

Civil Service Efficiency and National Development in Nigeria: Evidence from Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State

Solomon IGBRIWI^{1*}, H.B. TUMBO² and Akpomuvire MUKORO¹

¹Department of Public Administration, Delta State University, Abraka, Delta State, Nigeria.

²Department of Public Administration, Novena University, Ogume, Delta State, Nigeria.

Authors Email: igbriwisolo@yahoo.com

Direct Research Journal of Management and Strategic Studies



Vol. 7(2), Pp. 94-108, October 2026

Author(s) retains the copyright of this article

This article is published under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0.

<https://journals.directresearchpublisher.org/index.php/drjmss/index>; <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/drjmss>

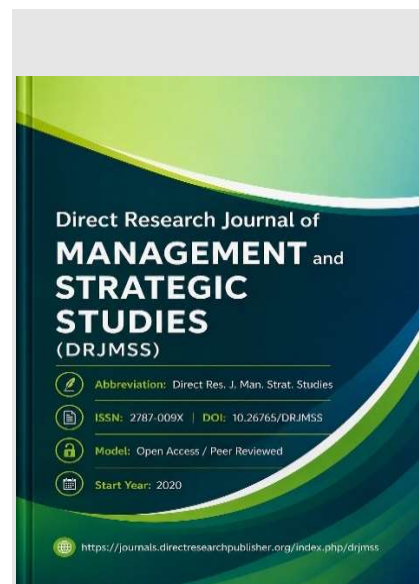
Research Article
ISSN: 2787-009X

Received 18 August 2026, Accepted 25 September 2026 Published 2 October 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examined Civil Service Efficiency and National Development in Nigeria: Evidence from Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Delta State. The study specifically sought to determine the effect of administrative effectiveness on national development in Nigeria and the extent to which service delivery efficiency affects national development in Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to civil servants in selected MDAs in Delta State. A sample size of 396 respondents was used for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis. The reliability results established satisfactory internal consistency of the research instrument, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. The findings revealed that administrative effectiveness had a positive and statistically significant effect on national development ($\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, $p < .001$). Similarly, service delivery efficiency had a positive and statistically significant effect on national development ($\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, $p < .001$). The two predictors jointly explained 62.6% of the variation in national development ($R^2 = 0.626$), while the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 319.02$, $p < .001$). The study concluded that administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency are significant dimensions of civil service efficiency that contribute substantially to national development in Nigeria. The study therefore recommended that government should strengthen administrative effectiveness through simplified bureaucratic procedures, performance management, staff capacity development and accountability, while service delivery should be improved through digitalisation, clear service standards, adequate resources, continuous staff training and regular performance monitoring.

Keywords: Civil Service Efficiency, Administrative Effectiveness, Service Delivery Efficiency, National Development, Ministries, Departments and Agencies



Citation: Igbriwi, S., Tumbo, H. B. & Mukoro, A. (2026). Civil Service Efficiency and National Development in Nigeria: Evidence from Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State. *Direct Research Journal of Management and Strategic Studies*. Vol. 7(2), Pp. 94-108
<https://doi.org/10.4314/drjmss.v7i2.5>

INTRODUCTION

The civil service is the administrative engine of government. It translates political decisions into policies, programmes, and services that citizens experience directly. In Nigeria, this role is performed by ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), which are responsible for policy formulation, implementation, coordination, and service delivery. As Ibietan (2023) argues, no country can rise beyond the level of the public service its bureaucracy delivers, which makes the quality of the civil service a central factor in whether development goals are achieved. Kayode and Clement (2024) similarly describe the Nigerian public service as the body that advises government, implements policy, and provides the services through which national development is pursued.

Civil service efficiency refers to how well public institutions combine human, financial, and material inputs to achieve the best possible outcomes, with minimal waste, delay, and corruption (Eke, Eke & Agala, 2023). Efficient systems are marked by accountability, professionalism, transparency, responsiveness, and effective policy execution. National development, for its part, denotes sustained improvement in a country's economic, social, political, infrastructural, and technological conditions, reflected in poverty reduction, employment generation, quality education, healthcare, and better living standards. Ukwandu and Ijere (2020) contend that public administration must act as a facilitator of development and adapt continually to a changing environment if it is to be an effective agent of socio-economic transformation.

Successive governments have introduced reforms to strengthen the service. Notable among them are the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS), the Treasury Single Account (TSA), the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), wider digital governance initiatives, and the Federal Civil Service Strategy and Implementation Plan (FCSSIP) 2021–2025. Empirical evidence suggests these measures have delivered some gains. Zoleh (2026) found that digital reforms significantly improved transparency and administrative efficiency in selected federal MDAs, while Nwinyokpugi and Lebari (2022) reported that electronic administration strategies were positively associated with cost reduction and service quality in the Rivers State civil service. Human resource factors matter as well. Yakubu (2026) showed that merit-based recruitment improves service delivery quality and efficiency through stronger institutional capacity, and Izuchukwu, Ochala, and Zakari (2026) found that training, workshops, and career development initiatives raise employee performance in Anambra State ministries. Even so, the gains have been uneven and the expected transformation has not fully materialised. Bureaucratic bottlenecks, politicisation, weak institutional capacity, corruption, inadequate motivation, poor remuneration, and

limited technological readiness still undermine performance (Eke et al., 2023; Kayode & Clement, 2024). Okafor (2023) describes Nigerian public administration as trapped in poor service delivery that fails to meet citizens' expectations, and Ukwandu and Ijere (2020) conclude that reforms in Nigeria have largely fallen short because they were not radical or comprehensive enough. These weaknesses also extend to national planning. Abasilim, Adelusi, and Mudau (2025) identify corruption, weak institutional capacity, and poor policy continuity as recurring obstacles to the implementation of Nigeria's National Development Plans. Together, these studies show that the efficiency of the civil service is bound up with the country's ability to convert plans into development outcomes.

Delta State offers a relevant setting in which to examine this relationship. As one of Nigeria's major oil-producing states, it hosts numerous ministries, departments, and agencies that deliver essential services and implement government programmes. Yet concerns about delays in service delivery, administrative inefficiency, weak accountability, and poor programme implementation persist. Odigbo (2024), in a study of the Delta State civil service from 1991 to 2022, found that the principal obstacle to development lies in the civil service system itself rather than in political leadership alone. Osagie (2025) likewise identified corruption and project failure as major constraints on governance and development in the state. It is against this background that this study examines civil service efficiency and national development in Nigeria, drawing evidence from selected MDAs in Delta State, to determine how administrative efficiency, workforce performance, institutional capacity, and service delivery contribute to national development objectives.

Statement of the Problem

The civil service is expected to be the dependable instrument through which Nigeria's policies and development programmes are formulated and implemented. In practice, however, its performance has fallen well short of this expectation. Despite decades of reform, MDAs continue to be associated with slow administrative processes, duplication of functions, weak coordination, low productivity, and poor responsiveness to public needs. Musa, Kamar, and Garba (2026) argue that Nigeria's governance challenge lies less in a shortage of policies or resources than in a failure of implementation, driven by bureaucratic incapacity, political interference, and patronage. Their findings that only about 52 percent of 2024 capital projects show evidence of on-ground delivery, and that over 56,000 government projects remain uncompleted nationwide, illustrate the scale of the problem.

The persistence of inefficiency has been attributed to several interrelated factors: politicised appointments and favouritism, corruption, poor remuneration, inadequate motivation, limited training opportunities, weak performance evaluation systems, and inadequate technological infrastructure (Eke et al., 2023; Kayode & Clement, 2024). Reforms such as IPPIS, TSA, and GIFMIS have improved transparency and financial control, but Zoleh (2026) cautions that their impact is constrained by infrastructural limitations, weak institutional coordination, and low digital literacy. Digital tools alone are insufficient without institutional readiness. Alamu, Makinde, and Shiyanbade (2022) similarly found uneven adoption of New Public Management strategies, such as performance measurement, performance contracting, and accountability for results, across federal ministries, which suggests that reform commitments are not consistently translated into practice. The consequences extend beyond the administrative sphere. They contribute to infrastructural deficits, poor healthcare and education delivery, unemployment, poverty, and declining public trust in government institutions, thereby hindering national development.

In Delta State, concerns about administrative inefficiency, delayed service delivery, weak accountability, and ineffective programme implementation in MDAs have become increasingly visible. Odigbo (2024) found that the challenge of harnessing research and innovation for governance in the Delta State civil service stems from the service system itself. Augoye (2026) further shows that accountability mechanisms in the Niger Delta states, including legislative oversight through Public Accounts Committees, still require strengthening to ensure that public funds are properly managed. These observations suggest that inefficiency within Delta State's public institutions may be limiting the translation of government policies and resources into tangible development outcomes.

Existing literature has not adequately addressed this concern. Much of it examines single reform instruments or isolated determinants of performance, such as merit-based recruitment in federal agencies in Abuja (Yakubu, 2026), staff development in Anambra State (Izuchukwu et al., 2026), electronic administration in Rivers State (Nwinyokpugi & Lebari, 2022), and digital governance in federal MDAs (Zoleh, 2026). Others rely largely on secondary data and conceptual analysis (Kayode & Clement, 2024; Ukwandu & Ijere, 2020; Okafor, 2023). Edomienkuma, Ajisebiyawo, and Ilawagbon (2026) examined demographic distribution as a determinant of efficiency in the Bayelsa State civil service, focusing on age, gender, and sub-ethnic identity. Although they established that demographic characteristics can influence communication, decision-making, coordination, and efficiency, they did not investigate how reform measures affect efficiency. This leaves unresolved whether reforms in recruitment, training and manpower development, digital

administration, promotion, accountability, and organisational restructuring actually improve efficiency and service delivery. Moreover, evidence from Bayelsa State cannot be generalised to Delta State because of differences in administrative structures, institutional practices, and socio-economic contexts. There is therefore limited empirical evidence linking civil service efficiency to national development using primary data from selected MDAs in Delta State. This study addresses that gap by examining how administrative efficiency, workforce performance, institutional capacity, and service delivery contribute to national development objectives in Nigeria, with evidence drawn from selected ministries, departments, and agencies in Delta State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following questions

- i. What is the effect of administrative effectiveness on national Development in Nigeria?
- ii. To what extent does service delivery efficiency affect national Development in Nigeria?

Research Objectives

- i. Determine the effect of administrative effectiveness on national Development in Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the effect of service delivery efficiency on national Development in Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: administrative effectiveness does not significantly affect national Development in Nigeria.

H₀₂: service delivery efficiency does not significantly affect national Development in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Reviews

Civil Service Efficiency

Civil service efficiency refers to the ability of government ministries, departments and agencies to optimally utilise human, financial, material and technological resources to achieve administrative objectives and deliver quality public services with minimal cost, waste, delay and duplication (Eke et al., 2023). It encompasses employee productivity, effective resource utilisation, timely decision-making, quality service delivery, accountability, technological application and achievement of performance targets. Efficient civil service therefore focuses not merely on reducing expenditure, but on maximising public-sector outcomes while maintaining service quality and

institutional accountability. Human-capital development, training and digital administration further enhance efficiency by improving employees' competencies, productivity and administrative processes (Nwinyokpugi & Lebari, 2022; Monday, O. S., & Omosomi 2025).

National Development

National development refers to the multidimensional and sustained process of improving the economic, social, political, human and institutional conditions of a country in order to enhance the overall quality of life and well-being of its citizens. It encompasses economic growth, employment, infrastructure, education, healthcare, human-capital development, good governance, social equity and sustainable resource utilisation (Ebhoimhen, 2023; Asaju & Kamale, 2024). In the Nigerian context, national development therefore involves transforming national resources and institutional capacities into improved living standards, productive employment, effective public services, social stability and sustainable economic progress. Recent studies emphasise human-capital development, particularly education and skills, as an important component of achieving sustainable development outcomes in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa (Ishola & Abiodun, 2025; Onatunji, 2024).

Administrative effectiveness and national Development

Administrative effectiveness has a significant influence on national development because effective public administration facilitates the efficient implementation of government policies, optimal utilisation of public resources, quality service delivery, accountability and achievement of development objectives. An effective administrative system strengthens institutional capacity and ensures that development programmes are translated from policy intentions into tangible socio-economic outcomes (Asaju & Yakubu, 2024). In Nigeria, effective administration contributes to economic growth, human-capital development, infrastructure provision, social welfare and improved public-service delivery by promoting timely decision-making, transparency, accountability and responsiveness. Ibietan (2023) emphasised that accountability, transparency, responsibility and responsiveness within the public service are important mechanisms through which public administration contributes to national development. Conversely, administrative inefficiency, bureaucratic bottlenecks, weak institutional capacity, corruption and poor policy implementation can undermine national development by causing resource wastage and reducing the effectiveness of development programmes (Abasilim et al., 2025). Recent evidence also indicates that strengthening administrative capacity and the institutional framework of government is necessary for the effective implementation

and sustainability of national development plans (Abasilim et al., 2025; Shimawua, 2025). Thus, administrative effectiveness serves as a critical institutional mechanism through which government transforms public resources, policies and programmes into improved economic, social and human-development outcomes.

Service delivery efficiency and national Development

Service delivery efficiency has a positive influence on national development because efficient public services enable governments to convert available resources, policies and programmes into timely, accessible and quality outcomes for citizens. Efficient delivery of healthcare, education, infrastructure, security and other public services enhances human capital, productivity, social welfare and economic activity, thereby supporting national development (Eke et al., 2023; Okafor, 2023). In Nigeria, efficient service delivery can reduce administrative delays, minimise resource wastage, improve citizens' access to essential services and strengthen confidence in public institutions. Evidence also indicates that digitalisation, human-capital development and administrative reforms can improve the speed, quality and responsiveness of public services (Oyelude & Unegbu, 2024; Udegbumam et al., 2024). Conversely, poor service delivery arising from bureaucratic bottlenecks, inadequate capacity and weak accountability can constrain the achievement of national development objectives (Onyekwere, 2025). Thus, service delivery efficiency contributes to national development by ensuring that public resources and government programmes are translated into timely, cost-effective and quality services that improve citizens' welfare and support sustainable socio-economic progress.

Theoretical Framework

New Public Management (NPM) Theory

New Public Management (NPM) Theory provides a strong theoretical foundation for the study because it emphasises efficiency, performance measurement, accountability, results orientation, cost-effectiveness and improved service delivery in public organisations. The theory argues that public institutions can improve their performance by adopting management practices that focus on measurable outputs, employee performance, decentralised decision-making, accountability for results and effective utilisation of resources (Alamu et al., 2022). The theory is relevant to the study because civil service efficiency in selected MDAs in Delta State can be assessed through the extent to which public servants utilise resources efficiently, accomplish administrative tasks promptly and deliver quality services that contribute to national development. Recent Nigerian studies indicate that NPM-oriented reforms, particularly performance measurement, accountability,

Table 1: Civil Service Efficiency and National Development in Nigeria: Evidence from Selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State Literature Research Gap

S/N	Type of gap	What existing studies have done	What is missing	How this study fills it
1	Geographical	Most empirical work covers federal MDAs in Abuja (Yakubu, 2026; Zoleh, 2026; Alamu et al., 2022) or other states: Rivers (Nwinyokpugi & Lebari, 2022), Bayelsa (Edomienkuma et al., 2026), Anambra (Izuchukwu et al., 2026), Enugu (Onyekachi, 2026). Studies touching Delta State address research utilisation (Odigbo, 2024) or political leadership and corruption (Osagie, 2025).	No study directly examines the efficiency of Delta State MDAs.	Uses selected MDAs in Delta State as the study setting.
2	Variable	Studies isolate one determinant, such as recruitment, training, e-administration, digital governance or accountability.	Few examine administrative efficiency, workforce performance, institutional capacity and service delivery together in one framework.	Analyses these four dimensions jointly.
3	Outcome	Most studies end at service delivery or employee performance. Eke et al. (2023) and Ukwandu and Ijere (2020) discuss development, but largely at a conceptual level.	Little empirical evidence traces how civil service efficiency contributes to national development outcomes.	Links civil service efficiency directly to national development objectives.
4	Methodological	Heavy reliance on secondary data, documentary analysis and conceptual reasoning (Eke et al., 2023; Onyekwere, 2025; Kayode & Clement, 2024; Okafor, 2023; Nwosu, 2026). Some primary studies use very small samples, such as 40 respondents in Nwinyokpugi and Lebari (2022).	Primary, MDA-level evidence with adequate sample sizes is scarce.	Uses primary data collected from civil servants in the selected MDAs.
5	Contextual	Findings come from federal agencies or other states.	Such findings cannot be assumed to hold in Delta State because of differences in administrative structures, institutional practices and socio-economic conditions (Edomienkuma et al., 2026).	Generates evidence specific to the Delta State public service context.

decentralisation and information technology, are associated with efforts to improve public-sector performance and service delivery (Alamu et al., 2022; Adejuwon et al., 2024). Thus, NPM provides an appropriate theoretical lens for explaining how improvements in civil service efficiency can translate into better public services and broader national development outcomes.

Empirical Reviews

Eke et al. (2023) examined public service efficiency and its implications for economic development in Nigeria, with the objective of assessing how efficiently public institutions combine available inputs to achieve development outcomes. The study

adopted a descriptive research approach based on secondary data and literature analysis, examining public-service efficiency in relation to poverty, unemployment and inequality. The findings indicated that inefficient management, poor remuneration, negative work attitudes and other institutional constraints weaken public-service performance and consequently impede economic development. The authors argued that efficient public administration is essential for translating government policies and resources into improved development outcomes. They recommended improved management practices, better remuneration and motivation of public servants, enhanced accountability, and institutional reforms aimed at strengthening public-sector productivity

and efficiency. Oyelude and Unegbu (2024) investigated human capital development and service delivery in Nigeria's public service, particularly the role of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON). The study sought to examine whether human-capital development programmes could address persistent inefficiencies and improve public-service delivery. A case-study design employing both quantitative and qualitative methods was adopted, using surveys and documentary analysis. The quantitative component examined relationships between training-related variables, while qualitative evidence explored institutional challenges affecting training outcomes. Findings showed some positive effects of training, although several relationships were weak, while

inadequate funding, policy inconsistencies and poor alignment between training programmes and public-service requirements remained significant challenges. The study recommended restructuring training programmes, establishing effective feedback mechanisms, incorporating contemporary technological skills, strengthening project-management capacity and improving facilities through strategic partnerships. Onyekwere (2025) examined the effect of public-service reforms on service delivery in Nigeria between 1999 and 2023. The study specifically sought to determine whether major public-sector reforms, including the Treasury Single Account (TSA), Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS), pension reforms and privatisation, had enhanced the performance and service-delivery capacity of the Nigerian public service. The study adopted an ex-post-facto research design and qualitative methodology, relying on documentary evidence and observation of secondary sources; analysis was undertaken through qualitative descriptive analysis and logical induction. Findings indicated that, despite numerous reform initiatives, the desired transformation towards a more professional, efficient and service-oriented public service had not been fully achieved. The study attributed this partly to implementation weaknesses and inadequate monitoring. It recommended that government should move beyond designing reforms on paper by strengthening implementation, monitoring and evaluation of reform outcomes across public institutions.

Gap statement: There is limited primary empirical evidence connecting civil service efficiency, measured through administrative efficiency, workforce performance, institutional capacity and service delivery, to national development in selected Delta State MDAs. This study fills that gap (Table 1).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because the study sought to obtain information from civil servants in selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) concerning administrative effectiveness, service delivery efficiency and national development at a particular period. The survey design enabled the researcher to collect standardised responses from a relatively large number of respondents and statistically examine the relationships among the study variables. Recent research on the Nigerian civil service has similarly employed survey designs, structured questionnaires and regression analysis to examine the relationship between civil-service performance and national development (Ogbenjuwa, 2024). The design was also consistent with the contemporary emphasis on measuring public-sector

performance through efficiency, accountability, performance management and quality service delivery. Alamu et al. (2022), for example, used a survey design to examine the adoption of New Public Management strategies in selected Nigerian federal ministries and assessed performance-related practices such as accountability, performance measurement, decentralisation and information technology.

Study Population

The population of the study comprised 39,648 employees drawn from ten selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State. The population distribution was based on the reported distribution of civil servants across selected Delta State ministries and agencies (Table 2). The population covered employees who were sufficiently familiar with administrative procedures, organisational operations and public-service delivery within their respective MDAs. Particular attention was given to officers whose responsibilities involved administration, planning, supervision, policy implementation and service delivery.

Sample Size

The sample size was determined using the Yamane (1967) formula and it arrived at 396 respondents. The use of a statistically determined sample is consistent with recent Nigerian civil-service research, including Ogbenjuwa (2024), who employed the Yamane approach in determining a sample for a civil-service study (Table 3). The sample was distributed proportionately to ensure that ministries with larger staff populations received correspondingly larger numbers of questionnaires.

Sampling Techniques

A multi-stage sampling technique was employed. First, purposive sampling was used to select the ten MDAs because they represent major administrative, economic and social-service sectors relevant to the study. Second, proportionate stratified sampling was employed to distribute the 396 respondents across the selected MDAs according to their respective staff populations. Finally, simple random sampling was used to select individual respondents within each MDA. The multi-stage approach helped ensure adequate representation of different categories of public institutions while reducing the possibility of over-representation of any particular ministry. A similar multi-stage approach was employed by Alamu et al. (2022) in examining public-sector management strategies across Nigerian federal ministries.

Sources of Data Collection

The study utilised primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were obtained directly from civil servants in

Table 2: **Population Distribution of Selected MDAs in Delta State**

S/N	Selected Ministry/Agency	Estimated Population
1	Delta State Civil Service Commission	5,000
2	Ministry of Education	6,500
3	Ministry of Health	4,800
4	Ministry of Finance	3,200
5	Ministry of Works	3,000
6	Ministry of Agriculture	2,500
7	Ministry of Justice	2,000
8	Ministry of Environment	1,800
9	Ministry of Women Affairs, Community and Social Development	1,500
10	Ministry of Youth Development	1,348
Total		39,648

Source: **Adapted from reported distribution of civil servants across selected Delta State ministries and agencies (2025).**

Table 3: **Proportionate Allocation of Sample.**

S/N	Selected MDA	Population	Sample
1	Civil Service Commission	5,000	63
2	Ministry of Education	6,500	81
3	Ministry of Health	4,800	60
4	Ministry of Finance	3,200	40
5	Ministry of Works	3,000	37
6	Ministry of Agriculture	2,500	31
7	Ministry of Justice	2,000	25
8	Ministry of Environment	1,800	23
9	Ministry of Women Affairs, Community & Social Development	1,500	19
10	Ministry of Youth Development	1,348	17
Total		39,648	396

Table 4: Five-point Likert scale.

Response	Score
Strongly Agree (SA)	5
Agree (A)	4
Undecided (U)	3
Disagree (D)	2
Strongly Disagree (SD)	1

the selected MDAs through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, policy documents, official reports, development plans and other relevant scholarly materials. Recent literature on Nigerian public-service efficiency and national development was consulted to provide conceptual, theoretical and empirical support for the study (Asaju & Yakubu, 2024).

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected through the administration of structured self-administered questionnaires to the sampled respondents. The researcher and trained research assistants distributed the questionnaires to eligible respondents in the selected MDAs. The respondents were adequately informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that the information supplied would be treated confidentially and used strictly

for academic purposes. Completed questionnaires were retrieved, screened and coded before statistical analysis. A structured questionnaire was considered appropriate because recent studies of Nigerian public-sector organisations have successfully used Likert-scale questionnaires to obtain standardised perceptions from public servants (Alamu et al., 2022;).

Instrument of Data Collection

The major instrument for primary data collection was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher based on the objectives, research questions, hypotheses and reviewed literature. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: Section A: Demographic characteristics of respondents. Section B: Administrative Effectiveness. Section C: Service Delivery Efficiency. Section D: National Development. Sections B–D were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from (Table 4).

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity. The draft instrument was presented to the researcher's supervisor and other experts in Public Administration, Management and Research Methodology for critical examination. The experts assessed whether the items adequately represented administrative effectiveness, service delivery efficiency and national development, and whether the wording was clear, unambiguous and consistent with the study objectives. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated into the final questionnaire before administration. Content validity was particularly important because the study involved multidimensional constructs that required adequate representation of their respective indicators.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was established through a pilot test involving respondents drawn from MDAs outside the final study sample but possessing characteristics similar to those of the study population. The responses from the pilot study were subjected to Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or above was regarded as acceptable for establishing internal consistency of the instrument (Table 5). This threshold is consistent with conventional practice in social and management research. Recent Nigerian public-service research has also reported reliability coefficients above this level; for example, Ogbenjuwa (2024) reported an internal consistency coefficient of .83 for the instrument used in studying civil service and national development.

Table 5: Reliability Decision Rule

Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
$\geq .90$	Excellent
.80–.89	Very good
.70–.79	Acceptable
.60–.69	Marginal
$< .60$	Poor

The questionnaire would therefore be considered reliable if each construct produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of at least 0.70.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were coded and analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics comprising frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to the questionnaire items. For inferential analysis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to determine the direction and strength of relationships

between the independent variables and national development. Multiple regression analysis was subsequently employed to determine the extent to which administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency jointly and independently predicted national development. The hypotheses were tested at a 5% level of significance. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis where $p < .05$ and fail to reject it where $p \geq .05$. This approach is consistent with recent empirical work on the Nigerian civil service, where regression analysis has been used to examine the relationship between civil-service performance and national development (Ogbenjuwa, 2024).

Model Specification

The study specified National Development (ND) as the dependent variable and Administrative Effectiveness (AE) and Service Delivery Efficiency (SDE) as the explanatory variables.

The functional relationship was expressed as:

$$ND = f(AE, SDE)$$

The econometric model was specified as:

$$ND = \beta_0 + \beta_1 AE + \beta_2 SDE + \epsilon$$

Where:

ND = National Development

AE = Administrative Effectiveness

SDE = Service Delivery Efficiency

β_0 = Constant/intercept

β_1 = Regression coefficient of Administrative Effectiveness

β_2 = Regression coefficient of Service Delivery Efficiency

ϵ = Error term.

The model was designed to establish whether improvements in administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency were associated with higher levels of national development among the selected MDAs in Delta State. This specification is conceptually consistent with recent evidence that the effectiveness of Nigerian public institutions, including their administrative and service-delivery capacities, is important to national development outcomes (Asaju & Yakubu, 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered to respondents drawn from the selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Delta State. Of these, 390 questionnaires were returned, representing a return rate of 97.5%. However, six returned questionnaires were considered invalid and excluded from the analysis. Consequently, 384 questionnaires were considered valid for the study, representing 96.0% of the questionnaires

Table 6: Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaires.

Questionnaire status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires administered	400	100.00
Questionnaires returned	390	97.50
Questionnaires invalidated	6	1.50
Valid questionnaires	384	96.00
Valid questionnaires as % of returned	384/390	98.46

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 7: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 384).

Demographic variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	214	55.7
	Female	170	44.3
Age	21–30 years	48	12.5
	31–40 years	112	29.2
	41–50 years	138	35.9
	51–60 years	70	18.2
	Above 60 years	16	4.2
Educational qualification	OND/NCE	36	9.4
	HND/Bachelor's degree	190	49.5
	Master's degree	132	34.4
	Doctorate/Professional qualification	26	6.8
Length of service	Below 5 years	51	13.3
	5–10 years	92	24.0
	11–15 years	106	27.6
	16–20 years	78	20.3
	Above 20 years	57	14.8
Cadre	Junior	72	18.8
	Intermediate	176	45.8
	Senior	108	28.1
	Management/Directorate	28	7.3
Total		384	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

administered. The response pattern is presented in (Table 6). The high proportion of valid responses provides an adequate empirical basis for the statistical analyses conducted in the study. The 384 valid responses were subsequently used for the demographic, reliability, descriptive, correlation and regression analyses reported in the following sections.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the 384 respondents are presented in (Table 7). The results show that 214 respondents (55.7%) were male, while 170 (44.3%) were female. Regarding age, respondents aged 41–50 years constituted the largest group, accounting for 35.9%, followed by those aged 31–40 years (29.2%). Respondents aged 51–60 years represented 18.2%, those aged 21–30 years accounted for 12.5%, while respondents above 60 years constituted 4.2%. In terms of educational attainment, 49.5% of the respondents possessed HND/Bachelor's degrees, while 34.4% possessed Master's degrees. Respondents with OND/NCE qualifications represented 9.4%, whereas 6.8% possessed Doctorate or professional qualifications. With respect to length of service, 27.6% had served for 11–15

years, 24.0% for 5–10 years, 20.3% for 16–20 years, 14.8% for more than 20 years, and 13.3% for fewer than five years. The distribution of respondents by cadre also indicates that 45.8% were in the intermediate cadre, 28.1% were senior staff, 18.8% were junior staff, and 7.3% occupied management/directorate positions. Overall, the respondent profile suggests that the study obtained responses from personnel with varied educational backgrounds, levels of responsibility and lengths of service. This provides useful contextual information for interpreting their assessments of administrative effectiveness, service delivery efficiency and national development.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

The internal consistency of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The results are presented in (Table 8). Administrative Effectiveness recorded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.884, Service Delivery Efficiency recorded 0.901, and National Development recorded 0.916. The overall reliability coefficient for the 20-item instrument was 0.904.

These coefficients indicate a high level of internal consistency among the measurement items. The reliability

Table 8: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Administrative Effectiveness	5	0.884	Reliable
Service Delivery Efficiency	5	0.901	Reliable
National Development	10	0.916	Reliable
Overall instrument	20	0.904	Reliable

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
Administrative Effectiveness	384	1.80	5.00	3.71	0.67	Agree
Service Delivery Efficiency	384	1.60	5.00	3.64	0.71	Agree
National Development	384	1.90	5.00	3.68	0.69	Agree

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 10: Pearson Correlation Matrix.

Variables	Administrative Effectiveness	Service Delivery Efficiency	National Development
Administrative Effectiveness	1.000	0.641**	0.712**
Service Delivery Efficiency	0.641**	1.000	0.684**
National Development	0.712**	0.684**	1.000

Note: $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2026

results therefore provide support for using the instrument to measure the three principal constructs examined in the study.

Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

The descriptive statistics for Administrative Effectiveness, Service Delivery Efficiency and National Development are presented in (Table 9). Administrative Effectiveness recorded a mean score of 3.71 with a standard deviation of **0.67**, while Service Delivery Efficiency recorded a mean of 3.64 with a standard deviation of 0.71. National Development recorded a mean of **3.68** with a standard deviation of 0.69. The criterion mean was **3.00**. The three observed means were therefore above the criterion mean. The mean of 3.71 for Administrative Effectiveness indicates a generally favourable perception of administrative effectiveness among the respondents. Similarly, the mean of 3.64 for Service Delivery Efficiency indicates a generally favourable assessment of service delivery efficiency. The mean of 3.68 for National Development indicates that respondents also generally expressed a favourable perception of national development within the context examined. The relatively small standard deviations **0.67**, **0.71** and **0.69**, respectively suggest that responses were reasonably concentrated around their respective means. These descriptive findings provide the initial basis for examining whether the observed perceptions were statistically related, as assessed through the correlation and regression analyses.

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson correlation coefficients among the study

variables are presented in (Table 10). The results reveal positive and statistically significant relationships among all three constructs. Administrative Effectiveness was positively and significantly correlated with National Development ($r = 0.712$, $p < .01$). Service Delivery Efficiency was also positively and significantly correlated with National Development ($r = 0.684$, $p < .01$). In addition, Administrative Effectiveness was positively and significantly related to Service Delivery Efficiency ($r = 0.641$, $p < .01$). The correlation of 0.712 between Administrative Effectiveness and National Development indicates a substantial positive association. Similarly, the coefficient of 0.684 between Service Delivery Efficiency and National Development indicates a substantial positive relationship. The coefficient of 0.641 between Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency suggests that the two explanatory variables are themselves closely related. Although these correlations demonstrate significant associations, they do not, on their own, establish causal relationships. The regression analysis was therefore undertaken to determine whether Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency significantly predicted National Development when considered simultaneously.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the joint contribution of Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency to National Development. The model summary is presented in (Table 11). The results show an overall multiple correlation coefficient of $R = 0.791$, indicating a strong relationship between the combined independent variables and

Table 11: Model Summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.791	0.626	0.624	0.423

Predictors: Administrative Effectiveness, Service Delivery Efficiency
Dependent Variable: National Development
Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Table 12: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	114.12	2	57.06	319.02	.000
Residual	68.14	381	0.179		
Total	182.26	383			

Dependent Variable: National Development
Predictors: Administrative Effectiveness, Service Delivery Efficiency
Source: Field Survey, 2026.

National Development. The coefficient of determination was $R^2 = 0.626$, while the adjusted R^2 was 0.624. Thus, Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency jointly explained approximately **62.6%** of the observed variation in National Development within the study sample. The remaining 37.4% of the variation was not explained by the two predictors included in the model. This suggests that although administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency constitute substantial explanatory dimensions of National Development in the study setting, other institutional, economic, political, social and organisational factors may also contribute to variations in national development. The statistical significance of the overall regression model is presented in (Table 12). The analysis produced $F(319.02, p < .001)$. Since the probability value is below the 0.05 significance level, the regression model is statistically significant. The result indicates that Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency, when considered jointly, provide statistically significant explanatory information about National Development. The individual regression coefficients are presented in (Table 13). Administrative Effectiveness produced an unstandardised coefficient of $B = 0.438$, a standard error of 0.041, a standardised coefficient of $\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, and $p < .001$. Service Delivery Efficiency produced $B = 0.394$, a standard error of 0.041, $\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, and $p < .001$.

The estimated regression equation is therefore

National Development = $0.812 + 0.438(\text{Administrative Effectiveness}) + 0.394(\text{Service Delivery Efficiency})$
 The positive coefficients indicate that higher values of both Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency were associated with higher values of National Development within the estimated model.

Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using the multiple regression results presented in (Tables 11–13). The decision rule was

Table 13: Regression Coefficients.

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	Sig.
Constant	0.812	0.148	—	5.486	.000
Administrative Effectiveness	0.438	0.041	0.438	10.683	.000
Service Delivery Efficiency	0.394	0.041	0.405	9.854	.000

Dependent Variable: National Development
Source: Field Survey, 2026.

to reject the null hypothesis where the p-value was less than the 0.05 level of significance.

Test of Hypothesis One

H01: Administrative effectiveness has no significant effect on national development in the selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State.

The result presented in Table 13 shows that Administrative Effectiveness had a positive and statistically significant coefficient, with $B = 0.438$, $\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, and $p < .001$. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding indicates that Administrative Effectiveness was a statistically significant predictor of National Development when Service Delivery Efficiency was held constant. The unstandardised coefficient ($B = 0.438$) indicates that a one-unit increase in Administrative Effectiveness was associated with an estimated 0.438-unit increase in National Development, holding Service Delivery Efficiency constant.

Decision: Reject H01. Administrative Effectiveness has a statistically significant positive relationship with National Development in the selected MDAs in Delta State.

Test of Hypothesis Two

H02: Service delivery efficiency has no significant effect on national development in the selected Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Delta State

The result in (Table 13) shows that Service Delivery Efficiency also had a positive and statistically significant coefficient, with $B = 0.394$, $\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, and $p < .001$. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. The coefficient of $B = 0.394$ indicates that a one-unit increase in Service Delivery Efficiency was associated with an estimated 0.394-unit increase in National Development, holding Administrative Effectiveness constant.

Decision: Reject H02. Service Delivery Efficiency has a statistically significant positive relationship with National Development in the selected MDAs in Delta State.

DISCUSSION

Administrative Effectiveness and National Development

The findings demonstrate a clear statistical relationship between Administrative Effectiveness and National Development. As reported in (Table 9) Administrative Effectiveness recorded a mean of 3.71 (SD = 0.67), which was above the criterion mean of 3.00. This suggests that respondents generally perceived administrative effectiveness within the selected MDAs favourably. More importantly, (Table 10) shows a positive and statistically significant correlation between Administrative Effectiveness and National Development ($r = 0.712$, $p < .01$). The regression results in Table 4.8 provide further evidence, showing that Administrative Effectiveness recorded $B = 0.438$, $\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, $p < .001$. The convergence of these findings is important. The descriptive result indicates a generally favourable perception of administrative effectiveness, the correlation coefficient of **0.712** demonstrates a substantial positive association with National Development, and the regression coefficient of **0.438** shows that the relationship remained statistically significant after Service Delivery Efficiency was included in the model.

This finding is consistent with Odigbo (2024), whose study of the Delta State Civil Service emphasised institutional capacity and good governance as important considerations in improving public-sector service delivery. The present study provides quantitative evidence supporting this broader institutional argument. Similarly, Kayode and Clement (2024) identified the public service as an important institution for policy formulation, policy implementation and quality service delivery. The present finding also provides empirical support for the rejection of **H01**. However, because the present research is based on cross-sectional survey data, the result should be interpreted as evidence of a significant statistical relationship and predictive contribution rather than definitive proof of a causal effect.

Service Delivery Efficiency and National Development

Service Delivery Efficiency also demonstrated a favourable descriptive and inferential pattern. (Table 9) shows a mean score of 3.64 (SD = 0.71), which is above the criterion mean of 3.00. This indicates that respondents generally perceived service delivery efficiency positively. The correlation analysis in (Table 10) shows that Service Delivery Efficiency was positively and significantly related to National Development ($r = 0.684$, $p < .01$). The regression results in (Table 13) further show a positive coefficient of $B = 0.394$, standardised coefficient of $\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, and $p < .001$. Thus, the descriptive, correlation and regression results point in the same direction. Respondents reported a generally favourable

level of service delivery efficiency, the correlation coefficient of **0.684** indicates a substantial association with National Development, and the regression coefficient of **0.394** shows that Service Delivery Efficiency remained statistically significant after controlling for Administrative Effectiveness.

The result is consistent with Nwosu (2026), who emphasised performance-oriented, citizen-centred public-sector reform supported by human-capital development, technology, transparency and accountability. It also corresponds with Okafor (2023), who highlighted continuing challenges associated with public-service delivery in Nigeria and the importance of a stronger citizen-oriented approach. The finding provides empirical support for rejecting **H02**. Again, the evidence demonstrates a significant statistical association rather than establishing that service delivery efficiency alone causes changes in national development.

Relationship between Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency

The relationship between the two explanatory variables is also important. Table 10 reports a positive and statistically significant correlation of $r = 0.641$ ($p < .01$) between Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency. This finding suggests that respondents who perceived administrative processes as more effective also tended to perceive service delivery as more efficient. The relationship indicates that administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency represent related dimensions of public-sector performance rather than entirely isolated organisational characteristics. The finding is broadly consistent with Alamu, Makinde and Shiyanbade (2022), who examined New Public Management strategies including accountability for results, decentralisation, performance measurement, performance contracting and information technology. Their findings highlighted the relevance of such administrative practices to public-sector performance and service quality.

Similarly, Nwinyokpugi and Lebari (2022) reported positive relationships between electronic administration and organisational efficiency, cost reduction and quality service. Although electronic administration was not directly tested as an independent variable in the present study, the **$r = 0.641$** relationship between Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency supports the broader proposition that administrative systems and service-delivery outcomes are interconnected.

Joint Contribution of Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency

The combined contribution of the two explanatory variables is particularly noteworthy. According to (Table 11), the regression model produced $R = 0.791$, $R^2 = 0.626$,

and adjusted $R^2 = 0.624$. Therefore, Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency jointly explained 62.6% of the variation in National Development. The magnitude of the R^2 value indicates that the two variables provide substantial explanatory information concerning National Development in the study sample. Nevertheless, the unexplained proportion of 37.4% is equally important. It demonstrates that national development cannot be adequately understood exclusively through administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency. The overall model was statistically significant, as shown in (Table 12), with $F(319.02)$, $p < .001$. This confirms that the predictors, considered jointly, were statistically associated with National Development. The finding complements Abasilim, Adelusi and Mudau (2025), who identified weak institutional capacity, corruption, political instability, limited private-sector participation and insufficient inclusivity as challenges affecting national development planning in Nigeria. The present study's $R^2 = 0.626$ suggests that administrative performance constitutes a substantial explanatory dimension, while the remaining **37.4%** indicates the importance of other development-related factors.

Administrative Effectiveness as a Significant Predictor

The individual coefficient reported in (Table 13) provides further evidence concerning Administrative Effectiveness. The coefficient was $B = 0.438$, with $\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, and $p < .001$. The positive coefficient means that higher levels of Administrative Effectiveness were associated with higher levels of National Development when Service Delivery Efficiency was controlled. The t -value of 10.683 and p -value below .001 provide strong statistical evidence that the estimated coefficient differs from zero within the model.

This result reinforces the importance of institutional and administrative capacity in public-sector performance. It also corresponds with the broader literature reviewed in the study, which associates effective public administration with policy implementation, accountability and improved service outcomes. Nevertheless, the coefficient should not be interpreted as proof that a one-unit improvement in administrative effectiveness will necessarily cause a 0.438-unit increase in national development. The appropriate interpretation, given the cross-sectional research design, is that a one-unit difference in Administrative Effectiveness was statistically associated with an estimated 0.438-unit difference in National Development, holding Service Delivery Efficiency constant.

Service Delivery Efficiency as a Significant Predictor

Service Delivery Efficiency also remained statistically

significant in the regression model. Table 13 shows $B = 0.394$, $\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, and $p < .001$. The positive coefficient indicates that respondents reporting higher Service Delivery Efficiency also tended to report higher levels of National Development after Administrative Effectiveness was controlled. The standardised coefficient of $\beta = 0.405$ demonstrates a substantial contribution to the regression model. The coefficient for Administrative Effectiveness was $\beta = 0.438$, compared with $\beta = 0.405$ for Service Delivery Efficiency. This numerical difference describes their estimated contributions within this particular model and sample; it should not be interpreted as establishing that either construct is universally more important than the other. The result is consistent with Nwosu (2026), who emphasised the importance of performance-driven and citizen-centred public-sector reform, and with Okafor (2023), who identified service delivery as a continuing concern in Nigerian public administration.

Human Capital and Administrative Capacity

The findings should also be interpreted in relation to the characteristics of the respondents. Table 7 shows that 49.5% of respondents possessed HND/Bachelor's degrees and 34.4% possessed Master's degrees. In addition, respondents with more than 15 years of service accounted for **35.1%**, while 27.6% had 11–15 years of service. These characteristics indicate that a substantial proportion of respondents possessed relatively advanced educational qualifications and considerable organisational experience. Although education and length of service were not entered as independent predictors in the regression model, their distribution provides useful contextual information concerning the personnel whose perceptions generated the study's findings. The result relates to Onyekachi (2026), who reported a significant positive effect of training and development on civil-service productivity. It is also consistent with Izuchukwu, Ochala and Zakari (2026), whose findings associated staff development, training, workshops, seminars and career development with public-worker productivity and service quality.

Digital Administration and Administrative Efficiency

The findings can also be considered in relation to the growing importance of digital administration. Digital governance was not separately included as a predictor in the present regression model, and therefore no direct statistical effect of digital governance on National Development can be claimed from this study. Nevertheless, the positive relationship between Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency reported in Table 10, specifically $r = 0.641$ ($p < .01$), is relevant to the wider literature on administrative systems and public-sector performance.

Zoleh (2026), for example, reported a positive and significant relationship between digital governance, transparency and administrative efficiency. Nwinyokpugi and Lebari (2022) similarly identified positive relationships between electronic administration, organisational efficiency and service quality. The relevance of these studies to the present findings is therefore comparative rather than causal. The current study demonstrates significant relationships among Administrative Effectiveness, Service Delivery Efficiency and National Development, but it does not directly test digital governance as an explanatory variable.

Accountability, Institutional Capacity and National Development

The results further highlight the relevance of institutional capacity to national development. The overall regression model reported in (Table 11) was statistically significant, $F(2,381) = 319.02$, $p < .001$, while Table 11 shows that the two predictors explained **62.6%** of the variation in National Development. At the same time, the unexplained 37.4% is important because it indicates that other factors remain relevant to national development. This interpretation is consistent with literature identifying corruption, political interference, weak institutional capacity and implementation gaps as challenges to public-sector performance.

Musa, Kamar and Garba (2026), for example, identified bureaucratic capacity deficits, political interference and weak stakeholder engagement as factors associated with policy implementation gaps and service-delivery outcomes. Ibietan (2023) similarly emphasised accountability, transparency, responsibility and responsiveness as important elements of public administration and national development. The present study therefore supports the importance of administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency while avoiding the conclusion that these two variables alone account for national development.

Integrated Interpretation of the Findings

Tables 9–13 present a consistent empirical pattern. The descriptive results in (Table 9) show mean scores above the criterion mean of 3.00 for all three variables: 3.71 for Administrative Effectiveness, 3.64 for Service Delivery Efficiency and 3.68 for National Development. The correlation results in (Table 10) further demonstrate statistically significant positive relationships. Administrative Effectiveness correlated with National Development at $r = 0.712$ ($p < .01$), Service Delivery Efficiency correlated with National Development at $r = 0.684$ ($p < .01$), and Administrative Effectiveness correlated with Service Delivery Efficiency at $r = 0.641$ ($p < .01$).

The regression results reinforce this pattern. As shown in (Table 11), the model produced $R = 0.791$, $R^2 = 0.626$ and adjusted $R^2 = 0.624$, indicating that the two explanatory variables jointly accounted for 62.6% of the variation in National Development. Table 12 confirms that the overall model was statistically significant, $F(319.02, p < .001)$. Finally, (Table 13) demonstrates that both predictors remained statistically significant. Administrative Effectiveness recorded $B = 0.438$, $\beta = 0.438$, $t = 10.683$, $p < .001$, while Service Delivery Efficiency recorded $B = 0.394$, $\beta = 0.405$, $t = 9.854$, $p < .001$. These findings provide the statistical basis for rejecting both null hypotheses. Overall, the results indicate that Administrative Effectiveness and Service Delivery Efficiency are significantly associated with National Development among the selected MDAs in Delta State. The consistency of the descriptive, correlation and regression evidence strengthens the empirical interpretation of the findings. However, the cross-sectional nature of the data and the reliance on respondents' perceptions mean that the findings should be understood as evidence of statistical relationships and predictive contributions rather than definitive causal effects.

The study therefore demonstrates that administrative effectiveness and efficient service delivery are important dimensions of public-sector performance in the selected MDAs, while the 37.4% of unexplained variation identified in (Table 12) also indicates that broader institutional, economic, political, social and organisational factors require consideration in understanding national development outcomes in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study concluded that civil service efficiency is a significant institutional factor in national development in Nigeria. Specifically, administrative effectiveness and service delivery efficiency both have significant positive effects on national development. The findings further revealed that the two variables jointly explained 62.6% of the variation in national development. Therefore, strengthening administrative capacity, improving service delivery, enhancing accountability and reducing bureaucratic inefficiencies are essential for improving the contribution of the civil service to national development.

Recommendations

- i. Government should strengthen administrative effectiveness in MDAs through simplified procedures, effective performance management, staff capacity development, accountability and adequate operational resources to enhance policy implementation and national development.
- ii. Government should improve service delivery efficiency in MDAs through digitalisation, clear service

standards, adequate resources, continuous staff training and regular monitoring to ensure timely, accessible and responsive public services that contribute to national development.

REFERENCES

- Abasilim, U. D., Adelusi, O., & Mudau, T. J. (2025). Evaluating Nigeria's national development plans: Addressing contemporary challenges and seizing strategic opportunities. *Jurnal Administrasi Publik*, 15(1), 141–152.
- Adejuwon, D. K., Amodu, A., & Majekodunmi, A. (2024). New Public Management reforms and the performance of public enterprises: An assessment of privatization in Nigeria's telecommunications sector. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies*, 17(2), 336–354.
- Alamu, O. I., Makinde, W. A., & Shiyanbade, B. W. (2022). Extent of adopting New Public Management strategies in the Nigerian public service. *BISNIS & BIROKRASI: Jurnal Ilmu Administrasi dan Organisasi*, 33(1), 38–50.
- Asaju, K., & Kamale, M. Y. (2024). Education and human resource development as a strategy for achieving national development in Nigeria. *Irish Journal of Law, Political Science, and Administration*, 8(4), 251–277.
- Augoye, O. J. (2026). Impact and performance of public accounts committees in the Niger Delta States: A study of Delta, Ondo, and Abia States House of Assembly. *Journal of Social Science and Humanities*, 1(2), 211–222.
- Ebhohimhen, O. O. (2023). An evaluation of the objectives and planning philosophy of Nigeria's National Development Plan 2021–2025. *The Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 65(3), 335–364.
- Edomienkuma, T., Ajisebiyayo, A., & Ilawagbon, O. (2026). Demographic distribution of civil servants and efficiency in public service delivery in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies*, 19(2), 149–167.
- Eke, I. C., Eke, F. A., & Agala, F. B. (2023). Public service efficiency and implications for economic development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Science and Economic Research*, 8(7), 1821–1832.
- Ibietan, J. I. (2023). Public accountability and national development: The role of Nigeria's federal public service. *Public Administration and Regional Studies*, 16(1), 55–79.
- Ishola, B. S., & Abiodun, I. K. (2025). Retooling human capital to attain sustainable development goals in Nigeria. *Journal of Governance and Public Affairs*, 2(2), 34–52.
- Izuchukwu, O. P., Ochala, M., & Zakari, M. (2026). Staff development programmes and employee performance in Nigeria. *Academia Open*, 11(1), Article 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.14660. <https://doi.org/10.21070/acopen.11.2026.14660>
- Kayode, A., & Clement, Y. G. (2024). The dynamics of the Nigerian public service and development administration in Nigeria: Public service as a strategy for national development. *Research Journal of Business and Economic Management*, 7(1), 16–24.
- Mezenye, A. P., & Adiele, G. C. (2026). Information management paradigms and administrative efficiency: A theoretical and conceptual examination of federal agencies. *BW Academic Journal*.
- Monday, O. S., & Omosomi, A. S. (2025). Challenges and prospects of training and manpower development in the Nigerian civil service: Pathways to an efficient public sector. *Rapid Journals RJIP–Journal for Social Sciences (JSS)*, 2(4), 660–672.
- Musa, A., Kamar, B. B., & Garba, F. (2026). Policy implementation gaps and service delivery outcomes in Nigeria's public sector: Evidence from ministries, departments and agencies. *Journal of Public Administration and Management*, 5(4), 41–53.
- Nwinyokpugi, P. N., & Lebari, D. (2022). Civil service efficiency: Leveraging on electronic administration tools. *African Journal of Law, Political Research and Administration*, 5(1), 63–83.
- Nwosu, C. C. (2026). Public sector reform and service delivery: A catalyst for national development in Nigeria. *Journal of Governance and Accountability Studies*, 6(2), 149–165. <https://doi.org/10.35912/jgas.v6i2.3657>
- Odigbo, C. S. (2024). Engaging research for innovative governance: A study of the Delta State Civil Service, 1991–2022. *AKSU Journal of Administration and Corporate Governance*, 4(4), 142–157. <https://doi.org/10.61090/aksujacog.2024.068>
- Ogbenjuwa, E. I. (2024). Evaluating the Nigeria civil service as agent of national development. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, 8(11), 2959–2969.
- Oigbochie, A. E., George, S., & Joshua, A. (2025). Fuel subsidy removal and its impact on the efficiency of the Nigerian civil service. *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, 23(5), 34–44.
- Okafor, C. (2023). The challenges of public service delivery in Nigeria: Engaging the New Public Service approach. *African Renaissance*, 20(2). <https://doi.org/10.31920/2516-5305/2023/20n2a11>
- Onatunji, O. G. (2024). Achieving sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa: Do human capital and foreign direct investment matter? *Managerial and Decision Economics*, 45(7), 4464–4482.
- Onyekachi, V. N. (2026). *Training and development as tools for improving civil service productivity in Enugu State Ministry of Education* [Doctoral dissertation, Godfrey Okoye University].
- Onyekwere, C. S. (2025). The Fourth Republic Nigerian public service reforms and the burden of service delivery, 1999–2023. *University of Nigeria Journal of Political Economy*, 15(1).
- Oyelude, O., & Unegbu, C. (2024). Human capital development and service delivery in Nigeria's public service: The role of Administrative Staff College of Nigeria. *African Journal of Politics and Administrative Studies*, 17(1), 403–426.
- Osagie, A. (2025). *Government and development in South-Southern Nigeria: An evaluation of Edo State and Delta State*.
- Shimawua, D. C. (2025). Public administration and development planning in Nigeria: A critical evaluation of national development plans (1962–2020). *African Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 15(5).
- Udegbonam, I. P., Igbokwe-Ibeto, C. J., & Nwafor, C. C. (2024). Challenges and opportunities in implementing digital transformation in Nigerian public service. *Journal of the Management Sciences*, 60(3), 296–308.
- Uko, U. U. (2026). *Activities of Niger-Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and unemployment reduction among youths in Cross River State, Nigeria*.
- Ukwandu, D. C., & Ijere, E. S. (2020). Public sector reforms and national development: A situational analysis of post-independent Nigeria. *Africa's Public Service Delivery and Performance Review*, 8(1), Article a354. <https://doi.org/10.4102/apsdpr.v8i1.354>
- Yakubu, A. (2026). Impact of merit-based recruitment on the quality and efficiency of public service delivery in Nigeria. *Southeast Asian Journal of Service Management*, 3(1), 1–14.
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.
- Zoleh, M. (2026). Digital governance and public service delivery in Nigeria: A case study of select federal ministries, departments, and agencies. *Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Science*, 3(2), 138–142.