

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: **IJAR-59207**

Title: Digital Transformation and Public Sector Performance in Sierra Leone: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Institutional Outcomes, 2010-2026

Recommendation:

✓ Accept as it is **YES**

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	✓			
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity		✓		
Significance	✓			

Reviewer's ID: JPR- 159

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

The document 'Digital Transformation and Public Sector Performance in Sierra Leone: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Institutional Outcomes, 2010-2026' is unique topic.

Recommendation : Accept as it is.

Detailed Reviewer's Report

- 1. Originality** – This document is a systematic review and meta-analysis examining the impact of digital transformation (GovTech) on public sector institutional performance in Sierra Leone and similar African contexts from 2010 to 2026. It combines **Institutional Theory**, **Public Value Theory**, and the **Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) Framework** to evaluate how digital adoption influences government efficiency, transparency, accountability, and service delivery.
- 2. Structure and Clarity** – The manuscript is generally well-structured with sections such as Introduction, Results, and Conclusion. However, transitions between sections can be improved, and paragraph alignment should be checked for consistency.
- 3. Strengths** –

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- **The Sierra Leone Paradox:** Despite investing over **\$50 million** in digital transformation projects (such as broadband expansion, integrated tax and financial management systems, and AI strategies supported by the World Bank), Sierra Leone ranks 172nd out of 193 economies on the UN E-Government Development Index. Notably, out of the 90 qualitative studies reviewed, **none specifically focused on Sierra Leone**, highlighting a significant empirical research gap.

Core Enablers & Barriers

- **Key Enablers:** Strong political will, leadership commitment, sustained capacity building, citizen engagement, and coherent policy frameworks.
- **Persistent Challenges:** Severe infrastructure deficits, limited financial resources, digital skills gaps, rigid bureaucratic cultures, and a ~15% success rate for e-government projects across developing African nations.

4. Significance –

Bridge the "Data-to-Decision" Gap: Establish dedicated institutional brokerage mechanisms to translate digital data into actionable policy decisions.

Focus Beyond Technology: Address fundamental institutional constraints—such as bureaucratic rigidity, staff capacity, and governance structures—rather than treating digitalization as merely a software installation.

Conduct Country-Specific Research: Prioritize empirical research within Sierra Leone to generate context-specific evidence to guide future investments.