

GOOD GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN NIGERIAN FEDERAL TERTIARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: This study examines the governance implications of the Federal Tertiary Institutions Governance and Transparency Portal (FTIGTP), launched in November 2025 to make selected information on enrolment, budgets, research grants, and intervention funds available across Nigeria's federal tertiary institutions.

Methods: Qualitative documentary policy analysis using a small purposively chosen set of documents, was applied to the council handbook, the official launch announcement, the portal description, Nigerian statutes, two press reports on uptake and reporting rules, and comparative scholarship. Agency theory and institutional theory framed the analysis.

Results: Four issues emerged: publication is not equivalent to financial accountability; council and data responsibilities require clear assignment; funding links create due-process risks; and disclosure has limited value without usable, comparable, and correctable data. Official and media accounts differ on reporting frequency. A May 2026 media report stated that 119 of 124 federal institutions had been integrated, but this figure does not independently verify data accuracy or governance impact.

Conclusions: A provisional Quadruple Alignment Framework connects regulatory authority, institutional responsibility, digital data quality, and stakeholder scrutiny. The Canadian comparison clarifies questions of institutional autonomy and shared governance rather than offering a transferable template. FTIGTP's effectiveness remains an empirical question, and a staged evaluation agenda is proposed.

Keywords: higher education governance, accountability, transparency, Nigeria, digital disclosure

Introduction

Public universities and other tertiary institutions occupy a demanding position in public administration. They receive public resources, exercise discretion over budgets and academic priorities, and are expected to protect institutional missions while demonstrating lawful, effective stewardship. These obligations create a governance information must be visible enough to permit scrutiny, but disclosure alone cannot establish that expenditure was authorized, decisions were fair, or educational outcomes improved.

Nigeria's Federal Tertiary Institutions Governance and Transparency Portal (FTIGTP) places this problem in a new digital setting. The Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation reported that the Federal Government launched the platform on 4 November 2025. Its announcement described a national data platform covering enrolment, funding, grants, and performance indicators, and stated that annual reporting would be mandatory and that future government funding and interventions would be linked to transparency and accountability metrics (Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation [FMINO], 2025). The portal itself describes coverage of data from the previous three years and identifies student enrolment, budgets, research grants, and intervention funds as public information categories (Federal Tertiary Institutions Governance Transparency Portal [FTIGTP], n.d.).

By May 2026, The Guardian reported that 119 of 124 federal tertiary institutions had been integrated into the portal and that 57 of 60 federal universities, 35 of 36 polytechnics, and 27 of 28 colleges of education had submitted data (Agbajileke, 2026). This is evidence of reported administrative uptake, not an independent audit of accuracy, completeness, comparability, or public use. The count also does not show if the data were checked or if publication changed any decision. The distinction between system adoption and governance impact is central to the analysis.

This study examines FTIGTP as a policy instrument in an early implementation stage. It asks: (a) What governance problem does the platform publicly claim to address? (b) How might its reporting and funding signals interact with statutory institutional governance? (c) What risks arise when digital disclosure is linked to resource allocation? and (d) What can selected Canadian governance practices contribute to policy learning without assuming that a Canadian arrangement can be transplanted to Nigeria?

This study makes three clear contributions. First, it establishes a documentary baseline from the platform's own public description, the official launch announcement, relevant Nigerian statutes, and contemporary reporting on reported uptake. Second, it uses agency and institutional theories to distinguish financial answerability from ritual compliance and formal adoption. Third, it proposes a Quadruple Alignment Framework for evaluating the relationship among regulatory authority, institutional governance, digital data quality, and stakeholder scrutiny. The framework is a proposition for future testing, not a validated model. The analysis does not claim to assess institutional compliance or to infer causal effects.

Governance and Accountability in Higher Education

Higher education governance distributes decision rights among public authorities, governing boards or councils, academic bodies, executive leaders, regulators, and institutional communities. The exact arrangement varies across jurisdiction and institution. University governance is therefore not reducible to a corporate board model: financial stewardship coexists with academic freedom, collegial decision-making, public obligations, and diverse institutional missions. Ontario's Council of Ontario Universities (2022), for example, describes board responsibilities for financial sustainability and overall governance alongside the need to preserve

academic freedom, institutional autonomy, and shared governance with academic bodies. This sector guidance is not legislation, but it provides a contemporary Canadian reference point for the distinction between board-level fiduciary oversight and academic governance.

Accountability in higher education is multidirectional. Public authorities and citizens require assurance that public funds are used lawfully and transparently. At the same time, institutions need room to make academic and operational decisions consistent with their statutory mandates. A useful accountability system therefore identifies who sets expectations, who produces and verifies information, who can challenge a decision, and what remedy follows a demonstrated error. A dashboard that only displays indicators supplies visibility; it does not by itself supply answerability, correction, or enforcement.

Empirical work also cautions against assuming that a single governance principle always produces better educational outcomes. In a study of Ethiopian public universities, Atanaw et al. (2025) examined accountability, autonomy, academic freedom, transparency, and responsibility in relation to education service quality. Their results differentiated among these dimensions, illustrating why simple claims that “more accountability” necessarily improves quality require qualification. The study is context-specific and does not evaluate Nigeria or FTIGTP, but it reinforces the need to define what is measured and to avoid treating indicators as interchangeable.

In this study, Transparency is treated as a chain rather than a publication event: data are generated, defined, documented, disclosed, interpreted, checked, and used to explain or correct decisions. A break at any point weakens public value. Data can be online but inaccessible; comparable in appearance but based on different definitions; complete but unaudited; or accurate but disconnected from budget and council decisions. Research on open-government data quality likewise emphasizes that availability should be assessed through identifiable quality dimensions and user-facing conditions, not merely the presence of a portal (Raca et al., 2022).

Recent Research on Performance, Digital Disclosure, and Autonomy

Recent public-administration research treats transparency as a governance process shaped by institutional incentives, political conditions, and citizen ability to use information. A structured review of transparency research in public administrations shows that disclosure has multiple dimensions and cannot be assessed solely by the presence of published records (Cuadrado-Ballesteros et al., 2023). Research on open-government-data initiatives similarly draws attention to political determinants of transparency (Hong et al., 2024), the inclusiveness and relevance of published data (Schwoerer, 2022), and recurring legal, organizational, technological, and social barriers in developing-country settings (Alexopoulos et al., 2024). Research on Nigeria’s wider digital-government agenda also frames digital transformation as a possible route to transparency and accountability, while leaving the effect of any particular platform to be tested (Shenkoya, 2023). These studies support treating public data as a governed resource, not as an automatic proxy for accountable conduct.

Digital platforms also depend on the quality of the service and governance arrangements around them. Alexopoulos et al. (2023) identify website design, fulfilment, service provision, security, and privacy as dimensions relevant to open-data services. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s digital-government framework emphasizes institutional coordination and clear accountability for digital initiatives (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2021), while Yukhno (2024) discusses the governance challenges associated with big data in public administration. Hu and Sun’s (2026) quasi-natural experiment examines links between open-government-data platforms and public-

service quality in China. Together, this work suggests that accessibility, data stewardship, and context-specific evaluation belong in the policy analysis.

In higher education, performance information has become a routine component of system and institutional governance, while the purposes and consequences of indicators remain contested (Beerkens, 2022; Huisman & Stensaker, 2022). Sarrico (2022) describes performance measures as capable of creating administrative burden as well as supporting learning and innovation. Comparative studies of performance-based funding identify variation in institutional responses and the need to examine the conditions under which funding incentives work (Matveeva, 2025; Teixeira et al., 2022). Kallio et al. (2022) document tension between public steering, accountability, and university autonomy in Finland. Evidence from Europe also cautions that increased autonomy does not uniformly predict stronger performance across institutional missions (Painsi et al., 2025). These findings make it necessary to assess the portal's funding signals alongside their procedures and effects, rather than assuming that an indicator-linked funding rule will improve governance.

Higher-education accountability also relies on internal control and institutional context. Fonseca et al. (2020) examine the contribution of internal audit to accountability in higher education institutions. Ibrahim (2022) situates Nigerian university governance within wider concerns about institutional integrity and the public good. These studies are not evaluations of FTIGTP; they inform the questions of assurance, institutional capacity, and mission that should guide its future evaluation.

Research on datafication in universities warns that data systems can make operations more legible while leaving the meaning, provenance, or ethical use of data opaque to those affected (Brooks & Timms, 2025; Stewart et al., 2023). A recent systematic review protocol on shared governance explicitly treats governance as context-dependent and calls for transparent decisions about setting, inclusion, and unit of analysis (Raza et al., 2025). Canadian sources likewise stress the diversity of institutional governance arrangements (Eastman et al., 2022) and the relationship between board responsibility, academic freedom, and shared governance (Council of Ontario Universities, 2022). Recent work on autonomy and accountability in other higher-education contexts reinforces that these values must be balanced rather than treated as interchangeable (Hao, 2025; Moodley, 2025; Sabzalieva et al., 2023). South African scholarship on emerging technology in higher education also flags privacy, cybersecurity, and digital-literacy risks alongside possible accountability benefits (Smith, 2025).

This literature does not answer whether FTIGTP has improved Nigerian institutional governance. It does, however, identify the unresolved mechanisms the documentary analysis tests: whether information is verified; whether measures are comparable; whether institutions can explain and correct records; whether public users can interpret the data; and whether funding consequences respect institutional mandates and procedural fairness. The article's contribution is This study's contribution is to connect these questions to the portal's documented design and to specify evidence needed for a later implementation study.

Agency Theory and Institutional Theory

Agency theory offers one lens for understanding why disclosure rules are introduced. In public tertiary education, government and citizens delegate resources and authority to institutional leaders and governing bodies, who possess more detailed information about local decisions. This principal-agent relationship can generate information asymmetry and monitoring problems. Jensen and Meckling (1976) provide a foundational account of agency costs, monitoring, and information asymmetry. Applied cautiously to tertiary education, their work

directs attention to whether budgets, grants, and performance data allow the public and governing councils to assess decisions and whether independent assurance can detect material reporting failures.

Agency theory is not a complete account of universities. A narrow monitoring approach may overvalue measurable outputs, understate public-good purposes, or treat academic communities only as agents of government. In practice, public institutions answer to multiple constituencies with sometimes competing expectations. Transparency metrics can reduce information asymmetry, but can also create incentives to prioritize what is easily counted. Monitoring should therefore be linked to mission-sensitive measures, procedural safeguards, and meaningful discretion.

Institutional theory helps explain why formal policy adoption and practical change may diverge. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) describe how organizations respond to coercive, normative, and mimetic pressures. For FTIGTP, coercive pressure may arise from mandatory reporting or funding conditions; normative pressure may arise from professional expectations of public stewardship; and mimetic pressure may arise when institutions copy practices perceived as modern or legitimate. A portal can therefore become a visible symbol of reform even where data practices, council oversight, or public accountability routines remain unchanged.

Taken together, the theories support a two-part test. The agency perspective asks whether reliable information and monitoring reduce avoidable asymmetry while preserving fair procedures. The institutional perspective asks whether reporting becomes embedded in governance routines or remains ceremonial compliance. The test is not whether a platform exists, but whether its information is trusted, usable, contestable, and connected to decisions made under lawful authority.

Nigerian Legal and Administrative Context

The Federal Ministry of Education's (2023) handbook states that governing councils are the highest decision-making bodies under their enabling laws and assigns them general superintendence, management, and control of institutional finances and property. It also describes ministry representatives' roles in reporting, policy alignment, and budget oversight. The handbook is ministerial guidance, not a substitute for each institution's enabling statute. It nevertheless shows that the portal must be aligned with existing council and ministry responsibilities. The Freedom of Information Act 2011 provides a statutory context for access to records held by public institutions, subject to the Act's scope, procedures, and exemptions (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011a). A public portal may make selected information easier to find, but it does not necessarily disclose all records relevant to an inquiry or replace applicable access-to-information procedures. The Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Establishment, etc.) Act 2011 establishes a separate statutory context for TETFund and its intervention functions (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011b). The legal relationship between any portal metric and a particular funding decision should be demonstrated through an authoritative instrument, not inferred from an announcement alone.

The handbook supplies a governance baseline, but it does not specify FTIGTP's detailed technical rules. The reviewed materials do not include an authenticated platform specification or operational circular describing data certification, correction and appeal procedures, or the precise relationship between reporting and funding. The article therefore treats the portal as an information layer within the existing statutory system, not as a substitute for enabling laws or institutional decision-making bodies.

Canada as a Comparative Policy Reference

Canadian university governance is diverse across provinces and institutions, with variation in board composition, academic bodies, and legal frameworks. The comparison in this article is deliberately limited to a policy question rather than a national ranking. Ontario's sector guidance recognizes both the board's accountability for financial sustainability and the university's distinctive academic mission, autonomy, and shared governance (Council of Ontario Universities, 2022). A contemporary synthesis documents institutional and provincial variation in Canadian university governance and cautions against assuming a single uniform arrangement (Eastman et al., 2022). Beerkens (2022) also discusses how the changing volume and uses of performance data reshape governance debates, including in Canada.

For Nigerian policy design, the transferable questions are: (a) how can a government require financial transparency without turning reporting into control over academic decisions? (b) how can governing bodies receive reliable financial evidence while academic bodies retain meaningful authority over academic policy? and (c) how can system-wide indicators account for differences in institutional size, mandate, location, and programme mix? These questions are relevant to Canadian debates about public accountability and university autonomy as well as to Nigeria's institutional reform. They also keep the comparison at the level of governance functions: public assurance, board oversight, academic participation, and institutional explanation. The comparative material does not establish that Ontario guidance is legally or administratively transferable to Nigeria,

and this study does not treat Canada as one Governance model.

Methodology

This study is a qualitative documentary policy analysis. Documentary analysis is appropriate for examining how a policy is framed, what obligations and institutional relationships are stated in public documents, and what issues remain unspecified (Bowen, 2009). The integrative-review tradition allows conceptual and empirical evidence to be considered together, but requires a transparent account of identification, evaluation, and synthesis (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005).

The primary documentary corpus comprised (a) the Federal Ministry of Education's November 2023 handbook for ministry representatives on governing councils; (b) the FMINO announcement of 4 November 2025; (c) the public-facing FTIGTP description; (d) the Freedom of Information Act 2011; (e) the TETFund Act 2011; (f) TheCable's 5 November 2025 report on the platform's reporting and funding claims; and (g) The Guardian's 18 May 2026 report on institutional integration and data submission. The Council of Ontario Universities' 2022 governance guidance and Eastman et al.'s comparative synthesis were used for the Canadian policy reference. The platform's underlying records, technical metadata, and data dictionary were not available for audit.

For the contemporary scholarly context, literature published from 2020 through 2 October 2026 was prioritized when it directly addressed higher education governance, accountability, institutional autonomy, public transparency, digital disclosure, or data quality. Foundational theoretical and methodological works published before 2020 were retained where necessary to define agency theory, institutional theory, documentary analysis, and integrative review methods. Searches conducted on 2 October 2026 used combinations of "higher education governance," "university accountability," "institutional autonomy," "digital transparency," "open government data quality," and "Nigeria tertiary education." Scholarly discovery used Google Scholar results and publisher or journal pages available to the researcher. The search was

purposive and not a reproducible multi-database systematic search. The literature scan supports conceptual framing; it is not presented as an exhaustive evidence base or as a denominator for quantitative synthesis.

Sources were included when they directly informed one of four analytic domains: financial accountability; council roles and institutional autonomy; digital data integrity and accessibility; or stakeholder interpretation and contestability. Public documents were retained for their direct relevance to the policy instrument, regardless of publication date. Sources were excluded from claims about implementation outcomes unless they presented evidence about implementation; announcements and media reports were treated as statements or reported observations, not independent verification.

Analysis proceeded in four steps. First, documents were read for stated aims, institutional coverage, data categories, reporting expectations, funding implications, and named governance actors. Second, relevant passages were coded under the four analytic domains. Third, claims were compared across sources, with differences in source type and evidential status preserved rather than merged. Fourth, the coded issues were synthesized into the proposed Quadruple Alignment Framework and a staged evaluation agenda.

This study is not a systematic review. PRISMA 2020 is intended for systematic-review reporting; its flow diagram would misrepresent this purposive policy-document analysis, which did not use a reproducible multi-database search or duplicate screening (Page et al., 2021). A future systematic review should search named bibliographic databases, record full search strings and screening decisions, and report the resulting selection process transparently.

The study is limited by the small, purposively selected corpus and the absence of independent portal-data validation, institutional records, interviews, or the operative technical and administrative instruments. The 119-of-124 figure is attributed to a named news report and is treated as reported integration or submission, not as a verified measure of completeness or data quality. These limits restrict the claims to policy framing, reported early uptake, and design implications.

FTIGTP Is Publicly Framed as a System-Wide Information Instrument

The platform description presents FTIGTP as a unified source for tracking and analysing performance and funding metrics across universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education. The listed information categories include enrolment, budgets, research grants, and intervention funds, with a stated three-year data horizon (FTIGTP, n.d.). The launch announcement additionally frames the system as a source for evidence-informed budgeting and policy, says annual submissions will be mandatory, and connects future funding and interventions with transparency and accountability metrics (FMINO, 2025). TheCable reported the following day that institutions would submit data quarterly and that financial reporting would affect performance and eligibility for future funding (Bolawa, 2025). The difference between annual and quarterly frequency, and the exact funding rule, remain unresolved in the absence of an authoritative operational directive. These statements establish public policy framing; they do not establish the reliability of each field or the conditions under which funding decisions will be made.

The reported integration of 119 of 124 federal institutions by May 2026 indicates early administrative reach, if the report is accurate (Agbajileke, 2026). It does not show whether every institution's data are complete, updated, comparable, or independently assured. Nor does it demonstrate that the platform has altered council oversight or improved educational outcomes.

The implementation question is therefore not simply how many institutions appear in the system, but what an “integrated” or “submitted” record means and what verification supports that status.

Publication Is Not the Same as Financial Accountability

Publishing budgets, grants, and intervention funds may help users identify resource allocations and ask follow-up questions. But financial accountability requires a traceable relationship among approved budgets, releases, commitments, expenditure, procurement, outputs, and audit or assurance. The public portal description does not specify whether it includes actual expenditure, audited statements, procurement records, or audit findings. Those elements should not be attributed to the platform without access to the relevant technical specification or underlying data.

Agency theory clarifies why this distinction matters: disclosure may reduce information asymmetry, but monitoring requires sufficiently reliable evidence and a mechanism for correction or consequence. If the portal provides only headline allocations, users may not be able to determine whether resources were spent as approved. If it displays outcomes without methodological notes, users may mistake accounting differences or institutional mission differences for performance differences. A data dictionary, source documentation, update date, and assurance status for each field would help address these risks.

Funding Links Create Both Incentives and Procedural Risks

The launch statement’s reference to future funding and intervention decisions tied to transparency and accountability metrics gives the portal a potential enforcement dimension (FMINO, 2025). This could encourage timely reporting and public stewardship. It could also create unfairness if institutions face different digital capacities, reporting definitions are unstable, or data errors cannot be challenged. A missing field can indicate non-submission, a technical fault, an unavailable record, or a true zero. Those cases should not be treated as equivalent.

A defensible funding process should distinguish reporting compliance from educational performance, and both from structural constraints beyond an institution’s control. Institutions should receive notice of disputed or missing information, a reasonable period to correct errors, a documented appeal route, and written reasons for funding decisions. Measures should be tested for comparability across university, polytechnic, and college-of-education missions. These safeguards are policy recommendations; the documents reviewed do not establish that they are already part of FTIGTP.

Digital Transparency Depends on Data Governance and Usability

The portal’s broad categories are understandable to a general audience, but the public-facing description alone does not specify detailed definitions, validation rules, update schedules, revision histories, or accessibility and download formats. These properties determine whether researchers, journalists, students, staff, councils, and policymakers can interpret the data consistently. Research on open-data portal quality supports examining such systems through data quality and usability dimensions rather than treating online availability as sufficient (Raca et al., 2022).

Institutional data stewardship is also necessary. Each data field should have an identified owner, a documented source, an internal verification process, and a revision history. At the system level, the responsible ministry should publish definitions, validation rules, update schedules, and a correction process. Where institutions differ in staffing or digital infrastructure, technical support is needed so that reporting capacity does not become a proxy for institutional merit.

Transparency Requires Answerability and Public Contestation

A portal creates public value when people can understand what a figure means, relate it to an institutional decision, and obtain a response when information appears incomplete or incorrect. The Freedom of Information Act remains relevant because a portal's selected fields cannot be assumed to exhaust the records available under law (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2011a). The portal should explain how online disclosures relate to statutory information requests, and provide a clear channel for correction or clarification.

The findings therefore shows a difference between data availability answerability, and consequence. Availability is a technical condition; answerability requires an institution to explain a decision; consequence requires a lawful, proportionate response where standards are breached. FTIGTP's public framing speaks to the first and signals an intention to link the system to the third. The reviewed materials do not yet establish the procedures that connect them.

Discussion

The documentary evidence supports a bounded characterization of FTIGTP: it is a federal transparency and data-infrastructure initiative whose public framing links institutional information with evidence use and future funding decisions. The evidence also includes reported early integration of 119 of 124 federal institutions by May 2026 (Agbajileke, 2026). It does not establish data accuracy, full institutional compliance, reduced corruption, stronger council oversight, or improved educational outcomes. Each of those claims would require different evidence.

This distinction is especially important when a reform is new. A launch announcement documents stated intent; a portal page documents the categories the platform says it presents; a news report documents a reported administrative count. None of these sources alone verifies data quality or impact. The next stage of research should compare portal entries with institutional source records and examine how the data are used in actual budget, audit, council, or funding decisions.

Agency theory highlights the potential of disclosure to reduce information asymmetry, but it also draws attention to monitoring design and procedural fairness. Institutional theory explains why a platform may be adopted to demonstrate legitimacy while routines remain unchanged. The two perspectives together suggest that technological visibility will not automatically produce accountability. The relevant test is whether reporting is incorporated into institutional decision processes, verified by actors with defined responsibilities, and open to challenge by affected stakeholders.

The Canada comparison reinforces the need to protect the distinction between operational and academic governance. Ontario's sector guidance situates board accountability for financial sustainability alongside university autonomy, academic freedom, and shared governance (Council of Ontario Universities, 2022). This offers a comparative policy question for Nigeria: can a central reporting system improve public assurance without displacing councils' lawful roles or academic bodies' authority over academic policy? The answer depends on Nigerian statutes and institutional arrangements, not on copying an Ontario governance form.

Quadruple Alignment Framework

The Quadruple Alignment Framework is a provisional synthesis of the documentary analysis. It is not a confirmed description of FTIGTP rules and has not been empirically validated. It organizes four conditions that future evaluation can test (see Table 1).

Table 1

Quadruple Alignment Framework Dimensions

Regulatory alignment	The first condition asks whether reporting duties, statutory powers, access rights, and funding consequences are clearly authorized and mutually consistent. Evidence would include an operative directive, a legal mapping of duties, published correction and appeal procedures, and written reasons for funding decisions.
Institutional alignment	The second condition asks whether institutions have assigned clear responsibility for producing, certifying, reviewing, and using reported information. Evidence would include named data owners, internal reporting protocols, audit trails, council review records, and documentation of how portal information informs institutional decisions.
Digital alignment	The third condition asks whether definitions, validation, updates, access, and correction processes yield reliable and usable data. Evidence would include a data dictionary, measures of completeness and timeliness, validation rules, correction logs, accessibility testing, and downloadable records.
Stakeholder alignment	The fourth condition asks whether students, staff, researchers, media, civil society, and public agencies can interpret and question the information. Evidence would include public feedback, documented responses, use of statutory information requests, consultations, and examples of information informing oversight.

Note. The framework is proposed from this documentary analysis and has not been empirically validated.

The framework is intended to prevent a common category error: treating portal activity as evidence of accountability. Strong performance in one dimension. May not make up failure in another For example, technically accessible data may have little value if reporting duties lack legal clarity or if affected institutions cannot correct errors. Conversely, strong legal requirements may not translate into public accountability when data are unavailable or incomprehensible.

Limitations and Future Research

This analysis uses a small purposive corpus and does not constitute a comprehensive review of higher education governance literature. It does not include interviews, institution-level records, the portal's source data, a data dictionary, an authenticated implementation circular, or an independent audit. The available government statement establishes intended policy, while the reported institutional coverage comes from a media account. Neither source can support causal conclusions about accountability or educational outcomes.

Future research should obtain the operative directive, technical documentation, and institutional reporting protocols; archive portal data over time; and compare selected entries with budgets, releases, audited statements, and institutional records. Interviews with ministry officials, council members, administrators, staff, and students could clarify how information is produced, challenged, and used. A separate, reproducible integrative review should search named scholarly databases, record all queries and screening decisions, and report a PRISMA flow diagram if the resulting review design warrants one. Canadian comparison should focus on selected provincial laws and institutional governance documents rather than broad national labels.

Conclusion

FTIGTP is a notable policy development because it creates a public-facing structure for information about Nigeria's federal tertiary institutions and signals a link between transparency metrics and future funding decisions. Public sources also report substantial early institutional integration. These facts describe policy design and reported uptake, not verified data quality or improved governance.

The platform's public value will depend on what surrounds the interface: clear legal authority, institution-level ownership, credible verification, fair correction and appeal procedures, comparable measures, and stakeholder ability to understand and question the data. Agency theory explains why information can improve monitoring; institutional theory warns that formal reporting can become symbolic. The proposed Quadruple Alignment Framework translates these concerns into an evaluation agenda. The next research task is to test whether the portal's information is complete, trusted, and consequential for decisions while preserving the statutory and academic responsibilities of tertiary institutions.

Recommendations for Policy and Administration

First, the responsible ministry should publish the operative directive and technical specification. These should identify covered institutions, data fields, submission intervals, validation and certification procedures, record retention, privacy protections, correction rights, and the conditions under which reporting may affect funding.

Second, portal measures should be mapped to existing statutory and institutional responsibilities. Each institution should identify officers responsible for data entry, internal verification, governance review, and certification. The mapping should explain how reported fields relate to approved budgets, actual releases, expenditure, grants, and audit processes. It should also specify where a metric is not directly comparable across institutional types.

Third, funding decisions should be reviewable. An institution should be able to see the information used, correct an error, appeal a disputed interpretation, and receive reasons for a decision. Reporting failure, educational performance, and structural disadvantage should be treated as analytically distinct conditions. Any consequences should be proportionate and consistent with governing statutes.

Fourth, data should be published with metadata, update dates, revision histories, and accessible downloadable formats. Missing values should be distinguished from zero values, delayed submissions, and technical outages. User guidance should explain the limitations of each indicator and the source record from which it is derived.

Fifth, evaluation should proceed in stages. A process evaluation should establish the legal basis, governance assignments, data definitions, and reporting workflow. A data-quality assessment should then test completeness, accuracy, timeliness, consistency, and usability across institution types. An outcome evaluation should examine whether verified disclosure changes council practice, public oversight, resource allocation, or institutional outcomes. Baseline data are needed before impact claims can be supported.

Finally, comparative learning should be issue-specific. Nigerian and Canadian arrangements should be compared on clearly defined matters such as board fiduciary responsibility, academic senate or council authority, publication of financial records, and routes for contesting decisions. Any proposed adaptation should be tested against Nigerian enabling laws, fiscal arrangements, and institutional diversity.

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