security and Privacy</td>
<td>.232</td>
<td>.050</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Speed/quality in service delivery

The model summary in Table 4 shows an R-value of 0.420. This suggests a negative effect of e-administrative infrastructure and speed/quality in service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. The R square- the value of 0.472 shows that 47.2% variation in speed/quality was accounted for by variations in transparency. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model did not significantly predict the dependent variable given the F-value of 365.024 and its corresponding P-value of 0.00. This implies that there is no significant effect of e-administrative infrastructure on speed/quality in service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice.

Decision: From the analysis above, there is a negative indication of the effect of e-administrative infrastructure on speed/quality in service delivery in Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice. Therefore, the Null Hypothesis which states that the state of e-administrative infrastructure does not enhance speed and quality in service delivery in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice is accepted.
Discussion of Findings

From the analysis above, it was discovered that e-administrative infrastructure/systems are not in use, especially by administrative staff in the ministry. What is obtainable is the use of analogue technologies where files are stored on shelves which poses stress to staff. Additionally, since documents still need to be presented in paper formats, providing signatories to these papers proves difficult especially in times of emergencies for remote clients, despite the existence of e-signature systems like electronic signature makers. Hence, the speedy and qualitative administration of justice (service delivery) becomes truncated in an analogue system as such as indicated by the respondents in the second hypothesis. The findings above agree with the findings by Adebayo & Bilquis (2021) in their work titled “E-Governance and Effective Bureaucratic Practices in Nigeria Civil Service”. Using a survey research design with 500 questionnaires administered to federal and State workers, it was observed that the extent of adoption and usage of e-administration is still very low in Nigeria. Respondents identified poor internet services; poor electricity supply and limited knowledge of and accessibility to computers as some of the problems militating against the effective usage of e-administration in Nigeria.

However, contrary to the state of e-administration in the Ministry of Justice and the judicial sector in its entirety, evidence exists to show that other States are slowly moving away from manual systems of service delivery in the sector. For instance, The Ogun State Government in November 2021 launched a case management and scheduling system to accelerate justice administration and dispensation by deploying Information Communications Technology (ICT) (A & E Law Partnership, 2022). The case management and scheduling system is meant to enable legal practitioners in the Ministry to have access to the details of cases assigned to them at the touch of a button from either their laptops or mobile phones. This is also said to be applicable in Oyo and Ekiti states respectively. Recently, the High Court of Taraba State in a landmark ruling permitted service by substituted means of court process by posting to the defendants’ Facebook and WhatsApp profiles, as decided in the case of Mohammad Awwaldanlami, Esq. v. Governor of Taraba State & Twenty Four Ors (Suit No: TRST/11/2018) (A & E Partnership, 2022). Also currently, Courts in Abuja can now serve hearing notices via email and/or SMS except as otherwise directed by the judge (Order 7 Rule 17 of the FCT High Court Rules) (A & E Partnership, 2022).

Extensively, the Court of Appeal Rules 2021 which came into force on 1st November 2021 made some excellent advancement towards the adoption of legal technology in Nigeria. First, the Rules in Order 2 Rule 1 provide that a notice of appeal may be served by electronic mail especially if the party gave an email address during the proceedings at the lower court. Also, Order 20 of the Court of Appeal Rules now provides that electronic filing is to run parallel with manual filing. Order 20 Rule 1 also stipulates: “There shall be established a 24-hour electronic filing system in the Registry of the Court, functional in all the Judicial Division of the Court, for the electronic filing of Court processes and documents by parties” (Court of Appeal Rules, 2021). Accordingly, the Akwa Ibom State Government is making policy changes to fully adopt these policies into the justice system to ensure ease and speed in service delivery. This explains the dependence on manual methods of service delivery in the judicial sector in the State to date.

In the administrative milieu, evidence also exists to show the prevalence of e-administration in ministries in other states in Nigeria. For instance, Edo State just recently transitioned its civil service to a paperless one through the adoption of two technologies; the EGOV platform and the M-FILES. These technologies are document management platforms that are designed to manage all aspects of administration including planning, procurement, budgeting, reporting, storage, etc. Accordingly, 6 million files have been stored on these
platforms with the government training over 3,000 workers on methods of operations (Megwai, 2023).

**Conclusion**

E-administration is one of the indicators of the movement from an agrarian society to a technological one. Hence, the need to ease stress on the part of employees and ensure speed and quality in service delivery to the public has buttressed the adaptation to a paperless society in many climes. However, it has been discovered that in the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Justice which interfaces more with the public, effective e-administration is lacking. This is contingent on the fact that e-administration among both administrative and legal staff in the Ministry is inconspicuous as manual storage and transfer of files is still heavily operational, especially amongst the administrative staff. As a result of this, service delivery becomes slow and less qualitative especially as papers are subject to tear, theft, and errors. Also, access, movement, and transfer of these files further pressurize staff, which is one of the causes of job stress and "red-tape" in the public service.

**Recommendations**

From the findings above, the following recommendations are made:

1. Policy measures that are commensurate with modern technologies should be adopted by the State for the Ministry and the entire Civil Service in general.
2. Staff in the Ministry should be trained efficiently on the use of e-technologies.
3. E-administration should be introduced as a short-term training course for new employees in the Ministry. Completion of this short course should serve as one of the criteria for consideration for employment.
4. The State government should set up a board which would be responsible for the supervision and evaluation of the use of the technologies in the Ministry and the Civil Service as a whole.
5. Necessary infrastructures such as a steady power supply and reliable internet connection should be put in place to ensure the smooth usage of e-administrative systems in the ministry.

**References**


