

Accounting Information Systems Adoption and the Performance of Small and Medium Enterprises in Nigeria: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Accounting Information Systems (AIS) have become an important concern with respect to how they improve or impair the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). However, evidence on the relationship between AIS adoption and SME performance in Nigeria remains fragmented across different states, sectors, and outcome measures. This study reviewed empirical literature published between January 2016 and June 2026 to synthesize evidence on the relationship between AIS and SME performance in Nigeria, identify the specific AIS technologies reported in the literature, and examine the extent to which these technologies have been studied. A systematic literature review design was adopted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. Relevant studies were retrieved from Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, and African Journals Online (AJOL). Out of 357 records identified, 14 peer-reviewed empirical studies satisfied the inclusion criteria and were synthesized using a qualitative narrative approach. The review found consistent evidence that AIS adoption enhances SME performance through improved financial reporting quality, profitability, sales growth, operational efficiency, employee productivity, business sustainability, cost control, return on investment, and access to finance. The review also identified accounting software packages and cloud accounting technologies as the principal AIS technologies associated with improved performance. However, only three of the fourteen studies explicitly examined specific AIS technologies, indicating a significant gap in technology-specific research. The study concludes that AIS is an important driver of SME performance in Nigeria and recommends greater empirical attention to the performance implications of specific AIS technologies.

Keywords: Accounting Information Systems, AIS Adoption, Small and Medium Enterprises, SME Performance, Nigeria.

Introduction

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) remain central to Nigeria's economic development because they contribute to job creation, poverty alleviation, and broader economic growth. However, they continue to struggle with weak financial management, operational inefficiencies, and limited access to timely financial information (Sulaiman & Usman, 2025; Erhijakpor & Patience, 2026). Many Nigerian SMEs still rely on manual bookkeeping and do

not fully leverage digital accounting tools, and this weakens financial reporting and performance outcomes (Olayemi, Adebisi, Oyelakun, & Ibrahim, 2025; Muktar, Inuwa, & Shuaibu, 2023). As such, Accounting Information Systems (AIS) have become increasingly important because they help firms record, process, analyze, report, and communicate business transaction results in forms that support managerial decision-making (Zaę & Shuli, 2025). Recent literature, therefore, treats AIS adoption not as a routine bookkeeping choice but as a strategic response to technological change and the growing demand for accurate, timely, and usable accounting information (Aliamutu & Mkhize, 2024; Rabi, Salihu, Maigoshi, & Ibrahim, 2025).

Conceptually, AIS has evolved from simple computerized record-keeping into integrated systems that combine data, procedures, software, controls, and human actors to generate financial and non-financial reports for decision-making (Zaę & Shuli, 2025). According to Aliamutu & Mkhize (2024) and Sanni and Akinrinola (2025), the real value of AIS lies not merely in digitization but in the system's ability to improve information quality, strengthen internal control, reduce reporting delays, and support faster business response. Firm performance, in this context, extends beyond profitability alone; rather, it reflects the extent to which an enterprise achieves its strategic and operational objectives through both financial outcomes, such as profitability, sales growth, and return on investment, and non-financial outcomes, such as customer satisfaction, market share, and operational effectiveness (Lawal, Abu Seman, & Rashid, 2026). When this conceptual link is applied to SMEs, performance becomes an important area of concern because small firms usually operate with tighter margins and weaker resource bases than larger firms.

Existing studies have examined AIS from different perspectives while also employing different measures of SME performance. This diversity has generated useful evidence but not a consolidated understanding of the nature and consistency of the AIS-performance relationship within the Nigerian SME context. A systematic synthesis of the available evidence is therefore necessary to clarify what is currently established, identify areas of concentration and neglect, and provide a stronger empirical basis for understanding AIS adoption and SME performance in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The AIS-performance relationship is not fully established in the Nigerian context. The literature remains dispersed across states, sectors, and outcome measures. This fragmentation makes it difficult to draw generalizable conclusions regarding the extent to which AIS adoption enhances SME performance or to identify the specific AIS technologies that consistently generate positive performance outcomes. Consequently, SMEs seeking to invest in AIS lack a consolidated body of evidence to guide technology adoption decisions and may allocate scarce resources to technologies that do not deliver the expected benefits in the Nigerian context. It is against this background that the present study undertakes a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed studies published between 2016 and 2026 to

consolidate empirical evidence on Accounting Information Systems and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. To synthesize empirical evidence published between 2016 and 2026 and examine the nature of the relationship between Accounting Information Systems (AIS) and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.
2. To identify the specific AIS technologies that influence the performance of SMEs in Nigeria.
3. To examine the extent to which Nigerian studies investigate the influence of different AIS technologies on the performance of SMEs.

Research Questions

1. What does the empirical literature reveal about the relationship between Accounting Information Systems and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria?
2. What specific AIS technologies are reported in the literature as influencing the performance of SMEs in Nigeria?
3. To what extent do Nigerian studies investigate the influence of different AIS technologies on the performance of SMEs?

Review of Related Literature

Accounting Information Systems

Accounting Information Systems have been conceptualized from several complementary perspectives in contemporary scholarship. Trigo, Belfo, and Estébanez (2016) defined AIS as an information system that supports accounting processes by collecting, processing, consolidating, and reporting financial information while increasingly integrating business process management to produce real-time organizational information. This definition suggests that AIS extends beyond record keeping to become an integrated business information platform. Monteiro and Cepêda (2021) described AIS as a technology-enabled accounting system that automates accounting activities by collecting, storing, processing, and communicating financial information required for planning, control, and decision-making. This interpretation emphasizes automation and digital transformation as defining characteristics of modern AIS. Romney and Steinbart (2023) defined AIS as a system that collects, records, stores, and processes accounting and other organizational data to produce information for decision-makers. This definition underscores the information-processing function of AIS and its support for decision-makers. Geerts (2018) viewed AIS as an integrated enterprise information infrastructure that links accounting events with business processes through digital technologies, thereby facilitating organizational coordination and reporting. This perspective highlights the increasing integration of accounting information with enterprise-wide information systems. Furthermore, Soudani

(2012), whose work remains foundational in AIS literature, conceptualized AIS as a system that transforms financial data into meaningful information that enhances planning, control, coordination, and organizational decision-making, thereby emphasizing its managerial value. Collectively, these perspectives indicate that AIS is no longer merely an accounting application but a strategic organizational information system that integrates accounting, technology, business processes, and managerial decision support.

The evolution of AIS reflects the broader advancement of information technology, progressing from manual accounting records to computerized accounting systems, enterprise resource planning (ERP) environments, cloud-based accounting platforms, artificial intelligence applications, blockchain integration, and real-time digital reporting (Monteiro & Cepêda, 2021; Chiu, Liu, Muehlmann, & Baldwin, 2019). Contemporary literature identifies several major components of AIS, including people, procedures and instructions, data, software, information technology infrastructure, and internal controls, which function collectively to capture, process, secure, and communicate accounting information (Romney & Steinbart, 2023). Recent conceptual discussions further characterize AIS by integration, automation, accuracy, timeliness, reliability, flexibility, scalability, security, and real-time reporting capability (Trigo et al., 2016; Knauer, Nikiforow, & Wagener, 2020). Modern AIS also incorporates business process orientation, enabling accounting information to flow seamlessly across organizational functions rather than remaining isolated within finance departments (Trigo et al., 2016).

For this study, Accounting Information Systems is defined as an integrated technology-enabled accounting system comprising people, procedures, data, software, information technology infrastructure, and internal controls that collectively collect, process, store, and communicate financial information to support organizational operations, managerial decision-making, financial reporting, and overall business performance.

Organizational Performance

Performance has remained one of the most important constructs in management, accounting, strategic management, and information systems research because it reflects the extent to which an organization achieves its objectives while ensuring long-term sustainability and competitiveness (Singh, Darwish, & Potočník, 2016). Richard, Devinney, Yip, and Johnson (2009) defined organizational performance as three specific areas of firm outcomes: financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment), product market performance (sales, market share), and shareholder return. This definition means that performance encompasses multiple organizational outcomes rather than profitability alone. Although this is a foundational definition, it continues to underpin recent conceptualizations of organizational performance. Singh et al. (2016) described organizational performance as a set of both financial and non-financial indicators capable of assessing the extent to which organizational goals and objectives have been achieved. This implies that performance reflects balanced organizational success across quantitative and qualitative outcomes rather than purely financial or accounting-based results. Hamann

and Schiemann (2021) defined organizational performance as the economic outcomes resulting from the interaction between an organization's attributes, managerial actions, and environmental conditions. This definition emphasizes that performance emerges from organizational capabilities operating within external contexts rather than from internal resources alone. Rehman, Mohamed, and Ayoup (2019) viewed organizational performance as the effectiveness with which an organization attains its desired goals and objectives. This means that performance should be understood in relation to organizational purpose. These perspectives collectively indicate that organizational performance is inherently multidimensional, dynamic, and strategic. Performance integrates financial achievements with operational, customer-related, innovation, and organizational capabilities that collectively determine sustainable organizational success.

Contemporary scholarship consistently portrays organizational performance as comprising financial and non-financial dimensions. Financial performance refers to accounting and market-based outcomes such as profitability, return on investment, return on assets, sales growth, liquidity, and market value, which indicate the organization's economic success (Hamann & Schiemann, 2021; Richard et al., 2009). Non-financial performance encompasses customer satisfaction, product or service quality, innovation, employee development, operational efficiency, internal business processes, organizational learning, flexibility, and stakeholder satisfaction, all of which contribute to long-term competitiveness and future financial outcomes (Singh et al., 2016; Van Looy & Shafagatova, 2016).

For this study, performance is defined as the multidimensional extent to which small and medium enterprises achieve their strategic and operational objectives through superior financial and non-financial outcomes. This definition is appropriate for examining the contribution of accounting information systems adoption to the overall performance of SMEs in Nigeria because it captures both immediate economic outcomes and broader organizational capabilities that sustain long-term competitiveness.

Theoretical Framework: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was developed by Fred D. Davis to explain and predict individuals' acceptance and use of information technology. The model originated as an adaptation of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and proposes that two core beliefs, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, are the primary determinants of an individual's attitude toward using a technology, which subsequently influences behavioral intention to use and actual system usage (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Perceived usefulness refers to the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular technology will enhance job performance, whereas perceived ease of use denotes the extent to which a person believes that using the technology will require minimal effort (Davis, 1989). The model further posits that perceived ease of use positively influences perceived usefulness because technologies that are easier to operate are more likely to be

viewed as beneficial. Consequently, users are more inclined to adopt technologies that they perceive as both useful and easy to use, making TAM one of the most influential theoretical frameworks in information systems and technology adoption research (Legris, Ingham, & Collette, 2003; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

The central assumption of TAM is that technology adoption is fundamentally a cognitive decision-making process driven by users' perceptions of a system's usefulness and ease of use rather than by the technical characteristics of the technology alone (Davis, 1989). The model assumes that individuals evaluate a technology before deciding whether to use it and that positive evaluations increase their intention to adopt and continuously utilize the technology (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000). Another important assumption is that external variables, including organizational support, system quality, training, technological infrastructure, management support, user experience, and environmental conditions, do not directly influence technology usage but exert their effects indirectly through perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989; Legris et al., 2003). These assumptions make TAM particularly suitable for explaining why some information systems are readily accepted while others encounter resistance despite offering comparable technical capabilities.

The relevance of TAM to Accounting Information Systems (AIS) adoption among SMEs is evident because the successful implementation of AIS depends not only on the availability of accounting technologies but also on users' willingness to accept and utilize them effectively. SME owners, managers, accountants, and other employees are more likely to adopt AIS when they perceive that the system will improve accounting accuracy, financial reporting quality, decision-making, operational efficiency, and overall business performance while requiring relatively little effort to learn and operate (Rabiu, Salihu, Maigoshi, & Ibrahim, 2025). Recent studies have demonstrated that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use remain significant predictors of AIS adoption among SMEs, with additional organizational factors such as trust, perceived security, and technological readiness further strengthening users' acceptance of accounting technologies (Dallal & Sankari, 2025; Muhammad, Auwal, & Salisu, 2025). Thus, TAM offers an appropriate behavioral lens for understanding AIS adoption decisions within resource-constrained SME environments.

Empirical Review

Burgos, Namoc, Padilla, and Flores (2022) examined the influence of accounting information systems (AIS) on the organizational performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Tagum City, Philippines. The study assessed AIS using system quality, information quality, and system threats, while organizational performance was measured by organizational efficiency, cost reduction, and quality of decision-making. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational design was adopted, and data was collected from 240 SMEs using structured questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The findings showed high levels of system quality and information

quality, low system threats, and very high organizational performance. A strong positive and significant relationship was found between AIS and organizational performance ($r = 0.709$, $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that effective AIS enhances organizational performance by improving operational efficiency, reducing costs, and supporting better managerial decision-making.

Van, Afifa, and Saleh (2024) examined the influence of cloud-based accounting information systems (AIS) on organizational performance among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Vietnam. The study investigated the effect of cloud-based AIS usage on AIS effectiveness and organizational performance, while assessing the mediating role of AIS effectiveness and the moderating effect of firm size. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through an online survey of 193 chief accountants and analyzed with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings showed that cloud-based AIS usage significantly improved AIS effectiveness and organizational performance. AIS effectiveness also positively influenced organizational performance and partially mediated the relationship between cloud-based AIS usage and organizational performance. Firm size significantly moderated the relationship between cloud-based AIS usage and AIS effectiveness. The study concluded that adopting cloud-based AIS enhances organizational performance by improving the effectiveness of accounting information processing, leading to greater operational efficiency, profitability, and long-term sustainability.

The international studies reviewed above demonstrate that Accounting Information Systems (AIS) can enhance organizational performance across different developing-country contexts; however, their findings cannot be directly generalized to Nigerian SMEs due to differences in institutional environments, technological infrastructure, regulatory frameworks, and operating conditions. Consequently, there is a need to synthesize evidence generated specifically in the Nigerian context to provide a more contextually relevant understanding of the relationship between AIS adoption and SME performance. The present review therefore proceeds to systematically identify, screen, and synthesize empirical studies conducted in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a systematic literature review (SLR) design to synthesize peer-reviewed contemporary empirical evidence on the relationship between Accounting Information Systems (AIS) and the performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria between January 2016 and June 2026. A systematic review was appropriate because the evidence on AIS and SME performance in Nigeria is dispersed across states, sectors, and performance measures, and an SLR enables transparent identification, screening, appraisal, extraction, and synthesis of relevant studies.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

A comprehensive literature search was conducted to identify peer-reviewed empirical studies examining the relationship between AIS and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Relevant studies were retrieved from major academic databases, including Journal Storage (JSTOR), Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and African Journals Online (AJOL). These databases were selected because they index high-quality, peer-reviewed journals in accounting, information systems, business management, entrepreneurship, and related disciplines.

The search strategy involved the use of Boolean operators (AND, OR) and combinations of relevant keywords. The principal search terms included "Accounting Information System" OR "Accounting Information Systems" OR "Computerized Accounting System" OR "Cloud Accounting" OR "Accounting Software" AND "Small and Medium Enterprises" OR "SMEs" AND "Performance" OR "Financial Performance" OR "Business Performance" OR "Operational Performance" AND "Nigeria." The search process yielded an initial pool of studies, which were subsequently screened for relevance based on their titles, abstracts, and full texts. Duplicate records identified across databases were removed before the eligibility assessment. Only studies that satisfied the predetermined inclusion criteria were retained for the final review and synthesis.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria were established before the screening process. The application of these criteria ensured that only relevant and methodologically appropriate studies were included in the final synthesis.

Studies were included in the review if they:

- were published between January 2016 and June 2026
- were peer-reviewed journal articles
- reported empirical findings based on quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods research designs
- examined the relationship between Accounting Information Systems (AIS), or computerized accounting systems, or accounting software, or cloud accounting, or other AIS dimensions and the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
- focused on SMEs operating in Nigeria
- were published in the English language with full-text access available for detailed review.

Studies were excluded if they:

- were published before 2016
- consisted of conference papers, dissertations, theses, books, book chapters, editorials, commentaries, or review articles
- did not report original empirical findings
- focused on large organizations, public sector institutions, or banks, and not SMEs

- examined Accounting Information Systems without relating them to organizational or business performance
- were conducted outside Nigeria.

Screening Procedure

The screening process was conducted systematically in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure transparency, consistency, and reproducibility in the selection of relevant studies. Before the screening process commenced, duplicate records identified across multiple databases were removed.

The remaining studies were screened in three sequential stages. The first stage involved title screening, during which the titles of all retrieved records were examined to determine their relevance to Accounting Information Systems (AIS), Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), performance, and the Nigerian context. Studies whose titles clearly fell outside the scope of the review were excluded.

The second stage involved abstract screening. The abstracts of the remaining studies were carefully examined against the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. At this stage, studies were excluded if they were not empirical in nature, did not focus on SMEs, did not investigate AIS or related accounting technologies, were conducted outside the Nigerian context, or did not examine organizational or business performance as an outcome.

The final stage consisted of full-text screening. Full-text copies of all potentially eligible studies were critically assessed to determine their suitability for inclusion in the review. Each study was evaluated based on its publication period, research context, methodological rigor, relevance to the study objectives, and consistency with the established eligibility criteria. Studies that failed to satisfy any of the inclusion criteria were excluded, and the reasons for their exclusion were documented to enhance the transparency of the review process.

Following the completion of the screening and eligibility assessment, only studies that fully satisfied all the selection criteria were retained for qualitative synthesis. The final review comprised fourteen (14) peer-reviewed empirical studies published between 2016 and 2026, which formed the basis for the analysis and discussion presented in this study. The entire study selection process is summarized in the PRISMA flow diagram below.

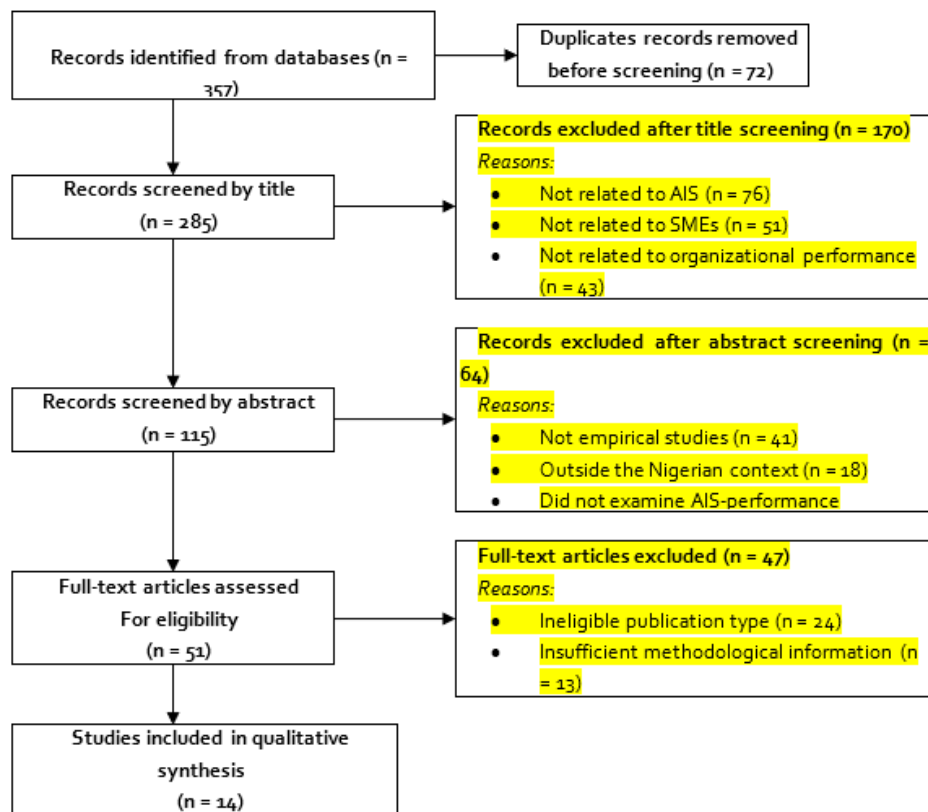


Figure 2: PRISMA Flow Diagram

Source: Author's Construct, 2026

Data Extraction

Data were systematically extracted from each of the fourteen (14) studies that satisfied the inclusion criteria. For each eligible study, the following information was extracted: author(s) and year of publication; study location and context; research objectives; characteristics of the SMEs investigated; Accounting Information System (AIS) technologies or dimensions examined; research methodology, including research design, sample size, data collection methods, and analytical techniques; measures of organizational performance; and the major empirical findings relating to the influence of AIS on SME performance. Where a study reported multiple AIS dimensions or performance indicators, all relevant variables and findings were extracted to preserve the richness of the empirical evidence. This approach enabled the review to capture variations in AIS technologies, research settings, and performance outcomes across the selected studies.

Synthesis and Analysis Technique

The extracted data were synthesized using a qualitative narrative synthesis approach. A narrative synthesis was considered appropriate because the included studies exhibited variations in research settings, Accounting Information System (AIS) technologies, research designs, performance indicators, and methodological approaches, making statistical meta-analysis inappropriate. The narrative approach enabled the integration and

interpretation of findings from diverse empirical studies while preserving the contextual characteristics of each investigation.

The synthesis proceeded in three stages. First, the empirical evidence on the relationship between AIS adoption and SME performance in Nigeria was synthesized to establish the overall direction and consistency of the findings. Second, the various AIS technologies and dimensions examined in the literature were identified and compared. Third, the reviewed studies were analyzed to determine the extent to which different AIS technologies had been investigated within the Nigerian SME context. To facilitate comparison across studies, the extracted information was summarized in tabular form, presenting the authors, year of publication, study context, AIS technologies or dimensions investigated, and the principal findings relating to SME performance.

Quality Appraisal of Included Studies

To enhance the methodological rigor of this systematic literature review, the quality of the fourteen included studies was appraised using a simple criteria-based assessment. Each study was evaluated against three methodological criteria: (i) appropriateness of the research design for addressing the study objectives, (ii) adequacy of the sample size or study context to support the reported findings, and (iii) completeness and transparency of methodological reporting, including the description of data collection procedures and analytical techniques. Overall, the appraisal indicated that the methodological quality of the included studies was generally satisfactory.

Results and Discussion

The findings from the fourteen empirical studies reviewed reveal a remarkably consistent positive relationship between AIS and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. Collectively, the studies demonstrate that AIS adoption contributes to improved financial reporting quality, profitability, sales growth, operational efficiency, employee productivity, business sustainability, management efficiency, cost control, return on investment, and access to finance. Although the studies employed different research designs, performance indicators, and measures of AIS, none reported an overall negative relationship between AIS and SME performance. While one AIS dimension, overhead cost management practices, examined by Okafor and Oji (2021), produced insignificant effect on ROI, the overall evidence strongly suggests that effective adoption and utilization of AIS enhance organizational performance among Nigerian SMEs. This consistent pattern is evident across the reviewed studies presented in Table 1 below.

With respect to the specific AIS technologies investigated, the reviewed literature identifies several technologies that have been empirically linked to improved SME performance in Nigeria. These include widely used accounting software packages such as Microsoft Excel, Peachtree, Dac Easy, Sage, QuickBooks, Tally, Chronicle, and Pastel (Binuyo, Olaposi, & Ige, 2022; Olajire, Olaleye, Kolade, & Ayoade, 2021), as well as cloud accounting

technologies, including Platform as a Service (PaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), and Network as a Service (NaaS) (Alagbe & Yinus, 2025). The technologies were associated with improvements in financial reporting quality, security, decision-making, and overall business performance.

Regarding the extent to which Nigerian studies have investigated specific AIS technologies, the review indicates that explicit technology-focused research remains relatively limited. Out of the fourteen empirical studies included in this review, only three (21.43%) explicitly examined identifiable AIS technologies (Binuyo et al., 2022; Olajire et al., 2021; Alagbe & Yinus, 2025). The remaining eleven studies (78.57%) focused on broader AIS constructs or dimensions, including computerized AIS, AIS quality, AIS efficiency, accounting information system impact, AIS investment, internal control systems, ICT usage, and financial reporting systems, without specifically identifying the associated technologies. This suggests that although substantial evidence supports the positive influence of AIS on SME performance in Nigeria, empirical research has largely emphasized general AIS constructs rather than undertaking detailed investigations of individual accounting technologies.

Table 1: Empirical Evidence on Accounting Information Systems and SME Performance in Nigeria (2016–2026)

S/N	Name of Author(s) & Year of Study	Study Context	Technologies / AIS Dimensions Studied	Profitability Outcomes
1	Fagbemi & Olaoye (2016)	SMEs in Kwara State	Computerized AIS adoption	Significant positive effect on performance; improved access to finance
2	Kpurugbara, Akpos, Nwuduudu, & Tams-Wariboko (2016)	SMEs in Woji, Port Harcourt	The study assessed AIS through its contribution to operational decisions	Improved management efficiency and cost control
3	Akesinro & Adetoso (2016)	SMEs in Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.	Accounting and financial record-keeping practices, including manual accounting record-keeping methods and electronic/computerized accounting record-keeping methods; electronic recording implications	Significant relationship with profitability and performance

S/N	Name of Author(s) & Year of Study	Study Context	Technologies / AIS Dimensions Studied	Profitability Outcomes
4	Ezeagba (2017)	Nigerian SMEs facing reporting challenges	Introduction of sound computerized accounting systems	Owners expect better records and reporting to support performance
5	Siyanbola, Maduemem, Ogbemor, & Sanyaolu (2019)	SMEs in Festac Town, Lagos	Accounting Practice (AP), Mode of Accounting (MOA), Impact of Accounting Information System (IAIS), and Use of Accounting Information (UAI)	All of the AIS dimensions had a significant positive effect on SME performance
6	Akanbi & Adewoye (2018)	Lagos State SMEs	AIS Investment (cost of hardware and software excluding labor); AIS Labor (cost related to AIS services); Non-AIS Labor (labor cost not related to AIS)	AIS investment, AIS labor, and non-AIS labor explained 82.8% of the variation in sales growth
7	Okafor & Oji (2021)	SMEs operating in Akwa Ibom State across manufacturing-related industries.	Management Accounting Practices: Overhead Cost Management Practices (OCMP), Inventory Management Practices (IMP), and Cash Management Practices (CMP)	IMP had a significant positive influence on ROI; CMP had a significant positive influence on ROI; OCMP showed an insignificant relationship with ROI
8	Itang (2021)	SMEs in South-South Nigeria	Computerized Accounting Systems (CAS) operationalized through: Internal Controls, Automated Data-Processing, Relational Database, Automated Reporting, and Enhancing Technologies	All of the CAS dimensions had a significant positive influence on Financial Reporting Quality
9	Binuyo et al. (2022)	Food and beverage SMEs in Southwestern Nigeria	Excel, Peachtree, Dac Easy, Sage, QuickBooks, Tally, Chronicle	93% of respondents agreed that adoption of Computerized Accounting System (CAS) had a positive

S/N	Name of Author(s) & Year of Study	Study Context	Technologies / AIS Dimensions Studied	Profitability Outcomes
				impact on firm performance.
10	Alagbe & Yinus (2025)	SMEs in Southwestern Nigeria	Cloud accounting: Platform as a Service (PaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS), Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), and Network as a Service (NaaS)	Better reporting quality, security, and decision support
11	Olajire et al. (2021)	SMEs in Osun State, Nigeria	Microsoft Excel, Pastel, Tally, and QuickBooks	AIS significantly improved SME performance
12	El-Maude & Danbeki (2021)	SMEs in Taraba State, Nigeria	Manpower (accounting personnel), Internal Control System, and ICT usage	All three AIS factors had a positive, significant effect on sales growth.
13	Bulus (2026)	Service-sector SMEs in Lagos State and Federal Capital Territory (Abuja)	AIS Quality and AIS Efficiency	AIS quality and AIS efficiency had significant positive effects on employee productivity (operational performance)
14	Ayeni-Agbaje & Adenigba (2026)	SMEs in Ekiti State	Financial Accounting Practices, Internal Controls, Financial Reporting, and Computerized Accounting Systems (Computerized Systems)	Financial accounting practices, internal controls, financial reporting, and computerized accounting systems all had significant positive effects on business sustainability

Source: Author's Construct, 2026

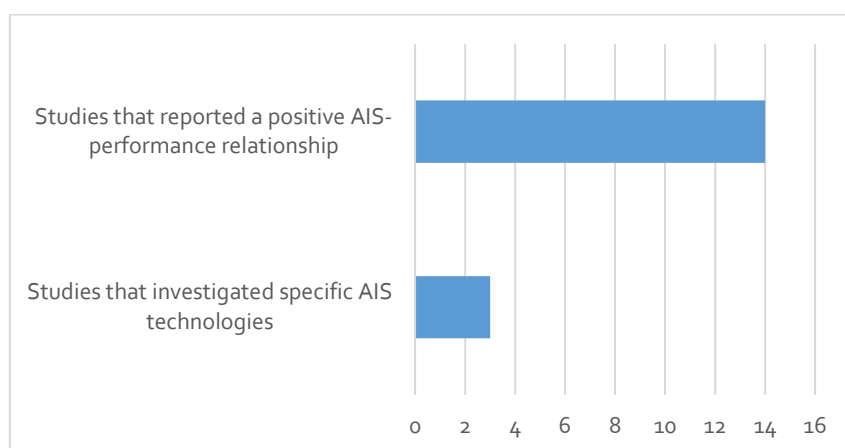


Figure 3: Summary of the Reviewed Studies on AIS and SME performance

Source: Author's Construct, 2026

Figure 3 shows that all fourteen (14) empirical studies reviewed reported a positive relationship between Accounting Information Systems (AIS) and the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria, indicating a strong consensus in the literature that AIS adoption enhances organizational performance. However, only three (3) of the fourteen studies explicitly investigated specific AIS technologies, while the remaining studies examined broader AIS constructs or dimensions. This suggests that although the positive influence of AIS on SME performance is established, empirical evidence on the effects of specific AIS technologies remains limited.

Summary of Findings

1. The study found that Accounting Information Systems (AIS) consistently improve the performance of SMEs in Nigeria by enhancing financial reporting quality, profitability, sales growth, operational efficiency, employee productivity, business sustainability, cost control, return on investment, and access to finance.
2. The study found that accounting software such as Microsoft Excel, Peachtree, Dac Easy, Sage, QuickBooks, Tally, Chronicle, and Pastel, as well as cloud accounting technologies (PaaS, SaaS, IaaS, and NaaS), positively influence SME performance by improving reporting quality, security, decision-making, and overall business performance.
3. The study found that research on specific AIS technologies in Nigerian SMEs is limited, as only 3 of the 14 reviewed studies examined identifiable technologies, while the majority focused on broader AIS constructs and dimensions.

Discussion of Findings

Firstly, the finding that Accounting Information Systems (AIS) consistently improve the performance of SMEs in Nigeria aligns with empirical evidence from Nigeria that AIS enhances financial performance through improved data accuracy, system integrity, and

timely reporting, thereby supporting better managerial decision-making and business sustainability. Read through the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), this pattern suggests that when SME users perceive AIS as useful for reporting and control and easy to operate, adoption is more likely to translate into performance gains. However, this conclusion should be read alongside the methodological diversity of the reviewed studies. The included articles vary in sample size, geographic scope, and design, so the observed positive relationship is robust in direction but not equally strong in every context. The consistency of findings is therefore encouraging, but the relative weight of each study is not identical. The finding is also consistent with evidence from SMEs in the Philippines, where system quality and information quality were found to significantly improve organizational efficiency, cost reduction, and decision-making (Burgos et al., 2022). This points towards the direction that effective AIS adoption is a strategic driver of SME performance across developing economies.

Secondly, the finding that accounting software and cloud accounting technologies positively influence SME performance is consistent with recent studies showing that digital accounting technologies strengthen financial reporting quality, security, and organizational performance. For instance, cloud-based AIS usage was found to significantly improve AIS effectiveness and organizational performance among SMEs through enhanced accounting processes and information quality (Van et al., 2024).

Lastly, the finding that relatively few Nigerian studies have examined specific AIS technologies is entirely a new concern that the present study raised because a careful examination of existing literature indicates that most studies have concentrated on the general adoption of AIS, its perceived benefits, implementation challenges, determinants of adoption, and organizational outcomes. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to evaluating the effectiveness, usability, or performance of specific accounting technologies and software applications deployed by SMEs in Nigeria and their influence on organizational performance. Overall, the findings of this study align with and build on existing literature.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Accounting Information Systems (AIS) constitute an important driver of the performance of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. The evidence synthesized from fourteen empirical studies consistently demonstrates that AIS adoption enhances financial reporting quality, profitability, sales growth, operational efficiency, employee productivity, business sustainability, cost control, return on investment, and access to finance. The review further establishes that accounting software applications such as Microsoft Excel, Peachtree, Sage, QuickBooks, Tally, Chronicle, Pastel, and cloud accounting technologies positively influence SME performance by improving reporting quality, security, and managerial decision-making. However, despite the strong evidence supporting the positive relationship between AIS and SME performance, the review reveals that empirical research in Nigeria has largely concentrated on broad AIS constructs, with

relatively few studies examining the performance implications of specific AIS technologies. Consequently, while the beneficial role of AIS in enhancing SME performance is well established, further technology-specific evidence is required to deepen understanding and guide informed adoption decisions.

Limitations of the Study

1. The study was limited to peer-reviewed empirical journal articles published between 2016 and 2026. Thus, it excludes conference papers, books, theses, and dissertations, which may contain relevant evidence.
2. The study adopted a qualitative narrative synthesis rather than a statistical meta-analysis because of the methodological diversity among the reviewed studies, limiting the ability to quantify the overall magnitude of the relationship between AIS adoption and SME performance.

Recommendations and Directions for Future Studies

1. SMEs in Nigeria should strengthen the adoption and effective utilization of Accounting Information Systems by investing in appropriate accounting technologies and staff training, as the review demonstrates that AIS consistently improves financial reporting quality, profitability, operational efficiency, and overall organizational performance.
2. SME owners, managers, and policymakers should encourage the adoption of proven accounting software and cloud accounting technologies such as QuickBooks, Sage, Tally, Microsoft Excel, and cloud-based accounting platforms, since these technologies have been shown to enhance reporting quality, information security, decision-making, and business performance.
3. Future studies should undertake empirical investigations of specific AIS technologies and compare their relative effects on different dimensions of SME performance across sectors and geographical regions in Nigeria, given the limited number of technology-specific studies identified in the current review.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study contributes to knowledge by providing a comprehensive and up-to-date synthesis of empirical evidence on the relationship between Accounting Information Systems and the performance of SMEs in Nigeria. This systematic literature review consolidates evidence published between 2016 and 2026 to establish a consistent positive relationship between AIS adoption and SME performance, identifies the specific accounting software and cloud accounting technologies reported in the literature, and highlights the limited attention given to technology-specific AIS research in Nigeria. By identifying this important research gap, the study provides a clearer direction for future

empirical investigations while offering a consolidated evidence base to support decision-making by researchers, SME managers, and policymakers.

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