


Chapter 11

Fortifying Municipal Governance: Leveraging IT Audits and Disruption Management for Sustainable Public Services

Tshepo Maota

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0475-5801>

University of South Africa, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This study examines how IT audits and disruption management might improve municipal administration and public service delivery in South Africa. Based on the 2024 Governance Performance Index, digital innovations and ethical leadership affect institution performance, specifically money mismanagement and poor service delivery. The study analyses municipal audit reports, oversight results, and worldwide best practices from Finland, Switzerland, and Singapore using qualitative document analysis. Research shows that most municipalities lack digital infrastructure, early-warning systems, and qualified personnel to manage disturbances. IT audits ensure compliance and transparency, while AI-driven disruption solutions reduce risk and plan continuity. Practical recommendations include institutionalising digital audits; decentralising e-governance; investing in cybersecurity and staff development; and encouraging citizen-centric involvement. This research recommends flexible, technology-driven governance structures to address complex and evolving service demands.

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INTRODUCTION

“The test of good governance is not how institutions function in times of stability, but how resilient and responsive they remain amidst disruption.”

Effective municipal governance involves not only the administration of public services but also the strategic management of the complex interactions among economic, sociological, and urban processes, necessitating a comprehensive and adaptable strategy (Das, 2024). Delivering sustainable public services in this complex environment requires a comprehensive framework that incorporates information technology (IT) audits and disruption management strategies, thereby protecting operational integrity and enhancing resilience to unexpected challenges (Das, 2024; Motubatse, Ngwakwe, & Sebola, 2020). The modern framework of municipal administration requires a shift towards citizen-focused, data-informed, and performance-oriented approaches, facilitated by improvements in information and communication technologies. Well-executed data management policies can equip cities for a transformational technological era (Blauer, 2017). Information technology audits are essential for assessing the efficiency, security, and compliance of IT systems and infrastructure, and they offer critical insights for process optimisation and risk mitigation. Disruption management involves the proactive identification, evaluation, and alleviation of potential disruptions, including natural disasters and cyber-attacks, to ensure the continuity of essential services and reduce negative effects on citizens and the community (Amaglobeli, 2023). Digital transformation in local government facilitates a transition from reactive to proactive, citizen-centric service delivery (Mhlongo & Thomas, 2024).

The integration of IT audits and disruption management is essential for cultivating sustainable public services, as it allows towns to optimise resource allocations, improve service delivery, promote transparency and accountability, and boost resilience against unforeseen events. The goal is to explore how IT audits and disruption management work together in local government, showing how they both help make public services more sustainable and effective in the long run. The Fourth Industrial Revolution requires local government officials to have a comprehensive awareness of their responsibilities in service delivery and the transformations associated with technological breakthroughs (Mhlongo & Thomas, 2024). Robust governance frameworks must be established on the basis of technology comprehension and readiness. Local governments can utilise strategic analysis approaches derived from the private sector to determine the necessary resources, capabilities, and management strategies for effectively addressing the changing environment (Sánchez & Zuntini, 2019). This discourse seeks to furnish concrete insights for municipal leaders and practitioners by examining real-world examples, best practices, and emerging trends to improve governance frameworks and foster more resilient and sustainable communities.

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