



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

## Digital School Management System in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education: Necessary, not a Luxury

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### Abstract

*This paper investigates Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) as a strategic necessity rather than a luxury in 21st-century education. As schools increasingly operate within data-driven and accountability-focused environments, traditional manual administrative systems have become inadequate. The research investigates DSMS as a concept which consists of essential elements and institutional operations that enable educational institutions to manage student data, employee records, financial tasks, academic activities and stakeholder interactions through centralized digital systems. The paper applies Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory together with Bandura's collective efficacy framework to describe how technological and social factors influence DSMS adoption. The Nigerian situation receives special focus because growing population numbers and resource shortages and government problems create an urgent requirement for effective data management solutions. Despite infrastructural and capacity constraints, evidence suggests that DSMS enhance decision-making, transparency, and institutional effectiveness. The paper concludes that digital school management constitutes essential infrastructure for sustainable educational governance and national development in the digital age.*

**Keywords:** Digital School, Management, 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Education

### Introduction

Education in the 21st century is shaped by digital transformation, rapid globalization, and increasing demands for transparency, quality assurance and accountability. Modern educational institutions need to perform two functions, which require them to deliver educational content and to function as intricate systems that handle extensive student, staff, financial, curriculum and assessment, and institutional development data. As education systems become more data-driven and performance-oriented, traditional manual methods of school administration are increasingly inadequate. The global shift toward digital transformation has reinforced and re-improved the need for schools to adopt technological solutions that enhance accuracy, efficiency, and institutional decision-making. The adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought about fundamental changes to organizational systems, which includes the educational sector. ICT enables the development of Management Information Systems (MIS) that support data processing, communication, planning, and decision-making. Such systems enhance stakeholder communication, improve administrative efficiency, promote transparency and collaboration, and support teaching and learning. Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) which people also refer to as School Management Information Systems (SMIS) and Education Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, provide educational institutions with software tools that handle student enrollment, attendance, academic performance, staff records, finances, and parent communication and reporting (Ramadani et al., 2025). The DSMS system provides educational institutions with the capability to manage all their data through a single platform, which enables them to access current information and make decisions based on verified facts while it helps them decrease errors, delays, and inefficiencies. Globally, smart technologies such as digital learning platforms, the Internet of Things (IoT), and artificial intelligence are redefining educational administration. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the limitations of traditional systems and accelerated digital adoption in schools. In Nigeria, the urgency for digital transformation is heightened by limited funding, population growth, and increasing demand for quality education. ICT



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

adoption has shown potential to improve administrative efficiency and institutional effectiveness yet implementation suffers from multiple challenges which include infrastructure deficits, unreliable electricity, poor internet connectivity and inadequate digital skills (Okonkwo & Okonkwo, 2023; Kurniasih, 2023). Despite these barriers, digital transformation remains crucial for improving educational outcomes. DSMS facilitate strategic planning, accountability, transparency, and efficient resource management, optimize limited resources, enabling schools to track student performance, and evaluate teacher effectiveness. Nevertheless, some administrators seem still perceive these systems as optional due to resistance to change, cost concerns, or limited awareness of long-term benefits. Digital management systems have become essential for organizations to succeed in the Fourth Industrial Revolution because workplaces now require employees to master digital skills and data literacy. In Nigeria, these systems are not merely administrative tools but national development priorities, supporting inclusive policies and bridging educational inequalities. Schools that embrace digital management systems are positioned to deliver higher-quality education, enhance institutional efficiency, and contribute to national development. DSMS, therefore, are a strategic necessity rather than a luxury for 21st-century education.

### **Concept of Digital School Management Systems**

Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) represent a modern evolution of educational administrative technologies which schools use to handle their complete operational needs through digital systems. The systems operate on Management Information Systems (MIS) and Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) which combine human resources with organizational workflows and technological systems to create an educational information system that supports decision-making processes. The digital world functions as an institutional framework which DSMS provide to schools for their operation in educational settings that use data as their primary resource (Adhikari et al., 2024). Digital school management systems function as complete software solutions which enable schools to handle their operational needs through automated digital systems that control the entire school process from planning to execution. Worldwide, EMIS defines education data systems as complete systems which gather educational information and process it to create analysis that supports institutional planning and administrative operations. These systems enable education managers to enhance administrative efficiency and improve institutional performance through structured data use (UNESCO, 2025).

The educational management information system EMIS functions as a unified framework which connects various elements such as people, institutions, technology and operational methods to generate accurate educational data which supports decision-making throughout all administrative levels. The data management systems which educational institutions use typically contain information about their students, staff members, their facilities and financial assets while delivering analytical tools that organizations use for their planning and monitoring and assessment activities (UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning [IIEP], 2024). More comprehensively, EMIS and related digital school systems are defined as integrated mechanisms for the collection, processing, maintenance, dissemination and integration of educational data to support policy formulation, monitoring, planning, and management at all levels of the education system. These systems combine governance structures, technological tools, and institutional procedures to provide timely, relevant and reliable information for education leaders and school administrators (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2024). Building on these foundations, Digital School Management Systems specifically focus on institution-level administration and operational management. DSMS extend traditional EMIS functions by providing user-friendly, and school-level software solutions that integrate daily administrative operations into unified digital environments. Educational institutions use these systems which educators commonly call School Management Information Systems (SMIS) and Education Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems because these systems enable educational institutions to connect their various operational departments (Forrester, 2019).

### **Core Functional Components of Digital School Management Systems**

Digital School Management Systems typically cover multiple functional domains that collectively support school administration. These include:

1. **Student Information Management:** The system provides centralized databases which allow schools to handle all aspects of student data. The system enables schools to track student enrollment, demographic information, academic performance, attendance, disciplinary history, and academic progress. Centralized student data management reduces duplication, improves accuracy, and supports long-term educational planning. Integrated student data systems enable



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

- real-time access to student information which educational institutions need for making timely decisions and providing personalized student assistance (Adhikari et al., 2024).
2. Staff Records and Human Resource Management: DSMS supports schools in managing their staff data which includes teacher information, attendance records, performance evaluation results, payroll data and professional development records. Digital HR modules help schools manage workforce resources efficiently while improving transparency and accountability in personnel management (Adhikari et al., 2024).
  3. Academic Planning, Teaching, and Assessment Management: Academic modules enable schools to handle all aspects of curriculum planning, timetabling, lesson scheduling, examination management, grading, and performance analytics. Schools can use digital academic processes to monitor student learning outcomes and enable data-based teaching decisions (Forrester, 2019).
  4. Communication with Parents and Stakeholders: Current DSMS systems provide educational institutions with multiple communication channels that include messaging systems, digital notice boards and mobile app functions. The tools enable teachers, parents, students and administrators to work together better which leads to improved stakeholder participation and better educational results (UNESCO, 2025).
  5. Financial and Resource Management: The financial modules allow schools to control all aspects of their finances which include fee collection, budgeting, procurement, payroll and asset management. Financial tracking systems that operate together with each other create better accountability standards which help to prevent financial losses and ensure correct resource distribution (Adhikari et al., 2024). Digital school systems use these operational areas to achieve their primary goal of establishing central control over school activities which enables schools to make unified decisions. The integration of management information systems within educational administration has been shown to boost operational efficiency while optimizing resources and enabling data-driven strategic planning across all management levels (Adhikari et al., 2024).

### **DSMS as Integrated Institutional Decision-Support Systems**

A key defining feature of digital school management systems is data centralization and real-time accessibility. Traditional paper-based systems often result in fragmented data storage, delayed reporting, and increased risk of data loss. In contrast, the digital systems create unified data systems which allow administrators to produce instant reports and analytical data (Forrester, 2019). Globally, education data systems have evolved from simple school census tools to complex digital infrastructures integrating multiple data sources, including human resource systems, assessment results, and financial records. This evolution reflects the growing importance of data-driven governance in education systems (UNESCO, 2025).

Reliable digital data systems enable education administrators to monitor school performance, allocate resources effectively, deploy teachers strategically, and address inequalities within education systems. Evidence suggests that investment in education data systems produces significant returns, particularly in low-and middle-income countries, where efficient resource allocation is critical (UNESCO, 2025). At the institutional level, digital school management systems serve as operational tools that translate national data strategies into daily administrative practices. The systems establish data-informed operational systems which enable educational institutions to adapt to new policies, stakeholder needs and performance evaluation standards (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2025).

### **DSMS and the Digital Transformation of Educational Administration**

The concept of digital school management systems is closely tied to the broader digital transformation of education. Schools today operate within knowledge economies where data accuracy, speed of communication, and operational transparency are essential. Digital systems therefore act as foundational infrastructures that support modern educational governance (Forrester, 2019). The scholarly reviews demonstrate that MIS integration helps school administration to improve decision-making processes and increase operational efficiency while maximizing resource usage. The management information system (MIS) functions as a strategic planning tool that enables institutional performance improvement while decreasing administrative workload (Adhikari et al., 2024). Digital school systems operate within global education governance frameworks that include the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which require data-driven policy implementation, and education outcome monitoring. International organizations such as UNESCO promote EMIS and related systems as essential tools for education planning, budgeting, and policy monitoring across national and institutional levels (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2025).



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

### **DSMS in the Context of Developing Countries and Nigeria**

In developing countries such as Nigeria, digital school management systems have significant strategic importance. Educational institutions which experience high population growth while facing limited resources, need to implement efficient data management systems. The DSMS system enables organizations to enhance their administrative operations through better administrative transparency, improved planning methods and fair resource distribution systems (Iwogbe et al., 2024). Research from Nigerian contexts highlights the transformative role of EMIS in strengthening primary education administration and improving overall system efficiency. The integration of digital data systems enhances institutional effectiveness and supports sustainable education development (Iwogbe et al., 2024). The DSMS system functions as a technological solution that organizations use to transform their institutions into modern educational systems which enable efficient governance, accountability and service delivery.

### **DSMS as Institutional Necessities in the 21st Century**

Digital school management systems have transformed from being optional technology solutions to becoming essential components of educational infrastructure. The successful operation of contemporary educational institutions requires educational administrators to obtain accurate information without delay. Schools encounter various operational difficulties which include slow reporting processes, incorrect information, inadequate resource monitoring, and ineffective communication methods (Forrester 2019). Schools need digital management systems because they provide essential technology for evidence-based school leadership, institutional transparency and efficient service delivery. The increasing data-driven nature of education systems will make DSMS an essential factor which determines how educational institutions function, how educational policies are executed and how educational quality i(UNESCO 2025). The implementation of DSMS systems proves vital for educational systems in Nigeria and other developing countries. The systems strengthen educational governance, enhance data accuracy and support national development objectives through their planning capabilities. Digital school management systems function as fundamental elements which educational institutions need to operate their administrative functions (Iwogbe et al 2024).

### **Rationale for Digital School Management in the 21st Century**

The rationale for digital school management in the 21st century is rooted in the changing nature of educational institutions, increasing administrative demands, heightened expectations for accountability, and the growing importance of data-driven decision-making. Schools develop into complex organizations which need specialized administrative systems because their operational requirements have grown beyond manual methods. The Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) establish the necessary technological and structural framework which helps educational institutions tackle emerging challenges and maintain proper school management throughout the modern educational landscape.

### **Increasing Administrative Complexity**

Schools need to handle growing student numbers, multiple academic programs, staff training requirements, financial operations and their extensive need for school reporting. The responsibilities of school operations have expanded because of educational reforms, curriculum diversification, inclusive education policies and additional regulatory requirements. The school administration system now requires more complex operations which need high volume data processing and urgent response capabilities compared to the previous time period. The manual administrative systems of organizations maintain incomplete records which result in unnecessary work and create delays when staff members try to access information. The systems are prone to human mistakes, data deletion and data inconsistencies which become worse in educational institutions that have large student populations and experience rapid growth. Research shows that schools' use of paper-based systems for administrative tasks creates operational delays, extended reporting times and weak cooperation between different departments (Forrester, 2019). In contrast, digital management systems integrate administrative functions into centralized platforms, thereby reducing redundancy and improving operational efficiency. The system automates essential administrative duties which include student registration, attendance monitoring, staff record upkeep, exam management and financial operations. The system uses automation to decrease administrative tasks while it improves record-keeping accuracy and record-keeping consistency. The implementation of Management Information Systems (MIS) in school administration results in better organizational performance and institutional unit coordination (Adhikari et al., 2024). In the Nigerian context, administrative complexity is further intensified by limited administrative personnel, large class sizes, and inadequate record-keeping infrastructure. Many schools still rely on manual registers and paper files, which



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

are difficult to manage, especially in urban and densely populated areas. Digital systems provide scalable solutions that enable schools to manage growth effectively while maintaining accurate and up-to-date records. The increasing complexity of administrative tasks requires schools to implement digital school management systems during the 21st century.

### **Demand for Accountability and Transparency**

Another critical rationale for digital school management is the growing demand for accountability and transparency in educational governance. Contemporary education systems operate under increased scrutiny from multiple stakeholders, including funding bodies, government agencies, parents, and accreditation organizations. These stakeholders expect accurate documentation, timely reporting, and transparent use of resources. Education requires reliable data which can be verified through established methods for maintaining accountability standards. Traditional manual systems often lack essential features which help to verify data accuracy, create audit trails and deliver real-time reporting functions essential for maintaining operational transparency. Digital School Management Systems address these limitations by providing traceable records, automated reporting functions, and secure data storage. The system features help institutions maintain their accountability standards while protecting institutional financial resources from unauthorized access and data tampering (UNESCO, 2025).

Globally, international organizations emphasize the role of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) in strengthening accountability and governance in education. UNESCO identifies digital education data systems as essential tools for monitoring school performance, managing resources, and ensuring transparency in educational administration (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2025). Digital systems also support compliance with regulatory requirements by enabling schools to generate standardized reports for inspection and accreditation purposes. In Nigeria, public officials demand digital accountability systems because they believe that school administration lacks transparency in three areas: student assessment, fee management, and staff deployment. Digital school management systems enhance trust among stakeholders by providing accurate, accessible, and verifiable information. Parents can monitor student attendance and performance, while government agencies can assess institutional compliance and performance using standardized digital data. The current educational environment requires digital school management systems because schools need to demonstrate their accountability and operational transparency to various stakeholders.

### **Data-Driven Decision-Making**

Data-driven decision-making has become a crucial requirement for effective educational leadership in modern educational environments. School leaders need to make well-informed decisions about multiple areas, including enrollment strategies, resource distribution, teacher assignment, curriculum delivery, and student assistance programs. The most effective decision-making process requires organizations to use data, which must be accurate, timely, and complete. Educational institutions use Digital School Management Systems to collect, analyze, and display their educational data in a structured manner. The dashboard and analytics tools enable administrators to track student enrollment trends, attendance patterns, academic performance levels, and resource usage throughout the school. These insights support strategic planning and early identification of learning challenges and evidence-based policy implementation (Forrester, 2019). Research consistently demonstrates that Management Information Systems enhance the quality of administrative decision-making by improving access to relevant and reliable information. Adhikari et al. (2024) explain that schools using digital management information systems, which provide real-time data, gain advantages for strategic planning and ongoing improvements. The EMIS frameworks established by UNESCO require educational systems to use data for their planning, monitoring, and evaluation activities (UNESCO, 2025). Nigeria requires data-driven decision-making because its educational resources remain limited while access and quality educational opportunities continue to face persistent inequalities. School leaders use digital systems to detect performance deficiencies, which enables them to distribute resources effectively and create specific programs that help students from underprivileged backgrounds. By transforming raw data into actionable insights, DSMS empower school administrators to respond proactively to emerging challenges and align institutional practices with national education goals.

### **Digital School Management Systems: Necessary, not a Luxury**

The debate over whether Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) constitute a necessity or a luxury in education often stems from a traditional perception that separates technology from the core functions of schooling. The viewpoint



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

maintains that educational activities can proceed without current modern administrative systems. The distinction between these two elements becomes impossible to maintain in modern educational environments. Digital education systems require educational institutions to operate with digital technology that provides quick results and precise information together with complete operational control and flexible performance capabilities which manual systems cannot deliver. People who consider DSMS to be non-essential educational tools generally show resistance to change while they show limited digital skills and they worry about expenses especially in developing nations like Nigeria. People develop understandable concerns but they fail to recognize the technology which now functions as a fundamental component of institutional operations. Digital systems no longer serve as supplementary elements; they now act as essential components that drive contemporary business operations. Schools, like other complex institutions, must manage large volumes of data related to students, staff, finance, curriculum delivery, and external reporting. Digital management systems serve as essential tools which help educational institutions build their institutional capabilities and achieve their educational objectives (UNESCO 2021).

The need for Digital School Management Systems becomes increasingly critical in Nigeria because educational institutions across the country and worldwide are adopting digital technologies for their educational activities. Government agencies increasingly require electronic data submission for accreditation, funding, monitoring, and evaluation. The examination system together with the admissions process operates mainly through computer systems which enable stakeholders like parents and donors to obtain precise information without delays. Schools that depend on manual systems face multiple risks which include slow operations, inconsistent data, poor governance and failure to meet legal requirements. The World Bank (2020) notes that weak administrative systems are a major barrier to effective school management in low- and middle-income countries, and that digital solutions significantly improve transparency and service delivery. Moreover, DSMS contribute directly to institutional competitiveness and sustainability. In an era of school choice and global benchmarking, institutions that employ efficient digital systems are better positioned to attract students, staff, partnerships, and funding. OECD (2019) argues that digital maturity has become a key indicator of organizational quality in education, influencing public trust and institutional reputation. Educational institutions that lack operational digital management systems now look outdated because they fail to meet current educational standards.

Importantly, classifying DSMS as a luxury ignores the long-term cost implications of manual administration. While initial investment in digital systems may be perceived as high, the long-term benefits reduced paperwork, minimized errors, improved efficiency, and better resource utilization, often outweigh the costs. The implementation of digital administrative systems enables organizations to achieve long-term cost reductions because these systems enhance their planning processes and decrease their operational waste (Fullan, 2019). Digital School Management Systems function as vital educational infrastructure which schools need to operate effectively just like they require classrooms, trained educators and teaching resources. In the 21st century, effective school management without digital systems is increasingly impractical. For Nigeria to achieve its educational development goals and remain competitive in a globalized world, DSMS must be embraced not as optional enhancements, but as indispensable tools for modern school governance and educational excellence.

### **Challenges and Solutions to Adoption of Digital School Management Systems**

Despite the recognized benefits of Digital School Management Systems (DSMS), their adoption in many Nigerian schools remains limited. The present obstacles which schools face originate from structural problems, human resources shortages, financial constraints and institutional difficulties. The solution needs dedicated policy development together with skills enhancement and planned financial backing to succeed instead of treating digital systems as non-essential components. One of the most significant barriers to the adoption of DSMS in Nigeria is inadequate ICT infrastructure. Many schools, particularly in rural and underserved areas lack both electrical power, internet access, and essential computer equipment. Digital systems need basic infrastructure to operate properly. The World Bank (2021) identifies infrastructure gaps as a major constraint to digital transformation in education across sub-Saharan Africa. In this scenario, the government should use public funding, educational intervention programs and public-private partnerships to support school ICT infrastructure development. Schools without electrical grids can access affordable power through solar energy systems while utilizing mobile networks for broadband internet access. In addition, cloud-based DSMS that operate on low bandwidth and mobile devices can reduce dependence on expensive physical infrastructure. The success of DSMS systems relies primarily on the digital skills which school leaders and their support personnel possess. Digital administration training did not exist during



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

the time when many school leaders received their training which created challenges for them because they lacked confidence and had restricted technical abilities. The OECD (2020) research shows that school success with technological implementation depends on the digital literacy skills of school leaders. In this situation, the solution requires schools to establish specific training programs which will help their administrators improve their digital leadership abilities. Educational ministries and teacher training institutions together with professional associations should include digital management skills in their leadership training and certification programs. Fullan (2019) states that ongoing practical training together with peer mentoring systems will make it possible to develop skills in a sustainable way. Schools become reluctant to implement DSMS because they perceive software and hardware expenses together with training and maintenance costs as excessive. Public schools and low-fee private institutions face budget problems which make financial resources difficult to obtain. Organizations which assess digital systems only based on initial expenses fail to recognize the future financial advantages these systems bring. In this situation, the solution requires school owners and government bodies to implement gradual deployment plans which will enable them to distribute expenditures across various time periods. Schools can save money through open-source DSMS solutions which eliminate the need to pay for software licenses. The process of centralized buying together with shared digital systems at district or state levels enables organizations to achieve cost savings through bulk purchasing advantages. The World Bank (2020) emphasizes that digital investment in school management yield long-term efficiency gains that outweigh initial expenditures. Resistance to change remains a persistent challenge, often rooted in fear of job displacement, increased accountability, or unfamiliar technology. Some administrators and staff prefer to work with manual systems because they consider these systems easier to understand while they doubt the reliability of digital systems. According to Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations theory, resistance is common when innovations challenge established practices. In this case, change management strategies should accompany DSMS implementation. The organization needs to educate stakeholders about digital system advantages through its educational programs, pilot projects and collaborative decision-making methods. The organization can ease employee concerns through DSMS demonstration which shows that DSMS functions as a support system for employees who need to carry out their tasks. Early adopters within schools can serve as change champions to encourage wider acceptance. As schools digitize records, concerns about data privacy, unauthorized access, and cyberattacks become increasingly prominent. The lack of strong regulatory frameworks and the insufficient cybersecurity skills of staff members create higher security threats to Nigerian educational institutions. UNESCO (2021) warns that inadequate data protection measures can undermine trust in digital education systems. In this case, clear data protection policies aligned with national regulations, such as Nigeria's Data Protection Act, should guide DSMS use. Schools must adopt secure platforms with encryption, role-based access, and regular data backups. Training administrators on basic cybersecurity practices and partnering with reputable technology providers can further mitigate risks. National education authorities should also provide standardized guidelines for data governance in schools.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) Theory and Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which includes the concept of collective efficacy, explain the way schools today implement Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) in their operations. The two theories together explain how organizations adopt new technologies while social factors shape their successful technology implementation. Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory explains that social systems determine how people perceive new ideas before they will accept them. According to Rogers (2003) people will adopt new ideas when they see the ideas as better than what they already know and the ideas work well with their current methods and they find the ideas easy to understand and they see the ideas actual results. In the case of DSMS, schools are more likely to adopt digital systems when they perceive clear benefits over manual methods, such as improved efficiency, transparency, and data-driven decision-making. The adoption process will experience delays because people perceive technical challenges while their ICT skills remain inadequate. The ability to test pilot programs allows people to see administrative process improvements which promotes greater program acceptance. The DOI framework accounts for differences between schools regarding their DSMS implementation levels and their DSMS implementation speeds.

The Social Cognitive Theory developed by Bandura supports this view because it demonstrates how staff members build collective efficacy through their belief in their ability to implement and operate DSMS systems. Successful technology implementation requires both the actual technological solution and the backing of the institution, dedication from leaders,



*Digital School Management System in ... Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)*

professional training, and proper system resources. The implementation of digital tools becomes sustainable and effective when teachers and school leaders together believe in their ability to use these tools (Bandura, 1997). The combination of these two theories delivers an extensive understanding of DSMS which functions as both a technological development and a socially driven process that organizations use to enhance their administrative operations and educational standards.

### **Implications for Educational Management and Policy**

The necessity of Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) for Nigerian educational management and policy development has become established as a basic requirement. The current education systems require new approaches because they rely on both data and technological systems for their operations. Schools need to update their leadership methods and their policy frameworks because these changes will enable better digital governance practices and institutional growth through better accountability systems. Schools now manage their operations through digital systems which represent a complete transformation of educational institutions from their base planning processes to stakeholder expectations. The development of digital leadership skills among school leaders stands as the main focus of this transformation. Effective use of DSMS goes beyond basic computer literacy and requires administrators to strategically integrate digital tools into planning, monitoring, decision-making, and evaluation processes. School leaders play a significant role in shaping organizational culture and guiding technology adoption, making it essential for principals and education managers in Nigeria to be equipped with the necessary skills to actualize and interpret digital data, manage information systems, and lead change in technologically evolving environments. The implementation of sustainable DSMS requires its intentional integration into educational systems of national and state education systems. The absence of consistent implementation methods leads to operational problems that make it difficult for schools to provide equal educational opportunities. Embedding digital school management within education sector plans, quality assurance mechanisms, and accreditation requirements would promote consistency, accountability and standardization in both private and public institutions. Such policy alignment ensures that digital management systems support broader educational goals rather than operate as isolated initiatives. The organization of human resources development activities needs to become more essential because it plays a vital role in success operations. Continuous professional development programs are necessary to build the confidence and competence of administrators, teachers, and support staff in the use of DSMS. These programs should emphasize not only technical proficiency but also data-informed decision-making and ethical digital practices. Digital school management requires dependable ICT infrastructure which must include continuous electricity supply, internet access and suitable computer equipment. Prioritizing infrastructure investment, especially in public and rural schools will help bridge digital disparities. Finally, clear guidelines on data protection, ethical use, and cybersecurity are essential to maintain public trust, safeguard sensitive information, and ensure responsible digital governance in Nigerian schools.

### **Conclusion**

Digital School Management Systems (DSMS) serve as vital tools for educational administration in 21st century educational institutions. The increasing use of data in schools requires new systems because manual approaches cannot deliver the needed operational efficiency, system transparency and stakeholder responsibility. DSMS provide educational institutions with complete digital systems that help them control their operations, make better decisions and achieve higher performance levels. In contexts such as Nigeria, where educational systems face resource constraints and rising expectations, digital school management is not optional but necessary. Although challenges such as limited digital skills and infrastructure gaps persist, they call for strategic investment and policy support rather than resistance. Grounded in innovation and collective effort, DSMS represent a foundational component of modern educational governance and sustainable development.

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*Digital School Management System in ...* Olowo, B. F., Et. al. (2026)

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