

## The Nexus Between Corporate Governance Practices and Information Technology Deployment in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission (2019–2025)

**Tony Iweanya Okonmah (Ph.D) & Sarumi Fausat Remilekun (Ph.D)**

Department of Politics and International Relations  
Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria.

**Corresponding Author: Tony Iweanya Okonmah (Ph.D)**

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines the nexus between corporate governance practices and the deployment of information technology (IT) in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission between 2019 to 2025. The research adopts a qualitative approach, these qualitative techniques provide a comprehensive understanding of how governance structures influence the adoption, management, and effectiveness of IT systems within the public service. Qualitative data were generated from key informant interviews and document analysis of relevant policy reports, circulars, and strategic plans. Thematic analysis was employed to interpret the findings. The results indicate a significant relationship between corporate governance practices such as accountability, transparency, leadership commitment, and regulatory compliance and the level of IT deployment in the Commission. Effective governance frameworks were found to enhance strategic IT planning, improve resource allocation, and strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, thereby facilitating the successful implementation of digital platforms for personnel management and service delivery. Conversely, weak enforcement of governance principles and bureaucratic bottlenecks were identified as key challenges limiting optimal IT utilisation. The study concludes that robust corporate governance practices are critical to sustaining effective IT deployment in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission. It recommends the strengthening of governance structures, continuous capacity building for public officials, and the alignment of IT initiatives with institutional governance objectives to improve efficiency, transparency, and overall public sector performance in Lagos State.

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**Keywords:** Corporate Governance Practices; Information Technology Deployment; Public Sector Management; Civil Service Commission; Lagos State

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### INTRODUCTION

Across Africa, including Nigeria and Lagos State, prevailing issues shape the discourse on corporate governance and the effectiveness of information technology. These issues include the scarcity of robust regulatory frameworks tailored to address the complexities of technological innovations. The absence of clear guidelines often undermines efforts to implement effective governance practices, leaving organizations susceptible to risks associated with rapid technological changes. Additionally, the lack of board diversity and expertise remains a pertinent concern, limiting the capacity of boards to navigate the nuances of technological disruption effectively. Moreover, the digital literacy gap among board members and senior executives hampers their ability to grasp and respond strategically to emerging technological trends, thus impeding organizational agility and resilience.

Nigeria, like many other African countries, grapples with governance challenges exacerbated by technological disruption, particularly within government ministries and parastatals. One prevalent

issue is the prevalence of bureaucratic inefficiencies and corruption, which undermine the effectiveness of governance mechanisms and erode public trust in government institutions. According to a report by the Nigerian Economic Summit Group, corruption costs Nigeria an estimated \$19 billion annually, equivalent to 5% of GDP. This endemic corruption impedes service delivery, diverts public resources away from essential services, and undermines investor confidence, hindering economic growth and development [1].

Additionally, the lack of transparency and accountability in government procurement processes and contract award mechanisms perpetuates rent-seeking behaviour and fosters a culture of impunity among public officials. These governance failures underscore the imperative for comprehensive reforms that promote transparency, accountability, and integrity in government operations.

Consequences of ineffective corporate governance practices in the face of technological disruption manifest across various dimensions. Organizations

may encounter reputational damage stemming from instances of corporate misconduct or failure to adapt to technological advancements, eroding stakeholder trust and market credibility. Financial losses often ensue from inadequate oversight of technological risks, leaving organizations vulnerable to cyber threats, compliance breaches, and missed opportunities for innovation and growth. Furthermore, the stagnation or decline in market relevance and competitiveness poses existential threats to companies that fail to embrace technological transformations effectively. Legal and regulatory sanctions loom over organizations that falter in compliance with evolving regulatory requirements, exposing them to financial penalties and reputational liabilities.

The prevailing issues surrounding corporate governance practices and information technology resonate deeply within the Lagos State Civil Service, Nigeria, echoing challenges faced globally while amplifying local intricacies. Lagos, being Nigeria's economic hub, confronts governance hurdles mirroring those of developed nations and compounded by the complexities of a developing economy. Within the Lagos State Civil Service, issues such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and insufficient technological infrastructure undermine governance efficacy. For instance, despite efforts to digitize processes, bureaucratic red tape persists, impeding service delivery and hindering the state's ability to harness technology for governance improvements. Moreover, corruption remains a pervasive challenge, with reports indicating significant leakages of public funds due to fraudulent practices and rent-seeking behaviours within government agencies [1]. These issues not only erode public trust but also impede economic development and social progress, positioning Lagos State within the broader global discourse on governance reform and technological adaptation.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing the above challenges, the study examines the nexus between corporate governance practices and information technology in the Civil Service Commission, Lagos State. By identifying key governance gaps and exploring strategies for reform, the study seeks to contribute to the advancement of governance norms and foster inclusive growth and development in Lagos State, Nigeria, and beyond.

### **Significance of the Study**

The study stands to benefit the Lagos State government itself by providing actionable insights into optimizing governance frameworks amidst technological advancements. By understanding the implications of digital disruption on governance structures and decision-making processes, policymakers can enact targeted reforms that foster

transparency, streamline operations, and improve service delivery across various ministries and parastatals.

Secondly, stakeholders within the Lagos State Civil Service, including civil servants and government officials, stand to gain valuable knowledge about the evolving nature of governance in a digital age. Through comprehensive analysis and empirical research, this study can illuminate the impact of technological disruption on their roles, responsibilities, and opportunities within the civil service. By embracing digital tools and adopting best practices in corporate governance, civil servants can enhance their efficiency, effectiveness, and adaptability in serving the needs of Lagos State's diverse population.

The findings of this study have the potential to inform policy decisions, shape institutional reforms, and drive advancements in corporate governance practices across government parastatals in Africa. By offering insights into the complex interplay between technology, governance, and societal impact, the research report seeks to empower policymakers, government officials, and stakeholders with the knowledge needed to navigate the evolving governance effectiveness and promote accountability within the African governance landscape.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Corporate Governance**

Corporate governance refers to the system of rules, practices, and processes by which a company is directed, controlled, and operated. It encompasses the relationships between a company's management, its board of directors, shareholders, and other stakeholders. The concept of corporate governance aims to ensure transparency, accountability, and the protection of shareholders' interests while promoting ethical behaviour and sustainable business practices.

There are several definitions of corporate governance provided by different organisations and experts. The World Bank defines corporate governance as "the system by which businesses are directed and controlled, encompassing the relationships among the management, board of directors, controlling shareholders, minority shareholders, and other stakeholders". This definition highlights the importance of multiple stakeholders and their interactions in the governance framework [2].

Another definition, proposed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), states that corporate governance is "the system by which business corporations are directed and controlled. The corporate governance structure specifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among different participants in the corporation". This

definition emphasizes the allocation of rights and responsibilities among various actors within the corporate structure.

Corporate governance plays a crucial role in promoting transparency and accountability. It ensures that decision-making processes are fair, ethical, and aligned with the long-term interests of the company and its stakeholders. Effective corporate governance helps mitigate conflicts of interest, prevents abuse of power, and fosters trust and confidence in the company.

One example of the importance of corporate governance can be seen in the case of Enron. The collapse of Enron in 2001 highlighted significant governance failures. The company manipulated financial statements, engaged in accounting fraud, and had weak oversight from its board of directors. This failure of corporate governance resulted in substantial financial losses for investors and employees. It led to increased scrutiny and the subsequent implementation of stricter corporate governance regulations and practices [3].

Good corporate governance practices also contribute to sustainable business performance. Companies that prioritize ethical behaviour, transparency, and accountability tend to attract more investors, customers, and talented employees [4]. They are better equipped to manage risks, adapt to changing market conditions, and create long-term value for shareholders. However, corporate governance is not without its challenges. One critical issue is the potential for conflicts of interest between different stakeholders. For example, the interests of shareholders may differ from those of employees, customers, or the broader community. Balancing these conflicting interests requires effective governance mechanisms and accountability frameworks. Moreover, the effectiveness of corporate governance largely depends on the willingness of companies to implement and adhere to best practices. Weak enforcement, lack of transparency, and inadequate oversight can undermine the effectiveness of governance frameworks, leading to governance failures and financial scandals.

At its core, corporate governance aims to establish frameworks and mechanisms that enhance accountability and transparency in decision-making processes. This includes delineating the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, such as shareholders, board members, executives, and regulators. For example, the separation of ownership and control in publicly traded companies necessitates robust governance structures to mitigate agency conflicts and ensure alignment with shareholder interests [5].

Effective corporate governance frameworks also encompass principles of integrity, ethics, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). By fostering a culture of ethical behaviour and responsible business practices, corporations can enhance their reputation, build trust with stakeholders, and mitigate risks associated with misconduct or malfeasance [6]. Notably, the Cadbury Report defines corporate governance as "the system by which companies are directed and controlled ... [which] involves a set of relationships between a company's management, its board, its shareholders, and other stakeholders."

One critical aspect of corporate governance is the composition and independence of the board of directors. A diverse and independent board can provide strategic oversight, challenge management decisions, and ensure accountability to shareholders. For instance, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in the United States mandates the establishment of independent audit committees to oversee financial reporting and internal control processes, thereby enhancing transparency and accountability in corporate disclosures [7].

Furthermore, corporate governance extends beyond regulatory compliance to encompass principles of sustainability and long-term value creation. Companies that prioritize environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors in their decision-making processes are better positioned to address emerging risks, capitalize on opportunities, and foster stakeholder trust and loyalty. For example, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a framework for companies to integrate sustainability considerations into their corporate strategies and operations, thereby aligning business objectives with broader societal goals [8].

In practice, however, corporate governance frameworks may encounter challenges and limitations. Agency conflicts, information asymmetry, and regulatory complexities can undermine the effectiveness of governance mechanisms and impede efforts to foster transparency and accountability. Moreover, entrenched interests, inadequate oversight, and lax enforcement may enable corporate misconduct and unethical behaviour to persist, eroding trust and shareholder value.

### **Information Technology Deployment**

Information technology (IT) is the collection of tools, systems, and processes that organizations and individuals use to handle information. It involves the use of computers, networks, databases, and software applications to collect, process, store, and distribute data efficiently. The core aim of IT is to support operations, enhance communication, and improve decision-making. Modern information technology extends beyond hardware and software to include

internet-based services, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data analytics. These components work together to make it possible to manage large volumes of information quickly and accurately. IT also helps organizations automate routine tasks, reduce errors, and increase productivity. In both public and private sectors, information technology has become essential for delivering services, supporting collaboration, and maintaining competitiveness. As technologies evolve, organizations are expected to adapt continuously to new tools and practices to remain effective and responsive to stakeholder needs.

**Information Technology in the Civil Service**

In the United States, information technology has transformed public administration through initiatives such as e-government services and cloud-based platforms. Agencies like the U.S. General Services Administration developed portals like USA.gov to improve public access to services, while advanced data analytics systems have been used to enhance policy development and accountability. In the United Kingdom, the government’s Digital Service (GDS) led efforts to digitize civil service operations. Initiatives such as GOV.UK streamlined thousands of websites into a single, user-friendly platform. Digital identity systems and secure online transactions have also made it easier for citizens to access benefits and public records.

Estonia is widely recognized as a global leader in e-governance. The country implemented an advanced digital infrastructure that allows citizens to vote online, sign documents electronically, and access nearly all public services through secure digital identities. This has made the Estonian civil service highly efficient and transparent. In Singapore, the Smart Nation initiative integrated digital technologies into public administration to improve service delivery and citizen engagement. The government launched apps and digital portals to allow residents to complete tasks like renewing licenses and paying taxes online, reducing bureaucratic delays.

Canada has invested heavily in information technology to modernize civil service operations. The use of digital records management, online service portals, and big data analytics has streamlined processes in departments such as Immigration and Revenue. Efforts have also been made to strengthen cybersecurity to protect sensitive information. In Australia, the Digital Transformation Agency has guided the adoption of IT across government departments. Initiatives include myGov, a central online platform where citizens can access health, taxation, and welfare services securely. This has increased efficiency and reduced paperwork in the Australian Public Service.

India launched the Digital India programme to digitize government services and improve transparency. Civil service organizations now use online portals for land records, subsidies, and citizen grievances. E-governance has also expanded access to rural populations through mobile technology and public internet kiosks. In Nigeria, information technology adoption in the civil service has been growing gradually. E-government initiatives have introduced electronic payroll systems, digital records management, and online recruitment platforms to reduce corruption and inefficiency. However, challenges such as inconsistent infrastructure, limited funding, and digital literacy gaps continue to affect full implementation. Despite these constraints, agencies like the Lagos State Civil Service Commission have started to embrace digital tools to improve transparency and service delivery.

**The History of Lagos State**

Lagos State, located in the southwestern part of Nigeria, has a rich and diverse history that spans several centuries. Here is an overview of the key historical periods and events that have shaped Lagos State as shown in Figure 2.1:



**Figure 2.1:** Map of Lagos State Showing Key Historical Periods and Events

**Source:** Lagos State Government Official Website

**Pre-Colonial Era:**

The area that is now Lagos State was initially inhabited by various indigenous communities, including the Awori, Ijebu, and Egun people. These communities were engaged in fishing, farming, and trading activities. The region's coastal location made it an important hub for trade with European merchants, particularly during the 15th and 16th centuries.

**Colonial Era:**

Lagos became a British protectorate in the early 19th century. In 1861, Lagos was annexed by Britain and

became a crown colony. The British established a colonial administration and used Lagos as a centre for their commercial and administrative activities in the region. The city grew rapidly, attracting migrants from different parts of Nigeria and West Africa. The amalgamation of Lagos with the Southern Protectorate in 1906 marked the beginning of the direct British rule over the wider Lagos area. The colonial government-initiated infrastructure development, including the construction of roads, railways, and public buildings, which contributed to the modernisation of Lagos.

#### ***Post-Independence Era:***

Nigeria gained independence from British colonial rule in 1960. Lagos became the capital of the newly independent federation and remained the capital until 1991 when it was moved to Abuja. As the capital city, Lagos experienced significant growth and development, becoming Nigeria's economic and commercial centre.

#### ***Lagos State Creation:***

On May 27, 1967, Lagos State was created as one of Nigeria's federating states through the State Creation and Transitional Provisions Decree. The state was carved out of the former Western Region and included the city of Lagos and other areas surrounding it.

Lagos State has witnessed rapid population growth and urbanization over the years. The city of Lagos, in particular, has grown into one of the largest cities in Africa. The influx of people seeking economic opportunities has led to the development of informal settlements and the challenges of managing urbanization, such as housing, transportation, and infrastructure. Since its creation, Lagos State has had several administrations that have focused on governance and development. Various governors have implemented policies and initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, education, healthcare, and social welfare. Notable developments include the construction of major roads, bridges, public buildings, and the establishment of educational institutions.

Lagos State is the economic powerhouse of Nigeria, contributing significantly to the country's GDP. It is home to a wide range of industries, including finance, telecommunications, manufacturing, entertainment, and services. The state has also been a major destination for foreign direct investment and plays a critical role in regional and international trade. Lagos State is known for its cultural diversity, with numerous ethnic groups and languages represented. The state is a melting pot of various Nigerian and international cultures, which is reflected in its music, art, cuisine, and festivals. Lagos State is also renowned for its vibrant nightlife, fashion industry, and creative arts scene.

In summary, Lagos State has a dynamic history that encompasses pre-colonial, colonial, and post-independence eras. From its origins as a trading hub to its present status as a bustling metropolis, Lagos State has undergone significant transformations and emerged as a key economic, cultural, and political centre in Nigeria and Africa as a whole [9].

#### **Records and Landmarks**

The civil service of Lagos State, Nigeria, boasts a rich tapestry of records and landmarks that reflect its historical significance and administrative prowess. As the economic and administrative centre of Nigeria, Lagos has been pivotal in the country's political landscape, contributing to its development and governance since independence. One notable record is the establishment of the Lagos Civil Service Commission, which serves as the backbone of administrative functions and personnel management within the state. Lagos is home to several iconic landmarks that symbolize its administrative heritage and cultural diversity. The Lagos State Secretariat, located in Alausa, Ikeja, stands as a testament to the state's commitment to efficient governance and public service delivery. The secretariat houses various government ministries, departments, and agencies, serving as a focal point for administrative coordination and policy implementation. Additionally, the historic Lagos Island, with its colonial-era architecture and bustling markets, remains a vibrant hub of commercial activity and cultural exchange, showcasing the city's dynamic spirit and cosmopolitan character.

Furthermore, the Lagos Civil Service is characterised by its commitment to innovation and excellence in public administration. The digitization of records and the implementation of e-governance initiatives have streamlined bureaucratic processes and enhanced service delivery to citizens. With landmarks such as the Lagos State Digital Village and the Lagos State Residents' Registration Agency (LASRRA), the civil service has embraced technology to modernize operations and improve efficiency. These landmarks serve as beacons of progress and innovation, reflecting Lagos State's vision for a dynamic and responsive public sector that meets the evolving needs of its citizens.

Basically, the records and landmarks of the Lagos Civil Service underscore its historical legacy and commitment to effective governance. From its iconic buildings to its pioneering initiatives, Lagos continues to set the standard for public administration in Nigeria, shaping the course of development and progress in the region. As the state looks towards the future, its civil service remains dedicated to upholding the principles of transparency, accountability, and service excellence, ensuring that

Lagos remains a beacon of hope and opportunity for generations to come [9].

### **The Nigerian Civil Service**

The Nigerian Civil Service is a critical component of the country's administrative machinery, serving as the backbone of governmental operations. Established to facilitate the implementation of government policies and programs, it consists of various ministries, departments, and agencies operating at federal, state, and local levels. The Civil Service Commission, established under the Nigerian Constitution, oversees the recruitment, promotion, and discipline of civil servants, ensuring professionalism and adherence to established standards [10].

Historically, the Nigerian Civil Service has faced challenges ranging from bureaucratic inefficiencies to corruption and political interference. These issues have often hindered the service's effectiveness in delivering public services and implementing policies. However, efforts have been made to reform and modernize the civil service to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability. Initiatives such as the introduction of e-governance systems and capacity-building programs aim to streamline processes and improve service delivery.

Despite ongoing reforms, the Nigerian Civil Service continues to grapple with systemic issues, including inadequate funding, outdated infrastructure, and insufficient training opportunities for staff. Addressing these challenges requires sustained commitment from government authorities, as well as collaboration with relevant stakeholders. By investing in the professional development of civil servants, fostering a culture of meritocracy, and leveraging technology for improved service delivery, the Nigerian Civil Service can fulfil its mandate more effectively and contribute to the country's socio-economic development agenda [9].

### **Vision of the Lagos State Civil Service**

The vision of the Lagos State Civil Service is centred on becoming a model of excellence in public administration, service delivery, and governance. As one of Nigeria's most populous and economically vibrant states, Lagos aims to foster a Civil Service that is innovative, responsive, and accountable to the needs of its diverse population. The vision encompasses a commitment to professionalism, integrity, and efficiency in the execution of governmental functions, as well as the promotion of transparency and citizen engagement. By embracing modernization, leveraging technology, and investing in the continuous development of its workforce, the Lagos State Civil Service aspires to set the standard for effective public administration, driving sustainable development and enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Agency Theory**

This study focuses specifically on Agency Theory, propounded by Michael C. Jensen and William H. Meckling in 1976, which posits a principal-agent relationship where principals (shareholders) hire agents (managers) to act on their behalf. The theory assumes that conflicts of interest may arise between principals and agents due to divergent objectives and motivations. According to agency theory, managers may prioritise their own interests over those of the shareholders, leading to agency problems such as moral hazard and adverse selection. Applying the Agency Theory in the context of technological disruption within the Lagos State Civil Service, it becomes relevant to examine how the board members and executives manage their roles and responsibilities. The theory and responsibilities. The theory suggests that effective corporate governance practices can help mitigate agency problems and align the interests of agents with those of principals.

One of the key arguments of the Agency Theory is that establishing independent boards and implementing performance-based incentives can help align the interests of agents with the long-term objectives of the organization. Independent boards, composed of directors who are not directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the civil service, can provide objective oversight and minimize conflicts of interest. Performance-based incentives, such as bonuses tied to organizational goals and key performance indicators, provide agents with incentives to act in the best interests of the principals. In the context of technological disruption, the Agency Theory highlights the importance of effective governance practices to ensure that board members and executives make decisions that prioritize the long-term interests of the Lagos State Civil Service. Technological disruptions can introduce new challenges and uncertainties, and the board's role becomes critical in navigating these changes [11].

In the context of the Lagos State Civil Service, agency theory provides valuable insights into the dynamics between political appointees and career civil servants. Political appointees, who are often agents of elected officials, may have different objectives and priorities compared to career civil servants who are tasked with implementing policies and programs. This misalignment of interests can result in conflicts and inefficiencies within the civil service.

The application of agency theory in the Lagos State Civil Service allows stakeholders to understand how conflicts of interest may manifest and impact organisational effectiveness. For example, political appointees may prioritize political objectives or personal agendas over the efficient delivery of public

services, potentially leading to suboptimal outcomes for citizens. By recognising these dynamics, policymakers and administrators can implement mechanisms to mitigate agency problems, such as enhancing transparency, accountability, and performance evaluation systems. However, agency theory has its weaknesses. Its simplistic view of human behaviour, which primarily focuses on monetary incentives and self-interest, may not fully capture the complexities of organisational dynamics within the civil service.

Additionally, agency theory tends to overlook non-monetary motivations and the role of institutional factors in shaping behaviour. In the context of the Lagos State Civil Service, where factors such as bureaucratic structures, cultural norms, and political influences play significant roles, a more nuanced understanding of organisational behaviour is required. By implementing mechanisms such as clearly defined roles and responsibilities, regular monitoring, and transparent reporting, the board can enhance its effectiveness in overseeing the adoption and implementation of technological initiatives within the civil service. This includes ensuring that decisions regarding technology adoption are based on the long-term interests of the civil service, rather than short-term gains or personal interests of board members or executives.

Specifically, in the context of corporate governance practices and information technology within the Lagos State Civil Service, the Agency Theory emphasises the need for effective governance mechanisms to align the interests of agents with those of principals. By implementing independent boards and performance-based incentives, the civil service can enhance its ability to effectively respond to technological disruptions and ensure that decisions are made in the best interests of the organisation and its stakeholders. Therefore, while agency theory provides a valuable framework for analysing principal-agent relationships and conflicts of interest within the Lagos State Civil Service, its application should be complemented with insights from other theories and perspectives. Recognising the limitations of agency theory can help policymakers and administrators develop more holistic approaches to governance, accountability, and organisational effectiveness within the civil service [12].

### **Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed**

In examining the theme of corporate governance practices and information technology within the Lagos State Civil Service amid technological disruption, several research gaps emerge that warrant attention. Conceptually, while existing studies may focus on the broad principles of corporate governance and information technology, there is a gap in understanding how technological disruption

specifically impacts governance structures and decision-making processes within the civil service. Questions arise concerning the adaptation of governance frameworks to leverage emerging technologies, address cybersecurity challenges, and ensure transparency and accountability in digital environments. Methodologically, there is a gap in empirical research that employs qualitative approach to explore the nuanced interactions between technological advancements, organisational culture, and governance practices within the Lagos State Civil Service. By integrating quantitative analysis of governance metrics with qualitative insights from key stakeholders, researchers can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms driving effectiveness in the face of technological change.

Furthermore, a theoretical gap exists regarding the applicability of traditional governance theories, such as Agency Theory and Stewardship Theory, within the context of technological disruption in the civil service. While these theories offer valuable insights into principal-agent relationships and managerial motivations, their adequacy in explaining the complexities of governance dynamics in digital environments remains uncertain. Additionally, there is a sectoral gap in research focusing specifically on the challenges and opportunities posed by technological disruption within government institutions, particularly in the context of developing countries like Nigeria. By examining the unique governance challenges faced by public sector organizations in Lagos State, researchers can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how technological disruption reshapes governance practices and decision-making processes in diverse socio-political contexts. Addressing these research gaps is crucial for informing policy interventions and institutional reforms aimed at enhancing governance effectiveness and resilience in an era of rapid technological change.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The methodology chosen for this research involves the use of exploratory research design to gain comprehensive insights to assess and enhance corporate governance practices and information technology in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission in response to the challenges posed by technological disruption. Descriptive analysis was employed to investigate corporate governance practices and information technology in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission. The use of qualitative approach (interviews) was utilized in data collection.

The decision to conduct face-to-face interviews stems from the aim to impartially capture the aim study objectives, drawing upon outsider perspectives on

civil service perceptions. The use of interview method allows the exploration of ideas and the probing of reactions in greater depth[13]. Conversely, interviews helped mitigate some of the limitations inherent in questionnaire-based research, such as addressing ambiguous language and inadequate measuring tools, albeit requiring substantial time and cooperation from interviewees.

In addition to primary data collection, secondary sources such as literature texts, government publications, journals, seminar papers, newspapers, textbooks, periodicals, and bibliographies were utilized to augment the research [13]. Non-printed materials sourced from the internet and other relevant sources were also incorporated to enrich the study on corporate governance practices and information technology in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission.

### **Population of the Study**

The study population consists of various key entities within the administrative structure of Lagos State Civil Service Commission including the present Commissioners, Directorate of Administration and Human Resource, Directorate of Career Management, Directorate of Human Resource Management Information System (HR MIS), Directorate of Promotion & Conversion/Advancement, Directorate of Employee Relations, Directorate of Learning & Development, Directorate of Career Progression, Department of Procurement, Department of Planning, Department of Internal Audit, Department of Information Communication Technology, Department of Public Affairs, Department of Human Resources Measures and Accountability as well as Recruitment and Appeal Unit, Appointment Unit, Discipline & Exit Unit, Planning, Research and Statistics Unit. Citizens (intended beneficiaries of the services of Lagos State Civil Service Commission) were also considered.

The choice of Lagos State as the study location offers a strategic vantage point for examining corruption issues and governance dynamics within Nigeria, considering its economic significance, demographic diversity, and institutional complexity. Lagos State was selected as the study location due to several compelling reasons [14]. First and foremost, Lagos is the economic and commercial hub of Nigeria, making it a critical center for understanding governance practices and corruption dynamics within the country. The state's diverse governmental institutions, ranging from civil service commissions to specialized agencies like anti-corruption bodies and media outlets, offer a rich landscape for examining corruption issues and governance effectiveness. Furthermore, Lagos State's significance extends beyond its economic prominence; it serves as a microcosm of the broader Nigerian society, characterized by cultural diversity,

urbanization challenges, and complex governance structures. By focusing on Lagos, the study aims to capture insights and patterns that may be indicative of broader trends within the Nigerian civil service and governance frameworks. Additionally, Lagos State's accessibility and infrastructure make it conducive to conducting comprehensive research, facilitating data collection and engagement with various stakeholders across different sectors. The presence of established media outlets and government institutions also ensures a robust information ecosystem for analysing corporate governance practices and information technology [14].

Finally, given the methodology of the current study, which adopts a qualitative approach utilizing interview guide as primary data collection tool to achieve the stated objectives. The interview guide, comprising open-ended questions and statements derived from existing literature on the nexus between corporate governance practices and information technology in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission, which facilitated in-depth exploration of relevant themes.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The analysis of the study was based on interviews conducted with a total of 30 participants drawn from various strategic entities within the administrative structure of the Lagos State Civil Service Commission. The study population included present Commissioners, the Directorate of Administration and Human Resource, Directorate of Career Management, Directorate of Human Resource Management Information System (HR MIS), Directorate of Promotion & Conversion/Advancement, Directorate of Employee Relations, Directorate of Learning & Development, and Directorate of Career Progression. Additional participants were selected from the Department of Procurement, Department of Planning, Department of Internal Audit, Department of Information Communication Technology, Department of Public Affairs, Department of Human Resources Measures and Accountability, Recruitment and Appeal Unit, Appointment Unit, Discipline & Exit Unit, and the Planning, Research and Statistics Unit. Citizens, as intended beneficiaries of the services provided by the Lagos State Civil Service Commission, were also included to ensure a holistic understanding of stakeholder experiences and expectations.

#### **Response Rate**

Out of the 30 targeted participants for the study on corporate governance practices and information technology in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission, only 25 individuals were available and accessible for interviews. This represented an actual response rate of 83.3%. The shortfall of 5 participants (16.7%) was primarily due to scheduling conflicts,

administrative workload, and last-minute unavailability of some senior officials. Although these constraints limited the researchers’ ability to reach all originally intended respondents, the reduction in sample size did not significantly compromise the representativeness and depth of the data collected.

The participants who were successfully interviewed were drawn across various directorates, departments, and units, including the present Commissioners; Directorate of Administration and Human Resource; Directorate of Career Management; Directorate of Human Resource Management Information System (HR MIS); Directorate of Promotion & Conversion/Advancement; Directorate of Employee Relations; Directorate of Learning & Development; Directorate of Career Progression; and key departments such as Procurement, Planning, Internal Audit, Information Communication Technology, Public Affairs, and Human Resources Measures and Accountability. Additional respondents were engaged from the Recruitment and Appeal Unit, Appointment Unit, Discipline & Exit Unit, and Planning, Research and Statistics Unit. Citizens who were intended beneficiaries of Commission services were also

included to provide an external stakeholder perspective. The inclusion criteria required participants to have held their positions within the Commission or as service recipients for a minimum of three years between 2018 and 2025, ensuring that all respondents possessed adequate experience and familiarity with governance processes and technology implementation. Despite the fewer interviews conducted, the diversity of perspectives offered a comprehensive analysis of governance and ICT integration in Lagos State. Table 4.1 shows the response rate of the participants.

Table 1: Response Rate [Qualitative Data]

Category	Targeted Participants	Actual Responses	Response Rate (%)
Commissioners	3	2	66.7%
Directorates (7)	7	7	100.0%
Departments (6)	6	6	100.0%
Units (4)	4	4	100.0%
Citizens [Internded Beneciaries of the Commisison]	10	6	60.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>83.3%</b>

Source: Researcher, 2025

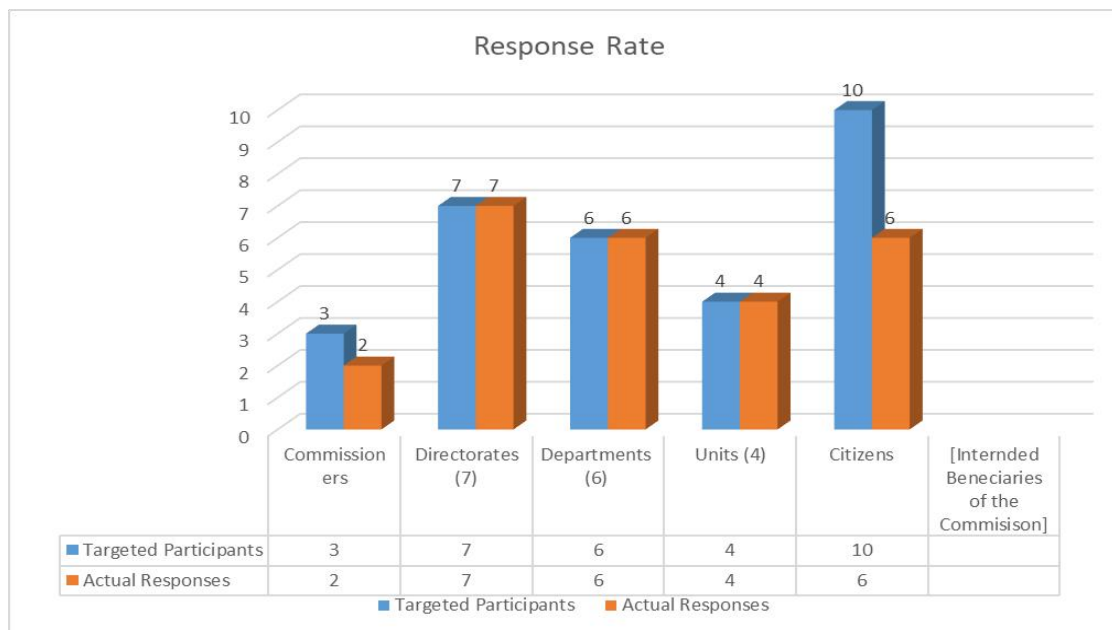


Figure 1: Response Rate

Source: Researcher, 2025

Table 5.1 presents the response rate of the qualitative data collection across the different categories of participants targeted in the study. Among the 3 Commissioners invited for interviews, 2 were successfully engaged, resulting in a response rate of 66.7%. All seven targeted Directorates achieved a full response rate of 100%, indicating strong participation and cooperation from key director-level stakeholders. Similarly, all six Departments identified for the study also recorded a complete response rate of 100%, underscoring the willingness of departmental

representatives to contribute detailed insights into governance practices and information technology use within the Commission. All four targeted Units likewise achieved full participation, further strengthening the comprehensiveness of the perspectives gathered from internal administrative structures.

In contrast, the Citizens category, which comprised intended beneficiaries of the Commission’s services, showed a lower response rate of 60%, with only 6 out of 10 targeted individuals participating in interviews.

This comparatively lower engagement among external stakeholders can be attributed to factors such as scheduling difficulties and varying levels of awareness or availability. Despite this, the study achieved an overall response rate of 83.3%, which is considered robust for qualitative research of this nature. The combined responses from Commissioners, Directorates, Departments, Units, and Citizens ensured that both internal operational perspectives and external user experiences were captured, providing a well-rounded understanding of corporate governance and technology integration in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission.

**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

This section provides a detailed overview of the demographic characteristics of the 25 respondents who participated in the study on corporate governance practices and information technology within the Lagos State Civil Service Commission (2018–2025). The participants were drawn from a cross-section of the Commission’s administrative structure, including Commissioners, Directorates, Departments, Units, and selected citizens who are beneficiaries of the Commission’s services. Their

diverse roles within the civil service and as stakeholders in public service delivery offer valuable insights into the governance and ICT transformation efforts undertaken by the Commission during the period under review.

The demographic variables considered in this study include gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, employment status, and role/category within the Commission. These variables were selected to help contextualize the perspectives and experiences of the respondents in relation to institutional reforms and digital integration. For instance, senior officials with advanced qualifications and years of service may provide more strategic insights into governance processes, while citizen participants offer perspectives on service accessibility and efficiency. Understanding these demographic distinctions is crucial for interpreting the qualitative findings and assessing how different groups perceive the effectiveness and challenges of governance and technology adoption in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 25)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	15	60.0%
	Female	10	40.0%
<b>Age</b>	31–40 years	6	24.0%
	41–50 years	11	44.0%
	Above 50 years	8	32.0%
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	Bachelor’s Degree	10	40.0%
	Master’s Degree	12	48.0%
	Doctorate/Professional Qualification	3	12.0%
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	20	80.0%
	Single	3	12.0%
	Widowed/Divorced	2	8.0%
<b>Employment Status</b>	Currently Employed in Commission	19	76.0%
	Retired from Public Service	3	12.0%
	Citizen (Service Beneficiary)	3	12.0%
<b>Role/Category</b>	Commissioners	2	8.0%
	Directorates	7	28.0%
	Departments	6	24.0%
	Units	4	16.0%
	Citizens	6	24.0%

Source: Researcher, 2025

The gender distribution among respondents shows that 60% were male (15 participants), while 40% were female (10 participants). This relatively balanced representation is significant because it suggests that perspectives on corporate governance and information technology were informed by both male and female voices across different organisational levels. The inclusion of women in key positions, particularly within Directorates and Departments, reflects the gradual progress in gender

inclusivity within the Lagos State public service, which has historically been male-dominated. This mix is important for understanding whether gender influences perceptions of transparency, accountability, and the effectiveness of digital transformation initiatives. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were between 41 and 50 years old, representing 44% of the sample (11 participants). Those above 50 years accounted for 32% (8 participants), while respondents aged 31–40 years made up 24% (6 participants). This age distribution

indicates that most participants had considerable professional experience, likely spanning at least a decade of service within the Commission. Their tenure is relevant to the study because longer-serving employees often have deeper institutional knowledge of historical governance practices and can provide more nuanced insights into how information technology has disrupted or improved existing systems.

Educational qualification emerged as a critical differentiator, with 48% of respondents (12 participants) holding a Master’s degree and an additional 12% (3 participants) possessing Doctorate or professional qualifications. Participants with a Bachelor’s degree comprised 40% (10 respondents). This high level of formal education among the sample suggests that most respondents were well-equipped to understand and critically assess complex governance frameworks, IT systems, and administrative reforms. Their advanced qualifications likely influenced their perspectives on capacity-building, policy implementation, and the challenges of technology integration in public administration. Regarding marital status, the data shows that 80% (20 respondents) were married, 12% (3 respondents) were single, and 8% (2 respondents) were widowed or divorced. The predominance of married participants suggests that many respondents may have stable family support systems, which can impact their engagement with demanding professional roles and their openness to organisational change. In studies of public sector reform, marital stability is sometimes associated with higher job satisfaction and a stronger sense of institutional loyalty, which may in turn affect how reforms are received and sustained.

Employment status further highlights the composition of the respondents. A large proportion—76% (19 respondents)—were currently employed within the

Commission, providing firsthand perspectives on day-to-day operations, decision-making processes, and the challenges of adopting new technologies. Meanwhile, 12% (3 respondents) were retired public servants whose views offered historical context to compare past and present governance practices. Another 12% (3 respondents) were citizens serving as service beneficiaries. Including these external stakeholders helped balance internal institutional perspectives with public perceptions of service delivery quality and transparency.

Finally, the role or category of respondents underscores the diversity of insights captured. Commissioners represented 8% of the sample (2 respondents), while 28% (7 respondents) were from Directorates, and 24% (6 respondents) were drawn from Departments. Additionally, 16% (4 respondents) came from Units responsible for core functions like planning, audits, and human resources, while Citizens accounted for 24% (6 respondents). This wide representation across organisational layers and external users ensured that the study could explore corporate governance and technology adoption comprehensively, taking into account strategic, operational, and beneficiary-level experiences within the Lagos State Civil Service Commission.

**ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

**Research Question One: What are the opportunities and challenges in implementing corporate governance practices in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission from 2018 to 2025?**

This section provides a detailed interview analysis structured around the research question. This analysis incorporates personalised responses from twelve participants representing various organisational levels and stakeholder groups within the Commission.

Table 3: Thematic Breakdown of Interview Question and Sub-Themes

Interview Question	Themes	Sub-Themes
<b>Evaluate the opportunities and challenges in implementing corporate governance practices in the Lagos State Civil Service Commission from 2018 to 2025.</b>	1. Policy and Regulatory Improvements	- Revised governance frameworks - Clearer accountability protocols - Updated codes of conduct
	2. Resistance to Change	- Bureaucratic inertia - Fear of exposure of malpractice - Limited buy-in from some senior staff
	3. Capacity Building and Training	- Expanded training programs - Knowledge gaps in compliance - Continuous professional development challenges
	4. Technology Integration	- Use of HRMIS and digital records - Streamlined workflows - Challenges in adapting legacy systems
	5. Transparency and Accountability	- Improved reporting mechanisms - Better audit trails - Difficulties sustaining transparency initiatives
	6. Stakeholder Engagement	- Inclusion of citizens’ perspectives - Communication gaps between management a frontline employees - Public trust issues

Source: Researcher, 2025

## Detailed Interview Responses

### Theme 1: Policy and Regulatory Improvements

Male Commissioner, Age 58:

*“In my experience, the biggest opportunity has been the new governance policies we introduced around 2019. They provided a clearer framework for accountability, which was previously lacking. For the first time, we had specific guidelines that linked performance metrics to governance outcomes. However, enforcing these policies uniformly across all departments was challenging because some directorates were more committed than others.”*

### Theme 2: Resistance to Change

Female Director, Age 47:

*“Many of us faced resistance when trying to implement the updated codes of conduct. Some senior staff were worried that the new policies would expose old practices they weren't proud of. I remember meetings where colleagues openly said they felt targeted. It took months of dialogue to get minimal buy-in.”*

### Theme 3: Capacity Building and Training

Male Director, Age 52:

*“Training was expanded significantly, but there were still big gaps. We had staff who hadn't attended governance training in years. I personally oversaw some workshops, and it was clear that many employees lacked awareness about compliance requirements. Sustaining continuous professional development has been an uphill battle.”*

### Theme 4: Technology Integration

Male Head of Department, Age 42:

*“The HRMIS and digital record-keeping systems were huge steps forward. They reduced paper trails and improved workflow. But integrating them with old legacy systems caused delays and confusion. I spent a lot of time troubleshooting compatibility issues.”*

### Theme 5: Transparency and Accountability

Female Department Head, Age 45:

*“From the audit perspective, I saw that the new reporting mechanisms improved transparency. We could track decisions better and verify claims more easily. But sustaining this progress is difficult when there is turnover in leadership or when political interests interfere.”*

### Theme 6: Stakeholder Engagement

Male Citizen Beneficiary, Age 50:

*“As someone who interacts with the Commission regularly, I noticed a real attempt to include public opinion in governance processes. But communication gaps remain. Sometimes, decisions are made that affect us, and we only hear about them after the fact.”*

## Additional Insights on Challenges

Female Directorate Officer, Age 41:

*“One challenge has been balancing transparency with confidentiality. We want open processes, but we also have to protect sensitive employee information. Striking that balance has caused tension.”*

Male Retired Senior Administrator, Age 63:

*“I saw firsthand how bureaucratic inertia can derail good ideas. Even when everyone agrees something is necessary, the slow pace of approvals and entrenched habits hold things back.”*

Female Citizen Beneficiary, Age 38:

*“As a citizen, I appreciate the efforts to make processes more accountable. But there are still times when I feel there is a lack of clarity about who to contact or how decisions are made.”*

Female Directorate Officer, Age 44:

*“In my role, I observed that not all staff are equally motivated to pursue training opportunities. Some see it as a burden rather than a chance to grow.”*

Male Head Unit, Age 46:

*“The governance reforms streamlined some appointment procedures, which was positive. But inconsistent implementation across units limited their full impact.”*

Male Unit Head, Age 39:

*“One opportunity I noticed was the push to use data for decision-making. But translating data insights into actual policies has been slow, partly because of competing priorities.”*

## DISCUSSION

The findings from the interviews reveal that one of the most significant opportunities in implementing corporate governance practices within the Lagos State Civil Service Commission (LSCSC) between 2018 and 2025 was the introduction of revised regulatory frameworks and performance-based protocols. Participants, especially those in leadership roles such as Commissioners and Directors, acknowledged the positive shift from informal decision-making structures to formalised governance mechanisms, including clearly defined roles, updated codes of conduct, and compliance tracking. The integration of digital governance tools, such as the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS), further enhanced workflow transparency and documentation efficiency. These developments, according to most respondents, marked a deliberate move toward institutional accountability and professionalisation of civil service operations.

However, several persistent challenges emerged across the Commission's departments and units. A recurrent theme was resistance to change, especially among long-serving staff members who viewed reforms as threats to entrenched interests or as a disruption of traditional bureaucratic routines. Directorate and unit-level respondents described how some staff members were reluctant to adopt new

policies or participate in training programs aimed at strengthening governance. Furthermore, while technology provided tools for improved monitoring and reporting, it also exposed capacity gaps. Many employees lacked the digital literacy or compliance knowledge necessary to engage effectively with new systems. This was particularly evident in the feedback from learning and development officers, who cited inconsistent participation in training programmes and the lack of a sustained professional development culture.

A key similarity across most responses was the recognition of improved transparency and structure brought about by governance reforms. Whether from internal stakeholders or citizen beneficiaries, participants noted a perceptible change in how decisions were documented, reviewed, and communicated. Both administrative and audit personnel observed that new reporting mechanisms, audit trails, and appointment procedures reduced opacity and fostered greater public trust in institutional processes. Yet, differences were noted in how these improvements were perceived. While directors and department heads saw these changes as strategic progress, citizen beneficiaries remained cautious, citing continued communication gaps and difficulties in accessing timely information. This difference in perception suggests that while structural reforms have taken root internally, their visibility and impact at the service delivery level remain uneven.

Specifically, the implementation of corporate governance practices in the LSCSC between 2018 and 2025 represents a complex interplay of opportunities and challenges. The period witnessed significant progress in formalising structures, leveraging technology, and enhancing internal accountability. However, these gains were moderated by cultural resistance, skill gaps, and implementation inconsistencies across units. The findings underscore the need for ongoing training, stronger change management strategies, and inclusive stakeholder engagement to bridge the gap between policy intention and operational reality. For the Commission to sustain its governance reforms, efforts must continue to focus not only on internal regulation but also on fostering trust and responsiveness in its interaction with the public.

#### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

One key limitation of this study is its reliance on qualitative data drawn from a relatively small sample of 25 participants within the Lagos State Civil Service Commission. While this provided rich, in-depth insights, it also means that the findings may not fully capture the experiences of all departments or reflect broader trends across other Nigerian states. Additionally, the study focused primarily on internal governance and technology adoption without

including a comparative analysis of performance metrics or benchmarking against similar commissions elsewhere, which could have strengthened the generalizability of the results.

#### CONCLUSION

In line with the findings and conclusion, the study found that governance reforms such as updated codes of conduct, clearer accountability frameworks, and digitised workflows provided genuine opportunities for faster approvals, enhanced transparency, and stronger audit controls. Yet these gains were uneven: entrenched bureaucratic resistance, skill gaps among long-serving staff, and pockets of political interference slowed or blunted implementation. While directors and commissioners praised policy clarity and HRMIS improvements, mid-level managers and citizen beneficiaries reported inconsistent application and persistent delays in some units.

In conclusion, while the Lagos State Civil Service Commission has achieved noteworthy strides in embedding corporate governance and leveraging information technology, these gains remain partial without a holistic commitment to cultural transformation and capacity building. A decisive, organisation-wide approach anchored in clear accountability, inclusive leadership, and sustained skill development will be the linchpin for realising the full potential of governance and technology in driving an efficient, responsive, and transparent civil service.

#### RECOMMENDATION

In line with the findings and conclusion the following recommendations were made:

1. The Lagos State Civil Service Commission should institutionalise a *comprehensive digital literacy and change-management training programme* across all directorates and units. This should target both senior executives and frontline personnel to close skill gaps that undermine the effectiveness of information systems. To achieve this, the Commission can partner with reputable training providers to deliver modular courses in e-governance, data security, and digital workflows, complemented by peer mentoring and periodic skills assessments. Implementation should be phased over 12 months, beginning with pilot departments that have demonstrated readiness, and progressively scaling to all units.
2. The Commission should *establish a Governance Reform and Oversight Committee* with a clear mandate to monitor the composition, functioning, and performance of all boards. This committee would be responsible for clarifying reporting

lines, resolving mandate overlaps, and tracking compliance with board procedures. To implement this, an executive directive should formally constitute the committee, appointing representatives from key directorates, the internal audit department, and at least one external observer to enhance objectivity. Quarterly performance reviews and public summaries of board activities should be published to reinforce transparency and accountability.

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